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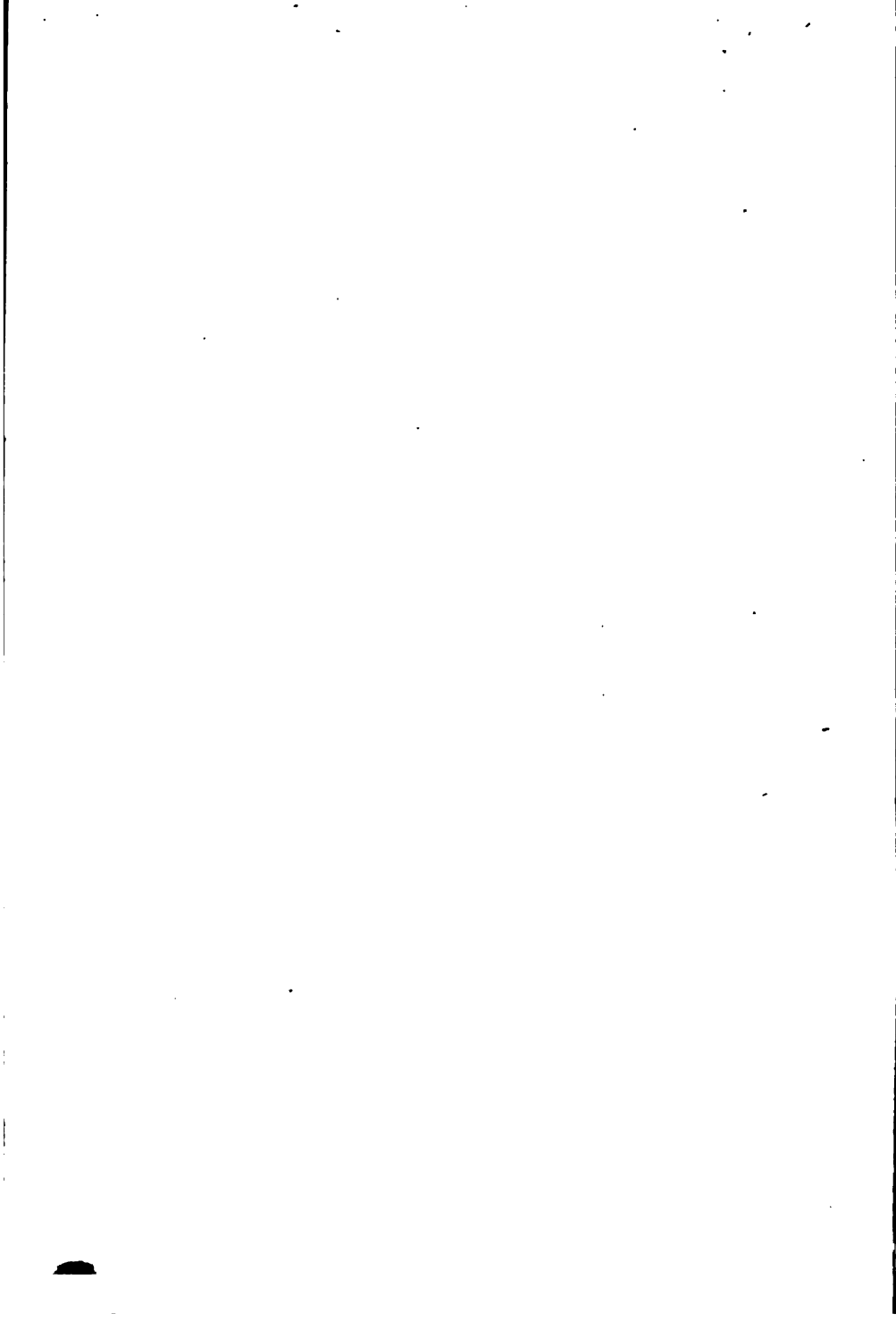
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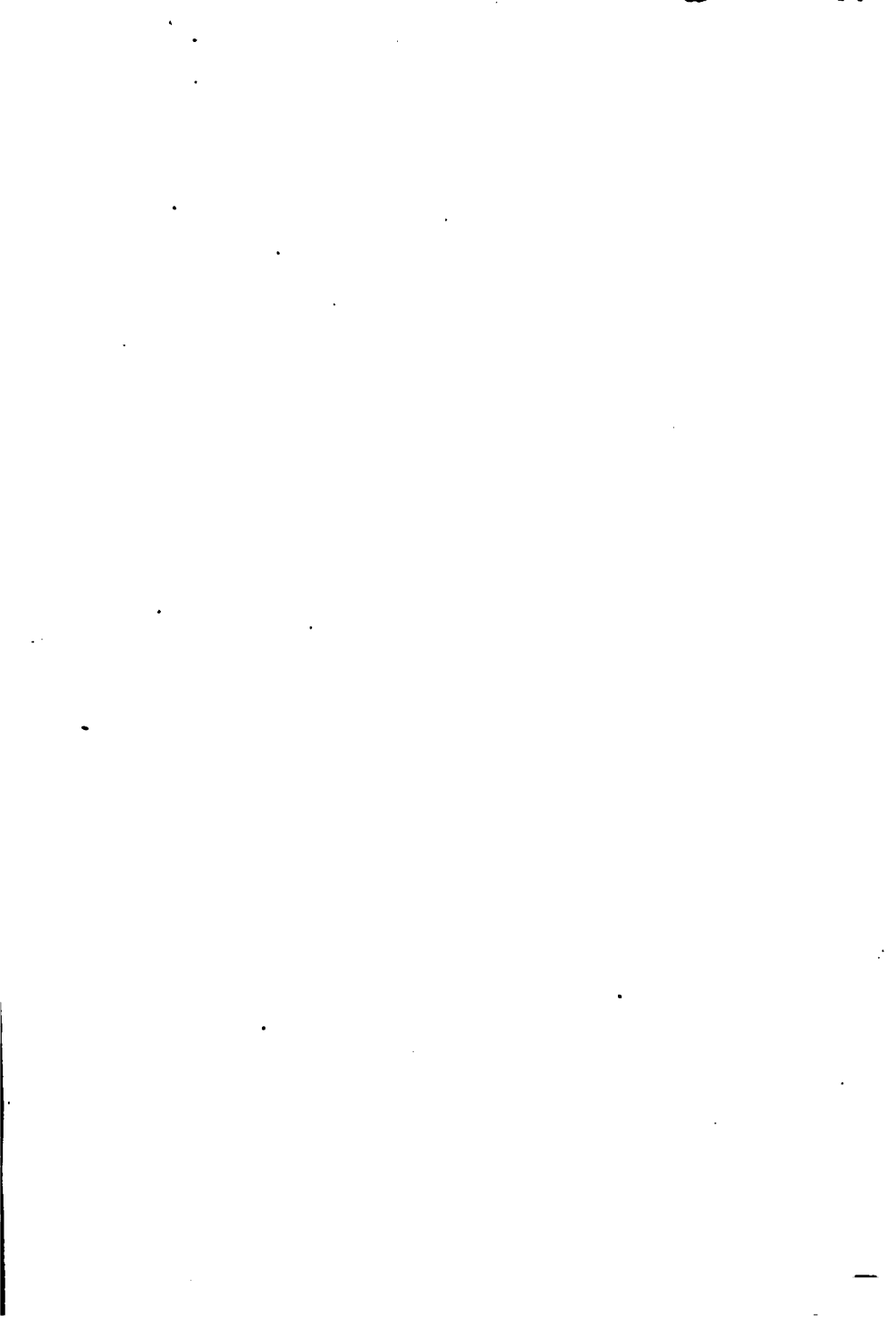
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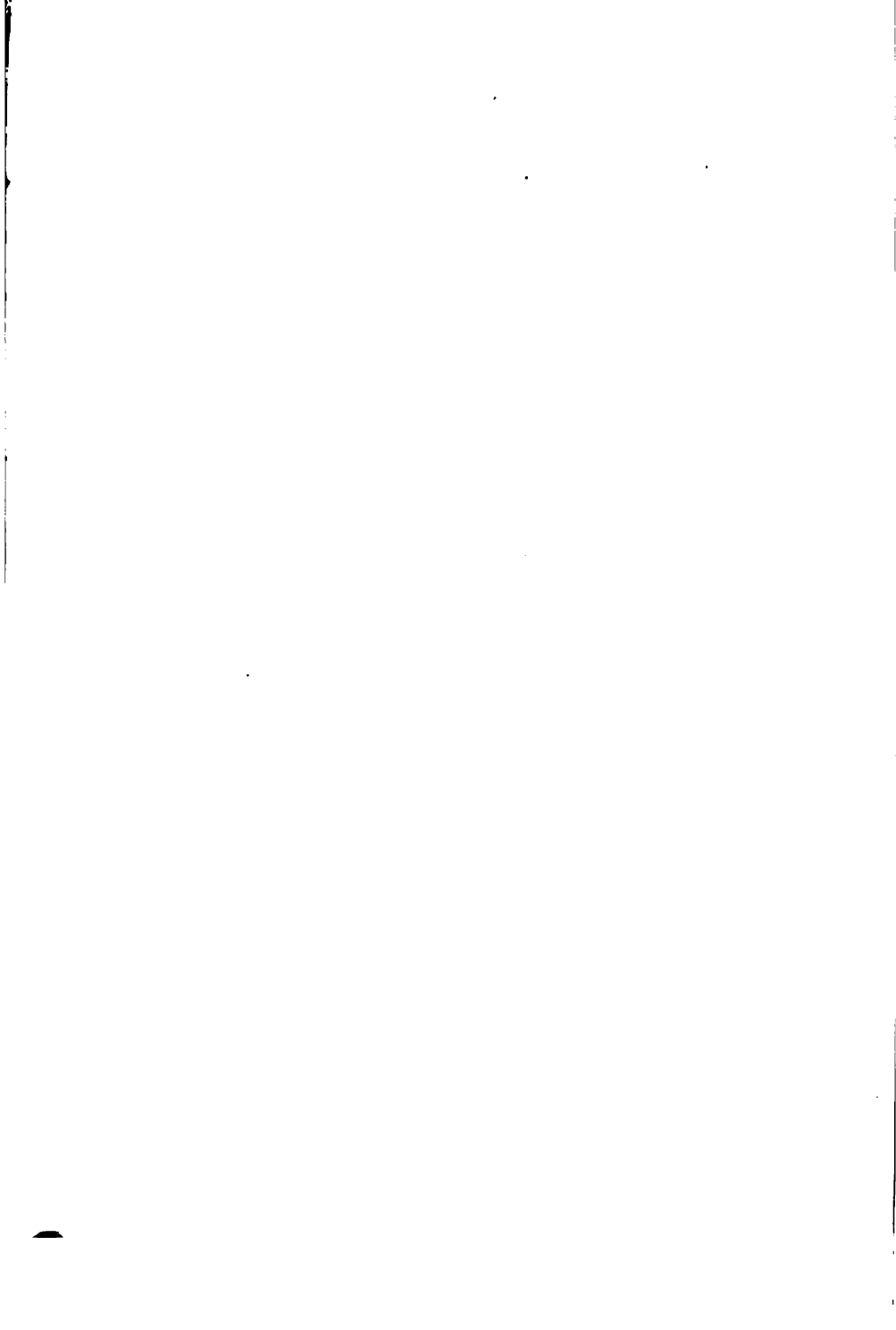
**PHILOSOPHY AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF RELIGION**

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**VOL. II.**

**ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
CHRISTIANITY**





PHILOSOPHY AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF RELIGION

BEING

THE GIFFORD LECTURES DELIVERED BEFORE  
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BY

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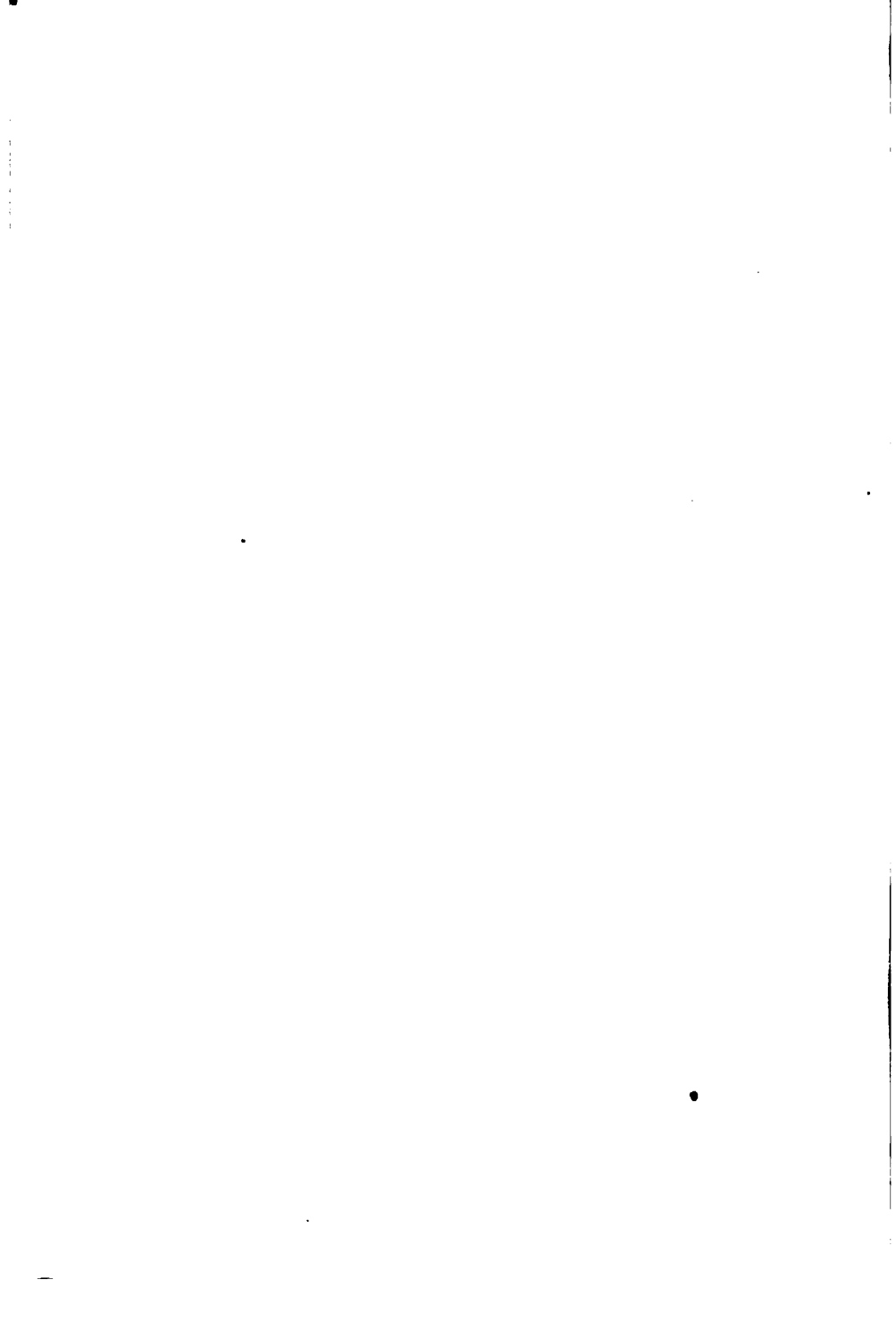
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# ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIANITY.

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## LECTURE I.

### INTRODUCTION.

THE subject of the second half of these lectures is to be the history of the Origin and Development of Christianity. The scientific investigation of this history is still of recent date, hardly more than a hundred years old. What made it impossible sooner was a double hindrance: first, a false idea of the nature of the Revelation upon which Christianity rests; and secondly, a false idea of the character of the Sources from which we are able to obtain a knowledge of its origin.

To investigate a history, means to trace out the connection of its causes and effects, and to make it intelligible to our understanding. This presupposes that in what has once happened there exists such a connection

of causes and effects as is analogous to our general experience of what happens among men and in men, and is therefore intelligible to our understanding. But according to the old ecclesiastical tradition, the origin of Christianity was held to have lain in an event which had been outside of the connection of human causes and events, incomparable with all other experience, and inconceivable by any understanding,—in other words, in an absolute miracle, which, again, could only be known in a miraculous way, and which could only be believed on authority. Christianity, so it was viewed, had arisen by this means, that a divine being, the second person of the Trinity, had once on a time descended from heaven and assumed a human nature by miraculous birth from a virgin, had made known his divine nature by many kinds of miracles, had by his death delivered men from the divine wrath, and thereafter had returned again into his heavenly world. Certainly beautiful conceptions, which from of old, and even still to-day, come home to the fantasy and heart of men; and in them we shall never cease to honour the venerable vestments of sublime truths. But is all this history, intelligibly conceivable history? No: *these* representations do not contain such history; nor can, nor ought, they indeed to contain it. The appearing of a heavenly being for an episodic stay upon our earth breaks the connection of events in space and time upon which all our experience rests, and therefore it undoes

the conception of history from the bottom. And nothing is altered in this position by showing how the appearance of the heavenly being had been prepared upon earth by the course of history; how the Roman government of the world favoured the spread of the Gospel; how the state of things in the heathen and Jewish world had been so desperate that men were the more willing to receive the tidings of the divine Redeemer, and such-like. Considerations such as these, which were always at home in the apologetics of the Church, certainly contain much truth; but they nevertheless always remain attached to the surface of things, and do not penetrate to the *inner* connection of Christianity with the preceding history. It is overlooked that here too, as everywhere in the historical development of humanity, when the old was dying out, the new was prepared not only negatively but also *positively*,—that men no longer found any satisfaction in the old forms of consciousness and life only because the presentiment of the higher truth already lived in the depths of the soul, and evoked their longing for elevation to a higher consciousness of themselves and of God. What breaks the old forms to pieces is just the new spirit itself, which therefore already pre-exists in germ under the shell of the old, and which struggles for liberation from the hindering bonds, and strives towards formation in personal and social existence. It is just on this account, then, that the appearance of this new spirit in a powerful prophetic



personality can be recognised and greeted as the fulfilment of the divining and hoping of all, because they find in Him their own growing spirit, their better selves. This is the true, the positive and inner connection of the new with the old in all human history, and so it is too in particular in the case of the rise of Christianity. Only thus can its origin and rise be really comprehended as history, while under the presupposition of an absolute miracle it remains to us for ever inconceivable.

If Christianity had appeared as an absolute miracle in the person of a God upon earth, the knowledge of this appearance and of its significance could also have been communicated only through a miracle to men. Hence supernaturalism logically assumed that the Bible, to which we owe this knowledge, was a work of the absolutely miraculous inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who had unveiled to the prophets the mystery of the future appearing, and to the apostles that of the accomplished appearance of the God-Man, and who had noted down the record of this revelation for the coming generations even to its wording—nay, had specifically dictated it to the pen of the amanuensis. As the Bible, according to this view, does not contain human history but superhuman miracles, neither has it arisen in a historical way; it is not a collection of divers human testimonies about human experiences out of different times, but it is from beginning to end the homogeneous

work of the *one* divine Author, who has only employed different men as secretaries, to whom He dictated the oracles of His super-rational revelation. In approaching the Bible with this assumption, men made it quite impossible for themselves to understand its actual contents, which are as different as the times and men from which they sprang. It was as when one looks through a coloured glass at a variegated landscape: its own manifold colours all pale and give way to the dreary monotony of the one false colour of the glass. Naturally, with this view, all interest in a higher thorough study of the Sacred Scriptures was lost; men supposed they knew beforehand what was everywhere to be found in them — namely, just the mysteries of revelation, the sum of which was already possessed in the dogmatic system. Hence the Bible was only further used as a mine of proofs for the established dogmatic system. Thus it happened that just in the age of the dominating orthodoxy, whose doctrine of inspiration deified the letter of the Bible, the true study of the Bible reached its lowest ebb, and an understanding of the actual development of religion in the Old and New Testaments was completely wanting.

It was a merit of the rationalistic movement that it broke with the prejudice of the unhistorical dogma of inspiration, and recognised the Bible as “a book written by men for men.” Emancipation from the fetters of

dogmatics was the necessary presupposition for a historical understanding of the Bible. But the rationalism of the period of enlightenment also still lacked the unbiassed historical sense. It was itself still entangled in dogmatic assumptions, although these were different from those of the ecclesiastical orthodoxy. It supposed that the true religion had been revealed to all men through reason and conscience, and had been everywhere and always the same, consisting of the elementary truths of belief in God, Virtue, and Immortality. But as regards what went beyond this scanty scheme of "Natural Religion,"—for *that* rationalism had no interest and no understanding. Hence it likewise sought again in the Bible everywhere only for a philosophical creed, and for this end indulged in as bold and violent interpretations of the Biblical writers as the orthodox had done. But what could not be brought into the rationalistic scheme was explained as non-essential accessories, as allegorical investment, or even charged upon the ignorance and superstition of the old rude ages. Thus were the characteristic distinctions between the Biblical writers and times really overlooked and suppressed; their radical peculiarities appeared to the levelling understanding as an accidental distortion of the essential, always identical truth; and in place of the living dramatic development of the religious spirit there was also substituted the barren monotony of a previously accepted system,—only not

the system of the orthodox Churchmen, but that of the rationalists, the so-called "Natural Religion."

It was, as we saw in the first of these Lectures, the merit of David Hume to have destroyed this illusion of an always identical natural religion, by which a main hindrance in the way of a historical view of religion in general, and of the Biblical religion in particular, was removed. We may carry back the beginning of a historical understanding of the Bible to Herder, the genial scholar of Hamann and Rousseau, the foe alike of rationalistic and of orthodox unnaturalness and stereotyped form, the friend of all natural, original, and powerful feeling in poetry and religion. With deep intellectual sympathy he was able to penetrate into the peculiarities of the Biblical writers, to feel the influence of their religious inspiration, and to re-create their poetical figurative language; and thus he put a powerful impulse in the place of the subjective arbitrariness of the rationalistic exposition of the Bible, and paved the way for the historical Biblical investigation of our time. Certainly, for a strictly scientific prosecution of such investigation, Herder still lacked too much of that sharp intellectual criticism which is as indispensable to the historian as sympathetic intuition and divination. It was always so essentially peculiar to him to view idea and reality as in each other that he was not able, in connection with the traditions of Biblical his-

tory, to carry out the critical severance between ideal content and historical reality — nay, he was scarcely able to understand it as a scientific postulate. “He rightly urged the view that the New Testament was to be read in the spirit of the New Testament itself, with new sense and feeling for the greatness of its contents. But if the greatness, the deep religious moral power, of these writings win their influence over him, carry him away and overpower him, he loses in consequence the freedom which he otherwise maintained towards poetical works. He still wanted the critical mediating conception between poetry and faith—the conception of the myth.”<sup>1</sup>

This defect, which had hindered even Herder from attaining to a historical understanding of the development of Christianity, was rectified by Strauss and Baur, the great Tübingen critics. The writers of profane history had been long clear on the point that in all ancient history the actual facts were covered by a thick stratum of fables, legends, myths, which have not been made arbitrarily by individuals, but had formed themselves spontaneously in the common consciousness of a people, under the co-operation of different impressions and motives, and out of the impulse to interpret religiously and to adorn poetically. But if the primeval history of all other peoples and religions is full of myths and legends, why should not the Biblical his-

<sup>1</sup> Haym.

tory be so too? To have answered this question clearly and straightly, and then to have also applied this point of view logically to the whole Gospel history—this was the merit of David Friedrich Strauss. His procedure was at bottom as simple and as self-evident as the egg of Columbus; but the simplest is in fact always that of which men think least, and by which, when it is suddenly presented to them, they are most surprised and moved. The strength of Strauss's 'Life of Jesus' lay, it is true, more in negations than in positive results,—in the removing of the hindrances to historical knowledge more than in the building up of such knowledge. It swept like a hurricane upon the dogmatic slumber of the theologians, and it swept away the thick mists of the rationalistic and supernaturalistic explanation of the Gospels. It showed the Christian world that its previous supposed knowledge of the rise of Christianity was for the most part an illusion, and thereby it made the path free for an actual knowledge of it. But in order to come to this knowledge, there was needed a more fundamental criticism of the *sources* of the Gospel-history: this foundation of a positive history of primitive Christianity was still wanting in Strauss, and here was the point at which the epoch-making achievement of his teacher Baur came in.

Baur started specially with the criticism of the Pauline Epistles. That some of the Epistles ascribed to Paul, as, in particular, the so-called Pastoral Epistles to

Timothy and Titus, were spurious, had been conjectured before Baur by certain exegetes,—Eichhorn, De Wette, and Schleiermacher (at least as regards 1 Timothy). But their doubts were still grounded more upon subjective judgments of taste than upon insight into the objective historical significance of the writings called in question. On the other hand, Baur, by comprehensive studies concerning the circumstances of the Church in the two first centuries, had come to the result that the Pastoral Epistles sprang out of the struggle of the Catholic Church against the Gnosticism of the second century, and had as their purpose to confirm the ecclesiastical tradition and hierarchy in opposition to the heretics. Baur had thus attained to a new method of Biblical criticism, which he opposed to the previous *subjective* criticism as the *objective* criticism. This method is extremely simple and luminous to every sound understanding. It consists in this, that in judging of the Biblical writings one is not to be determined by the ecclesiastical tradition which arose accidentally, and is, in many respects, quite arbitrary, but by the contents of the several writings themselves. If the contents of a writing are of such a kind that it is not possible without contradictions and artifices to connect it with the relations of the time and the person to whom it has been hitherto ascribed, then the origin of this writing must be transferred to another time, to that time whose relationships it most naturally fits into, and

from whose ecclesiastical as well as theological interests it is most easily to be explained. The only assumption in this method is for the historian at bottom a self-evident presupposition—namely, that the origin of the Biblical writings came about in the same way as all other popular religious literature; that in particular the New Testament Epistles were writings relating to particular occasions, and that they were called forth by a definite situation, by relationships of time and locality of the Christian communities, and were to serve definite purposes, ecclesiastical strivings, and religious tendencies of their time; and consequently, that they can also be only rightly understood from the connection of their time. This method, it is true, was in noway discovered for the first time by Baur,—it had been already long known to writers of profane history, and had been put to use by them; but it was Baur who first applied the method to the sources of Biblical history too, and thereby won results of the greatest importance and reach—nay, who thereby raised Biblical history for the first time to the rank of a real science.

We cannot here pursue in detail the application which Baur made of this method to all the New Testament writings. Only the two most important results of it may be here emphasised, because they have been of fundamental significance for the explanation of the rise of Christianity. The one relates to the position of the Apostle Paul in the development of the oldest



Christianity. By thorough investigation of the Pauline Epistles and of the Acts of the Apostles, Baur came to the result that it was through Paul that Christianity had been first recognised and realised as the universal world-religion, in distinction from the Jewish national religion, and that Paul had been able to carry through his original apprehension of Christianity only by hard and long conflict with the Jewish prepossessions of the primitive Church, and therefore that the real history of the apostolic time does not show the peaceful and concordant picture of the ecclesiastical tradition, but a development, passing from the beginning through strong oppositions and lively conflicts, out of which the one universal Catholic Church did not proceed till towards the end of the second century. The other equally important result of Baur's criticism relates to the Fourth Gospel. He started here from the question, What was the idea and intention which determined the author in his special presentation of the Gospel history? This was the idea, set forth in the prologue, of the divine Logos, the primal principle of the life and light of the world, which had embodied itself in the person of Jesus, and had entered into earthly history. With this idea the whole history of Jesus became for the author a divine-human drama, which turns on the representation and conquest of the opposition of the metaphysico-ethical principles of light and darkness, truth and falsehood, children of the devil and of God, spirit and

flesh, life and death. Thus the Fourth Gospel contains a Christian Gnosis, clothed in the form of a life of Jesus. But that such a representation, determined by ideal motives of a didactic kind, can lay no claim to historical value, has been established with full evidence by Baur by a running critical comparison of the John Gospel with the Synoptic Gospels, in which he showed how, in all their points of difference,—and these are of such a kind that they go deep and defy every attempt to harmonise them,—the greater historical probability is on the side of the Synoptic Gospels, and the divergence of the John Gospel must be referred to its own ideal pre-suppositions and motives. In opposition to the apologetic attempts to separate between the discourses and the narrations of this Gospel, Baur has shown how exactly the discourses also subserve the dogmatic purpose of the Gospel and are coherent with the narrations; and generally how the whole Gospel betrays a planned unity of composition, which excludes all possibility of a division between its historical and ideal constituents. After this analysis and characterisation of the contents of the Fourth Gospel, the question as to the Author is at last raised. That he cannot have been the Apostle John is proved by Baur by a series of important reasons: first of all, by the unhistorical character of many of the Johannine narratives, which in part justify us in inferring the unacquaintance of the author with Palestinian relationships; then, in the next place, by

the relationship of the Gospel to the Apocalypse of John and to the Paschal question in Asia Minor; and, finally, by the whole dogmatic character of the Fourth Gospel, its anti-Judaic universalism and Hellenistic spiritualism, which forms the extremest opposition to the Judaic Christianity of the first Apostles, and therefore also to the apostle John. But this, its ideal character, was precisely what enabled this Gospel to make such a powerful, attractive, and imposing impression upon the Church of its time, so that it was soon recognised as the expression of the loftiest Christian spirit. But that a work containing things of such essential value was also very soon held to be an apostolical production, was natural and obvious for that time, which still was far from having any historical criticism.

This criticism of Baur has of course been much attacked, yet it has not been refuted to the present day, whereas all further investigations have always only contributed anew to confirm it in the main. I will return to it in a later lecture, which will deal more thoroughly with the Johannine theology. For to-day, what has been said may suffice to explain why, in dealing with the question as to the first beginnings of Christianity in the life and teaching of Jesus, we must entirely look away from the Fourth Gospel, and exclusively keep to the first three, the so-called Synoptic Gospels. In his criticism of the latter, Baur has been less happy: his hypothesis regarding their relations to

each other may be regarded to-day as antiquated. Great as has been the labour applied by New Testament criticism to the question of the Synoptic Gospels, we are nevertheless still far from having reached a quite certain result, and we shall assuredly never come to such a result, unless perhaps some entirely new material source of information be yet discovered, which indeed, after so many an important find in the last decades, does not lie out of the sphere of possibility. However, although uncertainty still reigns regarding individual questions, yet an agreement on certain main points has been gradually formed among experts in the subject. I shall therefore attempt, on the basis of the present position of criticism, to draw a sketch in brief of the origin of the Synoptic Gospels, from which at the same time will follow the relative value of their statements for the history of primitive Christianity.

This much is first of all certain and generally recognised, that no one of our Gospels dates from the time of the first apostolical generation, but that the composition of Gospel writings only began after the close of that generation, and therefore somewhat later than the year 70 A.D. Down to that time, then, *oral tradition* was still the only source of the communication of the evangelic history. It may be supposed that this oral tradition referred at the beginning pre-eminently to the prominent turning-points in the life of Jesus; the beginning of His Galilean activity, its climax, and especi-

ally to the last days in Jerusalem, the Passion week. The groups of reminiscences which attached themselves to these main stations in the life of Jesus may have first assumed a firmer form and order in the tradition of the Jerusalem community, in which they became known to Mark, who was a friend of Peter, and they have formed the ground-material of his Gospel. Besides the deeds and fates of Jesus, however, there were also His discourses, which had the greatest importance for the community from the beginning. Not, indeed, connected discourses, as we find them in Matthew; but short sayings, the central words of the morality and promises of Jesus, which stamped themselves firmly upon the memory, and were propagated in the oral tradition of the communities and apostles. But here it must not be forgotten that the original Aramaic sayings of Jesus had already undergone a transformation by their passing into the region of the Greek language, and this change could not remain limited merely to the linguistic form. Further, in such oral tradition the connection in which the individual sayings had been originally spoken could not possibly always be exactly retained. These isolated sayings might then afterwards, when the tradition became fixed in writing, either be loosely ranged side by side with each other (as in Luke), in which case mere association of ideas may often have been regulative of the order, or they might (as in Matthew) be put together in the frame-

work of longer discourses according to positive points of view. Finally, it is to be carefully noted that the free form of the oral tradition of the sayings of Jesus could not exclude actual transformations and additions. It is especially in the discourses in the Gospels relating to the future that we often find such expressions, regarding which we partly know with certainty, and can partly surmise with great probability, that they did not proceed from Jesus Himself, but from the consciousness of the community, from their experiences or hopes. But even in the case of some of the parables, we have cogent reasons for distinguishing between an original simple kernel, which points back to Jesus, and an artificial interpretation, explanation, and transformation, which may well be a later addition.

And with this we are already led to a more general consideration, which is of the very greatest importance for the correct estimation of the Gospel accounts. It is the nature of all oral tradition that it works not merely preservingly, but also creatively and productively, and this the more that its object affects not merely the knowing but the heart of men, as is notably the case with religious tradition in the highest degree. We see even in everyday life how the recollection of a life which was dear to us is wont to be transfigured, beautified, and idealised by the unconsciously working fantasy. Still more is this the case where the life in question was one which was of great significance for many:

in such a case the imagination of a whole people and of many generations is busied in forming an ideal picture in which the features preserved in the recollection are heightened to a marvellous sublimity, and are so wreathed with free poetic allegories, that what was original is often hardly any longer recognisable under the legendary garment of the idealising fantasy. It would have been strange indeed if this psychological law, which we see reigning in the history of the civilisation and religion of all times, should not also have exercised its influence in the beginnings of Christendom. The whole heart of the disciples was still filled by the inextinguishable impression which the personality and the fate of Jesus had made upon them. "The magic of a wondrous personality, and the ardour of newborn trust, affection, hope, lifted men's thoughts into an activity greater than they knew. All the enthusiasm of the early Church for Jesus was poured into the Gospel tradition. With singular elasticity it gathered up elements derived from various sources, but all penetrated with the same assurance, and fused them with more or less completeness into the common mass."<sup>1</sup>

The ideal motives which worked determiningly upon the formation of the evangelic tradition may, if I see rightly, be referred to three different sources: (1) The existing Messiah-idea of Judaism; (2) the figurative modes of speech used in the Old Testament and by

<sup>1</sup> Carpenter, *The First Three Gospels*, p. 85.

Jesus ; (3) the religious experiences of the community of the disciples. By the fact that the disciples of Jesus recognised in their master the promised Messiah, or the divine instrument for the fulfilment of the prophetic promises, it had become inevitable that the picture in their memory of Jesus, and the ideal of the Messiah which they had received, should be blended in such a way that each of them was somewhat altered in the process. This could happen all the more easily because the Messianic conceptions of the Judaism of the time were not at all stamped in *one* definite doctrinal form, but wavered in many ways between the old prophetic ideal of a victorious king out of David's tribe, and the ideal which had arisen in the scholastic tradition of a great teacher and prophet after the type of Moses and Elijah, or after the picture in Isaiah of the patient teacher, and finally the Apocalyptic ideal of a heavenly man, who was to come from heaven, and who would be equipped with supernatural power for the conquest of all the kingdoms of the world. It was natural that the Christians should seize and complete those sides of the popular idea of the Messiah which fitted in with the history of Jesus, and that they should tone down and reinterpret the rest. Now the idea of the warlike Son of David did not in fact fit at all into the appearance of Jesus ; but so much the better did the representation of the patient Teacher and of the Servant of God endowed with spiritual power in Isaiah



xlii. do so. But with this representation there was also most closely connected the picture of the suffering Servant of God who was to expiate the guilt of the people by his innocent suffering, as presented in chapter liii. of Isaiah. This picture of the suffering Servant of God had indeed never been assigned by Judaism to the Messiah, because it contradicted too harshly its worldly political ideal; but it was so much the more natural for the Christians to find the fate of Jesus typified in the suffering Servant of God of Isaiah liii., and consequently to take the innocent martyr-suffering as a *new* trait into the previous ideal of the Messiah. But thereby that ideal was fundamentally altered: the worldly Ruler of the national Jewish dream of the Messiah vanished before the *moral-religious* heroism which possesses in patience and resignation the power of overcoming the world. Nevertheless, a patient teacher and an innocently suffering martyr would not yet have sufficed for the belief even of the Christians in the Messiah; even for their Messiah suffering could only be the way, the passage, to the *glory* whose possession was altogether inseparable from the conception of a Messiah. But must, then, the Messianic glory be thought of as that of an *earthly* hero and king? Had not the Messiah been already represented as a *heavenly* Being in the Apocalypses of Daniel and Enoch? And had not Jesus been raised by a miraculous resurrection to the right hand of God, and had there become just

such a "Lord of glory" as the Apocalypses represented the Messiah to be? The discordance which appeared to exist between the Jewish idea of the Messiah and the actual life and fate of Jesus, was therefore done away with for the first Christians very easily by their apportioning the two sides of the Messianic nature and working to the two appearances of Jesus—the one in the present, and the other in the future. If He had only come at first as the humbly teaching and suffering prophet and servant of God, He was to come the second time as the King of the eternal kingdom of God, who had been raised to the heavenly glory, as Daniel had beheld Him. But it could not fail that the rays of the heavenly glory, although it was only to reveal itself on the occasion of the near second advent, should already throw back a transfiguring brightness into the earthly life of Jesus. The Jesus who was raised by God to be the Messiah could not, even in His earthly life, be inferior to the great men of God in the history and legends of Israel. The miracles which were reported of them must also have similarly taken place, and even more gloriously, in the case of Jesus. With this dogmatic postulate wings were given to the oriental fantasy to raise the recollections of the mighty deeds of Jesus far above the level of the actual into the region of the supernatural, of divine omnipotent miracles. The same prophetic intuition which saw the Son of Man forthwith descending to earth on the clouds of

heaven, accompanied by heavenly hosts, was the same power which carried into the earthly life of Jesus, and beheld therein, a copy of the miracles of the holy legends and tradition of the Old Testament—a process which indeed went on for the most part quite involuntarily and unconsciously. As the Old Testament was then read throughout under the presupposition that everything in it was a prophecy of Christ, there were found in its forms and legends the types which must be found exemplified in the life of Jesus. Especially in the second generation, and in the communities that stood at a distance from the circle of the first apostles, this assumption worked determiningly upon the formation of the evangelic tradition; and thus it became a web in which the threads of the historical recollections, and those of free poetic invention, were so intimately interwoven that it is impossible in detail to keep them strictly apart.

In a way similar to the application of the Jewish idea of the Messiah, worked also the realistic interpretation of the Old Testament figurative discourses and of the similar utterances of Jesus Himself. When, for example, the Old Testament seer, introduced under the form of Balaam, saw a Star come out of Jacob and a Sceptre rise out of Israel, or when the Babylonian Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord rise upon Israel, and kings walking in its brightness and presenting their treasures as tribute—these were indeed originally only

images of the spiritual and worldly prosperity of Israel that was hoped for; but they were referred by the Christians to the appearance of Christ, and the allegory was understood in the literal sense of the words, from which arose the narratives of the Star of the Magi, and the glory that shone over Bethlehem. Or when, in Hosea, God said, "Out of Egypt have I called My son," by this was originally meant only the people of Israel; but because the Christians while using this term were early in the habit of thinking of Christ as the unique supernatural Son of God, they understood the words of Hosea as a prophecy of Christ. But, as no place in the known life of Christ anywhere presented itself as their fulfilment, they must have been fulfilled in His earliest childhood, and thus arose the story of the flight of the Christ-Child and His parents to Egypt, and their return from it. A similar process has gone on several times in connection with the figurative discourses of Jesus. Thus out of the expression, "I will make you fishers of men," arose the story of the miraculous draught of fishes; and out of the parable of the barren fig-tree arose the story of the cursing of the fig-tree between Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Finally, we must not forget that the pious belief of the community has also expressed its own spiritual experiences, presentiments, and intuitions in, the symbol of ideal narrations, the originally more allegorical significance of which was soon forgotten, or rather was

never so definitely distinguished from the historical reality as *we* are wont to do. The distinction drawn by the understanding between external actuality and ideal truth is to us, as men of the culture of the present day, so self-evident that it is difficult for us to represent to ourselves clearly the spiritual state of antiquity, and especially of the Orient, where this distinction was still almost wholly wanting. And yet this is an indispensable condition for the correct understanding of religious legends. "Nothing corresponds so much to the spirit of the East as the impulse everywhere pervading our evangelists to make history the type, the symbol, and bearer of higher religious and moral truth, to treat the earthly reality as a diaphanous transparency of a heavenly world, and thus to rise to ideal truth and poetic beauty. In this sense, actual memories are not seldom raised to ideal images of what is repeated in some sense wherever the followers of Jesus have believed and hoped, acted and suffered."<sup>1</sup> Such ideal pictures we recognise, for example, in the stories of the miraculous feeding in the wilderness, of the turning of water into wine at Cana, of the stilling of the tempest and the walking of Peter upon the waves, as also in the scenes of the transfiguration and of the appearances of the risen Christ. In like manner, it is difficult to say, with regard to most of the Gospel narratives of the

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, Einl. zu den Synopt. Evv.

miraculous healings of Jesus, what in them is historical memory, and where the ideal figurative invention begins. Nor is this of much consequence, seeing that for us the more important matter still lies, in any case, in the ideal truth of all such histories. Here the words of the poet hold true,—

“What never and nowhere as fact did hold,  
Is that alone which never can grow old!”

We have therefore seen that the Gospel tradition, during the decades of its oral communication, was a fluid mass, into which, along with the historical reminiscences, various other elements and ideal motives also found entrance. It is just on this blending of them that the imperishable and incomparable value of the Gospels rests as nutriment for the spiritual life of the Christian community. So far, indeed, we may recognise a providential dispensation in the fact that the Gospel history was not fixed in writing at the very beginning, but was preserved by oral tradition for more than a generation in the fluid state of evolution and growth, and of free transformation. But this could not permanently suffice. When the first generation of the living witnesses of the Gospel history had died out, the pressing need made itself recognised to fix the tradition in writing. Probably the beginning of this was not made before the year 70 A.D. In the following decades, however, the literary attempts were

multiplied in such a way that Luke, in the preface to his Gospel, which was written between 100 and 120, could already speak of many predecessors, who had written down the Gospel history according to the communications of ear- and eye-witnesses—in which he, moreover, at the same time testifies that the oldest authors of written Gospels had *not themselves* been ear- and eye-witnesses of this history. The first mention by name of the two evangelists, Mark and Matthew, is made by Papias, a bishop of Asia Minor, in the middle of the second century. According to him, Mark, as interpreter of Peter, on the basis of the teaching of that apostle, wrote down the discourses and deeds of Christ, without order or connection, but only as he remembered them in detail; but that Matthew wrote out in the Hebrew dialect the words of the Lord, which every one translated as well as he could. This notice of the old bishop Papias does not at all agree with the actual state of our canonical Gospels according to Mark and according to Matthew; for the Mark Gospel is by no means wanting in order, but has just the best order of the three, nor does it make the impression as if it could have been written on the basis of didactic lectures. Again, the Matthew Gospel is not a translation from the Hebrew, but was originally written in Greek, nor does it contain merely discourses of Jesus. From the statement of Papias we are therefore entitled to infer only this: that about the middle

of the second century there was still a reminiscence of the fact that *two chief sources* lay at the basis of our Gospels—a Greek source, which is preserved most faithfully in the Mark Gospel, and a Hebrew source, which sprang from Judæo-Christian circles, and which is turned to account in our Matthew Gospel.

The views of the learned are still divided regarding the character of this second source: some think of a mere “collection of discourses or sayings,” which is still pretty faithfully contained in the longer discourses of the canonical Gospel according to Matthew. But to this view others object that these discourses in Matthew betray too many traces of later and artificial composition for us to be entitled to refer them back directly to a historical collection of sayings: they also doubt whether there has ever been a mere collection of sayings, and prefer to bring the Hebrew source into relation with the “Gospel of the Hebrews” which sprang from Jewish-Christian circles, and of which at an early time there were already several Greek translations and editions in circulation, and these doubtless were also known and used by the authors of the canonical Gospels according to Luke and Matthew. At all events, we have already in these two Gospels works of second-hand, which took their material from older Gospel writings, mostly no longer preserved.

The oldest of our Gospels is that which is called the



Gospel according to Mark, as is now almost universally recognised. In comparison with the other Gospels, its presentation bears the stamp of greater originality, of clearness and definiteness, of uninterrupted completeness; in short, it is the ground-form from which the other Gospels diverge, now in this way and again in another, from different motives. Especially striking and characteristic of our Gospel is its dogmatic naïveté, the absence of Christological considerations and interests. Mark still knows nothing of the miraculous birth of Jesus; and what is more, he tells without concern of the unbelief of the mother and relatives of Jesus in His higher mission (iii. 21-31). The miraculous power of Jesus, according to his representation, is as yet no absolutely supernatural power, but is conditioned partly by physical means and partly by the faith of the sufferers; and on this account, according to Mark's statement, Jesus could do no miracles in his native town, Nazareth, because of their unbelief. He also reports utterances of Jesus in which he denies his possession of goodness and foreknowledge of the future equal to God, and therefore keeps definitely within the human level (x. 18, xiii. 32). And so, too, in Mark, Jesus does not yet appear from the very beginning as the Messiah, but we can here still follow in some measure the historical course of events—how the activity of Jesus as a Teacher from small beginnings expanded gradually more and more; how, with his

growing success, the resistance also increased; how, with this and at the same time, the doctrine of the kingdom and of the conditions of participation in it so deepened, and the opposition between Jesus and the Jewish people so expanded on both sides, that the tragic conflict became inevitable. This natural succession in the individual phases and turning-points of the public life of Jesus has only been preserved in the Mark Gospel, and this gives it an eminent historical value.

The ecclesiastical tradition has represented this Gospel of Mark, the companion of the apostle Peter, as written on the basis of lectures, or even (according to a later version) of dictations of Peter. However much these details in the tradition are subject to critical doubt, yet assuredly there is a correct kernel to be found in it. For the evangelist shows, on the one hand, such a knowledge in detail of the beginnings of the Galilean ministry of Jesus, and again of the events of the last days in Jerusalem, that one may with probability conjecture that he owed this information to the primary apostolic circle, and in particular to Peter, who, according to Acts xii. 12, was in the habit of frequenting the house of Mary, the mother of Mark. But, on the other hand, the evangelist also shows a decided acquaintance with the apostle Paul: we find in him not merely individual Pauline thoughts and turns, but also his whole description of Jesus; the emphasising of His

reforming energy, and indifference to the Jewish ceremonial law, breathes the Pauline spirit. But these two characteristics, intimacy with the primitive Jerusalem community, and at the same time with Paul, coincide in no other of the men of the primitive Christianity known to us so much as just in John Mark. We have, therefore, no reason to doubt the correctness of the tradition with regard to his authorship of the Gospel. To the question whether we have, in the canonical Gospel according to Mark, the original writing of Mark, or a revision of it by a later hand, the correct answer has been given, as I believe, by Renan, who says: "The Gospel of Mark presents a perfect unity, and, except for certain matters of detail where the manuscripts differ, apart from those little retouchings from which the Christian writings have, almost without exception, suffered, it does not appear to have received any considerable addition since it was composed."<sup>1</sup> It is to be regretted that the close of this oldest Gospel has been mutilated; for the last verses (xvi. 9 ff.) run differently in the different manuscripts, and have been undoubtedly added by later hands as an equivalent for the lost, or perhaps intentionally-suppressed, genuine close.

The Gospel according to Luke is introduced as a literary work of art by its preface, written in classical Greek (i. 1-4), in which the author expresses his inten-

<sup>1</sup> *Les Evangiles*, p. 120; *The Gospels*, Eng. tr., p. 62.

tion to excel the earlier attempts of the evangelic literature by exactness, completeness, and orderliness of presentation, in order thereby to strengthen the certainty of the belief of the Gentile Christian reader, Theophilus. And his work is really the richest in contents among the Gospels; it contains a multitude of narratives and discourses which are not found at all in Mark, and are found in Matthew only in part and in another order, and frequently also in another form. As this form shows in Matthew, almost throughout, less originality than in Luke, Luke cannot possibly have had the Matthew Gospel as a source; but his sources, except Mark, are to be sought in unknown and lost Gospel-writings—to which also doubtless belong translations and revisions of the Gospel to the Hebrews, and which also stood at the command of the author of the Matthew Gospel.

In the selection and presentation of his material the evangelist Luke betrays a unique religious and artistic personality. In the very first two chapters, the Pauline idea of Christ as "the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness" (Rom. i. 4), has been clothed by him in forms of the most fragrant poetry, and he has thereby created an immense treasury of motives for the Christian art of all times. In the presentation of the activity of Jesus in Luke, the anti-Judaic side, the struggle against the Pharisaic legality, markedly retreats behind the universal human side—

namely, the merciful love of the Saviour to penitent sinners, to the unhappy who stood in need of help, to the poor and low generally. What is blamed in the Pharisees is less the religious error of over-estimating the external ceremonial service than the moral error of loveless pride elevating itself above the impure people. The beautifying of the poor and hungry stands by the side of the woe pronounced over the satiated rich. The religious socialism which already receives expression in the hymn of Mary (i. 51) is interwoven with the whole Gospel of Luke. Accordingly, the chief demand on the disciples of Jesus is a Godlike mercifulness, which has to manifest itself in the exercise of unlimited beneficence, nay, in the giving up of all property in favour of the poor. A further peculiarity is the attitude of the Luke Gospel towards heathenism and Judaism. The universal world-destination of the Gospel is expressed in it as decidedly as in Paul. The Pauline mission to the heathen is prefigured and sanctioned by the sending of the seventy disciples into the cities of Samaria; the believing heathenism is prefigured and put in contrast to the unbelieving Judaism by believing, grateful, and merciful Samaritans. This thought, which recalls Romans chapters ix. and x., is the subject of the very first sermon of Jesus in Nazareth, as Luke—wholly deviating from the other evangelists—presents it. On the other hand, Luke lacks those places in which preach-

ing to the heathen is forbidden, and the mission of Jesus is limited to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew x. 5 and xv. 14). Luke, therefore, shared in the Pauline conviction of the universal destination of Christianity, but he did not ground it, like Paul, by the dogmatic thesis of the end of the law in Christ. Rather does he occupy a very conservative attitude in reference to the Jewish law, as well as to all existing practices. He narrates at length the fulfilment of all the legal conditions in the child Jesus, and, on the other hand, passes rapidly over the sharp polemical discourses of Jesus directed against the scholastic dogmas of Judaism; and this holds especially with reference to the decisive reforming act of the purification of the Temple.

