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The revelation of Jesus





THE REVELATION OF JESUS

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THE  
REVELATION OF JESUS

A STUDY OF THE PRIMARY SOURCES  
OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

GEORGE HOLLEY GILBERT, PH.D., D.D.

PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND INTERPRETATION  
IN CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AUTHOR OF "THE STUDENT'S LIFE OF JESUS" AND  
"THE STUDENT'S LIFE OF PAUL"

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TO

**My Mother and My Wife**

ONE EMBODYING THE GENTLENESS AND PATIENCE OF JESUS  
AND THE OTHER HIS SELF-FORGETFULNESS

**This Book is Dedicated**

IN HIS NAME



## PREFACE

No subject of historical investigation lies so near to the life of the Church as does the revelation of Jesus; and yet many subjects have received a far larger measure of attention. We have, in English, but one scientific discussion of the entire subject of the teaching of Jesus, so far as I know, and that is a translation of Professor Wendt's work. Single topics in the teaching of Jesus have been investigated in recent years in America and England, as well as on the continent of Europe, by such eminent scholars as Briggs, Bruce, Fairbairn, Haupt, and Baldensperger; and works on the theology of the New Testament, notably those of Weiss, Beyschlag, and Bovon, contain a condensed treatment of the whole teaching of Jesus; but it still remains true that this most vital subject has received relatively little scientific attention.

The revelation of Jesus must be *historically* investigated, and yet it is so intimately associated with our most sacred thoughts and feelings that a student shrinks from claiming that his investigation is absolutely historical. I can only say that this has been my constant

aim, and that never, in the interpretation of a single passage or in the presentation of inductions from a group of passages, have I consciously had regard either to my own former views or to the theological consequences that might follow from the results at which I had arrived. I have tried to follow the thought of Jesus with the utmost accuracy, and I have certainly done so with the conviction that His thought is of infinite value both to me and to all men. I ask, therefore, that the reader will not apply to this book any other test than the historical one. It may be that some of its results are at variance with this or that creed, or with some ancient and esteemed system of theology; but they may be quite true, nevertheless. Yet whether they are true or not is a question which can never be answered by comparing them with traditional beliefs. A theological test for a historical work is no test at all. We can get forward in Christian thought only as we become better grounded in the thought of Jesus. It would doubtless be wholesome to test our theologies by the teaching of Jesus; but it must be fatal to our Christianity to subordinate His teaching to our theologies.

The revelation of Jesus, as has been said, is a subject for *historical* investigation. Its sources are the Gospels. The time is certainly past when any student need to apologize for regarding these documents as essentially trustworthy. This quality is visibly stamped upon

them, and the stamp is attested by the unbroken existence and the unwasting power of the Church itself. But it is also plain that these writings differ among themselves in multitudes of details and occasionally in points of considerable importance, and that they all, though in varying degree, show the influence of the times in which they originated. Therefore a scientific investigation of their content must take account of these facts, and must seek by critical study to get back as nearly as possible to the original teaching. But I have thought it wise not to introduce this critical study of the text into my book except in instances where it appeared to be quite necessary.

The teaching of the fourth Gospel is so variously and so widely unlike that of the Synoptists, at least on its formal side, that it is presented by itself. The reader, therefore, can readily observe the differences between these ancient documents and can judge of its significance.

It remains to say only this word more, that I have sought to get at Jesus' point of view, and to observe the proportions which different subjects have in His teaching. This is the plain duty of one who will make a historical investigation. To dissect the teaching of Jesus and arrange its fragments under any artificial outline of theology is to miss, in large measure, its meaning and to lose its power. We must go as little

children and listen to all that Jesus says, and observe how and when and to whom He speaks, and must also mark His treatment of men. In this way only can we approach a right judgment of His revelation.

May He who is Himself the truth which He reveals, and who is more and more revealing to men the truth which He is, bless this and every effort to get nearer to His thought and life.

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# THE REVELATION OF JESUS

## CHAPTER I

### THE NEW REVELATION OF GOD

IN the religion of Jesus, as in all religions, the conception of God is fundamental. The one subject on which Jesus claimed to have unique and absolute knowledge was the Heavenly Father (Mt. xi. 27).<sup>1</sup> The vital moulding force of His own inner life was the consciousness of God, and by this consciousness His views of the kingdom of God were essentially determined. Moreover, what He realized in Himself as the light and the power of a divine life, He sought to realize in each member of the kingdom which He came to establish. It is, therefore, necessary, in presenting the truths which Jesus taught, to begin with His conception of God. For although it is true that *the kingdom of heaven* is largely the burden of the preaching of Jesus,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See W. Lütgert, *Das Reich Gottes*, p. 8; W. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 40.

we cannot begin with that subject because His thought of the kingdom depends on His thought of God; nor should a presentation of the teaching of Jesus begin with a discussion of His relation to the Law,<sup>1</sup> as though His religious conceptions had their origin in a sense of the imperfection of that Law. He certainly saw the Law's imperfection, and early in His ministry began to criticise both the living interpreters of the Law, and the Law itself, thereby giving mortal offence to the scribes; but His thought of the Law depended upon His thought of God, and He did not appear in Israel as the promulgator of new ideas about the Law, but rather as "instituting a new religion, revealing a new God to man, and making man a new being to God."<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, our point of departure, in setting forth the content of the revelation of Jesus, must be His thought of God, for this was the fountain-head of all His religious and ethical teaching. Yet the revelation of God which Jesus gave to the world was not absolutely new, certainly not as a doctrine.<sup>3</sup> Moses and the prophets had caught occasional glimpses of that truth in regard to the Divine Being which Jesus fully possessed, but their glimpses of this truth did not deeply

<sup>1</sup> See H. J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 130-131.

<sup>2</sup> See Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. H. H. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 139.

affect the popular conception of God, while the revelation which Jesus gave in word and in life undoubtedly marks the greatest advance in the religious history of mankind. In order, therefore, to appreciate fully the thought of God which Jesus had, we must consider what the Jewish people had thought before His time, and also the views of His contemporaries.

The first of the great prerogatives of the Jewish people, which are enumerated by Paul, is the *adoption* (Rom. ix. 4), that is, the ap-<sup>2. Father-</sup>pointment of Israel to be, in a peculiar<sup>hood of God</sup> sense, God's son. The apostle, therefore, thought of<sup>in the Old</sup> God as Israel's father, and he derived this thought<sup>Testament.</sup> from the Old Testament. God's message to Pharaoh by Moses involved a paternal relationship to Israel. Moses was to say, in God's name, "Israel is my son, my first-born" (Ex. iv. 22). This language implies that other peoples also were sons of Jehovah, in the thought of Moses, but Israel was the *first-born*, a peculiar treasure from among all peoples (Ex. xix. 5). Again Deuteronomy represents Moses as saying to the people, "As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee" (Deut. viii. 5; xxxii. 6); and the Lord says in Hosea that when Israel was a child, He loved him and called His *son* out of Egypt (Hos. xi. 1; i. 10). In these passages, and in a few more,<sup>1</sup> God is thought

<sup>1</sup> See Jer. iii. 4; xxxi. 9; 1 Chron. xxix. 10; Mal. ii. 10.

of as a father to the people of Israel as a whole, and He is the father of Israel because He made them a nation, and established them by His mighty power (Deut. xxxii. 6). Thus His fatherhood is national rather than individual. In some instances, however, the Old Testament individualizes God's fatherhood, at least in those passages in which the Messianic king is called the Son of God. The Lord says of the theocratic descendant of David, "I will be his father and he shall be my son" (2 Sam. vii. 14), and the Messianic king puts the decree of Jehovah concerning himself in these words, "Thou art my son: this day have I begotten thee" (Ps. ii. 7). With reference to other persons also the fatherhood of God seems to be individualized in the Psalter, for He is called the father of the fatherless, and it is said that the pity which He feels for those who fear Him is like the pity of a father for his children (Ps. lxxviii. 5; ciii. 13). And this individualized fatherhood is suffused with the glow of a divine tenderness in Isaiah, where God is one who gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them in His bosom, and who comforts His people as a mother comforts her children (Is. xl. 11; lxvi. 13). Yet in all these passages, even those which most nearly approach the spirit of the Gospels, we see only the relation of God to His chosen people or to His chosen king. The word *father* is not yet a name of God, a description of His

very character, but rather "a designation of His covenant relationship with the people."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, these words concerning God which we have considered are only as rare flowers from the heights of Old Testament revelation, and we cannot judge from their fragrance how the people as a whole, and through the centuries, thought of Jehovah.

The foundation of Old Testament life, at least from the time of Josiah, as well as the foundation of a large part of Old Testament literature, was the Law; and as all the people had trembled when the Law was given, hearing the thunders and the voice of the trumpet, and seeing the thick clouds and the lightnings, so under the Law's régime they continued to tremble with fear and awe. The Law, it is true, had a gracious side, when read by the apostle from his Christian point of view (Rom. x. 5-13), but to one without his illumination it was, in the main, terribly stern. The God who stood behind the Law was apprehended as a God of holiness and of mighty power, a God whose favor was to be secured only by strict observance of its numerous ordinances. Even the most earnest spirits under the Old Dispensation found that the Law developed fear instead of trust, and felt that it was a yoke too heavy to be borne (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. v. 1; Acts xv. 10). The visions of Isaiah

<sup>1</sup> See Hermann Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, p. 528.

did not alter the severe rule of the Law, or modify its cold, majestic conception of God. In the Old Testament ritual God is represented as enthroned above the cherubim, unapproachable to all the people save the high priest, and to him on all days of the year save the Day of Atonement; and to this ceremonial of worship the life of the saints seems to have corresponded. God was to them a great king dwelling afar, one who was to be feared and obeyed for the gifts which He could bestow rather than for the sake of His own divine companionship.

The Jewish conceptions of God in the time of Jesus were based upon the Law, but they had been colored by Greek thought, and had been still more deeply affected by that amazing development of the Law which occupied the synagogue during the long period between Ezra, "the perfect scribe," and Jesus the Messiah. It is true that Judaism preserved itself in a marvellous way from foreign influences. In building a hedge around the Law, as the men of the Great Synagogue<sup>1</sup> had taught,<sup>2</sup> Judaism built a strong high wall around itself. The leaders saw a future for the people only in a rigid fulfilment of the Law. Moreover, with the growth of the in-

<sup>1</sup> See Schürer, *Die Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, ii. 291-292; Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 6, 38.

<sup>2</sup> See Jost, *Entdecktes Judenthum*, i. 95; Barclay, *The Talmud*, p. 218.

fluence of the synagogue came the growth of that view of the Old Testament which regarded it as the depository of *all* useful wisdom. There was nothing to be learned from other peoples. God had given but one revelation of His will, and that revelation, infinite in content, was in the Law.<sup>1</sup> And yet the influence of Greek thought could not be wholly resisted. The Hellenization of the Jews who were scattered abroad, especially of the great numbers who dwelt in Alexandria, reacted upon the ideas of the Jews who dwelt in Palestine. Then, too, a party arose within Judaism itself, namely the Sadducees, who were favorable toward foreign culture and worship.

With reference to the conception of God, which we are now considering, it became more abstract and transcendental as it came into contact with Greek thought, and apparently *because* of this contact. This tendency toward the abstract is manifest already in the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was begun as far back as the third century B.C., and which came to have such influence even in Palestine that the writers of the New Testament usually quote from it rather than from the Hebrew original or from Aramaic versions. Thus, in this Greek version, God is not called "a man of war" (Ex. xv. 3), but He is "the Lord who makes war." Moses does not go up to *God* in the mountain,

<sup>1</sup> See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 84-86.

as the original reads (Ex. xix. 3), but he goes up to the *mount* of God. The slave who is to be set free is not brought *unto God* (Ex. xxi. 6), but unto the *judgment* of God. Moses and those with him did not see *the God of Israel* (Ex. xxiv. 9-10), but they saw the *place* where He stood. Such changes as these indicate<sup>1</sup> that the translators no longer held just the same conception of God which the Old Testament writers had.<sup>2</sup> They shrink from the idea that men may come into contact with Him.

We referred also to the synagogue or rabbinism as another source of modification of the Old Testament conception of God. The scribe with the written letter took the place of the prophet with his living message. The fundamental principle that a hedge should be built around the Law to the end that even its least statutes might not be transgressed, led to an increasing exaggeration of the ceremonial side of the Law. This may be seen, for example, in the early apocryphal writings of Tobit and Judith,<sup>3</sup> and still more abundantly in the Gospels, which reflect current views of their day. It is illustrated also in the Maccabean period by the fact that the Jewish soldiers allowed themselves to be cut

<sup>1</sup> Comp. J. Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, i. 157-166; Langen, *Das Judenthum in Palaestina zur Zeit Christi*, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> A trace of the same tendency appears in *Wisdom* i. 7.

<sup>3</sup> See *Tobit* i. 6; iv. 10; xii. 9; *Judith* xii. 2, 7, 9.



down in cold blood on the Sabbath, rather than profane the law of the Sabbath by self-defence (1 Macc. ii. 34-38). We see from the Gospels that the popular religion of that day had become wholly externalized and legalistic. Only through the outward and material could men approach and please the God of heaven. The same tendency which we have seen illustrated in the Greek version of the Old Testament appears, at a later day, in Palestinian literature. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan<sup>1</sup> remove from the Old Testament any expressions which imply the personal nearness of God to men. Thus in Gen. xxviii. 13, which says that Jehovah stood above the ladder that Jacob saw in his dream, we read in Onkelos that the *glory* of Jehovah stood above it; and instead of the *face* of God in Deut. xxxii. 20 we have His *shekinah*. In Gen. xviii. 8, where it is said that the Lord and His two companions ate of the repast furnished by Abraham, Onkelos says, "it *seemed* to him as though they ate." Moreover, the *Memra*, or word of the Lord, appears in the Targums where the Scripture text speaks in an anthropomorphic way concerning God, or uses language that implies His nearness to men.<sup>2</sup> Thus the conception of God became more and

<sup>1</sup> Written before 70 A.D. See Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, i. 36-58.

<sup>2</sup> See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 174-179; Langen, *Das Judenthum in Palaestina zur Zeit Christi*, p. 213; Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, i. 292-293.

more transcendental.<sup>1</sup> It is not He Himself who has ever come into contact with men, but simply this or that agent sent from His presence. The elaborate Jewish doctrine of angels went naturally with this conception of God, for, as He was thought to be infinitely removed from contact with mankind, it was necessary to have many messengers moving between Him and the earth.<sup>2</sup>

But while this Jewish conception of God was thus transcendental, it was not spiritual. We may not be justified in carrying back to the times of Jesus such ideas as we find in the Talmud of Jerusalem, and yet the Judaism of this writing probably differs in degree rather than in kind from the Judaism of the first century. The Talmud of Jerusalem represents God as a great rabbi, somewhat as the Greeks in Homer's time thought of Zeus as an indefinitely magnified man. The rabbis taught that God spends His time in heaven as they spent theirs on earth. He studies the Law three hours each day, and observes all its ordinances. He keeps the Sabbath. He makes vows, and the heavenly sanhedrin releases Him when the vow has been performed. He also fulfils the injunction to rise up before the hoary head.<sup>3</sup> This conception of

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Bousset, *Die Predigt Jesu in ihrem Gegensatz zum Judenthum*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 88-89.

<sup>3</sup> See Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, i. 276; Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 17-18.

God manifestly had as little ethical elevation as had the life of the scribes. In this respect it fell immeasurably below the prophetic conception of Jehovah.

It is true that a common name of God in the time of Jesus was the *Holy One*, but the rabbinic conception of holiness was superficial. We see the scribe's idea of holiness in his own life and endeavor. He washed the outside of cups and platters, while his own heart was full of extortion and excess (Mt. xxiii. 25). His holiness was ceremonial, not vital. And this was his thought of the holiness of God. It was removal from ceremonial uncleanness, and hence was physical rather than moral. To the Pharisee, the thought that God could regard with any favor a man who was Levitically unclean was repellent, and he drew his robes about him with horror when Jesus ate with publicans and sinners.

These conceptions of God of which we have spoken were doubtless not at any time shared by all the people of Palestine, and certainly not by all in the Dispersion. Ben Sirach in the second century B.C., and John the Baptist at the close of the first century B.C., are proof that here and there men appeared who had relatively noble and spiritual conceptions of God, — conceptions which remind us of the Old Testament prophets. Ben Sirach, though strongly predestinarian in his thought of God (*e.g.* xxxiii. 10–13), and though

having a legalistic type of religion (*e.g.* iii. 30), rises at times to large and worthy views of the Divine Being. Thus he says that the mercy of God is upon all flesh (xviii. 13), and he speaks with feeling of the loving-kindness and compassion of the Lord (xvii. 29). John the Baptist was far in advance of Ben Sirach in the spirituality of his religious conceptions. He was able to commune with God in the wilderness, without the aid of legal ceremonies which were all in all to the scribes and Pharisees of his day; and he thought of God as one who looks at the heart rather than at the outward observances of piety. Therefore he preached repentance, that men might be prepared for fellowship with this spiritual and holy God.

As Ben Sirach and John the Baptist represent the best Palestinian conceptions of God to be found in their respective ages, conceptions much higher than the dominant ones, so the Wisdom of Solomon<sup>1</sup> shows us that among the Jews of the Dispersion there were not wanting elevated views of the Lord. Thus the author of this book says of God, —

“To know Thee is perfect righteousness,  
And to know Thy power is the root of immortality.” (xv. 3.)

<sup>1</sup> Probably written B.C. See Schürer, *Die Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, ii. 758; Farrar in Wace's *Apocrypha*, i. 420.

Again, he thinks of God as God over all, and of tender love, when he says, —

“Thou sparest all, for they are Thine, sovereign Soul-lover,  
For Thine immortal spirit is in all.” (xi. 26.)

But the view of God which was held even by these exceptional men, though higher than the common view of their times, was not different from the general Old Testament conception. We read in Wisdom that God is the father of Israel as a people (ix. 7; xviii. 3), and that the individual righteous man may call Him father (ii. 16); but the author never thinks of Him as the father of the sinful and the lost. On the contrary, he declares that God loves nothing save the man who dwells with wisdom (vii. 28), and declares that while God dealt in fatherly love with Israel, He dealt with the Gentiles as a severe king (xi. 10; xii. 22). Thus the father-name here as in the Old Testament describes God's treatment of the righteous rather than the character of God in itself.

We pass now from the Old Testament and the later Jewish writings to the Gospels; and in doing so we shall find that between the dominant Old Testament conception of God and the conception of Him which Jesus had, the contrast is profound; while between the contemporaneous Jewish conception and that of Jesus, there is an illimitable gulf.

4. Jesus' conception of God grounded in experience.

The teaching of Jesus on the fatherhood of God is a teaching out of His inmost experience.<sup>1</sup> He first knew God as His own father. The story which Luke gives us out of the boyhood of Jesus shows that His consciousness of being a child of God must have belonged to the very opening of His mental and moral life (Lk. ii. 49). This consciousness surely was not awakened by the doctors in the temple among whom Jesus sat as a boy of twelve years. They were not the teachers on that occasion, but rather the taught. They marvelled at Jesus' insight into the Scripture — an insight which He had of course been gaining prior to His twelfth year. We cannot doubt that this spiritual insight into the word of God stood in a very close relation to the consciousness of God's presence and fatherly love. From His later knowledge of the word of God, as indicated by His teaching, we may surely infer that His earliest knowledge which He exhibited in the temple was not of the rabbinical sort. Jesus did not astonish the scribes by a prodigious memory of the letter of the Law, or by a precocious subtlety in manipulating the text of Scripture so as to make it yield a meaning opposite to its obvious sense. Such a hypothesis would not only destroy the unity of His spiritual development, but it would also be in direct antagonism with the fact that

<sup>1</sup> Comp. H. J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 247.

Jesus was conscious at this time of moral harmony with God, which consciousness could neither spring from a rabbinical knowledge of Scripture, nor exist by its side.

The knowledge of Scripture shown by the questions and answers of Jesus must have been of a spiritual sort—a knowledge of the *heart* of revelation. It was, of course, a boy's knowledge, not a man's; but it was the knowledge of a boy whose heart was pure, and who walked continually in the clear light of God. Such a knowledge presupposes that the words "my Father" did not express a conception that was new to the spirit of Jesus when He appeared among the doctors in the temple, but rather that they expressed a consciousness which His memory could follow back to the beginning of His religious life. Indeed, we have no ground to suppose that Jesus ever thought of God otherwise than as His father. Nothing suggests that He reached this conception through a period of struggle and doubt.

When we take up the Synoptic record of the words of Jesus, we find that His use of the father-name is what we should expect from the early conversation in the temple. Whenever the personal relation between God and Himself is involved, He employs no name but *father*, if we except a single passage where he quotes from the twenty-second Psalm (Mk. xv. 34). In each of the five prayers where the words of Jesus are given, He addresses God as father

5. Use of the father-name by Jesus.

(Mt. xi. 25-27; xxvi. 39, 42; Lk. xxiii. 34, 46), and in the longest of these, which includes but three verses, the name is repeated five times. When speaking of God in the third person, Jesus refers to Him once as "the great King" (Mt. v. 35), and once as "Lord of the harvest" (Mt. ix. 38), but in almost every case He uses the name "God" or the name "father." He never employs such circumlocutions as "The Blessed One" and "The Holy One"; and never uses abstract designations such as "Place," all of which were common in the synagogue.

The name with which Jesus addresses God is also the name which He puts upon the lips of His disciples. They are to enjoy the same intimacy that He enjoys, and say with Him, "Father" (Mt. vi. 9; xxiii. 9). It is instructive to compare with this usage the language which Jesus puts on the lips of the Pharisee and the publican in one of His parables (Lk. xviii. 11-13). Even the penitent publican, whose spirit was right in the sight of the Lord, is represented as saying "God," and not "Father." This portrayal was doubtless true to life. In the Gospels no one but Jesus speaks of God as his father.<sup>1</sup>

The fatherhood of God, in the teaching of Jesus, is

<sup>1</sup> In Jn. i. 18; viii. 27; xiii. 3 the author speaks from his own Christian point of view; and in iii. 35 he attributes his own Christian usage to the Baptist.



not accidental, not conditioned upon this or that human circumstance, but it is essential. He is fatherly because He is God. He is such an one in Himself that He takes thought for our daily bread, and numbers the hairs of our heads (Mt. vi. 11; x. 30). He is ready to give the kingdom of heaven and the vision of Himself to the poor in spirit and the pure in heart (Mt. v. 3, 8). That is to say, He is in Himself such an one that He freely gives the best He has to those who desire it. He is the one who is absolutely and unchangeably good (Mk. x. 18), and whom, therefore, it is man's first and divinest obligation to love and serve (Mk. xii. 30; Mt. xxii. 37-40). As it is the very nature of a father to give good gifts to his children, so it is the very nature of God to give His good gifts to those who ask Him (Mt. vii. 11; Lk. xi. 13).

The character of God's fatherhood is perfectly portrayed by Jesus in His story of the Lost Son (Lk. xv. 11-32). This parable was spoken in defence of Jesus' acceptance of publicans and other disreputable people. These classes are represented by the younger son. Now the father in the parable, through whom Jesus wishes to set forth the character of the heavenly Father, longs for the return of the wanderer, and when he does return freely pardons him. It thus appears from this story, as elsewhere in the teaching of Jesus,

that He did not call God our father because He created us, or because He rules over us, or because He made a covenant with Abraham, but simply and only because He loves us.

This parable individualizes the divine love, as did also the missionary activity of Jesus. The Gospels know nothing of a national fatherhood, of a God whose love is confined to a particular people. It is the individual man who has a heavenly Father, and this individualized fatherhood is the only one of which Jesus speaks. As He had realized His own moral and spiritual life in the consciousness that God was His father, so He sought to give life to the world by a living revelation of the truth that God loves each separate soul. This is a prime factor in the religion and ethics of Jesus. It is seldom or vaguely apprehended in the Old Testament teaching; but in the teaching of Jesus it is central and normative.

It cannot be fairly objected that, since these publicans and sinners who thronged Jesus were Jews, — lost sheep of the house of Israel, — therefore this story of the Lost Son does not teach the essential and universal fatherhood of God. The lost son does not stand simply for a lost Israelite, a fallen member of the kingdom of God,<sup>1</sup> but he represents the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile. The father in speaking of him says that he

<sup>1</sup> See Weiss, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, sechste Ausgabe, p. 74.

was "dead," and therefore he stands for all who are dead, for certainly a Jew who is spiritually dead is in no better state than a Gentile who is spiritually dead (Rom. ii. 28-29). And, furthermore, in the preceding parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, which are manifestly parallel to that of the Lost Son, the conclusion of Jesus is perfectly general. There is joy in heaven over one *sinner* that repenteth, it matters not whether circumcised or uncircumcised.

Surely it would be a complete misrepresentation of the spirit of Jesus to say that He regarded the fatherhood of God as being in any degree conditioned on nationality. For all His teaching, in contrast with that of the Jews of His time, is wholly inward and spiritual, and therefore is of necessity universal in its sweep. It is impossible to suppose that Jesus could pronounce penitence and meekness and mercifulness and heart-purity blessed, and yet have meant all the while that they were blessed when found among the Jews, but not when found among the Gentiles. If, however, He regarded these things as valuable in themselves, irrespective of outward circumstances, then He thought of the bestowal of the kingdom of heaven, the love and grace of God, as independent of outward circumstances. In other words, the fatherhood of God was not a term to designate His peculiar friendliness to the Jewish people.

There is yet another important fact which bears upon Jesus' conception of the fatherhood of God, and that is the attitude of Jesus Himself toward men. We find in the Synoptists as clearly as in John the claim of Jesus to a unique knowledge of the Father, and consequently the claim that He makes a unique revelation of the Father to men (Mt. xi. 25-27; Lk. ix. 22). But this revelation was lived as well as spoken. Therefore in the bearing of Jesus toward men, we see His conception of the fatherhood of God expressed in unmistakable terms. Now, it is true that Jesus considered Himself sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and that He confined His labors chiefly to them, but it is equally true that this was solely a matter of *order*. He told the Canaanitish woman that the children should be fed *first* (Mk. vii. 27). This plainly suggested that the Gospel was for all, but that for some reason it was to be offered first to the Jews. In like manner, early in the Galilean ministry, Jesus sent the twelve disciples to the Jews, and forbade their entering any city of the Samaritans or any way of the Gentiles (Mt. x. 5); but at a later day He sent both the twelve and the entire company of His followers to work among all nations (Acts i. 8; Mt. xxviii. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 6). The Jews as the first-born son, to whom were intrusted the oracles of God (Rom. iii. 2), and from whom came the Messiah and salvation (Rom. ix. 5;

Jn. iv. 22), were naturally the first to receive the offer of this salvation and the kingdom of this Messiah; but then their superior privilege ceased.

A further proof that it was simply a matter of order, when Jesus limited His personal ministry to the Jews, is seen in the fact that when in the providence of God He met Gentiles, and they besought His help, He never turned them away without a blessing. Thus He healed a Samaritan leper (Lk. xvii. 18), He healed the servant of a Gentile centurion (Mt. viii. 13), and the daughter of a Canaanitish woman (Mk. vii. 26). There is no indication that they were less dear to Him than were the Jews.

Therefore, in the fact that Jesus welcomed Jewish publicans and sinners, we must see His attitude toward all publicans and all sinners; and in this attitude of His we see, as in a clear light, His conception of the fatherhood of God. If His own love flowed out to every lost soul, and if He at the same time was conscious of perfect union with God, then He must have believed that God also loves every lost soul, or, in other words, that His fatherhood is essential and universal.

It happens that in most of the passages in which Jesus says "your Father," our evangelists represent Him as addressing His disciples; but we must not make hasty inferences from this fact, divorcing it from the manifest teaching of the life of Jesus. There is

one discourse in Matthew which was addressed to the *multitudes* as well as to the disciples, and in this Jesus is represented as saying to all who heard Him, "Call no man your father on earth, for one is your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. xxiii. 1, 9). If we had more of the addresses of Jesus to the multitudes, we might have more instances of this same usage. But the argument from the life of Jesus is alone quite decisive that, when speaking to publicans and sinners no less than when speaking to His own disciples, He presented God as their father.

Now as this fatherhood of God is ethical, a fatherhood of love, so Jesus teaches that sonship to God is ethical in like manner. A man cannot say, God is *my* Father, unless he is inwardly turned toward God. Therefore Jesus teaches that, while God *is* a father, men *become* sons (Mt. v. 45, Greek text).<sup>1</sup> As they learn to love their enemies and to pray for those who persecute them, so they become sons of their Father who is in heaven (Mt. v. 44). To be sons of God they must share His spirit; and His spirit is manifest in this, that He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. In other words, His spirit is one of uncalculating love; and in this love consists

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 146; Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 84.

His perfection (Mt. v. 48). Men become His sons as they come into the sphere of this love. Hence, that which constitutes them sons is inward, not outward; spiritual rather than physical. But the fatherhood of God does not begin when this sonship begins. His fatherhood has neither beginning nor end. He does not *become* a father but *is* one, for the term "fatherhood" is only a human means of describing what God is. An apostle of Jesus put the same thought in an abstract form when he said, "God is love" (1 Jn. iv. 8). The brotherhood of Jesus illustrates the fatherhood of God in the particular under consideration. Jesus did not *become* the friend of sinners, but *was* such a friend by the very necessity of His own holy and loving will. The consciousness that God was His father bound Him to His fellowmen in the bonds of a brotherly love which in its strength and intensity corresponded to His sense of His Father's care. The attitude of His heart toward publicans and sinners, His willingness to give His life for others, was not a *consequence* of His Messianic call, but rather conditioned that call. The office did not create the love, but the love prepared the way for the office. Thus in the thought of Jesus, according to the Synoptists, the fatherhood of God is the eternal heart of God, a term whose import is essential and universal.

This revelation of the fatherhood of God is the new

revelation which Jesus made. He gave no other; there could be no higher. Whatever Jesus says of God apart from His fatherhood, while in harmony with that, is mainly incidental.<sup>1</sup> It is such teaching as may be found also in the prophets. This is true, for example, of the holiness and righteousness of God. Jesus does not speak of these attributes in particular, but His entire life-work and his entire revelation imply the loftiest conception of them which is conceivable. Thus the very mission of Jesus is to call sinners to repentance, that they may become members of the kingdom of heaven and have fellowship with God (Mk. ii. 17); and the first petition that he taught His disciples was a petition for the hallowing of God's name (Mt. vi. 9). God is indeed the infinite Father, ready to pardon the greatest sinner; but He is the Holy Father, and unless sinners are pardoned and purified, they can never see His face (Mt. v. 8). Again, Jesus has no explicit teaching on the power and knowledge of God, but His thought, as made plain by incidental references, is in line with that of the great prophets. God marks the fall of a sparrow (Mt. x. 29), numbers the hairs of our heads (Mt. x. 30), and is acquainted with all our needs (Mt. vi. 8, 32). He feeds the birds, He clothes the lilies, He sends sun-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Adeney, "The Transcendental in Christ's Consciousness," *American Journal of Theology*, January, 1899, p. 103.



shine and rain, He would have us ask Him for our daily bread, He has prepared a kingdom for His own, all right and good things are possible to Him, and He is lord of heaven and earth (Mt. vi. 26, 30; v. 45; vi. 11; xxv. 34; Mk. xiv. 36; Mt. xi. 25). The new element in this teaching is that the infinite power and knowledge of God serve the ends of His fatherly love; and hence Jesus rebuked His disciples because they did not trust God in the storm on the lake (Mk. v. 40). Since the Almighty is their Father they ought not to fear the wind and the waves, but should be calm. Here, then, as elsewhere when speaking of God, it is His fatherly love which dominates the thought of Jesus. Nothing is allowed to attract attention from it, or to dim its brightness. And this central thought is expressed in the terms and with the accent of absolute certainty. Jesus *knew* the Father (Mt. xi. 27).

The Gospel of John is in a peculiar sense the Gospel of the fatherhood of God. For, in the first place, the term *father* is used here with much greater frequency than in the Synoptic Gospels (about ninety times in all); and, secondly, God is spoken of in an absolute sense as "the Father," a usage seldom found in the earlier Gospels (Mt. xi. 27; Mk. xiii. 32; Mt. xxviii. 19). The extent of this usage in John is not quite plain; for while in some passages the absolute sense is unmistakable, in others

9. The fatherhood of God in the fourth Gospel.

it may be questioned. In the conversation with the Samaritan woman Jesus plainly uses the term *father* in the sense of the universal Father. "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers." "Believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father" (Jn. iv. 21, 23). And there are not a few other passages in this Gospel where God seems to be called "the Father" in an absolute sense. In about one-quarter of the passages where God is called "Father," He is so called in reference to Jesus, and the language used is "*my* Father" (e.g. ii. 16; v. 17; vi. 32). In all the remaining instances He is called "the Father," never but once "your Father," which is common in the Synoptists. Now in some of these cases it is possible to hold that the word *father* is used of God in view of His relation to His Son, but in some cases this is not possible. So, for example, in vi. 27, where we read, "Eternal life which the Son of man shall give you, for this one the Father sealed, even God." Here the two terms "God" and "Father" seem to be terms of equally wide import. Likewise in vi. 46: "Not that any one hath seen the Father excepting Him who is from God: this one hath seen the Father." Here "the Father" is a synonym of "God." Equally decisive is the passage xx. 17: "I am not yet ascended to the

Father. But go to my brethren and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father and my God and your God." It is quite clear that the word "Father" in the first clause is unlimited, for, in the later clauses, He who is here called "the Father," is called by Jesus "my Father" and "your Father." Since now there are some passages where the absolute sense of *father* is required, and since in the other passages where the words "the Father" are used there is nothing which requires us to limit the fatherhood, it must be held probable that the author *always* employed the word *father* in an unlimited sense when he did not associate a personal pronoun with it. If this be the case, it is apparent that the universal fatherhood of God is made very prominent in John. This emphasis may be due largely to the author of the fourth Gospel and not to Jesus Himself; but even in that case it surely bears witness to the fact that Jesus taught the universal fatherhood of God, and taught it in a way which deeply impressed the hearts of men. Otherwise the appearance of this doctrine in an accepted and authoritative writing of the close of the first century would be unintelligible.

That God is father in this absolute sense is a fact which is found elsewhere in John than in the use of the father-name. It is found, for example, in the statement that God loved the world up to the point of highest

sacrifice for it, and in the promise that He will abide with any one who keeps Christ's words (iii. 16; xiv. 23). It underlies the great thought that Jesus will draw all men unto Himself by revealing unto them the heart of the Father, which He will do by the sacrifice of Himself (viii. 28; xii. 23, 28, 32). It is found also, as in the earlier Gospels, in the attitude of Jesus toward men. He offered life to the Samaritan woman, and felt that in helping her He was accomplishing the Father's will (iv. 10, 34); and the visit of the Greeks brought before His soul the vision of a great harvest for the kingdom of God (xii. 20-24). This attitude of Jesus toward a woman whom the Jews regarded as an outcast, and this attitude toward the Gentiles, shows plainly that He thought of the fatherhood of God as universal.

But in the fourth Gospel, as in the Synoptists, an ethical fatherhood calls for an ethical sonship. God is the universal Father, loving the whole world and each individual in it; yet Jesus says to the Jews who were rejecting Him, "If God *were* your Father, ye would love me" (viii. 42). That is to say, these men are not sons of God, though they are the objects of His love; and until they become sons of God, His fatherhood is not a reality to them. It is a reality in itself: God yearns for these men who are rejecting Jesus, and He offers them life; but He cannot express the deep meaning of His fatherhood to them except as they welcome its expression.

Hence it is only the disciples of Jesus of whom it can be said that God loves them as He loves Jesus (xvii. 23).

The fatherhood of God, in John as in the older Gospels, is a fatherhood in holiness and righteousness (xvii. 11, 25), and a fatherhood which unceasingly expresses itself in works of love and mercy (v. 17).

Such, in brief statement, was the new revelation of God which Jesus made. It was conveyed by words, and it was conveyed by a life which overflowed and will forever overflow the largest and deepest words of human speech. <sup>10. Conclusion.</sup> It rose above the teaching of scribe and Pharisee as far as the perfect character of Jesus towered above theirs; and it stood related to the purest and loftiest visions of the most spiritual prophets as the full day stands related to the earliest shimmers of the dawn. It reveals what God is in Himself, and therefore what He is toward every soul which He has made. It reveals Him as a heavenly Father, and pours into that word *father* a tenderness of love, a depth of sympathy, and a spirit of self-sacrifice for man's redemption, which is as inexpressible as the power and sweetness of Jesus' own life. It brings God forever near, and makes His infinite fatherliness toward every human being as real as the cross, or the flesh and blood of Jesus. In this revelation of the fatherhood of God, taken in its length and breadth and depth and height, lies the great message of Jesus to the world — the centre and the explanation of all His teaching.

## CHAPTER II

### THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

WE have only a meagre outline of the earliest teaching of Jesus. The evangelists pass over it with few words, and hasten forward to the events and teachings that belonged in the days when the Lord had become famous, dwelling at greatest length on the momentous close of His earthly life.

The beginning of the public career of Jesus was relatively obscure and unimportant. He spent some eight months in Judea, according to John (Jn. ii. 13; iv. 35), of which the first three Gospels have no clear trace. At the beginning of this period He spent a few days in Jerusalem, and in consequence of His words and deeds He was recognized by a small number of the more spiritually minded people as a teacher from God (Jn. iii. 2), while the religious leaders held Him to be an unlicensed and dangerous reformer. Then He retired from Jerusalem to the country of Judea, and spent two-thirds of a year (about one-third of His entire ministry) before His enemies in Jerusalem

heard very much about His words or doings. This period, which only John mentions, seems to be regarded even by him as of comparatively little importance, for he touches it very briefly. According to his sketch of the career of Jesus during these months, He must have appeared to the Jews as another John the Baptist (Jn. iii. 22-iv. 3). For, like John, He also was engaged in the work of baptizing, and each was surrounded by a band of disciples. Crowds of people were thronging both teachers, and if we may trust the report of the jealous disciples of John, the crowds who came to Jesus were greater than those who came to the Baptist. But even in this activity, Jesus retired, as it were, behind His disciples, inasmuch as He did not administer baptism, but committed that function entirely to them. After this obscure period in Judea, which seems to have had little direct Messianic significance, came the beginning of the more effective Galilean ministry. But of the earliest part of this Galilean work, also, our knowledge is slight. The records tell us that Jesus began His preaching, not with any abstract doctrine, but with the announcement of a fact, namely, the fulfilment of ancient prophecies which, however they had been misunderstood by His hearers, furnished the great hope of their lives (Mk. i. 15; Mt. iv. 17). So far Jesus seems to have followed in the steps of the Baptist; for the heart of John's mes-

sage, that which had thrilled all the land of Judea and the country around the Jordan (Mk. i. 15; Mt. iii. 5), and which was the motive that led men to repentance, was just this announcement that the kingdom of God was at hand. This was also the glad tidings in which Jesus asked men to believe: this was the burden of His first preaching. While, however, this initial announcement of Jesus was the same as that of His forerunner, it is quite certain, as will appear later, that He put into it a far deeper and more spiritual content.

In this earliest teaching of Jesus in Galilee there is no trace of personal disclosure. It soon begins to be *implied* more or less directly (*e.g.* Mk. ii. 10, 20), but at first it does not appear at all. The watchword of the popular preaching of Jesus, even from the beginning, was "the kingdom of heaven";<sup>1</sup> and all His teaching, the later

2. The kingdom of heaven a many-sided term.

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that the term ordinarily used by Jesus was "kingdom of *heaven*" rather than "kingdom of God"; for (1) the *Logia* of Matthew, that is the bulk of the words of Jesus which are incorporated in this Gospel, are regarded as directly apostolic, which, of course, cannot be said of the narratives of Mark and Luke. (2) The "kingdom of heaven" is regarded as original because it is more *Jewish* than the term "kingdom of God," and the presumption is that Jesus used a current term. The form of expression is Jewish, for the Greek word for *heaven*, in this phrase, is a plural in accordance with the Hebrew, but contrary to the Greek, usage. Then the expression "kingdom of heaven" has a Jewish coloring, as compared with "kingdom of God," in that it accords better with the popular belief that the kingdom was to come *from above*.



and more private as well as the earlier and more popular, aimed at the establishment and completion of this kingdom. However, it is not easy to define the thought of these words in a precise manner, just as it is not easy to state, comprehensively and exactly, what Jesus meant when He said that He had come "to fulfil" the Law and the prophets (Mt. v. 17). That fulfilment has many sides and involves many great truths; so is it also with the kingdom of heaven. It needs only a hasty survey of the words of Jesus to show that He did not use this term as one uses a definite mathematical expression. It is rather a many-sided, rich, and poetical symbol, and Jesus at one time gives prominence to one aspect of it, at another time to another aspect. Thus He says that the kingdom of heaven is something to be entered at once by those to whom He is speaking (Mt. vii. 13-14), and again, it is something which is entered by the righteous after the Son of man shall have come in His glory (Mt. xxv. 31, 34). At one time Jesus says to the Pharisees, "The kingdom of

(3) The originality of the term "kingdom of heaven" is favored by the consideration that the second and third evangelists, since they wrote for Gentile readers, may more readily be thought to have modified a Jewish expression, than that the author of the *Logia*, who wrote for Jews, should have modified the term used by Jesus. See against this view Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 298-300; in agreement with it, Arthur Titius, *Die neutestamentliche Lehre von der Seligkeit*, p. 27; Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, pp. 209-210.

heaven is among you ;” and again, He teaches that the kingdom of heaven is the place where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets rest and are blessed (Lk. xvii. 21 ; xiii. 28). In one passage the kingdom is something that can be taken away from the Jews and be given to the Gentiles (Mt. xxi. 43), and again it is that for whose coming Jesus instructs His disciples to pray (Mt. vi. 10). At one time Jesus says to those who are around Him that unless their righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they shall not enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. v. 20); and at another time He likens the kingdom of heaven to a field of mingled wheat and tares, and to a drag-net filled with fish both bad and good (Mt. xiii. 24-30, 47-50). It is plain that the foremost idea is not the same in all these passages, but changes widely as we pass from one to another. We have to ask, therefore, whether the entire content changes, or whether there is a constant element in it. I think it will appear from an examination of all the passages that there is a constant element in the expression, and that this constant element is the thought of *the divine rule in the heart of man*.

The passages in which the term “kingdom of heaven,” or “kingdom of God,” occurs, plainly fall into several main groups. In the first group, which is numerous, the *rule of God* seems to be the chief

thought. This appears to be the sense of the words when Jesus announced in Galilee that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Mk. i. 15; Mt. iv. 17). The rule of God was realized in His own soul and His own life, and He knew that He was divinely anointed to realize it in the souls and lives of others. And this rule of God which was at hand was indeed the fulfilment of the Old Testament conception of the kingdom of heaven taken at its highest levels.<sup>1</sup> Jesus declared that He had come to fulfil the Law and the prophets (Mt. v. 17), to realize in a perfect manner that ideal of life which they had apprehended but imperfectly. It was the same truth in another form when He said that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. His kingdom is the fulfilment of Law and prophets. The great ideal of the Old Testament was a theocracy, a divine rule, not inward alone, nor outward alone, but both inward and outward, a complete rule of God in human life.<sup>2</sup>

To this first group belong, further, such sayings as the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come" (Mt. vi. 10), and the exhortation to seek first God's kingdom and righteousness (Mt. vi. 33). When Jesus says to those who are attracted by the spiritual suggestions of His parables, "To you is given the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, vierte Auflage, pp. 124-125.

mystery of the kingdom of God," it is plain that the mystery is just what they were beginning to experience in their souls, and "the kingdom of heaven" is the rule of God which was beginning to be realized as Jesus came to have influence over these men (Mk. iv. 11). Again, the kingdom which comes not "with observation," of which Jesus spoke to the unbelieving Pharisees, is a kingdom that consists in God's spiritual dominion over the hearts of men (Lk. xvii. 20). That was already among them, or in their midst, yet they saw not its presence in anything material. It was among them as a spiritual force. Again, when Jesus speaks of the kingdom of heaven as something difficult to enter (Mt. xix. 23), as something which the publicans and harlots enter before the self-righteous Pharisees (Mt. xxi. 31), and as that from which the scribe was not far distant who asked Jesus concerning the great commandment (Mk. xii. 34), the kingdom of heaven is the *rule* of heaven, the reign of God. It is an invisible spiritual good, or a comprehensive designation of all spiritual goods.<sup>1</sup> The kingdom of heaven<sup>2</sup> in this sense of the term was a present reality to Jesus, and not something to be realized in a future more or less remote.<sup>3</sup> Jesus knew

<sup>1</sup> See Baldensperger, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu* etc., p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> Other passages which may probably be reckoned with this class are Mk. iv. 26-29; 30-32; Mt. xiii. 44-46; xx. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See J. Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, pp. 18-25.

that the divine rule was perfect in Him, the ideal of Law and prophets made real. Its realization was future for others, but present for Him, and so an accomplished fact for the race to which He belonged.

In a second group of passages the kingdom of heaven denotes, primarily, *the company of those who are under the divine rule*. The prominent

thought is no longer the *rule* but the *ruled*.

4. The kingdom as the company of those who are under the divine rule.

Such is its meaning in the parable of the Tares and in that of the Drag-net (Mt. xiii.

24-30, 47-50). The tares are the sons of the evil one, and at the end of the age they are to be gathered *out* of the kingdom of the Messiah. The sons of the evil one are, therefore, *in* the kingdom up to that time, as the tares are left mixed with the wheat in the field till the time of harvest. To be gathered out of the kingdom means to be separated from the sons of the kingdom. The interest of the parable centres in the teaching that these two classes—the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one—must remain intermingled until the end of the age. Therefore the kingdom out of which the “stumbling-blocks” are to be gathered is the company of those who inwardly belong to the Messiah. It is plain that “kingdom,” in this connection, cannot mean the dominion of God, for the sons of the evil one are said to be *in* the kingdom.

In like manner, when the kingdom of heaven is likened to a drag-net, which gathers the bad fish as well as the good, the foremost thought of the word "kingdom" is the persons who constitute it. To this class must be reckoned also the two passages in which Jesus speaks of being small or great in the kingdom of heaven. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. v. 19). "Among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist; yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Mt. xi. 11). It is difficult to regard the prominent thought of the word "kingdom" in these passages as that of dominion or rule. We cannot say, he that is least in the *rule* of heaven, or great in the *rule* of heaven, for rule is not place or society. And, moreover, the terms "least," "great," and "little" are relative, and require us to find their complement in the following expression, "kingdom of heaven." Their use is natural if the leading thought in the words "kingdom of heaven" was the company of those who are under heaven's rule. "Least" of this number, "great" or "little" in this company, are expressions whose meaning is plain. The same might

be claimed if "kingdom of heaven" were taken here in the sense of a *place*, but there is no evidence that it was ever used by Jesus to denote a place *on earth*.

In conclusion, it may be noticed that while the foremost thought in this second group of passages is a certain company of *persons*, these persons cannot be defined without the aid of the thought of the rule of God. They are the persons whom God rules; and not only so, they are the persons whom He rules through Jesus the Messiah. The kingdom of heaven of which Jesus speaks is a kingdom which begins with Him, and which is extended as loyalty to Him extends.

There is a third group of passages where the term "kingdom of heaven" has a content notably different from that of either of the classes which have been considered. This new thought is that of *the blessings and privileges which belong to those who are under the divine rule*. Thus those who are poor in spirit and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are promised the kingdom of heaven (Mt. v. 3, 10). It is plain that "kingdom," in this instance, does not mean, primarily, *rule*, for they who are poor in spirit are manifestly, by that very fact, already under the rule of God; and that which they have cannot be that which is promised to them. Neither can it denote the company of those who are under

5. The kingdom in the sense of the blessings of the divine rule.

the divine rule, as in the second group of passages, for they who are poor in spirit and they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness surely belong to the company who are ruled by God. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven which is promised to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake and to the poor in spirit may best be understood in the sense of the rewards which belong to that kingdom, the blessings and privileges which, either in the present age or in that which is to come, accompany the rule of God.

Another passage to be considered here is Mt. xxi. 43. At the conclusion of the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard, Jesus said to the Jews, "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." But clearly Jesus did not mean by "kingdom of God" in this passage the *rule* of God, for the Jews whom He was addressing were, as a matter of fact, not under that rule. They were the husbandmen who, in heart, had already killed the householder's son; they were hostile to the rule of God. It could not be taken from them, for they did not have it. It is manifest also that the word "kingdom" cannot here denote the company of those who are under the divine rule; for it is something which can be taken from the Jews and be given to others. What it does mean will appear when we consider the



historical fulfilment of Christ's word. That which was actually taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles was the privilege which they had enjoyed of being God's people in a somewhat exclusive sense. They had possessed the oracles of God (Rom. iii. 2), the light of His revelation, and the comfort of the Messianic hope. But when the grace of God was rejected by the Jews, it was fully manifested to the Gentiles. The vineyard of special privilege in which the Jews had been placed was opened to all peoples (comp. Acts i. 8; xiii. 46, etc.). Thus, in this third group of passages, while the divine rule is still involved, the stress falls on the blessings and privileges which accompany that rule.

There is a fourth group of passages in which the term "kingdom of heaven" has a sense different from the three already noted. This class is numerous, and the new meaning of the term is clear. It is *the place to be occupied in the future age by those who are under the divine rule*. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "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 who is in heaven" (Mt. vii. 21). It is plain from the following verses that Jesus is thinking of the end of the present age, and therefore the "kingdom of heaven" is here a synonym of heaven as the abode of the blessed

6. The kingdom as the future abode of those who are under the divine rule.

Again, the term has the same sense when Jesus says that many shall come from the east and the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (Mt. viii. 11; Lk. xiii. 29).<sup>1</sup> In the interpretation of the parable of the Tares, it is said that the righteous, *after* the judgment of the wicked, shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Mt. xiii. 43). Parallel to this is the passage in Mark where Jesus says, "It is better to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into Gehenna" (Mk. ix. 47). Since Gehenna stands here in contrast to the kingdom of God, it is certain that this expression denotes the place to which the righteous go at death.

Another passage belonging to this group is Lk. xxii. 29-30. "I appoint unto you a kingdom even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This language, "at my table in my kingdom," is local, and the context shows that Jesus is looking forward to the heavenly consummation of His kingdom. The term is employed in the same sense in the account of the Last Supper, when Jesus says to His disciples, "Verily I say unto you, I will in no wise drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine

<sup>1</sup> Lk. xvi. 23 does not affirm that Abraham is in Hades. That is where the rich man is, but Abraham is "afar off."

until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mk. xiv. 25), "or in the kingdom of my Father" (Mt. xxvi. 29). Plainly this kingdom lay out beyond His death and theirs, and has primarily a local sense.<sup>1</sup>

Such is the fourth group of passages in which the "kingdom of heaven" is found. The prominent thought is the future abode of the redeemed. But this group<sup>2</sup> of passages is bound to the first, as are the second and third, by the idea of God's rule. The kingdom of heaven as a place or abode is the place where that rule is perfected, where there are none who oppose it, and where all its promised rewards are forever realized. The kingdom of heaven in this sense alone is eschatological; it belongs entirely to the future. The kingdom of heaven in the three preceding groups belongs to the present as well as to the future. As the first and fourth of these groups are the most numerous, we infer that Jesus employed the words "kingdom of heaven" most frequently to denote either the rule of God, or the place to be occupied in the future by those who are under that rule.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 545-546. The view that Jesus here refers to a partaking of the Christian Eucharist on earth seems impossible, for He would thus partake of the symbols of His own flesh and blood. See Plummer's *Commentary on Luke*.

<sup>2</sup> Mt. xxv. 1 might be added. I have not attempted to classify every passage which speaks of the kingdom of heaven, but to cite a sufficient number of illustrations to justify the classification.

Having shown that Jesus did not attach a constant meaning to the term "kingdom of heaven," it is now necessary to consider somewhat more closely what He meant by *the rule of God*. Did the expression "kingdom of heaven," in this sense of it, bring before His mind anything material and visible? Did He associate with it any special social and civil relations? Was the conception wholly spiritual, or was it partly spiritual and partly material? Did His thought begin and end with an inward realization of the rule of God, or did it begin with this and go on to an external realization?