According to all this, we recognise in the author of the third Gospel a Hellenistic Paulinist of the post-apostolic time, who has presented the evangelic tradition in the spirit and for the wants of the heathen Christendom of his time. The internal Jewish conflicts carried on against Pharisaism and ceremonialism have here lost their interest, whereas the Gospel of Jesus is greeted as the comforting promise for the poor and lowly, the humble and meek; and in the hoping and loving of the brotherhood of Jesus is felt the presence of the universal kingdom of God, which is raised above all national limitations. Any danger of falling back into Jewish legality is no longer feared, whereas

the need of a regulation of the moral life of the communities takes practical form through new Christian orders, the authority of which can therefore not be questioned by antinomianism in principle. Moreover, the apologetic interest demanded that every appearance of political disloyalty should be anxiously removed from the first beginnings of Christianity; and hence what is reformingly aggressive in the historical picture of the character of Jesus is suppressed, and the merciful Saviour of sinners and Comforter of the poor is put in the foreground.

Whether the tradition which ascribes this Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles to the scholar and travelling companion of Paul is to be held as correct, depends on the judgment formed of the Acts of the Apostles,—a question on which I cannot enter here. I hold it to be more probable that the author of both writings was not Luke himself, but rather one who used *memorabilia* of Luke, and among these a diary of the journeys which Luke made along with Paul, fragments of which are preserved for us in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Gospel according to Matthew is not, as was once commonly thought, the oldest, but is the youngest of the Synoptic Gospels. When the Catholic Church took form out of the struggle of parties and tendencies, towards the middle of the second century, a Gospel was

needed for the use of the Church, which did not belong specially to the one or other party, but which represented the neutral unity and the advanced consciousness of the universal or Catholic Church. From this need arose the canonical Gospel according to Matthew, which has only very remote relations—if any at all—with the apostle of this name. It is a Gospel-harmony, in which the older Gospel literature is worked up in the genuine Catholic manner, so that the contradicting tendencies are not, as it were, suppressed, but are adjusted by peaceful juxtaposition. For the rest, this Gospel is the faithful mirror of the dogmatic and moral consciousness of the Catholic Church about the middle of the second century. Its fundamental view of Christianity is Catholic—namely, that it is the fulfilment of the Old Testament revelation, but yet also a *new law*, which the divine Lawgiver of the Church in the solemn Sermon on the Mount set forth in contrast to the old law given by Moses upon Sinai. The Catholic dogma already emerges on the horizon in the Trinitarian formula of baptism, in which the departing Christ leaves to His community the outlines of the ecclesiastical rule of faith as an inheritance. The doctrine as to Christ likewise stands upon the height of the ecclesiastical consciousness of the time: Christ is not merely the Son of David or of Abraham, and not merely the Prophet anointed with the Spirit, but He is the supernatural



essential Son of God, to whom all power is given in heaven and upon earth, who gives His new law to His community elected out of all peoples, who will also once gather all the peoples before His judgment-seat, and to whom the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and holiness belong in unlimited degree. Further, the soteriology and ethics of the Gospel according to Matthew are Catholic. All are to have access to the Church, yet *only those* will be participative of its salvation who adorn themselves with the bridal garment of a worthy walk and conversation; the lawless and loveless (and therefore especially heretics) will be excluded in spite of their Christian confession. But above the righteousness that is in conformity with duty, there rises the "perfection" which is acquired by following the evangelical counsels of voluntary poverty and celibacy (xix. 12-21). Catholic, finally and especially, is also the position ascribed to Peter, as the foundation of the universal Church, and the bearer of the power of the keys whose binding and loosing holds good for heaven—a phrase which already includes in germ the authority of the Roman bishop, but which, for that very reason, lies as far as possible from the mind of Jesus.

The Gospel of Matthew concludes with the assurance of the constant presence of Christ in His community, an assurance which strikes the note of the mysticism of John. But it also contains the statement of the ex-

clusive mission of Jesus to the lost sheep of Israel. From this Jewish narrowness to that spiritual climax—what a far way in the progress of Christian thought! The monuments of this way are preserved, and are recognisable, in the Synoptic Gospels.

## LECTURE II.

### THE PREPARATION OF CHRISTIANITY IN JUDAISM.

“WHEN the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son,” says Paul (Gal. iv. 4); and according to Mark (i. 15), Jesus Himself began His preaching with the words, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel.” The Gospel therefore entered into the world when the time of its preparation was fulfilled, when the world had become ripe for it. In these words it is already said that Christianity appeared not as an unmediated miracle, a *deus ex machina* without any connection with what preceded it, but that it was the ripe fruit of the historical development of humanity, and especially of the people of Israel. The Christian Church has also recognised this at all times. It rejected most decidedly as a dangerous error the opinion of a Marcion that Christianity is something entirely new, and standing in opposition to all that went before

it; it has found everywhere in the writings and histories of the Old Covenant prophecies and types which have come to fulfilment in the history of Christ; and in this very connection between prophecy and fulfilment the Church has all along seen a main proof for the divine revelation of Christianity.

Certainly in this it was perfectly right. There can, in fact, be no better or more irrefutable proof for the divine necessity and truth of Christianity than the fact that it was the ripe fruit of the preceding history,—the goal to which the religious development of humanity in general, and of the people of Israel in particular, had striven from the beginning. But this deep truth has been again and again very imperfectly understood. Instead of finding a fulfilment of “prophecy” in the inner organic connection of Christianity with the whole development of the Old Testament religion, this was sought rather in a miraculous coincidence of individual points of the Gospel-history with individual predictions of the old seers; and still in the present day the “proof of prophecy,” *thus* understood, is a favourite weapon in the armoury of many apologists. Historical criticism has, however, proved long since the futility of this proof; it has shown that, of the so-called “Messianic prophecies” of the Old Testament, those which were thought to be really “Messianic”—*i.e.*, in the sense of the Jewish idea of the Messiah—were *not* fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as He neither was nor would

be a worldly king and hero; and, on the other hand, the passages to which New Testament narrations appear precisely to correspond did *not* refer to the future Messiah, but to relationships in the present of the prophet himself, or even in the past. I will only recall a few of the most striking instances. When it is said in Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called My son," the prophet in uttering these words did not think in the least of the future return of the Christ-Child from Egypt as Matthew relates it, but he thought of the past calling of the people of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. When it is said in Psalm ii., "Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art My son; this day have I begotten thee," the singer did not think at all of the future miraculous generation of the Messiah, but he thought of the installation of the Israelite king into his dignity, which had just then taken place, and by which he became the son—*i.e.*, the *protégé* or ward—of Jehovah: the promise added in the same passage that he would break the heathen with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, is anything but a prophecy of the meek and humble Saviour, Jesus Christ. When Isaiah (vii. 14 ff.) encouraged King Ahaz by pointing to the impending birth of a child which would be called Immanuel, because before the child would know to distinguish good and evil, the country would be already forsaken of the hostile kings of whom Ahaz stood in fear,—in these words he mani-

festly did not think of a miraculous birth of Christ, which was not to take place for centuries to come, but of an ordinary child which was to be born some time within the space of a year, and whose name should be a symbol for the favourable turn in the political condition of Judah which was impending within a few years. It was the Christian readers who first understood these and similar passages as Messianic prophecy, and it was out of this erroneous interpretation that the corresponding narratives of the Gospels first arose. But when the second Isaiah (chap. liii.) speaks of the servant of God whose suffering would be for the expiation of sins and for the salvation of many, we indeed find sure enough in the suffering of the Saviour a wonderful confirmation of these words, only we must not forget at the same time that the prophet in the suffering servant of God did not think of the Messiah coming centuries after, but of the pious sufferers of his own time and surroundings, in whom he beheld the true kernel of the people of God, the bearer of their ideal future. We are therefore not to seek for a prophecy in the sense of a prediction of a divine future event even in Isaiah liii., but rather, as it must be admitted, a "prophecy" in the higher sense of the term, such as alone occurs in actual history—namely, the expression of an ideal truth which, just because it contains an eternal law of the order of the world, also finds ever new fulfilment at all times.

The fundamental error of the vulgar apologetics in its so-called proof from prophecy just lies in this, that it confounds the prophecy of the Biblical prophets with the soothsaying of the heathen oracles and the superstition of the multitude. To have destroyed this error, and brought the true knowledge of Biblical prophecy to light, is a merit of historical criticism for which those who truly honour the Biblical revelation cannot thank it enough. What was it, then, that distinguished the true prophets, the bearers of divine revelation, from the false soothsayers who gave out the dreams of their own heart as God's word? It was the consciousness of the holiness and righteousness of God and of His government of the world, that profoundly moral idealism, that *voice of conscience*, in which they recognised, and rightly recognised, the voice of God, the "Holy One of Israel." Out of this consciousness, and impelled by this holy spirit, they proclaimed their ideals of the future, which, for that very reason, were nothing else than the expression of the conviction, clothed in many respects by their time and circumstances, that the will of God is the moral ideal of the good, that this will of goodness is the law of the world's history, and that the fates of nations are conditioned by their bearing towards this moral purpose of God. On the other hand, the multitude of the people, together with their priests and false prophets, understood the relationship of Israel to its covenant-God Jehovah in quite

the same manner as the heathen peoples thought of their relationship to their national Deities—namely, not as a relationship resting upon moral conditions, but as a natural relationship of mutual affinity and belonging, in virtue of which the people believed themselves assured of the unconditioned protection of their God, whatever might be the character of their moral circumstances. The whole activity of the Hebrew prophets bore upon the constant struggle of the moral ideal belief in God against the naturalism which gave out the dreams and wishes of the selfish heart as divine inspirations. Let us hear the prophets themselves on the point.

Micah mocks at the vulgar soothsayers (ii. 11): "If a man walk with the wind and lie falsely, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be a prophet of this people." In chapter iii. 5, he announces to the prophets who made the people err, crying Peace! when their teeth have anything to bite, that the day shall be dark for them, and the sun shall go down over them, for there is no answer of God to them. "But truly," continues Micah, "I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin" (iii. 8). And Jeremiah (chapter vi. 13) laments that all, prophets and priests, are given to covetousness and deal falsely: "They have healed also the hurt of My people



slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (xxiii. 13, ff.) As the prophets of Samaria prophesied in Baal's name, and led Israel astray, so do also the prophets of Jerusalem! "They commit adultery, and walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness. Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. And they say unto every one that walketh after the stubbornness of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord? Who hath marked His word and heard it? Which think to cause My people to forget My name by their dreams, . . . and cause My people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not. . . . Therefore they shall not profit this people at all." The multitude and their leaders desired in carnal security the "day of Jehovah," of which they assumed as self-evident that it would be a day of judgment upon the enemies of Israel, and of triumph for the people of God; but Amos calls to them: "Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities. Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil,

and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate; it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (Amos iii. 2; v. 14, 20). Therefore it is just the election of Israel to be a special property of Jehovah, upon which the others supported their carnal trust in God and their dreams of sensuous prosperity, which became to the prophets rather a ground of the conviction that God will punish the transgressions of His people, and will manifest Himself in them above all others as the Holy God in judgment and righteousness (Isaiah v. 16), and that His pitying favour is only to be hoped for by a morally worthy people.

Through this knowledge of the moral nature and government of God, this revelation which had arisen in their heart and conscience, the Hebrew prophets became the creators of *ethical Monotheism*, the true Biblical religion, which came to its true fulfilment in Christianity. It was not without reason, therefore, that Renan could say that whoever would describe the origin of Christianity must go back to Isaiah. In this great prophet we already find drawn the two essential consequences that follow from knowledge of the spiritual moral nature of God—namely, that the right worship of God does not consist in ceremonies, but in moral conduct, and that the relationship of God to man must at last pass out of a nationally limited relation into a universal one. The saying already expressed before

him by Hosea, that God does not wish sacrifice but mercy, was explicated by Isaiah with glowing eloquence. Instead of sacrifices and festivals, which Jehovah hates, Israel is to become pleasing to Him by putting away its evil works, by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, by seeking judgment, by relieving the oppressed, by judging the fatherless and pleading for the widow (i. 16, 17). But Jeremiah makes Jehovah Himself say (vii. 22 f.), "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." How would such an expression have been possible if the prophets had known the sacrificial cult not merely as a popular practice but as an institution founded by divine revelation, as it is represented in the priest's law-book of the Pentateuch? And how is it possibly to be explained that in their struggle against idolatry and image-worship they should never have appealed to the law of Moses if that law had been already existing and known for centuries? The whole activity of the prophets remains an inconceivable riddle so long as we see in them only the expounders and defenders of a long-existing Mosaic law. Such were, in later times, the scribes of the Synagogue: the prophets,

however, were no scribes, but men of religious genius, full of original inspiration, who drew from their own religious moral spontaneity the new ideas of God's moral nature and working, and of Israel's destination to be a holy people of God,—ideals which were afterwards fixed in several law-books, but which were at the same time in many respects narrowed and adulterated by compromises with the existing religion of the people.

The rise of the ethical Monotheism having thus proceeded from the practical ideal, it is further self-evident that it did not already exist at the beginning as a clear theoretical knowledge of the unity of God. True, this was undoubtedly included already as a logical consequence in the thought that God is one with the will of the good; but a long way still lay from this practical insight to the theoretical knowledge of that consequence. From the beginning the prophets also shared the belief of their people that Jehovah is the special national God of Israel; that He had chosen this people to be His own kingdom before all others, and had entered into a covenant with them with mutual obligation, after the fashion of a marriage. Besides, to them too Canaan was still considered the dwelling-place of Jehovah and the Holy Land, outside of which every land is unclean; and in particular Zion, with the Temple, was the throne of God, from whence He made His voice sound forth, and to which the presence of His

revelation (His "Name") is bound, although the whole heaven cannot contain Him. But as regards the other nations, it is still said of them at the end of the time of the kings (Deut. iv. 19) that God has assigned them to the host of heaven as their special national Gods, while He reserved Israel to Himself as His own, "to be unto Him a people of inheritance." The heathen Gods are not, therefore, denied existence, but they are subordinated as inferior Gods, or vassals, to Jehovah, the national God of Israel; and He is thought of consequently as the "God of Gods and Lord of Lords," who excels all other Gods in power. Only *He* is the object of the worship of the pious Israelite; the heathen Gods have to him at most the negative significance of being enemies of his God and people. And, as the prophets knew the God of Israel not merely as the loftiest in power, but as the holy One, whose moral will even the fates of the nations must serve, there arose from this of itself the hope—as it is expressed by Isaiah and Micah—that even the heathen nations will yet in time come to know Jehovah in common with Israel, and to worship Him upon His holy hill, Zion. This may be called practical Monotheism, in so far as in it the existence of the other Gods, while indeed still theoretically assumed, has nevertheless already lost all significance for the religious consciousness of the Hebrew prophets. It is, however, noteworthy that even the prophets, although they strove to rise above the particularism of the

popular religion, yet never wholly succeeded in passing beyond it. For even in their ideals of the future, Israel still always plays the central part, as in a unique way the centre of the divine care—as it were the kernel, the original people of the kingdom of God, to which the other peoples were only to be attached as serving vassals. Such a cleaving to the national particularism would be inconceivable if the Monotheism of the prophets had been a product of theoretical speculation, as in the pagan philosophers; but it becomes quite conceivable under the presupposition that the prophets started from the national Henotheism of Israel, and came through moral purification of the idea of God and moral teleological contemplation of history to their practical Monotheism.

The further development of the religion of Israel was accomplished under the schooling of the affliction of its political misfortunes on two sides — namely, as progress in the *individualising*, and at the same time in the *universalising* of the religious consciousness. In face of the inevitable destruction of state and city, Jeremiah's view rose to a vision of salvation in the future time of the new Covenant, when Jehovah would write His law in men's hearts, when every man should teach no more his neighbour, but all from the least unto the greatest should know God as the merciful One who would forgive their iniquity, remember their sin no more, and love Israel with everlasting love

(xxx. 32, ff.); and Ezekiel comforted the exiles by prophecy of the time when God would gather the dispersed out of all countries, and would give to them, brought into their own land, a new heart and a new spirit, putting His own spirit within them, and causing them to walk in His statutes, and to keep His judgments (xxxvi. 26). Whence came this sublime idea of religion becoming a personal thing of the heart in individuals? The prophets can only have drawn this ideal of the new covenant in the future, of the religion of the spirit, *out of their own souls*. The more lonely and the less understood they were themselves in the midst of a dull unbelieving and superstitious generation, so much the more did they become accustomed to seek and to find the support of their faith in the voice of God within their own breast. From the struggles and afflictions of the external world they fled for refuge into the inner sanctuary of personal communion with God, and what they experienced here of comfort, power, and elevation, became to them the type and pledge of a future universal redemption, when the spirit of God, who now rested only upon *them* as yet, and the word of God, which was now only put in *their* mouth as yet, would have become the common good of *all*, and would no longer depart from their children's children for ever (Isaiah lix. 21). When religion is thus carried back to its deepest centre, to the fellowship of man in his heart with God, the separating limits

of the national cults fall away as meaningless; the most inward experience of what is purely human can no longer be a privilege of one people above the others—it must become a thing of the whole of mankind. Thus the extension of the religious relationship of all peoples, as we find it prophesied with magnificent boldness, not indeed in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but certainly in the second Isaiah, was the necessary consequence of the individual consciousness of the religious relationship as it grew out of the personal experiences of the great prophets in the time of the Exile. Nevertheless, we find these two tendencies, in which the religious development moved on from Judaism to Christianity, nowhere afterwards so closely combined again as in the unnamed prophet of the Babylonian Exile, whom we are wont to designate as the Babylonian or second Isaiah. The universalistic side of his prophecy later withdrew into the background behind a narrow-hearted Jewish particularism, although it was indeed justified by the stress of the times. On the other hand, the individual inwardness of the prophetic piety found its manifold and multiplied echo in the Psalms, those products of the Synagogue after the Exile which bear witness of what vigorous religious life had preserved and developed itself in the last centuries before Christ, even under the rigid forms of Jewish legalism.

It is true that, in certain respects, the legal religion of the Synagogue after the Exile shows a retrogression



from the lofty idealism of the prophets. The distance of their ideals from the religious moral reality and power of comprehension in the multitude of the people was too great for these ideals to have been capable of being realised immediately, or even as rapidly as the prophets themselves hoped. Between promise and fulfilment the *law* must intervene, as the strict schoolmaster of the immature, till the time of freedom in Christ was come, as Paul has clearly recognised in his profound philosophy of history. If the *spirit* of the prophetic religion, its ethical Monotheism, was to become the fixed inalienable possession of a whole community of people, it was necessary that it should embody itself in the sensible forms of a positive law regulating the whole life. For the first time this took place in the law-book published under Josiah, which has been preserved to us in Deuteronomy. This remarkable work, which arose under the immediate influence of prophetism (perhaps under that of Jeremiah), is, however, not a law-book proper, but a text-book for the people, a "catechism of religion and morality from the school of the prophets," as it has been strikingly called (Reuss). As love to God with the whole heart as the principle and kernel of all piety is put over the whole (Deut. vi. 4 f.), so likewise does the moral predominate throughout in detail over the ritual. The civil laws are distinguished by a truly humane spirit. Beneficence, mildness, justice, honesty, and

other social virtues, upon which the wellbeing of society rests, are brought home to the understanding and conscience as the content of the divine will, which comes to man not as arbitrary statute, but finds a natural response in his own moral consciousness. "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. xxx. 11-14). On the other hand, an entirely different position appears in the *priestly law-book*, which was published and brought into vogue two centuries later by the priestly scribe Ezra, who also took part in its composition, and which forms the main contents of the four first books of the Pentateuch. Here the religion of the prophets is narrowed and petrified in ceremonial Ritualism and priestly Hierarchism. To the priestly law, cleanness of skin and of vessels is more important than the cleanness of heart which the prophets demanded; to it, expiations by lustration and sacrifice are more important than the atonement of repentance and conversion. The moral act of blotting out guilt as a process in the heart is turned into an external cere-

monial act, whose sacramental power rests partly upon the correct performance of the prescribed forms, and partly upon the higher consecration of the officiating priests. These now obtained the exclusive right to enter the sanctuary and offer the sacrifices; they became the official mediators between God and the community, expounders and executors of His will, whose sacramental performance effects the purity of the community, and guarantees the grace of God.

It is clear that this *Jewish religion of law* founded by Ezra stands far behind the ideal of the prophetic piety and morality. It happened here as is usual in all great reforms, especially religious reforms. In order to introduce the ideal into the reality of the life of the people, a compromise had necessarily to be entered into with the traditional national religion, that worship of the "weak and beggarly elements" (as Paul designated the ceremonial law), and with this much of its purity naturally was lost. If the fundamental thought of the prophets, the worship of Jehovah as the only true God, had indeed attained in the Jewish community since the Exile to full and no longer disputed victory, yet this victory was purchased by such weighty concessions to the religious naturalism that one might almost raise the question whether in this course of things in Judaism the spirit of the prophets does not appear as the conquered rather than as the conqueror. So much at all events is certain, that those

violent protests against the seeming piety of the ceremonies, as we find them so numerous in the prophets, are not to be found again, or at least are only found in rare and deeply faded copies, in the whole time from the Exile down to Jesus, the fulfiller of prophecy. This was the wholly natural consequence of the fact that the priestly law-book had put the sacrificial and Temple worship under the ægis of the old venerable revelation of Moses—a fiction of which a Jeremiah has as yet no presentiment, according to chap. vii. 22 f. Thereby the ceremonialism was combined in such solidarity with the belief in Jehovah that it became very difficult for the pious members of the community, and already a rare degree of insight and courage in the cause of truth was required to exercise upon it such a free criticism as the prophets had done, and as, later, Jesus did again. It is therefore not to be denied that the priestly legislation of Israel laid the basis for that “service of the letter,” that carnal trust in the value of external exercises, that subtle casuistry which makes the little great and the great little, that proud exclusivism and contempt of everything not Judaic, which were the conspicuous features of the Pharisaic Judaism in the time of Jesus and Paul.

Nevertheless, it would be a great error to suppose that the period of Judaism founded by Ezra was only a time of the petrifying and degeneracy of the prophetic

religion. Under the lignified bark there still always circulated the sap and the power of true belief in God, which concealed in its germ a future rich in development. While in Jerusalem indeed, as the city of priests and Levites, the sensuous pomp of the Temple and sacrificial worship, in which the prophets had had so little delight, continued to go on with universal satisfaction, there arose at the same time in the Synagogues a new spiritual form of worship, in which we recognise the type and the germ of the Christian Church. Here the place of sacrifices and priests was taken by the public reading and edifying explanation of the law of the prophets, in which every Israelite according to his capabilities could take part as a hearer or speaker. In these assemblies, in which all other interests, and especially political interests, completely receded behind the earnest contemplation of the Sacred Scriptures and the consideration of the highest questions of human life which sought their solution from these Scriptures, religion became purely as such a personal concern of the individual. The individual religious feeling and thinking, which in earlier times had been proper only to the most eminent men of God, became universalised through the Synagogue. Thus, under the protection of the legal institutions of Judaism, the soil was already quietly prepared for the religion of the worship of God in spirit and in truth.

Out of the worship of the synagogue there sprang two new forms of religious literature, both of which became as significant as the law and the prophets for the final development of the religion of Judaism and of humanity, although they have never been equalised in value with these two by the Jewish theology—I mean the Psalms, and the didactic writings, which may be designated as the Jewish moral philosophy and philosophy of religion. The Psalms sprang, as is self-evident, not from King David, whose historical character had not the slightest in common with the pious singer of the Jewish legend—that is to say, of the Chronicles. Rather are they for the most part a product of the religious mood which was awakened and nourished by the Synagogue, and thus they also served the purpose of edifying the community in the worship of the Synagogue. The religious and poetic value of these songs is indeed very different, but of the majority of them it may certainly be said that a deep piety, nourished on the faith in God of the prophets, has given itself a purely human expression in them, which for that very reason has so powerfully and sympathetically laid hold of the feeling even of Christendom at all times. What gives the Psalms, even more than the prophets, their value as classical devotional writings for all times and peoples is just the withdrawal, and partly the total absence, of the national theocratic point of view: cares about the fates of peoples and the future ideals of universal history lay far from the

Psalm-poet of the Persian and Greek age; to him the place of the secular state was taken indeed by the religious community. This was certainly a one-sidedness, a narrowing of the spiritual horizon, but it was also the condition of an unparalleled religious concentration. Turned away from the variegated play of the world, the pious man now remained alone with his God, and out of the depths of the soul, which became tremblingly aware of the distance from its holy ideal, there arose a wrestling and struggling, a longing and hoping, of a newer and higher kind, with deeper pains, and more blissful refreshment, than the world of external appearance had ever known. Was not this already a Christianity before Christ? The prayer of the Psalmist (lxxiii.)—"Lord, if I have only Thee, there is none in heaven or earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever"—does it not breathe an idealism before which we Christians may well feel ashamed? True indeed! Only we ought not at the same time to forget the reverse side. Out of the sanctuary of this mysticism, as alienated from the world, no path led to human society: the soul, immersed in the seeking and finding of its God, and forgetting heaven and earth in its doing so, may attain the highest for itself, yet for the world it remains unfruitful; its struggles and victories remain its own experience, but do not become the common good of

humanity ; its lamentation and exultation remain a solitary monologue, and find no echo in the chorus of the pious community. Hence the piety of the Psalms could indeed prepare many hearts for the glad tidings of the coming of the kingdom of God, but it could not bring these tidings themselves ; their deep inwardness lacked practical energy, it wanted the social initiative of the prophets. It was not until the spirit of the prophets awoke anew and united itself with the inward heart-religion of the Psalms, that the time was fulfilled for the Gospel of the coming of the kingdom.

Contemporaneously with the poetry of the Psalms arose that didactic literature of Judaism which is comprehended under the name of the " Books of Wisdom " (moral and religious philosophy). What distinguishes these writings from the Psalms and prophets is the absence of religious warmth and enthusiasm. There reigns in them a cold intellectual reflection, which not seldom shows a touch of scepticism. The idea of God now became indeed purer, but also more abstract, than in the prophets. Anthropomorphisms are avoided, and where they are found in the Sacred Scripture they are interpreted in another manner by the scribes ; but at the same time God is put into an abstract remoteness away above the world, so that there opens up a gulf between Him and mankind which cannot be filled. There is found little in the Wisdom-Books of an experience of His living



revelation, such as meets us everywhere in the prophets and Psalms. In the theology of the Synagogue the law, the holy Thora, stepped more and more into the place of God. The law appears as the true absolute, as the power that governs the world, and as the final end of all existence, which even God Himself, as its executing instrument, has to serve. We meet not seldom in the history of religion with this absorption and substitution of the living revelation of God by a dead writing, but it is always the sign that the spirit which makes alive has passed away from a Church or a theology. With the Deistic severance of God from the world in the Jewish theology there is further connected, as coherent with it, the striving to fill up the gulf by intermediate beings. Hence the Angels now obtained an important part in the government of the world, of which the prophets had yet known nothing. Besides, such abstract conceptions as "Word of God," "Wisdom of God," which in earlier times had been only personified occasionally in poetical metaphor, were now begun to be represented as independent beings, mediators, and instruments of the divine working. In Proverbs (viii. 22 ff.) Wisdom is introduced discoursing. She says of herself that God had prepared her as the beginning of His creating before all His works, that when He settled the heavens and the earth she had been at His side as artist, had played at all times before Him, and

had had her delights with the sons of men. If it is already difficult here to think of a mere improper personification, this becomes completely impossible in the "Book of the Wisdom of Solomon," which was written by an Alexandrian Jew of the century before Christ. Here (vii. 22 ff.) Wisdom is described as the "maker of all things," in whom there is a holy all-knowing, all-powerful, fine pure spirit that penetrates all and orders all. It is called "a breath of the power of God, an emanation of His glory, a gleam of the eternal light, a mirror of the activity and an image of the goodness of God. Itself unchanged, it renews all things, and, passing from generation to generation into holy souls, it prepares friends of God and prophets." This passage is worthy of notice in a twofold respect: first, because it enables us distinctly to recognise the influence of the *Stoic philosophy*, which describes the Logos indwelling in the world with exactly the same predicates, as a principle at once spiritual and also half-material; and secondly, because it has been employed by the Epistle to the Hebrews, which (i. 3) describes with the same predicates the divine nature of Christ as mediating the creation and preservation of the world. In this Alexandrian Book of Wisdom we therefore see the Jewish theology combining with the Greek philosophy, and out of this mixture we see that Hellenic speculation proceeding which became of such far-reaching significance for

the development of Christian dogma. The Logos doctrine of the Alexandrian Philo, to which the Gospel of John attaches, is only a further carrying out of the same Jewish-Greek philosophy of religion, the beginnings of which are presented in the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon. As the prophets and Psalms prepared the religious substance of the Christian revelation, the Jewish theology and Alexandrian philosophy of religion prepared the dogmatic *forms* in which that substance was to be stamped and coined in due time.

A main theme of all religious reflection in the age from the Exile down to Christ turned upon the question of the *Theodicy*—namely, how the ill fortune of the pious man and the good fortune of the godless man are to be harmonised with the world-government of the just God. This question had as yet given little concern to the older Hebraism, because it did not yet reflect specially upon the fates of individuals, who appeared in the solidarity of their unity with the whole to share only its weal and woe; but in the faring of the people as a whole it was not difficult to find the ruling of the divine justice. It became otherwise from the time when the religious and moral consciousness had begun to individualise itself, when the pious individual felt himself standing in a personal relationship to God, and when the conscience, become conscious of itself, recognised more deeply the self-responsibility of every in-

dividual for his own conduct, and consequently also raised the intransferableness of guilt and desert from one person to another to the position of a postulate. This individual accountability we find for the first time decidedly expressed in Jeremiah: in the future time of salvation, as he hopes (xxxi. 29 f.), "They shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge," but every one shall die *for his own transgression*. And Ezekiel has again taken up this thought, and carried it out in greater detail: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon *him*, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon *him*" (xviii. 20 ff.) Certainly a principle of incontestable truth in the sphere of the civil order and law; but if a demand on the divine government of the world is founded on it, there cannot fail to arise personal conflicts between this ideal postulate and the facts of real experience. This contradiction of reality and the postulate of just individual retribution was the difficult riddle, the solution of which was attempted for centuries by the religious thinking of Judaism. The most magnificent endeavour to solve this question was made by the unknown author of the Book of Job, which certainly belongs to the time after the Exile. He represents the pious Job as fallen into grievous misfortune; and then his friends

come with their customary attempts at explanation. They assume that all suffering is a just retribution for the sins of the sufferer, and consequently he who has severe suffering must also have peculiarly heavy guilt; and hence they suggest that in the case of Job, too, hidden guilt was the ground of his suffering. But Job protests against this with the full confidence of the good conscience which is conscious of no grievous guilt, and he obtains the satisfaction that God Himself takes his side and rejects the suspicions of the friends. Thereby the customary explanation of the sufferings of the just is refuted, but the author has not succeeded in putting a more satisfying explanation in its place. The poetical close of his didactic poem comes to this, that the ways of God are unfathomable, and resignation is the only thing which is becoming to weak man. The narrative conclusion, however, represents Job as having at last obtained compensation for all his losses, and the sufferings he has borne are made up for by redoubled prosperity. With this result the author falls back again upon the old standpoint of the common doctrine of retribution, the contradiction of which with everyday experience evokes the problem of a Theodicy. He therefore gives in the closing narrative an only apparent solution, which, however, in truth only pushes the problem back and disguises it, while in the poetical conclusion he directly renounces any solution.

The theory of retribution is also elsewhere in the

Psalms and Wisdom - Books often replaced by the deeper view that the suffering of the just man is destined to try and to purify his virtue. But along with this it is always maintained that the disciplinary suffering will yet take a happy issue before the end of the earthly life, and that the probation that has been undergone is rewarded by so much the greater happiness. Thus the Psalmist says (cxviii. 16 ff.): "The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore; but He hath not given me over unto death." And in the Book of Tobias it is said (iii. 22): "Whoever serves God is comforted after the trial, and redeemed from affliction, and after the chastisement he finds grace." But what if this expectation never arrives? If experience shows that misfortune many a time follows the just man till his death, and that good fortune remains faithful to the godless man up to the last? Is one then to comfort one's self mayhap by holding with Jesus Sirach (xi. 26 ff.) that it is easy for God to reward a man according to his conduct even on the day of his death; that *one* bad hour makes any one forget the prosperity of life, and, as at the end of the man's life his deeds are discovered, we are therefore not to judge any one to be happy before his death? Such a far-sought ground of consolation will hardly suffice to carry the doubter over the disharmony be-

tween moral postulate and reality. It is easy to understand that out of such reflections, especially when influences of Greek philosophy came in to join them, there arose that pessimistic scepticism which we meet in Ecclesiastes. Here the idealism of the religion of the prophets has sunk to the freezing-point. What is worthy of note is not that the author does not know an ideal beyond the present world—for neither had the prophets any such ideal—but it is that he knows no ideal at all, no universal ends of abiding value which give the life of the individual content and significance. Like the Epicureans, he estimates the world from the standpoint of individual Eudæmonism, and on it he naturally finds that “all is vanity,” because all have one and the same fate, the just and the wicked, the good and pure as well as the impure and sinful—nay, at last the man as well as the beast (ix. 2 f. ; iii. 19). This pessimism was then, as it is again to-day, the quite natural result of a view of the world which knows nothing higher than the satisfaction of the selfish desire of happiness in the individual. If this view had spread more widely, as could not have been avoided in connection with the advancing Hellenising of the Jews under the Syrian rule, neither could the belief in God, to which the author of Ecclesiastes still held, successfully resist the universal scepticism ; for a belief in God which is only the postulate of the natural desire of happiness has too

weak a foundation for it to hold out permanently in the conflict with reality and to survive the disappointments of experience.

That this threatening issue of the religion of Israel was averted, that the inheritance of the prophets was preserved to the Jewish people and to humanity—for this the involuntary instrument in the hand of Providence was the arrogance of King Antiochus Epiphanes, who, by his attempt at violent suppression of the Jewish religion, awakened the national and religious feelings of the ill-used Jews out of their slumber. In the heroic rising of the wars of the Maccabees the Jews saved their religion, and even won their political freedom once again for a short time. From this uprising of the national consciousness proceeded that later blossoming of prophetism which it is customary to designate as "Apocalyptic." Its first and most significant work is the Book of Daniel, whose content forms a philosophy of history from the Jewish theocratic standpoint, which is put into the mouth of a legendary saint of the earlier time in the form of a vision. Founding on the prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah of the seventy years of the period of probation, the Apocalypticist makes out of these seventy years seventy weeks of years, and represents their redemptive turning-point to be immediately at hand, even in his own day, in the time of the Maccabean war. He sees in the Macedonian monarchy the last of the four heathen



empires advancing to its end, following immediately upon which the eternal government of the world by the "Saints"—that is, the Jews—is to begin, and the history of the world is to find its close. With this, the hope of a future time of salvation for the Jewish people, the "Messianic prophecy" which had long withdrawn into the background, was again brought to the front, but at the same time heightened and intensified in the direction of the supernatural, the miraculous, and the world to come. This new turn of the Jewish hope of the future, which was extremely significant for the whole further religious history, shows itself above all in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, of some to eternal life and of others to eternal horror, which appears for the first time in Daniel (xii. 2 f. ; xiii.) The attempt has been made to carry back the origin of this doctrine to Parseism, the influence of which in the Book of Daniel can certainly not be mistaken. But Renan rightly remarks—

"The belief in the resurrection arises so logically out of the development of the Jewish ideas, that it is quite superfluous to seek a foreign origin for it. The martyr was the true creator of the belief in a second life; only in reference to the martyrs did Daniel recognise the necessity of the resurrection. The date of this belief may therefore be exactly determined. Jesus Sirach's son, who wrote a few years before the crisis evoked by Antiochus, had still had no idea of it. One cannot form too high an idea of the fruitfulness of those melancholy times when Antiochus played by anticipa-

tion the part of Nero, and even while persecuting religion, confirmed and sealed it. Nothing arises otherwise than through crises; it is only under the pressure of necessity that that is developed which was formerly latent and potential. Messianism, Apocalypticism, hitherto kept back in its development, now enters with gigantic steps into the field. Christianity, in particular, has its foundation here.”<sup>1</sup>

The Apocalypse of Daniel also became the standard for the future idea of the person and descent of the Messiah. In a vision of the night Daniel sees a form “as of a Son of Man,” being brought upon the clouds of heaven before God, in order to receive dominion and a kingdom that was to last for ever, that all peoples and nations and tongues might serve Him (vii. 13 f.) As this same dominion and power over all kingdoms under heaven is afterwards given to the people of the Saints—*i.e.*, to the Jewish people (vii. 27)—it has been supposed that the heavenly form of a Son of Man was to be the personification of the Jewish people, which, besides, would not exclude from the Apocalyptic mode of representation the view that He was thought of at the same time as a real being of a superterrestrial kind, like the guardian angels or genii of the other peoples (x. 13 ff.) However that may be, at all events this vision in Daniel of the heavenly Son of Man had been early interpreted as referring to the Messiah, and it gave occasion to the view that ascribed to the

<sup>1</sup> Histoire du peuple d’Israel, t. iv., 1893, p. 325 f.

Messiah a supernatural origin from a heavenly pre-existence, which, although not universally received, was yet held in circles with definite Apocalyptic ideas (Enoch, for example)—a representation which became of the greatest importance for the Christian belief in the Messiah Jesus.

Generally speaking, the significance of the national religious rising of the Maccabees lay in this, that it gave the impulse to the revival of the old prophetic ideal of a coming kingdom of God, of righteousness and happiness, which would have its centre in the Jewish people, and rule from it also over the other peoples. This idea continued from that time in the religious consciousness of Judaism to be the stirring ferment out of which proceeded not only the purest enthusiasm but also the darkest fanaticism, according as the spiritual kernel or the worldly shell of that idea was the deciding element. The bearers of the Messianic hope were pre-eminently the *Pharisees*—that puritanical theocratic national party, who had already under the Syrian dominion formed the very soul of the resistance to the threatening Hellenising of the people, who had followed the Maccabean hero to conflict and victory, but had then turned away distrustfully and defiantly from the princes of that race as soon as their politics no longer corresponded to their principles of zeal for the law and enmity to the heathen. The Pharisees were not hypocrites in the

common sense of the term: they were in full earnest with their zealous piety, yet they had "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," as Paul judged; they held convulsively to the letter of the law, and in doing so forgot its spirit; they made the little great and the great little, they asked for miracles and signs, expected catastrophes from heaven, and at the same time overlooked the signs of the time, the prognostications of a new spirit which was already silently active, and was pressing on to a crisis. Hence Jesus called them "blind leaders of the blind," who led their people religiously and politically astray, and on to destruction. But the Sadducees, the opponents of the Pharisees, were not one whit better. This priestly aristocracy wanted heart for the people and for what moved their souls, for their faith and hope. Their accommodation to foreigners sprang not merely from political prudence, but also from a sympathy with heathen culture, which appeared to the rigid Jew as a falling away from the faith of the fathers, and their emancipation from the petty scholastic casuistry often degenerated into a libertinism which set itself above all morality with a frivolousness which was doubly offensive in those who held the holy priestly office.

Along with the parties of the Pharisees and Sadducees stood the sect of the Essenes, holding a position apart, and organised into a regular order. We possess no very reliable information concerning their

origin. In particular, opinions are still always divided as to whether this sect had a purely Jewish character, and are explicable from a rigoristic striving after purity and from an aversion to the world arising from weariness of life; or whether they are to be explained from Grecian influences, and were an imitation of the Neo-Pythagorean brotherhood. However that may be, thus much is at all events certain, that the Essenes, by their indifference to the Jewish Temple worship, by their rigidly ascetic principles, by the value they laid upon the passive virtues of humility, sufficiency, patience, and mercy, and by their interest in the spiritual world, come into near contact with Christianity. But the Gospel which subdued the world did not proceed from this circle of a paltry, narrow, and world-alienated piety, but out of a soul that was free from the compulsion of forms, and strong in the impulse of love—the soul of Jesus of Nazareth.

## LECTURE III.

### THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE Jewish religion was a religion of hope and promise: in contrast to the unsatisfying reality, its seers set forth the Ideals of a future time of salvation in which God was to glorify Himself in His people, and redeem them from all evil. And the sadder the reality took shape at any time, so much the higher did the ideal hope rise. When the Assyrian empire at one time oppressed Judah, prophets like Isaiah and Micah recognised Jehovah as the moral governor of the world who directed the fates of the nations. When the Babylonian empire broke the Jewish state to pieces, Jeremiah saw, rising on the far horizon, the time of a new government when God's law would be written in men's hearts. When under the oppression of the Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, the further existence of the Jewish religion was threatened, the prophetic thought of the kingdom woke out of long slumber, and rose in

Daniel's Apocalypse to the vision of a kingdom of the Saints under a wonderful Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven. After flourishing for a short time, the government of the Asmoneans had again passed away; and the Jewish people, instead of attaining to the universal dominion they had hoped, had been actually subdued under the Roman rule. This, the deepest humiliation of the people of God, had roused the national and religious feeling of the pious Jews in the deepest way, and had heightened their hope for the redemption of Israel out of the hand of their enemies to spasmodic intensity. The rising of Judas the Galilean was an outbreak of this excited feeling, and it had ended with his own destruction and that of his followers. Yet the tragic end of this pretended Messiah could not quench the Messianic hopes of the people: they flamed up strongly anew when from the wilderness of Judea there sounded the call of John the Baptist, "Repent; the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Notwithstanding the silence of Josephus, there can be no doubt regarding the Messianic background of this preaching of repentance. If John did not himself claim to be the Messiah, yet he meant to prepare the way—that is, to prepare the people for the immediately-to-be-expected appearance of the Messianic day of judgment, that introduction of the kingdom of the Messiah. That it was the Messianic hopes which drove the crowds of people to the austere preacher in the wilder-

ness was very soon perceived by the government of Herod, and it hastened to remove out of the way a prophet who was dangerous for its own safety.

What John the Baptist had begun, was continued in another way and with another result by Jesus of Nazareth. He had been among those who, moved by the proclamation of the near kingdom of God, had hurried to John and had become consecrated by baptism for the reception of this kingdom. After the imprisonment of the Baptist, Jesus continued his preaching, and, in fact, as the Gospels relate, with the same words, "Repent; the kingdom of God is at hand." There is nothing that would justify us in holding the view that Jesus had from the beginning already connected another sense with these words than the Baptist and the rest of the people. Rather is it extremely probable, because he does not find it necessary to explain the idea, that Jesus understood the conception of the kingdom of God exactly in the same sense as all others before him did, namely, in the Apocalyptic sense of a redemption of the oppressed people and a renovation of all things on earth brought about by divine Omnipotence. \*And yet the appearing and working of Jesus was from the beginning entirely different from that of the Baptist. John was a severe preacher of repentance according to the manner of Elijah and Ezekiel; preaching the approach of the kingdom was in his mouth a threatening of judgment



which was meant to convulse and to humble sinners. In the mouth of Jesus that preaching became "glad tidings" for the consolation of the mourners and the raising up of those who were bowed down. In what did the ground of this difference lie?

We shall have to seek it only in the religious personality of Jesus himself. It was not the zealous spirit of an Elijah that lived in him, but the spirit of childlike trust in God and inward love to God, as it is expressed in many passages of Jeremiah and of the second Isaiah, and especially in many of the Psalms. That utterance of the mystic religion of the heart: "If I have only Thee, I ask nothing from heaven and earth," had found its echo in the pious soul of Jesus; and therefore God was not to him, as to the theologians of the Jewish schools, a far-off unapproachable power, not a severe terrible judge, but the "Father" with whom he knew himself to be connected in the most inward and confidential way, whom he trusted unconditionally, and whom he loved above all things. But this feeling of childlike piety in the case of Jesus was not the sacred thing of a solitary heart shut to the world and closing itself against it, nor such as would have made him indifferent to men's weal and woe, but it was combined in him with a merciful love of men which impelled him to communicate his pious belief and hope, and to make them a comfort and source of salvation for many. This trait particularly distin-

guishes the character of Jesus from the other forms of Jewish piety, which on the one hand drew back timidly and anxiously from the defiling contact of the sinful world, and on the other hand, by its loveless judging and condemning, repelled the weak and helpless and made them still more wretched. Not such was the manner of Jesus. He was *grieved* for the poor people in whom he beheld not outcast sinners but a scattered and bruised flock that needed leading and healing, and which he felt himself called to take into his charge and to help. Nor did he fear to defile his piety by contact with the sinful world; on the contrary, he trusted the impulse of holy love which lived in his heart and its power of overcoming evil by good. He relied immovably on the world-overcoming power of the good; for he believed in the living God, and felt himself secure in the guardianship of his heavenly Father. Between the inward love of God which raised him above the world of the bad and drew him to the heart of the heavenly redeeming God, and the pitying love of men which drove him to the redemption of his poor sinful brethren upon earth, there was in Jesus no discordance, but entire oneness. *The religious and the moral motives stood in his case in the purest harmony and in the most fruitful reciprocity.*

Because he felt himself united with God as intimately as the child is with his father, he could not, like the Rabbis, think of God as the judge of the future who

was removed to a far distance in the other world, and who had abandoned the present world in the meantime to Satan. But God became to him again, as He had been to the old prophets, the living and omnipresent One who fills heaven and earth with His power and His spirit, who rules in nature as the all-good provider for all His creatures, who feeds the birds under the heavens and clothes the lilies of the field, but who cares still more as a Father for men who, as His children, stand so near His heart that He numbers the hairs of their head, that He knows all their wants before they ask Him, that He sends down rain and sunshine on the just and on the unjust, without distinction, in His inexhaustible goodness. Yet to those who pray trustfully to Him He grants wonderful hearing of their prayers; and He will give them as the highest of His good gifts the Holy Spirit, that power of overcoming the world, that pledge of eternal life. But if God is thus the One who lovingly reveals Himself in the world, the Father who guides nature for men and who educates men for the eternal life of the kingdom of God, then the pious man cannot wish to serve Him by turning away from the world which still is, or is to be, the sphere of the government or kingdom of God; nor can he honour God by indifference towards men who still are, or are yet to become, God's children. Thus inmost piety or surrender to God becomes here the motive not of Essene flight from the world, or Stoical

apathy, or Indian resignation, or renunciation of the world, but of heartfelt brotherly love, of labour for the kingdom of God, of service for the human community.

But, on the other hand, in the view of Jesus the moral life was at the same time not a thing existing for itself; it was no mere natural and worldly striving after happiness and culture, but it had the root of its power and purity in religious faith. His merciful brotherly love was not a sentimental compassion which is roused to momentary feeling by the painful aspect of the distress of others, but which notwithstanding soon again flickers away and grows weary before the difficulties of everyday reality. Nor was it optimistic enthusiasm for the universal good and happiness of humanity, a visionary philanthropism which closes the eyes before the dark depths and shadows of human nature, only to become sobered by gradual undeception and to end in cold embitterment and hopeless despondency. Jesus was not such a fanatic: his knowledge of man was too clear and sober, and his conscience too earnest and strict, for him to become such a visionary. By comparing men as they actually are with the Ideal of the perfect God as it gleamed in his heart, he came to the universal judgment that men are "evil," that out of their hearts proceed evil thoughts, that even their better inclinations are always again choked by the tares of the lust and care of this world; nay, that even the best among them "savour not of the things that be

of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. xvi. 23), and that from the fear and desire of pleasing men, from considerations of ambition and pride, they are always again drawn away from their divine destination and kept under the ban of vanity, of the world, and of mammon. And yet, with all this sober knowledge of men, what pitying human love, what joyous faith in the possibility of the salvation and redemption of those who are sunk and lost in sin and the pleasures of the world! How would such have been possible, if this trusting love of men had not had its root in trusting love to God, the Father of all spirits? The eye of Jesus did not, like that of the realistic man of the world, keep itself fixed on the distorted features of man as he appears; he saw deeper and more radically. He viewed man in the depths of his soul, and recognised in its most hidden essence that image of God which was not to be entirely obliterated by any diseased state: he recognised the germ of the child of God, that spiritual impulse which springs from the Father of spirits and strives back to Him, and which, however much it may be fettered by the bonds of the flesh and of the world, yet always lives and struggles after redemption, and yearns for light and life and freedom. Therefore was he driven by a divine power of love and faith to become a leader to those who had strayed, a deliverer to those who were in prison, a physician to the sick, and a shepherd to the scattered flock. That life united with

God and blessed in God which he bore in himself, he would not keep as a spoil for himself alone; but he wished to communicate it to his unhappy brethren in order that they also might become what they were all destined and made capable of becoming—namely, sons and daughters of the heavenly Father, as he already actually was, as “the first-born among many brethren.” And just because Jesus was already in his conscious personal life what was yet present only as germ and capacity in all others, as a divining and yearning hope and desire, therefore did he know himself, as no other did, to be capacitated and called to bring to birth and to realise the divine spiritual life still bound up in his brethren and become a Saviour to the sick, an awakener to the dead, a redeemer to the captives.

But with this the task taken up by Jesus had become quite different from what it had been for the Baptist. However he might share with John the idea of the near kingdom of God, yet for him it was no longer enough merely to fling the summons to repentance as a ferment among the masses of the people, and then, away from the world in the solitude of the desert, to wait for whatever issues of things were yet to come. His task was rather to begin the work of saving and educating love in the individual, and to carry it out in constant patience and gentleness. The Spirit led him out of the wilderness back into the towns and villages of Galilee, in order to go after men in the schools and

lanes and houses, so as to seek and to save those that were lost, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the mourners, to forgive the penitent, to heal the sick, and to call those who were ready and willing to receive him to become his followers, and enter into lasting fellowship with him. Thus was fulfilled to him the prophecy of Isaiah (xlii. 1 ff.; Matt. xii. 17 ff.) of the elect servant of God, the teacher of the people, anointed with the spirit, who should not cry nor lift up his voice, nor quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed, till he should have brought forth judgment (the decisive struggle) unto victory. In this consisted what was specifically new in the work of Jesus, what essentially distinguished him not merely from John the Baptist but also from all earlier prophets and placed him high above them—namely, that he not merely foretold the coming of the kingdom of God as a future event, and awaited it inactively as a divine dispensation accomplished apart from all human co-operation, but that he made its realisation a task for human work, which might be designated with *one* word, as *the work of the religious-moral education of man*. Thereby he has become the founder and head not merely of a new religion, but of a new spiritual world, whose abiding task for all time may be summed up in one word—namely, to educate natural men to be “men of God,” to train the children of the earth to become citizens of the kingdom of God.

Was this work of educating love, as Jesus knew and exercised it from the beginning as His calling, then in reality merely a *preparation* of the future kingdom of God? was it not rather already the *beginning* of the actually existing kingdom of God itself? Certainly we may answer this question from our standpoint decidedly in the affirmative; for what else is the kingdom of God but just a community in which the spirit of divine Sonship is active in educating men to be men of God? But the question is not so simple in its bearing in so far as it has to do with the consciousness of Jesus himself. For not only is there nothing to entitle us to assume that Jesus connected with the idea of the kingdom of God from the outset another sense than the Baptist and the people, but we also find narrated, as from the latter period of his activity, a series of expressions in which the coming of the kingdom appears as a future thing, and as a new ordering of things, which is to be effectuated with wonderful catastrophes. I remind you of the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come"; of the prophecy, "There be some that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark ix. 1); of the promise to the twelve that at the renovation of the world "they would sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel," and the saying that the pious should sit down with the Patriarchs in the kingdom in the future; of the parting words at the



Last Supper, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come" (Luke xxii. 18, 29 f.); and, finally, of the question of the disciples to their departing Lord, "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" (Acts i. 6). On this point Keim has, as I believe, rightly observed: "Against the total impression awakened by these facts the objection cannot be raised that Jesus only spoke in images, nor even that the disciples corrupted His utterances by giving them a sensuous meaning. For Jesus was so wise that He would not have spoken in figures which set all the national wishes and passions in motion, if He actually rather wished the opposite, . . . and the Gospels are not so unworthy of credit that they should have turned the activity of Jesus into the very opposite of what it was; for with such a view the history of Jesus ceases entirely to be history."<sup>1</sup> But just as little can it be contested that there are other passages opposed to those which have just been quoted, in which the actual presence of the kingdom appears to be expressed. In this connection it is usual to think, first of all, of the well-known passage, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke xvii. 20 f.) Yet I hesitate to give specially to this passage a decisive importance, as it stands in such striking contradiction with the immedi-

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte Jesu von Nazara, ii. 48.

ately following description of the appearing of the Son of Man as coming with the swiftness of a flash of lightning, that we may doubt of its being original. Incontestable, on the other hand, are the Parables in which the kingdom of God is compared with the gradually developing seed-corn, with the mustard-seed growing up to a tree, with the leaven permeating the meal, with the hidden treasure and the pearl into the possession of which the happy finder is immediately put; and we have further to remember the judgment pronounced upon the Baptist, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." "There is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke xvi. 16, vii. 28; Matt. xi. 11 ff.) Here unquestionably John is designated as the turning-point between the old and new age of the world, and because he still belongs to the old, as being in principle inferior to the adherents of the kingdom of God—that is, to the disciples of Jesus; from which it follows that those disciples are already in possession of the kingdom of God, and that kingdom is therefore already present in their community. With this is to be compared the answer which Jesus gave to the question of the Baptist, whether he was the one who was to come; the expected redeemer of Israel? "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, and to the poor the Gospel is preached. And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Luke vii. 22). Accordingly, from the actual results of the work of Jesus, from his power to heal and mitigate spiritual and bodily disease and distress, the Baptist is to give himself the answer to his own question. We are also able to infer from this by what way Jesus Himself may have attained to the conviction of the presence of the kingdom of God as already begun. And a definite confirmation of this view is contained in the saying with which Jesus defended Himself against the accusation of the Pharisees, that he cast out devils by Beelzebub: "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Matt. xii. 28).

In order to measure the range and reach of this saying, we have to remember that Jesus shared the idea of his time and his people, according to which the diseases of men were to be regarded as effects of the work of devils, and therefore signs of the dominion of their head—namely, Satan—over the present age of the world. According to the universal expectation, the coming of the kingdom of God was to consist essentially just in this, that God would again take actively into His own hand the government of the world, which had been to a certain degree suspended at the time and given over to Satan; that He would overcome Satan's

dominion with superior power, and liberate His people from all the bonds in which Satan still held them captive through his many instruments. Under this idea the other Jews thought of liberation from the political dominion of the Romans, in whose empire the Pharisees beheld very especially the embodiment of the universal dominion of Satan; and consequently *they* thought of the coming of the kingdom of God as such a manifestation of the divine Omnipotence whereby the political condition of the world would be completely overturned, and the Jews who were enslaved at the time would be raised to be lords over the heathen kingdom of the Romans. Wholly different was the trend of the thought of Jesus. The political ideals of the future of Judea had indeed lain pretty far from this son of the poor Galilean people even from the beginning; but they passed the more completely into the background of his view, the more his passionate soul was moved by the immediate distress in the circumstances of the masses of the people, who were economically and physically, as well as morally and religiously, ruined and wasted, and the more his attention was concentrated on a remedy for this *social* distress which would have to begin in the individuals. What we recognised above as the specifically new in the work of Jesus—namely, that he perceived his task to lie in the work of saving and educating love exerted on individuals—it was precisely this that led him also to the decisive new

turn in his apprehension of the coming of the kingdom of God. To him, too, this coming consisted in an overcoming of the universal dominion of Satan by the superior power of God, but for the Saviour of the labouring and heavy laden the *theatre* of this conflict changed its place: he did not seek it (at least he did not seek it any longer primarily) in the great world and in the catastrophes of the fates of nations, but *in the experiences of individual souls*, in the suffering and healing of the sick and poor, the labouring and heavy laden. Now if in these circles, in a manner which was not less surprising and elevating to himself than to the people around him, he was able to experience what a wonderful power to heal and to animate his word exercised upon the souls and bodies of the unhappy of every kind, what then was more natural than that in these very wonderful and daily multiplying results of his saving word he should perceive the victorious power of the Spirit of God over the devils, and therefore the beginning of the overthrow of Satan's dominion, and consequently the beginning of the realisation of God's universal dominion in the world? So long as the divine spirit filled only his own inspired soul, he could not yet know the coming of the kingdom of God, the objective universal dominion of this spirit, as begun in the present; but when he saw how the spiritual power which filled himself was also communicated to others by his word, how it kindled

their dead hearts with new glad life, and even liberated the sick bodies from their Satan's bonds and raised them up to new existence,—then, indeed, it became for him a certainty that Satan's dominion was coming to an end, and that God's kingdom had begun to dawn. "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Matt. xii. 28). "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke x. 18).

This new important knowledge, so pregnant with consequences, which had sprung up to himself as a blissful fruit from his working as a Saviour, was now regarded by him as a thing which was also to be communicated to others, and first of all to the narrower circle of his disciples. Jesus chose for this purpose the form of the *parable*, which revealed "the mystery of the kingdom of God" in a form at once illustrating and veiling it through images of the life of nature. The original form of the parable of Jesus has been preserved to us by Mark (chap. iv.) Immediately after choosing the twelve disciples, as Mark relates, Jesus began to speak many things in parables to the people; but he then also gave the interpretation of them to his disciples, because it was given only to them to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. In three parables, which are distinguished by simplicity and clearness, the nature and growth of this kingdom is illustrated; and all three are taken from

the sphere of the life of nature, from the sowing and growing of the seed. The first of these parables shows the founding of the kingdom by the seed of the word, which, according to the state of the heart, has always a different result,—now bringing forth no fruit at all, now only growing up and passing away, now bringing forth little fruit, and now yielding rich and abiding fruit. The second parable shows from the gradual growth of the seed, as it passes by an inner law through definite stages on to the ripe fruit, the constant development of the kingdom of God advancing from within outwards on to the completion of its earthly realisation—namely, the “harvest” as the conclusion of its process of development. Finally, the third parable, by the figure of the mustard-seed, describes the result, magnificent beyond expectation, which is reached at the end of the development, of the embracing greatness of the kingdom in its completion as it has grown out of small beginnings. A related, and yet again a specifically coloured, thought is contained in the parable of the leaven, which is placed in Luke and Matthew along with that of the mustard-seed, according to which the kingdom of God is apprehended as a spiritual principle eternally permeating and transforming humanity. In this parable, and that of the gradually growing seed—which Mark alone has (iv. 26-29), because its deep meaning was probably soon no longer understood—there is expressed with

truly surprising clearness the great and genuinely modern thought of the "development" of the kingdom of God out of inner germs and forces, and according to inner laws and orders.—But if the divine spirit in humanity realises its essence out of itself like the self-developing seed-corn, and if it assimilates the reality like the leaven, does not this entirely annul and set aside the Apocalyptic idea of an establishment or completion of the kingdom as effected through external miraculous catastrophes? This is a common opinion at the present day, nor is its correctness in itself to be contested from the standpoint of *our* thinking; yet it must be pronounced an erroneous view, if this consequence is attributed to the consciousness of Jesus himself; for it would stand in manifest contradiction with many clear expressions in the Gospels. Besides, it is psychologically quite conceivable, and it is a fact confirmed by innumerable analogies of history, that old deeply-rooted religious notions that are supported by the authority of tradition are not set aside all at once by new ideas, but they continue to exist along with these ideas, while they gradually lose in significance under their influence, or even alter their meaning. So it was in this case too. Although what is essential in the kingdom of God—namely, the victorious activity and dominion of the divine spirit in human souls—has already begun with the new insight, yet the Apocalyptic notion of an impending miracu-



lous and visible appearing of the kingdom of God "with power" (or of the heavenly Son of Man) was by no means done away or shaken for the consciousness of Jesus. One might perhaps say that in his intellectual *conception* of the kingdom of God this side did remain always the main thing, but its significance became different to his practical religious *frame of mind*. This is shown above all by this, that in the delineation of the future given by Jesus, the national political feature of Messianism is completely wanting: the hope of the Jews for a glorious revenge on their oppressors found in the pure and great soul of Jesus no echo at all. What for him has alone importance in the great day of the Lord is, that the moral results of every individual life shall come to manifestation; the faithful servant will enter into the joy of his Lord, the proud and secure sinners will be excluded from the communion of the blessed; the judgment will also bring to complete external accomplishment and to definite manifestation the separation between the wheat and the tares, the good and bad fishes, which is already internally present, and is grounded in the moral nature of individuals. With this view the thought of the future loses the eudæmonistic naturalistic character which it still had in the Apocalyptic Messianism. It is reduced to the purely religious thought of a future realising of moral ideas and worths. Without affecting the sensuous poetic form

of the hope of the future of his people, Jesus, with the immediate tact of the religious genius, put into relief the moral and religious content which was of abiding value. He bridged over the gulf between the present and the future. As the future dominion of God already projects into the present as a victorious working of the spirit, so the present with its moral being and achievement already bears the fates of the future, of the eternal consummation, in its bosom. It is the seed which ripens to the harvest. Thus apprehended, the thought of the future is no longer the fantastic dream of the Apocalyptic writers, which seduces the mind into a quietistic indifference towards the tasks of the Now and Here; but it becomes the powerful motive of moral working on the person of the individual himself and on the world. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning." "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching" (Luke xii. 35-37).

As the preaching by the Baptist of the approaching kingdom of God had awakened in Jesus himself the consciousness of his life-task, that of working educatively on men, so he also again in his preaching made the nearing of the kingdom the motive of his moral demands, which are all summed up in the one, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"—that is, seek for participation in the kingdom of God by

appropriating and practising the God-pleasing sentiment which corresponds to it. But in what does this righteousness which is to be demanded from the associate or member of the kingdom consist? It consists—says Jesus at first, along with the whole of his people—in doing the will of God. “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” Now the Pharisees had imagined that the demand of righteousness was to be satisfied by their resolving the divine will into an innumerable host of individual commands and prohibitions, and by their endeavouring to attain a painful literal observance of it in their outward conduct; but in doing so their heart had always gone further from God, and men had become ever poorer in humility and love, and hence Jesus required from his disciples a “better righteousness.” Not that he had rejected the law of Moses and substituted a new law for it—for, as a faithful son of Israel, he was far from this during the whole of his life; but treading in the footsteps of the prophets, the holy men of God of the early time, he opposed the Idealism of the moral disposition to the ritualism of ecclesiastical merit by works. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” It is not merely the evil deed but even the evil desire that already makes a man condemnable

before God, the searcher of hearts. The perfect God can require from man, His child, nothing less than to be *perfect* as He Himself is perfect. Jesus therefore did not destroy the law, but he fulfilled it by carrying it back to its last and highest end, the absolute Ideal of Godlike perfection. But in this highest requirement there lies at the same time enclosed the highest dignity and the highest happiness of man; for the perfection which we are to strive after is that of our Father, whose nature we bear in us and in whose image we are created. To become like Him means, therefore, only to fulfil our most proper destination, to realise our true nature, to become in full truth that which we already are in the ground of our being—namely, children of God, spirit of His spirit. But the essential nature of God as the Father is love, which communicates itself and is inexhaustibly rich in giving and forgiving. Accordingly the Godlike sentiment required from us can consist in nothing else than in *love to God* with all our heart *and to our neighbour* as to ourselves. Both commandments are undoubtedly already found in the Old Testament, but not connected with each other, and the second is limited to the members of the same people. Jesus abolished this limitation, and extended the commandment to our fellow-men generally; and he brought the two commandments into the closest connection with each other, and set them forth as the sum of the whole law, as the one religious-moral prin-

ciple from which all individual commandments are to receive their moral estimation and significance.

Religion and morality are therefore brought into indissoluble connection by Jesus, and thereby each of them is raised to its Ideal elevation. There is to be no religion in the Christian world that should not be a motive of genuine moral sentiment and mode of action, and no morality which should not have the root of its power and the guarantee of its purity in the consciousness of religious obligation. With this there was first given an entirely new estimation of ritualistic action: this is no longer a service performed to God by which man might acquire merit with God and purchase His favours, as Judaism and Heathenism supposed; but it is the satisfaction of man's need to give expression to his pious sentiment, and hence has worth only in so far as it is the utterance of this inward state. The external ceremonial or ascetic performance by itself alone is worthless ostentation—hypocrisy. Hence ritualistic performances are never to be set before the fulfilment of the simple moral duties, or even put in their place. Jesus said with the words of the prophet Hosea, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," and in the same sense as prophetism he rejects the Pharisaic practice which made the celebration of the Sabbath an end in itself at the cost of the wellbeing of man, or which neglected God's commandment to honour parents in order to honour the temple by sacrifice, or which took anxious

pains for the purity of vessels and of the skin, but did not concern itself although the heart was full of the evil thoughts of pride, lovelessness, vanity, and covetousness, or which made a show of itself by much and long praying while the heart was far from the God whom the lips honoured. On the other hand, Jesus demands that the act of bringing gifts to the altar shall be interrupted when it is a question of becoming reconciled with an injured brother; and he ascribes value to prayer only in so far as it is the intercourse of the soul with its God, far from all external ostentation—the expression of childlike trust in God.

Unlimited trust in the bountiful providence of the heavenly Father, and undivided surrender of the whole self and of all one's property to the service of His kingdom—this it is in which the love to God has to exhibit itself. The trust in God which, as the fundamental mood of the mind of Jesus, runs through all his discourses, especially in the beginning of his Galilean ministry, is the world-overcoming Idealism of the Psalms and Prophets, which soars away above all that is finite directly to God, and knows its own life secure in its Father's will. "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive." This certainly presupposes the disposition which makes the kingdom and the righteousness of God the main concern, and leaves all else, the satisfaction of the many finite wants, to be bestowed by God

as an accessory consequence of the *one* highest good (Matt. vi. 33). The exhortation to trusting in God, in the sense of Jesus, therefore includes at the same time these two things: the requirement of renunciation of all selfish wishes and godless enjoyment of the world, and the assurance of the fulfilment of the true desire that is directed to the highest, along with the satisfaction likewise of the earthly wants that belong to human existence, in so far as they are subordinated to this desire. No thought is to be taken about eating and drinking and clothing as the heathen do, who seek after these things as the highest, and as ends in themselves; but these things are nevertheless not to be denied their relative value on that account. "For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." But while this fundamental thought remains the same through the whole preaching of Jesus, yet a certain change in his mood towards it makes itself observable, in so far as at the outset the careless cheerfulness of childlike trust in God forms the ground tone, whereas later the emphasis falls upon the ascetic *severity* of the requirement of denial of the world and of self. No man can serve two masters, God and Mammon; and hence one has to sell all that he has and give to the poor in order to gather for himself treasures in heaven. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot

be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 33). Men are even to unloose themselves from the bonds of earthly love to their nearest relatives, to renounce natural rights, to bear wrong and shame without resistance, to love their enemies and to bless them that curse them, to pluck out their very members that might become an offence to them—that is, to mortify the natural impulses—and even to hate and lose their own soul for Christ's sake, so that they might save it for the eternal life (Matt. v. 39 ff.; Luke xiv. 26 f.; Mark viii. 34 f.)

It is intelligible that such utterances of Jesus should be made the subject of very different judgments. They contain, in fact, the deepest truth of his religious ethics, together with its temporal limit. The deepest truth which Jesus impressed for the first time on humanity, and with a power such as no one else ever did, is this, *Die and live again*. Thou findest salvation nowhere but in the unconditional and unreserved surrender of thy whole self to God and His will of goodness: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The soul of man, the child of God, cannot find its rest and satisfaction in the perishing ungodly nature of the world; nor is it practicable to divide the heart between Mammon and God, as the Holy Ghost will have the whole man. Hence it is incumbent to lose one's own soul—that is, utterly to deny one's own will in so far as it would like to be



something in itself, without and against God. However near this requirement appears to approach the principles of Indian asceticism and Stoical apathy, yet the distinction between them in principle is quite apparent. In Jesus the denial of self and the world is not the final thing, nor an end in itself, but is only a means of gaining the true self and a better world! "Whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it." Whoever seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, to him will all else—namely, the finite things—be added. The sacrifices made for Christ's cause will be indemnified by a hundredfold compensation (Matt. xix. 29). Accordingly the ascetic demand in the case of Jesus does not rest, as it commonly does elsewhere in antiquity, upon a radical dualism between finite and infinite, nor upon unconditional negation and depreciation of the finite in favour of the sole justification of the infinite. From this error of an abstract pantheistic mysticism Jesus had been kept by his faith in the living God, the Father of spirits, whose nature it is to communicate Himself to His children, and therefore to preserve and not to annihilate their life. What is to be denied is only the false life of man that is at enmity with God, the life of the man who is still involved in the immediate state of nature, and who has not yet become aware, or participative, of his true nature as man and as child of God. As the corn of wheat bringeth not

forth fruit unless it die, so man cannot realise his true nature as a Godlike spirit otherwise than by a breach with his false self, with that mode of existence which is hostile to God, and with the spirit of his sensuously-selfish tendency of life which is natural to him. This "Die and live again" is the deep core of truth in the ethics of Jesus, beyond which no culture and science will ever pass. Nevertheless an unbiassed historical view will not be able to overlook the fact that this truth in Jesus' mode of apprehension and expression, as the Gospels exhibit it, appears clothed in a form which we can no longer now appropriate unchanged. We are accustomed to think of both the "die" and the "live again" in the sense of inner processes of the soul within the present life, as an ethical turning away of the mind from the natural and selfish mode of living, and elevation to a spiritual mode of living in eternal and universal ends. But the utterances of Jesus concerning the sacrifices to be made and the reward to be expected, in the case of his disciples, certainly go beyond this ethical sense; just as certainly as his utterances regarding the end of the world, and the future of the kingdom of God or the Son of Man, cannot be understood as merely allegories, but only as statements concerning external world-renewing events in the future. Jesus thus undeniably shared the Apocalyptic belief of his time of the near end of the present age of the world, and the dawn of a new super-

natural age (*αἰὼν οὗτος, αἰὼν μέλλον*); and to this *eschatological supernaturalism* logically corresponded his *ethical supernaturalism*—that is, the ascetic requirement of the not merely internal, but also external, renunciation of all that belongs to the present age, of goods and chattels, of family and calling, of friendship and fatherland. For all these sacrifices the disciples are promised a hundredfold compensation in the future *new world* (*παλιγγενεσία*), in which they shall no more marry or be given in marriage, and in which therefore the conditions of the life of earthly society shall be abolished. The ascetic negation of the present actual world and its social order has not therefore entered into Christian morals only at a later time, but has its roots in the morality of Jesus himself, and more particularly in the fact that in the consciousness of Jesus moral Idealism clothed itself in the form of eschatological supernaturalism. This was just the historically inevitable form, and in fact also the entirely suitable form, under which it was alone possible to introduce the new ideal spirit of Christianity into the world. The new spirit could not but put itself at first in harsh opposition to the old world, to all its forms of life, even to its higher moral goods. This was necessary, till it acquired such strength that it could become master of the resisting material of the world. Then could the mediation of the ascetic supernaturalism with the natural conditions of the life of earthly humanity

begin in the forms of the historical self-organising life of the Christian community.

Certainly the lingering influence of the original ascetic supernaturalism was still preserved in the form of the Catholic Monasticism, that institution in which the Church has continued to maintain its world-denying tendency along with its world-ruling power. It was the Reformation which did away with this remnant of the primitive Christian asceticism. The Protestant ethics finds the kingdom of God in the God-pleasing formation of the Society of this world; and thereby the striving after this kingdom is also divested of its initial ascetic supernaturalistic character, and put into harmony with the earthly conditions of the life of society. It thus becomes a striving for the realisation of the divine idea of humanity, not in the world beyond the present, but *within* the forms of its early manifestation, *within* the spheres of labour, of the family, of society, of the state, *within* the fulfilment of duty in man's common earthly calling. And thereby we Protestants have certainly recognised and preserved the abiding ideal truth of the ascetic utterances of Jesus and the New Testament; but, on the other hand, it is not to be disputed that we have thereby departed far from the proper original meaning of the ascetic supernaturalism of Jesus and of the primitive Christianity. This deviation, however, is not an arbitrary thing, but has been a necessary

result of the providential development of Christianity itself.

It is only by giving to the historical testimonies regarding the preaching of Jesus altogether their full due, without prejudice or stint, that we can also understand its consequences. If Jesus had only taught an ideal morality, he would at most have founded a school of pure Jewish righteousness, not a new religion; but in that case he would hardly have evoked the passionate hostility of the worldly rulers, which brought destruction to himself but victory for his work. On the other hand, if he had only proclaimed the Apocalyptic dream of the near world-end and the dawn of the new world, he would have founded a sect of fanatics which would have perished in one of the numerous Messianic risings, without leaving a trace behind. But the *combination of ethical idealism with Apocalyptic supernaturalism* gave the possibility of a work which was as powerful as it was thorough and lasting. It awakened in the contemporaries of the time and people of Jesus the enthusiasm for a comprehensible Ideal that attracted their fancy, and banded them around the person of Jesus as the surety of its realisation; and thus they became receptive for the morally educative work of Jesus, and learned from him the significant new truth that the way to the heights of the kingdom of heaven passes through the depths of serving and suffering love. Jesus did not

directly deny the Apocalyptic ideal of the future; but in showing in word and example a new way to its realisation, he *indirectly* put the abiding Christian truth in the place of the transient Jewish dream—the truth, namely, of a community of children of God united by the spirit of serving love and of world-overcoming trust in God. We may also perceive an advance in the education of the disciples, corresponding to the march of the experience of Jesus which undoubtedly brought about a ripening of his own knowledge.

At the beginning, in the days of the Galilean spring, the manner of the teaching of Jesus moves in the idyllic tone of cheerful childlike trust in the heavenly Father, in Him who cares for the lilies and the birds, and on whom we may cast all our cares. Then at the height of the Galilean ministry, the mystery of the kingdom—namely, that planted by the word in the hearts of men it grows gradually and quietly and constantly—is unveiled to the disciples in parables; and they are called blessed in that they were to experience that time of the dawning kingdom of God which had been longed for by the Fathers. But tasks of a new significant kind are also set up; they are to let their light shine before men, to preach from the house-tops before all the world what they have learned in quiet intercourse with their Master. And with the growing success among the multitude, who

yet continued always to be wavering and unreliable, the distrust and contradiction of his opponents also increase: they complain about disregard of tradition, they accuse Jesus of being in alliance with Satan, they ask for miraculous signs from heaven—that is, for Messianic legitimation. Thereupon Jesus warns his disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees; he puts before them the choice of either standing with him against the authorities of the synagogue or standing with them against him. Then he takes them on an excursion which extended beyond the Galilean boundaries in order to rivet them firmer and firmer to himself by undisturbed confidential intercourse; and on this journey he puts the question to them, Whom they held him to be? and Peter answers for them all, “Thou art the Christ.” The conduct of Jesus on this occasion is noteworthy: whereas he had formerly commanded the disciples to preach the news of the kingdom from the house-tops, he now forbids them to tell their opinion of him to any man. Was it that perhaps to himself the thought that he was destined by God to be the Messiah (for this only could be the question at issue) was still so new, so dark and uncertain, that he was terrified by the open utterance of the words as by the profanation of a mystery? Or was it rather pedagogic wisdom and foresight that made him command the disciples to keep the dangerous word silent so long as they had

not yet become aware of its true sense and pregnant meaning? However it be, at all events we see Jesus now taking a new important step in the education of the disciples: he shows them that upon the way of the Son of Man and of the coming kingdom of God sufferings and persecutions, shame and death, are inevitably to be expected, but that according to the divine decree these are only means for the final victory. It is true that we may undoubtedly entertain some not unfounded doubts as to the definite form of the prophecies regarding his suffering and resurrection, as the Gospels narrate them; but we can hardly doubt the fact, which is as natural as it is well attested, that Jesus after the close of the Galilean activity, when he was resolved to bring about the decision of his cause in Jerusalem, recognised the probability of grievous experiences, and sought to make his disciples also familiar with these thoughts: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division" (Luke xii. 49 ff.) Do we not discern in these words that they contain a knowledge which Jesus had not from the beginning, but which rather grew up in him for the first time in the school of bitter experience and undeceptions during the activ-



ity of his calling? He himself, as the Epistle to the Hebrews strikingly says, "learned obedience by the things he suffered"—that is to say, he learned to serve the divine will, not merely as a humble and meek teacher, but at last even as the suffering Servant of God who gives his life as an offering for the sins of his people (Isaiah xlii. 53). "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark x. 45). This is the insight that there lies a victorious power in innocent suffering more even than in all active doing—nay, that it is the chief and unavoidable means for the victory of the good in this imperfect world. And this insight is the crowning close of the Gospel of Jesus, which began with the exhortations to unconditioned trust and obedience to the heavenly Father; for trust and obedience both undergo their ordeal of fire only through patience and fidelity under suffering.

The words of Jesus concerning the necessity and wholesomeness of suffering found indeed at first among the disciples but little understanding of their meaning. Such utterances contradicted too harshly their Jewish thoughts of the Messiah, and their lusting after dominion, for them to have found themselves at home in their significance. But when Jesus had sealed his words by his actual faithfulness even unto death, then did his death become the most powerful preaching of

the Gospel. It became a revelation of Holy Love that lighted up the darkness of human destiny,—of a love according to whose decree, at all times, the Son of man must suffer in order to enter into His Glory.

## LECTURE IV.

### THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, AND THE BEGINNING OF THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH.

THE death of Jesus was the crowning of his life-work. It was this, not merely as a last authentication and sealing of his faithful obedience to his divine life-task, but also in so far as it first brought to completion what the didactic instruction of Jesus to the disciples had not yet attained—since it tore them away from their Jewish carnal hopes of a Messiah, and it raised them to a higher world of faith and hope. At first, indeed, the completely unexpected catastrophe appears to have surprised them, and to have dissipated all their composure and all their courage. We may infer this not merely from the fact that, according to the Synoptic Gospels, none of the disciples were near the Lord in His last hours, but we have also direct evidence for it in the words which, according to Mark (xiv. 27 f.), were spoken by Jesus to His disciples as a prophecy

on the way to Gethsemane. "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee." It matters little whether we hold these words to be an actual prophecy of Jesus or a prophecy after the event (*vaticinium post eventum*) which the evangelist, or properly speaking the tradition of the community, had already put into His mouth. For in any case the community would not have handed it down, nor would the evangelist have narrated it, if the facts had not corresponded to it. In these words we have an indubitably certain intimation as to how we have to think of the historical course of events immediately after the death of Jesus. We may draw from them two important inferences: first, that the disciples of Jesus, under the agitating impression of a tragic issue which took them completely by surprise, lost their composure and courage, and, scattered like a flock without a shepherd, they fled to their Galilean home; and secondly, that there they experienced the miracle by which they persuaded themselves that the crucified Jesus was living, and had risen again. The latter inference is also confirmed by the narrative of Mark and Matthew concerning the angels at the grave of Jesus, who gave the women direction that they would see Jesus in Galilee, where He had gone before them. Whatever view we may be inclined to take

regarding this legend of the angels at the sepulchre, so much at all events is certain, that the words put by the oldest tradition into their mouth would remain inconceivable under the assumption of Luke's form of the Easter history, according to which the appearances of Christ are represented as having already taken place on the Sunday in and near Jerusalem. Thus the words of the angels in the older Gospel only obtain a meaning when we perceive in them a trace of the *older recollection* that the appearances of Christ took place first in Galilee, and consequently not till some time after the death of Jesus. From this the further inference is to be drawn, that the whole group of the Easter histories enacted in Jerusalem belongs to a later form of the legend, and cannot be authoritative for our judgment of the actual facts; and further, that the mysterious visions which the disciples experienced in Galilee could not stand in any relation to the grave of Jesus situated at Jerusalem, nor consequently to the body of the crucified one which lay in it. This inference is, moreover, confirmed by the further consideration that Paul (in 1 Cor. xv.) puts the appearances of Christ which had occurred to the first disciples on the same level with that which had happened at last to himself. And as he thought of the latter, at all events (as we shall afterwards see), as an appearance of the heavenly spirit, and not of the earthly body, of Jesus Christ, it follows that he (cer-

tainly in harmony with the oldest tradition of the community) also thought of the first appearances of Christ in the same way, and consequently as revelations of the exalted spirit of Christ without any relation to the earthly grave and dead body. Thus the two oldest witnesses that we have on the subject—namely, Paul and Mark—lead us, in harmony with each other, to a view of the experiences of the disciples after the death of Jesus which lies far from the more richly woven later legends, but is so much the more favourable to a psychological explanation of the belief in the resurrection, based on the historical conditions of the primitive community.

Let us in this regard first recall to our minds what part the belief in a resurrection played generally in the Judaism of that time. The boundaries between the present world and the next had become so fluent, that no difficulty was found in beholding in an extraordinary person like Jesus a prophet of the olden days who had risen again—an Elijah, or Jeremiah, or even a John the Baptist who had just been beheaded. Such popular judgments, of some of which the Gospels give us an account, show distinctly how natural the thought of the resurrection of a pious one was to the Jews of that time. It is just from this point of view that the legends of the raisings of the dead to life, which Jesus and the apostles are represented as having performed, are likewise explained; as is also the legend handed

down by Matthew (xxvii. 52) of the many bodies of the saints coming out of their graves after the resurrection of Jesus. In a time and environment in which such a spiritual tendency prevails, in which men stand on such intimate footing with the other world and are constantly in strained expectation as to whether its gates might not open, or an announcement or a messenger now come from it, is it to be wondered at if what all hold to be possible and probable, and many longingly expect, should have actually once become a psychological experience of individuals? The particular grounds, however, which actualised this possibility, lay in the psychological state of the disciples of Jesus after the death of the Lord. Utterly surprised by the catastrophe, they had indeed in the first moments lost composure and deliberation, and had fled back to Galilee. Here, however, in the places where they had tarried in intimate intercourse with Jesus till but a short time before, and where they had received the deepest impressions, their senses soon returned to them again; they felt themselves once more under the magic power of His personality, which stood as lovingly as ever before their souls; they felt themselves again supported by the courageous faith and hope which He had been able to inspire so often in them. In particular, they would naturally recall individual utterances and quotations from Scripture by which Jesus had strengthened His confidence in God, when looking forward to the

impending dire conflicts and fate that awaited Him; they must have thought of such words in the Psalms as are found in Psalms xvi. 10, lxxxvi. 13, and similar passages, in which the poet hoped for a deliverance from threatening death as coming from God, but which now could be interpreted as redemption from the bonds of death by resuscitation from the dead. And still more was such an interpretation suggested by the form of the figurative expression of the prophet Hosea (vi. 2), "After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." In like manner they would think of the words of Isaiah concerning the Servant of God, who, after he had given his soul as an offering for sin, was to prolong his days and divide the spoil with the strong. If the despondent spirit of the disciples gathered support again from such memories and words of Scripture, if their heart burned in the hot conflict between doubt and hope (Luke xxiv. 32), if their yearning love flung itself back into recollections of the Lord as He went with them upon the way and opened to them the Scriptures, then were all the psychological conditions present under which a visionary experience of a similar kind, as occurred later in the case of St Paul, becomes quite explainable. According to the testimony of Paul (1 Cor. xv. 5), which is confirmed by allusions in Mark (xvi. 7) and Luke (xxiv. 34), it was Peter, the man of vivid feeling and of quickly excitable soul, who was the first who came



by such a vision to the conviction that the crucified one was living and was exalted to be the heavenly Messiah. His conviction and the believing courage of his enthusiasm worked upon the others, kindling them too; and soon the rest of the disciples also experienced similar moments of enthusiastic vision, which served as a confirming testimony to the words of Peter.

That these appearances occurred in the case of several and to many together, proves so little against the possibility of their psychological explanation that it rather serves to give them support. For it is a well-known fact of experience that states of the extraordinarily excited life of the soul, and in particular religious enthusiasm and ecstasy, have a sort of infectious character, and master whole assemblies with elemental power. The history of religion of all times furnishes a multitude of instances in proof of this. Nor does the appearance of Christ to more than five hundred brethren which Paul mentions (1 Cor. xv. 6), present in this respect any difficulties; and so much the less if the conjecture is correct—and in fact it has much probability—that what is referred to here is the same event which lies at the basis of the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles of the effusion of the Spirit on the first Pentecost. If in this narrative the coming of the Spirit upon the assembly of the believers is accompanied with a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and with cloven tongues like as of fire, it is not difficult to

recognise again there the same visionary beholding of heavenly light, and hearing of heavenly voices, as seems to have occurred as a rule in the case of the appearances of Christ (cf. Acts ix. 3). And if all the inspired, those who were "filled with the Holy Ghost," then began to speak in foreign tongues, so that it appeared to many hearers as if they were filled with new wine, while Peter found in this the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel about all seeing visions and prophesying (Acts ii. 13-21),—at the basis of this lies quite distinctly the recollection that the inspiration experienced in the primitive Christian assemblies was wont to express itself pre-eminently in ecstatic voices, in speaking in tongues and prophesying. This "speaking in tongues" was, according to the authentic description of Paul (1 Cor. xiv.), nothing but a stammering effusion of exuberant religious feeling that could not be clothed in intelligible words, which to those who stood at a distance might well give the impression of mental derangement, and which even for the assembly of the believers always needed special interpretation in order to have a universal edifying effect. This "speaking in tongues," as Paul describes it, has nothing in common with speaking in foreign languages,—just as little as the ecstatic stammering, groaning, and shouting which still frequently occurs at the present day in religious revival meetings is a speaking in foreign languages. The author of the Acts of the Apostles,

who seems no longer to have known the original manifestations as an eyewitness, was the first to give a miraculous interpretation to the "speaking with tongues" of that Pentecost assembly, as if the disciples had spoken in foreign languages which had been recognised by the hearers as the various languages of their countries. Nevertheless, under this legendary transformation the original correct recollection is still clearly enough betrayed in the statement that many hearers expressed the suspicion that the speakers in tongues were intoxicated (Acts ii. 13 f.; 1 Cor. xiv. 23); and besides, Peter in his Pentecost discourse makes not the slightest mention of the strange miracle of discoursing in foreign languages, but speaks only of enraptured visions and prophesying, and therefore just of such utterances of intense inspiration as those we know of from the description of Paul, and as we find them again not seldom in a similar way in other experiences of the kind, in which we have no supernatural miracle to seek for at all. Accordingly, we shall thus be able to find the historical kernel of the event of Pentecost in this, that the inspired visions and speaking hitherto confined only to individuals or the narrowest circle of disciples, in which there was perceived a revelation of the living Christ or of the spirit of Christ (which both mean the same thing), spread on the first occasion over the whole of the large assembly and carried it irresistibly away, so that several hundreds were all at once converted to

Jesus as the Christ. The Pentecost history is therefore not at all so very different from the Easter histories as appears according to the later legendary representations of them by Luke. Carried back to their original kernel, they stand upon one and the same level, and serve mutually to explain each other, as certainly as do the different appearances of Christ particularised in succession by Paul (1 Cor. xv. 3 ff.) At the basis of all these cases there lie states of high religious enthusiasm, which became heightened to ecstatic visionary perceptions (hallucinations) and utterances of feeling. In such cases what filled the consciousness might well assume different forms in individuals; but it was always felt as the operation of the heavenly Spirit, in which the life of the exalted Messiah Jesus announced itself to His believers, and in which therefore the dawning of the time of salvation promised by the prophets had become a fact. But with all the extraordinariness of these experiences of the oldest community of disciples, in whom the new Christian spirit was embodied with creative originality, they have nevertheless many analogies in those states of religious inspiration or enthusiasm in which any devout community feels itself quickened and seized by the Spirit of God. And who would care to deny that something wondrous does happen in all such moments, when human souls feel themselves raised in common devotion to a higher world of divine life and filled with the powers of world-

overcoming faith and love? Who would question the fact that the divine spirit, of whom it is said that it is as the wind which "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth," in this its working in our hearts, is a mystery never wholly to be fathomed? So far the pious belief in the miracles of the first Christian Easter and Pentecost remains right in itself, even if in the sense of the historical way of thinking of the present day the absolutely supernatural miracle is discarded by interpreting and explaining the experiences of the primitive community of those days according to analogy of the later pious experiences of Christendom generally, as such experiences have recurred again at all times. And granting that the revelations of the spirit of Christ in the first community might express themselves differently in form, and were more powerful, more abrupt, more enthusiastic, more visionary, than in our community at the present day, yet it is always one and the same spirit of Christ, the divine Son of Man, whose working in His brethren is indeed marvellous, but was never an absolutely supernatural miracle any more than it is to-day.

With the belief of the disciples that their Lord and Master had been resuscitated from the dead and made Lord and Christ, the King of the Messianic kingdom (Acts ii. 36), there was also immediately connected the expectation that in a short space of time He would

come again upon the clouds from heaven, where He is now sitting at the right hand of God, as Daniel had so prophesied of the Son of Man, and that He should then reveal Himself to all the world as the Messiah and set up His kingdom on the earth (Acts i. 6). All the hoping and waiting of the community, since the first visions of Christ, were directed towards this His early return or Second Coming; nay, these visions, and the certainty of the crucified one being alive which was produced by them, had so great fundamental importance for the first disciples only because they saw in them the guarantee of His immediately impending return and visible dominion. That the Lord was at hand and with Him the great day of judgment and of deliverance, the time of the renovation of the world, of the founding of a new order of things, or the kingdom of God in place of the Satanic kingdom of the world,—this was the constantly recurring watchword in which the whole confession of the first Christians was still comprised. Their faith was still essentially the hope of a future salvation; nor should we think of the object of their hope too spiritualistically. It was not a heavenly blessedness in the other world which they expected from the Messiah Jesus, but earthly redemption from their present earthly misery; nor did they hope for this redemption for all men, but only for the people of Israel, and more particularly for those pious Jews who waited for the consolation of Israel,

and beheld in Jesus the God-elected bringer of this consolation. The inmost sense of the primitive community is certainly expressed in the Acts of the Apostles when the disciples are represented as addressing the question to their departing Lord, "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel" (Acts i. 6); or when Mary, with her gaze turned towards the dawning Messianic salvation, blesses God that "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy; as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever" (Luke i. 52 ff.) We are accustomed to take such words figuratively and to interpret them spiritually, in which we are quite right as regards their use for the purpose of edification; but we ought always to remember, when we are studying history, that we transform the simple original meaning of the words by our spiritual interpretation. The primitive Christian community hoped for the coming kingdom of the Messiah in no other sense than all the other Jews did. It was distinguished only in that it expected the restoration of this kingdom by the Jesus of Nazareth whom the leaders of the people had rejected, but whom God had chosen and exalted to His right hand.

Insignificant as at first sight this point of difference

may appear, yet it is undeniable that it involved important consequences for the religious frame of mind of the Christian community. As their Messianic hope did not, like that of the other Jews, cleave to a warlike Son of David, that Ideal of the national political dream of the Messiah, but was attached to the historical person of Jesus whom they had learned to know as the merciful friend of the people and saviour of the wretched, as the humble teacher and meek sufferer,—they thus recognised in these very characteristics the typical example which believing Christians have to imitate in order to become participators in the kingdom of the Messiah. Thus the belief in Jesus as the Lord and Christ of His disciple-community became not merely the motive of their confident eschatological hopes, but at the same time also the motive of a disposition which, in their imitation of the humble and meek, merciful and selfless character of Jesus, already actually possessed the power of overcoming the world, and with it the true, spiritual essence of the coming kingdom of God,—although in their consciousness of that kingdom there was still a future good to be expected from the return of Christ. Be it that their ideas of God, the world, and of the future kingdom of God in Israel, were still quite Jewish, and albeit in their external mode of life they might still remain wholly bound to the law of their people—since, according to the representation of the Acts of the Apostles, they



were distinguished by strict legal piety—yet, in spite of all this, they already bore in their hearts the germ of a new and higher piety and morality. For it was the image of Jesus which they carried in their hearts and impressed in affectionate memory so intimately on themselves that now, much more than in His lifetime, they grew into His mind, and so outgrew the Jewish mind. Although outwardly still Jews, they were nevertheless a brotherhood animated by the spirit of Jesus in which the germ of the new community of Sonship to God was already alive, although at first still hidden beneath the Jewish husk which it was not yet possible for them to strip off, nor would it have been wholesome at the outset for them to have done so. The new religious principle of life which had entered into the world with Jesus must first ripen and strengthen in the stillness of a small circle of quiet piety, hardly as yet distinguishable externally from its surroundings, before it could burst its bonds and create for itself its new external form.

The primitive community was the guardian of the most precious treasure of Christendom—the memory of the facts of the earthly life of Jesus, of His discourses, doings, and sufferings. If it had not so faithfully preserved this treasure we would have received no Gospels, nor any tradition of the several features of the life of Jesus. And what would Christianity have been without the Gospels? These plain nar-

rations of the oldest tradition, which we owe to the primitive community, are for all time the most valuable and indispensable counterpoise to the high-flying speculation about Christ which has occupied Christian thinking from the time of Paul. Yet the tradition of the primitive community even was already far from being able to give a photographically faithful portrait of the historical reality. In its own way it was already creatively fashioning the historical according to the idea, and introducing ideas into history. Since Jesus had been seen in the glory of the heavenly Messiah, it was inevitable that this heavenly glory should cast its reflection back upon His earthly life; and under such illumination that life obtained more and more supernatural colour and content. Already in the visions of Christ seen by the apostles, there lay so far the germ of the supernatural dogmas about Christ of the later Church. The higher world of the Messianic glory into which Jesus had entered by the resurrection, and whose wondrous powers were already possessed by the existing community in the gifts of the Messianic spirit, in speaking with tongues, and in prophesying and healing the sick, was already to be found in the typical and wondrous signs of the earthly life of Jesus as the pledges of its full future revelation. These are the motives which explain all the ideal or supernaturalistic elements of the evangelistic tradition, and in particular the narratives of the *Trans-*

*figuration*, the *Baptism*, and the *miraculous Birth of Jesus*, in which we can still quite distinctly trace a gradually advancing process of dating back the Messianic equipment and appointment of Jesus.

*The history of the Transfiguration*, according to the original intention of the narrator, still easily recognisable in Mark, is a symbolical anticipation of the glorification of Christ through His resurrection and exaltation, as the Lord of the new community. As Moses once upon Mount Sinai beheld God's glory and his countenance became shining from its reflection, and as Paul in the vanishing of this splendour of Moses, when compared with the abiding splendour of Christ, recognised the higher dignity and abiding duration of the new covenant in contrast to the merely temporary significance of the old covenant (2 Cor. iii. ff.),—so Mark (ix. 2 ff.) tells that Jesus was "transfigured" into a form of light like that in which it was believed that they had seen the risen One, the heavenly Son of Man. Thereupon appeared Moses and Elijah as representatives of the law and prophecy, in order to be witnesses of the exaltation of Jesus and to pay homage to Him as the Lord of the new covenant. Now while Peter would make three tabernacles for all of them (that is, would permanently maintain the law and the prophets, the authorities of the old covenant, along with Christ), a heavenly voice came saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear *Him*." Immediately Moses and Elias

disappear, and Christ alone remains with the astonished disciples. Christ alone is therefore appointed by God Himself to be the Lord and Mediator of the revelation of the new covenant, before whose authority that of the old men of God disappears. Thereupon Jesus forbids His disciples to make known what they had just beheld until the Son of Man was risen from the dead, whereupon they astonished ask each other what this rising from the dead can mean. By this it is clearly enough indicated that what is here narrated was not an actual event in the earthly life of Jesus, of which already something had been known before His death, but that it was a symbolical presentation of that exaltation of Christ to be the Lord of the new community which only became comprehensible and really known after His death, and through reflection upon the *significance* of His death and His resurrection. The narrative of the transfiguration of Jesus therefore expresses the thought that by His being raised up to the heavenly world of light, to be the "Son"—that is, to be the Messiah—He was appointed or instituted the Lord of the community of the new covenant—a thought which doubtless contains the *oldest form of the belief in Christ* of the community. Thus even Peter in the Pentecost sermon says: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"—that is to say, through the resurrection; and in like manner

afterwards in the sermon in the house of Cornelius: "And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead" (Acts ii. 36, x. 42). Paul likewise, notwithstanding his advanced speculation about Christ, still shared the same primitive Christian view—namely, that Jesus had first been declared through His resurrection to be the "Son of God with power," appointed to be "Lord both of the dead and living," and ordained "to judge the world in righteousness" (cf. Romans i. 4, xiv. 9; Acts xvii. 31).