It admits of no debate that Jesus' conception of the rule of God was *preëminently* ethical and spiritual.<sup>1</sup> He told the Pharisees that the kingdom was not to come with observation, so that men could see it and say, "Lo, here!" or, "There!" (Lk. xvii. 20, 21.) While they had been speculating in regard to the time of its coming, it had come and was among them.<sup>2</sup> And Jesus did not say that it had simply *begun* to come: He said it was there. Now the kingdom of God was present at that moment only in the sense of the rule of God in the heart

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 293-296; Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. on the clause "among you," Meyer's *Handbuch über die Evangelien des Markus und Lukas*, sechste Auflage, pp. 513-514; Haupt, *Die eschatologischen Aussagen Jesu*, pp. 12-13.

of man. That rule was perfect in Jesus' own case, and it was beginning to be realized in the hearts of His disciples.

It appears further that His conception was preëminently ethical and spiritual from the fact that in His spontaneous teaching He never discussed the relation of His Gospel to the State, nor spoke of the consequences which the acceptance of His Gospel would bring to the outward relations of man as a member of society. The only words of His which bear upon this matter were called out by the questions of His enemies, and are wholly incidental in His teaching. The beatitudes of Jesus are not for good citizenship and philanthropy, but they are for qualities of heart which underlie all good citizenship, and on which a permanent and wise philanthropy must ever depend. His Sermon on the Mount seldom touches the outward life directly, and then it does so simply for the sake of the inner life.

But while it is unquestionable that Jesus' conception of the rule of God is preëminently ethical and spiritual, the question may still arise whether it is *exclusively* so. In the discussion of this question we must recognize two great facts. First, the *realization* of the divine rule, whether that rule be limited to the spiritual or not, proceeds exclusively from within. It is in no degree conditioned on the outward and the physical. Reliance upon external means for

8. The divine rule realized exclusively from within.

the establishment of the kingdom of God was recognized by Jesus in the wilderness as a temptation of Satan, and was rejected once for all. Repentance and faith in the Gospel were the primary demands which He made upon all men.

Jesus did not seek to realize the divine rule by means of miracles. His works of power did not precede His call to repentance, but followed it. And furthermore, miracles were not a constant part of His ministry, as though He had a fixed policy to reach the heart through the body.<sup>1</sup> He seems to have wrought comparatively few miracles in the crowded city of Jerusalem, though the need of physical relief was probably greatest there, as is ever true of large cities. Miracles of healing diminished in number as His ministry advanced, and there were very few in the last six months. Again, Jesus never *sought out* the sick to heal them, even in the period of His greatest activity in their behalf. He went hither and thither to preach the kingdom, but it is never said that He went about in order to heal.

It is plain, therefore, that the direct effort of Jesus to improve the physical condition of men was wholly incidental in His ministry. It was not carried on systematically, as though Jesus held it to be a wise method of accomplishing spiritual results. And His course is

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Jn. v. 5, which tells how Jesus once entered a water cure and healed one sick person only, leaving the multitude in their infirmity.

justified by the effect of His miraculous cures. Of the multitudes whom Jesus healed, according to the Synop-  
tists, there is no direct and conclusive evidence that  
a single person accepted Him as the Messiah in conse-  
quence of the physical blessing which had been re-  
ceived.<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps natural to think that Mary Mag-  
dalene and the other women who followed Jesus (Lk.  
viii. 2-3; xxiv. 10) did so because He had healed them,  
and Mary Magdalene at least seems to have become a  
true disciple. Bartimæus, when healed, followed Jesus  
in the way, doubtless full of gratitude toward Him; but  
we do not know whether he ever accepted Jesus as his  
Saviour. It can neither be affirmed nor denied that he  
or any other person accepted Jesus as the Messiah be-  
cause of a physical blessing received from Him. But  
even if there were individuals who were drawn to Jesus  
as the Messiah by His physical cures, such instances  
must have been rare. Jesus is represented as healing  
multitudes,<sup>2</sup> and yet He had but a handful of disciples.  
The case of one man who, when healed, went out and  
disobeyed the word of Jesus, thus hindering His work  
(Mk. i. 45), shows that a miraculous cure, as little as  
any physical blessing, necessarily brings spiritual re-  
sults.<sup>3</sup> The Samaritan leper, one of the ten who had

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Jn. ix; xi. 45.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Student's Life of Jesus*, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Jn. ii. 23-24; xi. 46-48.

been healed, returned to Jesus and glorified God; but this statement of course does not imply that he accepted Jesus as Messiah and Saviour (Lk. xvii. 16).

Jesus sometimes told those whom He had healed that their faith had *saved* them (*e.g.* Mt. ix. 22), but this salvation was manifestly physical. The faith in Him which was exercised by persons who desired healing was simply faith that He was able to heal; and the healing which they received was according to their faith (Mt. ix. 28). It was physical deliverance that they wanted, and only this that they were fitted to receive.

Further, it is to be borne in mind that the ministry of Jesus to the physical man was wholly *miraculous*. There was not in His practice or His teaching any effort or plan to work through the physical, by *ordinary human means*, for the accomplishment of spiritual results. Now if, in the thought of Jesus, the realization of the divine rule could proceed from without inward, we should have expected to find, at least in His teaching for His disciples, some word justifying this order. But there is no suggestion of this sort. Moreover, while He Himself ministered miraculously to the physical man, He evidently did not intend that His disciples should continue this sort of ministry. During His own public activity in Galilee He commissioned them to work miracles, but in His final commission



there is no reference to miraculous works.<sup>1</sup> There were comparatively few such works in the apostolic age; and in the subsequent centuries the Spirit has not led the Church to undertake miracles or to desire them. This fact confirms the incidental character of the element of miraculous healing in the life of Jesus. His miraculous ministry to the physical man stood in close relation to His Messianic claim,<sup>2</sup> and was not an example to be permanently imitated in His Church, after His Messiahship should have been forever established by His resurrection from the dead.

Thus, as we have seen, Jesus thought of the rule of God as a rule to be realized exclusively from within. If He thought of transformations of society and government as belonging to the divine rule on earth, or if He ever thought of the exaltation of Israel in a political sense as a part of the realization of the kingdom of heaven for His people, it is certain that He thought of these things as the natural consequences of an inward realization of God's rule. He began His work for the Jewish people with a call to repentance and faith, and closed it with warnings of the judgment which would overtake them because they had not repented. He sent forth His followers to make

<sup>1</sup> The close of Mark's Gospel, xvi. 9-20, is rejected by most critics as not from the hand of the evangelist.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 204-206.

disciples of all nations, presumably by such means as He had used in winning them to discipleship, that is, the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom and the revelation of the love of God. Jesus did not institute any social or political reform; and it is not recorded of His apostles that they departed in this respect from the example of their Master.

In regard to the question whether Jesus' conception of the rule of God was exclusively spiritual, the second  
 9. Jesus had no thought of a national restoration. fact to be noticed is this, that, as far as our records inform us, He never thought of a national restoration. There is no proof that the divine rule meant to Him, at one time, Jewish independence and the propagation of the Gospel by a redeemed Jewish kingdom, and that later, after He had failed to impress the people as a whole, the divine rule became in His thought wholly spiritual.

We might believe, if we had in view only the Synoptic Gospels, that Jesus at the beginning of the Galilean ministry *hoped*<sup>1</sup> to gain the great mass of the people; but even if He had cherished such a hope — which cannot be proven — this would not imply that He then associated national independence with the divine rule. If He hoped to gain the people as a whole, He surely hoped to gain them by spiritual motives. He never appealed to them by the motive

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 319-320.

of a national future in which they should have power and glory. On the contrary, He studiously avoided every complication with the popular Messianic hopes.

We cannot argue from Matthew's use of the word *church*, that it implies a change in the thought of Jesus regarding the scope of His work, for the genuineness of this word is by no means clear.<sup>1</sup> If Jesus, in the critical hour at Cæsarea Philippi, had introduced a new term in the place of "the kingdom of heaven," we should expect to find it in all the records, and we should expect that, from the days of Cæsarea Philippi forward, it would have been used frequently, if not exclusively. But this is not the case. The new word is not found save in Matthew, and even he uses it but twice: he continues the use of the old term "kingdom of heaven." Moreover, there is no apparent reason why the word *church* should be used in Mt. xvi. 18, for it plainly has no other significance than the term "kingdom of heaven," when we take this in the sense of the company of those who are under the divine rule. And finally, against the originality of the word *church* is the fact that in Mt. xviii. 17 it means a local body of disciples; but, in the time of Jesus and long after that, the disciples were not separated from the synagogue. If, then, this word is original, it is a prediction of what was to be some years

<sup>1</sup> See Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 612; Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 210.

hence, and indeed is, a prediction of an ecclesiastical sort. This, however, is not probable, for Jesus gave His disciples no ecclesiastical organization or directions whatsoever. We must therefore hold that the word *church* is to be ascribed to the author of the Gospel. It is altogether natural that he should carry back into the life of Jesus this name which was subsequently applied to His disciples, and especially so if he thought it had essentially the same meaning as the term "kingdom of heaven."

In conclusion on this point, the general Synoptic picture of the Messianic activity of Jesus is unfavorable to the view that He began with a conception of the divine rule which was national in character, and afterward advanced to a purely spiritual conception. For, according to the Synoptists, Jesus avoided everything which could suggest political claims, or which could be construed as favoring a national restoration. The only act which was in line with an outward conception of the divine rule was the triumphal entry into Jerusalem; but this fell at the close of the public life of Jesus, when He clearly saw that the Jewish people was hastening to its judgment, and that the Gospel was to be carried to the Gentiles.

There is yet one fact which should not be overlooked when considering the question whether Jesus ever anticipated a national restoration. It is this, that through-

out His entire ministry He never dropped a word of contempt, or hatred, or even disrespect, for the foreign power which was oppressing the Jews. He had doubtless toiled with His own hands to earn money with which to pay the Roman taxes. He could remember with what rigor the Roman soldiers had suppressed the Galilean uprising under Judas, which had taken place when He was a boy of nine years. He must have known also of the corruption of the social and political life of Rome. And yet in His preaching Jesus betrays no sympathy with the political ambitions of the Zealots, or with the less radical aims of the Pharisees. There is never a suggestion of opposition to the Roman government. On the contrary, Jesus recognized Cæsar's right to receive tribute, and denied that the payment of this conflicted with Jehovah's claims (Mk. xii. 13-17). Jesus did not share the popular enmity against the tax-gatherers — Jews in the employment of Rome; but He had fellowship with them, and seems to have regarded their calling as perfectly legitimate.

Now this attitude toward Rome, this absence of the slightest trace of hostility toward it, is scarcely intelligible if Jesus at any time thought of the rule of God as necessarily involving a national Jewish restoration. It accords best with the view that Jesus regarded the divine rule in the heart as incomparably more important than any outward state or condition, so that the latter does

not even come up for consideration. Jesus treats the political question as non-existent. But it would certainly be wrong to infer from this that He thought of the political question as being in itself unimportant. Such an inference is impossible in view of the genuinely human and practical sympathy and aim of Jesus. He who taught that God takes thought for what a man eats and wears could not have believed that He is indifferent to any of the organized relations of men; and therefore we cannot conceive that Jesus was indifferent toward them. He doubtless saw more clearly than any one else the iniquity of the existing social and political conditions, and felt deeply the wrong and the shame of it all; but nevertheless, in the whole course of His ministry, He did not voluntarily touch these social and political questions *in a direct manner*. He always aimed beneath them, at the fundamental spiritual condition. First, the reign of God in the heart of man; then, social and political health. As far as the records go, He did not admit the possibility of any other order.

We conclude, then, that Jesus did not at any time associate a national restoration with the divine rule which He sought to establish in Israel; and in regard to the larger question whether the rule of God in the teaching of Jesus is exclusively spiritual, we hold that an affirmative answer must be given. The kingdom of heaven as the *rule* of God is wholly ethical and

religious. Jesus avoids confusing the main issue with issues that are incidental, and avoids it with the absolute consistency of one whose vision and purpose are clear and unalterable.

The kingdom of God as the key-word of the Messianic age, according to the Synoptists, is scarcely heard in the fourth Gospel. It occurs but twice, once near the beginning and once near the close of Jesus' public work. In the first passage Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God as that which a man cannot see unless he is born from above, and cannot enter unless born of water and the Spirit (Jn. iii. 3, 5). In the second passage Jesus says to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence" (Jn. xviii. 36). Jesus then admits that He is a king, and describes His kingship as one of witnessing to the truth. In other words, His kingdom is the rule of truth, which the Synoptists call the kingdom of heaven or of God. These two passages in the fourth Gospel manifestly belong together, and their conception of the kingdom of God is that of the first of the four groups of passages in the Synoptists: it is the divine rule independent of outward conditions.

10. The kingdom of heaven in the fourth Gospel.

This view of the kingdom of God which meets us in these isolated passages in the fourth Gospel is confirmed by the use which this Gospel makes of the expression *eternal life*. This is here the *summum bonum*, the great gift of heaven, as the "kingdom of God" is in the Synoptists. Yet the conception of eternal life is not coextensive with that of the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup> This term, in certain passages, has a meaning quite different from that of life eternal, as we have already shown; but the "eternal life" of John corresponds, in a measure, to "kingdom of God" in the sense of God's rule in the soul. He who has the kingdom of heaven in this sense of the term has eternal life. But eternal life is plainly a *spiritual* good, and therefore we say that the use of this expression supports the view that the author of the fourth Gospel thought of the "kingdom of heaven" as designating, preëminently, the rule of God in the heart of man.

Jesus' conception of the kingdom of heaven cannot be fully appreciated until there is put by its side that

II. The conception which was held by the Jews of His day. They thought of the kingdom of heaven in the teaching of the scribes. heaven as something to be realized *from without*, and not from within. The pious man

is described as one who *waited* for the kingdom of God (Mk. xv. 43). When Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding

<sup>1</sup> See Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 277-279.



on an ass, and allowed the crowds to shout hosanna, His disciples thought that He was now at last to set up a visible Messianic banner, and they hailed the *coming* kingdom of their father David (Mk. xi. 10). Thus the kingdom was thought of as one that should come with outward pomp. So the Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God should *come* (Lk. xvii. 20); and it is plain that they expected a coming which would strike the senses, and hence something utterly unlike the thought of Jesus, who declared that the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation. The kingdom had come in the midst of them, but its appearance was so different from what they had expected, that they did not recognize it.

This idea of a kingdom to be realized from without appears in the words with which Luke introduces the parable of the Ten Pounds. He says that Jesus spoke this parable because His fellow-pilgrims thought that the kingdom of heaven was about to appear (Lk. xix. 11). The ministry of Jesus was now near its close; but they had not at all observed that the kingdom of God had appeared in Him and His work. Even the immediate disciples of Jesus, as late as after the resurrection, seem to have thought that the kingdom was to come in some miraculous manner, at any rate it was not to come *through them* (Acts i. 6). This significant fact shows how deeply rooted was the belief of

the Jews that the kingdom of heaven was to be established from without, in a visible manner. And we have this same idea of the kingdom in Jewish writings outside of the New Testament. Thus, for example, in the Psalms of Solomon, we read that the Messiah will destroy the ungodly nations by the breath of his mouth, and He alone will establish the kingdom (xvii. 23-51). Of the same purport is the teaching of the Talmud. Deliverance by the Messiah, like the deliverance of Israel by Moses, is to come from without, miraculously, and not at all from within. The Jews who are alive at the coming of the Messiah seem to have no more to do with the establishment of the kingdom than do the Jews who are dead, and who at the beginning of the Messianic age are raised up to enjoy the kingdom. Thus the kingdom was thought of as something external, which was to be superimposed upon the Jewish people.<sup>1</sup>

Again, the Jewish conception of the kingdom of heaven in the time of Jesus was thoroughly *political* and *national*. This statement is abundantly illustrated in the Gospels. Thus the third temptation of Jesus, as recorded by Matthew, presupposes that people thought of the kingdom of God as a political organism.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Baldensperger, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu* etc., p. 101; Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 347-354; Hilgenfeld, *Die jüdische Apokalyptik*, p. 86.

For the suggestion that Jesus might secure all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, — He, a Jewish carpenter from the little town of Nazareth, — would have been psychologically impossible had not the popular view associated world-wide political dominion with Messiahship; and it would not have been a temptation of any power to the mind of Jesus had it not been deeply rooted in the Jewish heart, and had it not seemed to have strong support in the Old Testament itself.

The fourth evangelist tells us that after the miracle of feeding the five thousand near Bethsaida Julias, Jesus perceived that the people were about to make Him *king* (Jn. vi. 15). This word is capable only of a political meaning in this place, for Jesus admitted that He was king in the domain of truth; and He would surely have welcomed the recognition of this fact at any time (Jn. xviii. 37). But the kingship which the five thousand wished to force upon Him, He refused because it was political.

Again, we see the character and strength of the popular view in the request of Salome, seconded by James and John (Mk. x. 37; Mt. xx. 21). She wished her sons to sit at Christ's right and left in His glory. It is obvious that she was thinking of an earthly glory, and of places of honor in the sight of men. This family of Salome and Zebedee may be taken as

representing the prosperous and intelligent class of society; and, accordingly, it would be a mistake to suppose that the political conception of the Messianic kingdom was confined to the ignorant and poor, who perhaps suffered most from the foreign despotism.

We have further illustration of the common view in the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. We cannot understand this ovation on any other supposition than this, that the popular conception of the Messiah was through and through political. Men who had not cared to hear the divine words which Jesus spoke, and who were blind to the real proofs of His Messiahship, flung their garments in the road when Jesus mounted the ass and rode toward the gate of the city.

A final illustration of the point under discussion is found in the question of the disciples after the resurrection, to which reference has already been made (Acts i. 6). The kingdom which they thought Jesus might now *restore* to Israel cannot be understood otherwise than in a political sense; for their question turns the thought back to that kingdom which Israel had lost. It was *Israel* to which the kingdom was to be restored: the Messianic age was to be the age of Israel's dominion. Jerusalem was to be the capital of the world, and the temple its religious centre. Jewish law and ritual would be everywhere

in force; and Gentiles would have small participation in the blessings of the kingdom except as they adopted circumcision and became Jews.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the main features of the popular view of the kingdom of heaven in the time of Jesus. It was to be a kingdom of this world, though supernaturally established, and it was to be a kingdom for Israel. It was thus radically unlike the conception of Jesus. And yet this teaching of the scribes, like that of Jesus, rested upon the Old Testament. But one view was the fulfilment of the Old Testament; the other was its degradation. One conception centres in God, and is superior to earthly relations; the other centres in man, and consists essentially in earthly good.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 356; Deane, *Pseudepigrapha*, pp. 297-300.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LIFE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

IT was in accord with Jesus' conception of the kingdom of heaven as a divine rule in the heart of man that

I. Entering  
into life.  
a. Repent-  
ance.

He preached repentance as a fundamental necessity. This divine rule cannot begin without a turning to God, for it is not a rule of force but of love, and therefore repentance had a prominent place in the teaching of Jesus. Thus He coupled a call to repentance with His earliest announcement of the kingdom (Mk. i. 15), and on the first occasion when He is recorded to have forgiven sin, He declared that the aim of His mission was to call sinners, or in the explanatory language of Luke, to call sinners *to repentance* (Mk. ii. 17; Lk. v. 32). His third beatitude was for those who *mourn*, not over the loss of national independence, for that subject He ignored as of comparatively little importance; and not over the fact of poverty and straitness in earthly goods, for He taught men not to mourn or be anxious regarding these things; and not over the loss of dear friends, for the beatitudes concern the living in their relation to

God and to mankind: the beatitude was for those who mourn over *themselves*, because they are not under the divine rule.

When Jesus sent out the twelve in the early Galilean ministry, they preached that men should repent, even as He had preached at the beginning of His work, and as He doubtless continued to preach (Mk. i. 15 ; vi. 12). When Jesus was about to leave Galilee, He declared that the Ninevites would rise up against the present generation in the judgment, and would condemn it, for they had repented at Jonah's preaching; and the queen of the south would condemn the present generation, for even she had shown greater interest in divine truth than they (Mt. xii. 41-42). It would be more tolerable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, though notoriously wicked, than for the present generation who had not repented at His preaching (Mt. xi. 20-24). Again, Jesus set forth the great value of repentance when He declared that there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (Lk. xv. 7, 10), and especially when He told the story of a father who covered his son with kisses when he returned with confession of his unworthiness (Lk. xv. 20). In contrast with the self-righteous Pharisee Jesus set the publican whose prayer was, "God, be merciful to me the sinner" (Lk. xviii. 13). It was this kind of

spirit only which was justified before God. Jesus told the Jews that except they repented, namely, of their hostility toward Him, they should all perish. And the severity of their doom would be comparable to the fate of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, and to the fate of those eighteen persons on whom the tower in Siloam fell (Lk. xiii. 3-5). Finally, Luke's version of the closing words of Jesus to His disciples represents Him as saying that the preaching of repentance to all nations was in accordance with the Scripture (Lk. xxiv. 47).

Thus it appears that Jesus regarded repentance as of absolutely fundamental importance. The people who thought that they did not need repentance were, according to Jesus, in the greatest need of it. He spoke of them, ironically, as "righteous persons," and said that ninety-nine of them made less joy in heaven than one penitent sinner (Mk. ii. 17; Lk. xv. 7). Punctilious fulfilment of the entire ceremonial law did not take the place of repentance (Mt. v. 20; xxi. 31).

The primary *motive* to repentance, in the teaching of Jesus, is the divine goodness. This thought is reflected in the brief record of His earliest preaching, for He makes the nearness of the kingdom of God the ground of His call to repentance (Mk. i. 15; Mt. iv. 17). The kingdom of God that was near



was primarily the rule of God in the heart; and the establishment of this rule in man, with its infinite heritage of blessing, is a signal manifestation of the divine love. Again, Jesus encourages men to mourn over their sins with the assurance that this is the way to receive comfort from God (Mt. v. 4). He woos men to repentance by telling them that the repentance of one sinner makes joy in heaven (Lk. xv. 7, 10), and by teaching that God awaits their return with a full pardon and with overflowing love (Lk. xv. 20).

And Jesus' own *treatment* of sinners, no less than His teaching, shows clearly that, in His thought, the fatherhood of God which was being revealed through Him was the prime motive to repentance. Jesus was known as the *friend* of publicans and sinners because of His sympathetic regard for them (Lk. vii. 34). He had no fan of judgment in His hand, as His forerunner expected He would have (Mt. iii. 12), and He did not begin at once to cleanse thoroughly His threshing-floor. He did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax (Mt. xii. 20). His most characteristic sermon began with *blessed, blessed, blessed*. The cry of His heart was, "Come unto me and I will give you rest" (Mt. xi. 28). His love sought to be to Jerusalem like the brooding of the mother-bird's wings (Lk. xiii. 34).

But while Jesus made the divine goodness or the

fatherliness of God the primary motive to repentance, and in His own person brought that goodness into tenderest contact with men, there is at times a stern note in His call to sinners. They who refused to repent under the sunshine of divine love were at length threatened with summary destruction. And nothing can exceed the rigor of His language on these occasions. Thus He declares that the worst of the heathen cities will fare better in the day of judgment than the lake cities of Galilee in which He has preached (Mt. xi. 20-24). His unrepentant countrymen are a tree to be cut down, and a people who, since they have refused the King's invitation, shall be destroyed (Lk. xiii. 7; Mt. xxii. 7). But this motive to repentance was made necessary by the persistent sin of the Jews. It is not an element in the spontaneous preaching of Jesus, but a motive which He was forced to use because all the overtures of His love were rejected.

The conception which Jesus had of the *nature* of repentance may be seen from the story of the Lost Son. The son *came to himself*, then arose and came to his father (Lk. xv. 17). This coming to himself suggests that his previous state had been one of stupor, one in which his reason had lain, as it were, dormant. The expression employed is akin to that which Luke uses in describing Peter's awakening out

of the trance, or ecstatic state, into which he had fallen while praying upon the housetop in Joppa (Acts x. 9-10). Peter was *in himself* when he reflected on the significance of the vision; but he was not *in himself* previously, that is, he had not reasoned in a self-conscious manner. So the lost son in "coming to himself" came to his throne as a rational being. He reasoned about his deplorable state, and recognized the facts as they were. Hence we conclude that Jesus thought of repentance as based on a clear seeing, by the sinner, of his own condition. It is an eminently rational act, but a rational act that carries the whole man. It is a coming to one's better self, and also an acting in accordance with this clear and deep vision of one's true state. This involves a going back to the Father with confession of sin (Lk. xv. 21).

When the lost son saw his condition, then he said, "I will arise and go to my father" (Lk. xv. 18). Jesus everywhere assumes that a man *can* thus reason in his heart, and *can* go to his Father. We must suppose that He was sincere when He presented to men motives which should lead them to repentance. He pronounces a blessing on those who mourn over their sins, just as upon those who make peace. The one act is thought of as lying within a man's power no less truly than the other. Jesus influences the will of man powerfully by His revelation of

the love of God, or rather He presents a powerful motive to the will; but the will has full power to yield or not yield to the motive. He tells His disciples, when asked to explain His parables, that the mystery of the kingdom of heaven is given to them (Mk. iv. 11-12); but He infers that it is given to them from the fact that they seek it. He did not separate one and another out of the multitude to whom He spoke the parables. On the contrary, He spoke the parables, and one and another separated himself from the crowd, and waited for an explanation of the word. They sought the mystery of the kingdom of God; and because God was their father, Jesus knew that He had granted what they sought. There is no suggestion of a decree of God, as that word has often been used in theology. It is the Father's good pleasure to reveal the mystery of the kingdom to babes, and to hide it from the wise and understanding (Lk. x. 21; Mt. xi. 25); but to be "wise" and "understanding," or to be a "babe" is never treated by Jesus as something that lies outside a man's own will and choice. When Jesus said, relative to the salvation of a rich man, that *all things* are possible with God, He certainly did not intimate that God can at pleasure produce repentance (Mt. xix. 26). He had sought to win a rich young man, and had failed. He then told His disciples that it was very

difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. In stating this truth He used a figure which, taken literally, declares the absolute impossibility of saving a rich man, for it is wholly impossible for a camel to go through a needle's eye. The disciples were exceedingly amazed, thinking that if it was so difficult to save a rich man, then no one could be saved. To this Jesus made reply that what is impossible with men is possible with God, for all things are possible with Him. He is simply emphasizing, with these words, the greatness of God's power; but the statement cannot be taken literally any more than that other in which Jesus tells the Pharisees that they strain out gnats and swallow camels. It means that God's power—here to accomplish moral results—is inconceivably greater than man's. But there is no suggestion that this power is exerted in any peculiar manner in particular cases. Everywhere God is father, and everywhere men are urged to become children of the Father. The fact of fatherhood goes before and gently constrains men to repentance; but the act of turning is nevertheless their very own. Mary *chose* the good part (Lk. x. 42), and of the people of Jerusalem Jesus said, "I would . . . but ye would not" (Lk. xiii. 34).