But the belief of the community in Christ could not stop at this first stage. It would no longer see the Son of God and the Messiah merely in the Christ of the other world, of heaven, and of the second coming, but would fain have a guarantee given in the earthly life of Jesus that He had already become such through a divine proclamation and equipment with Messianic power. Jesus of Nazareth, who had been accredited by God "by miracles and wonders and signs" (Acts ii. 22), who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him (Acts x. 38), must even from the beginning of His work as the Saviour have been anointed by God "with the Holy Ghost and with power." But when could that have taken place? What moment of His known life was more fitted to be fixed on for that divine equipment of

Jesus with Messianic spirit and power than the moment of His baptism? Accordingly the divine Messiah-proclamation about Jesus was now pushed further back from the end of His Galilean ministry (the transfiguration) to before the *beginning* of it, and brought into connection with the baptism of John. And the appointment of Jesus to the dignity of the Messiah is put solemnly upon the stage in the same way as in the other case: as on that occasion heavenly light and heavenly spirits appear, so here, too, do the heavens open and the Holy Ghost descends in the symbolic form of a dove upon Jesus. In an uncanonical but very old version of the legend, the narrative also tells of the appearance of fire which flashed up at the moment of the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, so that Jesus was surrounded by its splendour—exactly as in the case of the transfiguration. In addition to this, the heavenly voice was heard at the baptism speaking almost the same words as then: “This is” (or “Thou art”) “My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” That the voice according to Mark and Luke was addressed to Jesus, but according to Matthew was expressed in the third person and therefore was also destined for the bystanders, may rest upon an accidental difference in the tradition, yet it may also have been an intentional alteration of Matthew in order thereby to turn the miracle from being a mere subjective vision of Jesus into an objective reality. The words of the voice are a

combination of expressions in Psalm ii. and Isaiah xlii. Besides, it is to be noted that, according to an old good manuscript reading which is confirmed by Patristic citations, Luke originally reported the heavenly voice only in the unabridged words of the passage in the 2d Psalm: "Thou art My Son; *this day have I begotten Thee.*" It is extremely probable that *this* was the oldest version of the voice at the baptism; the alteration of it in our Gospels may have rested on later dogmatic motives, and thereby the significance of the legend of the miracle at the baptism becomes so much the clearer. It is the solemn divine installation of Jesus to be the Son of God and Messianic King, combined with the communication of the Holy Spirit which capacitates Him for His Messianic calling. Whereas originally, therefore, the resurrection of Jesus, that moment of His exaltation into the heavenly spiritual world, was regarded as His installation as the Son of God, this act is now attached to the baptism as the moment when the heavenly spirit descended upon the earthly man Jesus. That this remained a long time a prevailing conception is proved by the practice which arose in Gnostic circles, and which was accepted by the Church and retained till the fourth century, of celebrating the baptism of Christ as the "Epiphany" of the divine spirit of Christ and as the festival of the birth of Christianity. It was not till the fifth century that this meaning of the festival of the Epiphany was oblit-

erated by that of the festival of Christmas, in which a step in the advance of the belief in Christ, which had undoubtedly been taken at a much earlier time, found ritual expression.

To think of the baptism of Jesus as the beginning of His Messianic divine Sonship could not permanently satisfy the Christian consciousness. For in that view the divine Sonship still appeared as a mere accident of His natural personality, whereby its all-surpassing significance being not yet sufficiently secured, the difference between Him and the old prophets was not yet definitely enough marked. Satisfaction was first given to this need of the faith by making the divine Sonship of Christ, from being a Messianic *position of dignity* assigned to Him in the course of His life (which it hitherto signified), into a *determination of the essence* of His personality. Paul made the beginning of this view by apprehending Christ as the heavenly man who not merely has become the Lord *in* heaven by the resurrection, but who already had come as Lord *from* heaven, and who therefore had been a heavenly being in Himself already before His earthly appearance. This Pauline view—accepted probably in Gentile Christian communities chiefly—then obtained the more sensuous and conceivable form that the earthly life of Jesus sprang from a miraculous generation by the spirit. Motives of various kinds co-operated in forming and developing the *History of the Birth of*



*Jesus* as narrated by Luke in epic fulness. In the first place, we may think of the analogy of heathen sons of God. How very natural it was for the heathen consciousness to refer human greatness to supernatural origin and divine Fatherhood, is evidenced not only by the old legends of heroes who had a God for their Father, but also by the popular legends which were formed around actual historical persons partly even during their lifetime. I remind you of Gautama Buddha and Plato, Alexander the Great and Cæsar. But even the Old Testament legends furnished at least indirect examples of the kind in the histories of the births of Isaac, of Samuel, and of Samson, who in virtue of divine miraculous power had been born to their aged parents after an unfruitful marriage. In addition to this, there are also certain figurative modes of speech in Hebrew poetry which could be the more easily understood in the literal sense by the Christian communities the more unaccustomed they were to the figurative Semitic idiom, as was naturally the case on Gentile Christian soil. When God in Psalm ii. spake to the earthly king of Israel, "Thou art My son, this day have I begotten thee," the Gentile Christians no longer understood the original sense of this expression, which only meant the installation of the king into his theocratic dignity, and they applied it to the supernatural divine Sonship of Christ. Even the reference to the endowment of Christ with the spirit in baptism

appeared not yet fully to satisfy the term "begotten"; its verbal fulfilment appeared to be found only in the miraculous begetting of the life of Jesus in the bosom of the virgin. When the prophet Isaiah (vii. 14) said of the expected child of a young mother that they would give him the name "Immanuel" as a symbol of the near help of God, he thought neither of a miraculous birth nor of the future Messiah; but as the name "Immanuel" fitted excellently to the Messiah, it was natural and easy to understand this passage Messianically, and then a Christian who was not familiar with the Hebrew language might easily understand the word signifying a young woman in the sense of a virgin, and thus read the miraculous birth of Jesus out of this passage. Such bold interpretations were possible only to those who were already attached on other grounds to such a view of the person and origin of Jesus. The main motive for the rise of the legend of the supernatural generation of Jesus lay without doubt in dogmatic ideals, and especially in the Pauline doctrine that Christ was God's Son, "with power according to the spirit of holiness" (Romans i. 4), which, however, was not thought of by Paul as the efficient cause of the bodily existence of Jesus, but as the heavenly substance of His nature. To the understanding of the Gentile Christians this speculation became coarsened into the poetic myth, which came more naturally to their imagination. Even the individual traits of this myth are

illustrations of dogmatic ideas of Paul. The lowliness of the heavenly child which, while springing from the heavenly world, lies in the stable at Bethlehem, and is greeted by heavenly hosts, illustrates the passages: "Who, being in the form of God, . . . humbled Himself," and "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor" (Phil. ii. 6 f.; 2 Cor. viii. 9). The tidings of the angels to the shepherds illustrates the passages: "The poor have the Gospel preached to them," "And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen" (Matt. xi. 5; 1 Cor. i. 28). Matthew has, instead of the visiting shepherds, the Magi from the East, who are brought under the guidance of the miraculous star, and present their homage, corresponding to the images of the old prophets, according to which kings should walk in the light which was rising over Israel, and present their gifts of gold and incense as tribute (Isaiah lx. 3 ff.), while a star was to come out of Jacob, a sceptre to rise out of Israel (Numbers xxiv. 17). In the sense of the old seers such images signified the future splendour of the people of Israel; but the Christian reader applied them to the Messiah Jesus, and because their fulfilment could nowhere be shown in the known public life of Jesus, they sought to find a place for it in the obscurity of His prehistoric childhood.

Hence the two histories of the childhood in the younger Gospels, as well as the older histories of the miracles of the baptism and transfiguration, which are

common to the Synoptic Gospels, are to be regarded as symbolical legends which sprang up under the co-operation of religious (dogmatic) ideas and Old Testament images in the unconsciously poetising fantasy of the oldest period of Christianity, and—like all unconscious legendary poesy—were believed as true history. In these images of a pious imagination the mass of the Christian communities possessed their *epic representation of Christ*, which could not but be more 'easily apprehensible by their understandings and more sympathetically related to their souls than the dogmatic speculation about Christ which was now commencing. And how much has the Christian art of all times owed to these thoughtful legends, in which the sublimest ideas of Christianity have embodied themselves in corporeal images, whose spiritual sense every child can divinely feel, yet no understanding of the wise can exhaustively think out! Are these legends to be regarded as less valuable to us of to-day because we have come to know their genesis historically, and thereby have learned to distinguish better than earlier generations between the meaning and the image, the religious thought and the mystical investment? Whoever should assert this, logically could never feel any joy in Homer, in the 'Divina Commedia,' in 'Faust,' or in Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' in short in any genuine poetic invention, because it is poetic invention, which yet contains truth though not mere reality as perceived

by the senses. In contrast to such dry rationalism we take as our confession the words of the poet which assign eternal reality only to that which does not happen in time :—

“ What never and nowhere as fact did hold,  
Is that alone which never shall grow old.”

Although in the early times of the community the doctrinal impulse of the Christian faith expressed itself more in the prophetic production of pregnant images than in dogmatic reflection, yet there was not an entire want of rudimentary beginnings of such reflection. It was especially the *suffering of the Messiah Jesus*—that stumbling-block to a Jewish conscience—which called forth the apologetic reflection. At first the endeavour was made, by the Messianic interpretation of such passages in the Psalms and Prophets as treat of the suffering of the just one, to prove that the fate of Jesus had been already foretold by the Holy Scriptures, and therefore had been grounded in the Divine decree. The matter at issue here did not yet turn so much around the dogmatic question *why* Christ must suffer, as rather how to show that the suffering of Christ was a necessity ordained by God, and therefore had not been a traversing of His decree, nor a contradiction of the destination of Jesus to be the Messiah. For this purpose many passages of the Old Testament could be turned to account, but above all the classical passage

in the 53d chapter of Isaiah of the Servant of God, the Man of Sorrows, who bore our griefs and was wounded for our transgressions that we might have peace and be healed by His stripes. The Jewish theology had explained this passage partly by not referring it at all to the Messiah, and where it did so refer it, by seeking to get rid of the thought of a suffering Messiah by allegorical transformation and softening down of the features of suffering. In connection with this passage the Christians found it easy to take their stand; for it was manifestly the most natural thing and the most intelligible view to the popular mind to understand the picture of the pious sufferer, so concretely sketched, to hold of a definite person; and how natural then was the application of it to the suffering and death of Jesus! The reference of the Christians to this prophetic passage may therefore have made the same impression upon many as it did upon the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia, to whom Philip, according to Acts (viii. 33 ff.), explained it. This very passage, however, at the same time already contained the answer to the further question, which could not be easily evaded—namely, For what end did God give up unto death Him whom He had sent? That the innocent sufferings of the just man is an expiatory means for compensating for the sins of his people, is a thought which the Jewish theology had already drawn from Isaiah liii., and applied to the suffering of the pious, especially to the

witnesses for the faith in the time of the Maccabees. It is therefore quite conceivable that the primitive community already considered the death of Christ from the same point of view, as an expiation for the forgiveness of sins, as Paul expressly testifies (1 Cor. xv. 3) when, referring to the little which he received through tradition, he adduces this very point, that Christ "died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." But if the death of Christ was an atonement for the forgiveness of sins, it follows naturally from this that the forgiveness of sins as the immediate gift of Christ is communicated to those who believe in Him, and enter into the community of His disciples, as is often expressed in the sermons of the apostles as we find them narrated in the Acts of the Apostles. Only we shall have to take care that we do not over-estimate the range of this thought in the mind of the primitive community, or identify it with the Pauline doctrine. According to Paul, the death of Christ as an expiation of the curse of the law was at the same time the abrogation of the law for the Christians, whereby the new way of salvation by faith took the place of the works of the law. From this conclusion the primitive community was still far removed. According to their view, the death of Christ was undoubtedly a saving means for the forgiveness of sins, yet it did not stand in place of the personal legal performances of the pious man, but was only available for the completion of their

imperfection, and therefore under the established assumption of the continuing obligation to fulfil the law even on the part of the Jews who believed in Christ.

It never entered the minds of the primitive community before Paul that by faith in Jesus as the Christ the validity of the Jewish law was abrogated, and a new religious community was founded upon an extra-Judaic basis. As its members viewed the dawning kingdom of the Messiah and its blessings as the fulfilment of the prophecies given to the Fathers of Israel, it was also simply regarded as self-evident that the community of the Messiah was to be built upon the firm ground of the law which was given to the Fathers by God. They had indeed learned from Jesus that mercy is of more worth than sacrifice and the celebration of the Sabbath, and that purity of heart is worth more than the washing of hands and the straining out of gnats; but there was still a long way from this knowledge of the higher worth of the moral when compared with the ceremonial, to the insight into the religious meaninglessness and non-obligatoriness of the latter and to the practical emancipation from the Jewish ceremonial law. Nor had the first disciples been led or had occasion to tread along this path even by Jesus Himself. For with all the freedom and ideal elevation of His judgment in these things, He had nevertheless not put Himself in His actual mode of acting above the legal order of the life of His people. The primitive community, in which



we cannot assume the same degree of purity and freedom of moral judgment to exist as in Jesus, could therefore much less think that emancipation from the Jewish law belonged to them. Although it may be partly to be laid to the account of the apologetic purpose of the Acts of the Apostles that we have the community of the disciples described as distinguished above the other Jews by a most conscientious fulfilment of all legal ordinances and usages, and as having attained the reputation of special zeal for the law, yet this description may be regarded as having reproduced in essentials the actual circumstances of the case. This is best proved by the later attitude of the Jerusalem community when the question of the law became a practical one through the Pauline mission to the Gentiles. At the Apostolic Convention when they conceded to Paul the dispensation of his Gentile Christians from certain legal demands, on the side of the Jewish Christians they were still far from thinking that the previous obligation to fulfil the whole law was to cease for them. And when circumstances in the mixed community at Antioch led to a temporary overstepping of the limits of Jewish concession intended in the Apostolic compact, this had only as its consequence that from that time the Jewish communities held fast the more rigidly to their legalism, and thereafter even carried on a propaganda for the legal principle in the Pauline communities. All the violent conflicts which

Paul had afterwards to engage in with the Jewish Christians on account of the question of the law would be unintelligible on the assumption that the primitive community had been from the beginning of the same view as Paul regarding the freedom of the Christians from the law. They form, therefore, an irrefutable proof of the fact that the primitive community regarded itself as still bound to the Jewish law.

From this it follows of itself that the first Christians could not yet have thought of organising themselves as a new and special religious community different from Judaism. They wished to be nothing but the Christ-believing core of the people of the promises, and they expected the fulfilment of these promises in the near establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah by the Lord Jesus coming again. How could they, then, have thought of creating for themselves ecclesiastical institutions and practices for this short interval? Nor at the outset were baptism and the Lord's Supper yet in the same sense as afterwards, ceremonial acts and signs of the distinction of the Christian from the Jewish religious community. The historical Jesus did not institute *baptism*, as even the Gospels themselves indicate by the fact that they put the baptismal command only into the mouth of the risen Christ, and therefore derive it from the spirit of Christ invisibly ruling the community. The Christians in this followed the example of John, whose

baptism was an imitation of the Jewish baptism of proselytes. Like it, the Christian baptism was therefore also a symbolical act of consecration and repentance, to which confession of Jesus as the Christ came to be added; and it had as its consequences the forgiveness of sins and the communication of the Spirit. Yet they thought of the latter as not rigidly bound to the external act of baptism; it might even precede it, as in the baptism of Cornelius (Acts x.), or might only follow it by means of the laying on of hands, as in the case of the Samaritans (Acts viii. 16 f.) If there may even be found in this already an approach towards the mystic sacramental significance of baptism, yet that significance was first dogmatically fixed by Paul and grounded by the reference of baptism to the death of Christ. In the primitive community baptism was therefore undoubtedly already a distinct mark of the associate of the Messianic kingdom, but it was not yet a regeneration that severed the connection with Judaism and incorporated the individual in a new religious community. *The Lord's Supper* likewise first received its ceremonial sacramental character through the Pauline theology and in the Pauline communities. We cannot properly speak of an institution of this rite by Jesus: it has its origin in the last supper of Jesus only in so far as the love-feasts of the Christian brotherhood were consecrated by the remembrance of the last supper which they had together with

Jesus, and at which Jesus seems to have given to the bread and the cup a symbolical reference to His death. In connection with this very narrative the evangelical tradition is indeed so wavering, and has been so strongly influenced by Paul, that we can get no certain knowledge regarding the meaning of what was spoken by Jesus, or of the very words He used. At all events this much is certain, according to the oldest Gospel, that Jesus celebrated the Jewish passover with His disciples, and that He said nothing of such a nature as would point to the replacement of this Jewish rite by a new Christian rite. Even the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," are only found in Paul, from whom Luke received them, and they are contrary to the oldest tradition. Among the oldest Christians, therefore, the supper still consisted simply of common meals, in which the obligation of love to the brethren in the new covenant came to practical expression. Such religious meals had been already in use among the Essenes and Pharisees as the expression of a narrower religious bond of connection, not extending beyond, but confined within, the common popular religion. But what undoubtedly gave the Christian love-feasts their higher religious significance was not so much a positive ritual form as rather the spirit animating the fellowship of the community, the participants being bound to one another through the cardinal point, common to them all, of their thoughts

in Jesus the Christ. When amid prayer and meditation on Scripture they lost themselves in the remembrance of the life and death of their Lord, and comforted themselves by His promises, they felt themselves filled by the spirit of Jesus—the spirit of world-overcoming faith and of ministering brotherly love.

The practical exemplification of this love was the regular care of the poor out of common means. It was not, indeed, as the author of the Acts of the Apostles seems to represent it, a complete and formal “community of goods.” For in such a community there would have been no poor left for the regular care of whom deacons would have to be appointed; nor when some one sold his possessions for the good of the common purse, would this have been emphasised as a laudable act on the part of individuals; nor would any one then have been able to have opened his private house hospitably to the community for their assemblies, as this is reported of Mary the mother of Mark. But even when we remove the exaggeration of the legend, and reduce the primitive Christian community of goods to its historical kernel—that is to say, to a standing provision for the care of all the poor of the community out of common means, and especially by the common brother-meal—yet this still remains a fact of great importance. The fantastic hopes of the time were here transmuted into practical deeds;

the dream of the Apocalyptic kingdom of the Messiah had here become the reality of a fraternal association of the children of God. The way was here being prepared for the grandest, boldest, and at the same time purest social regeneration of the world; and that, too, in the narrow circle of simple and quiet men, not in the spirit of selfishness and violence, but of ministering and enduring love which saw its pattern in Jesus, the friend of the poor and needy, and found in Him the surety of its victory. Not in dogmas which did not arise till later, but in these miracles of love, lie the impelling forces by which Christianity has overcome the world, and first and chiefly the world of the poor and despised, of the unwise and weak, the oppressed and ill-used, the hungering and weeping, the abandoned and lost. To them all the brotherhood of Jesus opened a refuge, where in the comforting and helping sympathy of the brethren they felt a foretaste of the future kingdom of God, in which God should wipe away all tears from their eyes.

## LECTURE V.

### THE APOSTLE PAUL.

#### *I. HIS THEOLOGY.*

THE oldest community at Jerusalem was distinguished, as we have seen, from the other Jews at first only by the fact that its members hoped to see in the Messiah, whose early coming all expected, their crucified Lord Jesus coming again. That in this one point of difference a wholly new principle is contained, whose consequence would lead to a breach with Judaism and to a new world-religion, was what no one had any presentiment of in this society. The first disturbance of what were at first peaceful relations between the Christ-believing community and Judaism, proceeded from the Hellenist Stephen. The Hellenistic Jews of the dispersion (*Diaspora*), on account of their manifold intercourse with the Greek world of culture, had never been so rigidly legal in their sentiment as the Palestinian Jews. Many elements of Greek thought had

found admission among them, and had shaken the simplicity of the Jewish belief so far that they were only now able to make a compromise with many Jewish doctrines and usages by means of allegorical interpretation. Hence they had from the outset a more unprejudiced eye for the reforming originality of the personality of Jesus and for the consequences of His death. We may hold it as very probable that the Hellenist Stephen in his disputations with the Jews gave expression to these freer views, although the accusation raised against him—namely, that he advocated the abolition of the temple worship and of the Mosaic law by Jesus—is in this definite form perhaps not quite correct, but may have been a statement made up by false witnesses, as the author of the Acts of the Apostles relates. The discourse, however, which he represents Stephen as delivering, was so sharply anti-Judaic in its point that it serves rather to confirm than to refute that accusation. At all events, the fact that Stephen fell as the victim of Jewish fanaticism is an unambiguous proof of the fact that his bearing wounded the Jewish feeling, and therefore that it must have been very different from the previous Jewish conservatism of the Palestinian Christians. If it was the intention of Stephen to liberate Christianity from the fetters of Judaism, his martyr-death availed more for the fulfilment of this end than his life could have done; for at the sight of



this bloody spectacle, the sting had pierced into the soul of the Pharisee Paul, and it gave him no rest until from a persecutor he had been changed into a follower of Stephen.

We are accustomed to reckon the conversion of Paul as among the greatest and most incontestable miracles of Biblical history; and certainly this sudden transformation of the passionate enemy of the Christians into the enthusiastic apostle of Christ, was indeed one of those extraordinary spiritual experiences which always retain something obscure and mysterious to our understanding, because we are never able to demonstrate with mathematical certainty the causal connection of the processes which were carried out in the depths of his soul. But if "miracle" is to be understood in the sense that here a natural psychological connection is generally not thinkable, and that we are compelled absolutely to hold the conversion of Paul to be an effect of supernatural causes and of heavenly appearances of objective reality, then I must confess that I am unable to see such necessity in the case. Certainly Paul was convinced in that decisive moment near Damascus that he had seen Jesus as the heavenly Christ, as the "Lord of Glory" in the splendour of the light of heaven; but what is there to prevent us from explaining this seeing as a subjective vision springing out of the inner depths of his soul? I consider that this explanation obtains the highest probability when

we know, first, that Paul was generally much disposed to such visionary states, and secondly, that he must have found himself on the way to Damascus in such a frame of mind as, according to all the analogies of experience, would be highly favourable to the occurring of visionary experiences. In the former regard it is to be remembered that Paul himself (2 Cor. xii. 1 ff.) speaks of "visions and revelations of the Lord" (in the plural), when he was transported into the third heaven and heard words which it is not lawful for a man to utter—and whether he was then in the body or out of the body he could not tell; and in the same connection he speaks of a "thorn in the flesh," of "buffetings of an angel of Satan," in connection with which, according to a very probable hypothesis, we may think of epileptic attacks. It is well known that men who are affected with such a disease are necessarily disposed in an extraordinary degree to ecstasies and hallucinations. Moreover, we know of two particular cases in which Paul, when in a critical situation, was determined to a decisive resolution by a revelation or by a vision in a dream—the first time before the journey to the Apostolic Council (Gal. ii. 2), and the other time before he passed over to Europe (Acts xvi. 9); from which we may infer that states of intense psychical excitement and tension in him were wont to receive their solution and decision in visionary form. Now, that Paul upon the way to Damascus found himself in a state of violent

spiritual excitement and tension is certainly conceivable enough. He came from bloody persecution, and was intent on continuing such persecutions. But the motive for doing so lay, not in a coarse delight in cruelty, but in his religious consciousness: it was zeal for God which made the struggle against the preachers of a crucified Messiah appear to him as a duty. But while this zeal, which rested upon acquired Jewish prejudices, determined his conduct, in the depths of his soul there flowed an undercurrent of feelings and thoughts which drew him in an opposite direction. The question was, Can a crucified one be the Messiah as the Christians assert? To this question the Pharisee must necessarily answer, No; for a crucified Messiah would be the end of the national Messianic hope, and at the same time of the Law, which pronounces the curse upon one who is crucified (Gal. iii. 13). But against this No of the Pharisees there rose other voices pressing for the affirmation of that question—voices which sprang from the depths of the human heart, of its own moral experiences, struggles, and needs. The Pharisee Paul had striven after the strictest fulfilment of the law; yet his conscience had never come to rest with it all. His doing had never corresponded to his willing; the impassable gulf between the Ideal of the righteousness required by God and the reality of his human performance had produced in him that deep feeling of pain to which he still gives such powerful expression in the Epistle to

the Romans, when, looking back to that experience, he exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now, if he compared with this, his peaceless and joyless zeal for the law, the peace and joyfulness which the belief in Christ awakened and maintained in those who confessed it even under the bitterest sufferings, would not then the thought necessarily arise within him that yet after all the higher truth might be on the side of the Christian's belief? But the belief in a crucified Christ, was it not the opposite of all Jewish hope, the annihilation of the glorious Ideals of the future which had been the consolation of so many generations of pious Israelites? Yet the Christian belief in the Messiah Jesus was certainly the condemnation of the Messianic Ideal, in which the national egoism and carnal eudæmonism of Judaism had found its expression and sought its satisfaction. But who would then guarantee that these Jewish thoughts were also really the thoughts of God? that it really was the purpose of the world-governing God to help the Jewish people to a glorious victory over all the peoples of the earth by a warlike Messianic King? Did there not stand already in the Sacred Scriptures by the side of this carnal Messianic Ideal of the Pharisees another picture of the servant of God, which did not flatter Jewish vanity, but all the more sympathetically appealed to the pure tender feeling of the pious heart of Paul—the picture in

Isaiah of the meek teacher and innocent sufferer, that picture which accorded so wonderfully with what the Christians told of their Jesus? However violently the Pharisee in Paul's breast might revolt against the possibility of a crucified Messiah, there still dwelt in this breast another, a *human* soul, which felt itself irresistibly attracted by the moral greatness of the sufferer, who humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, to the death of the cross, in order to enter, through the lowliness of the form of an earthly servant, into the dignity of heavenly Messianic dominion. If we picture to ourselves how these two souls in Paul's breast struggled with each other during his journey to Damascus—struggled as for life or death, for heaven or hell—and if we bring home to our minds how, in addition to this terrible inner conflict, which pressed for decision in face of the near approach to Damascus, there came the exhaustion of the weak body from the toilsome ride over the glowing sand of the desert, was it a miracle if the exhausted powers collapsed, and while the external senses were wrapped in darkness a light rose in the soul in which it believed that it saw the heavenly Messiah Jesus, and if the reproachful voice of the conscience clothed itself in the words of a voice from heaven, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"? This ecstatic seeing and hearing was the solution of the sore inner conflict, was the

victorious breaking through of *the* light, which had already struggled in the soul of Paul to overcome the dark clouds of his Jewish prejudice ; it was the revelation of the Son of God within His spirit, the gleaming up of the knowledge of the splendour of the light of God on the face of Christ Jesus, as Paul himself has described his experience of it (Gal. i. 16 ; 2 Cor. iv. 6). Undoubtedly it was a "*revelation*" which here fell to the lot of Paul ; not indeed a revelation of sensuous realities of a superterrestrial kind, but a revelation of the spirit of the Son of God, or of the divine truth which was reflected from the form of the suffering Saviour with heavenly clearness, and took the heart of Paul for ever captive.

When, under the care of friendly Christians, he had come to himself again, he had become another man, "a new creature," for whom the old had passed away and all things had become new—new his world and new his self ; the world was crucified to him and he to the world : not merely his estimation of the sensible things of the world was changed, but also his spiritual world ; all that had hitherto been his pride and his comfort as a Jew had broken down and been annihilated, and in the universal ruin he found his one only point of hold and support in the cross of Christ ; and therefore henceforth he desired to know and preach of nothing but Christ the crucified One, who was his life and love. "I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not

I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). That he immediately after this agitating catastrophe began to teach and to dispute, as the Acts of the Apostles narrates, has little probability in itself, and does not agree with the statement of Paul himself that he retired forthwith to Arabia. We may easily surmise with what he occupied himself in this time of quiet retirement. It was now requisite to build up, in place of the shattered world of Jewish faith and hope, the new world of Christian thoughts, which resulted as consequences and presuppositions from the knowledge of the crucified Christ; for this man of deep religious feeling and of fiery fancy, this man of ecstasies and visions, was at the same time a religious thinker of the first rank. What he felt he continually made the object of his reflection, in order to comprehend it in thought and to prove it to himself and others as truth. Thus he became the creator of the doctrinal form of the Christian faith, a comprehensive new view of the world, the creator of Christian *theology*.

If we inquire as to the origin of the Pauline theology, the apostle himself answers us clearly and concisely: "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 12). How is this possible? one may ask. The apostle of Jesus Christ, who had not personally known the Master, disclaims being instructed about Him even by

historical tradition! However paradoxical this may sound, yet the correctness of this self-testimony—to be understood *cum grano salis*—cannot be doubted, for it is confirmed by a look into his Epistles. Apart from the facts of the death on the cross and the appearances after the resurrection, other traditions concerning the life or the teaching of Jesus have contributed nothing to the theology of Paul. The few sayings of Jesus which we find cited by him refer only to incidental moral questions and never to a dogmatic doctrine. The Pauline statement concerning the Lord's Supper deviates so greatly from the oldest evangelical account, that we do not know how much of it may belong to tradition and how much to the personal inspiration of Paul. Even where he sets forth Christ as a moral example, he reflects only upon the incarnation and the death of Christ, not upon his earthly conduct and life (2 Cor. viii. 9; Phil. ii. 5 f.) His gospel was the preaching of the cross and the proclamation of *the* Christ, who is no longer flesh but spirit, and who had revealed himself in immediate spiritual intuition (2 Cor. v. 16; 1 Cor. ix. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 6). Now so far as this spiritual Christ is a product of religious speculation, he stands certainly, in truth of human life and concrete intelligibility, far behind the picture which the Gospels have given us of the historical Jesus on the basis of the oldest tradition. Yet on the other hand it is not to be overlooked that the Pauline Christ is not an arbitrary fiction or an empty phantom, but the personi-



fied Ideal of man as the Son of God, and therefore the Ideal of the same religious moral sentiment which had formed the kernel of the universal historic significance of the historical Jesus. That Paul took this Ideal kernel out of its temporal and popular husk and made it the centre of the Christian faith and the essential object of the appropriation and imitation of the Christians—this was of immense importance for the world-mission of the Gospel. True as it is that the spiritual Christ of the Pauline preaching rests upon an abstraction, which may appear poor in comparison with the fulness of life in the real historical Jesus, yet it is also certain that it was only by this abstraction from all externalities and contingencies in its manifestation that the Ideal principle of the religion revealed in Jesus could be put in such clear light that its truth might be made luminous and noble—as holding good universally for the humanity of all peoples and all times.

The deepest source of the theology of Paul was therefore the revelation of the spirit of Christ in his heart—that is to say, the religious experience in which the spiritual nature of Jesus was recognised by him and felt as the saving truth, and grasped in the obedience of faith. This *inner religious experience* was the ground upon which the certainty of his conviction of faith rested; it was the well-spring which ever again permeated the intellectual movements of his theological

Gnosis and Rabbinical dialectics with the vital forces of religious mysticism and moral inspiration. Only by keeping this in view shall we be able to understand the powerful influence of Paul upon the heathen world and to estimate his theology correctly; for there is undoubtedly in this theology much that may make a surprising and chilling impression. The material out of which Paul built up the structure of his theological thought consisted not merely of gold and precious stones, but also in part of ignoble and perishing things. With this judgment we do him no wrong, but merely repeat his own testimony, that he bore his heavenly treasure in earthen vessels. No wonder, therefore, that the judgments about Paul are still more widely divergent than those regarding almost any other character in the history of religion. Some are so carried away by the treasure of his religious truths that they readily overlook the earthen vessel of his theological doctrine, and elevate him to be the unconditional authority for all times; while others, again, have only an eye for the perishing vessel, for the Jewish Rabbinical form of his mode of teaching, and therefore find him repellent and unamiable. But it is the task of the historian to avoid either of these two extremes: he has at once to put the heroic greatness of the apostle and the enduring value of his theology into light, and at the same time frankly to recognise his individual and historical limitation for his time.

This limitation consists simply in this, that even as the apostle of Christ he could not deny the Jewish theologian and the disciple of the Pharisees. Undoubtedly the religious centre of his life and the moral goal of his striving had become different from what they once were; but if his anxiety now was how to express the new living content in doctrinal form, this could only be done by means of the ideas and associations of ideas lying ready in his consciousness, and these all bore the stamp of the Jewish theology of which he had been a zealous student till his conversion. Its influence shows itself, above all, in his method of demonstration or his employment of Scripture. The two are really identical,—for Paul shows himself to be a genuine son of his race in this, that his thinking always remained positive throughout: it was a reflecting on the basis of given authorities, a connecting of the new revelation with that which was deposited as the old revelation in the Sacred Scriptures, a proving from the words of the inspired text of what had become certain to himself in quite another way, through inner experience and discernment. The conviction of the verbal inspiration of the Biblical writings which ruled in the Jewish school was held by Paul as a self-evident presupposition. “The Scripture saith,” “The Scripture foresaw,” “The Scripture had concluded under sin,”—in such expressions the Scripture wholly represents the place of God; it is, as

it were, the will of God itself incorporated in the Holy Book. This super-naturalistic theory of inspiration and idolatry of Scripture had, however, in Paul, as generally, a twofold consequence: on the one hand, a slavish bondage to the letter of the individual passage, which is removed from its connection and taken apart from its historical relations, as the utterance of a divine oracle, and thus applied as a proof of the remotest things; on the other hand, at the same time the freest interpretation of the letter by the introduction of a different so-called spiritual sense along with or instead of the proper sense of the words. This method of "allegorising" is invariably the natural consequence of the overstrained theory of inspiration, the reaction and self-help of the human mind, which can save its self-activity only by this artificial method in face of the letter of tradition, when it is accepted as infallible. In the Jewish theology both of Palestine and Alexandria, this method of the allegorical interpretation of Scripture had in Paul's time been long universally dominant, and therefore we need not wonder at all that Paul has also applied it most ingeniously without any doubt of its justification and demonstrativeness. I refer you to the allegories of Sarah and Hagar (Gal. iv. 21 ff.), or that of the threshing oxen (1 Cor. ix. 9), or that of the veiling of the face of Moses (2 Cor. iii. 13), or that of the seed of Abraham (Gal. iii. 16). Luther's judgment regarding these allegories

—namely, that they are not tenable—holds true also of most of the other Scripture proofs of Paul; they mostly attach a meaning to the Biblical citations which does not accord with the original sense of the words, and indeed is in part quite foreign to it. Hence the Jews especially who were familiar with the Old Testament received the impression that the proofs of Paul were capricious, and even a falsification of the word of God. But *we* ought never to forget in this connection that the truth of the theological thought of Paul is wholly independent of these proofs, because it rests upon his religious experience and intuition, and is therefore a spontaneous product of his Christian thinking, for which the positive Scripture proofs were sought only as supplementary, in conformity with Jewish custom.

The Jewish theology of that time has also furnished rich contribution to the contents of the Pauline theology; and this holds true of both its forms, the Palestinian and the Alexandrian. It may be disputed whether Paul knew the Alexandrian religious philosopher Philo, his contemporary: I hold this to be incapable of being proved, but undoubtedly he knew the book of the 'Wisdom of Solomon,' written by an Alexandrian Jew shortly before Philo, and he diligently used it. The dualism of the spirit and the flesh, of the heavenly and the earthly man, which rules the whole of its view of the world, was also of great importance for the whole Pauline theology. As according to the

Alexandrian, so likewise according to Paul the natural man is merely "flesh"—that is to say, an animated earthly being endowed with consciousness and understanding, but wholly wanting the divine spirit, and therefore completely incapable both of the knowledge of spiritual things or divine truths, and of the fulfilment of the divine will or of really good willing and doing: the power for both can come to the natural man only from without and from above, through a divine communication of the holy spirit. In this Paul quite agrees with the Alexandrian view, as is unequivocally proved by passages exactly parallel, even partly in the words in detail; as for example in 1 Cor. ii. and in the Book of Wisdom in chapters viii. and ix. But while the question as to how man shall attain to the higher spiritual power of the true and good always remained with the Alexandrian problematical and an individual task, this question found in Paul's view a definite solution in faith in Christ as "The Lord who is the Spirit," and from whom the divine spirit became the constantly working power in the midst of the Christian community. Paul therefore started indeed from the dualism common to him with his time, of spirit and flesh, heavenly and earthly world; but this dualism—and this is what was distinctively new in his view—was overcome in principle in the *one* person of Jesus Christ, the spiritual man who sprang from heaven and was elevated to heaven; and from this *one* historical

point the advancing subdual of it, through the abiding dominion of the spirit of Christ in the Christian community, is once for all secured. The overcoming in principle of this dualism in the person of Christ is indeed at first still represented by Paul in a quite supernatural form—that is, to speak more precisely, it is not the earthly person of Jesus, but the transformation which took place with him through his death and resurrection, in which Paul sees the earthly flesh overcome and the spirit of the heavenly man set free as the animating principle of a new humanity (1 Cor. xv. 45 ff.) But how was it possible for the earthly man Jesus to become through the resurrection the animating spirit if he had not also been already essentially spirit? The resuscitation is thus at bottom, according to Paul, only the full realisation of that which the earthly Jesus had already been potentially—spiritual man, Son and Image of God. But the earthly Jesus could only be this, according to Paul's way of thinking, because He sprang not from the earth but from heaven; the heavenly pre-existence of Christ, which Paul first taught, was for him the logical postulate for the explanation of what Christ became through His death and resurrection—namely, the heavenly head of the community of the children of God, the well-spring of the new spiritual life of humanity. But even this doctrine of the heavenly pre-existence of Christ has its starting-point in a theory of the Alexandrian

philosophy of religion—namely, in its distinction between the ideal heavenly man who is immediately created after God's image, and the earthly man who is the sensibly dimmed and sensually differentiated likeness of that image. This theory, resting on the Platonic idealism, appears even before Paul to have had an influence upon the rabbinical interpretation of Scripture, seeing that they read out of the narrative of the creation in Genesis i. the creation of a double Adam, the heavenly and the earthly Adam. Now, as this heavenly or ideal man came into very near approach to the heavenly Son of man, or the Messiah of the Apocalyptic literature, it is very possible, although not yet proved, that the identification of the two closely related ideas had already begun before Paul's time. In any case this much is certain, that we find it carried out in Paul; and in fact nothing could be more natural than this combination of the ideal man of the Hellenist speculation and of the Christ Jesus exalted to heaven as he lived in the faith of the community and as Paul had beheld him in the vision of his conversion — a combination which laid the foundation for the whole subsequent Christology of the Church. This view undoubtedly stepped beyond the bounds of the earthly historical reality; the earthly life of Jesus had become an episode between his heavenly anterior life and after-life, and indeed an episode which rested upon a free act of the heavenly Son of man, his



voluntary self-renunciation and self-humiliation, when he exchanged the heavenly glory for the serving form of the mortal flesh (Phil. ii. 5 ff.; 2 Cor. viii. 9). Although these conceptions, already prelude of the Gnostic speculations, may appear to us somewhat strange now, yet we ought not to overlook the fact that they were to Paul, because they lay ready in the notions of his time, only the natural frame for one of the profoundest ideas in the history of religion. This Pauline Christ, the heavenly ideal man and "head" of the whole of humanity (1 Cor. xi. 3), who enters into history in order to overcome the flesh and to communicate His spirit as an animating principle to men His brethren, in order that they all may become like His example and "that He might be the first-born among many brethren" (Romans viii. 3-29)—what is he but *the personified idea of man as the child of God*, as Jesus had thought Him and realised Him in Himself, the idea of the man who indeed as an earthly being is at first fettered under the ban of the sensuous nature, but who has from the very outset the destination and the capacity to be liberated from this ban through the power of the spirit, and elevated to be a child and image of God? Liberation from the sensuousness and transitoriness of earth and elevation to the true eternal life of the divine spirit—this was the object of the divining and longing of antiquity as it was passing away, and especially of the Hellenic world; and to

this longing the Gospel of Paul brought the welcome fulfilment through faith in Christ as the Lord of heaven, who is the spirit and who makes the powers of the spirit stream out from Himself to His brethren, who become with Him *one* spirit and *one* body. That this liberating spiritual power had not come from within, from the historical development of humanity itself, but from without and from above through the miraculous incarnation of the heavenly man Christ—this supernatural mode of representing it was undoubtedly the tribute which Paul has paid to the dualistic mode of thinking characteristic of his time; but instead of taking offence at this supernatural form of his Christology, we ought to consider that it was *only* at *this* price that the evil of the undeified world was to be healed, and the breach which had been effectuated in the consciousness of men between this world and the world beyond, between the human and divine, was to be reconciled. The Gospel which Paul brought to the world was in fact "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans i. 16), but a power of God which concealed itself in the form of human weakness; it was a heavenly treasure, but in an earthen vessel which was to be broken in the course of time.

Almost even more important than the influence of the Alexandrian theory upon Paul's doctrine of Christ and of the Spirit, was the influence of the Palestinian Phariseean theology upon the apostle's doctrine of

atonement and justification. The *Phariseean theology* had construed the religious relationship from legal points of view throughout; the righteousness of man rests upon a divine judgment which strikes the balance between the sum of the meritorious performances of man, or his fulfilment of the commandments on the one hand and of his transgressions of the commandments or his trespasses on the other hand. Sin, although provoked by the natural evil impulse, is yet always a free deed by which the doer contracts a definite measure of guiltiness that demands punishment or expiation. Sin is a guilty debt which God causes to be paid to Him somehow; forgiveness without payment, according to the Phariseean assumption, holds as little of God as in the case of a human judge. For the averting of the punishment which man has deserved by his sin, he therefore requires a compensating atonement, which may consist in definite performances or expiations that are to be calculated according to the measure of the guilt. Good works, voluntary mortifications, innocently endured sufferings, were the appropriate means for the appeasement of the divine wrath and the turning away of the deserved punishment. But all the performances and expiations of individuals do not suffice to bring out with certainty a favourable balance of the heavenly account, because in most men their merits and their guilt so hold the equilibrium that an overplus of the former remains doubtful. Hence,

according to the Jewish theology, it is of great importance that the superfluous merit of the eminently just may be imputed to sinners for the covering of their own defects. Next to the merits of the Fathers of Israel, which always avail for the good of the whole people, the merits of contemporary just men are also of such common saving efficacy that they are able to save a whole generation from the penal judgment of the divine wrath. And not merely the meritorious doings, but also the innocent sufferings of the just, may be imputed to sinners as vicarious atonement; in particular, the martyr-death of a just man has the force of an expiatory sacrifice, by which the divine punishments are bought off in favour of the whole people. The more just a sufferer was, so much the less did he require the merit of his death as a compensation for his own trespasses, and so much the greater, therefore, is the overplus of merit which may be vicariously imputed to those who are His. Nor was it merely to their own living generation but also to the dead that the atoning power of the sufferings of eminently pious men was held to extend.

This theory of a vicarious atonement, in which we may perceive a juristic distortion of the ethical thought of Isaiah liii., was indeed never referred by the Pharisean school to the Messiah, because the worldly political direction of their Messianic idea excluded the thought of His suffering and dying. But when the Pharisee Paul, after his conversion, recognised the

Messiah in the crucified Jesus, and began to reflect upon the significance and the purpose of this death on the cross, it was quite natural that he should apply the universal theory of his school to the special case of the martyr-death of Jesus, and should therefore see in this death an expiation contrived by God for the atonement of the sinful world, for our redemption from the curse of the law, for the acquisition of our righteousness (Romans iii. 25; 2 Cor. v. 19 ff.; Gal. iii. 19). But a righteousness which is effectuated by the vicarious expiation of another is not conditioned by one's own doing, but is imputed to the believer as a gift of the divine grace. It has therefore no reference to the law which demands personal performances, and therefore may just as much be shared in by the believing heathen as by the Jew. Thus the death of Christ, as expiating the sin of the world, is the abrogation of the privileges of the Jew, the end of the law, and the founding of a universal salvation. This doctrine of Paul is extremely remarkable because, starting from the juristic theory of Phariseeism and operating with its categories, it at last comes to a result which abrogates the legal religion of Judaism, and puts in its place the Gospel of God's universal will of grace. This *result* of the Pauline doctrine of the atonement freed Christianity from the fetters of Judaism, and raised it to the position of an independent new religion, the universal religion. This was what was permanently valuable in the Pauline

doctrine, an acquisition which the Church has always held fast. On the other hand, the dogmatic *mediation* through which Paul attained to this result was always left out of view by the ancient Church, because it lacked understanding of the juristic categories of the Pauline doctrine of atonement and justification. It was the Protestant theology which first laid hold of this side of the Pauline doctrine, and turned it to account as a weapon against the legalism of the Catholic Church. Yet there were not wanting those even from the beginning of the Reformation who felt themselves more repelled than attracted by this form of doctrine, and at the present day it is perhaps the most contested part of the doctrine of the Protestant Church.

This is intelligible enough, for in fact it cannot be denied that that theory of vicarious atonement and imputed righteousness makes a very strange and chilling impression upon us—at least if we attend only to its verbal expression, and especially if we overlook the ethical religious feelings by which Paul was able to breathe warm life into the dry skeleton of his Phariseean categories. We feel ourselves transported back by it into the region of the juridical apprehension of religion, above which we yet feel ourselves far elevated as Christians by the Gospel of the Sonship of God. And, on the other hand, earnest questions and scruples regarding it press themselves upon our intellectual reflection, and these have not been solved by Paul, because,

from being accustomed to think in the categories of the Pharisees, he never felt these difficulties, never put these questions to himself.

Such above all is *the* question, Why was a vicarious atonement by the death of Christ needed at all, if God was always the gracious Father who—as Paul himself teaches—has already proved His love when we were yet sinners by the sending of His Son? God was indeed, as Paul says, He who was reconciling the world, and not He who was reconciled: for what purpose then, we ask, was the dispensation of the bloody expiation in the death of His Son required? Was it that God owed this to His own righteousness? But His righteousness cannot possibly be at discord with His love; and besides, according to Paul, the righteousness of God is just manifested in this, that he justifies the believing sinner, redeems him from sin, but does not demand punishment. Or was it that the expiation was to be performed to the law? But the law is precisely, according to Paul (a point to which we shall soon come), a merely temporary expression of the Divine will, the abrogation of which through Christ was already contemplated from the beginning. It was only given by God as “a schoolmaster unto Christ” for the time of pupilage. How, then, can the law, which is only a subservient element in the economy of the revelation of Divine grace, lay claim to the satisfaction of its penal demand by the death of that same

Christ who was even from the beginning its final end, its Lord? A logical solution of these contradictions has never been given nor can be given, but they are explained psychologically thus: the law demanding expiation, or the wrathful will of God on the one side, and the atoning and justifying gracious will of God on the other side, are the expression of the two souls which always struggled with each other in the breast of the Pharisee and the apostle Paul — namely, the legal Jewish soul and the evangelical Christian soul. True, in him the apostle triumphs over the Pharisee, but not without bearing thenceforth on himself the scars of the conflict: as a Christian, Paul feels himself liberated from the law, but when he reflects on the ground and right of this liberation, he can only think of it as mediated and produced by a process of law, which is carried on between God, Christ, and mankind, and which is entirely rooted in the soil of the juristic theology of Phariseism. But on that account we are justified in regarding this Jewish juristic form of Paul's doctrine of atonement and justification, as well as the Hellenistic mythological form of his Christology, as belonging to what is transitory in his teaching, which can no longer claim any binding authority over us. But let us look well to it that with the perishing husk we do not at the same time lose the permanently valuable kernel which it conceals and contains.

As the mythological notion of the pre-existent



heavenly man and his incarnation in sinful flesh conceals in itself the idea of the divine spiritual man, who is however subject to the conditions of finitude, so we recognise in Paul's doctrine of the atonement the profound idea hidden under Jewish mythology, which since the Gospel of Jesus forms the kernel of Christian truth, the eternal law of the divine order of salvation, Die and live again! The death of Christ is indeed, according to Paul, primarily the objective act of expiation carried out in Christ as the vicarious head of mankind. But what gives this its worth before God, and its efficient power over our consciousness, is the ethical disposition of faithful obedience and of voluntary sacrificing love, which Christ has authenticated in that he has not thought the being equal with God a robbery, as did the first Adam, but he humbled himself in obedience to God's will, even to the death on the cross—and that he became poor for our sakes, and gave Himself for us. This "righteous act" of the second Adam (Romans v. 18) is that by which the offence of the first Adam was expiated and the forgiving love of God guaranteed to all those who are "in Christ"—*i.e.*, who become so personally one with Him that His spirit and mind also become theirs. The external vicarious relationship is therefore deepened by Paul into a relationship of spiritual unity, in which the believer also makes his own the spirit of obedience and of self-denying

love, which Christ has demonstrated by His death ; and he consequently lives over again in himself the death of Christ in a spiritual repetition — that is to say, in the mortifying of the naturally selfish ego. And as in the case of Christ the living for God followed the death for sin (Romans vi. 10), so the believers likewise, when they die with Christ according to their old man, enter into a newness of life in which they are here already “new creatures” and experience a foretaste of the future perfection at the resurrection. Thus viewed, Christ’s death and resurrection are no longer merely a historical event that happened once, and whose effect might avail for our good by imputation, but we recognise in it with Paul the symbolical revelation of the universal order of salvation—namely, that only through the surrender of the naturally selfish ego the true spiritual life of man is won. Thus the Pauline doctrine of redemption, by the circuitous way of the Phariseean legal theory of expiation, yet comes again at last to the simple religious moral fundamental truth which formed the basis of the Gospel of Jesus. If we can no longer accept the notion of a bloody expiation carried out on an innocent one for the satisfaction of justice and the buying off of the curse of the law, yet we recognise the abiding truth of the thought lying under that dogmatic veil, that the holy love of God cannot otherwise redeem and save sinful man than by the

judgment upon sin, as it executes itself not indeed outside of us, but within us in the painful severance of the Ego from its naturally selfish desires, and in the humble and obedient self-surrender of the self to God's holy will.

From this point of view we also understand the Pauline doctrine of "justification by faith" more correctly than is usual in the popular apprehension of it, according to which the foreign merit of Christ is placed to the credit of the sinner, simply on the ground of his holding this doctrine to be true and trusting in it. Against this view, which certainly seems to have support in certain turns of the Pauline expressions, there are raised well-founded objections such as these: How can God declare the sinner to be just on account of extraneous merits without contradiction of the truth and therefore of His own holy nature? Or—viewed from the side of man—How can the sinner hope to pass as righteous before the holy God, merely because he holds this doctrine to be true, which is indeed a mere act of the intellect which hardly touches the moral nature of man? Again, whether trusting to an extraneous vicarious merit can make a man actually personally good and pleasing to God, or would not rather lead him away into moral indolence, and therefore would just keep him away from that striving after Godlike perfectness which Jesus has prescribed to us? Certainly these are very grave objections to the popular appre-

hension of justification by faith, especially when it is so carefully distinguished from regeneration and sanctification as has been done by the Protestant dogmatics. But all the more decidedly must it be remembered that this popular view is not just to the meaning of the Pauline doctrine, for according to Paul faith is not merely the theoretical act of holding a dogmatic doctrine to be true, nor is it merely an idle trust in extraneous merits, but it is an act of the heart (Romans x. 10), of the whole undivided man, who surrenders himself in obedience to the divine revelation in Christ, who lays hold of Christ after he is laid hold of by Him and so becomes *one* spirit with Him, that he is in Christ and Christ in him. This mysticism of the Pauline conception of faith (which signifies only in another form the same as what Jesus meant by the words, "Follow Me and learn of Me") has to be kept well in view in order to understand his utterances regarding the effects of faith. These effects are comprised by Paul more distinctly in the conception of the "Sonship of God" than in the juristic conception of "justification"; "for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26)—that is to say, whoever becomes spiritually one, *one* heart and *one* mind with Christ in faith, enters thereby into the same relationship of Son to God in which Christ stands; he therefore sees in God no longer the angry judge but the loving Father who forgives the guilt and redeems from the evil, it being always pre-

supposed that the individual will let himself be redeemed from it and be educated to true goodness. What else is this but just that trustful childlike love of God to which Jesus has also already encouraged us by teaching us to know God as the Father? And as this trustful childlike disposition is not possible without the surrender of one's own will to the holy will of God, it is clear that in this religious disposition the genuine God-pleasing morality is contained, and consequently the objections previously mentioned become here quite inapplicable.

For the whole of this Christian state of soul, which, along with religious vivification, at the same time includes moral inspiration, Paul has coined the two specific conceptions, "to be in Christ" and "to be" or "live in the spirit"; and by the very fact that the two conceptions cover and mutually explain each other, each of them gains a deep significance. When Paul designates the Christians briefly as "those who live in Christ," this signifies not merely that they belong to the Christian community, and not merely that they confess the doctrine of Jesus, nor even merely that they hope for the future of the heavenly Christ and the benefits promised by Him; but it signifies that they share in the spiritual life which is ideally revealed in Christ and which is active in those who are His, as the principle of a new existence liberated from the bonds of the flesh, of sin, of death, and of the world.

All that was still temporarily and nationally limited in the belief in Christ is therewith stripped off; the belief is raised into the region of pure spirituality, and consequently of universally human ideality: "the Lord is the Spirit, but where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." On the other hand, when Paul says of the Christians that they live in the spirit, he means not merely that they receive individual gifts of the spirit and have experienced miraculous operations of the spirit—such as it is usual to see in the speaking in tongues, prophesying, and powers of healing—but he thinks that their whole personal living, thinking, feeling, and willing stands under the constant dominion of the divine spirit revealed in Christ, and that therefore not merely individual miraculous powers are bestowed upon them, but that their whole man has experienced a miraculous transformation, a regeneration after the image of Christ and God. With this the sensuous and fantastic magical and ecstatic element, which had still adhered to the new Christian spirit, was stripped off, or at least repressed, and its nature as truly spiritual—*i.e.*, morally-religious—was now first understood; and with this the bridge was first made from the Apocalyptic transcendence to the permanent inwardness and historical development of Christianity. And this leading of the Christian spirit on from the first unordered and extravagant enthusiasm into the path of an ordered and circumspect direction of life

and formation of character, the fundamental condition of the order of a lasting community and of the ecclesiastical existence of Christianity, was accomplished by that very apostle who could boast above others of his speaking in tongues and of his visions and revelations; and this is in fact the most marvellous proof of the extraordinary religious and moral originality of the apostle Paul.

The new life in the spirit, as Paul understands it, expresses itself on all sides of the human personality. In the feeling heart first of all, the love of God is shed abroad by the Holy Spirit so that it becomes an object of personal experience (Romans v. 5): thereby in place of the feeling of fear there enters the childlike trust, the "peace and joy" which hold out under the manifold suffering of the world, because they rest upon the certainty that God is with us, and that nothing can separate us from His love—nay, that all things must work together for good to them that love God (Romans viii. 28 ff.) And along with the experience on the side of feeling, the spirit at the same time attains the clear knowledge of the divine good of salvation in the form of thought, because the Christian possesses the spirit from God which searches the deep things of the Godhead; and because he possesses the "understanding of Christ"—that is to say, the intimate knowledge of God that is proper to the Son of God—he has therefore in matters of religious truth an independent

judgment which gives itself up to no external authority,—“ he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man ” (1 Cor. ii. 15). But it is especially the moral willing and doing to which the renovating and sanctifying operation of the Christian spirit is related. Paul had all the more reason to emphasise this point, as his doctrine of justification by faith and of the end of the law had been frequently misinterpreted in a libertine sense both by friends and foes. In opposition to this it was incumbent to show that the same spirit of sonship which transfers us from the position of the law into that of grace, includes the obligation as well as the power for a new mode of conduct in which the will of God is fulfilled better than under the law. The power which the law was not able to give, because the natural impulses always resisted its forbidding letter, is effected by the spirit of Christ, seeing that this spirit has a higher vital impulse which is victoriously superior to the sinful natural impulses. Sin is no longer Lord over the Christian, because “the love of Christ constraineth him” (2 Cor. v. 14). In this movement of the holy spirit lies the impulse of all that is good, for “love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans xiii. 10). Here the will of God is no longer a dead and deadening letter, which by its bidding and forbidding resists the contradiction of the self-will; but it has become the very will of the man himself, the free and joyous



impulse of the heart which, from its own impulse of childlike love, fulfils the will of the Father. The spirit of the liberty of the children of God is at the same time the new law which binds to God and binds the brethren together in obedience and love. With this there was set up a *new moral principle* of the greatest range, a principle which is elevated as far above the unfree legality of Judaism as above the arbitrary abasement of heathenism. It was the religious anticipation of the thought of the idealistic ethics, as Schiller has glorified it in the beautiful verse:—

“ But fly the boundary of the Senses ; live  
The ideal life free Thought can give ;  
And, lo, the gulf shall vanish, and the chill  
Of the soul's impotent despair be gone !  
And with Divinity thou sharest the throne,  
Let but Divinity become thy will !  
Scorn not the Law—permit its iron band to thrall  
The sense, it cannot chain the soul.  
Let man no more the will of God withstand,  
And God the bolt lets fall.”

And if we look to the two ancient moral systems about whose excellences the contemporaries of Paul in the Græco-Roman world disputed, we may say that the proud dignity of the Stoic and the sympathetic grace of the Epicurean have found their highest synthesis in the ethical principle, as Paul deduced it from the faith in Christ. For the faith that is active through love places the personality by itself over

against the world; by binding it to God it makes it independent of the fear of man and of the care of the world, and therefore grounds an autonomy and inwardness of the personal Christianity which is not inferior to the Stoical freedom. But the very same faith binds at the same time through the strongest affection, through love, to human society, to the fraternity of the Christian community in the first place, but which is destined to expand itself into a union of humanity; and so the personality cannot therefore withdraw itself from the social duties in the heartless self-sufficiency of the stoical "wise man," but it feels itself bound to society by the strongest bond of solidarity—namely, by love, which, being rooted in the religious faith, is directed to the highest ends of human fellowship, and hopes joyously for the victory of the good in the world.

Hence this Christian principle of morality was able, in quite another way than the stoical, to heal and rejuvenate sick humanity. While the stoical cosmopolitanism only made men indifferent to the natural bonds and limits of society, the Christian love twined new bonds around the divided peoples and races, and has made Jew and Greek, bond and free, man and woman, one in Christ (Gal. iii. 28).

From this height of the ideal of humanity, as Paul has experienced and described it in the Christian's "life in the spirit," there opened to him finally other

magnificent prospects into the past and future of the history of humanity. The sense for the teleology of history had always been Israel's charisma; the visions of its seers were the first, although still the childlike stammering philosophy of history; but the pictures of the Jews as we find them, especially in the Apocalypses of Daniel, Enoch, and Ezra, were still entirely sketched from the narrow national horizon of Judaism: they were pictures of the changing fates of the peoples, seen in the light of the Messianic dream of the final victory of the Jewish people over all the peoples of the world. Quite otherwise is it with Paul, to whom the world of the Jewish hopes had faded away on the cross of Christ, and Jews and Greeks had become one in the "body of Christ," in the community of the new spiritual humanity. No longer in the hopes of his people, but in the experiences of his heart, did he find the key for the interpretation of human history; and no longer in the external fates of the peoples, but in the transformations of the religious feeling and thinking, did he find the inmost core and the true significance of history. When he looked back from his present Christian life to his past (Romans vii. 7 ff.), he saw at the beginning a short time of childlike innocence, when he had lived as yet without law, and therefore in guileless peace, without the painful feeling of inner discord and conflict. Then the law had come, and by its forbidding concupiscence had awakened concupiscence, had

brought the formerly hidden pleasure in sin to consciousness, and with this becoming alive of sin his ego had died; in place of the naïve unity of the soul with itself and the world, discord and conflict had come in; the law in the mind lay in conflict with the law in the members; the will to do was in conflict with the doing; the joy in the law of God was in conflict with the fear of the angry judge. But from this wretchedness of inner discord, from this bondage under the tyranny of the flesh of sin and of death, the spirit of life in Christ had made him free; he had found again the peace and the joy of the guiltless child through the spirit of childship which in him cried, *Abba, Father!* Yet even now his blessedness was not yet that of seeing but of hoping: although already in the possession of the first-fruits of the spirit, he still waits, yearning within for the glory of the children of God, which was only to be revealed in the future, when even the body will be liberated from the bonds of corruption, and the perfection to which God has destined His children shall have appeared.

Now it was just these phases of his own life as it was, is, and will be, that serves the apostle as the model from which he sketched the stages in the development of the history of mankind. The peaceful innocence of his childhood corresponds to the age of the childhood of humanity, when it was still without law and therefore without the feeling of guilt, and

at peace with God and the world. This state of innocence, however, Paul sees not merely in the first time before Adam's sin, but also and even predominantly in the time of the Patriarchs, with whom God concluded a covenant of grace independent of the law which was not to come till later on. In the faith of Abraham, which corresponds to the gracious covenant of the promise, the righteousness of faith of the Christians was already typified. But between the promise and its fulfilment the law came in midway, and it first gave sin its sting, the pain of the feeling of guilt. With this began the time of unfreedom when the heir was under tutors and governors, when the Jew tortured himself in the service of the letter and of sensuous ordinances and ceremonies ("the weak and beggarly elements") in order to attain to righteousness, and thereby could not but convince himself more and more of the insufficiency of his own power and of the powerlessness of the law to overcome the resistance of the flesh, nay, even of the multiplication of transgressions through the incitement of the law. Because Paul from the height of his Christian consciousness of redemption could judge his earlier state under the law to be only a state of unblessed bondage, he therefore also thought that the original purpose of the divine legislation was only that it should hold men captive under the bond of sin and the feeling of guilt, and thus indirectly prepare for their redemp-

tion through grace (Gal. iii. 22 ff.)—a view of the law which does not indeed correspond to the Old Testament consciousness, but in it we are able easily to recognise a recoil from the Pharisean idolatry of the law, and which might indeed be as useful and even necessary for the practical liberation of Christianity from the religion of the law as Luther's pessimistic judgment of the Papacy was necessary for liberation from the Papal Church. But in so far as the law, according to Paul, was to exercise its lordship as a schoolmaster from the beginning only for the time of pupilage on to the appearance of the Son of God—its authority was extinguished with the death of Christ; it has no longer any right over the children of God, who are liberated by the Son of God. The Gospel of Christ is therefore a calling to freedom of all who believingly follow the call. The heathen who do this are now the new people of God who enter into the inheritance of the promise of Abraham; the Jews, on the other hand, who hold fast to the law against Christ, are on that account for the time those who have lost the promise. The formation of a new people of God composed predominantly of believing heathens, appeared therefore to Paul to be so far from an annihilation of the promises given to the Patriarchs, that he rather beheld in this the fulfilment of those promises, the realisation of the gracious covenant with Abraham which had preceded

the law of Moses. The religious prerogative of Israel above the heathen, which rested upon its possession of the historical revelation, was not indeed denied by Paul; but he regarded it as a mere temporary means for the realisation of God's universal plan of salvation. Does there not already lie in this thought the germ of the modern conception of the development of the religious spirit of humanity through the manifold forms of the national religions to the concluding unity of the universal kingdom of God?

Paul has also connected the coming in of the end of all these wondrous ways in the government of the world with the visible coming again of Christ, which he expected in the immediate future. With this catastrophe he thought in the customary manner that the resurrection of the dead and a solemn judgment were connected, and that then every one would be rewarded according to his works. Here, therefore, the idealism of his doctrine of justification obtains at the same time a realistic conception, through the prospect of a retribution according to the worth of the moral performances; and Paul has often made use of this motive for moral exhortation (*parænesis*). Moreover, he did not think of the resurrection, in the manner of the Pharisees, as a restoration of the earthly fleshly body, but as an investment in a heavenly body similar to Christ's body of light, which those who were still living at the second coming were to receive through a

transformation. This whole series of thoughts which sprang from the Jewish eschatology is nevertheless crossed by another hope which sprang from Hellenism, and which he at least indicates several times in his last epistles—namely, the hope immediately after departing from the life of this body of being at home “with the Lord” (2 Cor. v. 6; Phil. i. 23), the hope of a blessedness of the individual souls of the pious in another world, which is independent of the catastrophes of the second coming and resurrection, and therefore was excellently fitted to compensate for the disappointment of the primitive Christian expectations of an early end of the world. That all these ideas, however precious they were to the primitive Christianity, are nevertheless only of relative and temporary value, was at least indicated by Paul himself in the significant proposition, that after the overcoming of all powers hostile to God, Christ Himself would also subordinate Himself to the Father—that is to say, would surrender His position of Ruler, and would retire into the series of the creatures in order that God might be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28). At the final goal of the history of religion he sees all the means and mediators around whom men had fought and separated for thousands of years giving way; and in the blessed consciousness of its oneness with God, the Father of Spirits, he also sees humanity coming to a final unity, to a kingdom of peace and of joy in the Holy Ghost.



## LECTURE VI.

### THE APOSTLE PAUL.

#### *II. HIS APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY.*

THE idealising of the age of childhood and of youth is natural not merely to individuals, but also to human communities, peoples, and religions. The legend of the "Golden Age" which meets us in such manifold forms in the history of religion is, as we have seen in a former connection, a product of the natural impulse to present in contrast to the present, with its evils and conflicts, the ideal image of a happy past when all was still in beautiful harmony — an ideal image which, however, proves to be but a beautiful dream before sober historical investigation, and to which the actual conditions of the beginning of history everywhere were far from corresponding. The faith of Christendom, following this natural impulse, also began at an early stage, even from its first beginnings in the post-apostolic time, to sketch for itself an ideal picture, the picture of a community

whose unity of faith and moral purity were only troubled as in an exceptional way by slight and rapidly overcome disturbances. Is it allowable to subject this pleasing picture, by which many a pious soul may have edified itself amid the confusions of its time, to strict historical examination, at the risk of finding that this ideal of youth may also show itself to be a poetic product of the fancy with which the reality was not actually in accord? I think we are not merely entitled to answer this question in the affirmative, but we are even bound to do so, if we would be faithful to the principle of the Lectureship which has brought us together here—the principle, namely, that religious traditions are to be tested and examined with the same scientific freedom and candour as the things of astronomy or chemistry. If in connection with the question as to the beginnings of human life upon this planet we have let ourselves be guided by the evidence of astronomy and geology, biology and palæontology, to the conviction that the Biblical legend of creation and paradise cannot lay claim to historical reality, then, as it appears to me, it would be a strange inconsequence if we were to hesitate to apply the same method of strict and sober scientific examination likewise to the beginnings of the Christian Church. If by this criticism revered images of childish tradition are transported from the sphere of reality into that of poetry, the result may be painful to many a heart; but should scientific

investigation on that account be at all interdicted? Is the knowledge of the truth not also a good, and a good of such value that it is well worth the sacrifice of an old error? If an erroneous tradition to which special feelings still attach is not to be tampered with or called in question, it would be quite impossible to advance even a single step in the knowledge of the truth, for all new recognition of what is truth involves the denial of what is false, and can therefore only be carried through by means of the combating and overcoming of old errors.

A classical confirmation of this proposition is presented by the history of the primitive Christianity which has just given occasion for these remarks. That Paul recognised Christianity as a new religion free from the Jewish law and carried it to the Gentiles, was a step in advance of infinite importance, and one which was decisive for the whole future of the religion of mankind. But with this knowledge Paul stood at first quite alone, and it was only through sore struggles that he could vindicate among the Jewish Christian community the recognition, or at least the toleration, of Christianity emancipated from the law. The Acts of the Apostles has not indeed passed over these conflicts in entire silence, yet it has given only such a faded picture of them that the impression might be got from it that complete agreement had reigned from the beginning between Paul and the rest of the community regarding the question of the validity of the Mosaic

law for the Christians. It has only been since men began to study the Epistles of the apostle Paul independently and unbiassed by this prejudice derived from the Acts of the Apostles, that it became known how little such peaceful agreement really existed at the beginning, and on the contrary what severe and long conflicts it cost the Apostle to the Gentiles in order to carry through his principle of the freedom of the Christian from the law. Already in connection with the first transaction relating to this question—namely, at the Apostolic Council at Jerusalem—according to the account which Paul himself has given of it in the 2d chapter of Galatians, a much more violent conflict occurred than appears according to the representations of the Acts of the Apostles (chap. xv.) And the result of this conflict was by no means the full victory of the Pauline freedom for *all* Christians; but what Paul then attained was only the concession of the freedom of the *Gentile Christians* from the Jewish law, while at the same time the continuing validity of the Jewish law for the *Jewish Christians* was presupposed as self-evident. The possibility of the mission to the Gentiles was indeed thereby achieved and secured; but there was still a far distance from the *union* of the Gentiles and Jews in the new Christian community, for the Mosaic Law still existed as a wall of partition between the two sections. The inference which appears to us so obvious, that the law if it is not binding on the

Gentile Christians can no longer be binding even on the Jewish Christians, was still far from being drawn by the primitive community and their apostles, either on the occasion of the Apostolic meeting or even long afterwards. Their whole attitude towards Paul and his missionary activity bears testimony to the fact. The division of the missionary spheres between Paul and Peter is explained at once by the fact that the primitive apostles felt themselves permanently bound to the Jewish law, which on account of its ordinances of purification made a ministry among the Gentiles impossible to them. From this point of view is also explained the wavering conduct of Peter in Antioch: in his sanguine manner, which was easily determined by emotional impulse, he had here at first accommodated himself to the freer practice, and had lived in the Gentile manner with the Gentile brethren—that is to say, he had practised fellowship in eating with them without regard to the Jewish prescriptions as to purity; but when the adherents of the strictly legal James came to Antioch, he withdrew himself again from the associates of the Gentile community, and required from them accommodation to the legal practices of the Jewish Christians. The result of this was, that it issued in a sharp conflict between Paul and Peter, which the Acts of the Apostles has passed over in silence for the sake of its irenical purpose, but which Paul has narrated in Galatians ii.

11 ff. The reproach of "dissimulation" which Paul thereupon made to Peter was too severe, inasmuch as Peter had not properly denied his conviction, but had only shown such a wavering attitude from want of a firm and clear conviction with regard to the law. Peter was one of those men who, however good and honest their will, have nevertheless not the courage and the power to win a clear and well-grounded conviction in questions of principle, and who therefore allow themselves to be led more by contingent external circumstances and the impulses of their feeling at the time, than by fixed principles and clear thoughts. Such men may be very amiable and able in calm and settled times, but in critical times no reliance can be placed upon them: they oscillate between the old and the new undecidedly and confusedly, thereby increase the general confusion, and delay the unavoidable process of clarification and new formation by putting themselves in the way as a hindrance to the resolute spirits that are conscious of the end to be pursued. From the moment of that conflict in Antioch the paths of Paul and of Peter, of the Gentile Christianity as free from the law and of the Judaic Christianity as under the law, went far asunder. Indeed the Jewish zealots of the law (as even the Acts of the Apostles designates the majority of the Jerusalem community, Acts xxi. 20) soon were no longer satisfied with letting Paul pass on his way to the heathen, but they carried the struggle

against him and his law-free Christianity even unto his own Gentile communities, and thereby prepared for him heavy cares and anxieties. But the result of these contests, however painful they were to Paul personally, was here too, as in all later similar cases, only conducive to the progress of the cause of truth and freedom. They served the purpose of enabling Paul to put always more clearly into light his Gospel of the Christ who is the end of the law (Romans x. 4), and to carry it through more and more decisively and more victoriously in the heathen Christian communities. So far we must be thankful to the Judaical Christian opponents of Paul: without their agitations in Galilee and Corinth we should probably not have had the glorious Epistles of the apostle to these communities.

From the self-defence of the apostle in these Epistles we can indirectly infer what his opponents may have brought forward against him. Moreover, we have direct information on the subject in a Judaic writing dating from the middle of the second century, which shows at the same time how long the recollection of the conflict in Antioch continued to live in the circles of the Jewish Christianity, and how long it nourished the grudge against Paul. In the 17th of the Clementine Homilies Peter asks Paul whether one can become a teacher of the Gospel by visions? Why, then, if this were possible, did Jesus associate a whole

year long with his waking (not ecstatic) disciples? and how, then, can his assertion that he had seen Christ be believed since he nevertheless teaches otherwise than Christ has taught? "If thou hast actually been participative of His presence although only for an hour, been taught by Him and been intrusted with the apostolic office, then preach His doctrine, explain His sayings, love His apostles, and do not dispute with me (Peter), who have had intercourse with Him. To me, the fixed rock, the foundation pillar of the Church, thou hast set thyself up in opposition as an adversary. If thou wert not an adversary, thou wouldst not have calumniated and reviled my preaching, so that I should no longer find faith even with that which I have heard as an ear-witness from the Lord Himself. If thou callest me 'damned' [cf. Gal. ii. 2] thou accusest God, who hath revealed Christ to me. If thou wilt actually co-operate in the proclamation of the truth, then learn first from us what we have learned from Him (Christ), and so become our fellow-worker, having become a scholar of the truth." Such reproaches had Paul to hear from the beginning, and they were, in fact, so natural, and were so evident to the common understanding, that Paul had no easy task in taking stand against them. To the appeal of the Judaists to the personal intercourse of the primitive apostles with the earthly Jesus he had only to oppose the subjective testimony of the inner revelation



of the spiritual Son of God, Christ; but daily experience teaches us how weak are such ideal grounds of inner experience when put in the scale against the real facts of external history. Was it not a fact that Jesus during His earthly life had been subject to the Jewish law, and had even taught His disciples not the abrogation but the fulfilling of the law? When Paul said that for the Christians the old had passed away and become new, that he even no longer knew Christ according to the flesh—that is to say, according to His external earthly appearance—that he preached Christ as the Lord who is spirit and the end of the law, he was himself indeed clearly conscious of the divine truth of this his spiritual doctrine of Christ, and he had also perfect right in holding it, but it was not easy to convince the Jewish Christians of it, those who seemed to have the historical reality upon their side. And when Paul sought to draw from the law itself the proof that the law was to have only temporary significance and was annulled in Christ's death, one cannot blame the Jewish Christians for the fact that these technical demonstrations did not weigh much with them, and that they believed that they found in them an arbitrary misinterpretation of the divine word. Here was one of those tragic conflicts, such as are repeated so often in critical times in history, when the right is not merely upon *one* side, but right stands against right,—upon the one side the right of history, of

tradition, of the letter; and upon the other side the right of the idea, of the spirit, of inner revelation. But that such oppositions are not fought out merely with real reasons, that passion turns against the person of the innovator and reproaches him with bad motives, untruthfulness and vanity, ambition and covetousness,—this painful experience was not spared even to Paul.

What had he to oppose to all this? Nothing but the "demonstration of the spirit and of power" (1 Cor. ii. 4). His external appearance was weak and his speech contemptible, as his opponents sneered (2 Cor. x. 10). But what a glow of enthusiasm animated this fragile body! What a power of conviction spoke out of these plain words,—words wanting in all the charm of human wisdom and art, but a want which only served to bring the power of God and the wisdom of God in the Gospel more immediately to expression! Paul himself reminds the Galatians of how on the occasion of his first missionary journey they had not despised nor disdained him in spite of his sickness at the time, but had received him as an angel of God—nay, even as Christ Jesus. "Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me" (Gal. iv. 15). What had worked so ravishingly upon his hearers, and had carried their hearts so by storm, was at

once the glad tidings and the person of the messenger who brought them: the good news of the one true God, who was not merely the God of the Jews but also of the Gentiles, and who was calling out of all peoples to Himself a new "Israel of God"; and of the Son of God, Christ, who had given Himself up for our sins in order that He might deliver us from this present evil world, that He might redeem us from the law and from the service of the weak and beggarly elements of the world (the Jewish and Gentile ceremonial worship), and that He might make us free children of God; and of the spirit of Sonship that is bestowed on the believers as a pledge of their future inheritance, and which now already works in them childlike trust in God the Father and the fruits of the various virtues in which fulfilling of the law consists. This was not the empty word-wisdom of Greek rhetoricians, and not the subtle casuistry of Jewish lawyers; but it was the power of God unto salvation for the sick world, the splendour of whose gods had vanished and paled, and whose ideals had sunk into the dust. Here the world-weary souls of the earnest heathen, which were longing for eternal good things, found what neither the Greek philosophy nor the Jewish law was able to furnish them with: a new feeling of their life, a goal worthy of their striving, a fixed ground for their hopes, and a union of brotherly love and mutual helpfulness. And the man who

brought them these good things, how entirely other was he than the vain and covetous rhetoricians or the pedantic rabbis so proud of their Judaism! He loved most of all to boast of his weakness, so that God's power might be mighty in him. His Jewish privileges, which had once been his pride, he regarded no longer as anything; worldly honour, earthly gain, had for him no charm; as a simple handicraftsman he gained his own living in order that he might not be a burden to the community, for he sought not theirs but themselves: from all his speaking and doing it was easy to recognise that he had died to the world and to its petty interests, and only lived on for Christ and His cause. Love to Christ and to the souls which he would fain win for Christ held him bound, and it was the only motive and the only standard of all his conduct; other considerations he knew not. From the evil calumny of his enemies he turned away with the calm assurance of a good conscience (1 Cor. iv. 3 ff.) But neither did he shun the semblance of inconsequence where his purpose required it; he became now a Gentile as without law to the Gentiles that were without law, and again a Jew to the Jews. He accommodated himself always according to circumstances to this or that party in order that he might here or there gain souls for Christ (1 Cor. ix. 19 ff.) And while, in opposition to the aggressive Galatian Judaists, he condemned every backsliding into the Jewish ceremonial-

ism as an apostasy from Christ, he practised the greatest toleration towards the legal scrupulosity of the weak Roman brethren, explained the keeping of holydays and abstinence from the eating of flesh to be things indifferent (*adiaphora*), with which every one may deal as it pleases him, and on account of which no one was to judge another; corresponding to his exhortation, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations" (Romans xiv. 1). In this ability in distinguishing the spirits, and in this loving consideration for the particular needs of individuals, Paul has given for all time a pattern of pastoral wisdom and educative love.

Rich occasion for the exercise of these virtues was furnished to him in the circumstances of his communities, as we may learn them in a particularly instructive manner from the Epistles to the Corinthians. A glance at these narrations will enable us to obtain a knowledge of the primitive *beginnings of the churchly and social practices in the Christian communities*, in which the germs for later developments are already partly prefigured. The Corinthian Church at the time of Paul was assuredly not an ideal Christian community. In its ecclesiastical and moral life the heathen leaven and the Greek frivolity in particular continued to work in so strong a manner that it needed all the wisdom and power of the apostle to keep it within the limits of Christian discipline and order. Above all,

the formation of parties which flourished luxuriously in that Church was a genuinely Greek thing. Three parties had already formed themselves soon after the first residence of Paul in Corinth: a Judaistic party which named itself after Peter, a Hellenistic party under the ægis of the Alexandrine Apollos, and a Pauline party. The Judaistic party was in the Gentile Christian community an artificial product imported from without; it was the work of Jewish Christian agitators who had come to Corinth from abroad with letters of recommendation from foreign (probably Palestinian) communities, in order to carry on a propaganda for their own cause on Paul's field of work, and with what weapons we have already seen. The party of Apollos consisted of those who honoured the Alexandrine theologian who had come to Corinth after Paul's departure, and had there propounded the Gospel in the forms of the Alexandrine speculation, from which his adherents doubtless fashioned for themselves a Gnostic spiritualistic Christianity, which must have deviated from the simple Gospel of Paul in essential points. Paul's polemic against the wisdom of this world, and against the intellectual conceit to which he opposes the simplicity of the Christian faith, is directed against this party. And if we consider that it was just out of this Alexandrine Christian speculation that the whole churchly dogma afterwards proceeded, the inference manifestly follows that that dogma can be so little

based upon Paul's authority that the tendency lying at its foundation had rather been already rejected beforehand by Paul, and characterised as a danger for the simple evangelical faith. But Paul had little reason for joy even in the party which banded itself around his own name, for they misunderstood his doctrine of the liberty of the Christian in the libertine sense, as being a licence for the continuation of their frivolous heathen immorality. Paul sought to make it intelligible to them what a great difference there is between Christian freedom and heathen licentiousness—namely, that the principle expressed in "all things are lawful unto me," which is justified in opposition to Jewish legalism, finds its limit in the demands, lying in the nature of the Christian spirit of self-discipline and sanctification, that those who are purified and sanctified by baptism and the reception of the spirit have the duty to regard and conduct themselves thereafter as members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost. In opposition to this party-spirit in general, Paul reminded the Corinthians that they were baptised not to their human teachers but to Christ, that only ground of their salvation; that the individual teachers might well build upon this foundation, each according to their kind with nobler or ignobler, more lasting or more perishing material, but the foundation itself, as it was laid by God in Christ, cannot be replaced by any work of man. To be adherents of Christ

was therefore to be the only true watchword of all Christians, as it was also his, the apostle's, watchword. Nor will he have himself regarded as anything but one of the fellow-workers of God along with Apollos and Peter, to every one of whom his special reward is assigned: he would have himself be regarded as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God, which he has only to administer faithfully; as a helper of the joy of the community, not as having lordship over their faith (2 Cor. i. 24). Paul has nowhere raised a claim to such infallible authority and exceptional miraculous inspiration as that which the Church afterwards ascribed to the apostles. He was, indeed, conscious that he did not preach the word of man but the word of God, and not in words such as the wisdom of man teaches, but in words which are taught by the spirit received from God; yet he has nowhere declared the possession of this illuminating Divine spirit to be his or the apostles' exclusive privilege, but, on the contrary, he represents it as the common gift of God to believers as the children of God (Gal. iv. 6); and the bold words of the apostle which put an end to all external authority in matters of faith—namely, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man (1 Cor. ii. 15)—hold true of *every* Christian in so far as he has the spirit. Even with regard to his own words, so far is he from demanding a blind authoritative faith that he



rather expressly exhorts his readers to "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. v. 21). Nay, more, what are all the often elaborate reflections and arguments with which his Epistles are full but attempts to convince the readers by *reasons* which presuppose their own reflections? Hence Paul can neither have demanded nor wished a thoughtless blind acceptance of his doctrines as true, as if they had been miraculous divine oracles. The same thing holds true likewise of the other Biblical writers. The churchly doctrine of inspiration has therefore not proceeded from the direct evidence of the Biblical authors, but has been set up *against* their testimony by the Church on quite other grounds: it is the dogmatic postulate of the period of Church leaders who, in the same measure as they felt themselves forsaken by the spirit, began to idolise the monuments handed down from the period in which the productivity of the spirit was still living.

The envying and strife of the Corinthians so sharply reproved by Paul was also a genuine Greek fault, and it had made itself felt very disturbingly in the religious assemblies of the Christian community. To the directions and regulations which Paul gave in this connection we owe a pretty clear glimpse of the religious services in the worship of these oldest Gentile Christian congregations. Compared with the later practice of the worship of the Church, they had both the advan-

tages and the defects of immature youth, an exuberant fulness of spiritual powers which all strove to pour themselves forth in unconstrained directness, and produced an extravagant multiplicity in the expressions of the religious life: but the reverse side of this unbridled spontaneity was a mischievous disorderliness, a confused babbling of ecstatic speakers in tongues, of clairvoyant prophets, of theosophic teachers of wisdom and lyrical Psalm-singers—nay, even women stood up unveiled as speakers in the assemblies. In all these religious manifestations, but more especially in the rapturous speaking in tongues, men saw miraculous operations of the spirit of Christ, and there arose a rivalry among the members of the community to surpass each other in spiritual gifts. In his discussion of these ongoings Paul proceeded to show (1 Cor. xii.), by the image of the one body with different members, that in the community of the Church, the body of Christ, the one spirit must likewise reveal itself in various powers, and that the one Lord must be served in divers offices. But the value of the individual gifts is measured, according to the sound judgment of the apostle, not by their astonishing impression upon the hearers, nor even by the exuberant feelings of the speaker himself, but by their wholesome influence on the edification and moral furtherance of the community. Hence the ecstatic speaking of the enraptured Christian, of whose meaning neither he himself nor the hearers had a clear

consciousness, was only valuable for private edification, but not for the whole assembly, especially as there were also often present in it non-Christians as guests on whom the speakers in tongues only made the impression of being out of their minds. On the other hand, the gift of prophesying was conducive to the edification of the community, because by its unveiling of the most hidden thoughts of the heart (like the modern "thought-reading") all present were moved, and were convinced of the presence of God in the community. But still more valuable than "speaking in tongues" and prophesying, than knowledge of mysterious wisdom and power of miracle-working faith, according to Paul, is love: when they pass away, faith, hope, and love will abide; but the greatest of these is love. Thus does the apostle lead the thoughts of his readers from the extravagant manifestations of enthusiasm, which impose through the charm of the mysterious, but also bring with them the danger of a gloomy and morally unfruitful fantasy, and guide them again to the pure heights of truly spiritual, because moral and living, powers, which find constant and ordered manifestation in the disposition and character of Christian virtue, and above all in love. The supernaturalism of the fantasy he reduces to order by putting it under the new nature of the spiritual man, who builds up a new world from within by no other miracles than those of love.

The same pedagogic art of referring the small affairs of daily life to the highest points of the universal religious view of the world is betrayed also in Paul's discussion of the public appearing of Christian women in the assemblies (1 Cor. xi.) That women are laid hold of by religious movements with peculiar force is a universal experience which has repeated itself times without number down through the whole Christian history; and it is easy to understand how great must have been the impression of the first Pauline missionary preaching upon the women, who had been hitherto kept under the restraint of the strict Greek practice in an almost slavish want of freedom and state of pupilage, as well as excluded from all the higher interests of society. Now, when they heard that in Christ men and women were one (Gal. iii. 28)—both called to the same degree of freedom of the children of God, and both dignified by the same gifts of the spirit and made capable of serving the Lord in the community—must not that have appeared to them as special redemption of their sex from social oppression? And was it to be wondered at if they rapidly drew the practical consequences of these principles, and, putting themselves above the prevailing practice, appeared unveiled in the assembly of the church, and gave expression to their exuberant feelings in stammering speeches? But Paul saw in this emancipated appearing in public an overstepping of the limits set to women by the order of nature. For

substantiation of this view he went back to the creation legend, according to which (Genesis ii.) the woman was made from the man and for the sake of the man, and from this he concluded in the sense of the Jewish theology that she has her pattern and head in the man, as he has his in Christ, and Christ in God (1 Cor. xi. 1-9). According to this theory, the woman would stand in a more distant relationship to Christ and God than the man; he only would be the immediate reflected image of Christ and God, but the woman would be merely the mediate reflection in so far as she would be primarily that of the man. How is this view to be harmonised with the principles of the apostle that man and woman are one in Christ, and that in the religious relationship the difference of the sexes becomes therefore of no significance? This is not quite evident, and it is indeed possible that the apostle himself did not at all seek to adjust or reconcile the two judgments—namely, the newly gained Christian and the traditional ancient judgment (which was Jewish as well as Greek)—and perhaps he did not feel their contradiction. Moreover, the ancient view of the inferiority of the woman also continues to influence him in his estimation of marriage, of which we shall soon come to speak.

Special ground for blame was given by the disorders which occurred in the Corinthian community in connection with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. A

common brotherly feast was often not realised, as every one immediately himself consumed the provisions which he had brought with him, when the rich man revelled in good things, while the poor man went hungry away and felt himself ashamed. This lowering of the Lord's Supper to a common feast was designated by Paul as a sinning against the body and blood of Christ, whereby he who ate unworthily brought judgment upon himself because he did not regard the holy significance which belongs to this bread and cup in virtue of their symbolical reference to the body and blood of Christ. In the treatment of the symbols of the body and blood of Christ as common means of enjoyment just lies the depreciation of what the symbol signifies. Paul sees a punishment of this offence in the frequent occurring of sickness and deaths among the members of the community. On this occasion Paul tells of the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus, and what is new in his narration is the way he defines it so that it is to be a lasting rite in remembrance of Jesus, and for the showing forth of His death, regarding which we find nothing in the older Gospel narratives. Paul could hardly have had this information from external tradition; probably by the "having received it from Christ" he means a new revelation of the spirit of Christ—that is to say, a prompting of his mystical inspiration which felt itself constrained to make the death of Christ, which was

the centre of his theology, also the turning-point in the ritual usages of the community. At all events, it was Paul who first gave a mystic sacramental significance to these usages, and in this connection the analogy of the heathen mysticism was serviceable to him. In 1 Cor. x. 16 ff., he compares the Lord's Supper with the heathen sacrificial meals. As in the latter the sacrificers entered into a mysterious connection with the demons, in like manner the Christian entered into union with Christ on the occasion of the celebration of the Lord's Supper. At the basis of this position there does not at all lie, as was afterwards held by the Church in its grosser view of the doctrine, the assumption of a real presence and enjoyment of the heavenly body of Christ, but simply the idea which was current in the whole ancient world, that man by enjoyment of things which are consecrated to a higher being enters into the sphere of the power of that being, and comes under his mysterious influence. For that very reason Paul forbade the Corinthians from taking part in the heathen festivals, because they who entered into fellowship with the Lord through the Lord's table could not also have fellowship with demons through the demon's table. Further, as the associates of an altar were also united with each other into a religious brotherhood through their common connection with the God of the altar, so in like manner Paul sees in that act, which seals the connection with Christ through

the enjoyment of the symbols of his death, at the same time the brotherly union of the Christians with each other to be sealed. And he also finds this side of the sacred act expressed in a second symbolical reference; the unity of the bread, of which each enjoys a part, represents the unity of *the* body of Christ, which consists in the community of the believers. If we are therefore to speak of a "presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper," that can *only* be thought of in the sense of Paul, as pertaining to the mystical body—*i.e.*, the Christian community. Augustine and Zwingli, who have expressed most clearly this meaning of the Supper, have therefore caught quite correctly the sense of the apostle.

As in the case of the Lord's Supper, so did *Baptism* also first receive its sacramental significance through Paul. As he saw in the immersing under the water the symbolical repetition of the death and resurrection of Christ, Baptism appeared to him as the act of spiritual dying and renovation or regeneration, of incorporation into the mystical body of Christ, that "new creation." As for Paul the baptism of adults only was in question, faith in Christ is already of course presupposed by it, and baptism is just the act in which faith realises the decisive resolution of giving one's self up actually as belonging to Christ and His community. Yet the outward act is not on that account a mere semblance of what is already present in faith, but according to the



mysticism common to Paul with the whole ancient world, the symbolical act *effectuates* what it typifies, and therefore in this case the mortification of the carnal man and the animation of the spiritual man. As the opposition between flesh and spirit is, according to Paul, an excluding opposition, the transporting out of the one state into the other cannot be effected by a psychological process within the consciousness but through a mystical catastrophe. In this theory Paul also probably leaned on analogous ideas in the heathen mysteries. Thus, for example, in the Eleusinian mysteries the act of reception was represented as a regeneration, and the hierophant appointed to the temple service had to take a sacramental bath, out of which he proceeded as a "new man" with a new name which signifies that, as they were wont to say, "the first one was forgotten"—that is, the old man was put off at the same time with the old name. The parallel of this Eleusinian rite with the thoughts which Paul has written about Baptism in the Epistle to the Romans (chap. vi.), and therefore from Corinth, is so striking that a direct relation between the two may well be conjectured; and all the more that even in the case of the Lord's Supper, Paul has brought in the comparison with the heathen festivals in order to give a basis for his mystical theory.

That these sacramental elements of worship went beyond the practice and way of thinking of the primitive community and of Jesus, and that they contain the germs

of a tendency which led afterwards to no inconsiderable confusions, cannot be denied. But, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that a religious community, at least in the ancient world, would not have been able to assert itself entirely without the sacramental mysticism of a form of worship, and that Paul gave to this need of his Gentile communities such satisfaction that within it the ancient mysticism was made the receptacle for the most valuable Christian ethical thoughts regarding regeneration and the unity in love of the spiritual body of Christ. The more the Church of the present day appropriates this ideal kernel of the Pauline sacramental doctrine, both in its knowledge and life, so much the more will it be entitled to let go or to interpret as mere symbolism what belongs to the sphere of the ancient mystic cults.

As regards Paul's *ethics*, at least, this separation between the transitory and the abiding was practised everywhere and without question in the Protestant Church from the beginning. As the abiding or permanent, we have recognised that Paul put in place of the Jewish legalism and the Gentile unbridled liberty, "the law of the spirit in Christ," that inner norm of the holy spirit of love who unites the believers as with Christ, so also with each other, into *one* moral organism, a "*body of Christ*." This profound conception represents in Paul the present earthly realisation of the kingdom of God, whereas the latter

conception is used almost exclusively in an eschatological sense, and therefore comes into consideration in ethics only as a motive of hope and not as a present reality. But if it has been therefore thought that the ethical conception of the kingdom of God has been replaced and suppressed in Paul (and John) by the transcendental Christ of speculation, this is an error; for Paul expressed by the conception he had coined of the "body of Christ" exactly and wholly the very thought which *we* are wont to connect with the term "kingdom of God"—namely, the moral organisation of human fellowship in a community in so far as it is animated and ruled by the religious ideal of man as the son of God. Yet this *our* conception of the "kingdom of God" was not that of the primitive Christianity: this conception was then understood in a thoroughly eschatological sense, and even the approaches observable in the discourses of Jesus to an immanent ethical application of the conception did not continue to work in the consciousness of the primitive community, which was turned wholly and utterly in an eschatological direction. So far, therefore, was the "ethical thought of the kingdom" from being suppressed by the Pauline speculation that, on the contrary, it was Paul who gave a definite expression to this thought for the first time—namely, the expression "body of Christ," and thereby the thought was emancipated from the transcendental fantasies of an

apocalyptic kingdom. It is quite correct to hold that this expression stands in close connection with the Christological speculation of Paul; but it only follows from this that this Christological speculation was needed in order to rescue Christianity from the sphere of the Jewish dreams of a Messianic future, and to elevate it into the domain of the universal-human ethical ideality.

But fruitful as was the idea of the "body of Christ" in itself for the moral order of society, Paul nevertheless drew its consequences at first still very imperfectly. It was properly only the religious life of the community for which he established the solidarity and mutually completing service of the individual members: for the secular morality he still wanted feeling and insight. His ethical idealism still stood in a relation of indifference to the family and civil society, tolerating what existed, but not positively working upon the moralisation of these orders of life. The relationship between the world and the kingdom of Christ was to him and the Christendom of his time still generally so much of an excluding opposition, that a positive permeation of the two did not appear possible; and this so much the less as, with the expectation of the nearness of the second coming and of the end of the world, time seemed to be wanting for long and lasting work being applied to the moral transformation of the world.

This negative and ascetic Christianity of the Pauline ethics meets us most strikingly in his estimation of *marriage*. It might indeed be supposed that the correct Christian appreciation of marriage would necessarily have resulted of itself from Paul's high estimation of love (1 Cor. xiii.), and from the principle that man and woman are one in Christ, and that the woman therefore in the highest religious relation of life was of equal personal dignity with the man. But Paul did not yet draw this conclusion, which appears to *us* to follow so immediately. He regarded marriage (1 Cor. vii.) as indeed allowed, and even under circumstances as necessary, to guard against excesses. But apart from this relative usefulness as a safeguard against worse, he assigned to it no special moral value, but in general he declares the celibate life to be preferable, because it can be consecrated more exclusively than the married life to the service of the Lord. "The unmarried woman," he says, "careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. vii. 34). Paul therefore saw in the duties and cares of the married state something worldly which withdraws from the total surrender to the Lord Christ and his cause—a view which has been retained in the Catholic Church in its placing the virgin state above that of the married life. That the married life includes in itself a

fulness of moral tasks and means of virtue and good, that it is an excellent sphere for the exercising and fostering of Christian piety, patience, self-denial, and ministering love, this Protestant view of the married state as the "order" which is truly pleasing, and much more sacred than all the monastic orders, still lay far from the views of the apostle, whose whole way of thinking was still so much ruled by the ancient dualism of flesh and spirit that the spiritual ennoblement of the natural in the family life did not yet appear to him as a positive task of Christianity.

Just as striking is his estimation of *slavery*. That this is a reprehensible relationship, because in contradiction with the personal dignity of the Christian who is called to the liberty of the children of God, appears to us so self-evident to-day that it is difficult for us even to understand the elucidations of the apostle to the contrary in 1 Cor. vii. 20 ff.; and yet there can be no doubt about their meaning if we consider his words unbiassedly. Paul regarded slavery as one of the religiously indifferent forms of the callings of the worldly life which are not to be altered by the calling to the community of Christ. Every one is to remain in the calling in which he was called to Christianity; even he who is called as a slave is to give himself no concern about that—nay, even if he can become free he is all the rather to remain so, seeing

that he knows himself to be free in fact, as the freed man of the Lord, just as conversely the free man knows himself as the servant of Christ. Thus the inner freedom and equality of the religious self-consciousness, according to the opinion of Paul, makes the social distinction of master and slave a matter of indifference. What is incompatible with the Christian belonging to the Lord Christ is only the want of religious freedom or the bondage of man in matters of faith, but not the social want of freedom on the part of the slave, which is a concern of this passing world about which the Christian, the citizen of the future world, has to give himself no anxiety. This way of judging about slavery we can very well understand and excuse historically; for what would have become of Christianity if it had proceeded to draw the practical consequences of its ideal doctrine of freedom from the beginning, and to shake the foundations of the ancient social order? Yet when viewed in a purely matter-of-fact way, we shall not be able to appropriate this way of thinking. The dualism between the ideal self-consciousness of the Christian personality and the real worldly life was indeed an inevitable stadium through which the beginnings of Christianity had to pass; but with the course of time it had as certainly and as necessarily to be overcome as that Christianity has the destination to permeate like leaven the matter of the worldly life, and to transform it into a kingdom of God, an order of

human society pleasing to God and corresponding to the idea of man.

Finally, as regards the *State*, Paul exhorted the Roman Christians (Romans xiii.) to obedience towards every existing authority as a divine order. As this order is instituted by God for the protection of the good and the punishment of the bad, the Christian is to be subject to it not merely from fear but for the sake of conscience; he has to show it respect, and to conduct himself as a quiet citizen. But the thought that the good citizen has also to take a part with positive interest in the tasks of the State, and has to co-operate in the betterment of the legal orders and institutions, lay far from the apostle's thoughts, as he found *his* "politics" not in connection with the earthly secular state but with the heavenly city of God (Phil. iii. 21). Paul even forbade his Corinthian Christians appealing to the secular tribunals in any disputes about property (1 Cor. vi. 1-28), because it is not worthy of the Christians that they, who are to judge the world and the angels at the second coming of Christ, should have their righteousness determined by heathen judges. Rather than that they should go to law before the unjust—that is, the heathen magistrates—they ought rather to suffer injustice. Therefore, according to the view of Paul, the Christian ought indeed to submit himself passively to the political authority; but he is not to recognise any positive moral worth in



the legal order which constitutes the essence of the State. Logically, there arose from this that view of the State which prevailed from the time of Augustine in the whole medieval Church, and which still prevails to-day in the Roman Church, according to which the State as a profane worldly institution is completely subordinate to the Church as a divine foundation; and the ecclesiastical law and the ecclesiastical authority take precedence of the civil law and the political authority, as the divine precedes the human. It was Protestantism which first broke with this depreciation of the State, and which restored to the civil authority and legal order their own independent dignity and their proper moral worth; and Luther founded this view just on the Pauline conception of the body of Christ, in which the Christian magistrate is also a member intrusted with special functions, while his dignity and right are not dependent on the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Thus has Protestantism in its estimation of the State as well as of marriage corrected Paul by Paul, by carrying out the ideal principles of his ethics more logically than the apostle himself, and by setting aside the limitations in them which were conditioned by the historical relations of the time.