There is yet one point to be noted, in the teaching of Jesus, in connection with repentance: that is, it secures

immediate and full pardon. The conception which Jesus had of the forgiveness of sins differs from that of the prophets and psalmists only as His conception of God differed from theirs. The distinctive characteristic of this conception, which is the essential fatherhood of God, determines His teaching of forgiveness. The fatherhood of God involves an *abounding* willingness to pardon every one who seeks pardon. This is the peculiarity of Jesus' doctrine of forgiveness—the joyous readiness of God to grant full pardon, and to grant it simply for the asking. This truth has its classic expression in the picture of the father's reception of the returning son (Lk. xv. 11-32). He is waiting for him, he runs to meet him, he kisses him fervently. The son has nothing to offer but a confession of sin; but this is enough for the father, or rather the fact that he has his son again is enough. He was lost; he was dead as far as his relation to his father was concerned. Now he has come back, and it is the restoration of this personal relationship which makes gladness in the home. We may infer from the father's language that the son could not possibly have brought with him anything which would have been worthy of the slightest consideration in comparison with the return of his child. It is the *son*, the son though in abject poverty, that occasions the father's joy.

So Jesus thought of God in relation to a penitent

sinner. Other words and facts of the Gospel confirm the lesson of this story. Thus Jesus tells His disciples to forgive a penitent brother until seventy times seven (Mt. xviii. 22). What, then, in His thought, must be the divine willingness to pardon! And this willingness of God is further seen in Jesus Himself, for He promises rest to all who simply *come* to Him (Mt. xi. 28), and shows not the slightest hesitation in opening Paradise to a dying robber who casts himself in penitence upon His loving pity (Lk. xxiii. 40-43). This abundant willingness of God to pardon is not lessened by that obscure word of Jesus in regard to an everlasting sin (Mk. iii. 28-30; Mt. xii. 31-32; Lk. xii. 10). Jesus does not intimate that the scribes, to whom He was speaking, might dye themselves so deeply in sin as to make God *unwilling* to forgive them. He says that they are in danger of committing the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and that this sin hath not forgiveness; but the nature of this sin, as far as it can be inferred from the context, suggests, as the reason why it is not forgiven, a lack of penitence on man's part rather than lack of willingness in God to pardon. For it is implied that blasphemy against the Spirit, unlike blasphemy against the Son of man, has no excuse of ignorance. It is blasphemy against what is recognized by the soul as the very light and truth of God. It is ascribing to Satan what one knows to be divine. Now it is easier

to believe that a soul which has fallen to such a depth of depravity is unable to turn in penitence to God than that God is unwilling to forgive so heinous a sin. Therefore, this saying cannot be allowed to limit God's willingness to pardon.

We have seen that Jesus thought of the kingdom of heaven as being, primarily, the reign of God in the heart. He announced that kingdom as *at hand*, and later declared to the Pharisees that it was *among* them, because He was conscious that it was completely realized in Himself. Therefore His conception of receiving the kingdom of God was of necessity dominated by the personal idea. Believing the Gospel, or receiving the kingdom of God, which is an equivalent expression, meant hearing His word and doing it (Mt. vii. 24). This thought is deeply impressed upon the Synoptic Gospels, though Jesus did not, according to these writings, make a verbal and public claim to Messiahship till near the close of His ministry. Thus, for example, He said that one who was but little in the kingdom of heaven was greater than John the Baptist (Mt. xi. 11), because one who was but little there, nevertheless, received *Him* as the bringer of that kingdom, while the Baptist was questioning in that hour whether Jesus was really the "coming one." Again, confessing Christ or being ashamed of Him and His words are the facts which

*b.* Receiving  
the kingdom  
of heaven.



determine the future of each spirit (Mk. viii. 38; Lk. xii. 8-9). The greatest calamity that can befall a man is to cause one who believes in Christ to stumble (Mk. ix. 42). Of the significance of this personal claim we shall speak in another connection, but it is mentioned here as helping to illustrate Jesus' conception of receiving the kingdom of God or believing in the Gospel.

We have said that, in the thought of Jesus, to receive the kingdom of heaven means to *hear* and *do* His word. He lays stress on this practical aspect of the subject (Mt. vii. 21, 24). He alone *believes* the word of Jesus who actually does it. To say "Lord, Lord"; to prophesy in His name; to eat and drink in His presence; even to cast out demons and do mighty works in His name,—these things are not *believing* in Him (Mt. vii. 21-23; Lk. xiii. 26-27). To do these things is not necessarily to do His word. That word is spiritual, and seeks control of the entire inner life. Men may prophesy and do mighty works in His name, and yet be workers of iniquity. This view of faith, which regards it practically as the *doing* of Christ's word, gives prominence to the will of man. For the word of Jesus, which calls men to the acceptance of the divine rule and the doing of the divine will, is a word that calls for radical self-surrender, and this is ever a supreme act

of the will. It carries the whole man, intellect and heart, but it gives prominence to the will. It is plain that this view of faith which Jesus had is entirely practical and intelligible.

There are two points in regard to the reception of the kingdom of God which Jesus emphasizes. First, it must be received *in humility*. The first beatitude of Jesus is for the poor in spirit (Mt. v. 3), those who do not with the Pharisee recount their virtues before the Lord, but who stand afar off from the altar, who do not lift up so much as their eyes to heaven, and who smite the breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me the sinner" (Lk. xviii. 9-14). The first instance of faith so great that it surprised Jesus was faith which was accompanied by equally remarkable humility. "I am not worthy," said the centurion, "that thou shouldest come under my roof" (Mt. viii. 8, 10). Jesus recognized with thanksgiving that it was the good pleasure of God to reveal the things of the Gospel to "babes" and to hide them from the "wise" and "understanding" (Mt. xi. 25). The "babes" were His disciples, men who did not take offence at His lowly appearance, as did the people of Nazareth (Mk. vi. 3), and who did not think themselves wiser than He.

The same condition of receiving the kingdom of God is contained in His words to the disciples when

they wished to turn away the children who had been brought for the Master's blessing. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (Mk. x. 15). With this saying we may associate the words and deed with which He rebuked the disciples' desire to be first. He embraced a little child, and said that to receive a little child in His name was to receive Him, and so to receive the Father (Mk. ix. 36-37; Lk. ix. 48); and unless they turned from their selfish striving and became as little children, they should not enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. xviii. 3). To receive the kingdom of God as a little child is just to receive it as a gift, simply and joyously, with no vain thought of deserving it;<sup>1</sup> and it is that spirit which Jesus symbolically commended when He embraced a little child. Once and again the Lord set forth this same truth in the proverbial saying, that he who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted (Lk. xviii. 14; Mt. xxiii. 12). It is seen also in the story of the Lost Son, for he purposes to ask his father to receive him as one of his *hired servants* (Lk. xv. 19). This insistence that the kingdom of heaven must be received in humility is in keeping with Jesus' conception of man's ill desert.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Bousset, *Jesu Predigt in ihrem Gegensatz zum Judenthum*, p. 45.

The lost son, lost and dead to his father, is His type of every sinner. When He speaks to the scribes and Pharisees of the ninety and nine *righteous* persons who need no repentance, that is irony; for in regard to these same scribes and Pharisees to whom He thus refers, He elsewhere said that the publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of God sooner than they (Mt. xxi. 31); and He also told His disciples that unless their righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they should by no means enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. v. 20).

The man whose spirit Jesus holds up as a model is the man who said, "God, be merciful to me *the* sinner." Jesus regarded this as the only right spirit, because that which He came to seek was *lost* (Lk. xix. 10). He refers to all who do not heed His word as *dead*, that is, dead toward God, morally and religiously dead (Lk. ix. 60). But when Jesus says that He came to seek that which was lost, we cannot infer that He thought of all men as being *equally* bad and equally far from His kingdom. In His own experience, which we may probably see reflected in the parable of the *Sower*, He had found hard soil, rocky soil, impure soil, and also good soil of different degrees of fertility (Mk. iv. 1-20). When He sent out the twelve and the seventy, He anticipated that they would

find a *son of peace* in one house and not in another (Lk. x. 6). These *sons of peace* need His message: so much is taken for granted; but they are inwardly inclined toward Him and His kingdom. Some of them are near (Mk. xii. 34); some, it may be, at the very door. There is a vast gulf between them and such other persons as persecute His messengers and persecute Him. The kingdom was equally near to all, but all were not equally near to the kingdom.

A second condition of receiving the kingdom of heaven is that a man must receive it as the *one thing needful*, as the hid treasure and the pearl of great price for which he may rationally sell all that he has (Mt. xiii. 44-46; Lk. x. 38-42). Jesus knew by experience that the rule of God in the heart was the supreme good, and He taught that it must be received as such. A man must think of it rightly in order to receive it truly. Jesus called upon men to make sacrifices and endure struggles commensurate with the value of the kingdom which they sought. They must seek that kingdom in preference to food and raiment and the other things of the earthly life (Mt. vi. 25-34). They must henceforth find the centre of their desire in that kingdom and not in themselves. They must deny themselves. They must bear their cross daily after Him; that is, they must be ready to be crucified for

His sake (Lk. ix. 23).<sup>1</sup> The criminal customarily bore his cross to the place of execution (Jn. xix. 17). Hence the demand of Jesus was that His disciples should be willing to make the last sacrifice for the kingdom of heaven. Whatsoever was held as a good must be held in subordination to that kingdom. Father, mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yea, and life itself, must be hated in comparison with one's love for the kingdom of heaven (Lk. xiv. 26). One must renounce all that one has in order to be a disciple unto the kingdom of God; for that kingdom is the rule of God, and the rule of God excludes all other rule in and over the soul of man (Lk. xiv. 33). The demand that was made on the rich young ruler, to sell all that he had, was made in principle in the case of every one who was called to the kingdom (Mk. x. 21).

It is here, in connection with entrance into the kingdom of heaven, that Jesus' references to wealth chiefly belong. Wealth is not discussed for its own sake. That is quite plain in the case of the young ruler who failed to respond to the summons of Jesus to give away his property and follow Him (Mk. x. 17-31). His refusal led Jesus to remark on the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of heaven; but the story contains no word or suggestion

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 379, foot-note.

on the possession of riches by those who are already in that kingdom. Jesus loved the young man, and spoke of only one thing which he lacked, and that, as the sequel shows, was an undue attachment to his wealth. Had his attachment to Jesus been paramount, there is no reason to suppose that he would have been asked to sell his goods. No such demand was made on James and John, who belonged to a family of means (Mk. i. 20), or on Joanna, Mary Magdalene, and Susanna, who, with Salome and other women, contributed to the support of Jesus and His disciples (Mk. xv. 40-41; Lk. viii. 2-3). Zacchæus was probably a wealthy man; but, unlike the young ruler, he was ready to accept Jesus, and accordingly he brought his wealth with him as he came into the circle of disciples, and began at once to use it in the service of the kingdom (Lk. xix. 8-9). His wealth may or may not have been the "mammon of unrighteousness" (Lk. xvi. 1-13); but in any case, after he met Jesus, it was his servant and not his master. But although Zacchæus brought his riches into the kingdom of heaven, Jesus taught that it was difficult for a man in his condition to enter the kingdom—not indeed because of any antagonism between the principles of the kingdom and wealth, but simply because, as a rule, the man who has wealth is not likely to feel such a need of the kingdom that he

is willing to put it before his wealth. That was the case with the young ruler; his wealth absorbed his affection and made him insensible to the claims of the heavenly kingdom. And it is just this fatal fascination of wealth that is in the foreground of the two parables which Jesus spoke concerning rich men. In one case, there came with the increase of riches only the thought of more selfish pleasure and ease (Lk. xii. 16-21); and in the other case is illustrated the power of riches to make one insensible to the claims of human suffering (Lk. xvi. 19-31). But both parables were addressed to men of the world, not to the disciples of Jesus; and they were addressed to men of the world who were lovers of money and inclined toward covetousness (Lk. xvi. 14; xii. 13-15). When Jesus told His disciples not to lay up treasures on earth (Mt. vi. 19-21; Lk. xii. 33), but to lay up treasures in heaven, and when, according to Luke, He spoke a beatitude for the poor and hungry, and pronounced a woe on those who are rich and full (Lk. vi. 20-21, 24-25), He sought to turn their thought to the chief thing and to magnify the riches of His kingdom.<sup>1</sup> The statement is relative, as when He says that one cannot be His disciple except one hates father and mother (Lk. xiv. 26). This signifies that the *supreme* thought should be on the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 167-168.



treasures in heaven, not on earthly treasures; the *supreme* love must be for Jesus, not for father and mother. But as Jesus did not teach His disciples to hate father and mother, so neither did He teach them that it is wrong in itself to lay up treasures on earth. Riches are dangerous for men of the world and deceitful for those who have the seed of the Gospel mixed with thorn-seed in their hearts (Mk. iv. 18-19); but Jesus has no specific teaching in regard to the possession of wealth by those who are truly members of His kingdom. Therefore we repeat that the references of Jesus to wealth, except those which use it simply as an illustration, are in connection with the thought of entering His kingdom. Hence we can no more appeal to the teaching or life of Jesus in support of any theory of wealth or its proper use than we can appeal to Him for specific instructions regarding any phase of the outward life. He does not give such instructions; He is not a legislator. He aims to make men sons of God and brothers to their fellow-men, and assumes that when they have this right fundamental attitude, when He has inspired them with His spirit, they can be trusted to solve the problems of their outward life.

We have noticed some of the passages which teach that, in the thought of Jesus, one cannot truly receive the kingdom of heaven unless one receives it as the highest

good, the one thing needful. It is another expression of this thought when Jesus speaks of the way of the kingdom as *narrow* (Mt. vii. 13-14), and calls on His hearers to make strenuous efforts to enter (Lk. xiii. 24). Here belongs also the word with which Jesus checked an ardent candidate for discipleship when He told him that the Son of man, less favored than the foxes and the birds, had not where to lay His head (Mt. viii. 20). One who would follow Him must have the resolution to face privation and suffering.

The fourth Gospel differs somewhat from the Synoptists, at least formally, on the subject of entering into life.

c. The  
Johannean  
conception of  
entering life.  
I. Believing  
in Jesus.

Fewer aspects of it are touched, some new ones appear, and one aspect on which the Synoptists do not dwell is here magnified both in the words of Jesus and in those of the evangelist. Repentance, forgiveness of sins, and that complete devotion to the kingdom of God which is emphasized in the Synoptists do not directly appear in John, while *believing in Jesus* is here an almost constant theme. Entering into the kingdom of heaven is an expression which occurs but once: the King of the kingdom engrosses the evangelist's attention. The attitude toward this King, which secures life, is the attitude of belief, or, since the noun is not used in John, we will say the attitude of *believing*. This word is frequently used in an absolute sense, no object being

expressed. Thus "he that believeth hath eternal life" (Jn. vi. 47), and "blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed" (Jn. xx. 29). But it is plain what the evangelist thinks of as the object of the verb in these passages. "To believe" means always to believe that Jesus is the Messiah. This follows both from the multitude of passages in which the expressed object of belief is Christ, and from those in which *believing* and *believing in Christ* occur in close proximity, as interchangeable terms (Jn. iii. 15-16; v. 43-44; ix. 35, 38, etc.). It follows also from the fact that no other object of believing is anywhere expressed which could be supplied in the passages where the verb is employed independently. For though in a single case the passing out of death into life is made to depend upon believing in *God*, it does not depend upon this alone, apart from Christ. For Jesus says, "He that heareth *my* word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life" (Jn. v. 24). Thus it is plain that belief in God, in this passage, is belief in Him *as the one who sent Jesus*. That is something quite different from an abstract belief in the Divine Being irrespective of Jesus. In another passage Jesus declares that he who believes in Him believes not in Him, but in the one who sent Him (Jn. xii. 44); that is to say, he who believes in Jesus thereby believes

in God: to accept Jesus as the Messiah shows a true faith in God (Jn. v. 23).

So when the fourth Gospel speaks of *believing*, without expressing an object, the author always thinks of the Messiahship of Jesus. This independent use of the term *believe*, as though in the sphere of religion there were only one thing to be believed, is a striking illustration of the great importance which the fourth Gospel attaches to belief in Jesus.

The content of the word *believe* is learned from the terms which are employed in parallelism with it. Thus, in the first place, Jesus uses the word *receive* as equal to *believe*. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye *receive* me not. . . . How can ye *believe*," etc. (Jn. v. 43-44). Hence to receive Him in His claims, to take Him as Messiah and Saviour, is a practical definition of believing in Him. Again Jesus uses the expression *coming to Him* as synonymous with *believing* on Him (Jn. vi. 35). He tells the Jews that they will not *come to Him* that they may have life (Jn. v. 40), and that all which the Father gives Him shall *come* to Him (Jn. vi. 37). It is plain that coming to Him is a concrete expression for believing on Him, for Jesus says: "If any man thirst, let him *come* unto me and drink. He that *believeth* on me," etc. (Jn. vii. 37-38).

The next figurative description of believing in Jesus suggests, more forcibly than the last, its deep spiritual

significance. It is the figure of a *birth from above*, used only in the conversation with Nicodemus (Jn. iii. 3, 7). This birth, like believing in Jesus, is said to be necessary to entrance into the kingdom. Now if it is thus necessary, and yet is mentioned but once in all the records, it is antecedently probable that it means essentially the same thing as believing in Jesus, for this is the only other act which is said to be necessary to salvation, and it is not probable that a necessary condition of salvation would be mentioned only a single time. Analysis of the passage fully establishes this view. The birth from above is later described as a birth *out of water* and the *Spirit* (Jn. iii. 5), or simply as a birth *out of the Spirit* (Jn. iii. 6, 8). Now a birth out of water could at that time have referred only to water-baptism like that of John, for neither Jesus nor His disciples had yet baptized.<sup>1</sup> And such a reference is quite adequate to the needs of the context. For a baptism with water symbolized the putting away of sin, and the statement of Jesus, that a man must be born of water in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, does not carry our thought beyond such a voluntary act of putting away sin. But this putting away of

<sup>1</sup> Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 402, foot-note, holds that the reference to water-baptism was not originally in the narrative, but was added by the author of the Gospel, and with direct reference to Christian baptism. I see no sufficient ground for rejecting the words "born of water," and hold that, if original, it would be an anachronism to refer them to Christian baptism.

sin, or, as Paul would say, a dying unto sin, is surely involved in believing on Jesus, for one cannot accept Him without renouncing sin. Furthermore, since the birth out of water refers to the cleansing from sin by way of water-baptism, the birth from the Spirit is doubtless to be identified with what the Baptist foretold as Baptism with the Holy Spirit, which was to be accomplished by the Messiah (Mk. i. 8; Mt. iii. 11; Lk. iii. 16). But this Messianic baptism with the Holy Spirit is also implied in believing on Jesus. For as the birth out of water refers to the putting away of sin, so the birth out of the Spirit refers to a consecration of the life to God. One born of the Spirit is spiritual (Jn. iii. 6). But consecration to God is plainly involved in believing on Jesus; it is the great positive element therein. For to believe Him is to receive Him, and to make His will our law, which is another way of describing complete consecration to Him. Therefore it seems plain that the birth from above involves nothing essential that is not contained in the conception of believing in Jesus. The man who believes in Jesus is, by virtue of that fact, born from above. There is a new life in him. That belief itself is a veritable birth from above, for it involves a turning from sin and self, and a consecration to the will of Jesus. This figure of birth may, however, be regarded as emphasizing the divine coöp-

eration in the act of believing in Jesus, since the figure involves the necessity of the Spirit's aid. At this point the thought of the expression is analogous to that *drawing* of the Father which is said to be necessary to faith in Jesus (Jn. vi. 44).

There is yet another figure which conveys the thought of believing in Jesus, namely, that of *eating* Him, or eating His *flesh* and drinking His *blood* (Jn. vi. 51-58). Jesus had told His hearers that the work of God was that they should believe on Him whom God had sent (Jn. vi. 29); and then He explained this one essential work and brought out its inward significance by the figure of eating and drinking Himself. They are to eat the bread which came out of heaven, and He is that bread. And then putting His thought in a more vivid and forcible way, He says that they are to eat His *flesh* and drink His *blood*, or they are to eat *Him* (Jn. vi. 57).<sup>1</sup> This figure of eating and drinking the flesh and blood of Jesus shows clearly the comprehensive and vital meaning which the fourth Gospel attaches to believing in Jesus. It is spiritual appropriation of Him as the Messiah sent from God. Therefore it involves conviction of the understanding, al-

<sup>1</sup> We have essentially the same thought in the Synoptic account of the institution of the Lord's Supper (Mk. xiv. 22-24); but the introduction of this teaching into the address in Capernaum, six months before the last Passover, is perhaps due to the author of the Gospel.

legiance of the will, and devotion of the heart. He who thus believes has indeed passed out of death into life; he is born from above, or born of water and the Spirit.

The Gospel of John has much to say of the importance of *knowledge*, both in connection with the entrance into life and with the development of life in the heart. Thus, to know the Father as the only true God and to know Jesus Christ whom He sent, is eternal life (Jn. xvii. 3; comp. xii. 50). The disciples are characterized as those who know Jesus as the Messiah (Jn. xvii. 8, 25), and the world persecutes the disciples because it does not know the Father nor Jesus (Jn. xvi. 3). Accordingly one is thought of as passing out of the world into the discipleship of Jesus, out of death into life, by means of a certain knowledge of God and of Christ. This conception is correlative to that other one, prominent in the fourth Gospel, that the mission of Christ to the world was to make the Father *known* (Jn. v. 19-20; xiv. 7, 10; xv. 15; xvii. 3). If He came to make the Father known, then to accept the knowledge which He brought is to accept His mission and become His disciples.

This knowledge of which the fourth Gospel speaks is not simply intellectual: it is eminently moral and religious. This appears, in the first place, in the fact that its attainment is morally conditioned. It is only

2. The place of knowledge in the fourth Gospel.



to the man who has a will to do the teaching, that the teaching is made known (Jn. vii. 17). Again, Jesus said to the hostile Jews, "Ye both know me and know whence I am" (Jn. vii. 28), and again, "Ye know neither me nor my Father" (Jn. viii. 19), that is to say, they knew Jesus as a carpenter from Nazareth, but did not know Him as the Messiah. The entrance of any spiritual knowledge was made impossible by their hostility. The name of the Father could be made known only to the men whom the Father had given to Jesus, the men who had been won by His love and light (Jn. xvii. 6). In like manner, when Jesus says that he who is *of God* heareth the words of God (Jn. viii. 47), and he that *doeth the truth* cometh to the light (Jn. iii. 21), it is plain that the knowledge which He gives is spiritually conditioned.

Further, the moral and religious character of the knowledge of which the fourth Gospel speaks appears in the fact that its object is the Messiah, or God as revealed in the Messiah (Jn. xvi. 3; xvii. 3), and that it sets a man free from sin (Jn. viii. 32, 34). It is a knowledge that sanctifies (Jn. xvii. 17), and, therefore, Jesus anticipates that as He continues to reveal the Father to His disciples, the love of God will abide in them more and more richly (Jn. xvii. 26). Plainly, then, this knowledge, which conditions entrance into life, is not thought of as a mere intellectual

acquisition, but as a moral and religious perception, a spiritual knowledge which involves the entire man, will and heart no less than understanding. Hence, this conception of knowledge is closely related to the Johannean conception of believing. Both are comprehensive spiritual acts; but one gives a certain prominence to the understanding, while the other gives a similar prominence to the will; from the standpoint of the former the Gospel appears as a revelation, from that of the latter it appears rather as an invitation and a claim to allegiance.<sup>1</sup>

The Johannean conception of entering into life has one further peculiarity, which is found in the expressions *drawn by the Father* and *given by the Father*. "No man can come to me," said Jesus, "except the Father which sent me draw him." "This is the will of the Father, that of all which He hath *given* me I should lose nothing" (Jn. vi. 39, 44, 65). Four times in the prayer of the seventeenth chapter of John Jesus refers to His disciples as those who had been *given* to Him by the Father (vs. 2, 6, 9, 24), and employs the same language on one other occasion (Jn. x. 29). The drawing by the Father which is referred to in Jn.

<sup>1</sup>The Synoptic narrative preserves one saying of Jesus which makes salvation depend upon the knowledge of God which Jesus alone gives, Mk. xi. 27; Lk. ix. 22.

vi. 44 is evidently a drawing which is accomplished through God's word (Jn. vi. 45). It is an effectual spiritual influence of His word upon the heart. It is not simply *an* influence, for the word of the Old Testament had influence of some sort on all the Jews whom Jesus addressed, but few of them were drawn to Him thereby. Those who heard from the Father and also *learned*, these were *drawn* (Jn. vi. 45), and by virtue of that very fact they were also *given* to Jesus.

The thought of this language is not that of a *decree*, for this does not accord with the figure of *drawing*, nor is it consonant with Jn. vi. 37, which represents the *giving* as something which takes place in the present, and from time to time. The expression refers rather to the working of God's Spirit upon the hearts of men, which they either welcome or resist. The Jews who were hostile toward Jesus had indeed heard from the Father in the Old Testament, but they had not really welcomed His influence, and, therefore, had not been *drawn* by Him. They who *do the truth* (Jn. iii. 21), whether it comes to them through the Old Testament or along other channels are, as appears from that very fact, *drawn* of God. The divine *drawing* is inferred from the fact that they are *moving toward God*, and this is only another way of saying that they *do the truth*. God is not simply *trying* to draw them, which

is true of His relation to all men (Jn. iii. 16), but they are actually *drawn* of Him. Now the position of Jesus is that they who are moving toward God will surely accept Him as the Messiah, because He manifests God. If they have welcomed the light of God which has reached them through Nature or the Old Testament, they will welcome Jesus because He brings that light, and brings it in a hitherto unknown fulness. They are sure to welcome Him when they know Him. "Every one who is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn. xviii. 37).