But if Protestantism from the beginning has carried into effect this distinction between the transitory and the enduring in Paulinism with regard to ethics, who then shall prevent us of the present day from carrying

out the same distinction likewise in reference to the dogmatic theology of the first Christian theologian? Has he not himself impressed upon us the right—nay, even the duty—to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good? Has he not himself warned his communities against this, that those whom Christ has called into liberty should not again let themselves be entangled with the yoke of bondage? What the yoke of the letter of the Jewish law was to them, the yoke of the letter of ecclesiastical dogmatic ordinances is to us. To emancipate Christianity from the fetters of Judaism, and to pave the way for the Gospel of the Lord, who is the spirit unto the peoples of the world—this was the universal historical work of the apostle to the Gentiles. And thereby he became the herald of Christian liberty for all times, the leader of all those who struggled for the spirit against the letter, for the right of conscience against the authority of tradition. Nor does the spirit of the greatest of the apostles in the spiritual conflict of the present stand upon the side of those who cling to his words merely, but on the side of those who have taken as their motto his genuine Protestant principle, “He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.”

## LECTURE VII.

### JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN HELLENISM.

IN order to understand the further development of Christian Theology from Paul to the Church Fathers, we must in the first place cast a glance over the Jewish-Greek philosophy of religion of Philo, the contemporary of Paul, who hardly less than the apostle prepared for the formation of Christian dogma in Alexandria, the meeting-point of Greek and Oriental culture. The numerous and prosperous Jewish colony which had existed there since the second century before Christ had become so Hellenised, that its members were wont to read their own Sacred Scriptures only in the Greek translation of the Septuagint. In daily intercourse with educated Greeks, the better class of Jews could not withdraw themselves from the influence of Greek culture: they began to occupy themselves with Greek philosophy, and found in it so much that was akin to their own faith that they thought the

Greek sages must have borrowed their doctrines from Moses. But when they rendered the Jewish faith into the terms of the Greek philosophy, it could not fail, conversely, that they should also read the thoughts of the Greek philosophy into their own sacred writings, with the purer ideas of the Divine being and working, and of the moral destination of man, which they had learned from the Greek philosophy. Many traits of the Biblical narratives, in which God was represented as acting wholly according to the manner of men, could only be brought into accord with these ideas by allegorical adaptation. By means of the same method the Stoics had also already sought to harmonise the mythology of the popular religion with their metaphysical and moral views. The allegorical interpretation of Scripture by Philo was therefore not a new and arbitrary invention of his own: he only brought into a system what others had already similarly practised before him, and what in similar times of transition always offers itself as a make-shift, in order to harmonise a new way of thinking with an old tradition to which the advanced spirit feels itself still bound by pious considerations, and so seeks to bring them into harmonious connection.

Nor even in regard to their contents were points of contact wanting between the Jewish Theology and the Greek Philosophy of that time. The Jewish opposition of God and world had found its counterpart since

Plato in the opposition of spirit and matter, of world of ideas and world of sense; and the mediation of this opposition which the Stoic and Neo-Pythagorean philosophy found in divine powers and demons corresponded to the angels, the spirit and the wisdom of God, which played in the Judaism of that time the same *rôle* of mediator between God and the sensible world. The longing of the Greek ethics was turned towards a higher revelation of the truth than that hitherto attained by reflection, and it aimed at a religious grounding of ethics; and these two things were furnished by the faith of the Jew in the positive revelation of God in the law of Israel. The Jewish thinkers, on the other hand, strove after elevation above the limits of the national faith in God and the sensuous worship by means of a spiritualisation of the traditional notions, and for these the Greek philosophy furnished the abstract conceptions and the dialectical method. However different the starting-point of the two series of development had been, and however different the spirit of Hellenism and Judaism still always remained, yet so many related ideas and tendencies had developed themselves on both sides that a reciprocal attraction could not but arise between them, nor could they fail to set together into a new crystallisation on the soil of the Alexandrian mixing of the peoples. On both sides they had reached a point at which, with the feeling of their own weaknesses and difficulties, the need of over-

stepping the previous limits, of extending the circle of vision, of completing their own incapacity by reception of new elements of culture, pressed themselves upon them irresistibly. From these relationships of the time is explained the rise of the Jewish Hellenic philosophy, whose most important representative was the Alexandrian Jew Philo.

Philo led into a common channel the long since converging streams of the Greek philosophy as a world-wisdom, and of the Jewish theology as a divine wisdom, and this he did by finding the fitting intellectual form for the related views. Above all, the transcendence of the Jewish theism became connected in his thought with the transcendence of the Platonic idea, into that abstract dialectic view of the divine nature which empties it of all determinations in order to fill it again, notwithstanding, with all perfections. According to Philo, God is not only not to be thought of in an anthropomorphic way as like man, but He is as such without attributes; He is exalted above all conception, and He is not properly to be designated by any name. One cannot know of Him what He is, but only that He is and what He is not. He is not in space, not in time, not changeable, not in need of anything; He is absolutely simple, purer than the one, better than the good, more beautiful than the beautiful, more blessed than the blest. He is who He is; only being can absolutely belong to Him as a predicate. Nevertheless this

divine being receives two significant determinations with which the Alexandrian philosopher raises himself above the emptiness of Agnosticism. From the Stoic philosophy he takes the conception of the efficient Cause, and from the Platonic philosophy that of the highest good. God is the perfect One, who reveals Himself only in beneficent operations; evils either arise not at all from Him but from matter, or partly come only indirectly from Him and directly from subordinate spirits, the instruments of His government. According to Philo, the perfection of God excludes generally all immediate influence upon the world, because He would thereby be defiled through contact with matter, that chaotic and changeable being. Hence His working can be thought of as only mediated through ministering "powers," as Philo says with the Stoics; or through "ideas," according to Plato; or through "angels," according to the Old Testament. But these individual powers are all comprised in the one "Logos." In this conception, the turning-point of his system, there are combined in Philo's view the Judaic ideas of the wisdom and the word of God with the Stoical conception of the Divine reason indwelling in the world. Like the latter conception, the "Logos" of Philo is a metaphysical principle which forms and preserves the world by separation and combination of opposites, and it is designated at one time impersonally, as the bond, law, necessity of the universe,

and again personally, as the One who orders and directs all. But it is distinguished from the Stoical "Logos" and the Jewish "Wisdom" by this, that it is not identical either with God or with matter, but it is what mediates between the two. In relation to God the Logos is the oldest or first-born Son, His image, and it is therefore also straightway called "a second God"; in contrast to the world, the Logos is both the Ideal according to which, and the efficient Power through which, all things and especially man have been created. And as the mediator of the creation, the Logos is also the mediator of all religious revelation. He is therefore called on the one hand the Servant, Ambassador, Substitute, Interpreter, Angel of God, and on the other hand the Representative, High Priest, Intercessor, and Advocate (Paraclete) of men: entering as mediator between the two members, He guarantees to both the continued existence of the order of the world. He is thus especially the active instrument of the revelation of God in Israel; it was He who conversed in Paradise with our first parents, who appeared in bodily form to the Patriarchs and as a Pillar of Fire in the wilderness to the people of Israel, and who revealed Himself to Moses on Sinai and communicated to him in the law the sum of all wisdom. But even outside of the sacred history the Logos is the principle of all true knowledge and of all goodwill in man; it is only where He or the Spirit of God (who



seems in this respect to be identical with Him) dwells in the souls of men, and is active as teacher and leader (physician and medicine), cupbearer and heavenly drink, that men are able to be delivered from the bondage of the senses, and to find the way home from the earthly world to the invisible City of God.

The necessity of this helpful revelation of the Divine Logos or Spirit rests upon the weakness of the human soul, which, as Philo taught with Plato, has sunk out of a higher world down into the visible world, and feels itself shut up in the body as in a prison. The material body is the ground and seat of all evil, of all error, and of all unblestness. Philo sought to harmonise this theory with the Biblical history of creation by finding the creation of a double man indicated in the two accounts of the creation in Genesis i. and ii.: an ideal heavenly man, who is bodiless and sexless and the immediate image of the Logos, or even the Logos Himself (for the two conceptions pass into each other); and the earthly sensuous man, who is sexually divided and is only an imperfect copy of that ideal man,—for the heavenly part which the former has of the latter is combined with earthly matter, and has thus become a being of mixed good and evil, standing in the middle between the angel and the beast. But even within mankind Philo also distinguishes between two kinds: some men spring from below, and are irrecoverably bound to sense; the others have a Divine spirit breathed

into them, so that they live according to reason. The picture which Philo draws of the latter class corresponds indeed to that of the Stoical wise man, but with an essential difference as regards the mode in which this ethical ideal is to be realised. Whereas the Stoical ethics in their older form had thrown the wise man entirely upon his own resources, and left him to rise, through the power of the rational will itself, to the height of morality, Philo, on the other hand, was far too deeply possessed by a conviction of human weakness and native sinfulness for him to hold that the redemption of man by his own power was possible. This redemption can only be the effect of Divine grace, to which man has to surrender himself in pious trust. With Philo, as with the Neo-Pythagoreans, and later with the Neo-Platonists, ethics became a religious doctrine of salvation, which shows the way in which man, under the illuminating and animating influence of the Divine Logos, attains to faith and vision, and finally to mystic ecstatic union with God.

But in so far as the Logos, who is the Leader of every soul on the way of salvation, has revealed Himself typically in the history of Israel, the ethics of Philo obtains its positive basis in the religious tradition of Israel. The question as to the actuality of the "wise man"—always a problematical point in the Stoical philosophy—finds here its solution in the faith of the Jewish community: the abstract Ideal of the perfect

man is embodied for the religious apprehension in the forms of the sacred history, and above all in the person of Moses. To Moses all the predicates of the Logos, and even his name, are attributed in a way which verges very closely on the notion of an incarnation. Moses is called the sinless Mediator and Atoner, a Redeemer and Intercessor for his people, Prophet, Priest, and King in one person, an example for all souls, a Leader and saviour of humanity, the friend of God and participator of the Divine nature. In Philo's work on the life of Moses one may see a companion-picture to Plato's ideal sketch of Socrates and to the Johannine transfiguration of the Synoptic Jesus. Nevertheless, the historical ideal picture of Moses is not yet the exhausting and lasting revelation of the Logos; but Philo still expects a higher revelation of the Logos in a super-human appearance, which is yet to appear visible to all in order to fulfil Israel's hopes, and, with the victory of the elect people over all the nations, at the same time to bring the true religion of the one God to universal dominion. However, the Messianic faith in Philo is limited to this definite indication—it is engaged in stripping off its earthly national form in favour of a universal spiritual hope of the future. But more important for Philo still than this hope was the hope of the individual immortality of pious souls.

This is the system of Philo, which became so important for the future of religion, because it connected for

the first time the religious way of thinking of the East with the philosophy of the West, and thus created the unitive view of the world of Hellenism, into the frame of which Christianity could then fit the new religious experiences. From the Greek side sprang the idealistic tendency, the striving above the sensuous to the spirit, above the temporal to the eternal, above the divided to the one and universal: a high striving but abstract idealism, which did not pass beyond the opposition of the upper and the lower, the spiritual and sensible world, however much it strove to overcome the gulf, theoretically, by its doctrine of middle beings, and practically, by its asceticism and ecstatic states. From the Jewish religion, on the one hand, sprang the faith in the *one* God of nature and history, who, as governor of the historical life of the peoples, pursues moral ends, and through historical acts of revelation paves the way for the realisation of a moral kingdom of God. Thereby the historical life received a teleological valuable content, such as was wanting in the Greek idealism. But that idealism had proper to itself, in contrast, a spiritual universalism which was strikingly fitted to correct the nationally limited and morally fantastic ideal of the future in Judaism. Now when in Hellenism the Jewish faith in the God of revelation and history was connected with the Platonic world of ideas and spirits, and the "future-world" of the Jewish hope became fused with the "upper-world" of the Greek thinking,

there was founded a view of the world in which the Jews of the dispersion came into touch with the earnest-minded among the Gentiles, and a certain satisfaction seemed to be furnished to the religious need of the ancient civilised world, which had everywhere outgrown the old faith. Yet this satisfaction was certainly always but a very imperfect one, for in this view of the world there was not actually overcome either the ceremonial and national positivism of Judaism, nor the abstract and unfruitful idealism and intellectualism of the Greeks. Hence Hellenism could not of itself attain to the founding of a new-world religion. It was on the one side still too narrowly Jewish, and on the other too abstractly idealistic and doctrinaire, and consequently unpopular and unfruitful. But it was undoubtedly the favourable soil in which the new-world religion could take root.

On the soil of the Hellenistic culture, as thus prepared, Paul scattered the seed of his Gospel, the knowledge of the Christ Jesus in whom the historical revelation of God has already partly found its fulfilment, and partly will completely find it at His second coming, but who was not merely the Messiah of the Jews but the second Adam and man from heaven, the Image of God and head of humanity, the Ideal of the Sons of God and the primitive source of the Holy Spirit for all believers, Gentiles as well as Jews: in this lay the desired satisfaction of the religious longing

of the time. The opposition of the two worlds, for the overcoming of which Hellenism had otherwise laboured in vain, could now be viewed as abolished at last in the one person of the Christ Jesus, who sprang from heaven and was exalted to heaven, and its complete abolition was for the followers of Christ only a question of time, an attainable goal of hope guaranteed by the present spirit of Christ, which at the same time, as the goal of the striving of the common preparatory work of the community of Christ, included in itself a fulness of moral motives and practical tasks. With the world-Saviour of the Pauline preaching the God of the Jewish revelation had become the God of the world, and the revelation in the history of the Jewish people had become the common good of the universal Church of the world, this new people of God. This Church now appropriated the Divine word of the law and of the prophets in the higher form, by stripping off its national and ceremonial limit and only holding fast its universal human substance, the hope of a coming kingdom of God and the sense of being bound to a moral order of life springing from God. Besides, the Gentile Christian community in its faith in the risen Christ had the surety of personal immortality; in the sufferings of Christ it had the motive of repentance and endurance of suffering; in the present spirit of Christ with his gifts and miracles it had the pledge of its communion with the higher world, which even thereby

was no longer merely a future world but also already rose above the horizon of this present world. In this "reasonable service" (Romans xii. 2) of the new people of God the Divine revelation of Judaism had become one with the idea of humanity of the Greeks. What the Gentile proselytes had hitherto sought in Judaism, but had only very imperfectly found, was furnished to them now by this Christian Hellenism—namely, a higher thinking, a confident hoping, a purer life, and a religious moral society bound together and released from national and ceremonial limitations.

Hellenism, however, was not merely a favourable soil for the reception and spread of Christianity, but it also exercised a profound influence upon the theological apprehension of it. There was already in Paul an unmistakably Hellenistic element. We found it not merely in the manner of his allegorising use of Scripture, but also in the doctrines of the spirit of Christ and his relationship to the natural man, which are in touch and partly in verbal agreement with the Alexandrian "Book of Wisdom." But over these Hellenistic elements there preponderated in Paul the presuppositions of the Phariseean scholastic theology, whose legal categories served him as a means of over-coming Judaism with its own weapons. That this combination of Phariseeism and Hellenism, which was peculiar to Paul, found no understanding and no reception among the Gentile Christian communities

is easily conceivable. It was for the converted Gentiles in part *too much Jewish* and in part *too little Jewish*: the former, in so far as the ideas of the curse of the law, vicarious atonement, and imputed righteousness sprang from the soil of the Phariseean legal religion, and therefore could not be understood among the Gentiles in their original sense; the latter, in so far as the excluding opposition of law and Gospel, of faith and works, involved for the Gentiles the danger of their discrediting the Old Testament revelation, and falling away into a morally dangerous Antinomianism in the manner of Marcion. It was therefore in the course of things as natural as it was salutary, that in the Gentile Christian communities the Phariseean side of the Pauline theology was set aside, and the Hellenistic preferred and further elaborated. Thus there was developed in the school of Paul, in the decades following the apostle's death, that "deutero-Pauline" theology which we may designate as Hellenised Paulinism or Paulinised Hellenism. The two most important documents of this development of the primitive Christian theology are the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel according to John, the former indicating the beginning and the latter the climax and maturity of the Hellenistic theology of primitive Christianity.

The Hellenistic basis of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, its dependence in individual points as well as in its



whole view of the world on the Alexandrian "Book of Wisdom," and especially on Philo, is now beyond any doubt. Thence springs its allegorising treatment of the Old Testament, its estimation of the ritual sacrifices as means not for the forgiveness of sins but for the remembrance of sins, its erroneous opinion of the daily sacrifices of the High Priest, its comparison of Christ with Melchisedec, the priestly King who did not spring from men,—for Philo had already referred in the same way to the Logos. The fundamental thought of Philo's view of the world—namely, the opposition of the heavenly world of ideas and of the earthly world of sensible copies—has been especially made the basis of his Christian speculation by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and has been applied by him to the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. He sees in the earthly sanctuary of the Jewish cult the sensible copy of the true sanctuary which pre-existed as a heavenly ideal, and first became manifest in Christianity according to its true superterrestrial and supersensible nature. The "upper world" of the ideas has been unveiled in Christianity, in the first place, for the eye of faith; but at the near second coming it will also come to visible appearance, and is so far identical with the "future world" of the Jewish hope. From which there results for the author the paradoxical view that Christianity belongs to the future world. The religious mood cor-

responding to this view is undoubtedly the eschatological hope; but this hope yet rests essentially upon the faith that the opposition of the two worlds is already in principle overcome in Christ, that through His going before the entrance into the heavenly sanctuary has been opened to us, and that it has already been vouchsafed to us to enjoy a foretaste of the powers of the world to come. Christ, therefore, in the view of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, occupies essentially the same position as the Platonic Logos. He is the mediator of the two worlds who bridges over the gulf between them by this, that He, as the Son of God springing from above, represents as a priest with God, and reconciles with God, the world which He has created, and as whose heir and administrator He has been instituted. And as the Logos is called by Philo "a second God," so is Christ also addressed as "God" in the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 8 f.), on the basis of the citation of Psalm xlv. 7—the first certain trace of the apotheosis of Christ, which we have accordingly to refer to Hellenism, but whose motive we are able also already distinctly to recognise. This motive lies in the fully established interest to bring to expression the sublimity of the Christian religion, as the perfect revelation of God, above all earlier forms of religion in the sublimity of the person of Christ, above all other terrestrial and superterrestrial medi-

ators and messengers of God. But along with the sublimity of the eternal Son of God the author, in like manner, purposely emphasises the earthly lowliness of the Saviour who appeared in human flesh. Here lies the point where the ways of Christian theology parted for ever from those of the Jewish philosophy of religion. Philo had indeed already designated his Logos as the great High Priest and Advocate of men with God; but this was only an abstract theory, more rather of metaphysical than religious significance. It was only when the Christian Alexandrian beheld this heavenly High Priest of speculation as coinciding and one with Jesus, the Son of Man, the historical Saviour of sinners, that the opposition of the two worlds, whose gulf Philo sought to fill up by unsubstantial abstractions, was actually reconciled, and that the entrance to the fellowship of the Divine life and love was opened to the longing of the pious heart. Moreover, the incarnation of the Son of God, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, has not merely, as in the view of Paul, the significance of a necessary means for the end of the redemptive death, but the earthly life of the incarnate Christ Jesus receives here also an independent and important significance as a *moral example*. As for us sufferings are subservient to the moral exercises and verification of obedience, so has Christ also "learned obedience" by suffering, and "was made perfect by suffering."

since He received the exaltation to the heavenly dignity and joy as the reward of His faithfulness. The mediation of this human moral view of the life of Christ with speculation about His superhuman nature and His heavenly origin is not yet attempted here. The two sides are simply placed along with each other, and their union in intellectual formulæ is left as a problem for the theological speculation of the following time—a problem which, from the nature of the subject itself, could never be satisfactorily solved, because it includes a logical contradiction in itself, which indeed escapes from the immediate religious intuition, but is insuperable to logical reflection.

To this same striving to see the Divine idea and the human actuality connected in the most intimate way in the person of Jesus, *the Gospel according to John* owes its origin; and to the wonderful dexterity with which it was able to satisfy this two-fold need of the Christian consciousness it owes its ruling position in the theology, not merely of the second century, but of all the Christian centuries. In order to estimate correctly the true value of this Gospel, we should not seek in it a historical work, which it does not at all profess to be: it is a didactic writing which has invested its theological thoughts, drawn from Paul and Philo, in the form of a life of Jesus. The whole religious view of the world of the Gospel of John is based upon Philo:

as in his system, the Johannine has also its cardinal point in the opposition of God and world, and of the mediation of both by the Logos; but the difference consists in this, that with the evangelist the Logos was identified with the historical person of Jesus, and thereby converted from a metaphysical abstraction into a religious ideal with rich content. Paul had also already seen in the historical Jesus a superterrestrial being, the ideal man from heaven; but this ideal man yet belonged as "the first-born among many brethren" to humanity, was its representative before God. It was the Hellenistic theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Gospel according to John that first took the further step of elevating Christ above all that is creaturely into the Divine nature, and setting Him as the eternal mediator of all Divine revelation in opposition to the world. Thus could that age of mysteries, which strove as passionately as in vain to penetrate into the secrets of the Divine world, find in Christ the fulfiller of its longing, the authentic witness of the Divine truth. But while the Johannine Christ by His essential nature stands further from humanity than the Pauline Christ, on the other hand He has entered much more than the latter into human manifestation. The Pauline Christ, according to the spirit, is connected with the Jesus of history only through the *one* fact of the death on the cross, in which His ideal nature

presents itself for recognition, as concentrated in a focus, while the rest of the life of Jesus is left aside as meaningless. In John, on the other hand, the heavenly Logos has so become flesh in the terrestrial Jesus that His whole public life and work is a constant revelation of the Divine truth and grace. Here it is not the death of the man through which the Divine first breaks into manifestation, but already in the life of the Man the Divine glory so reveals itself that Jesus can say of Himself, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." Thus the Christian conviction is brought here still clearer to expression than in Paul, that the perfect humanity is also the perfect revelation of God. Naturally the historical is treated from this point of view with the greatest freedom; the material of the evangelical tradition is only used to the extent and with the transformation in which it is available for the didactic purpose of the theologian John; the discourses of the Synoptic Jesus are completely replaced by dogmatic treatises, which would have been as incomprehensible for the companions of Jesus, of His time and people, as they were in fact intelligible and useful for the apologetic theology of the second century. Generally it is the experiences, feelings, and interests of the Church of His time which the evangelist sees typified in the life of Jesus, herein also following Paul, who apprehended the community as the "body of Christ," as

the abiding incorporation of the spirit of Christ as it appeared personally and transitorily in Jesus. The Gospel according to John is therefore not to be regarded as a historical testimony of the life of Jesus, but as the most important document of the theological thinking of the Hellenistic Christians of the second century. I will try to exhibit the fundamental thought of his system in a short summary.

We must start from the opposition of God and the world as the Hellenistic presupposition of the Christian doctrine of salvation. According to John, God is spirit exalted above all the limits of mundane existence, and therefore also above the sensuous forms of worship in heathenism (Samaritanism) and Judaism, which are limited to space and time; but as spirit He is not a dead substance, of which nothing is to be predicated as of the Gnostic primitive principle, but He is the living spirit who has eternal life in Himself, and who is active without ceasing, who communicates His life, reveals Himself to men, and so reveals Himself for their knowledge as the truth, and for their feeling as grace or love. Indeed God's working upon the world is in John as little an immediate operation as it is in Philo, but it is mediated by the creation through the Son; yet as He is only the voluntary organ for the execution of the purposes and impulses of the Father, God Himself still remains the ultimate source of all the activity that orders, animates, and illuminates the

world. The motive of the Divine working is love, whose nature it is to communicate itself, and to make others participate in its own being. The object of the Divine love is primarily the Son, then men whom the Father has given to the Son to be His in order that He by revelation of the Father might put them into the same unity with the Father in which He Himself stands with Him. True, it is not all men who are the objects of the love of God and Christ, but only a chosen number of them, who by their nature are not of the world but of God, whose natures are akin to God (xvii. 9-16); but as these form the kernel of the world and the final cause of the rest of creation, it can so far be said of the world generally that God has loved it, and given His Son for it (iii. 16). God's working in reference to the world is, according to John, directly only that of animating and blessing love, and not that of penal judgment; but because His love has reference only to the choice of God-related men, the judgment is executed indirectly through this, that the distinction existing from the beginning between the children of God and the world that is hostile to God comes to manifestation. This severance (*krisis*) between the opposite elements of the world is here, as in Philo, put in the place of the Messianic judgment.

In the Johannine conception of the world there are two sides to be distinguished. It is on the one side a creature of God through the Logos, an object of the love



of God and of the redeeming activity of the Logos; but on the other side it is the complete contrary of God, and is related to Him as flesh to spirit, darkness to light, death to life. Men, in so far as they only belong to the nature of this world and are born of flesh, are not able to understand the heavenly things or to do what is good—nay, their natural blindness and unreceptiveness for the light increases in the majority till it rises to hatred of the light, to conscious rejection of the truth, by which they will not let themselves be convinced of their own badness. The nature of the world in its hostility to God comes to its most intensive expression in hatred to Christ, and it unveils itself at the same time according to its ultimate principle as Sonship of the Devil. The Devil, as “prince of this world,” is the personification of the side of the world that is adverse to God, the opposite of the being of God, the ground of all the falsehood and all the hatred of men; and hence all those to whom truth and love are alien and repugnant prove by that very fact that they are the sons of the Devil, as is expressed by John, especially as applicable to the unbelieving Jews who were hostile to Christ. By the inspiration of Satan Judas instigates the death of Christ; but this very death is victory over Satan, who can do no harm to the Holy One, and hence he falls into his own snare when he assails the Holy One and is deposed from his dominion over the world (xii. 31). The purpose of the

appearance of Christ is therefore designated as just being to destroy the works of the Devil, a thought which remained as the ruling conception for a long time in the ecclesiastical notion of the work of redemption. Besides, it is very significant of the cautious attitude of the Johannine speculation, which repels all Gnostic mythology, that nothing is taught by it concerning the origin of the Devil. It is nowhere said that he, originally created by God, first became the Devil by a free apostacy; but there is just as little said or indicated as to how such a contra-divine principle could come into the Divine creation. John has manifestly not reflected upon such a question, and he proves thereby that the Devil signifies nothing more to him than the personification of the evil principle which is found existing in the actual world as a power that is earnestly to be combated, whencesoever it may spring. But although John did not advance like the Gnostics to a metaphysical dualism, yet the personification of the good and the bad principle in Christ and Satan has as its correlate a dualistic severance between the two originally different classes of men, the children of God and of the Devil. The distinction founded on experience between the religiously receptive and non-receptive men, in which we, however, always perceive only a relative opposition, a preponderating of the flesh or of the spirit, laid hold of the intuition of the Hellenistic evangelist, which moved between anti-ethical

principles, as was the case with Philo, and it settled into a duality of essentially different men—those who demonstrate that their being is from God by their receptiveness for the divine, and those who prove that their being is not from God, but from the world and Satan through their unreceptiveness for the divine—an opposition which abolishes the unity of the human species, and which in its logical consequence cannot but lead to a duality of creations, if John had drawn this consequence, which he wisely did not do.

The mediator of the opposition of God and of the world is the Logos, who in Philo is called the first-born Son of God and a second God, and in John is called in a completely corresponding way the “only begotten Son” who was from the beginning as a God (*θεός*) with the God (*ὁ θεός*). The cosmic mediative activity which preponderates in Philo takes indeed a less prominent and significant place in the evangelist, yet it is not wanting here either, but is expressly put in the prologue as the starting-point: all things were made by the Logos. He is the bearer and mediator of all the life of the world whose primal ground lies in God, from whom the Son first received it by communication in order to give it to the creature. The mediator of life is further a principle of the light—*i.e.*, of the spiritual life of men, every one of whom is enlightened by the Logos—*i.e.*, possesses already in His human capacities a natural indwelling revelation

of God. But although the world has thus originally part in the Divine life and light, or bears it as capacity germ and power in itself, it is nevertheless not conscious of this its Divine origin and goal, but is held in finitude, is turned away from God, is darkness. Hence the mediator of the creative revelation becomes further also the mediator of the historical revelation, and primarily so in the Patriarchs and Prophets of Israel, who all, because inspired by the pre-existent Christ-Logos, were already before Christ witnesses of Christ. From this it follows that the Old Testament is so far God's word as it contains before Christ prophecy of the new dispensation. Whoever, therefore, actually believes the writings of Moses must also be led by them to faith in Christ. On the other hand, the Jewish law in itself is a religiously valueless tradition of Moses, and is put by John directly in opposition to the Christian grace and truth, to which it is related like powerless water to fiery wine, as is indicated in the allegory of the miracle at Cana. But the Jewish boasting of their being children of Abraham is altogether condemned by John as a sign of their being children of the Devil. Thus John is even more anti-Judaic than Paul, and he can therefore leave his controversies about the law and grace behind as a superseded standpoint in order to behold in Christ above everything else the positive fulfilment of all earlier revelation of God.

The light of the Logos rose on the world first through His incarnation in Jesus Christ. The Gospel contains no statements about the *how* of this incarnation, yet we may suppose that the evangelist represented it as quite analogous to the entrance of pre-existent souls into the earthly bodies of men, and consequently not as the assumption of a whole human nature by way of addition to the Divine, but as the investment of the subject of the Divine Logos with a human body of flesh. This veil, according to the idea of the author, concealed indeed the Divine glory of the Son from the sensible seeing of the multitude; but it so little took away its presence that the human flesh was rather the means of the exhibition of the Divine Logos in discourse, deed, and suffering. In this presentation the perfect identity of the Logos-Christ, become flesh with the pre-existent Logos, is directly presupposed as self-evident; the former has a clear recollection of His pre-mundane state in Divine glory as well as of His having descended from heaven, whither he will ascend again after the earthly episode. But even in this interval of time He knows Himself to be always one with the Father in the sovereign possession of Divine life, of the power to awaken the dead and to hold the judgment of the world. He knows everything,—as knowing the heart He sees through men, He knows His hour beforehand,—that is, the time of suffering which is foreseen of

God; he performs creative miracles of absolute supernaturalness; He throws the troop of His enemies to the ground by a mere word, and He gives up His life with spontaneous freedom in order to take it again to Himself in the same way by His own power in the resurrection—and so does this Logos - Christ walk as a veiled God upon the earth, raised above human imperfection and weakness. But with all this He is yet on the other side strictly subordinated to the Father; He speaks only what the Father has taught Him, performs the works which the Father has shown and given to Him, never seeks His own glory but finds the purpose of His life in the glorification of the Father: He says, "The Father is greater than I"; but, on the other hand, "I and the Father are one." What mediates the two sides, equality with God and subordination to God, is the *love* in virtue of which the Father gives all that is His to the Son, and the Son receives all from the Father in order to turn it again actually to account for the Father, to reveal the Father in Himself and through Himself in the world. Thus the metaphysical relationship of the Logos to God—which always lies at the basis of the view—becomes the ideal of the religious relationship of human Sonship to God. The perfect freedom in full dependence on God, the realisation of the essential unity with God in loving surrender to Him—what is this but the ideal of true religion? Thus under

the undoubtedly often strange, because superhuman, features of the Divine Logos-Christ there is yet at last unveiled to us the familiar image of the Christian Sonship of God as the special kernel of the Johanne as well as of the previous Pauline Christology.

The task which Christ has to fulfil consists, according to John, in the exhibition and communication of the divine glory, grace, and truth proper to Him, and in the founding of such a communion of men with God as He Himself has; or, put shortly, His task is to make the religious ideal which He exhibits in His person the common good of men, and primarily of His community. The means for the fulfilment of this task is primarily His word, which for that very reason has for its content nothing but Himself and His essential relationship to the Father, His oneness with God as the Ideal of all true human religion. But the intimate Son who has come from above, who lay on the bosom of the Father and was the eye-witness and ear-witness of the heavenly things, has initiated us into the mysteries of the heavenly world and of the Divine nature, which were shut from every earthly one. He is the true Hierophant, and His revelation is the fulfilment of the wisdom of all the heathen mysteries. The works of Christ come in addition to the words of Christ as demonstrations of His glory—*i. e.*, His fulness of supernatural power—and as signs which serve not merely to authenticate His divine mission, but are also sym-

bols of His spiritual gifts and operations in sensible images. Hence the double character of the Johannine miracles: on the one side, they are of the highest supernaturalness, far surpassing the Synoptic histories of miracles, because only the highest miracles appear as a worthy demonstration of the absolute miracle of the incarnate Logos; yet again, on the other hand, value is denied to the miracles as such in so far as what is sensible in them is not an end in itself but a mere means of making a spiritual idea visible or the illustration of a truth which does not belong to the world of sense, and therefore is also entirely independent of sensible miraculous occurrences. Hence the faith in miracles is rated very low in the Gospel according to John. The right faith is rather that which believes on the Word (iv. 42, 48, 50) — that is to say, which gains certainty from the words of Christ that He truly reveals the Father and is the Saviour of the world. Thus in John the working of Jesus in word and works receives back its religious significance as an indisputable means of salvation, which it had forfeited in Paul in consequence of his one-sided accentuation of the death of Christ. Whereas in Paul the animating Christ-spirit is first brought forth in the resurrection of Jesus, in John that spirit is already present in the whole earthly life of Jesus, and gives to all His discourses and doings the value of acts and means of salvation. Thus the death of Christ



is also no longer an isolated fact, but it appears as the culmination and conclusion of the whole work of His life. In the place of the Pauline theory of vicarious atonement through which we are ransomed from the curse of the law, the Hellenistic evangelist puts the beautiful thought, intelligible to all, of the ethical self-sacrifice of the heroic soul which lays down its own life in the good struggle in order to save those of others from the power of the evil world and its prince. In this view the death of Christ is not an end in itself which had been required by God for the sake of His own righteousness, but it is the unavoidable means by which alone the Saviour could fulfil the task of His life, and make the salutary truth intrusted to Him the common good of a whole people of God—like the dying of the corn of wheat by which its fruitful power is first brought forth. As an act of self-sacrificing love, Christ's death was the highest revelation of His own nature as well as of the nature of the Father, and at the same time it was the victorious overcoming of the world in its hostility to God, and also of Satan; and, finally, it was the means and the beginning of the exaltation of Christ Himself, who, by putting off the veil of the earthly flesh, returned again to the heavenly glory which He possessed from the beginning. As His death, according to John, was not the undergoing of a fate ordained and inflicted upon Him, but a free self-surrender of life, so His overcoming of death was

likewise not a resuscitation by the omnipotence of God, but a self-active resumption of His life in order to continue His work as a Saviour in a higher form.

The abiding fruit of the death and exaltation of Christ is the coming of the Holy Ghost, who, as "the other Paraclete"—*i.e.*, Advocate—represents the place of Christ in the community. The evangelist has taken this designation of the Spirit from Philo, who has often so designated the Logos; in John, Christ is also thought of and occasionally named as the first and proper Paraclete (1 John ii. 1); but usually the name Paraclete is reserved for the Spirit, in order by it to indicate its distinction from Christ. This distinction is certainly not yet dogmatically fixed, even in John; rather is it still so fluid that the coming of the Spirit may be interchanged with the second coming of Christ: yet it cannot be overlooked that in John the idea of the Spirit already begins to obtain more independent consistency in distinction from the Father and the Son, doubtless in connection with the growth of the self-consciousness of the Church, as the Church knew itself to be in lasting possession of a divine principle which reaches above the historical person of Jesus. This thought is also expressed in the significant Johannine presupposition that Jesus had not yet been able to say everything because the disciples would not yet have understood him, but that the Spirit would lead the community in all truth (xvi. 7-12 f.) John

has thus thought of an advancing and self-perfecting revelation of the Spirit in common with Gnosis and Montanism, those heretical phenomena of the second century; but he keeps within the ecclesiastical line when he emphasises the essential harmony of the advancing and foundation-laying revelation; the Spirit derives its proclamation from what properly belongs to Christ and effects the transfiguration of Christ; He is the selflessly serving organ of the Son in the same way as the Son is that of the Father. We have here already the conception of a development of the religious consciousness within the Christian community which has become so important in recent times; but the Christian consciousness of faith itself is, according to John, in a certain respect nothing absolutely new, but only the development of germs called into life by the revelation of Christ—germs which were already previously present in the souls that spring from the truth or from God. Only he who is drawn by the Father, or to whom it is given by the Father, can come to the Son (vi. 44-65)—that is, the faith in Christ arises only where there already lives in the soul a tendency to the divine, a presentiment and longing for religious truth which finds its satisfying fulfilment just in the manifestation of Christ. According to this beautiful Johannine thought, Christianity is therefore, not as it might easily appear in Paul, a new creation which has suddenly entered into the world, and which stood

merely in opposition to all that is naturally human, but it is the completion of the creation, the actualisation of the divine powers of life and light which are already implanted by the divine Logos in our species. Likewise in regard to its content the Christian faith appears simpler in John than in Paul, in so far as, without taking the circuitous route through the Pauline dogma of redemption, he holds directly to the person of Christ, and recognises and loves in it the human manifestation of divine grace and truth, and hence faith no longer stands here in opposition to works; but as compliant love to Christ, it includes in itself the doing of the divine will, and especially the fulfilment of the new commandment of love to the brethren. The abstract oppositions of faith and law or works are here done away in the higher unity of a religious moral consciousness, which has its firm supports in knowledge and love.

But it is not merely the conflict of the primitive Christian parties that has lost its significance for John; the hopes of the future, which were common to all the primitive Christian parties, have paled before the presence of *the* eternal life, which consists in the knowledge of God and Christ. The second coming of Christ is so transformed that it is already partly fulfilled in the appearances of the risen One, and is partly being continually fulfilled in the spiritual coming of Christ, and His dwelling in His followers. The visible Chiliast

kingdom of Christ which formed the object of the primitive Christian expectation has wholly disappeared, and its place is taken by a kingdom which is not of this world, whose kingdom is the witness of truth, and whose citizens are the worshippers of God in spirit and in truth. Just as little is there a judgment still awaiting the community,—in its faith it has already advanced beyond death and judgment; but the judgment is continually executed on the world,—on its unbelief in so far as this separates it from God and the children of God. The resurrection takes place at present partly in the awaking of the spiritually dead by the voice of the Son of God, and it will partly yet be carried out in the resuscitation of those who are actually dead. But the final state will be nothing less than the completion in the other world of the fellowship of love in which pious souls are even now at one with Christ and the Father, and consequently also with one another (xvii. 24 ff.) Hellenistic faith in the other world, that religious expression of the ancient idealism, animated by the warm breath of the mysticism of Christian love—this was the sign under which the Church set itself to conquer the world of the ancient civilisation and culture.

## LECTURE VIII.

### THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE ALEXANDRIAN FATHERS.

IN the last lecture I sought to sketch a condensed picture of the Jewish philosophy of religion founded by Philo in Alexandria, and then to show how under its influence a century later the Christian tradition experienced that ideal spiritualisation which we are wont to designate as Johannine theology. To-day I would ask you to transport yourselves again with me to Alexandria, no longer into the study of a solitary Jewish thinker, but into a Christian lecture-room in which the Christian faith is being treated as the subject of scientific instruction. It is the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria, the oldest theological educational institution of Christendom, in which at the beginning of the third century the Christian philosopher Clement undertook philosophically to establish and explain Christianity before Christian and heathen hearers. His hearers included many who afterwards occupied influential

positions as bishops or teachers in Eastern churches. Among them was the still youthful Origen, who afterwards, as the successor of Clement in the Catechetical School, outshone the fame of his teacher and created the first Christian dogmatic—the foundation of all later theology, and certainly also the apple of discord in all its conflicts. In order to understand Christianity as it has taken shape in the ecclesiastical theology, we must glance at the manner in which the primitive Christian faith became dogmatic theology, by means of the scientific work of the Alexandrian Fathers.

As Philo had found in the Divine Logos the unity of the Old Testament revelation and philosophical reason, the same conception also served Clement as the basis of a philosophy of the history of religion, which made Judaism and the Greek development prior preparatory stages of Christianity. The Divine Logos which enlightened the souls of men from the beginning—so Clement teaches—taught the Jews by Moses and the prophets, and he also awakened wise men among the Greeks, and gave them philosophy as their guide to righteousness. What prophecy was for the Jews, philosophy was for the Greeks; they were both a preparatory education for the higher truth which was to come in the Gospel. Whereas heathen philosophy had several fragments of the truth and Judaism had the truth still veiled in promises, in Christ has appeared the full truth in which all earlier

germs of truth have been fulfilled, and at the same time have become a common good for all the world. "The rise of the light has put everything into light; and now all has become Athens, all has become Hellas."

As the history of religion is regarded as an education of mankind from imperfect to perfect knowledge of truth, the development of the Christian life also falls under the same point of view of a progress from mere faith to the knowledge that is formed by philosophy. Clement, indeed, in harmony with the Church, held faith, that immediate certainty of the divinely revealed truth, to be the necessary basis of the Christian salvation in general, and of knowledge in particular. But above the faith which accepts what is handed down on authority, there stands in his view the Gnosis which comprehends the content of what is believed and can demonstrate it on scientific grounds, or defend it against sophistic attacks. But for this, according to Clement, philosophy is the indispensable auxiliary: not that the Christian Gnostic had to hold to a definite philosophical system, but he has to select the best out of them all, and by occupying himself with philosophy, to appropriate the faculty of reflecting about spiritual things and recognising the deeper sense of the traditional faith. This knowledge of the deeper sense, Clement, according to the customary manner of that age, mediated with the traditional faith by the allegorical transformation of it, which in fact frequently



led to the freest criticism of the tradition. But this freedom hid itself from the believing Gnostic behind the fiction that his allegorical interpretation went back by means of an esoteric tradition to a secret doctrine of the apostles, and even the most independent thinking of these Alexandrian Fathers felt itself secured only under the ægis of an at least latent tradition.

The object of the Gnosis is not so much God Himself as rather the Divine Logos. According to Clement, God in Himself is unknowable. He is not to be thought of correctly under any predicate or any name. We but improperly use all kinds of noble names in application to God as a regulative means of averting erroneous thoughts, and as a positive expression of His essential nature. His essence becomes knowable only in His image and instrument, the Logos. Clement thought of the Logos, on the one hand, as the universal world-forming and regulating reason and power, and consequently as one with God according to His immanence in the world; but, on the other hand, he also thought of Him as the Son, personally distinct from God and subordinate to Him, who, as He first gave us as creator the natural life, so He has at last appeared in Christ as teacher in order to bestow upon us the eternal life, through the knowledge of the life that is pleasing to God. Christ is therefore, according to Clement, the ideal manifestation of the universal principle of the true and good, which worked from the

beginning in the world, and led humanity educatively to its Divine destination. But this destination is reached only in Christianity, and more particularly by the Christian Gnostic, who is no longer impelled by fear and hope like him who merely believes, but who raises himself in the knowledge and love of God above all that is earthly, and who, in following after His teacher Christ, also becomes Himself a God free from all mere impulses. Clement's ideal of the Christian Gnostic has the greatest affinity with the ideal of the wise man of the Stoics, as the pious Stoics in the time of the Emperors, men like Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, have sketched it. What surrender to the Divine order of the world is with them, that with the Christian Gnostic is the knowledge and imitation of the Divine Logos, typically revealed in Christ as the educator and teacher of mankind.

The most important among Clement's scholars was Origen, who, while still a youth of eighteen years, became his successor as teacher of the Catechetical School. He had hitherto occupied himself with linguistic science and interpretation of the Holy Scripture. But when there were now also found among his scholars heretics and philosophically educated men, he felt the need of making himself more exactly acquainted with philosophy, and he attended for some years the school of the Neo-Platonist, Ammonius Saccas. Regarding the result of these studies of

Origen, the Neo-Platonist Porphyry afterwards delivered an acute judgment, saying that he indeed made great progress in philosophy, but as an adherent of the Christian sect he again falsified all the excellent things he had learned by Hellenising in his doctrine of God and things, and these Hellenistic views he foisted on foreign myths. In fact, Origen's mode of teaching was a mixture of Christianity and Greek philosophy. The latter, indeed, he wished only to use as a means for the defence, establishment, and development of the historically given faith; but it inevitably exercised a determining influence even upon the apprehension of the substance of the doctrine of faith. The traditional views of the faith of the community were spiritualised, idealised, transposed into philosophical thoughts partly far away from their original sense. But on the other hand, the philosophical ideas were so combined with the traditional matter of the half-historical, half-legendary faith of the community, that this dogmatic mixture might well appear to a philosophical critic as a "falsification" of the Hellenistic ideas. This impure mixing of thoughts and sensible images and legends continued to be the fundamental characteristic of the dogmatic theology of which Origen was the scientific founder. It was only at the cost of entering into the form of Greek speculation that the Christian faith could overcome the ancient culture; and on the other hand, the ancient culture

could only be preserved for the after-world at the cost of its amalgamation with the Christian tradition. It would be senseless to blame this universal historical necessity, or to make it a reproach to the Fathers; for it is not our function to play the master to history, but to understand it. But it would be just as perverse a position to deny that the theology of the Church as it thus arose, and became a product of the mixture of such heterogeneous elements as the tradition of the community and the Greek philosophy, was far from being a perfect expression of the truth; rather can it satisfy neither the thinking mind nor simple faith. It is a compromise which has to mediate between two constituents, but on that account becomes just to neither of them, because it contains too much artificial reflection for the one, and too much fantastic mythology for the other.

This evil, which has cleaved to dogmatic theology from its beginning, was, however, felt less in the time of Origen than afterwards, because philosophical speculation had not yet become an element of that faith of the community which was binding on all, but was reserved as a higher stage of knowledge for those who were trained for it. And hence speculation could proceed all the more freely because it did not with every proposition give a shock to the sensibilities of the naïve consciousness of the community, and the community of the simple believers could still enjoy the practical sav-

ing force of their faith undisturbed, because it was not yet lighted up with the refinement of subtle dogmatic definitions and formulæ. How much confusion would have been spared the Christian Church if its teachers had always proceeded according to the principles of the pedagogic wisdom which was accepted in the Catechetical School at Alexandria in the third century! There were not wanting those who, according to Origen's statement, could give account of their faith with deep reasons that were taken from the essence of things themselves; but they were far from forcing this Gnosis upon all. The many who lacked the power of understanding it were exhorted to keep to the simple faith and thankfully to experience its power in their moral life, without giving themselves any concern about dogmatic questions. "What stands in specially high estimation with us (the ideas of the philosophically educated) we venture to bring forward in our public addresses only when our hearers consist in the majority of men of insight; and on the other hand, we still hold back what is more profound when they have not yet reached the proper stage, but seem still to require milk." This right to distinguish with pedagogic wisdom between the milk of babes and the strong food of mature men, and not to give the same thing to every one but to give every one his own, may appeal to the example of the apostle Paul; but it has unfortunately been denied to the Christian teachers from the time when the State

intruded, with rough levelling hand, into the sanctuary of the Christian faith, and raised the propositions of a scientific reflection to dogmas which all were bound to confess.

That Origen employed allegorical interpretation as a means for the mediation, or even veiling, of the opposition between his philosophical culture and the positive tradition, was not new. But he first grounded this method systematically, and brought it into intellectual connection with his metaphysics. As man has body, soul, and spirit, so the Scriptures have a threefold sense—the bodily or literal sense, the psychological or moral sense, and the spiritual or Gnostic sense. According to Origen's conviction, the literal sense contains much which is not worthy of God nor conducive to our salvation, or which at least is important only for a low religious consciousness, but is indifferent for those who are advanced: such matter has been intentionally intermixed in the Scripture by the divine Logos, in order thereby to give us occasion to rise above the letter and to seek after the deeper sense. With this position Origen won great freedom in respect of all the Biblical narratives which were repellent to the cultivated taste of his time. Not only the legends of the Creation, of Paradise, and the Fall, and the intercourse of God with the Patriarchs, but also many Gospel narratives, have been treated by him as allegories of spiritual truths; and he grounded this, his mystical interpretation, in a

manner which has the most striking affinity with the modern mythical explanation of miracles. For example, he says that the evangelists have not properly understood many of the extraordinary deeds of Jesus which they described, and also that they have given what was purely spiritual often in the form of an external history: they interchanged the spiritually true with the external, so that they not seldom preserved the spiritual truth to a certain degree in the veil of an untruth.