We pass now from the thought of Jesus on the subject of entering into the kingdom of heaven to the

II. Jesus' great word which dominates the life of that  
 conception of kingdom, the word *righteousness*. It is plain,  
 of righteous- kingdom, the word *righteousness*. It is plain,  
 ness. from a survey of the Synoptic Gospels, that  
 a. The the term *righteousness* does not stand for  
 comprehen- the term *righteousness* does not stand for  
 siveness of any particular aspect of character and life, but  
 the term. rather for a general condition. The righteous are not  
 those who touch the divine law at a single point, or on  
 a single side of their nature, but those who conform to  
 that law at all points and on every side of their nature.  
 Thus, the word is used to designate the redeemed  
 (Mt. xiii. 43; xxv. 37), where it manifestly describes  
 an acceptable condition of the entire man. When  
 Jesus tells His hearers that unless their righteousness  
 exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees they shall

in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven, He does not refer to any particular virtue, but to the entire moral and religious life (Mt. v. 20). His disciples must apprehend and fulfil the divine will more perfectly than had the scribes and Pharisees.

Again, the term is used comprehensively when Jesus tells His disciples to beware of making a parade of their righteousness before men, as the Pharisees did (Mt. vi. 1). What they paraded was their entire religious life,<sup>1</sup> its supposed perfection at every point. They believed perfection to consist in the observance of all the traditional law, and that observance they claimed to fulfil. When Jesus exhorts His followers to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, He holds up before them the ideal of true life in its length and breadth and depth and height (Mt. vi. 33).

This comprehensive use of the word *righteousness* was not new with Jesus. We meet it also in the Old Testament. Righteousness is there sometimes used as the compendium of all the qualities which belong to complete manhood in the sight of God. Thus in the parable of Balaam we read, —

“Let me die the death of the righteous.

And let my last end be like his” (Num. xxiii. 10).

<sup>1</sup>The word *righteousness*, in the Talmudic sense of *alms*, is later than the New Testament. See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 273.

Again, the righteous man is set in contrast with the *ungodly* (Ps. i. 6) and with the *wicked* (Is. iii. 10-11), and thus the word is plainly used in a general sense.

But the distinctive element in Jesus' conception of righteousness is *spirituality*. This element, also, is not

b. The wholly new, for the Old Testament prophets  
spirituality of and psalmists often exalt the inward above  
righteous- the outward; but the teaching of Jesus is  
ness.

marked off from that of the Old Testament by the greater prominence which it gives to the spirituality of righteousness. This is manifest, first, in the frequency of Christ's references to the subject. He preached the kingdom of heaven as the divine rule in the heart of man in contrast to an outward and political kingdom. The beatitudes of His teaching were nearly all for states of the heart. He summarized Law and prophets in the one word *love* (Mk. xii. 28-34). His ideal characters were those which are ideal to the Father who sees *in secret* (Mt. vi. 1, 4, 6, 18).

But still more does the polemic of Jesus against the merely external righteousness of scribes and Pharisees serve to bring out into strong light His own conception. Their righteousness is not sufficient even to secure admission to the kingdom of heaven, much less to make one great in it, as they fancied (Mt. v. 20). The sinful woman whose penitent love covered the feet of Jesus with tears and kisses was exalted above Simon,

the host, who could doubtless have said regarding the commandments, as did the young ruler, "All these things have I observed from my youth up (Lk. vii. 36-50; Mk. x. 20). Publicans and harlots who had the beginning of an inward religion were destined, according to Jesus, to enter the kingdom of heaven before the Pharisees, who had a religion that was outwardly perfect but nothing more (Mt. xxi. 31). One penitent sinner causes more joy in heaven than ninety and nine righteous persons who need no repentance (Lk. xv. 7). The publican in the parable who brought to God nothing but his sinfulness was accepted, while the Pharisee who fasted twice a week and gave tithes of all that he had acquired, in both particulars going far beyond the actual requirements of the Law, was not justified (Lk. xviii. 14). The most vehement denunciations uttered by Jesus were denunciations of hypocrisy in religion. Because of this hypocrisy, scribes and Pharisees were whited sepulchres, serpents, offspring of vipers, and very sons of Gehenna (Mt. xxiii. 15, 27, 33). Yet these men were so devoted to their religion that they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte to Judaism (Mt. xxiii. 15); they were so scrupulous that they tithed mint and anise and cummin (Mt. xxiii. 23); they built the sepulchres of the prophets (Mt. xxiii. 29); they made long prayers (Mk. xii. 40); and they

fasted often with sad and disfigured faces (Mt. vi. 16; Lk. xviii. 12). Thus the externalization of their religion made them worse than the heathen, in the estimation of Jesus.

Again, the new emphasis placed by Jesus upon the inward character of righteousness is seen in His penetration to the hidden purpose of the heart, and making this the sole test. Thus, *anger* exposes to judgment no less than the act of murder (Mt. v. 21-22). Adultery may be committed by a look (Mt. v. 28). The good deeds which the Father sees are those which are done in secret (Mt. vi. 3-4), and the prayers which He hears are those of the inner chamber (Mt. vi. 6). The fast that is acceptable to Him is that which men do not see (Mt. vi. 17). The kingdom of heaven does not come with observation; it comes invisibly, for it is itself invisible. At the last day those who, without heart, have prophesied in the name of Jesus and in His name have done mighty deeds, will be rejected; while those who have shown the loving spirit of Jesus, without thought of reward and in the most unnoticed ways, are summoned to inherit the everlasting kingdom (Mt. xxv. 31-46).

Thus in His conception of righteousness Jesus did not set up a new ideal, but gave a new and perfect enforcement and illustration of an old ideal. This enforcement, however, as compared with the conceptions of scribes and Pharisees, amounted to a complete



revolution. His thought was to theirs as spirit is to form, and as a living simple faith to a complex but dead religiosity.

It has been shown that the characteristic element in Jesus' teaching of righteousness was its emphasis on spirituality. This leads to the question of His attitude toward the statutory legislation of the Old Testament, which in its interpretation by the scribes made up the greater part of the religious life of His day. Early in the Galilean ministry it was observed that the disciples of Jesus did not keep the ordinary fasts, and this fact appeared like a questionable new departure not only to the Pharisees but also to the disciples of John the Baptist (Mk. ii. 18). The Son of man had come eating and drinking, and His disciples naturally imitated His example (Mt. xi. 19). But the Pharisees fasted twice in the week, and apparently John's disciples did the same. Hence the question which they brought to Jesus. The reply of Jesus involved two points. First, fasting is an expression of sorrow of heart; and since the present is a time of joy for His disciples, fasting would be as much out of place as weeping at a wedding feast. Secondly, the reason why He does not protest against the practice of the Pharisees and the disciples of John is the fact that their practice is in logical accord with their principles. It would be destructive to urge upon them the liberties

*c.* The righteousness of Jesus and the Law.  
*i.* The Law in the life of Jesus.

of His disciples while they have not His disciples' joy. It would be like putting a piece of unfulled cloth upon an old garment, or new wine into old skins. But Jesus intimated that a time was approaching when it would be appropriate for His disciples to fast. That time of sorrow which is here darkly hinted at began when Jesus was crucified and continued until the morning of the resurrection. After that the "bridegroom" was again with the "children of the bridechamber," and the occasion for fasting was gone. Thus Jesus did not strictly abolish all fasting for His disciples, but He taught that so long as they had Him with them, they did right in disregarding this institution. Yet the principle here involved was not hostile to the Old Testament Law, which enjoined a single day of fasting as an expression of sorrow of heart (Lev. xvi. 29); but it virtually *fulfilled* that Law by its removal, through the fellowship of Jesus, of the inward *ground* of fasting.

The bitterest opposition of the scribes toward Jesus was occasioned by what they regarded as a violation of the Sabbath. Their legislation regarding this day was their masterpiece of so-called interpretation of the Mosaic law. This legislation Jesus entirely ignored. He allowed His disciples to pluck heads of grain on the Sabbath, and rub it in their hands in order that they might eat it (Mk. ii. 23). When His conduct was challenged, He justified it by an appeal to the Scrip-

tures. The example of David, which the Old Testament silently approves, was cited as an apology for the act of His disciples. If David's hunger was a sufficient excuse for his taking the shew-bread, which only the priests might eat, then the disciples of Jesus were justified, for they also ate to satisfy hunger. Moreover, if this were not true, if they were not justified in their act, then they would be in bondage to the Sabbath as the scribes were; and thus the purpose of God in the institution of the day would be defeated, for His purpose was that the day should serve man, not man the day (Mk. ii. 27).

Again, Jesus was accused of violating the law of the Sabbath because He healed the sick on that day. Three instances are recorded, in two of which the healing was in a synagogue, and in one in the house of a Pharisee (Mk. ii. 23-28; iii. 1-6; Lk. xiii. 10-17; xiv. 1-6). In the first case He healed a withered hand, and justified His act on the ground that it is right to do *good* on the Sabbath. Here the appeal is directly to their moral sense. In the second case He healed a deformed woman, and justified the act by the practice of His critics. They did not hesitate to rescue an ox or an ass that had fallen into a pit: much less should He hesitate to rescue this daughter of Abraham from the bondage of Satan. This same line of argument was used in the third

case of Sabbath healing. Thus Jesus justified His conduct on the Sabbath both by Scripture and reason.

Another notable accusation against Jesus was that He neglected ceremonial cleansing. His disciples did not wash their hands before eating, that is, did not regularly perform this ablution as a religious duty (Mk. vii. 1-23). Therefore the Pharisees held Jesus to account for violating the tradition of the elders. In their eyes this tradition was based on the Law, and was no less sacred than that. Jesus replied that the tradition of the elders was radically opposed to the commandment of God, for in holding one they left the other. Then He declared to the people, in the hearing of the Pharisees, that a man is defiled by that which comes from within him, and not by that which enters him from without. If that which enters a man cannot defile him, then manifestly the touch of unwashed hands upon that which enters a man cannot defile him.

Later, Jesus explained to His disciples this saying which seemed to them obscure and probably also antagonistic to the Law. He says in His explanation, that what is from within defiles because it comes from the *heart*, and that what is from without cannot defile because it does not enter into the heart. Thus it is plain that He was thinking of *moral* purity, and therefore was not necessarily in conflict with the

Levitical law. He did not declare that all sorts of food are Levitically clean;<sup>1</sup> indeed, He did not touch the matter of Levitical cleanness at all, but He at once struck deeper, to that which is clean or unclean for the *heart*. Of course we may infer from this that He considered purity of heart of great value, in comparison with which Levitical cleanness was an insignificant thing; and accordingly we may say with Wendt<sup>2</sup> that Jesus thereby excluded, in principle, all ceremonial legislation which aimed at Levitical purity, from the perfect righteousness which is required for the kingdom of God. But that is not equivalent to saying that He attacked the Levitical law, and regarded it as a plant which His heavenly Father had not planted (Mt. xv. 13). The "plant" which His heavenly Father had not planted was the tradition of the elders. Not so the Levitical law. Through this ran a clear religious purpose, and that purpose was to fit the people of Israel for fellowship with Israel's holy God.<sup>3</sup> This law Jesus did not attack, but fulfilled. As fulfilled in Him, He doubtless thought of it as inoperative for His disciples, though they might continue to observe it for a time through the force of habit, or out of regard for their brethren,

<sup>1</sup> This seems to have been the view of the second evangelist, Mk. vii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> See *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 221-224.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 65-78.

that they might not offend (Mt. xvii. 24-27). Jesus never spoke a word that favored a violent break with the reign of the Law, but left the attitude of His disciples toward that reign to be determined from within, with the development of their Christian life and thought.

We have thus far seen that Jesus defended Himself against specific charges of being a law-breaker. He broke the traditions, but not the Law. The narrative of His life represents Him as mindful of the Old Testament statutes. Thus He commanded the healed leper to show himself to the priests, and to make the required offering (Mk. i. 44). Not only so, but He did this with an air of *severity*, as though to make more plain that while He recognized it as His duty to heal the man, He did not forget the Law. Again, when He healed the ten lepers, He sent them to the priests (Lk. xvii. 14). He kept the Passover and paid the temple-tax (Mk. xiv. 12; Mt. xvii. 24). He commanded the multitudes to observe all things that are taught in the Law (Mt. xxiii. 3).

When we turn from the practice of Jesus to His teaching, we see more clearly and fully what His position was. And, first, He virtually distinguished between the moral and the ceremonial elements in the Old Testament, though He did not do this in a formal way. He teaches that the *weightier* matters of the Law are judg-

2. The Law in the teaching of Jesus.

ment, mercy, and faith (Mt. xxiii. 23), while the duty of tithing belongs to the *less* important things. What He held to be true in regard to tithing, we must suppose that He held true in regard to all similar outward requirements. They were to be regarded as of secondary value. Judgment, mercy, and love must be put first. The outward has its place, until the Messianic fulfilment, but that place is subordinate. Prophets and Law in their deepest and most vital messages are summed up by Him in the word *love*. The ceremonial element in comparison with that sinks out of sight. It does not follow, however, that He denied to the ceremonial law a divine purpose. He did not. It was for Him a part of the Law which should not pass away until wholly accomplished. And since its providential purpose was akin to that of the moral law, we may agree with Weiss that Jesus recognized it as of binding authority,<sup>1</sup> and in so far we may say that He made no distinction between the moral and the ceremonial law. But at the same time it is plain that He made a practical distinction between them on the ground of their intrinsic values, and that He exalted the purely moral precepts of the Law. This position was really a reversal of the teaching of the scribes, as Jesus Himself saw and declared. They exalted the ceremonial and ignored the moral.

<sup>1</sup> See *Lehrbuch der bibl. Theologie des N. T.*, dritte Auflage, pp. 78-79.

But, secondly, the attitude of Jesus toward the Law is best characterized by His word *fulfil*. He says that He came not to destroy the old but to fulfil it (Mt. v. 17). This is the great and unique claim which He makes. Then He explains *how* He fulfils the Law, and His explanation runs on this wise. The letter of the Law is against murder: He prohibits anger (Mt. v. 21-22). The letter of the Law is against adultery: He prohibits the look of lust (Mt. v. 27-28). The Law allowed divorce, therein falling below the ideal of Genesis: Jesus goes back to that ideal (Mk. x. 2-12; Mt. xix. 3-12). The Law allowed the return of evil for evil: He demands the return of good for evil (Mt. v. 38). The Law allowed hatred of an enemy: He required love (Mt. v. 43). But while the Law allowed hatred of an enemy, it must be remembered that, according to Jesus Himself, this same law *at its highest* made supreme love of God and equal love of the neighbor the two great commandments (Mk. xii. 28-34). So Christ's fulfilment of the Law is a fulfilment of it *as a whole*. Such a fulfilment is consistent with direct opposition to details of the Law's teaching. Thus, for example, hatred of an enemy, in support of which isolated passages of the Old Testament can be cited, is absolutely incompatible with membership in Christ's kingdom. Again, the concession made by the Law to the hardness of men's



hearts in the matter of divorce, Jesus does not allow to continue. He reinstates the primal idea of the indissolubleness of the marriage bond and does away with the Mosaic legislation. Another illustration of the point in hand is Christ's prohibition of the oaths in vogue among the Jews (Mt. v. 33-37).

But while there are thus points at which Jesus is radically opposed to the Law, He can yet declare that He is not come to destroy it, and that no jot or tittle shall pass away till all things be accomplished (Mt. v. 18).<sup>1</sup> For there is a higher and a lower in the Old Testament itself. There are ideals now seen and again lost to sight. There are concessions to the imperfect state of man's development. Jesus fulfilled the great central aims of the old revelation, and in so doing set aside that which was merely temporary. He saw with perfect spiritual vision that ideal which was seen only in part by the Old Testament lawgiver and prophet, and He erected this in all its lofty perfection as the standard for every member of His kingdom. Thus He fulfilled, or made perfect, the Law: first, in His own blameless life, and also in His teaching. What the Old Testament struggles after, He realizes, and realizes in a purely spiritual

<sup>1</sup> This is a hyperbolic statement of the permanent value of the Law. For an attempt to refer it to the Law as completed by Jesus, see Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 342.

way. Thus He abolished, in principle, all the ceremonial of the Law, though he left the *actual* abolition of it to be accomplished easily and gradually in the process of Christian growth.

As we pass from the Synoptists to John, the terms *righteous* and *righteousness* almost entirely disappear, and a new conception claims our attention. When the old terms are found, they have the same content as in the Synoptists (Jn. xvi. 8; xvii. 25). The new terms are *truth* (ἀλήθεια) and *true* or *genuine* (ἀληθινός). The term *truth* is plainly akin to the term *righteousness*, but it cannot be regarded as strictly identical with it. It appears that *true* and *truth* in the fourth Gospel are not less than *righteous* and *righteousness*. The man who *does the truth* or is *of the truth*, in the language of John, is a righteous man, as the Synoptists account righteousness. For to be *of the truth* is an expression that takes one not into the sphere of the intellect merely, but also into the sphere of the will (Jn. vii. 17; xviii. 37). It is to have a right inclination as well as a right sight for good and evil. Again, he who seeks the glory of Him who sent Jesus is *true*, and no unrighteousness is in him (Jn. vii. 18). That is to say, in regard to the purpose of his life, he is wholly righteous. So when Jesus says that he who does the truth comes to the light, it is manifest that

d. The  
teaching of  
the fourth  
Gospel.

doing the truth is not less than righteousness (Jn. iii. 21). The truth which he does is, of course, the truth which he *has*. It is not the full truth as revealed by Jesus, for in that case the Lord would not have spoken of such an one as *coming to the light and hearing the voice* of the Messiah (John iii. 21 ; xviii. 37). That would no longer be necessary. But what he does is truth, or it is righteousness: that is its quality.

But while *true* and *truth* comprehend all that is contained in *righteous* and *righteousness*, they present the thought from a different angle, and they have distinct associations of their own. Thus, in the first place, while the word *righteousness* turns our thought to a moral state, the word *truth*, as used in John, brings before us the divine standard. Thus, Jesus says that the aim of His mission is to bear witness to the truth (Jn. xviii. 37), and again declares that He Himself is the truth (Jn. xiv. 6). This truth makes a man free from sin (Jn. viii. 32), and that freedom is practical righteousness. Thus truth goes before, and righteousness follows. Truth is the deliverer, and righteousness the state of deliverance. This is one point wherein the two terms are not commensurate. Again, the word *truth* differs from the word *righteousness* in that it has a more distinct suggestion of the *ideal*. It is true that righteousness, completed, is the ideal of character, but the word does not so

directly suggest the ideal as is done by the terms *truth* and *genuine*, as used in John. Thus, the evangelist says that the Law was given by Moses, but *truth* came by Jesus Christ (Jn. i. 17). He did not mean that the Law was false. It witnessed concerning Jesus, and in so far at least was true (Jn. v. 39). But the truth of Jesus was a *larger* truth than that of the Law. The *ideal* of truth, as the *ideal* of grace, was realized in Jesus. Again, this significance of the word *truth* appears in Jn. xiv. 6, where Jesus says, "I am the truth." This is not equivalent to saying that Jesus was honesty itself. It is not the denial of all falsehood in His nature and character, but it is the affirmation of the presence in Him of the full revelation of God's thought of salvation.

The word *genuine* has the same suggestion. Jesus tells the Jews that His Father gives them the *true* bread out of heaven (Jn. vi. 32). He does not thereby affirm that the manna of Moses was not as truly *food* as was this which the Father was offering to them. It was real and satisfying food, in contrast to the unreal and unsatisfying; but it was for the body *merely*. Hence Jesus said that it was not the *true*, that is, ideal, bread. It was not such bread as most fully accords with the idea of the word. The ideal bread, the highest nourishment that a human spirit can receive, is Jesus Himself. In like manner,

Jesus says that He is the true vine (Jn. xv. 1), that is, the idea of the vine is perfectly illustrated in Him. Thus He calls God the only *true* God (Jn. xvii. 3), which surely means more than saying that God is the only *real* God. There was no occasion for Jesus to affirm that His Father was the only real God, and that all the other so-called gods were only shadows. The Jews were not polytheists, and did not need to be told that their God was the only God in existence. But the thought of Jesus was far more significant. The world had not known God, but Jesus had known Him (Jn. xvii. 25); and now, in the conscious possession of that unique knowledge, He affirms that the heavenly Father whom He had known is the only being who fulfils the idea of the word *God*. He is the genuine, the ideal, one. Hence it is true in regard to Him alone, that knowledge of His will is vital to men.

We are to consider, in the next place, how, in the thought of Jesus, the righteousness of the kingdom will express itself in the various relationships of life, and first in relation to God.

The religious life of the kingdom of heaven is controlled by the fundamental conception of the personal, ethical fatherhood of God. The righteous man is a son of God, and his relation to God is to be that of an ideal son. His life is to be directed by regard for a heavenly Father, and

III. The  
righteous  
man in his  
relation to  
God.  
a. The  
spirit of the  
religious life.

not according to the letter of a written law. This fact makes a wide difference between the religious life of Christ's kingdom and the religious life of the Jews of Christ's day. It is a fact which continually furnishes fresh inspiration to high moral endeavor, and creates an atmosphere of freedom which is favorable to the development of the best character. It greatly simplifies the religious life of Christ's kingdom since it substitutes the will of a Father, personally ascertained, in the place of a complex legal system, interpreted by scribes and priests.

Jesus does not *legislate* on the religious life of His kingdom after the manner of Moses. He pronounces certain things blessed. He sets up an ideal, and incites His followers to strive toward it. But He issues no specific statutes for the outward life. His yoke is not the constraint of *Thou shalt* and *Thou shalt not*, but the constraint of a voluntarily assumed submission to His will, the inward constraint of love and reverence for a person.

The first of the broad principles laid down by Jesus regarding the righteous man's relation to God is *trust*. God is worthy of perfect confidence because He is a perfect father. He *knows* the needs of his children, even the least physical needs (Mt. vi. 32); He is lord of heaven and earth, and His care extends to the minutest wants of

b. The principle of trust.

His children (Mt. xi. 25; vi. 26; x. 30). Jesus teaches that God will certainly provide for those who put their trust in Him. He feeds the birds and arrays the lilies in beauty, and therefore it cannot be that He will neglect His human children (Mt. vi. 26, 28). He is in Himself a father, and hence those who will receive His care, He cares for with a divine fatherliness. Since, then, God is a father, the first duty of the members of Christ's kingdom is to trust Him. This is rather taken for granted by Jesus than made the subject of formal and definite teaching. His revelation of God as a father, is the final and supreme ground of trust; and having made the revelation, He leaves men, in a large measure, to infer their duty of trust and to fulfil it. Yet not wholly so; He gives some specific suggestions. The disciples are to exercise trust in regard to their personal and daily needs. They must not be anxious for food, or drink, or raiment. They are of far more value than the birds, and yet their Father feeds the birds; and of much more value than grass which flourishes for a day and then is burned, and yet their Father clothes this grass. If He knows what the birds need, and what will make the grass beautiful, then surely He knows what the disciples of His Son need. Therefore, they should drop the anxious care which men of this world have for these material things, and trusting in

God, seek His kingdom and His righteousness (Mt. vi. 32-33). Not to do this, but to say, What shall I eat? or, What shall I drink? or, Wherewithal shall I be clothed? is to be as a Gentile, and as though one had no heavenly Father.

The disciple is to trust God also in all the needs of his work. He must not be anxious before governors and kings, for the Spirit of His Father will speak in him (Mt. x. 19-20). He will be called Beelzebub, and will be treated accordingly (Mt. x. 25), but he is not to fear the hostility of a world which can at most destroy his body (Mt. x. 28). It is in this connection only that Jesus ever speaks of *fearing* God (Mt. x. 28). But this fear of God of which He speaks is consistent with trust in Him as the heavenly Father, for He is to be feared in view of His *power* and not in view of His character. It is because He is *able* to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna, while a hostile world can destroy the body only — it is because of His power that the disciples of Jesus, when tempted to fear the face of man, are exhorted to fear God. Hence, it appears that the fear of God, of which Jesus speaks as possible to His disciples, does not belong at all to the *ideal* Christian life. It should spring up in the soul only when the soul is in danger of going down before the threats and blows of the world.

It is plain from these passages which speak of trust



in God that Jesus did not contrast it with *knowledge*, but with *cowardice* and *doubt*.<sup>1</sup> The one subject on which Jesus claimed to have unique knowledge was *God* (Mt. xi. 27; Lk. ix. 22), and this was therefore the only subject on which He claimed to impart a unique knowledge to His disciples. From this point of view, trust in God was surely not thought of by Jesus as being at all the antithesis of knowledge. The disciple of Jesus should know God more accurately and completely than he knows any other being or subject in the universe. Faith is not contrasted with sight, but with cowardice (Mk. v. 36), and with doubt regarding the goodness and faithfulness of God (Mt. vi. 30-34).

This filial trust in God which Jesus expected of His disciples is in strong contrast with one of the most prominent features of the religious life of the Jews, namely, trust in meritorious works. The Pharisee of the parable trusted in his more than perfect fulfilment of the Law (Lk. xviii. 12). His only trust in God was that God would keep an honest account of his holy life. The scribes taught that righteousness was secured in two ways, namely, by doing the Law and by good works.<sup>2</sup> Every effort along these two lines was reckoned to a man's credit, and was set over against his transgressions. If a man believed that he was justified and should inherit

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 227.

<sup>2</sup> See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 269-277.

the Messianic kingdom, it was solely on the ground of merit. When Mar Ukba was dying, he asked for his account, that is, for the amount of alms he had given. It was found to be seven thousand pieces. He did not believe that this amount was sufficient for his justification, that is, sufficient to outweigh his transgressions, and therefore he gave in alms half his remaining fortune in order that he might go hence in safety.<sup>1</sup> This was the spirit of the scribes in the time of Jesus; but in the Master's teaching the disciple must trust the heavenly Father to *give* the kingdom. It is not earned, but received as a gift.

It may also be noticed in this connection that, in the teaching of Jesus, trust in God and fear of God are never blended with trust in angels and fear of Satan or the demons. His conception of God as a father, in personal contact with His children, rendered the mediation of angels unnecessary. In the Jewish teaching, angels of various ranks formed a connection between the distant God and the world. It is a remarkable fact that Jesus thinks of God as near and of the angels as being in heaven, rather than God in heaven and the angels near. With the exception of a single instance, and that in a story, Jesus does not refer to angels as entering into any relation to men on earth. This exception is only par-

<sup>1</sup> See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 276-277.

tial, for it was not until the death of Lazarus that the angels came to him (Lk. xvi. 22). Angels are inhabitants of heaven, according to the references of Jesus, and their existence and activities do not for the present concern men in any essential manner (Lk. xv. 10; Mt. xiii. 39; xvi. 27; xxii. 30; xxiv. 36; xviii. 10). Thus the thought of Jesus regarding angels was extremely simple as compared with that of the Jewish teachers. The same is true regarding His conception of demons. He never suggests that His disciples have anything to fear from them: neither they nor the angels come between the disciple and his heavenly Father.

Another fundamental principle which characterizes the righteous man in his relation to God, and one that is closely related to the foregoing, is *love*.

This principle does not appear in the teaching of Jesus in a crystallized form, but rather as a subtle atmosphere, or as Beyschlag says, as a great unexpressed presupposition. The life and teaching of Jesus as a whole called for a paramount love of God, and indeed actually developed love for Him far beyond what any other person or force in history has ever produced; but His teaching does not call for love of God in a direct and formal way.

Jesus recognized the love of God as the greatest commandment of the Old Testament, but He did

*c.* The principle of love.

not reënact this commandment (Mk. xii. 28-30; Mt. xxii. 36-40). This surely was not because He rated the love of God any lower than did the Old Testament. On the contrary, since He came to fulfil or perfect the Law, we must infer that He sought to give this fundamental principle of the Old Testament even fuller sway, and to make it dominant in each member of His kingdom. But He did not seek to do this by reënacting the formal commandment to love God. He evidently thought that there was a better way, and that this better way was to reveal God to men. Instead of commanding love, He taught His disciples that God was their Father; and He trusted that this divine revelation of fatherhood would *win* a love which could not be legislated into existence. Every deed of love that Jesus wrought, and every word that He spoke about the love of the Father, was an appeal to the hearts of men to love God. Moreover, the fact that His life, whose purpose was to make the Father known to men, was one consistent service of love, implies that He regarded the love of God as the dominant principle in the religious life of His disciples. Yet He passes over it in almost unbroken silence. In His kingdom, then, the love of God was not to be the fruit of outward statute, but rather the echo of the heavenly Lover's voice, the spontaneous homage of the heart when it comes to know that it is beloved of God.

Again, the righteous man in his relation to God is both *humble* and *sincere*. How highly Jesus esteemed these virtues may be seen from His stern <sup>d. Humility</sup> invective against the religious pride and in- <sup>and sincerity.</sup> sincerity of scribes and Pharisees. They paraded their religion, as was natural, on the ground of their theory of merit. In their own thought, their good works and their perfect fulfilment of all the commandments of the Law justified them in an outward display of their righteousness. They sounded a trumpet before them to call attention to their benevolent acts (Mt. vi. 2). They prayed where the most men could see them (Mt. vi. 5). They made their fasts as noticeable as possible by disfiguring their faces (Mt. vi. 16). They claimed the first seats in the synagogues and at feasts because of their superior holiness (Mk. xii. 39). They wished to be called *rabbi* and *father* (Mt. xxiii. 8-9). They showed their remarkable piety by tithing mint, anise, and cummin (Mt. xxiii. 23); also by scrupulous washings of their hands, their cups and platters (Mk. vii. 1-23; Mt. xxiii. 25). They thanked God that they were so much better than other men, and publicly praised their own superabounding righteousness (Lk. xviii. 9-14). All this was an abomination in the sight of Jesus, and He believed that it was an abomination also in the sight of God (Lk. xvi. 15). In the religious life of His disciples there must be a different

spirit. When they give alms and pray and fast, it must be in secret (Mt. vi. 3, 6, 17-18). They are to do good works with the desire that their heavenly Father may be glorified, rather than they themselves (Mt. v. 16). They are to find their rest in subjection to one who is lowly (Mt. xi. 29). Instead of boasting as the scribes and Pharisees did, the disciples of Jesus are to be of such a spirit that they will say, when they have done all things that are commanded them, "We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which it was our duty to do" (Lk. xvii. 10). Thus Jesus taught that the members of His kingdom, in their attitude toward God, were to be radically different from the Pharisees. Genuine humility must take the place of pride.

With equal emphasis does Jesus teach that the righteous man in his relation to God will be a *sincere* man. Thus He has a beatitude for the pure in heart, and purity of heart involves sincerity (Mt. v. 8). Again, it is the man whose eye is *single* into whom the light enters, and the single eye is the symbol of the pure purpose (Mt. vi. 22-23). The man whose eye is single does not attempt to serve both God and mammon (Mt. vi. 24), as some of the Pharisees who were lovers of money tried to do (Lk. xvi. 14). He is not as the soil that receives the good seed, and at the same time contains seeds of thorns, which sprout and grow and

choke the good seed (Mk. iv. 7). The single-eyed man is rather the good soil which bears fruit.

Jesus characterized the religious teachers of His day as having a sheep's clothing and a wolf's heart (Mt. vii. 15), that is to say, they were insincere. All their religious rites were performed that they might be seen of men (Mt. xxiii. 5), and therefore were of no value (Mt. vii. 22). The estimate which Jesus put on sincerity may be inferred from the answer which He returned to those Jews who charged *Him* with insincerity (Mk. iii. 20-22, 28-30). They said that He did His signs by Beelzebub, while professing to do them by the power of God. It is plain that they were insincere in this, for they knew that the works of Jesus were beneficent, and most unlike Satan's works. Jesus replied to this charge with words of solemn warning. He said, in substance, that this insincerity, this attributing to the prince of evil what they knew to be good, was near to the sin against the Holy Spirit, which hath never forgiveness. Thus it is plain that Jesus thought of sincerity and humility as fundamental to the right attitude of men toward God.

Since the disciple of Jesus, or the righteous man, is a son of the heavenly Father, it is assumed that he will *commune with Him in prayer*. This feature of the life of Christ's disciples is relatively prominent in His teaching, as prayer was

*e.* Communion with the Father.

prominent in His own experience. The character and form of the disciple's prayer are determined by the fact that God is his father. The disciple comes directly into His presence. He shuts out everything that might disturb his personal converse with God. Jesus was in the habit of retiring into solitude for prayer, and He taught His disciples to go into the inner chamber (Mt. vi. 6). This specific direction was doubtless occasioned by the fact that the religious teachers of the time loved to pray in synagogues and at the corners of streets (Mt. vi. 5). What they desired was the recognition of men, not communion with God. It was not their position in itself, but their spirit, of which Jesus disapproved. But since the spirit was manifested in the choice of conspicuous places, Jesus could suggest the true spirit by telling His disciples to enter into the inner chamber. The end in view is communion with the Father. Again, vain repetitions, such as the Gentiles use, cannot be used by the disciple who prays to God as his father (Mt. vi. 7). For since the disciple knows that God is his father, he knows that prayers are not needed to move God to be gracious. The disciple is not heard because of his "much speaking," but because God is his father. His prayer is not to *inform* God of his needs, for God, his heavenly father, knows them before he asks (Mt. vi. 8). So the fatherhood of God requires simplicity in prayer.



Again, the *encouragement* to prayer lies in the fatherhood of God. It is this fact which makes it more certain that He will give good things to those who ask, than that earthly fathers will give good gifts to their children (Mt. vii. 7-11). Jesus confirms this statement by an appeal to the general experience of the people of God. Every one who asks receives, every one who seeks finds, and every one who knocks has the door opened. That is proof that the Father delights to give. So great is the confidence of Jesus in the Father's readiness to give good gifts to His children, that He makes the agreement of even two disciples sufficient ground for the granting of any request (Mt. xviii. 19-20). It does not seem to be His object here, to commend the duty of two persons to unite in prayer for a common end, but rather to set forth the Father's willingness to hear and help His children. In line with this general thought are the parables of the Unrighteous Judge and the Three Loaves (Lk. xviii. 1-8; xi. 5-8). For these parables do not inculcate the duty of insistence in prayer, but rather magnify the generous grace of God. If a man, awakened at midnight by a friend who desires bread for an emergency, at first excuses himself, and afterward, because of the friend's urgency, rises and gives him bread, how much more *certainly* will God give to those who ask Him! He does not need to be awakened, and He cannot be irritated by continual asking.

In like manner, if a judge who fears neither man nor God is moved by a poor widow's repeated petition for justice, how much more *certainly* will God avenge His elect who cry to Him day and night! It is true that the evangelist says this parable was spoken to teach that men should always pray and not faint. But why should they offer ceaseless prayer? Because God, like the unrighteous judge, cannot be moved save by strenuous and urgent supplications? No, for that would contradict Jesus' fundamental teaching on the fatherhood of God. They are to continue in prayer unto God because, as their father, He is *sure* to hear and answer. The certainty that His love will grant the desired blessing, at the right time, is the reason why they should not faint but keep their eyes lifted up unto the hills.

Finally, it is in keeping with the central fact of the fatherhood of God that Jesus prescribes no *form* of prayer, but leaves that to be determined by the varying circumstances. Fatherhood invites to familiar converse, to free outpourings of heart. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray as John had taught his disciples, He gave them a *model* but not a ritual (Lk. xi. 1). He said, "After this manner pray ye" (Mt. vi. 9). He did not give them a set form of words from which they were not to depart, or to which they were to attribute any peculiar value. Had He done this, it is not probable that the prayer would have been preserved in two so

widely divergent forms as those of Matthew and Luke. Matthew has seven petitions, Luke only five. The Greek text of Matthew has fifty-seven words, and that of Luke only thirty-eight. This wide difference between Matthew and Luke seems to indicate that the Lord's Prayer was not regarded by the first generation of Christians as a ritual, but as a model to be used with Christian freedom.

As a model for prayer, the words of Jesus suggest, first, what we have already seen elsewhere, that the prayers of the disciples should be framed and offered in the consciousness of the fatherhood of God. They are to begin with "Our Father" or "My Father." Then it suggests that prayers should be *brief*, a suggestion that is seconded by the example of Jesus. All of His recorded prayers are short, even that of the awful hour in Gethsemane. True, it is once said that Jesus spent an entire night in prayer (Lk. vi. 12), and He seems, on other occasions, to have spent several hours in prayer (*e.g.* Mk. i. 35); but we are probably to think of these periods as periods of devout meditation and communion with God, rather than of supplication.

Again, the model for prayer *begins* with the divine interests, the name, the kingdom, and the will of God, and thus it turns the thought and desire to the great things of life and immortality. These are to be put first in the prayers of the disciples. The child is not to con-

sider its own personal affairs chiefly, but the affairs of the Father, the things which will glorify Him. And yet these things of the Father, when rightly considered, are the highest and truest interests of the child. And finally, the model for prayer suggests that the disciple in his praying should believe that the affairs of his individual life, material as well as spiritual, are of interest to God. Hence he is to ask for daily bread, for since the great God is his father, He must be mindful of even this need and must take pleasure in supplying it. The disciple is to ask that he may be led in ways where he will not be tempted, which of course implies that his little life is wholly known to the Father, and that the Father desires to direct and control it. He is also to ask for the pardon of his sins, and it is implied that God will grant even this, when asked in a filial spirit.

Thus we see that in the teaching of Jesus the righteous man's relation to God in prayer is determined throughout by the thought of the fatherly character of God. This fact invites to frequent communion, to simple, large, and confiding petitions.

The position of Jesus in regard to religious ceremonies for His kingdom is in strongest contrast to the Jewish views of His time. The religious teachers around Him taught an elaborate system of outward rites as necessary to salvation. They not only laid great stress upon

*f.* The  
righteous  
man and  
religious  
ceremonies.

all the requirements of the Law of Moses, as had been done with increasing ardor since the days of Ezra, the scribe, but the enactments of tradition were far more numerous than the statutes of the old Law, and they were regarded as no less sacred and binding upon the conscience. Thus the entire life of the devout Jew was covered with a mesh of religious rites. The scribes had laid heavy burdens on the shoulders of men, and grievous to be borne (Mt. xxiii. 4). From this burden Jesus from the first kept His shoulders free; He ignored all the legislation of the scribes. We have already considered His own relation to the Law, and have seen that while He observed its ordinances He claimed to fulfil it, or to make it perfect. It was, of course, this perfected law which He designed for His kingdom, and since this law was inward and spiritual, its acceptance and observance involved a release from all the outward requirements of the old Law. It raised the disciples to a plane of freedom, to a life ruled from within and not from without.<sup>1</sup> Thus in this point the teaching of Jesus transcended His own practice. He Himself observed outward rites which His teaching was destined to destroy. He stood on the line between the old and the new, but in vital connection with both. He could not lead out of the old into the new without having in Him-

<sup>1</sup>Comp. Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 79.

self the spirit of the new and at the same time having upon Him the forms of the old. But when the transition was once accomplished, the forms of the old could be dropped, and must inevitably be dropped as the perfected law in Jesus came in between the disciples and the old rudimentary Law. In accordance with this attitude of Jesus toward the Law, we find that He has no teaching for His disciples in regard to outward religious rites. He refers to fasting, ceremonial cleanness, and the observance of the Sabbath, but with a single exception He never does this spontaneously. He speaks of them only when the correctness of his attitude toward them is challenged. The exceptional passage is Mt. vi. 16-18. Here Jesus refers to fasting, and does it of His own motive. He tells His disciples that when they fast, it must be *in secret*, unto God and not unto men. Their outward appearance is not to be that of fasting; and thus He intimates that the rite itself, as far as men can take cognizance of it, is of no value.

The defence which Jesus gave of His attitude toward fasting, ceremonial cleanness, and the Sabbath, has already been considered. In each case He justified His conduct and that of His disciples. They might fast if they had sorrow of heart, but as members of His kingdom they should not be sorrowful. In the matter of purity, they ought to think of the heart

rather than the hands, or what is put into the mouth. As for the Sabbath, it was ordained to minister to them and not to have lordship over them. Thus the words of Jesus in connection with these specific charges are in harmony with the principle which He lays down in the Sermon on the Mount.

Such being the attitude of Jesus toward the Law, we should not expect that He would institute new rites for His kingdom, and as far as our records go we find that He did not. It is true that, according to the fourth Gospel, He indorsed the rite of water-baptism, but even this was not imposed upon His disciples as a law. In the early Judean ministry, before Jesus fully began His Messianic work, He allowed His disciples to baptize, as John had done and was still doing. But it is significant that as soon as Jesus took up His work in Galilee, with which the first three Gospels begin, this rite of water-baptism disappears and leaves no trace behind. It is never once alluded to by Jesus in connection with a man's entrance into the kingdom of heaven. In the whole course of the Synoptic narrative, with the exception of Mt. xxviii. 19, it is never mentioned; nor is it alluded to in the fourth Gospel after the close of the early Judean ministry. It is therefore certain that the rite of baptism had no place in the Messianic activity of Jesus. If men could not be received into His

kingdom without baptism, then it is altogether probable that we should have references in the Gospel to the administration of the rite; and it is further probable, we may say *certain*, that the teaching of Jesus would have had something to say about this indispensable condition of discipleship. Therefore the injunction of Mt. xxviii.<sup>v</sup> 19, that the followers of Jesus should disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, comes wholly unexpected. The prominence which it gives to an outward rite is not in accord with the spirit of the teaching of Jesus. It is improbable that Jesus passed through His ministry up to the last hour without reference to baptism and without enacting a single law for the outward life of His disciples, and then in that last hour suddenly departed from His previous position and method, and gave His disciples a positive statute for the outward life. Moreover, there is strong evidence of another sort that this verse in Matthew cannot be attributed to Jesus. Throughout the apostolic age there is no trace of the Trinitarian formula of baptism. The apostles baptized into the name of Jesus, and into no other name, as far as the New Testament writings inform us. Now, had it been known that Jesus left a command to baptize into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, this prac-



tice of the apostolic age would be totally unintelligible. Would Peter have ignored a farewell command of his Lord, and have baptized, as he did, simply into the name of Jesus (Acts ii. 38; x. 48)? Would Paul have baptized into the name of Jesus, as he did, had there been extant in the Church a command of Jesus to baptize into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27)? This is incredible.<sup>1</sup>

It is true, however, that the very existence of baptism in the apostolic church from the first, and the absence of any suggestion that it was unauthorized, is proof that the apostles believed the rite to be in accord with the mind of Jesus. We cannot go so far as Beyschlag<sup>2</sup> and say that the practice of the apostles cannot be explained unless there was an *ordinance* of Jesus behind it. For the early church appointed deacons, and later elders, but there was certainly no command of Jesus back of these institutions. The apostles, of course, believed that they had the approval of Christ in the appointment of church officers, as no doubt they had; and in like manner they must have believed that the rite of baptism which they performed in His name was acceptable to Him. But the existence of the rite

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Teichmann, "Die Taufe bei Paulus," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1896; Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 610.

<sup>2</sup> See *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 181-182.

in the apostolic age no more presupposes an explicit command of Christ than does the existence of the office of deacon and elder.

We must, therefore, in view of all these facts, regard the formula of Mt. xxviii. 19 as an expression of ecclesiastical belief subsequent to the time of Paul, perhaps at the close of the first century.

The case of the Lord's Supper is different (Mk. xiv. 22-25). It is unquestionable that Jesus instituted this, and it seems most probable that He expected its continual observance among His disciples. Nor does its institution come unexpected. It was natural that Jesus should leave a memorial of Himself, when He departed from His disciples; and natural that He should put in parabolic form the great central lesson of the disciples' dependence upon Him. Moreover, the observance of the Supper is not commanded, but is rather invited. Mark has no command to observe the Supper. Luke has an exhortation in connection with the bread, but not with the wine. Matthew has an exhortation with both bread and wine. Now if Jesus had given an explicit command to observe the Supper, it would be strange that the oldest Gospel should have no trace of it. And, further, if Jesus had strictly commanded the observance of the Supper, it is probable that He would have fixed a time for it. Finally, the view that the observance of the Supper is not commanded but invited best accords

with its character as a memorial of love, since love is not treated by Jesus as subject to an outward command.

Therefore we conclude that Jesus did not institute for His disciples any rite of a legal nature. The only outward observance which He certainly instituted was a memorial of love, an observance which loses its meaning and force when legally interpreted.

It remains now to consider the thought of Jesus on the relation of a righteous man to his fellow-men. The moral teaching of Jesus, like His religious teaching, is dominated by one and the same great conception, namely, that of the fatherly character of God. The morality of Jesus is purely religious and controlled by the thought of God's relation to the individual soul.<sup>1</sup> The righteous man's duty to his fellow-believers and to his fellow-men springs out of the relation which subsists between him and God. He is a son of God, and this fact controls his ethical life. There is no place in the teaching of Jesus for a morality which is not based upon religion.

Jesus' conception of the fatherhood of God gave to His moral teaching a characteristic intensive and extensive element. It involves unselfish love, and it involves the exercise of this toward all men. Hence, it is the dominant fact in His teaching on the righteous

IV. The  
righteous  
man in his  
relation to  
men.  
a. The spirit  
of the ethics  
of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Ehrhardt, *Der Grundcharakter der Ethik Jesu*, p. 110.

man's relation to men. It involves the thought, as has already been intimated, that *brotherhood* is a broader term than *discipleship*.

There are certain passages in the teaching of Jesus in which the *brother* is the fellow-disciple and no other.

Such, for example, is Mk. iii. 35, where Jesus calls those His *brothers* who do the will of His Father in heaven. It is plain that this brotherhood is conditioned upon a spiritual fact, and hence is limited (Mt. xii. 50). We find the same usage in the judgment scene in Mt. xxv. 31-46. Those to whom Jesus refers as "these my brothers, these least," are those on His *right* hand, who are also called "righteous" and "blessed of my Father." Once more, when Jesus tells Simon that He has prayed for him, that his faith may not fail, and adds the injunction that when he has been turned again, he should *stablish* his *brothers* (Lk. xxii. 32), the "brothers" are of necessity fellow-disciples. Only such could be *stablished* in faith, for others would need to be brought into the faith, first of all, before they could be established; and to such only would Peter's experience be applicable who had come perilously near falling away from Christ. Here, therefore, the word *brother* is necessarily limited to the fellow-disciple.

In other passages the word *brother* is as plainly used in a comprehensive sense, meaning the brother-man,

b. The meanings of brotherhood.

irrespective of his religious faith. Such is the case, for example, in Mt. v. 22, "Every one who is angry with his *brother* shall be in danger of the judgment." The word *brother* cannot be limited here to the fellow-believer. For the very point of the passage is that Jesus goes back from the act of murder to the passion of anger in the heart, and declares that this is worthy of judgment. It is anger itself, rather than the ripe fruit of anger, that is condemned. But anger is anger, whether the brother believes as we do or not, and it is impossible to limit the scope of Jesus' word to any class of people. Further than this, the old law of murder was as broad as humanity. It read, "Whoso sheddeth *man's* blood, by man also shall his blood be shed" (Gen. ix. 6). This fact also requires that the brother of whom Jesus speaks in the passage under discussion be understood as the brother-man, and not limited to the fellow-disciple. Again, when Jesus speaks of seeing a mote in the *brother's* eye (Mt. vii. 3), it is impossible to suppose that He is thinking of the fellow-believer merely. The entire context is against such a limitation. Jesus is dealing with purposes of the heart, and purposes of the heart are right or wrong in themselves. Finally, in Mt. xxiii. 8-9, when Jesus was speaking to the multitudes as well as to His disciples, He said, "Be ye not called *rabbi*; for one is your teacher, and all ye are brothers." And the next verse suggests why they

all are brothers; it is because God is their common father.

In view of these passages, then, we must say that Jesus did not limit the word *brother* to the fellow-believer, but used it also in a broad sense, as describing the fellow-man.<sup>1</sup>

The word *neighbor* which Jesus uses in His summation of Law and prophets, and which He defines in the parable of the Merciful Samaritan, corresponds to *brother* in its comprehensive sense (Mk. xii. 31; Lk. x. 29-37). The first commandment is to love God, the second to love the neighbor. Now it is plain that Jesus did not mean by *neighbor*, in this passage, the one who is our friend, a sense which the word sometimes has in the Old Testament, and which it had among the Jews of Jesus' time (Mt. v. 43). For in the Sermon on the Mount, He teaches that His disciples should love their *enemies* as well as their friends, that is, they should love all men (Mt. v. 44). When, therefore, He says that one of the two commandments on which the Law and the prophets hinge is equal love of the *neighbor*, that word must be taken in the sense of one who is *near* us, whether friend or bitterest enemy. The Samaritan illustrated this second commandment. He loved his neighbor as himself; and his neighbor was not a Samaritan, but

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 269-271.

a Jew, and so presumably an enemy, for Jews and Samaritans were mutually hostile toward each other (Jn. iv. 9). The priest and Levite violated this same commandment. Their conception of neighbor was so narrow that it did not include the man whom the robbers had left half dead, though he was their countryman, and near to them in place, and in desperate need of their help.

The specific thoughts in Jesus' teaching on the righteous man's relation to men are the natural correlates of brotherhood, and flow like that from the fatherhood of God. Thus the disciple is to *love* his neighbor, for hate is unbrotherly and not in accord with his sonship to a heavenly Father. He is to love his neighbor *as himself*, for his neighbor is his brother (Mt. vii. 12). He is to love his brother, though this brother be in turn unbrotherly. To love only those who love us is to rise no higher than the plane on which the publicans and Gentiles stand, and on which the Jewish teachers also stood (Mt. v. 46-47; Lk. xiv. 12-14; xvi. 19-31). To love those who do not love us is to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect (Mt. v. 48).

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But while the disciples are enjoined to love their enemies, there is a limit to the *expression* of this love. Jesus tells His disciples not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor cast their pearls before swine (Mt. vii. 6).

The twelve disciples were to shake off the dust of their feet against any place which would not receive their testimony (Mt. x. 14). The brother who has sinned and who refuses to be reconciled to the one whom he has wronged, is to be counted unworthy of further fellowship. But this does not mean that love is ever to give place to hate. This is plainly inconsistent with a brotherhood which rests on the fatherhood of God. In all these cases of broken fellowship, love is still to remain the controlling principle; only for the present it has reached the limit of its manifestation.

Again, brotherhood implies *service*. The divine fatherhood which gives rise to this brotherhood is a fatherhood of service. Hence the sons of God, the members of Christ's kingdom, seek to do to others what they wish others to do for them, that is, seek to do them good (Mt. vii. 12). He who loves his neighbor as himself serves him as he would be served by him. He does not do this *in order that* he may himself be served in return. This motive would give us an earthly society of publicans and Gentiles, and not a kingdom of God (Mt. v. 46-48). In this kingdom, where all are brothers, one cannot strive to have the preëminence over another, and to rule his brother (Mt. xxiii. 8-10). The ambition which Jesus recognized as lawful among His disciples was the ambition to be the most helpful



(Mk. x. 35). According as the disciples have this spirit of service, they will be at peace among themselves, and not be asking which of them is greatest (Mk. ix. 50).

Furthermore, the principle of brotherhood implies practical *tolerance*. The unknown man who cast out demons in the name of Jesus (Mk. ix. 38-41), and whom the disciples sought to restrain from work because he did not follow them, must not be disturbed. If he had faith enough to do good in the name of Jesus, the disciples should let him alone. They should account the work that he is doing as a service to them; and though it were no more than giving a cup of water, they may be assured that even this service will not fail of a reward.

This brotherly tolerance must be maintained at any cost. Intolerance might cause a disciple to fall away, a "little one" like the unnamed man who was casting out demons in the name of Jesus (Mk. ix. 42). And it were better for a man to have a great millstone hanged about his neck and to be cast into the sea, than to alienate from Jesus any trusting soul. This statement reflects at once the lofty estimate which Jesus put upon the value of the soul (comp. Mk. viii. 36) and also His conviction that a soul's highest good consists in a right attitude toward Him.

Once more, the duty of *forgiveness*, which Jesus refers to several times, as though to suggest that the

disciples would have abundant opportunity to exercise it, is involved in the second great commandment of love for the neighbor, and is a necessary correlate of brotherhood. If the Father in heaven has forgiven the disciple "ten thousand talents," that disciple must be ready to forgive a fellow-disciple the paltry sum of a "hundred shillings" (Mt. xviii. 23-35). The fatherliness of God toward the disciple is an ample ground why the disciple should exercise unlimited forgiveness toward his brother.