Let us now cast a glance at the dogmatic system in which Origen has professedly combined the results of his investigation of Scripture into a coherent whole, but in which he has in truth worked together the Biblical ecclesiastical tradition with the Greek philosophy. It is the systematic work "Concerning Principles" (*De Principiis*), and the apologetic treatise "Against Celsus," which come here under consideration. According to Origen, God is to be thought of as simple, unchangeable, perfect spirit, so far exalted above all finite beings that we are never able fully to know Him. He has indeed so expressed His nature in the visible creation that a certain relative knowledge is to be gained from it, as it is found in philosophers; but we Christians have learned to know God still better through the incarnate Logos. Nevertheless, our knowledge of God always remains only relative. "Whatever it be that we are able to divine, or to know of God, we must always believe that He is yet far more

glorious and greater than what we have known of Him." The attributes which we predicate of God serve as a means to help us to think of Him in so far as this is possible to human nature. But we must think away from them all that is unworthy of God, and especially all that would bring a contradiction or a change or a moral imperfection into God; for example, such states of feeling as repentance or anger. Between the goodness and justice of God there is no discordance, as the Gnostics thought; but justice or righteousness is the order in the manifestation of His goodness. Nor is the omnipotence of God to be thought of as so limitless that it could come into contradiction with the wisdom or omniscience of God. Because the omnipotence is constantly determined by the wisdom of God, it can do nothing contrary to reason; but it is also limited by the knowing of God, in so far as this cannot embrace a thing that is unlimited in itself; and therefore omnipotence was not able to create a world unlimited from the beginning, but merely an endless series of worlds limited at every time. The unlimited would be the incomprehensible, even to God; it could not be the object of His knowledge, whose nature is to limit the knowable.

As the perfect spirit, God cannot be without revelation; but this is mediated by the Son begotten eternally out of God, or the Logos. The personal independence of the Logos has been taught much more def-



initely by Origen than by Clement. The opposition to the Gnosticising teaching of the Monarchians (Unitarians), and the need of closest attachment to the ecclesiastical way of thinking in which the identification of Jesus with the Logos had already become a standing view, was without doubt the determining motive of Origen's emphasising of the independent hypostasis of the Logos, that source of all the further defects and contradictions in the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity and of Christ. But it appeared as yet less prominently in Origen than in his successors. In virtue of the beginningless generation of the Son which is grounded by the immutability of God, He stands above all creatures, shares in the perfect nature of the Father, and is therefore directly called God. But as the Son begotten by the Father, who has the principle of His being not in Himself but in the Father, He is subordinate to the Father in the same manner as all creatures, and is Himself also called creature. His equality of Being with the Father becomes a relative equality, and His unity with the Father is understood as a moral harmony of will. One sees that Origen's formula of the "eternally begotten Son" already includes in itself the contradiction of equality with God and subordination, from which as a natural consequence the conflict between the Arian and Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity afterwards arose.

Before Origen the Church had as yet taught nothing

definite regarding the Holy Spirit: it wavered between the view of the Spirit as a creature analogous to the angels or identical with the Son. Origen, essentially in the sense of the Johannine Gospel, conceived of the relationship of the Spirit to the Son as an analogous repetition of the relationship between the Son and the Father: the Spirit has taken Being through the Son, is of the same substance with Him, but subordinate. The activity of these three hypostases was represented by Origen in the form of three concentric circles: the widest, embracing the whole Being, is that of the Father; the next that of the Son, which extends to the rational creation; and the narrowest is that of the Spirit, which rules in the holy men of the Church. But the inference might easily be drawn from this view that Father, Son, and Spirit are three modes of the revelation of the one Deity, developing themselves in so many stages out of each other; and this would amount to the same thing as the modalistic doctrine of the Trinity held by Sabellius. But Origen repudiated this inference, seeing that he held fast the view of the hypostases as subjects separating themselves independently from each other, as they most naturally are apprehended by the popular mind.

The creation of the world, according to Origen, cannot have had a beginning in time; for it is unthinkable that God has ever been inactive, that His goodness did nothing, His omnipotence exercised no power.

But if His omnipotence was always active, it must also have had objects, and therefore must always create a world; a transition from not-creating to creating would also be in contradiction with the immutability of God. The world as a revelation of the infinite omnipotence must be infinite; but as object of the divine knowing, which can only embrace what is limited, it must always be finite. Origen solved this antinomy by the thought of an endless series of finite worlds succeeding each other. He probably borrowed this thought from the Stoics, but he improved their theory in that he did not think of the successive worlds as a mere repetition of the same existence, but as an ascending series of developments, in which every prior existence carries the germs of the later in itself, so that the seed of the preceding world comes to maturity in states of the later world. Origen found a further difficulty in the inequality of the creatures, whereas the divine justice is the law of equality for all. If the reason of the inequality can lie neither in the one creator nor even in several creative causes, it must lie in the creatures themselves—namely, in their free self-determination in a pre-terrestrial existence. In agreement with Plato, Origen supposes that all rational beings existed before their terrestrial appearance as pure spirits in the ideal world, and that freedom belonged to them, so that they might continue to persevere in the imitation of God or fall away from Him. This very mutability,

as grounded in their freedom, distinguished them from the immutability of the Divine Being. The fact that the possibility of their fall was actualised, is explained from the cooling down of their original love to God and their inertness in the preservation of goodness. The fall itself appears so far as a necessity grounded in the nature of the finite spirit; only the degree of deviation from the good is different in individuals according to the measure of their freewill. The soul is the spirit fallen away, or cooled in its love for the good (which Origen finds indicated in the etymology of the word *ψυχή*); but it has the possibility of again returning to its spiritual origin. The extreme point of the fall of souls is their incorporation in a material body; but this is at the same time the beginning of the process of return or of the elevation of the soul again to spirit. The body is on the one hand the prison and place of punishment of fallen souls, and on the other hand it is the means of their purification and education. According to Origen, the whole material world is only created as a place for the purification of fallen spirits. Matter is that which is wholly undetermined in itself; it receives its determining formations from the distinctions that are grounded in the freedom of souls; it is therefore properly only the manifestation of the freedom, or of the essence, of spirits. With this decisive significance of creaturely freedom, Origen could not accept a divine predestination. The election of some,

or rejection of others, has not, according to him, its ground in a groundless divine decree, but in the pre-terrestrial merits of some and offences of others. Moreover, it does not condition any absolute and definite opposition, but only a relative and temporary distinction, seeing that the divine goodness and wisdom aims at the final restoration of all. The place of particular predestination is consequently taken, in the view of Origen, by the profound and genuinely Christian thought of a world-government educating all. The Divine wisdom knows so to guide all the events which happen, that they must serve the common end. It brings the resisting tendencies of will together for fulfilment of the one world-purpose. It directs the doing of the free spirits to goals which lie beyond their own thinking and willing; and even the antagonism and hindrance of some by the others, only serves it as a means by which so much the more to further and secure the victory of the good. "As our body, while consisting of many members, is yet an organism which is held together by *one* soul, so the universe is to be thought of as an immense living being which is held together by *one* soul, the power and the Logos of God." We might find in this an anticipation of Leibnitz's thought of a pre-established harmony of monads, or of a harmonious development of the world guided by an immanent purposive idea. But side by side with these truly speculative thoughts, we find in Origen many

fantastic details concerning angels and demons which pursue their work in nature and the world of men, and exercise good or bad influences upon the natural and moral life of men,—notions in which the Alexandrian theologian has paid tribute to the mythological way of thinking of his time.

The human soul, although it is a fallen spirit, still always retains from its origin a spiritual element in itself, an image of God which includes the capacity of becoming actually like to God. Origen finds this higher endowment pre-eminently in the capacity of our reason to distinguish between good and evil and to choose with freedom, but strikingly explains that our acting is never determined merely by external stimulations, but becomes determined by our inner self. The influences of God or of demons which certainly take place, exercise no necessitating power, but it depends on our freewill whether we shall surrender ourselves to the one or the other. Nevertheless, Origen accepts the view of a universal sinfulness of all men (with the single exception of Jesus); but according to him it is not a consequence of the fall of Adam, but of the fall of the several souls in the state of pre-existence, and their combination with the impure material body. Accordingly, he interprets the narrative in the Bible of Paradise and the fall of our first parents allegorically, as applying to the state of souls in the ideal world, and to their sinking down from that world into the

corporeal world. The further consequence of this position was that the fallen souls were exposed to the corrupting influences of the demons. With all this deterioration, however, the seeds of the divinely good remain in every soul, and guarantee the possibility of their redemption and restoration.

Origen thought of redemption as a gradually ascending education of men by divine revelation and guidance, which has proceeded down through the whole history of the world, but attained its culmination in the incarnation of the Logos. The incarnation took place at the critical moment when mankind had fallen so much into corruption that it had become incapable of helping itself, and could only be restored by the immediate help of the Creator Himself. That the Divine Logos had become man in Jesus, was an established proposition in the view of the ecclesiastical teachers from the time of the Gospel of John, but Origen was the first who reflected more definitely about the *how* of the incarnation. He was led to this on the one hand by his doctrine of the independent personality of the eternal Logos, and on the other hand by his doctrine of the nature and origin of human souls. All souls have a certain participation in the Divine Logos, but in a different degree according as they make themselves worthy and capable of his communication by their love to the Logos. Now the soul of Jesus was originally quite like other souls; but as in virtue of

its free choice it cleaved to the Logos in unchangeable and indissoluble love, it became one with the Logos in the same way as the iron is penetrated by the fire; it so received the Divine nature of the Logos in itself, that the Logos became its own nature. There did not take place thereby a change or limitation in the Logos, but in the soul of Jesus. There was certainly an elevation above human limits in so far as by its free love for the Logos it became participative of its nature and was deified. And as the character of the body is always determined by the soul, so the divinity of the soul of Jesus had as its consequence that even His body had supernatural properties which distinguished it from other human bodies. It could already on earth assume any change at pleasure, but after the resurrection and ascension it was completely freed from all earthly limits: since then Christ has become wholly God, and pervades the world omnipresently. Thus, according to Origen, the miraculous God-man of the Christian dogma comes about by an ethical process at whose end the two personal subjects, the Divine Logos and the soul of Jesus, are fused into a single Being. The result of the process passes beyond all human analogy and becomes a transcendental mystery, although the *process* itself keeps within the analogy of our moral-religious experience. Viewed on this side, we have a religious ideal in which the Christian experience indeed potentiates its proper content and yet finds it again intelli-



gibly ; while on the other side we have the abstract form of an artificial reflection which has no significance for the religious faith, but so much the more contains matter for theological disputation. Thus the Christology of Origen stands exactly intermediate between the unreflected religious faith in Christ of the oldest Christendom and the scholastic Christ-dogma of the Church for which it laid the foundation.

The work of Christ was described by Origen from different points of view, for which occasion was given partly by the statements of the New Testament and partly by the popular notions of his time. To the former belongs the view of the death of Christ as an atoning sacrifice which He, as the sinless head of the community, offered vicariously for them, in order to satisfy the justice of God. To the latter belongs the mythological idea of a conflict of Christ with Satan and the Kingdom of Demons, in which His death appears partly as a heroic self-sacrifice for the liberation of His own people, and partly as the ransom for redeeming them out of Satan's captivity. But Origen has himself very finely observed that the different views of the salvation effected by Christ correspond to the different wants of the religious consciousness. Its truth, therefore, is a relative truth according to the standpoint of the person who views it. He says, "Christ is for different souls the Way, Physician, Door, Lamb of God, and High Priest; on every stage of

rational existence He is all to all. He became flesh in order to be apprehended by those who could not see Him as the pure Logos." "Blessed are they who have come so far that they no longer need Christ as a Physician and Redeemer and Shepherd, but only as the Logos and the truth, as the teacher of the heavenly mysteries!"

Origen therefore distinguishes different stages of the Christian life. On the lowest stage stands the faith by authority; and at this stage there is still no true knowledge and free love, but the motives of fear and hope move the individual to a slavish bondage. Yet even this faith has a value as a means of moral education; nor is it to be designated as blind faith, seeing that it is founded upon the "demonstration of the spirit and of power"—that is, according to Origen's interpretation, upon prophecy and miracle. The high value which he laid upon these demonstrations, especially the first, appears the more striking to us, seeing that he himself puts these alleged proofs on a line with the heathen oracles and miracles, only that he finds the superiority of the Biblical prophecies and miracles in their moral effects. But if their demonstrative power depends upon the moral character of their bearers, it would be natural for us to draw the inference that the proper proof just lies in this moral fact and not in that supernatural element. That this immediate inference did not occur even to such

idealistic thinkers as Origen and the other Greek apologists, is characteristic of the way of thinking of that time, in which sublime speculation was always mixed with fantastic mythology.

But above this elementary belief of beginners stands the stage of the advanced, who recognise in Christ the revelation of the eternal Logos, and with it also raise themselves to the free love of God, which, passing above what is commanded, becomes an ascetic perfection. A constant progress in knowledge and moral purification takes place even beyond the earthly life. In this reference Origen has applied the traditional ideas of punishment in the other world, and especially of hell-fire, which is not to be understood as meaning local tortures, but as the torture of the evil conscience, and as the painful repentance and purification of the soul. But if all punishment has only educative significance, there can be no question about an eternity of punishment in hell. Origen is so logical as to deny this not merely with regard to men but also to demons, seeing that to God there is no injury of the creature which is unhealable, and the duration of the healing discipline is only different in different individuals according to their measure of evil. The goal of all these purifications is that the potential image of God in the man of the first creation is actualised to the likeness to God, and this becomes at last unity with God. Origen strikingly describes this ideal of com-

pleted perfection as a spiritual Paradise restored upon a higher stage. It is a Paradise in which God will dwell and rule in souls in which there will no more be any distinction of goodness and badness, because nothing bad will longer cleave to him to whom God is all, and when one will no longer desire to eat of the tree of knowledge, because he will always stand in the good and be at the same time in and with God. And to this spiritual perfection there will also be a corresponding bodily perfection. It is not the sensible body that will rise again; but the soul having become wholly spiritual and holy, will also receive a body worthy of this state, a body of inexpressibly fine material and perfect form—as Origen held in agreement with Paul (1 Cor. xv.), but in opposition to the traditional Eschatology of the Church. Yet this world-end, according to Origen, is not to be final, seeing that the mutability lying in the nature of the freedom of the creature always leads again to a new fall, to a new creation of a material world, and to a new process of educating and purifying fallen spirits. That this view lets go the teleological standpoint of an inner perfection of the world by fulfilment of its absolute purposive idea, and the carrying back of all oppositions to their unity in God, was undoubtedly felt by Origen himself; and he therefore wavered between the view of an absolute end and of endless repetition of always new worlds. But far be it from

us to reproach him with the fact that he has not solved an antinomy, the solution of which no one has fully succeeded in finding even to the present day.

If we now review this system, whose outlines I have attempted to unfold to you, it appears to me that we can only view with admiration the greatness of the theological thinker, who with all his entanglement in the presuppositions of his time, and with all his pious fidelity to the traditions of his Church, was yet at the same time able to rear on the ground given to him the intellectual structure of a "spiritual Christianity," in which the highest ideas of the Greek philosophy are wedded with the moral earnestness and with the all-embracing love of the Gospel, in which the sensuous fantastic hopes of the future cherished by the primitive Christianity are laid aside and replaced by a moral religious ideal of sublime purity, and in which the visionary fantasy of the Gnostic mythologising is restrained by rational thinking, and the quietistic mysticism of the Neo-Platonic ecstasy is moralised by practical love of God. If it is the task of theology to unfold the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God which are hidden in Christ, to put them into relation with the various elements of the consciousness of the time, and to prove them to be the fulfilment of all previous germs of truth and the corrective of all previous errors, and thus to make the Divine prin-

principle the ennobling leaven for all human thought and life, then we must recognise that Origen has fulfilled this task of theology for his time in a masterly and truly exemplary way. And in saying so we do not overlook the fact that as a child of his age he was confined to his limits, that his thinking with all its ideal aspiration was still far from the soberness and logical discipline of the modern scientific method, that he had no sense for historical criticism, that to him the limits between historical reality and intellectual products were always unfixed and wavering, and that from all these grounds his dogma became a mixture of religious truth and fantastic mythology welded together by a scholastic dialectic which it is often difficult to distinguish from sophistry.

Unfortunately for humanity, it is the common lot of the systems of great thinkers that their successors do not keep so much to their true thoughts as to their errors, and that they often exaggerate these errors and develop them one-sidedly when separated from the connection of the whole. So it happened with the Christology of Origen. It was not the revelation of the Logos in the history of human religion, but his metaphysical essence and relationship to God the Father, that became the main object of purely philosophical reflection, which came to have less and less religious interest. The independent personality of the Logos, which Origen has sought to connect in the closest possible

way with God the Father, became always more one-sidedly emphasised in the conflict with the Monarchians. In order to keep away all temporal movement from God, they made the Logos a created lower God, in whom the popular consciousness could find an analogon and surrogate for the polytheistic gods. The love of disputation, the delight in dialectical analysis of abstract conceptions characteristic of the Greek, soon took possession of Origen's formula of the eternally begotten Son. Arius found this conception full of contradiction, and put in its place the Son begotten of the will of God in time, who was essentially a creature, and therefore unequal to the essence of God, and yet who preceded the world in time and was raised to Godlike dignity on account of His moral merit. The victory of this doctrine would have led Christianity back into paganism and Judaism,—into paganism in so far as it deifies a creature and abolishes the unity of God; and into Judaism in so far as it makes the union of God and man impossible and their opposition insuperable by the interpolation of a third being, who is neither God nor man. It was the merit of Athanasius to have recognised this danger and saved the religious idea of Christianity, at least in principle, although he veiled it in a transcendent mystery. He acutely pointed out the contradiction in the Arian conception of a created middle God; but the really deciding motive which guided him

lay in the religious necessity to establish the truth of the Christian redemption, or union of God and man, as a fact given in Christ. The thought presented by him in manifold variations is this, that it is not a creature, but only God Himself, who can redeem us from sin and death, receive us into the fellowship of God, and make us participators of the Holy Spirit and eternal life. "In order that we might be made Divine, God has become Man."

But this thought, while entirely correct in itself, led, under the established assumption that the Divine life revealed in Christ is a personal God-Being in distinction from the Father-God, to those insoluble difficulties which have been fixed in unthinkable formulæ by the decrees of the Councils of the Church, and which have been made a law of belief for Christendom. With the Homousian deity of the Son and of the Spirit as decreed at Nice and Constantinople, they had three Divine persons which were yet not to be three Gods but *one* Divine substance—a mystery on which the acuteness of philosophical dialectics might try its power, but through which the God of the Biblical faith was not made manifest, but veiled and transported into an impenetrable darkness. The person of the Saviour became also quite as inconceivable. If He was the God-Logos who had appeared in the flesh, how could He yet have been the man whom the Gospels describe Jesus to us as being? Has He taken from humanity



only a body, or a body and soul, yet without a human spirit; or has He assumed a whole human nature in spirit, soul, and body? And if the latter was the case, how could a complete human nature subsist with the Divine nature of the Logos in the unity of *one* person? If the two Natures remained different, then there were properly two persons, the God-Logos and the man Jesus, who are combined only in an improper sense in our view, and worshipped as a single person; or if it was actually a single person, then the human Nature appears not to subsist beside the Divine Nature, but must be merged in it, as a drop of vinegar is merged in the sea. Inevitable as one or other of these two consequences appears to be for the reflective understanding, yet the Church has repudiated both of them, and commanded the mind to think the unthinkable—namely, to think together in the unity of the single person two natures, a perfect deity and a perfect humanity, unmixed and unseparated. Thus did they add to the mystery of the Trinity, according to which three persons form only *one* Being, the counter-mystery of Christology, that one Person consists of two Natures.

In this connection the question involuntarily presses itself, What interest could the Church have in promulgating or prescribing such a product of artificial speculation and dialectic, as a principle of faith? That it was not a mere matter of philosophical school-wit, but an acute religious insight which lies at the basis of

these strange dogmatic controversies and formulæ, is guaranteed for us by the representative outstanding name of Athanasius. What the Church wished was unquestionably the establishment and vindication of the central Christian truth—the union of God and man in the religious personality of Christ and of Christians. But this new principle of the union and reconciliation of God and man could only be expressed by the Church by the means and under the presuppositions of the thoroughly dualistic way of thinking of that age; and the discordance between the true Christian religious kernel and the dogmatic shell formed from the notions of that time, became thereby inevitable from the outset. Instead of recognising the union of the divine and human spirit in the religious personality of Jesus as a spiritual fact of such a kind that it is similarly reproduced in the faith of the Christians, and consequently becomes an actually knowable object of our lasting Christian experience, there was put in the front a divine person wholly incomparable with our person, one who had come down from the heavenly heights, had united Himself in a unique and inconceivable manner with humanity, and after the episode of an earthly life had returned again to the heavenly world. Thus in the place of a continuous moral religious experience there was put a mysterious drama of the other world, which is entirely removed from our experience and knowledge, and is only to be worshipped in silent

awe. Certainly dogma had thus become a veiling of the religious truth of Christianity; but let us not forget, at the same time, that the *veil* had become a beneficent protection for that truth, for whose immediate apprehension the peoples had not yet become ripe. And at the same time, in the case of the Germanic peoples, who were then entering into the Church, the mystery of the dogma and worship which became to their childlike souls the object of a reverence full of presentiment of the truth, was a wholesome means of educating them to Christian faith and life.

The two sides of the orthodox dogma—namely, that it has the union of God and humanity as its content, but that this is presented only in the form of a supernatural miracle separated from actual humanity—have their correspondence in the practice of the Church. To the other-worldness of the dogmatic God-man corresponds the ascetic ideal of monasticism, whose most zealous cultivators were those very Fathers who created the orthodox dogma. As the dogmatic Christ is a superterrestrial Divine Being who only assumes humanity in order to merge it in Himself or in His Deity, so the ideal Christian has practically to negate the humanity in himself, and to withdraw from human society in order to raise himself to deification by a holiness withdrawn from the world. The asceticism and flight from the world of the monk is a consequence and illustration of the transcendent spiritualism of the dogma.

Hence the monks were the most zealous champions of this most sublime and inconceivable dogma. The holding as true of the inconceivable was for them a requirement of the ascetic ideal, a mode of intellectual asceticism, or a mortification of the sound understanding. But, on the other hand, the dogma had as its content the mystery of the incarnation, of the indwelling of God in the flesh, His visible appearance under an earthly veil. To this side of the dogma correspond the mysteries of worship which celebrated the presence of the Divine nature under the sensible sign, the visible image, and the edible matter of the holy actions. It is well known what influence the heathen mysteries have exercised upon the development of the ecclesiastical worship. But the deeper ground for the formation of the ecclesiastical mystical worship lay not in the external heathen influences, but in the religious need of the Church itself. The further the God-man of the dogma was removed to a remote unapproachable height, so much the more did men wish to become certain of the presence of the Divine in worship under the sensible, visible, and tangible signs. The mystical realism and the theurgic magic of the worship is the obverse side of the transcendence of the dogma: it is the pledge that the opposition of the Divine and human, of the other world and this, although it otherwise held everywhere in extremest form, was nevertheless overcome at least at *one* place of the world, at the altar of the

Church, at the holy spot where the mystery of the incarnation of God is always accomplished anew in the miracle of the Eucharist.

It is certain that the sensuous mysticism of the worship and the ascetic desensualising of monasticism lay both equally far from the Christian ideal of the worship of God in spirit and in truth. But it would be unjust and unhistorical if we were on that account to deny all Christian content to those ecclesiastical forms. To use Paul's words, they are assuredly weak and beggarly worldly elements unsuitable for the glorious freedom of the children of God. But, for the immature Christendom which was unable to overthrow so rapidly the habits and inclinations of heathen thinking and feeling, these beggarly elements of the world were yet symbols of spiritual truth and educating means of salvation. They raised the soul above the dust of the earth to feel the presentiment of a higher world, which, while infinitely exalted above the turmoil of earth, yet gives its blessed presence to be felt by the hearts which bend before what is holy, in humility and love.

## LECTURE IX.

### THE CHRISTIANITY OF AUGUSTINE AND OF THE ROMAN CHURCH.

DURING the decades in which the Church of the East endeavoured to bring to an ultimate conclusion the dogmas about the Trinitarian essence of God and the two natures of Christ, and as it were to bury in these abstractions of a transcendental speculation the living religious faith of Christianity, there worked in the West a man who was destined to vivify this faith again on the basis of inmost personal experience, and thereby to give to the Western Church the impulse and the power for further independent development. This was the great Church Father Augustine, the Bishop of the North African city, Hippo Regius, who was able to breathe a new spirit into the traditional formulas of the ecclesiastical theology by turning the theological thinking from the airy and cold heights of transcendental speculation back to the inner life of the human soul,

and by finding in the experiences of sin and grace the foundation for the structure of the ecclesiastical faith and life. After a wild youth tossed about by sensuous passion and theoretical scepticism, the Platonic philosophy had first helped him to reach an ideal view of the world. But, profoundly as it impressed his reflective understanding, it was yet unable to give his passionate heart the longed-for peace. This he found only when, under the guidance of the apostle Paul, whose spirit was so intimately related with his own, he came to understand Christianity as the religion of redemption and grace. From that time he regarded it as his task to work the Platonic doctrine of God and the Pauline doctrine of salvation into a whole by combining them with each other and with the dogmas of the Church—a whole which should at once satisfy both the reason of the thinking Christian and the need of faith in the Christian community, and which should at the same time serve as a support for the striving of the Church for the domination of the world. Corresponding to this his personal development, the theology of Augustine had three main parts, which partly support and also partly contradict each other—namely, the doctrine of *God*, of *man's salvation and misery*, and of the *Church* as the earthly City of God (*Civitas Dei*), in which Divine truth and grace are embodied as ecclesiastical authority and as a sacramental institution.

What is specially significant in Augustine's Doctrine

of God is, that he first derived the consciousness of God from the self-consciousness. God is to him the ideal and the presupposition of what he finds by self-observation in his own soul. In the soul he finds the image of the Trinity; for we are, we know our being, and we love this being and knowing. The being which we find present in us and the world is, however, a changeable thing, and is therefore not true being, but has the not-being always in itself; this untrue being presupposes a true unchangeable Being which is God. Further, in our knowing we are conscious that we do not make the truth itself, but that we only become aware of the truth, which, being independent of us, must be superior and anterior to all knowing minds. This eternal and unchangeable truth which must be presupposed in all our participation in truth, is God, whose Being consequently is Spiritual Being, unity of Being and Knowing, perfect Wisdom and Beauty, which gives itself to be recognised in the artistic order of the world. Finally, we find, as the inmost essence of our soul, the activity of willing, that desire of good which feels itself satisfied with no limited good; and even in its unrest, its insatiable longing for greater good, there is already betrayed its destination for a highest good. But what can be the highest good for our soul? Only that which makes it free from the inner discord and the wretched unfreedom of its natural impulses, and which makes it one in itself. But the good alone is such, in so far as it



becomes to us not merely a commanding law but the object of our love, so that we "no longer willed what *we* willed, and only now will what *God* wills." In this experience that the good becomes to us the highest good and the liberating power, we recognise the working of God, who consequently is not merely the highest Being and Knowing, but also the highest goodness, the source and power of all good, perfect love or grace. As God is the being in all existence, and as He is the Truth in all knowing and the Beauty in all feeling, He is also the Love in all willing, that which liberates the activity of willing from unfreedom and makes it one with the "blessed necessity of the good." To depend on God is the soul's highest good; it is only in Him who has created us for Himself that our heart can come to rest. In this tendency of our heart to God, and this satisfaction in God, lies the deepest proof of the fact that He is the existing Goodness, the almighty Love.

This derivation of the consciousness of God from the Christian pious self-consciousness, must be reckoned among the deepest which has ever been thought and said regarding it. We may recognise in it that it weds fruitfully the Platonic idealism with Christian experience, and its influence may be perceived both in the philosophical speculation and in the religious mysticism of the following time. As for the rest, we have to distinguish in Augustine's Doctrine of God two different sides that are not in accord with each other: a Neo-

Platonic side, which was accentuated in the struggle against the Manichæans; and the ecclesiastical dogmatic side, which was developed in the struggle against the Pelagians. The former consists in such an abstract apprehension of the simplicity of God, that in it all distinction of attributes and all knowableness of the Divine nature threaten to be abolished. Undoubtedly we must recognise the energy of the thinking with which Augustine endeavoured to deny all finiteness, temporalness, and spatiality, changeableness and limitedness, and consequently all anthropomorphism of the Divine essence. But the question cannot be suppressed, How does the triad of the Trinitarian Persons, even if these "Persons" were to be reduced to "relations" of the inner Divine Being, accord with the asserted simplicity of God, in which there is to be no distinction of substance and attribute, of essence and operation? The striving of Augustine to resolve the tritheism into a true unity must indeed be recognised, but the authoritatively established dogma hindered him from strictly drawing the consequence. Further, the question arises as to how the acceptance of a beginning and end of the world accords with the conception of the eternity of God as a continually unmoved presence? With such a beginning and end, would there not also come a change into His knowing and working? And then in particular, How does the opposition of the decree of election and reprobation

in God and the twofold issue of the world in eternal blessedness and eternal damnation, accord with the essence of God as the highest good and omnipotent love? Here we stand manifestly before an insoluble contradiction which can only be psychologically explained from the fact that, in consequence of the history of his life, two incompatible souls existed together in Augustine—namely, the philosophical thinker and the orthodox dogmatist and condemner of heretics.

This discordance shows itself especially in Augustine's Doctrine of Man, which fashioned itself quite differently according to the front presented at the time in the course of his combating of heretics (Manichæans, Pelagians, Donatists). In opposition to the Manichæans, Augustine emphasised the position that man has been created by God and for God, and that he was created good with the capacity and freedom for all that is good. He was subjected to no compulsion of matter, nor did he find himself in any discord between the flesh and between the spirit, but the body was completely and willingly subject to the spirit as the spirit was to God. The original state of man was a state of harmony on all sides both of his powers with each other and of his wants with the conditions of the world,—a state, therefore, of perfectness and happiness. But, as Augustine further taught in conflict with the Pelagians, this excellent state lasted only for the very short time from the Creation to the Fall. The first

act of man's freedom was an abuse of it in opposition to God, whereby freedom and all good capacities were lost again for mankind and were changed into their opposite. Certainly when one looks more closely at it, the Fall was only the appearing of the evil which was already present in a hidden form; for the evil deed must, as Augustine himself says, have an evil will preceding it, and this will could only consist in pride, the desire after godless self-exaltation. "If man had not already begun to please himself, the Devil would not have been able to bring him to a fall." And that this hidden pride broke out in open sin, as Augustine adds, was so far good, as it could not have been healed without this outbreak. Regarded from this point of view, the Fall was not therefore so much the ground of men's becoming bad as rather the manifestation of their latent evil and the necessary means for its being healed. It would have been a consequence of this view to judge the natural state of man less as guilt worthy of condemnation than as a weakness and disease worthy of compassion. But just in order to emphasise sharply the guilty character of the natural sinfulness and the punishableness of unredeemed men, Augustine, on account of this *a priori* dogmatic necessity, prefixed the *fiction* of the sinless state of man and of his initial freedom for all that is good.

From the bright foil of this initial perfectness the

dark image of the following corruption, as Augustine described it, stands forth so much the more effectively. Because man had abandoned God in a free act he was now abandoned by God, and thereby he fell under the natural propensity to evil irremediably: freedom for the good was wholly lost, and there only still remained freedom for evil; the previous harmony of the lower and higher powers of the soul was dissolved, and became dominion of the flesh over the spirit or unbridled sensuous concupiscence. In short, in place of the initial possibility of not sinning there now entered the fearful necessity of sinning, and in the place of the possibility of not dying there came in the necessity of dying. And these consequences did not remain limited to the first parents; for seeing that Adam had sinned as the progenitor of the whole race, all his offspring had at the same time sinned in him—which Augustine believed that he could establish by his false interpretation of the Pauline words in Romans v. 12 (*ἐφ' ᾧ = in quo omnes peccaverunt*)—and accordingly along with Adam the whole human race at the same time fell under the fatality of sin and death. The sinful corruption was inherited henceforth as a natural condition from generation to generation. But although it is inherited by every human child as a natural state quite independent of his own freewill, it is yet, according to Augustine, for the new-born child, already guilt de-

-serving condemnation; for, as he very significantly asks, what would baptism be otherwise necessary to children for, if it were not to forgive them a state of guilt? And what can this be but just the guilt of the original sin? In this ecclesiastical postulate that baptism was already necessary to the children for their salvation, we have therefore to see one of the main grounds of Augustine's harsh doctrine of original sin; and it was supplemented by the effects of his Manichæan period, during which he held a physical and dualistic view of evil which he never completely overcame. Besides his own moral experiences, the severe struggles with his passionate and hot-blooded African temperament also come into consideration as a psychological ground for explaining his dogmatic theory.

Deeply as Augustine had felt the misery of sin, so deep likewise was his desire for redemption through Divine grace. Here he touches at once all the inmost Christian experiences which find their echo in every pious soul:—

“Who will give me to rest in Thee? Who will give me that Thou shalt come into my heart and intoxicate it so that I may forget my evils and embrace Thee, my one good? What art Thou to me? Be merciful that I may speak. What am I to Thee, that Thou commandest Thyself to be loved by me, and if I do it not Thou art angry with me and threatenest terrible miseries? Say to my soul, I am thy

salvation. Let me run after Thy voice, and lay hold of Thee. Hide not Thy face from me. I will die, yet not die, that I may behold it. The house of my soul is narrow. In order that Thou mayest come to it, let it be widened by Thee. It is in ruins; repair it. There are things in it which offend Thy eyes: I confess and know it. But who will cleanse it? Or to whom else but Thee shall I call? Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wishest."

Divine grace shows itself, according to Augustine, not merely in forgiving but also in giving, not merely in teaching about the good but in working the inclination and power for the good. He who only knows the good without also doing it, has received this knowledge not from grace but from the law, not through the Spirit but through the letter. As the mystery of our moral misery lies in the inner division of the will that it wills the good and yet does not do it, and therefore partly wills and partly does not will, so the mystery of grace lies in this, that it makes the good not merely the law of the will but the object of its love, and consequently effectuates the actual willing and accomplishing of the good. But if it is grace which first makes the willing of the good efficacious, it cannot be deserved by the good performances of man himself. Man cannot transform himself out of an evil tree into a good one, he can only be transformed by Him who is at all times good. Nor is grace participated in by man because he is already a believer, but in order that he might become

such; not because he has deserved it by good works, but in order that he might obtain the merit of good works. What merits can we ever have before we love God? And how can we love God as we ought to love Him if we did not receive such a love from Him who first loved us? What can we do that is good without such a love? Or how can we not do good with such a love? If virtue is only mighty in weakness, no one becomes perfect who does not recognise the weakness in himself and has the good vouchsafed to him as a gift of grace, as we may see by the example of Paul, and even by the little children who, as Augustine again very significantly remarks, receive the grace of baptism without their merit—nay, even in spite of their resistance as announced by their crying. Yet the essence of grace does not consist merely in this, that it is bestowed undeservedly, but that it alone works undividedly the whole salvation from beginning to end. Yet the free-will is not abolished by it, but rather first established, because it heals the will of its unfreedom and fills it with love for righteousness. It is just the will which can no longer serve sin that is free; but this is not the presupposition but the effect of grace. But if grace is the unconditioned and solely operative cause of salvation, the ground of its operating in some and not operating in the case of others cannot be sought on the side of man, but can only lie in the will of God, in His free election of some and rejection of others. The com-



munication of grace is therefore, according to Augustine, the manifestation of the eternal predestination which has selected out of the general mass of corruption a definite number of men for blessedness. The ground of this selection of some before others does not lie in men but only in the groundless will of God, which stands unchangeably fast and irresistibly realises itself in the elect in the life in time. The elect is not only called efficaciously to faith, but is also kept by the gift of perseverance in faith to the end. If cases of experience appear to testify against this, such as that of a believer having fallen, then such a fall was either only apparent and transitory, and the fallen one was again restored before death, or the election of such a one was merely apparent. For this reason no one can know his election with certainty before the end. Augustine holds this just to be the advantage of this hard doctrine, that it keeps the man from false security and pride. And in fact so much is clear, that man cannot have a certainty of salvation, if it rest upon a hidden decree of electing grace; for who belongs to its elect ones, is a secret of God which can never be known by man. The abstract supernaturalism of Augustine's conception of grace leads logically to this as the result of his doctrine of predestination—a result which is as repugnant to pious feeling as to the sound understanding. The salvation which is grounded only outside of man, in the transcendent will of God, continues to be always

a problematical thing, a dark mystery for the self-consciousness of man. If the relationship of man to God rests not upon the attitude of his own will, which surrenders itself to the Divine will, and knows itself to be one with it, then the man cannot reach an inner certainty in the faith of his salvation. So much the more is he driven to seek a substitute for this want of immediate self-certainty in the external supports of salvation, in the authority of the Church and its means of grace.

The doctrine of the Church, therefore, forms in Augustine the complement to his doctrine of grace. The grace which is in itself transcendent and hidden, comes to its present and perceivable manifestation in the Church as the historically organised institution of salvation. The Church is the surety of all truth, and the dispenser of all grace. On the right relationship to it, therefore, depends at last all the religious salvation of man. "He has not the Holy Spirit who is out of the Church; no one has the sacrament nor justification so long as he is separated from the unity of the body of Christ; one may have everything outside of the Church with the exception of salvation. And if one believes that he can lead a good life, yet, because of this one offence, he will not have part in life, but the wrath of God abides on him who is separated from the Church." The animating and connecting soul of this body is the spirit of love; hence

separation from the Church is a breach of love; but without love no appropriation of salvation is possible. It is not in the subjective purity of the individual members that the decisive mark of the true Church lies, as was thought by the Donatists; but, according to Augustine, its essence is to be sought in this, that it is in possession of objective grace and means of grace. Donatism, he says, rests upon self-righteousness, the Catholic Church upon the righteousness of Christ; the schismatics appeal to subjective opinions and testimonies such as visions, the hearing of prayer, and suchlike. The Catholic Church, however, appeals to the testimony of God in the Holy Scripture. The only true testimony is the Law and the Prophets; all else is but the smoke of earthly delusions compared with this thunder and lightning from above. Because it has this Scriptural testimony for itself, the Catholic Church is therefore the *sole true* Church; it is the City upon the hill which is manifest to all the world, the Ark of Noah in which alone is to be found safety from the corruption of the world. It is the *only* Church identical with itself in all countries and at all times, held together by the one spirit of Christ and his organ the Episcopate. But it is also the *Holy* Church, not indeed in the sense of the Donatists; for it is only the triumphant Church of the consummation that can be a pure community of saints, and not yet the earthly City of God, which is necessarily mixed of good and

evil. Yet the earthly Church already possesses the predicate of holiness in a twofold sense: partly because it takes upon itself the punishing and reproofing of the godless, in the exercise of Church discipline; and partly, in particular, because it possesses in the sacraments the efficient means of salvation and sanctification for its members.

The Sacrament of Baptism is of the greatest importance to Augustine; it effects forgiveness of original guilt and infuses hidden grace in a hidden manner into the children, and makes them thereby members of the body of Christ. That without baptism all, even the little children, are subject to damnation, follows from Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin, which again is demonstrated by the actually existing practice of child-baptism. Of course this proof in a circle is without logical demonstrative force, but it is extremely significant for the Augustinian theology, in which the Manichæan pessimism forms throughout the foil for the glorification of the Church and for its claim to being the sole medium of salvation. And because Augustine's exclusive theocratic conception of the Church lay far from the thought of the Greeks with their more human than political way of thinking, they could not acquire a taste for his harsh doctrine of sin and grace. To them grace, with all its supernaturalness, was still always a something implanted in man himself, in his nature as related to God. It was a universal human endow-

ment which is awakened and animated by the Christian revelation. The exclusively supernaturalistic view of grace, that it is infused in man from without through a sacramental act of the Church, was alien to the broad and idealistic way of thinking of the Greek Fathers, and was first brought into the Christian dogmatics by Augustine — a consequence partly of his Manichæan Anthropology and partly of his theocratic ideal of the Church. Besides, it is easy to see that upon this point Augustine's doctrine of grace comes into discordance even with itself. For if baptism is actually an infusion of grace, then either all the baptised must become participative of salvation, or the perdition of many of the baptised must be their own fault, and in both cases a particular predestination is excluded. On the other hand, if we start from this doctrine, then it is impossible to see in baptism an efficacious communication of grace, and in the fact of externally belonging to the Church an objective guarantee of salvation. The unconditionedness of the election of grace, and the conditionedness of salvation by the means of grace of the visible Church, are two incompatible theories. In Augustine they were united, but afterwards they were severed from each other in such a way that the Church first put itself in the place of grace in medieval Catholicism, and afterwards grace took the place of the Church in the Reformation and in Protestantism.

As the Church is the sole possessor of the means of grace, it is also the sole and infallible authority in matters of religious truth. It is this just in virtue of its catholicity and apostolicity. "What the whole Church holds, and was observed at all times, one must in truth believe that it is handed down by apostolical authority." Usually, indeed, Augustine founds the authority of the Church upon that of the Holy Scripture; but occasionally, as, for example, when the catholicity of certain Biblical books is called in question by heretics, he has no hesitation in simply inverting the relationship of the two. "I would myself not believe the Gospel, if the authority of the Church did not determine me." If it is further asked what determines us to believe in this authority, then Augustine refers partly to the many and great miracles which were done by Christ and the apostles, and which were still wont to take place in the Church, and partly to the multitude of believers, to the constant spread of the one universal Church which extends over all peoples, and against which neither the Christian sects nor the philosophical schools can come into consideration. Both of these Augustine reproaches with the intellectual subjectivism which accompanies moral selfishness, vanity, and pride. Philosophy, as Augustine judged in his later period, does indeed seek God, but not in a pious way: it has some elements of truth, but only in the form of human opinions, not in the

respect-commanding form of authority resting upon Divine revelation. Faith in the Divine authority of the Church must therefore, as Augustine unwarrantably inculcates, precede all true knowledge as its starting-point and established basis. "We must first believe without insight into the thing; such a faith is the surest way to rational knowledge, and the only condition by which the healing again of sick souls becomes possible." Nevertheless, Augustine is as little inclined as the Alexandrian Fathers to have rational thinking excluded by faith. Faith, he strikingly observes, cannot stand in exclusive opposition to reason, because it is itself only possible through the rational capacity of man, and therefore always already contains implicitly a certain thinking which makes possible and demands a development to scientific knowledge or theology. "What we hold fast in certainty of faith, has also to be made apprehensible by the super-venient light of reason." That for this purpose philosophy is necessary, not indeed that of a definite school, but at least the philosophical cultivation of thinking generally, has never been denied by Augustine: he repudiates equally those who do not philosophise when they occupy themselves with religious questions, and those who do not think piously in philosophy. ("Repudiatis omnibus qui neque in sacris philosophantur neque in philosophia consecrantur, tenenda est nobis Christiana religio et ejus ecclesiæ

communicatio, quæ est catholica."—Aug., De vera religione, 12.)

In particular, he demands that the Christian shall not be afraid of what is true in the Platonic doctrine, but appropriate it for his own use; for he has to know that truth, wherever he may find it, belongs to his Lord. But the highest ideal of the Christians, even Augustine, like the Alexandrians, finds in a knowledge of God which has immediately grown out of the inner experience of the pious man. "Roam not away beyond thyself; turn into thyself; in the inner man dwells the truth; seek it in the stillness and leisure of thy spirit. To love God is to know God; the purer the heart is from all defilement, so much the more capable is it of beholding the truth; thereby the Christian becomes the law itself according to which he judges everything and about which no one can judge." By the path, therefore, of self-knowledge and self-purification, of speculation and ascetic mysticism, that autonomous self-certainty is won which Paul had already designated (1 Cor. ii. 15) as the ideal of the truly spiritual man—a self-certainty which needs no longer the external supports of authority, but makes itself independent even of its enactment. With this Augustine pointed to the path of *mysticism* which, in the Middle Ages, maintained the right of inward freedom, and which prepared for the Reformation; while at the same time, by his accentuation of the authority



of the Church, and by his demand to put philosophical thinking into the service of its authority, and to make faith intelligible by reason, he has been the founder of *Scholasticism*.

Augustine's great work on "the City of God" ('De Civitate Dei') may be called a programme of the medieval view of the world. The Church is here opposed to the Roman world-state as the earthly manifestation of the God-state, and so that the opposition of the two is one in principle, with its origin in the pre-mundane fall of the heavenly spirits and its consummation in the blessedness and damnation of eternity. The world-state takes its earthly beginning from Cain, the fratricide and type of Romulus; the God-state from Abel, the pious martyr. The world-state has its course through heathenism, especially through the two great empires of the Assyrians and Romans; the God-state has its course through the history of Israel and of the Christian Church. The essential difference between them consists in this, that in the earthly state self-love, amounting to contempt of God, rules; while in the God-state the love of God, going as far as contempt of self, rules. Ambition and the desire of glory were, as Augustine seeks to prove in detail, the impelling motives of the conduct of the Romans; their empire was nothing but a great robbery; even the virtues of the best, because they had not love to God but to earthly things as their highest

motive, were at bottom only splendid vices. Yet God has not willed to leave unrewarded the relative goodness which lay in the Roman civil virtues, patriotism, and valour; and He has therefore bestowed upon the Romans earthly fame and universal dominion over all the peoples. But with this they have also had their reward: in spite of all their apparent virtues, which may still serve in a certain sense as an example to the Christians, they are yet predestined to share eternal punishment with the devil. But in holding this position, Augustine still recognises that even the earthly peace, for the establishment of which the world-state provides by its laws and magistrates, is a relative good which even the citizens of the God-state, so long as they live as strangers in this world, use and prize, and therefore they also in earthly things obey the laws of the State. But the citizens of the God-state do not see their peculiar good in this earthly peace and the other earthly goods which belong to the world-state, but in the heavenly peace which they already enjoy in faith now, and will yet enjoy in the vision of God. Regarded from the point of view of this perfect good all the earthly goods appear to them as great misery, and the civil activity directed towards these goods therefore also appear to them as worthless; and even justice is denied to the State, in so far as it does not above all give to God what is God's. Because the heathen State serves the demons instead of God, it

can never have civil rights. Augustine therefore saw in the State as such, in so far as it would be an independent community for the ordering of right, nothing that is truly good, but only an organisation of sinful selfishness which serves the demons more than God. To him the only order resting upon Divine right was the God-state of the Church. And from this followed naturally the practical conclusion that the State has to subordinate itself to the Church, and to lend its services for her ends. Augustine calls the rulers happy who make their power minister to the spread of religion; and on the occasion of the Donatist controversy he asserted not merely the justification, but even the obligation, of the civil magistrate to persecute the heretics and schismatics. Appealing to the parable in the Gospels, he called upon the civil authority first to invite the heretics peacefully to conversion; and if this availed nothing, then to compel them to come in (to the Orthodox Church). Such a wholesome compulsion to good is not hardness but beneficence, a bitter but useful medicine. How much misery this sophistry, thus sanctioned by Augustine, has brought upon Christendom, is well known.

If we now review the theology of Augustine, the fundamental thoughts of which I have attempted to exhibit, two main tendencies stand out in it prominently before our view: first, its harsh supernaturalism, according to which the Christian salvation stands in

mere opposition to human nature, and can only come to it from without through a miracle; secondly, its Hierarchism, according to which the Church organised in the clergy is the earthly realisation of the heavenly God-state, and has to subject the world to the purposes of the supramundane State or City of God, and to communicate and guarantee to it supernatural salvation through the permanent miracle of a sacramental operation. The supernaturalism is indeed common to the Augustinian theology with the Alexandrian theology; but in the latter, with all the transcendence of the God-man, the Greek fundamental thought of the affinity of human nature with God, and its participation in the divine Logos in virtue of its moral constitution, remained too vital in their consciousness for the Alexandrians to have come to the dualistic sharpening of the opposition between the natural man and a supernatural salvation as it appears in Augustine. The matter has indeed also its obverse side. While in Augustine the opposition was transferred from theology to anthropology, and was turned from a metaphysical into a moral religious opposition, it was thereby primarily sharpened for the religious feeling; but the overcoming of it in the religious self-consciousness was at the same time made possible on the basis of an inner experience of sin and grace. For this opposition of states of consciousness must ultimately find its unity above the opposition in the essence of

the self-conscious spirit, when grace is recognised as *one* with the true freedom of man, or with the essential nature of his rational will, and is no longer regarded as an extraneous compelling and magical power of will. Indications of this view are already found everywhere in Augustine whenever he simply speaks the language of immediate religious experience, and does not dogmatise in the domain of ecclesiastical presuppositions and interests. And therefore it is quite conceivable that the Augustinian theology, even more than the Alexandrian, contained the starting-points and germs of that individualistic mysticism which afterwards relaxed and ultimately broke down dogmatism.