Thus, in the Synoptic teaching of Jesus, the relation of His disciples to each other and to men in general is controlled by the facts of fatherhood and brotherhood. They are sons of the Father in heaven, therefore brothers to all of whom He is father. Fatherhood draws them to God, and is the life-principle in their religion; brotherhood draws them to each other, and is the life-principle in their morality. Religion is perfected when man is an ideal son of the heavenly Father; morality is perfected when man is an ideal brother to his fellow-men. And these two ideals are inseparable.

It is with the inner fact of brotherliness, the realization of the spirit of brotherhood, that Jesus is concerned. He did not discuss the changes which this principle would bring to the Family or to the State. His teaching did not include these institutions except as it did so

by implication.<sup>1</sup> His direct teaching on these subjects—a single brief passage on each—was called out by questions, and was not spontaneous, not a part of the message which He felt Himself divinely sent to proclaim to the world. It is safe then to assume that He had no ideal for the Family and no ideal for the State which would not be essentially realized with the realization of the filial spirit toward God and the brotherly spirit toward men.

This spirit of filial and brotherly love would manifestly sweep away the marriage legislation which made concessions to the hardness of men's hearts, and that is exactly what Jesus did when the question of divorce was put to Him by the Pharisees (Mk. x. 5; Mt. xix. 8). He went back to the primal ideal of marriage, the indissoluble union of one man and one woman. This is of God, a divine order which man cannot annul (Mk. x. 9). If either husband or wife divorce the other and marry again, the one thus acting commits the sin of adultery against the other (Mk. x. 11), because God has not released them from their mutual vows. He never does release them, according to Jesus, unless one party to the union is unfaithful (Mt. xix. 9). In that case the union is destroyed, and the

<sup>1</sup> For an admirable discussion of what is implied in the incidental utterances of Jesus on these subjects, see Shailer Mathews, *The Social Teaching of Jesus*.

innocent party is as free as though the union had never existed.

Thus Jesus abolished, as imperfect, the legislation regarding divorce which was warped by the hardness of man's heart. The ideal which He sets up in its place is an ideal which is in harmony with His fundamental conception of a man's true relation to God and to his fellow-men. It is the ideal of the spirit of religious love applied to the foundation of the family. The presumption is that Jesus would have left men to reach this ideal as they realized His spirit, if He had not been challenged by the specific question on divorce; and the history of divorce legislation in nominally Christian nations shows that it is wholly unavailing to have this ideal of Jesus when His spirit is not realized.

Again, the spirit of filial and brotherly love which Jesus taught and which He manifested in His life involves the equality of woman with man, as does His conception of marriage which has just been considered; but Jesus left this equality to be evolved with the development of the Christian spirit. He did not make it a subject of teaching, though His own personal treatment of women must have left an ineffaceable impression upon His disciples. His regard for them was in fundamental contrast with that of the Jewish teachers (Jn. iv. 27), for it was pervaded

by the same high respect which He showed for men.

Finally, Jesus did not discuss the relation of His disciples to the State, or what sort of political government they should aim to secure. His only direct utterance on the subject was called out by the plot of the Pharisees and Herodians to entrap Him in speech (Mk. xii. 13-17; Mt. xxii. 15-22; Lk. xx. 20-26), and went no further than the general principle that the government of God and the government of Cæsar may coëxist. His own life affirmed the same truth, for He was subject to earthly rulers and also to God. Surely Jesus "stands committed to no political teaching," as He stands committed to no ecclesiastical or social theory. It is life, not the countless manifestations of life, with which He is concerned. He gives new wine, and therewith the caution that it be put into new wine-skins; but He leaves it to His disciples to fashion these new wine-skins as shall seem best to them.

The fourth Gospel is almost silent on the subject under discussion,—the righteous man's relation to his fellow-men; yet it contains one important word of Jesus, and that is the *new commandment* which He gave to His disciples on the evening before His death. The essential thought of this is presented, first, in the symbolic washing of the

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disciples' feet. The evangelist regarded this as the uttermost proof of the love of Jesus for His disciples (Jn. xiii. 1). Jesus plainly intended that the act should teach the disciples the duty of loving one another, for He said, "I have given you an example that ye also should do as I have done to you" (Jn. xiii. 15). "If I, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn. xiii. 14). This is closely related to the Synoptic saying of Jesus, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mk. x. 45), but it is not identical with that statement. Both have to do with service as the fundamental principle of the new life, and in both the law for the disciples is the example of Jesus. But the symbolic washing of the disciples' feet is a more *intense* statement of the law of service than that of the Synoptists. It was an actual service, and not the statement of a principle; and then it was a *menial* service. It is just at this point that the "new commandment" in John has its peculiar significance. It was a commandment of mutual love and mutual love of a particular sort. Its standard was to be "even as I have loved you" (Jn. xiii. 34; xv. 12). The commandment to cultivate love was not new; it was a part of the Old Testament teaching. The newness of Jesus' commandment to His disciples must be found

therefore in the *standard* of love. This was indeed new. There had been no Jesus before; no such manifestation of love as His. There had been no life which commended unselfish love and made it the very heart of righteousness. Jesus' love of men was based on His sense of the fatherhood of God, and as this was new, the love also was new. Therefore the commandment to love *as He had loved* might be called a *new* commandment.

We can hardly say that the peculiarity of Jesus' love was this, that He loved others *better* than Himself; while the Law required that one should love the neighbor *as one's self*. There had been persons before Jesus who loved others better than themselves; many a mother who had thus loved her child; and many a patriot who had thus loved his people and land. The standard of Jesus is broader than this, and also more practical. The love of Jesus was a purely *religious* love. Its impulse was from God. He loved others as He did because conscious of the love of God for Himself and for them. This love, then, was a deep principle in His soul, and was unselfish. Therefore when He urged His disciples to love even as He had loved them, He urged them to have a love which springs from a sense of God's love, and which should control the entire life from within. This was what He had. And the commandment to love in this way is

practical, for it calls for a love which wells up naturally in the soul, when the soul knows God and in proportion as it knows Him. And as every soul can have this knowledge, so every soul can have this love.

It is peculiar to the fourth Gospel that this love is made the badge of discipleship. This living vital principle, this practical manifestation of the spirit of Jesus, and nothing else, shows that they belong to Him. It is significant, as has been pointed out,<sup>1</sup> that while Jesus, in the fourth Gospel, lays great stress upon the *knowledge* of God, He yet did not make a distinct *doctrine* of God, or a definite *cultus*, the characteristic mark of His disciples, but rather their mutual love for each other. And yet the evangelist is not inconsistent in first making eternal life depend upon a certain knowledge of God and Christ, and then making love the sole mark of discipleship, for this knowledge is gained through love, and this love is rooted in knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> See Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 290-291.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE OUTWARD DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

NOTHING is so noticeable in the teaching of Jesus in regard to the future of His cause as the vast breadth of His thought combined with the absolute simplicity of the means for the attainment of His end. When he had but a handful of disciples, and they very imperfect, He declared that they were the salt and the light, not of Galilee or Palestine, but of the *world* (Mt. v. 13-14); and at the end of His brief ministry He sent His "little flock" forth to disciple *all nations* (Mt. xxviii. 19). What had been dimly anticipated by prophets of the Old Testament regarding the sweep of the Messiah's influence, is the clear and constant thought of Jesus. While He gives Himself chiefly to a little band of disciples, and thinks of His own personal mission as being in an eminent sense to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, it is yet plain that from the beginning of His public career He believed that He was instituting a work which was to be as wide as humanity. And yet He sent forth His disciples

with no outward organization whatever. In the first part of the Galilean ministry Jesus appointed twelve men to preach and to heal, and they were associated with Him later; but He neither organized them among themselves, nor gave them any official standing with reference to other believers. The only fact that seems for a moment to suggest an inner organization is the word to Peter at Cæsarea Philippi:<sup>1</sup> "Thou art *Petros* and upon this *petra* I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt. xvi. 18). But no greater misinterpretation of the thought of Jesus has ever been committed than the view that Peter was made primate of the apostles by these words, and that this primacy was to be perpetuated by means of apostolic succession. This view did not originate in light and cannot bear the light. One fatal argument against it is the fact that Peter's confession was not the confession of a *new* faith in the Messiahship of Jesus, and that new faith peculiar to Peter;<sup>2</sup> but it was rather the confession of allegiance to an old faith, which was shared by the

<sup>1</sup> The fact that Judas seems to have been the treasurer of the apostolic circle (Jn. xii. 6) belongs simply to the domestic economy of the band.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 266-269.

other apostles as well as Peter. Therefore there was no *ground* for putting such high and permanent honor upon Peter as is implied in his so-called primacy. The purport of Peter's words was not, I now at last believe that Thou art the Messiah; but, I *still* believe that Thou art the Messiah. The crisis in Capernaum had just passed, and enthusiasm for Jesus had turned into bitter disappointment. Many of His former disciples went back and henceforth walked no more with Him (Jn. vi. 66). In this situation Jesus wished to find out how His twelve chosen ones stood, and hence He put the test-question at Cæsarea Philippi. They had long cherished the belief, more or less clear and positive, that He was the Messiah. They had accepted a commission from Him to preach the kingdom of heaven and to heal disease, and they had been successful in their work. They had heard Jesus claim to have authority to forgive sin, and had seen that claim supported by miracles. Of course their belief in His Messiahship had been very inadequate, but there had been in it a saving element of increasing personal attachment to Jesus, and the great fact brought out at Cæsarea Philippi was that, in face of the general desertion from Jesus, the apostles still clung to Him. Now Peter was not alone in this loyalty. All had believed in Jesus; all still believed with the exception of Judas, whose inward alienation dates as far back

as the critical day in the synagogue at Capernaum (Jn. vi. 70). Peter expressed the thought of the others as well as his own; and so Jesus charged all the disciples, not simply Peter, that they should tell no man that He was the Messiah (Mt. xvi. 20). It is impossible, then, in view of the fact that all the disciples had stood the strain of the past few days, and still clung to the person of Jesus, to suppose that He rewarded Peter's confession with a permanent primacy in the apostolic circle. The confession of Peter was due rather to his impulsiveness than to superior spiritual insight or superior courage.

It is necessary only to allude to the other facts which preclude the view that Jesus at this time established any organization among His disciples. When the question arose among the apostles, shortly after the experience at Cæsarea Philippi, which of them was the greatest, Jesus recognized no priority of rank whatever, save that which was based on eminence in serving others (Mk. ix. 35). Nor did Jesus in the subsequent days show any special consideration for Peter, or otherwise intimate that he was the head of the apostles. He chose Peter to go with Him to the mount of transfiguration, and also into the garden of Gethsemane, but He took James and John as well (Mk. ix. 2; xiv. 33). The disciple who leaned on the bosom of Jesus at the last supper was not Peter, but

John. The commission which the risen Lord gave to Peter, to feed His sheep, was evidently occasioned by Peter's threefold denial, and was his restoration to a common plane rather than an elevation above that plane (Jn. xxi. 15-18). And, finally, in the apostolic age, no primacy was accorded to Peter. He was prominent in the mother-church at Jerusalem, but he was only one of the three "pillars," and he is not mentioned first even of these. James was first (Gal. ii. 9).

The *rock* upon which Jesus declared that He would build His church was the rock of personal loyalty to Him, of which loyalty Peter was the first outspoken representative. The praise of this loyalty is not only that it furnishes an indestructible foundation for the Church, but also that the men who embody it hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and "bind" or "loose" with authority.<sup>1</sup> They and their teaching are the *standard* of moral and religious truth, as Jesus was in His earthly life. They are *authoritative* teachers as they are loyal to the Messiahship of Jesus; and therefore they are said to hold the keys<sup>2</sup> of the kingdom of heaven. Men enter or are refused entrance into that kingdom according as they accept or reject this one essential truth of loyalty to Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> See August Wünsche, *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Evangelien aus Talmud und Midrasch*, pp. 195-197.

<sup>2</sup> The same fundamental thought otherwise expressed in Jn. xx. 23.

But again, as there was no organization among the apostles, so Jesus gave them no official position with reference to other believers. As He sent them out to preach and heal, so later He sent out seventy on the same errand (Lk. x. 1). After He rose from the dead He neither appeared in a special manner to the apostles, nor gave them any special and exclusive commission. The commission to disciple *all nations* was probably given not to the apostles alone, but to more than five hundred disciples, that is, to the entire church.<sup>1</sup> The commission given in Jerusalem, of which Luke speaks, was not simply to the eleven, but to the eleven and *those with them* (Lk. xxiv. 33). All the disciples alike were to be His witnesses, and upon all alike was the promise of the Father to be sent (Lk. xxiv. 48-49).

Thus the eleven apostles had no ecclesiastical position from the hands of Jesus. They had enjoyed special privileges with Him, and had been specially fitted to form the nucleus of the brotherhood of disciples; but they had no ecclesiastical preëminence. The authority which they had was such as naturally belonged to their better acquaintance with the life of Jesus. It was moral rather than official.

This position is confirmed by the fact that the apostles themselves did not regard their office as per-

<sup>1</sup> See Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 398-399.

manent. When they appointed a man to take the place of Judas, the one necessary condition was that he should have personal knowledge of the entire ministry of Jesus, and should be a witness of His resurrection (Acts i. 21-22). It is plain, therefore, that they did not think of the apostolate as continuing longer than the generation which had witnessed the resurrection.

We conclude, then, that Jesus left the matter of the outward organization of His followers absolutely untouched, and hence He cannot have regarded it as a matter of essential importance. Jesus was the founder of the Church as a spiritual agency in the world, but no ecclesiastical organization or form of government can ever appeal to a word of His for support. He may have anticipated that His disciples, in time to come, would have some sort of organization; but if so, He was content to leave this to be developed according to the needs that might arise.

Jesus expected that His kingdom would be extended by personal witnessing. He devised no machinery. He wrote no book or tract to be put into the hands of His disciples. He gave them no miraculous power. He promised them the aid of the Holy Spirit in their witnessing, when they should be brought before governors and kings (Mk. xiii. 11); but in His final commission He said

II. The method of extending the kingdom.

nothing of power to heal and cast out demons. This had been part of their equipment on their early tour in Galilee, even as Jesus Himself wrought miracles to confirm His claim ; but as the working of miracles was incidental in the ministry of Jesus, so it was a temporary phenomenon in the work of the disciples. When His claim had been eternally established by the resurrection from the dead and by the coming of the kingdom of heaven at Pentecost, miracles were no longer needed, and soon ceased altogether.

The disciples were to rely upon purely spiritual and rational means for the accomplishment of their work. They were to bear witness of what they had seen and heard. It was thus that Jesus had won them, and thus they were to win others. Jesus had come to them personally, and had testified what He knew of the Father. By His life and words He had convinced them that He was their divinely appointed helper, the Messiah of God. And as He had been sent to them, so He sent them to others (Jn. xvii. 18).

This is the one great law for the development of Christ's kingdom which is found in the record of His teaching. He depended upon personal witness and personal contact. He did not say that the *Gospel*, either spoken or written, was the salt of the earth ; nor did He say that of any organization. He said it of the *men* who had accepted Him. It was



*they* who were to preserve the earth from corruption and make it acceptable to God.

Their verbal witnessing is summed up by Jesus as *confessing Him before men* (Mt. x. 32). That is to be the text of all their preaching. It is only as they are loyal to this truth that He gives them authority to "bind" and "loose" (Mt. xvi. 19). They will call men to repentance, but they will do it for the sole purpose that men may thereby enter into the kingdom and fellowship of Jesus (Mk. i. 15). They are to invite men to the feast of the Gospel, as Jesus had done (Mt. xxii. 1-14), and are to do it as moved by their own experience of the power and grace of that Gospel. Jesus in His preaching made known what He had experienced of the Father (Mt. xi. 27): His disciples were to make known what they had experienced of the Father through Jesus. He spoke to them in secret of the Father and His kingdom: this word they were to proclaim from the housetops, but only as it came from their own hearts (Mt. x. 27). He had no abstract message for humanity, and cannot have expected that His followers would have any. They were to "fish" for men, as He had done, with the bait of what they had seen and heard and experienced. And because their message, which was to transform men, was to come out of their own heart's experience, it is natural that Jesus laid stress upon

the witness in *life* as well as in words. The "light" that shines to the glory of the heavenly Father is the new personality itself: *ye* are the light of the world (Mt. v. 14). It must and will express itself in "good works," in ministering and sacrificing itself even as the Son of man ministered and gave His life (Mk. x. 43-45; Mt. xxv. 40).

There is nothing to indicate that Jesus regarded the life-witness of His disciples as less important in their work of extending the kingdom of heaven than the witness of His own life had been in His work. In harmony with all that Jesus said about the bearing of witness in word and life is the fact that He expected every follower to take part in extending His kingdom. He did not institute a special order of men to do this work. Bearing witness in word and in life that Jesus is the Messiah has a basis in each disciple's experience, and is part of each disciple's obligation. Jesus ordained all His disciples to the same service, and equipped them all with the same power. He included all in His farewell commission.

The *spirit* in which the disciples are to bear witness for the extension of the kingdom of Jesus is the spirit of gentleness and peace. The disciples are not to resist him that is evil, and smite when they are smitten (Mt. v. 39). Meekness turns the left cheek when the right is smitten; gives the cloke

when the coat has been taken, and goes two miles when forced to go one. The disciples are to be harmless as doves (Mt. x. 16). This language is plainly hyperbolic, and must not be taken in a coldly literal sense. It sets forth vividly the duty of gentleness. At the same time Jesus expected His disciples to have proper self-respect and to be courageous. When He was smitten before Annas, He did not turn the other cheek in a literal sense, but rebuked the officer who had struck Him (Jn. xviii. 22-23). The disciples are to be gentle, but they are also to be courageous and fear no man (Mt. x. 26, 28; Lk. x. 19). They are on their Father's business, and He will care for them.

This extension of the kingdom of heaven by gentle witness-bearing, like that of Jesus, is in strongest contrast with the popular view of that day in regard to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom.<sup>1</sup> According to this view, the Messiah Himself was to set up the kingdom, destroying the enemies by the word of His mouth. It was to be done suddenly and miraculously, and the Jewish people would have nothing to do but to stand still and see their great deliverance accomplished. This outward miraculous method perhaps suited the conception of an earthly, political kingdom, as well as the method of Jesus suited the conception of a spiritual and heavenly kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 56-61,

Jesus did not expect that His kingdom would be extended without many and serious hinderances. He had met with an increasing opposition from the very beginning of His ministry, and He anticipated the same sort of opposition for His disciples. If men had called the master of the house Beelzebub, much more would they apply this epithet to the members of his household (Mt. x. 25). This opposition was felt to be inevitable from the very nature of Christ's work. He had come to send a *sword* on earth, not peace (Mt. x. 34). He had come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Mt. x. 35-36). His claim to Messiahship was fundamental, and men, must accept it or reject it, and so be sharply divided on a supreme issue. Jesus taught His disciples to expect hostility, and said it would be an evil day when all men should speak well of them (Lk. vi. 26). That was the way the false prophets were treated in the olden time, but the true prophets met with persecution. Jesus regarded a like fate for His followers as so certain, and as such a constant part of their experience, that He spoke a beatitude for those who should endure this opposition for His sake (Mt. v. 10-12).

Jesus drew a dark picture of the opposition which His disciples must meet. They would be scourged

in synagogues; they would be brought as criminals before governors and kings; brother would deliver brother to death, and a father his child. The disciples would be hated of all men for the sake of Christ; and as the bitterest drop in the cup of suffering, they who persecuted them unto the death would think that they were rendering service to God (Mt. x. 17-23; Mk. xiii. 9-13). This language was meant to prepare the disciples for the worst, but Jesus did not expect them to take it all literally. They would not be hated of *all* men; some were to receive them with joy. They would find *sons of peace* in some houses (Lk. x. 6), and their word would fall into some good soil (Mt. xiii. 8). But Jesus would not have the disciples underestimate the strength or the bitterness of the hostility to which they were to be exposed. They must be ready to be as their Master even in the outward fate which befell Him.

The opposition which Jesus foresaw was not to come wholly from His open enemies. The disciples would have to meet false prophets, who, under sheep's clothing, have a wolf's heart (Mt. vii. 15). These will do signs and wonders, and unless the disciples take heed, they will be led astray by them (Mk. xiii. 22-23). This inner opposition is still broader than that of false prophets. There are tares mingled with the wheat, false disciples among the genuine (Mt. xiii. 24-30), and this

fact inevitably adds to the temptations of the disciples and hampers their work. Jesus did not anticipate that these forms of opposition would cease until the consummation of His kingdom (Mt. xiii. 37-43, 47-50).

It is plain from the words of Jesus, which have already been cited in this Chapter, that He thought of the opposition to the development of His kingdom in the world as proceeding wholly from men. Whatever He believed in regard to Satan and other evil spirits, He thought of men as the only immediate agents in the opposition, and as being always responsible for their deeds. He refers now and again to an invisible power which is opposed to God, but He gave His disciples nothing like a definite doctrine in regard to this power (Mt. vi. 13; Lk. x. 18; xxii. 31). His allusions to Satan are rare, as are also His references to good angels—a fact which is in striking contrast to the elaborate Jewish doctrine of good and bad spirits which come between men and God. Again, Jesus' allusions to Satan are almost entirely in passages which are highly figurative and poetical, and thus His usage is in line with the noteworthy circumstance that the two books of the Bible which have most to say about Satan are poetical books,—Job and Revelation. The only striking exception to this usage is the petition in the model for prayer, "Deliver us from the evil *one*;" but these words are not found in the shorter version

of the prayer in Luke;<sup>1</sup> and it is possible that "the evil *one*" is hardly more than a concrete equivalent of the word *temptation*.

Jesus usually speaks as though believing in the existence of a personal Satan, even as the Gospels represent Him as believing in the existence of personal demons; but, on the other hand, there are passages in which Satan seems to be the name of impersonal evil tendencies or ideas. Thus in the story of the temptation, the proposal of Satan to give to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world may be simply a dramatic expression of the popular belief that the Jewish Messiah was indeed to rule all the kingdoms of the world. Again, it is plainly impossible to take literally the statements that the devil set Jesus on a pinnacle of the temple, and the devil brought Him to the top of an exceeding high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant. It was only *in thought* that Jesus stood on the pinnacle of the temple, and beheld all the kingdoms of the world from the top of a mountain.<sup>2</sup> He was in the wilderness all the forty days. But since thus the movements of Satan are part of the drapery of the thought and not real historical actions, it lies near to suppose that the name itself is here only a vivid con-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 238-239.

<sup>2</sup> See Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 132-134.

crete designation of all methods of Messianic work, which Jesus recognized as false. In like manner, when Jesus addresses Peter as *Satan*, this usage suggests that, in His thought, whatever was opposed to God was properly designated Satan (Mt. xvi. 23). But this point of the personality or impersonality of Satan is relatively unimportant in the teaching of Jesus. The existence of tendencies and forces which are hostile to God is perfectly manifest; and Jesus, in His outlook over the work of His disciples in the extension of the kingdom of heaven, contemplates these forces and tendencies only as embodied in men.

It is true also of the fourth Gospel, as of the Synoptists, that the opposition which Jesus anticipated was to come from men. Its references to *Satan* differ somewhat from those of the earlier Gospels, yet this difference appears to be formal. He is spoken of as a murderer and liar from the beginning of history (Jn. viii. 44),<sup>1</sup> but this statement probably does not imply an independent activity of Satan. He is called a murderer and a liar in view of such facts as Cain's murder of Abel and his subsequent lie about it (comp. 1 Jn. iii. 12). But God held Cain responsible for those deeds (Gen.

<sup>1</sup> The statement that the devil has not "stood" in the truth seems to mean that he has not cherished it, and hence does not suggest a fall from a state of holiness.



iv. 11-12). This conception of Satan as embodied in bad men is perfectly evident from the reference to Judas (Jn. xiv. 30). When Jesus anticipated the coming of Judas and the Jews to seize Him, He said, "The Prince of the world cometh;" that is to say, Jesus regarded Judas and the Jews as a visible embodiment of the prince of the world, so that when they come, the prince comes. All the other references to Satan as "the prince of the world" are in connection with the crucifixion (Jn. xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11), and are to be understood in the same manner as that which has just been explained. Thus we see that, in John, Satan is referred to only where we have the most extreme manifestations of human sin, and then he is represented as embodied in men, much as though he were regarded merely as a personification of the principle of sin. The thought that his dominion extends over the whole world is the same that we have in the account of the temptation, where the devil offers Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth and their glory.

But while Satan is represented both in the Synop-  
tists and John as the ruler of this world, his *status*  
is not now what it once was. Jesus overcame him  
(Mt. iv. 1-11), and henceforth for Jesus and His  
disciples he is virtually a *bound* Satan (Mk. iii. 27).  
His power is limited, as Jesus intimated in the  
symbolic word about beholding Satan as lightning

fallen from heaven (Lk. x. 18; comp. Jn. xii. 31). Whether Satan be thought of as personal or impersonal, his power has been broken by Jesus, and his opposition to the kingdom of heaven can never again be what it formerly was. The disciples may still be persecuted and put to death, but they can now more easily and perfectly maintain their own integrity of spirit, which after all is the chief thing (Mk. xiii. 13; Jn. xvi. 33).

In the words of Jesus regarding the ultimate extent of His kingdom on earth we hear at one time a note of triumph and largest hope; and at another time an accent, not indeed of despair or discouragement, but an accent of measured expectation. The experience of Jesus Himself, judged by outward results, was fitted to depress the most hopeful worker. He found many kinds of soil that brought no fruit. The people of His own town sought to kill Him; the people of His province rejected Him; and the leaders of the religion of Israel put Him to death in the sacred name of religion. He saw many entering the broad way which leads to destruction, and but few finding the narrow gate. Many were called, but few were chosen (Mt. xxii. 14).