The same holds true of the other side of the Augustinian theology. That salvation, while transcendent in itself, has its earthly presence in the working of the Church, and indeed in its ascetic negation of the world as well as in its sacramental worship, was pointed out in the last lecture as a characteristic feature of the Alexandrian theology also. Here, too, the Church is the present actualisation of salvation in the world; but it is so as the community of the ascetic saints, or the world-fleeing monks, and as the possessor and dispenser of the mysteries of the magical ritualistic means of grace. Contemplative monasticism and a priesthood administering the Divine mysteries is here the main thing. But in Augustine appears the new thought, a thought

infinitely important for the future of Western Christendom, that the Church as a hierarchically organised society is the earthly exhibition of the heavenly City of God, and as such it has the task not merely ascetically to negate and ritually to purify the world, but also and specially to subject it to the supramundane ends of the God-state. Not monastic contemplation and ritual mysticism, but practical conquest and dominion of the world by the theoretically organised Church, is here the main thing. The opposition of Church and world, which in the East was naturally of a more passive and defensive kind, is made by Augustine for the West into an active and aggressive opposition. Certainly this was also primarily a powerful *sharpening* of the opposition corresponding to the sharpening of supernaturalism in Augustine's doctrine of salvation. As the individual Christian has to experience in himself the tension and the conflict of the hostile principles of sin and grace, and is thereby kept in constant psychical agitation and activity, so the Western Christendom ruled by Augustine has to struggle through the conflict between the great historical forces of Church and State, and thereby its history obtains a violent dramatic movement, with which the quiet rest of the East so strangely contrasts. But here, again, that which appears primarily as a sharpening of the opposition was yet in truth only the means for overcoming it. For

it was just by the Church taking up aggressively the conflict with the world and seeking to conquer the world for its ends—to subject the world to its ideas, and, in short, to ecclesiasticise it—that it thereby became possible for the Christian principle to be so fundamentally worked into the world, and to be so inwardly appropriated by it, that the world at last having become Christian could throw off the ecclesiastical fetters and stand upon its own feet; that is to say, could find and realise in the Christian moral humanity the true reality of the kingdom of God. The hierarchical domination of the world by the Church was a providential *means of education* for the nations of the world in order to lead them to that Christian perfection which in the surrender of the self to the universal ends of the kingdom of God does not lose its own freedom but first truly wins it, and which in the subordination of all temporal goods to the eternal good of moral goodness wins the heavenly peace and in addition receives the peace of earth—that is, the rational ordering of the earthly goods. As Christ had said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you.” The medieval Church was destined to impress this great principle on the world, that we have to give up all that is ours for the unconditioned end of the Divinely good. That it identified this ideal end with its ecclesiastical ends, and

sought to subject the kingdoms of the world to its ecclesiastico-hierarchical domination, was certainly a great error; but it was at the same time the necessary means for the education of the peoples to *the* freedom of the children of God, which rests upon obedience and love, and knows the kingdom of God as present in the duties and goods of moral society.

At the time when Augustine was writing his work 'De Civitate Dei,' in which he set forth the victory of the God-state over the world-state as a postulate of faith, the basis for the fulfilment of this postulate was laid by certain events which belong to universal history. The Germanic races broke the Roman Empire to pieces and took possession of its lands. Amidst the universal deluge the Roman Church showed itself as the fixed rock of Peter on which the billows that overthrew the ancient world broke; and its organisations culminating in the Bishop of Rome remained the only permanent thing amid the universal change of things. It thus became the inheritrix of the Roman Empire and the preserver of the ancient culture which was taken up into the faith and practice of the Church. The task fell to it to be the means of conveying this inheritance of the past to the Germanic peoples, and of subjecting the conquerors of the old Roman secular State to the new Roman Divine State. It was, in fact, no easy task to bring these Germans, with their joyous worldly life and pride in their free-



dom, under the ascetic hierarchical system of the Church. But great as were the difficulties, and tenacious as was the patience which the new conquest of the Western world required, yet at the same time this new soil was favourable for a victory of the Church, and so much the more complete was it to be. Here the Church had no longer to combat with an old civilisation, but met the crude uncivilised state and the fresh receptivity of the Germanic peoples with the finished system of its doctrine and constitution and with the treasure of the ancient culture, and thus stood towards them in the position of the far superior teacher and educator. Moreover, the political relationships of the next centuries became such that they favoured in many ways the striving of the Church for universal domination. The Frankish kings, the Carolingian kings, and later the Saxon emperors, needed the help of the Church, and supported it at first in their political interest; but in these combinations of the political and ecclesiastical powers the Church always carried away the lion's share. In it as the representative of the Divine State lay the central idea on which the Roman-German empire grounded its claim to universal dominion. It was therefore natural that, in connection with the new revival of the ecclesiastical spirit which in the eleventh century proceeded from the Western Monasticism, the Church should have been able to divest itself of all its previous dependence on the State,

and to carry through its claim to freedom—that is to say, to the command of the State. With the victory of the monk-Pope Gregory VII. over the Emperor Henry IV., the victory of the Church over the secular State was also decided. What Augustine had once beheld in the spirit had thereby become reality; the work which the old Church had left still incomplete was now at last accomplished.

The spirit of the medieval Christianity, whose classical period covers the next two centuries after Gregory VII., could not be more aptly described than has been done in the thoughtful work of Eicken on the *Medieval View of the World*. Allow me, then, as the close of 'my lecture to-day, to borrow some sentences from it:—

“Asceticism and churchly government of the world, these two mutually conditioned presuppositions of the supersensible Divine State, had become within that period, even more than in Christian antiquity, the moving forces of the life of the peoples; they had penetrated into the inmost life of the Western nations. The political and economical existence of the latter, and science and art, were determined, even to the smallest relations of daily life, by these two thoughts of the ecclesiastical system. The Middle Ages bore in their civilisation the pain of world-negation on the one side, and the violent character of world-conquest on the other side. The symbol of the Christian religion, the cross, at the same time was to the Middle Ages ‘the sign of the mortification’ as well as of ‘the overcoming of the world.’ The Middle Ages overcame and dominated the world by negating it; to

die to the world meant the same as to live to the Church. The fulfilment of the three ascetic virtues—Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience—thus made it a task how to sacrifice the whole personality with its material and spiritual interests to the Church. In the same proportion as the world was negated on the one side, the Church must also be affirmed on the other side. The enhancement of asceticism had as its necessary consequence the corresponding enhancement of the secular power of the Church. The negation of the world and the ecclesiastical domination of the world were, in the view of the Middle Ages, synonymous conceptions. In the exhausting prosecution of these two strivings, as they mutually condition each other, lay the essential nature of the medieval culture. It is only from this point of view that the history of the Middle Ages can be understood. But while the thought of the domination of the world by the Church drew all things into its circle of action, the hierarchical principle led the Church, while striving in its transcendental metaphysics to get away from the world, back into the midst of the interests of the world. For in the measure in which the power of the Church rose, the Church itself became conformed to the world. As it was its task to combine all the goods and powers of the world under its despotic command, the world thus formed the whole substance of its existence. The Church was the centre in which all secular powers had their confluence. Through the virtue of poverty the Church acquired immense riches; through the virtue of obedience it grew to be the greatest and most potent State which had ever been; and finally, through the virtue of chastity it obtained an incomparable army of officials, capable of being moved in an unrivalled way, and ready for conflict at all times and in every place. The supersensible idea of Christianity became transformed in the Church, with logical

consequence in every department of its ethics, into the opposite systematic affirmation of the life of sense. The world-ruling tendency of the Roman Church formed the counterpoise to the ascetic supersensible idea of the Christian metaphysics. Notwithstanding that the life of the Middle Ages in State and family, in economics, law, art, and science, turned itself away from the world of sense, it strove back again to the world in the Church with the same zeal. In this circle lay the pathos of the medieval history."

The idea of the Middle Ages, the supersensible Divine State, refuted itself by the consequences of its own principle; the greatest development of its power was at the same time the cause of its dissolution. It was precisely the Crusades, in which the Divine State of the Roman Church found its highest realisation, which led all the departments of life—the State, industry, art, and science—back to secularism. It was the Crusades, in which the fraternalising of the Christian nations and the devotion of the forces of the State to the ends of the Church attained their culmination, which served to sharpen the national oppositions and to strengthen the independent claims of the political powers. Further, it was the Crusades, in which the Christian peoples gave up their possessions and life with glad willingness in order to wrest the Holy Land from the infidel, that became the cause of an economic development, of a material and spiritual enrichment of life, which riveted the Christian peoples more firmly than ever to the earth. In the course of the following

centuries one domain after the other detached itself from the ascetic hierarchical system of the Divine State in order to fashion itself independently according to its own ends. But as these practical strivings sought to break away from the world-dominating thought of the Church, they at the same time remained standing upon the basis of it—namely, the sacramental character of the priesthood. There arose thereby a conflict between practical morality and the religious system—a conflict which found a solution in the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, when it repudiated the sacramental priesthood and broke a free path for the immanent ethic of the practical life.

This great subject will be discussed in my next and last lecture.

## LECTURE X.

### THE CHRISTIANITY OF LUTHER AND OF PROTESTANTISM.

THE Reformation of the Sixteenth Century was the revolt of the Germanic spirit against the oppression of the Roman Church, which had gradually become unbearable, when that Church sufficed no longer to satisfy either its religious or its moral wants. The Church put itself, with its priests and saints, its sacraments and ceremonies, as a mediator between God and man; it tied the religious salvation of man to these external means and to the condition of obedience to its lordship. But what was meant to be a means became a partition-wall which separated man from God, and made impossible to him that certainty of salvation in the fellowship of God for which the pious heart longs. Against this religious defect of the Catholic ecclesiasticism deeper natures had already long sought help in *mysticism*, the religion of pious feeling, which withdraws itself from all the externality of the Church into

the inwardness of one's own self, and seeks to make one's self certain of unity with God in self-denial, humility, and tranquillity. And mysticism might indeed make individuals indifferent to the Church and free them from its guardianship, but it could not reform the Church nor found a new religious and moral social life. It was too one-sidedly subjective and unpractical for this: it wanted not only an objective truth resting upon historical experience, which could make itself the common conviction of a Church of the people, but also the impulse towards the exercise of practical influence upon the world. From the inner sanctuary of the God-loving heart it could not find the way to the theatre of the working of the kingdom of God in the world. It still shared with the Catholic Church the dualistic view of the opposition of the Divine and secular, of the sacred and natural, and therefore it was indifferent to the moral states and defects of society, and remained without influence for their amelioration. The reaction against the moral faults of the secularised Church, which had partly sprung from the unnatural life of the asceticism of the monks, and partly from the covetousness and ambition of the hierarchy, started from the secular enlightenment of the *Renaissance*, which, following the example of the ancients, became enthusiastic for the beauty of nature and art and for the freedom of the national State, and opposed these ancient ideals energetically and passionately to the ascetic hierarchical ideal of the Church.

But this secular culture was lacking both in moral earnestness and in religious warmth and depth. It indeed overwhelmed monkery and priestcraft with the arrows of its ridicule, but the root of the evil was not reached by it; and for the practical conflict with the existing ecclesiastical powers it wanted the enthusiastic courage which only a religious conviction can give.

What made Luther a Reformer was the fact that through severe inner conflicts he had won a deep religious conviction which made him strong to defy a whole world. Anguish about the salvation of his soul had driven him into the monastery, as it had done with untold numbers before him; but he had not found peace of heart there. However much he might torture himself with monastic mortifications, he was quite unable to get rid of the torturing feeling of his sin and of his fear before the just God. The discordance between what he ought to be and what he was, and the impossibility of overcoming it by actions performed by his own natural power, had been felt by him as deeply as it had been by Paul and Augustine; and therefore the experiences of these two teachers of the redeeming power of the Gospel of the grace of God in Christ were able to serve him as leading stars and guides out of the darkness of his struggles and doubts. In particular, the Pauline formulation of the evangelic truth as "justification of the sinner by faith" became henceforth to Luther the centre of his religious con-

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viction. This is easy to understand from the similarity of the stand he took in opposition to the Roman legalism with that of Paul in his opposition to the Jewish law. As Paul regarded his own righteousness by the works of the law as prejudicial to attaining righteousness by faith alone, so Luther recognised the ascetic performances of monasticism as prejudicial and as a hindrance of the true Christian salvation, because trust in one's own works and the pride of this vain self-righteousness do not let the man come to full, humble, and trustful surrendering of himself to the grace of God. And as the grace of God clothed itself to Paul in the legal conception of a vicarious expiatory sacrifice in Christ's death and a judicial judgment of justification regarding the believing sinner, even so to the consciousness of Luther the revelation of the love of God in Christ clothed itself in the conception, borrowed from the ecclesiastical system, of a merit which the God-man acquired by His vicarious death, and which God imputes to the sinner on the ground of his trust, as if it were his own. As Paul therefore had set aside the validity of the law for the Christians by the weapons of the law itself, even so the conception of the meritorious performance of Christ, which belonged to the circle of the ecclesiastical ideas, served Luther as the weapon by which to set aside the merits of the saints and the treasure of grace in the Church, and to make man again immediately and alone dependent on

the grace of God as it is revealed in the Gospel of Christ. This dogmatic investment of religious truth was as indispensable to Luther in his conflict with the Catholic Church as the similar investment had once been to Paul in the conflict with Judaism.

But it certainly cannot be denied that in the latter case as well as in the former, this form of dogmatic representation contained a danger for the purity and power of the religious faith,—not indeed for the religious genius who set forth this doctrine as the expression of his inmost experience, but assuredly for others, who, without having gone through this experience themselves, appropriate it only externally. Already in the word *Glauben*—that is, “faith” or “belief”—there lay the danger of confounding the religious act of trustful surrender to God with the mere theoretical accepting and holding true of a doctrine or history. And this danger was further essentially strengthened by the fact that the object of the faith, which is properly the saving will of God, was represented as a miraculous history in the past enacted between God and Christ or between Christ and the devil; for such history cannot be at all the immediate object of trustful appropriation and experience, but only an object that may be held true. But if faith in *this sense*, as the holding of a history and doctrine to be true, was held to be the sole means of justification, of forgiveness of sin and blessedness, it is immediately evident what danger of moral

laxity and frivolity must lie in such an opinion. This was also shown in what followed. The Reformers themselves often complained bitterly enough about the fact that the new preaching of faith made so little fruit of moral improvement appear among the multitude; and Luther has himself occasionally admitted that the unsatisfactory moral states of his communities stood in causal connection with the misunderstood doctrine of justification. But that the dogmatic form of this doctrine itself led to this misunderstanding was not recognised by him, because he was too little accustomed to critical thinking to distinguish the form from the religious kernel, and because it was in his own case but a mere form for a profoundly true religious experience.

In order rightly to understand Luther's doctrine of Justification by Faith, we must always keep in view what he properly understood by "faith." In the preface to the Epistle to the Romans he says, "Faith is a Divine work in us which transforms us and bears us anew out of God. It is a living, busy, active, powerful thing this faith, so that it is impossible that it should not work what is good without intermission. Nor does it ask whether good works are to be done; but before this is asked it has done them and is always doing them. Faith is a living trust in God's grace which makes one joyful, confident, and cheerful towards God and all creatures." In his beautiful treatise "On the Freedom of the Christian Man," whose contents Luther

himself has described as the whole sum of the Christian life, he first proceeded to show that no external thing can make man free and pious, because it does not reach to the soul, and because the godless also can have and use external things. "What alone makes man pious and free is faith in the Word of God, as it is at once commandment and fulfilment." "Whoever does cling to it with right faith, his soul is so entirely and utterly united with it that all the virtues of the Word become also those of the soul, and he is therefore holy, just, true, peaceful, free, and full of all goodness, a true child of God." And so far as Christ is the centre of the Word of God, as it were its personal embodiment, it is further said of faith that it unites the soul with Christ as a bride with the bridegroom, and that in this marriage all the goods and blessedness of Christ become the property of the believing soul, while all its sin and unvirtuousness are swallowed up in Christ. Hence it is not enough if the history of Christ is only preached perfunctorily; but the main thing is to recognise why Christ has come, how we are to use and enjoy Him, what He has brought and given to us—namely, that we are kings and priests through Him, are masters of all things, and in all our doings are pleasing in the eyes of God. Where a heart therefore hears Christ, it must become joyful from its very depths, must receive consolation and become sweet towards Christ in order to love Him again. Who will do any harm

to such a heart or frighten it? It learns with the apostle to defy sin and death, and to thank God for the victory which is given to us through Christ our Lord. Accordingly, in the sense of Luther, Faith is the disposition of the man who, in surrender to the historical Word of God, and especially to the ideal of the Son of God beheld in Christ, feels himself to be a child of God, and has inwardly become one with God. And therefore he cannot continue without bringing forth fruit outwardly; he will keep his own body in discipline and obedience, and will serve his neighbour in love. Not as if he would merit anything for himself by his works; for works avail nothing to him who is without faith to help him to piety and blessedness. Whoever will do good works must not start with works, but with the person who is to do the works: yet no one makes the person good, but only faith; and no one makes the person evil, but only want of faith. Where works are done with the perverted opinion that we shall become pious and blessed by them, in that case they are already not good; for they are not free, and they lower grace, which alone makes one pious and blessed by faith. But although faith does not need works for blessedness, it has yet to do them, and will willingly do them, out of its free gratitude to the experienced love of God. "To such a Father who has thus overwhelmed me with His superabundant good things I will in return do freely, joyfully

and gratuitously what is pleasing to Him, and will also become a saviour to my neighbour such as Christ became to me, and will do nothing more than what I just see to be necessary and useful to him, while I yet through my faith have enough of all things in Christ. Behold, there thus flows from faith, love and desire to God, and from love a free joyous life, willing to serve our neighbour for naught."

To Luther, therefore, faith is at the same time these two things: the religious possession of salvation, and the moral motive of sanctification. It connects man with God, frees him from human mediators and means, and makes him immediately certain within of his salvation; but it connects him at the same time with human society, and impels him to serve men gratuitously from free love without selfish seeking of reward, and to exercise in this service of love to man his practical service of God. This is the Reformation faith in its purest religious moral sense, if we look away from the dogmatic coverings by which it is veiled, which certainly but too soon again obtrude themselves. It is the Christianity of Paul and of Augustine which we see revive again in Luther. With these two he shared the deep feeling of human sin and unfreedom and the elevating experience of the free and renovating grace of God; but in distinction from Augustine, Luther saw the divine grace, not as conjoined with the Church and its means of salvation, but only with Christ

and His gospel; and hence the doctrine of grace, which in Augustine had subjected man to the slavish yoke of the Church, became in Luther rather the means of liberating him from all human dependence, and binding him to God alone. This consequence had not appeared from the beginning: for several years after he had come to his conviction of justification by faith Luther believed that he was still in harmony with the Church; and on his visit to Rome in the year 1511 he conducted himself as "a mad saint" in his devotion to the "Holy City," and in his blind credulity towards its half-heathen mythology. The occasion of his falling out with the Church came from without by a shock which his conscience received from the shameful traffic of Tetzal in indulgences. The forgiveness of sin, which was to him the highest and holiest good, and which he himself had attained only after the direst inner struggles as the price of the victory of faith, he saw here put up for sale as a common market-ware offered for money, and having for its effect the lulling of consciences to sleep and the hardening of obstinate sinners. This perversion of what is holiest into a means of sin shocked equally his religious and moral feeling, and roused him to opposition against what he thought an isolated abuse. It was only when the Church did not stand up for him as he expected, but went against him, and even bade the voice of the inconvenient exhorter be at rest, that the scales fell from his eyes, and that

he recognised, step by step and reluctantly, but always more distinctly, the whole breadth of the gulf which separated his Biblical Christianity from that of the Roman Church. When at the Leipzig disputation he was harassed by his opponent Eck with the authority of the Pope and of the Councils, he declared, "I believe that I am a Christian theologian, and live in the kingdom of truth; and therefore I will be free and will give myself up to no authority, whether it be of a Council or of the Emperor, or of the universities or of the Pope, so that I may confidently confess all that I know as truth, whether it is asserted by a Catholic or a heretic, and whether it is accepted or rejected by a Council. Why shall I not venture the attempt, if I, one man, can point to a better authority than a Council?" This declaration has been rightly designated the beginning of a new time, in which the authority of tradition has passed away, and the right of every one to think independently, to investigate, to seek after truth, and to express what is known as truth, is recognised. At least the principle of autonomous thinking, of freedom of conscience and reason, was clearly and distinctly set up by Luther from the time of the Leipzig disputation and the Diet of Worms. Certainly a long time was still required till its consequences were actually drawn. The Reformation itself very soon put itself into opposition to that principle by its dogma of Scripture and its own symbols, and Luther



himself in his later years already contributed essentially to this reactionary movement. But in the zenith of his reformatory working, he made the principle of freedom of conscience and reason valid for every Christian man.

There is nothing at all contradictory to this in the fact that Luther opposed the Bible to the ecclesiastical authorities, referred to it, and wished to be refuted out of it before he recanted. In the Bible he found the revelation of God, which inwardly proved itself as truth to his conscience, most purely and most originally testified. As the testimony of the historical revelation of God, it stood not in opposition to his reason but in harmony with it, seeing that this reason as Christian had filled itself with the contents of the historical Christianity, and had formed itself by its standard. The Word of God in the Scripture found its echo in the Word of God which Luther heard in his own heart, and recognised as the effect of the same spirit of God who enlightened prophets and apostles. But Luther was far from identifying the Word of God in Scripture with all the words and letters of Scripture, in so far as the interests of dogmatic polemics did not afterwards prepossess him in favour of this view. It is known with what freedom Luther judged of the books of the Bible,—how he called the Epistle of James an Epistle of straw; how he could not hold the Revelation of John to be either apostolical or prophetic;

how he also made certain distinctions regarding the value of different books of the Bible, and set up as a universal rule for their estimation that only that which sets forth Christ is apostolical, by whomsoever it may have been written. Hence, in a word, it was not the letter of the Bible that Luther accepted as infallible authority, but its spirit, and this also the more it agreed with the conception of Christ as it lived in the spirit of Luther himself. In entire agreement with this free attitude towards Scripture—already sanctioned by Paul in 1 Cor. ii. 15—is also the manner in which Luther was wont to put Scripture and reason on a level with each other, as criteria of religious and moral truth, in that earlier time when he was not yet biassed by dogmatic polemics. In the most solemn hour of his life, when he made his confession at Worms before the Emperor and the Dignitaries of the Empire, he declared that he would not recant unless he was refuted with the testimonies of Holy Scripture or with clear reasons. That he thereby ascribed to reason an independent position along with Holy Scripture, as deciding on the demonstrative force of principles, cannot be called in question.

The two powerful Reformation writings of Luther of the year 1520, in which he exercised the sharpest criticism on the ecclesiastical circumstances of his time, are splendid testimonies both to his free and clear reason and to the pious dependence of his con-

science on the word of God in the Scripture. While the earlier strivings for reform had to do only with the external evils in the condition of the Church, and left untouched the fundamental evil—namely, the sacramental priesthood—and could therefore come to no thoroughgoing result, Luther, in his writing addressed to the Nobility of the German Nation, laid the axe at the root of the tree by opposing to the clerical pretensions the principle of the univereal priesthood of all Christians. Even the secular authority is spiritual in so far as it is a member of the spiritual body of Christ, and through the fulfilment of its calling serves the common ends of the kingdom of God. The ecclesiastical office of preaching is only an office in the community like every other; and the bearer of it is only distinguished from the bearers of other offices in the community by the peculiar mode in which he performs the service with which he is commissioned, but not by the supernatural holiness of his class. All the special rights of the clergy are therefore to be annulled. They are subject to the laws and the authority of the civil commonwealth as well as every other citizen. The civil authority has as much right as the spiritual authority to take steps against ecclesiastical abuses, and if the bishops resist the necessary improvements they are to be deposed. Even the interpretation of Holy Scripture and the establishment of Christian truth does not pertain

merely to the Pope and the Bishops, but is the common right of all Christians, who in fact, according to the promise of Christ, will all be taught by God. Having thus destroyed the religious basis of the hierarchy, the sacramental character of the priesthood, its worldly, arrogant, and unchristian doings are subjected to the sharpest criticism. Instead of its becoming worldly by its striving after the domination of the world, the Church ought to limit itself to fostering the religious life of the Christian people by its ministering the word and the sacrament. The unnaturalness of the asceticism which the ecclesiastical arbitrariness has put in the place of the Divine commandments is also to be rejected, and above all the celibacy of the clergy, which has led to so much sin and shame. The same holds of the going on pilgrimages and begging, which the Church has made pious works, but which are only hurtful and unscriptural idling, seeing that, according to the Scripture, "If any one work not, neither should he eat." The national civil authority is further exhorted to remember that it is an independent Divine order, and therefore that it ought to emancipate itself from the Roman hierarchy, to stand against hierarchical attacks upon its government, and to have a care for the establishment of Christian discipline and practice in all their parts.

Luther has sketched the programme of a wholly new order of society in this Reformation writing. To the

claim of the Hierarchy to domination of the people is opposed the right of the national authority which rests upon Divine order, or the autonomy of the secular state, which is no longer regarded as a form of violence and wrong but as a rightful institution serving the moral purposes of the kingdom of God, to whose laws all, even the clergy, have to accommodate themselves without distinction. In like manner the life in the family and worldly calling, which the ecclesiastical asceticism had negated and which hierarchism had suppressed, has been restored by Luther to its right and honour. He taught men to regard marriage as the truly spiritual state, which is much more holy and pleasing to God than the monastic life because it is a school of all Christian virtues, and especially of patience and of self-denying ministering love. In opposition to the fancied service of God by pious idling in the monasteries, he brought labour in men's earthly calling again to honour by teaching men to recognise it as a service which every one performs to others for the best interest of the whole, and at the same time to God Himself. Luther even restored again to German Christianity man's joy in nature and the harmless enjoyment of her gifts, by seeing in nature no longer merely the plaything of demons, but the work and manifestation of the glory and goodness of God, who can well allow men also to enjoy His gifts. Luther, in perceiving in every harmless joy an excellent weapon against the gloomy spirits of dejection

and doubt, broke the ban which the ascetic spirit of the Middle Ages had laid upon the natural and social life. The blot of unholiness was now taken from the world; it was recognised as the revelation of God and as the growing kingdom of God.

In this there has been seen a return to a Hellenic mode of thinking; and in a certain sense this is undoubtedly so far right, for the abstract supernaturalism which the Church had opposed to the ancient naturalism was overcome by Luther, at least in the domain of ethics. The kingdom of God is to him no longer limited to the world beyond and to the Church as the supernatural Divine State, but is recognised as the lordship of the Divine will realising itself everywhere in space and time as the realisation of the good in human fellowship. The task of the Christian is consequently no longer to mortify nature in order to put in its place a supernature and an unnature; no longer to flee out of the world in order to save his own soul and merit salvation behind cloister walls; but the task is now to subordinate nature to the spirit and to make it the instrument of its rational moral purposes, to exercise man's God-given capacities and powers in the world in order to become lord over the evils in the world in labouring for the good and advancing the coming of the kingdom of God on earth. The deep discordance and dire conflict between spirit and nature, the divine and the human, which had filled

the whole Middle Ages, has come to an end in Luther's religious moral disposition of mind. The human spirit, in its full self-surrender to God in faith, has become conscious of its own Divine power and its dignity, of its right of lordship over nature and the world; and in virtue of this inner self-certainty in alliance with God, it gives the hand of reconciliation to nature when thus overcome in order to form the alliance of a morally free and beautiful humanity. In this consists the principle of Protestant Christianity which so far has its starting-point and its pre-eminent example in Luther's moral religious character. But this principle has attained very imperfect and illogical expression in the doctrines of ecclesiastical Protestantism; and this too has its ground and example in Luther, for Luther's theological thinking in all the doctrines which do not immediately relate to subjective salvation or justification by faith remained, his life long, bound to the patristic scholastic Tradition—concerning which he assumed, in good faith, that it is also the doctrine of Holy Scripture, and consequently of Divine inspiration. That between his new faith, which in surrender to the holy love of God revealed in Christ assures itself immediately of reconciliation with God, and the transcendental metaphysics and mythology of the ecclesiastical dogma, there exists a yawning discordance, which could not but become an intolerable offence to reason,—this was not perceived at

all by Luther at the beginning, so long as his whole interest was still concentrated upon the decisive struggle with the ecclesiastical authority. But afterwards, when others began to draw the consequences left disregarded by him, his conservative sense shrank back as in terror from these logically correct and necessary consequences of his own reformatory principles; and with this began that passionate struggle against reason, by which Luther removed himself in his later years as far from the scientific humanistic culture of his time as he had previously done from the system of the ecclesiastical tradition. Thus the halfness of the ecclesiastical Protestantism was founded and typified in the discordance between Luther as Reformer and Luther as conservative Churchman. "Catholicism ethically broken through, but only half overcome in the sphere of thought, and again breaking into all the views of faith—this is the impress which Luther has stamped upon the first centuries of Protestantism."<sup>1</sup>

The first occasion for this reactionary turn was given by the dispute with Carlstadt, and it was continued in the dispute with Zwingli about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. If it is faith alone, that inward relation of the heart towards God, upon which all salvation rests, then all the external ecclesiastical usages, even the sacramental actions, are only of subordinate signifi-

<sup>1</sup> H. Lang, *Luther als relig. Charakterbild*, p. 50.



cance: they no longer contain and effectuate salvation itself, but can only be signs of the common faith and symbols of the salvation received in it. These necessary consequences had been often and clearly expressed by Luther himself in his Reformation writings, but when Carlstadt and Zwingli made the definite application of these premisses to the Lord's Supper, and taught that in it the body of Christ is not really present, and that the words of institution of Jesus are not to be understood literally but metaphorically, then Luther shrank back as in terror from this simple and self-evident consequence, and with passionate defiance took an obstinate stand upon the letter: "This is My body." Was it then only respect for the Biblical letter which made him so biassed in this connection? Yet how often has the same Luther in other cases completely set himself above a Biblical literalism which did not correspond to his feeling of faith, and transformed the meaning of the letter in the freest way! The motive of his opposition to the freer sacramental doctrine doubtless lay deeper: it lay in a religious need which we can only judge to be the unsubdued remainder of Catholic piety. In an earlier Lecture we saw that the ancient Church, in the same measure in which it transported the object of faith to the unapproachable height of transcendent speculation, drew it at the same time into the visible and tangible nearness of the means of worship: the dualism of the dogma had as its corresponding and

completing counterpart the magical immanence of the Divine in the ritual. Now Luther had indeed overcome this dualism of the dogma in his feeling of the blessedness of faith, but he had let it stand in his theological thinking. He did not think of the atonement as a process realising itself internally in faith, but as a past history which was enacted between God and Christ, as the altering of the mind of the angry God by the vicarious merit of the God-man. Between this transcendent process and the inner certainty of the man there exists no spiritual connection; the miracle of the reconciliation of God once on a time by Divine merits can only again be made effective for man by new and continued miracles, and thus communicated to him and made sure. This miraculous means is first of all the revealed Word of Scripture, which, just in order that there may be infallible certainty of those Divine mysteries, must rest on Divine inspiration even to the words and letters. But even the Word is not yet sufficient, seeing that its appropriation always also requires a spiritual activity on the part of man which leaves room for misunderstanding and doubt. The weak faith still needs other and more solid supports, and it finds these in the sacrament in so far as in it the body of Christ is presented to every individual, and enjoyed as a tangible pledge of the forgiveness of sin. It is evident that therewith the Catholic fundamental view of salvation as a material good which is presented

by tangible means and received by man in a purely passive way is again established. We find ourselves here again in the midst of the charmed circle of medieval magic and fantastic ideas, in which connection it makes no real difference whether, according to the medieval doctrine, the bread is transformed into the body of Christ, or, according to the Lutheran doctrine, the body of Christ is present in, with, and under the bread. The principle that salvation is experienced in faith, in the free spiritual self-surrender to God, has been thereby broken through in the most mysterious way.

The consequences did not fail to follow. The sacramental magic of the doctrine of the Supper drew after it a corresponding irrationality in the doctrine of Baptism, and then also in that of the person of Christ, of the Bible, and of faith and reason. If it is faith which makes the new man, the baptism of the new-born child cannot operate his regeneration, but can only be an ecclesiastical act of consecration which symbolically exhibits and promises future regeneration by faith. But this consequence, which was set up by the Protestant heretics, was not acceptable to Luther's conservative sense: he was not willing to give up the saving power of baptism even in its form as child-baptism, and had therefore recourse to the aid of evasions which sound like a mockery of the Protestant principle of personal faith. At one time

the faith of the godfathers and the godmothers was to stand vicariously for that of the child, and again the Holy Spirit was to effectuate faith in the unconscious children in a mysterious way through the baptism itself! Of course the doctrine of justifying faith, which otherwise always rests upon the preaching of the Word and is thought as connected with repentance and personal change of mind, came thereby to be affected with a fatal confusion, which the Lutheran dogmatists have never succeeded in clearing up. Further, the doctrine of the Supper led to the resuscitation of the scholastic question regarding the relationship of the two Natures in Christ. In order that the body of Christ might be everywhere present in the Supper, the human nature of Christ must have obtained from His Deity the attribute of omnipresence; and hence the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* was set up, which led to a multitude of subtle controversies in the most genuine spirit of scholasticism. But while these artificial dogmas had been only things of the school in the ancient and medieval Church, they were now elevated to the position of indispensable objects of faith, with whose acceptance by every one eternal salvation was to be connected. Thus "faith" became at last a holding true of inconceivable dogmatic formulas, concerning which a more violent controversy than had ever raged before was kindled among the Protestant theologians. The Church became a doc-

trinal institution, or school, in which the theologian again claimed an authority similar to what the priests claimed in the Roman Church. Luther himself had already led the way with the evil example of condemning difference in theological opinion as damnable heresy which leads to hell. And because the opponents of this new ecclesiasticism led Reason into the field, Luther now began a fanatical struggle against Reason, although he had himself at an earlier stage appealed to it along with faith; and the unmeasured violence of this struggle is to us only a proof that Luther painfully felt the contradiction in which he had entangled himself with his own reformatory principle. In a man who had made such energetic use of his reason in his criticism not merely of the ecclesiastical usages and traditions but also of the Biblical books, the theory of the hostile relationship of reason and faith can only be understood psychologically as a symptom of the violent self-suppression of his own reason.

“But to a mind of the force and vivacity of Luther’s,—a mind, too, which had measured its individual strength against the prescriptions of centuries, and held its own against a world in arms,—the strangling of reason was not an act to be lightly committed, or to be regarded afterwards without at least passing pangs of remorse. Under certain mythological forms, with which no Christian in the sixteenth century could afford to dispense, we discern the fact of a perpetual struggle going on in Luther’s mind. When his

natural reason rebelled against the violence which orthodox faith offered to it, the revolt was ascribed to the direct agency of the Devil, and was contended against as a suggestion of hell."<sup>1</sup>

Luther regarded the strangling of reason as the most agreeable sacrifice and service which can be brought to our Lord God; that is, psychologically expressed, it was a sacrifice which for him was as painful as it was individually necessary, in order to assert religious peace, that highest good of his soul. But however it may be psychologically intelligible from Luther's individuality, yet such a spiritual self-mutilation in a man like Luther always remains *tragic*; and it is all the more tragic, seeing that it has cast its shadow not only into his own life, but also into the whole further history of his Church. Lang rightly says: "By mistaking and casting down the Protestant spirit, which put forth its demands on the time (in Carlstadt, Zwingli, and others), Luther made Protestantism lose its salt; he inflicted wounds upon it from which it has not yet recovered to-day, and the ecclesiastical struggle of the present is just a struggle of spiritual freedom against Lutherism."

The more heavily the individual limitations of Luther's powerful personality pressed upon the inner and outer development of German Protestantism, so much the more important was it for the future of the Christian world that the Swiss Reformation went

<sup>1</sup> C. Beard, *The Reformation, &c.*, p. 164.

on side by side with the Lutheran as a movement independent in its origin and kind. The Swiss Reformation also arose out of the Germanic spirit, but it is another side of this spirit which was represented in Zwingli than that which was represented in Luther. Here it was not the mystical depth of feeling, with its inner struggles and cries, its obscurities and contradictions, but the need of intellectual and ethical freedom, clearness, and order, that asserted itself; and all this was in accordance with the natural endowments of Zwingli, which were developed and strengthened by his humanistic culture and his practical popular activity. The Bible was to him, as to Luther, the source and rule of his religious and moral convictions, but he read it with the eye of the humanist and of the patriotic teacher of the people; and hence he did not find in it in the forefront the consolation of the forgiveness of sin, but the revelation of the moral truth which overcomes sin and transforms human life into a life pleasing to God. Hence he saw in Christ not so much the mediator of the atonement as the typical example of the inner redemption which consists in the lordship of the Divine Spirit over the flesh. And therefore faith was to him not so much a passive receiving of divine promises as rather a moral act effected by the Divine Spirit, the self-denial and surrender of one's own will in active obedience. And because God can demand from us nothing that is irrational, because moral truth stands in harmony with

all other truth, Zwingli could not fall into the Lutheran antagonism of faith and reason: in the pious surrender to God, the intellect must not be suppressed in favour of the feelings, but the pious feeling is the reflex of the moral harmony of the whole man which the Divine Spirit works in us. The mysteries of the ecclesiastical dogmas were not indeed denied by Zwingli, but they were put in the background as venerable symbols from which we have to take only what is significant for us, or what we are able to experience internally and to exercise practically. In particular, the sacraments of the Church contain no dark mysteries and magical saving powers, but are signs of faith which are rather of significance for the community than for the individual. Generally in this ethical view of Christianity much greater importance is put upon the social element than in Luther's religious individualism. While the chief interest for that individualism lies in this, that the individual Christian has to become certain of his soul's salvation, and in this connection the Church comes into consideration for the individual only through its ministering of the Word and Sacrament,—on the other hand, to the Swiss Reformers the main interest lies in this, that the will of God has to be fulfilled in the social life of men, and that the earthly community of the Christians has to be fashioned into a true kingdom of God. Hence the active aggressive missionary spirit of the Reformed Churches, which aims at conquer-



ing the world for Christ, and which conditioned the powerful extension of these Churches and their profound influence on the political fates of the peoples, while the Lutheran Church remained for two centuries arrested in emotional still-life and theological doctrinairism, hardly capable of maintaining its boundaries, much less of extending them. The matter has certainly also its converse side. The puritanical zeal for purity in the life of the Churches has not seldom led to a legalism which was hardly to be reconciled with the free personality of a Christian man. And the predominating of the practical interest was less favourable to the work of carrying forward knowledge of the Christian truth than the contemplative inwardness of the Lutheran Christians. That it was predominantly the Lutheran Churches of Germany in which the problems of the Reformation were again afterwards taken up and elaborated anew and in a deeper way, can be well explained from the fact that in the Lutheran form of doctrine the state of inner discordance in which the Reformation theology remained was carried to the sharpest extreme, and the contradictions in the confessional fixation of doctrine were therefore most painfully felt.

The Christianity which had been locked up by the Roman Church in the mysteries of dogma and worship, was by the Reformation practically subjectivised so as to make it an object of personal experience and of the

internal authentication of the conscience, but *theoretically* there remained the dualistic transcendence of the medieval view of the world. The dogmas of the Trinity, of the God-man, and of the Atonement remained essentially unchanged, and in spite of Luther's Biblical criticism the dogma of the Inspiration of the Bible was even accentuated and made the basis of the doctrinal system. That this supernaturalistic other-worldness of the object of faith stands in discordance with the Protestant inwardness of the subjective experience of faith, was indeed well observed by individuals, who on that account also demanded a revision of the objective dogmas and a distinguishing of Scripture and Word of God. But the time was not yet ripe for these demands, and therefore these deeper seeing thinkers and inconvenient admonishers were expelled from the State-Churches, which were striving after consolidation and rest, and they were condemned under the general nickname of "fanatics" and "Anabaptists." But their scruples and objections regarding the orthodox system, although suppressed at the time, were again taken up by a later time and supported with new reasons and asserted with sharp emphasis. The inner contradiction of the orthodox Protestant system of doctrine had been the more capable of being concealed from the founders of it because the universal view of the world of the Middle Ages, out of which the dogmas had grown and into which they fitted, was still regarded by them as

unshaken and indubitable. But in the following centuries, the new science of nature and history, whose beginnings reached back to the age of the Reformation, grew to such an imposing power that the Church could no longer simply ignore it, but must begin to reckon with it and come to explanation with it. Hence arose those movements of the modern thinking which we are wont to indicate under the names Deism, Rationalism, and Criticism. Time, however, will not allow us to-day to enter upon the course of this movement, and the consideration of it may be the more readily spared seeing that I have already started introductorily in two earlier lectures from this point of view (vol. i. Lect. i., and vol. ii. Lect. i.)

This movement, which proceeded from the free-thinkers of England of the Seventeenth Century, has not yet come to rest in our day. The questions and doubts then raised even press much more forcibly to-day than ever before upon the consciousness of the Christian world. Thanks to the scientific work of three centuries, our knowledge of the world, of nature, of man, and of history has become so fundamentally different from what it was in the age of the Reformation, that the doctrines and systems then formulated under totally different scientific presuppositions cannot be brought any longer into accordance on any point with our present knowledge. To us, the fixed firmament no longer arches over the resting world ; but we

know our dwelling-place as a star along with numberless other stars, as a rolling planetary body in infinite space. Where remains now the theatre for the intercourse between heaven and earth, for that ascending and descending of heavenly beings, of which the Biblical history tells, and which served dogmatic theology as the sensible framework for its religious representation of Divine revelation? And as our earth follows the law of gravitation, so the processes of the terrestrial world obey the laws of nature, which connect every phenomenon with other phenomena, and keep up the order of the whole and the harmonious structure of the world. Where, then, does there remain a place for supernatural manifestations,—for the miracles of the religious legend? Geology has followed out the development of the formation of our earth through various epochs of thousands of years. Biology has raised to a high probability the theory of the development of the higher species, and at last of mankind, out of the lower animated beings of the earth. Palæontology has described the development of our species from rude animal beginnings through long periods of primitive civilisation. Where, then, in face of all this, remains the Biblical legend of the six days' work of the creation and of the primeval state in Paradise, that fulcrum of the whole Augustinian ecclesiastical dogmatics? Of not less significance, likewise, is the progress in the advance of

historical science and of the art of interpretation. While the authors of the old and new (Protestant) Confessions of the Faith of the Church saw no harm at all in introducing into the words of Holy Scripture the sense which corresponded to their dogmatic wants and presuppositions, to us of to-day, who have learned the method of the linguistic interpretation of ancient Scripture, such a procedure appears as a wholly illegitimate forcing of the Word of Scripture. While the old theologians had no idea of historical development, and therefore took no offence when dogmas of late origin were imported into the oldest Biblical books, and while they thus found again everywhere throughout the whole of Scripture the same thing—namely, their ecclesiastical system of faith—we of to-day have learned to distinguish the peculiarities of individual times and writers. In the Bible, as well as in all other literature, we have learned to understand every writer from the conditions of his time and surroundings, and to perceive a progress, a transformation of the mode of thinking and believing, even in the course of the history of the Biblical religion. In presence of this insight into the gradual development even of the Biblical religion and of its literary monuments, where remains the ecclesiastical view of the Bible as purely and solely a Divine book, whose inspired oracle contains from beginning to end the same doctrine of faith?

Accordingly, if our whole conception of the world to-day has become entirely different from that under whose presuppositions the Churches of the Reformation constructed their doctrinal systems, will Protestant Christianity be able to maintain these doctrinal systems in the future, unconcerned about their fundamental contradiction with all the knowledge of the present? Some, perhaps even many, may indeed still succeed for a long time in closing their eyes persistently to this contradiction; and they may thus, in spite of all the knowledge of the present, hold fast to the faith of the Fathers. Far be it from us to judge in an unfriendly spirit of such as these among our fellow-Christians, or to doubt the honesty of their motives; but what we must doubt is, whether the enduring of such a discordance between rational knowledge and religious faith, although it is possible at the time for individuals, will also be *lastingly* possible for the Christian community as a whole? The experiences of history do not appear to speak for the affirmative view. History shows by many examples that a traditional faith which has remained too far behind the advanced knowledge of a later time gradually fades away, because it is always less able to strike its roots in the consciousness of the generations as they renew their life. Suppose that this were also to hold good of the inherited faith of the Christian Churches, should we then have to expect in an indefinite future the

euthanasia of the Christian religion? This inference, as it appears to me, would only have to be affirmed, if the position were established that the ecclesiastical faith was so immutable in its essence that it could undergo no sort of transformation, no adaptation to a new consciousness in time, without denying its principle itself. With regard to the faith of the Catholic Church this appears to be actually the case, at least when taken according to the customary utterances of its own representatives, whose correctness I will not here examine. But it undoubtedly stands otherwise with the Faith of the Protestant Churches. These Churches, which have arisen from the criticism of a tradition of fifteen centuries, on that account carry the principle of criticism, and consequently the principle of change, of alteration, of progress, of development, of adaptation to new human wants, as a law of their existence, and in their very essence. The Church which carries back its origin to the Reformation, that product of the free activity of the personal consciousness, cannot renounce the right, and dare not withdraw from the duty incumbent upon it, to reform its faith ever again from time to time, and to liberate itself from the fetters into which the theoretical thinking of past stages of culture has cast it. It may be a difficult task to recast the faith of the Reformation in harmony with the knowledge of our time, but it cannot be an

insoluble one; for in the freedom of the conscience which is bound to God, and in the insisting on personal experience of saving truth, Protestantism already inherently contains the germs which only need further development and more rigorous logical treatment in detail, to lead to such a new formation of our Christian faith as will stand in harmony with the secular knowledge of the present, and no longer exact from us any sacrifice of reason.

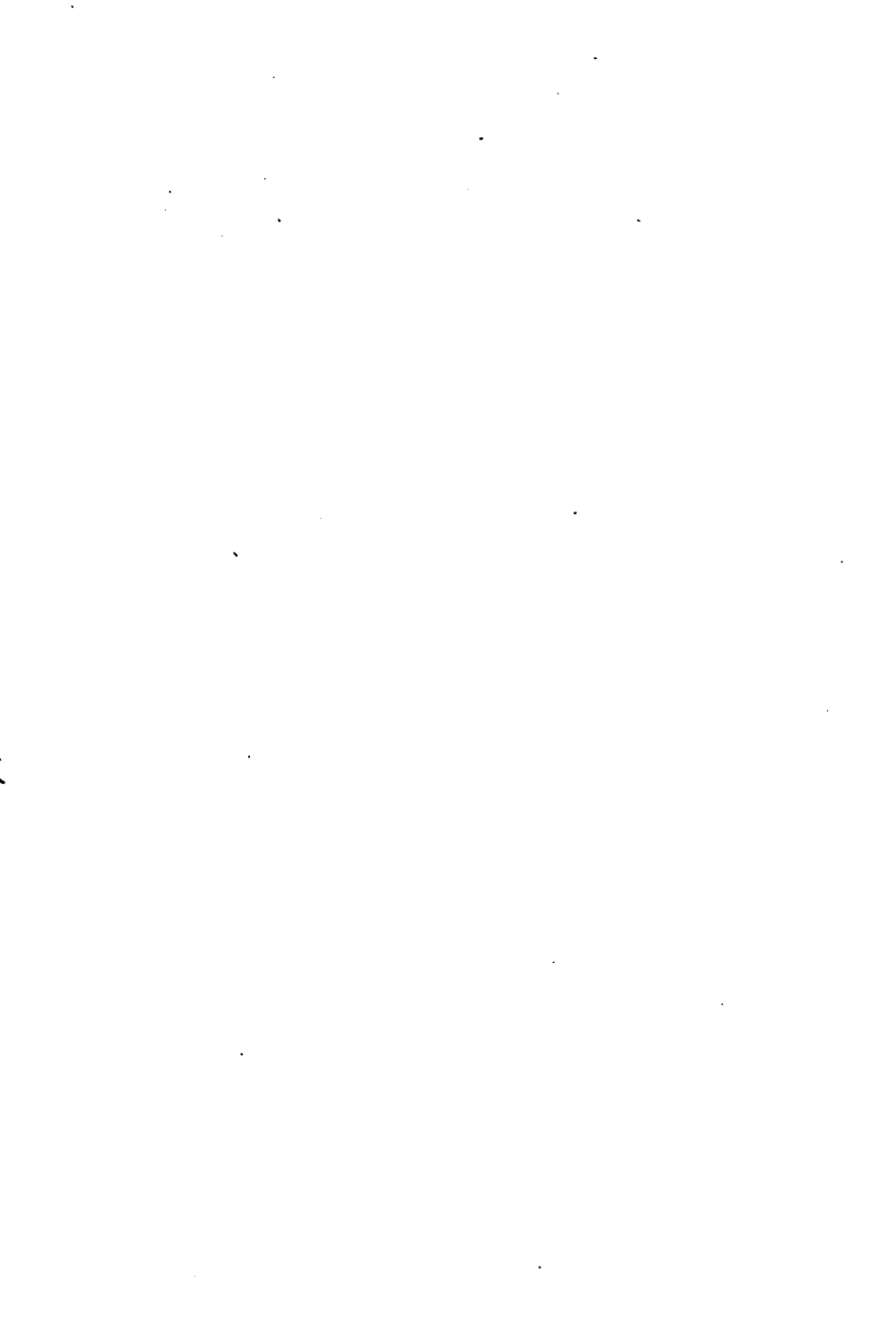
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As the promotion of such thought about religion was the aim of this Lectureship, according to the will of its founder, I have endeavoured in my Lectures to contribute to its fulfilment as far as lay in my power. And I venture to hope that my efforts have not been quite unsuccessful, considering the kind reception they have found on the part of my audience, for which I return my heartiest thanks. Of course, I did not expect that my hearers would agree with all my opinions. I am as far from thinking myself, as any one else, infallible. The matters which have been treated in these Lectures are so difficult that no one man, nay, not even a generation of men, could possibly know the whole truth regarding them in its purity. All we can do is to strive, with sincere love of truth, after an ever



deeper understanding of the mysteries of God's revelation in human hearts. However our opinions in regard to details may differ, if only we are all united in sincere love of truth, we may confidently hope that the spirit of truth, promised by Christ to the pious children of God, will guide us into all truth.

THE END.





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