Sometimes the work of the disciples seems to be covered largely by the shadow of this experience of

Jesus. Thus He tells them that they shall be hated of all men (Mt. x. 22). He likens the kingdom itself to a field in which there will be tares among the wheat until the harvest, and to a net which gathers both bad fish and good; and if such be the condition within the kingdom, the condition outside must be abundantly discouraging. On a certain occasion one asked Jesus whether many would be saved (Lk. xiii. 23-24). Jesus in His reply did not say whether many or few would be saved, but said that many would strive to enter and would not be able. Again, in concluding a parable on the duty of prayer, He asks whether the Son of man, when He comes, shall find faith on earth, that is, whether the disciples will still believe in the coming of the Messiah (Lk. xviii. 8).<sup>1</sup> In His discourse on the last things He speaks of a future multiplication of iniquity, and says that the love of the *many* shall wax cold (Mt. xxiv. 12). At the end of the age, when the Son of man is seen coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, all the tribes of the earth shall *mourn* (Mt. xxiv. 30); and this mourning shows that the tribes of the earth are not thought of as His disciples, for in that case they would rejoice at the coming of Jesus.

These sayings all involve the thought that the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 607.

success of the Gospel will be far from complete. The kingdom on earth will not be ideal either in extent or in quality, unless indeed Jesus thought of earthly history as extending beyond His *parousia*.<sup>1</sup>

But the sombre outlook of these passages must be compared with the outlook of a larger number of passages whose spirit is one of victory. It has been remarked that Jesus' conception of God as the divine Father made a fundamental optimism necessary; and certainly the dominant note in His words regarding the future of His kingdom on earth is optimistic. Thus when Jesus calls His disciples the salt of the earth and the light of the world, the language implies that it is their destiny to salt the earth and to light the world (Mt. v. 13-16). He spoke two parables, whose central thought is the greatness of the final outcome of His cause. The kingdom of heaven is likened to mustard seed, which of all seeds shows the largest capacity for development (Mk. iv. 30-32), and it is likened to leaven which does not cease working until the entire mass in which it is placed has been leavened (Mt. xiii. 33). These parables reflect a positive conviction that the outcome of His work will be large relatively to its beginning, and large also relatively to the extent of humanity.

<sup>1</sup> See H. J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 179.

Again, when speaking of the failure of His cause among the Jews of that generation, Jesus looked forward to a successful work among the Gentiles. The kingdom of heaven was to be taken from the Jews and given to a nation that would bring forth its fruits (Mt. xxi. 43). A large outlook is found also in a saying of Jesus relative to his own personal sacrifice, that the Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many (Mk. x. 45); and Mt. xxviii. 19, though in its present form probably not from Jesus, doubtless rests upon some farewell word of the Saviour which pointed to a hopeful work of His disciples among all nations. These passages justify the statement that the *dominant* thought in the words of Jesus regarding the future of His kingdom on earth is that of development and victory.

So also in the fourth Gospel the brighter view of the future of the kingdom of heaven is the more conspicuous. There are broad and dark shadows on that future. Men would not come to Jesus (Jn. v. 40), they loved darkness rather than light (Jn. iii. 19); and as it had been in His experience, so it was to be in the experience of His disciples. They would be hated and persecuted and put to death (Jn. xv. 19, 20; xvi. 1-2), for the prince of this world is the deadly enemy of Jesus (Jn. xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11). Yet in spite of these facts there is more light

than shadow in the Johannean outlook for the future. The kernel of grain that dies bears *much* fruit (Jn. xii. 24), and Jesus, when lifted up, will draw *all* men unto himself (Jn. xii. 32). He speaks of the Spirit as the one who will convince the *world* in respect of sin and of righteousness and of judgment (Jn. xvi. 8). He prays for the unity of His disciples that the *world* may believe that He is sent from God, and that the *world* may know that the Father loves the disciples as He loved Jesus (Jn. xvii. 21, 23). This language is, of course, modified by the other class of passages which speak of the sweep and the persistence of the opposition to Jesus; but still it unquestionably shows that Jesus anticipated immense, world-wide results from His seed-sowing.

And here the matter must be left by the historical student. Jesus saw no cessation of the conflict within the horizon of earthly history. He saw increasing victory in the coming years, a preaching of the Gospel throughout the entire earth, a leavening of the whole mass of humanity, a world-wide influence of attraction proceeding from Him as the revealer of God; but no era when conflict should cease, no era when His disciples could drop the petition for deliverance from the evil one, or when they would no longer have opportunity to bear witness for Him and labor for the extension of His kingdom.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PERSON OF JESUS THE MESSIAH

THE first fact which meets us in the Synoptic testimony of Jesus in regard to His own person is that He claims and manifests a truly human consciousness. It is important to notice the character and extent of this evidence, both on its own account and because of its bearing on the question of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus.

I. The human consciousness of Jesus.

In the examination of this point we may begin with the account of the temptation in the wilderness, which must be traced at last to Jesus' own report to His disciples. Here Jesus applies to Himself words which were spoken of old to the individual Israelite. He throws up, as a bulwark against the tempter, various moral teachings of the Old Testament, thus manifestly feeling that He is on the same plane with those to whom the words first came. He quotes, as applicable to Himself: "*Man* shall not live by bread alone;" "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy *God*;" "Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy *God*"

(Mt. iv. 4, 7-10). This language seems to be an unmistakable expression of a human consciousness. Jesus feels Himself a man, and looks up to Jehovah as His God, whom He should worship.

A little later than the experience in the wilderness, we see Jesus *praying* near Capernaum (Mk. i. 35). This act is one of a series stretching through the entire ministry of Jesus. Thus it is recorded that Jesus spent an entire night in prayer before the appointment of the twelve apostles (Lk. vi. 12), and Luke preserves a tradition that it was the praying of Jesus which led His disciples to ask Him to teach them how to pray, as John taught his disciples (Lk. xi. 1). Jesus thanked the Father for revealing the mystery of the Gospel to babes (Mt. xi. 25). He asked God's blessing on the bread and fish with which at two different times he fed the multitudes (Mk. vi. 41; viii. 6). According to Luke, Jesus was engaged in prayer when the vision of His transfiguration was granted to the three disciples (Lk. ix. 28). At the Last Supper He gave thanks for the bread and wine, and asked God's blessing upon them (Mk. xiv. 22-23). He prayed repeatedly in Gethsemane that the hour might pass (Mk. xiv. 35, 36, 39). He prayed on the cross both for Himself and for those who had crucified Him (Mk. xv. 34; Lk. xxiii. 34, 46).



Since Jesus prayed, we must believe that He felt a *need* of prayer. He offered sincere thanks and sincere supplications for the Father's help. He looked away from Himself as one consciously dependent. He subordinated His will to a higher will (Mk. xiv. 36). He secured inward quietness and strength by casting Himself upon the will of God. Now in all these situations Jesus comes before us as a true man. There is the same sense of creaturely dependence that we find in ourselves. Jesus did not have one kind of prayer for Himself and another kind for His disciples. As He approached God with the name *Father*, so He taught His disciples to do. The prayers of Jesus can all be prayed by His followers, as far as their circumstances correspond with His. There is nothing in them that suggests a consciousness other than that of an ideal man. This line of evidence is of peculiar value, for through the prayers of any soul we see into its inmost depths, its most sacred feelings and beliefs.

The human consciousness of Jesus is further seen in His sense of *limited knowledge*. This is, of course, implied in the fact of prayer, but there is other evidence of an absolute character. Thus Jesus declares that the hour of His *parousia* is unknown to Him, and known only to the Father (Mk. xiii. 32; Mt. xxiv. 36). This statement is clear and positive. It is equal

to a declaration that He is not omniscient; or, taking this fact together with the preceding evidence of a human consciousness, it seems necessary to say that these words imply a consciousness of the ordinary human limitations of knowledge. Moreover, there are particular circumstances in the life of Jesus which confirm this statement. Thus He came to a fig tree on a certain occasion to see if it had fruit (Mk. xi. 13-14). He plainly thought it possible that He might find some, and He was mistaken. Again, He asked His disciples how many loaves they had (Mk. vi. 38), and on another occasion, when people were thronging Him, He asked who had touched Him (Mk. v. 30). He asked a blind man, whose eyes He had touched, whether he saw anything (Mk. viii. 23); and other blind men, who sought healing, He asked whether they believed Him able to heal them (Mt. ix. 28). He asked the father of the epileptic boy how long his child had been thus afflicted (Mk. ix. 21). Now in all these, and other similar cases in the Synoptic record, if we interpret naturally, we must suppose that Jesus was sincere in His questions, and asked for information. There is no intimation that He knew beforehand and only asked the questions for effect. On the contrary, in view of the evidence already considered, that Jesus had a human consciousness, it must be held to be

entirely unfounded when one says that Jesus did not need to ask questions. The few exceptional occasions when His knowledge surpassed human limitations belong with His miraculous deeds, and have the same explanation.

As Jesus was conscious of limited knowledge, so also of limited *power*. The fact that He prayed is sufficient basis for this statement, but there is further evidence which must be noticed. Thus Jesus says that it is by the *Spirit of God*, or, in Luke's version, by the *finger of God*, that He casts out demons (Mt. xii. 28; Lk. xi. 20). He does not do it in His own unaided strength, but in dependence upon the power of God. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we are required to apply to *all* His miracles what Jesus here said in regard to a particular class of them, and hold that He wrought them all in conscious dependence on God. Again, Jesus tells the ambitious brothers, James and John, that it is not in His power to bestow upon them the first places even in His own kingdom (Mk. x. 40). To do that would transcend the limits of His authority. Once more, in the hour of His arrest, Jesus rebuked the well-meant attempt of Peter to defend Him with sword, and said that if He needed deliverance He could pray His Father, and He would send Him more than twelve legions of angels (Mt. xxvi. 53). Thus He was con-

scious that, in Himself, He was helpless. His rescue from Judas and the soldiers must come from God, if it come at all. His own power and that of His disciples is limited; but God's power is unlimited.

Thus we have clear and unambiguous proof that Jesus was conscious of limitation in power as of limitation in knowledge. The superhuman power which He exercised at times was, according to His own testimony, *given* to Him. It was not native and inherent. And we must judge in the same manner of the supernatural knowledge which Jesus manifested at times. By supernatural knowledge is not meant omniscience. As we have already seen, the theory that Jesus was omniscient is wrecked on His plain word, and ought never to have been held. But He certainly had supernatural knowledge in regard to particular events, as, for example, in regard to His own death and resurrection. It is true, the evidences of such knowledge are comparatively rare. The Gospel narrative, *in the main*, not only does not require us to think that Jesus had superhuman knowledge, but very often assumes that He had not. The evidence for this has already been cited. In view, then, of these facts, we must say that supernatural knowledge was no more inherent in Jesus than supernatural power. When He had such knowledge, it was a gift of God for the purposes of the Messianic work.

There is another and different evidence of human consciousness to which we may properly refer before leaving this subject; and that is the fact that Jesus refused to be called *good*, saying that only God is good (Mk. x. 18). Now it is certain, as we shall show later, that Jesus was conscious of perfect integrity, of absolute sinlessness before God. Therefore, when He declines the epithet *good*, and says it belongs to God alone, He must do so in the consciousness that He is a man, exposed to temptation, subject to change, and not in the absolute and unchangeable possession of goodness or righteousness (comp. Heb. ii. 10). He knows in Himself<sup>e</sup> that He has not fallen below the standard of righteousness, but that standard is the will of God, not His own will (Mk. xiv. 36), and He conforms to it by conscious and strenuous moral effort, as appears, for example, in the record of the temptation. Had He been righteous or good as God is good, He could not have been tempted of evil, even as God cannot be (James i. 13). The standard of righteousness for God is not outside Himself, neither can we conceive it necessary or possible for Him to put forth effort in order to be perfectly righteous. We can understand, then, how Jesus could point to God as the only good one, and at the same time be conscious that He Himself had never sinned. He does so because His consciousness is that of a man, and

He feels that the quality of His inner life is dependent upon the Spirit of God.

A second fact which meets us in the Synoptic record of the testimony of Jesus concerning His own person

is the consciousness of *perfect moral union with the Father*. This is foreshadowed in the story of the boy Jesus in the temple (Lk. ii. 49). The unclouded consciousness that God is His Father, and the consequent sense of obligation to Him, while they do not necessarily argue a consciousness of sinlessness, at least suggest that His consciousness of God was unique. Yet an undue importance may easily be attached to this saying. It is the saying of a boy, and not of a philosopher or a theologian. It is a saying which does not take us beyond the ideal piety of the Old Testament. As we have already seen, the Old Testament sometimes rises to the conception that God is the father, even of individual souls, and of course teaches that the things of God should be put first. Practically, however, the sense of sonship which appears in these words of Jesus does not seem to have been often experienced under the Old Covenant, and probably was never experienced in so high and pure a degree as by Jesus at twelve years of age. This sonship to which the passage in Luke bears witness is certainly ethical and only ethical. To suppose that the boy Jesus hinted at

II. The consciousness of perfect moral union with the Father.

a peculiar metaphysical relation to God when he said "my Father," is a view which is condemned by the explicit and abounding evidence that Jesus had a truly human consciousness. To suppose that He used the words in a Messianic sense is simply to ignore one of the plainest historical teachings of the Synoptic Gospels, for they date the Messianic consciousness of Jesus from the hour of His baptism. It remains, then, to see in the words of the boy Jesus the evidence of an ideal filial spirit. They harmonize perfectly with the evangelist's sketch of the truly human development of Jesus, when he says that He "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Lk. ii. 52).

When we come to the public ministry of Jesus we find abundant evidence that He was conscious of a peculiar moral relation to God. We notice this first in His attitude toward the Law. In the Sermon on the Mount He says that He came to *fulfil* the Law and the prophets (Mt. v. 17), and it is plain from the following verse that He is not thinking of the Messianic prophecies in particular, but of the comprehensive moral purpose of God. It follows from this claim of Jesus that He was conscious of being in perfect harmony with the divine ideal. Had His vision of God been obscured by any slightest consciousness of sin and ill desert, He must, if honest, have recognized that He could not *fulfil*

the Law and the prophets. He must have known within Himself that He was not qualified to see or to say what the *perfect* will of God is. He might have felt Himself *in line* with the lawgiver and the prophets, as called of God to communicate His revelation, but He could not have had the serene consciousness of manifesting the final message of God to men. In order to fulfil this end He must have been conscious of standing in perfect accord with the will of His heavenly Father.

Again, a consciousness of perfect moral union with God is involved in Jesus' claim to be the *judge* of men. He is the judge by virtue of the fact that He is also the standard. He makes it plain that He will judge men according to their attitude toward Him (Mt. x. 32-33; Mk. viii. 35, 38; Mt. xviii. 6, etc.). Whosoever confesses Him, He will confess before His Father; whosoever denies Him, He will deny before His Father. Whosoever causes a little one who believes in Him to stumble, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the sea. Unless the Jews repent of their unbelief toward Him, they shall perish (Lk. xiii. 3, 5). Those on the right hand of the Judge are approved because they have manifested the spirit of Jesus (Mt. xxv. 37). According to this scene, the spirit of Jesus is the test of judgment. But since Jesus claimed to be the standard according to which all mankind are to be



assigned to their everlasting conditions, He must have believed that the standard was perfect. And the other passages which have just been cited are in harmony with this scene. Confessing Jesus or denying Him means accepting or rejecting Him as the anointed of God, who by His life and teaching makes known the perfect way of salvation. So the consciousness of being the judge of men involves the consciousness of being in perfect accord with the will of God.

Again, there is proof that Jesus was conscious of perfect moral union with God in the fact that He never betrays the slightest sense of guilt. This fact cannot be taken alone; it owes its chief significance to another fact, namely, that Jesus showed the most perfect apprehension of sin and virtue. Thus in all His teaching He goes beneath the outward act and profession, and declares that everything depends upon the purpose of the heart. It is by this that a man is judged sinful or virtuous. The ethical teaching of the Old Testament is estimated by Jesus with unerring insight, and the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of His own day is uncovered and analyzed in a way that argues perfect moral perception. Now that a man with such an apprehension of sin and virtue never betrays any sense of ill desert is an evidence of the greatest importance. Jesus taught his disciples to pray for the forgiveness

of their debts (Mt. vi. 12), but *He* never prays thus. He adopts the lament of the Psalmist, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" but it is plain that these words do not imply a sense of ill desert (Mk. xv. 34). Had He been conscious of ill desert, then the feeling that God was afar off would have been no mystery to Him. In the various prayers of Jesus there is never a word nor an accent of confession; but had He been conscious of any sin, He was the one of all men who would have been most deeply humbled by it. The saintlier a man is, the keener is his shame and pain when he does wrong.

In connection with this absence of any trace of guilt, and confirming what has been said, we may notice the absolute serenity of Jesus in the moments of extreme peril, and when confronting death on the cross. He was calm when the boat was beginning to sink on the lake of Galilee (Mk. iv. 38-40). He was agitated, it is true, in Gethsemane, but not through fear of what comes after death (Mk. xiv. 33-34). He prayed that a certain cup might pass, but there was no obstruction between Him and the Father. His fellowship with God was untroubled. His highest desire was that the divine will might be done (Mk. xiv. 36). When about to expire on the cross, He assured the dying robber that he should be with Him that day in Paradise (Lk. xxiii. 43). There is not only no fear of what is after death, but

there is a perfect certainty of entering Paradise; and what is more, there is a calm assurance that He can promise Paradise to the dying man at His side.

We have seen that Jesus had a truly human consciousness, and that He had also a consciousness of perfect moral union with God. Still more varied and extensive is the evidence that He was conscious of being *the Messiah of the Old Testament Scriptures*. We find this evidence, first, in the titles which Jesus applied to Himself, or which were given to Him by others and which He tacitly accepted. We come upon the first of these significant titles in the hour of Jesus' baptism, when He heard a voice out of heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved *Son*, in thee I am well pleased" (Mk. ii. 10-11; Mt. iii. 16-17; Lk. iii. 21-22). This communication was a divine revelation to Jesus, a clear disclosure to His spirit of a new and momentous relationship to God. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, given to Jesus now in the fullest measure, the consciousness of being the well beloved Son of God was awakened.<sup>1</sup> We are here concerned not with the method, but with the meaning of this communication. When the consciousness of Jesus expressed itself in the words, I am the beloved Son of God, what did those words signify to Him? The Synoptic Gospels leave us

III. The  
Messianic  
conscious-  
ness of Jesus.  
a. The title  
*Son of God*.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Baldensperger, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*, p. 163.

in no doubt as to the reply which must be given to that question. On the lips of Jesus and the evangelists, the title *Son of God*, as applied to Jesus, had a preëminently Messianic significance, but also an ethical element.<sup>1</sup> It seems plain that Jesus so understood the term, for, in the first place, from the hour of His baptism, when He was addressed as the Son of God, His career is distinctively Messianic. His temptation is intelligible only on the view that Jesus believed Himself to be the Messiah, and in the wilderness was contemplating the Messianic work. In other words, the Messianic temptation implies that the heavenly announcement, "Thou art my beloved Son," was for Jesus a virtual announcement of Messiahship. Its burden, therefore, was not ethical. If the term *Son of God* had for Jesus, primarily, the thought of a unique relationship of *love* with the Father, then it is not apparent why Jesus was impelled to go from the place of baptism into the wilderness, to a temptation which concerned the exercise of His Messianic prerogatives. A sense of the Father's love, even the sense of an altogether special love of the Father, does not lead to the wilderness and to temptation. Such a sense of God's

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 193; Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 166; Briggs, *The Messiah of the Gospels*, pp. 76-77; Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 66-67; Baldensperger, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*, pp. 78, 160; Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 433.

love might call a noble soul to self-sacrifice, but it is not apparent why its possessor should at once feel himself clothed with Messianic authority. Not only does the temptation imply that Jesus regarded the baptismal announcement as a revelation of Messiahship, but it is also implied in the fact that, immediately after the temptation, Jesus entered upon Messianic work. As far, then, as the Synoptic record goes, the Messianic temptation and the Messianic career have their origin in the heavenly announcement by the Jordan, "Thou art my beloved Son."

There is another passage in which Jesus virtually applies to Himself the title *Son of God*, though not of His own impulse; and the teaching of this is no less explicit than that of the foregoing facts. The high priest demands of Jesus that He shall say, under oath, whether He is Christ, the Son of the Blessed, or as Matthew says, the Son of God (Mk. xiv. 61-62; Lk. xxii. 66-70; Mt. xxvi. 63-64). Jesus replies, "I am," that is, I am the Christ, I am the Son of God. There is no suggestion here that the term *Son of God* means anything different from *Christ*. It appears to be an explanatory synonym.

The passages in which Jesus speaks of God as His Father do not belong in this connection, though of course, every time that He thus speaks, He claims to be in some sense a Son of God. But still these

passages are not to be classed with the Messianic titles, because Jesus refers to God as the Father of His disciples and of other men, no less than as His own Father. There is no suggestion that He puts something essential into the fatherhood in one case which it does not have in the other.

Again, it is plain that the evangelists, as well as Jesus, made no essential distinction between the titles *Messiah* and *Son of God*. Sometimes they represent the demoniacs as knowing that Jesus was the *Messiah* (Mk. i. 34; Lk. iv. 41), or, what is equivalent, the *Consecrated One of God* (Mk. i. 24); and again as calling Him the *Son of God* (Mk. iii. 11). This interchange of terms we find in one and the same writer, and even within the compass of a single verse. Thus, in Lk. iv. 41, we read that demons came out of many persons, saying (to Jesus), "Thou art the Son of God;" and also that He did not allow them to speak because they knew that He was the *Christ*. It is obvious that this evangelist regarded the two terms as synonyms, and it is sufficiently plain that they were so regarded by Mark.

In the account of the confession of Peter, Mark has the words, "Thou art the Christ," while Matthew has, "Thou art the Christ, *the Son of the living God*" (Mk. viii. 29; Mt. xvi. 16). It can hardly be held that Matthew's second clause introduces any new idea.

It simply strengthens the statement that Jesus is the Messiah. Peter does not confess two things, namely, that Jesus is the Messiah, and also that he stands in a unique relation of love to the Father. Again, in Luke's account of the trial of Jesus by the sanhedrin, the members of the court ask Jesus if He is the *Christ*, and then after a moment ask if He is the *Son of God* (Lk. xxii. 67, 70). The situation is unchanged, and the purport of the second question is exactly that of the first. When they ask if He is the *Son of God*, they do not seek to know whether He claims to stand in a peculiar relation of love to the Father. It was wholly immaterial to them whether He claimed such a relationship of love or not. The sole point of interest to them was whether He claimed to be the Jewish *Messiah*. When they found that He did, they charged Him with blasphemy (Mt. xxvi. 6). Holding such views as they did of the glory and power of the Messiah, they could use no milder term than *blasphemy* for the claim of this helpless prisoner, this untaught man, who had never even been recognized by the religious authorities in Israel, this would-be reformer from Nazareth, who had been betrayed by one of His own disciples for the paltry sum of fifteen dollars.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, we must say, that in the thought of Jesus and of the Jews of His day, the title *Son of God* was

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 265.

practically equivalent to *Messiah*. So it belongs with the titles: *The Coming One* (Mt. xi.3), *The Holy One of God* (Mk. i. 24), *The Son of David* (Mt. xii. 23), and *The King of Israel* (Mk. xv. 32), all of which were used in addressing Jesus but never employed by Him.

This title *Son of God* is based directly upon the Old Testament, and particularly upon Ps. ii. 7 (comp. Ps. lxxxix. 27; 2 Sam. vii. 14), which is applied to Jesus by New Testament writers (Acts xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5). The Messianic king, who was a type of the Messiah, is here called the *Son of God*. Jehovah says to Him, "Thou art my son: this day have I begotten thee." This was a term of dignity and honor, but plainly not of essential relationship. The Messianic king of Ps. ii. 7, whether David or another man, was not thought of as having a *nature* different from that of other men. He stood high in the favor of God, but his sonship was evidently not metaphysical. The act of *begetting* is nothing else than the *enthronement* of the Messianic king, his introduction into the royal sphere. So Peter understood it, who saw its fulfilment in the resurrection of Jesus, which was the beginning of His exaltation to the Messianic throne. But if the Messianic king is called the Son of God because He is *enthroned* by God, then plainly the sonship is official. The fact that God has enthroned Him may show that God loves Him, but this love is implied rather than



expressed. Therefore this Old Testament passage, both in itself and as understood by Peter, prepares the way for the distinctly Messianic use of the title *Son of God*, which we find in the Synoptic Gospels. In conclusion, it may be remarked that since Jesus and the evangelists used this title as synonymous with *Messiah*, the theological use of it, which refers it primarily to the *nature* of Jesus, has no basis in the Gospels.<sup>1</sup>

The Messianic consciousness of Jesus is further seen in the title, *The Son of man*. This first appears in the account of what happened in the house of Peter at Capernaum, when the paralytic was lowered through the roof (Mk. ii. 10). Jesus forgave the man's sins, and when accused of blasphemy for thus exercising a function which belongs to God, He declared that the *Son of man* had authority to forgive sins. This title, unlike the title *Son of God*, is used in the Gospels by Jesus only, and is used by Him frequently. It is found once on the lips of the angels in the empty tomb, but they use it in a quotation from the words of Jesus (Lk. xxiv. 7). It is, therefore, Jesus' own peculiar self-designation; and in the usage of Jesus Himself we have conclusive evidence of the significance which He attached to it. We are not dependent upon the apocalyptic literature; we are not obliged to give any particular weight to Dan. vii. 13;

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 184.

and we need not lay any especial stress on the definite article, *the* Son of man. The usage of Jesus is plain and decisive. On two occasions Jesus speaks of the Son of man as one concerning whom the Scriptures bear witness. Thus in the conversation caused by the transfiguration, when the disciples asked Him, saying, "The scribes say that Elijah must first come and restore all things," Jesus replied, "Elijah indeed cometh first and restoreth all things: and how then is it written of the *Son of man*, that He should suffer many things and be set at naught" (Mk. ix. 11-12; Mt. xvii. 10-13)? Now the disciples and scribes thought that Elijah would come to prepare for the *Messiah*. When, therefore, Jesus indorses their general thought, and says that Elijah cometh first and restoreth all things, and then asks the question, "How is it written of the Son of man, that He should suffer many things?" it is manifest that He means by the "Son of man" no other than the prophesied Messiah.

Again, in the solemn dialogue between Jesus and the high priest, we have unmistakable evidence that the title *Son of man* expressed a Messianic consciousness. The high priest asked Him, "Art Thou the Christ, the son of the Blessed?" and Jesus replied, "I am, and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mk. xiv. 61, 62). The equivalence of the titles is here beyond question.

On the evening before the crucifixion, Jesus said to His disciples, "The Son of man goeth, even as it is *written* of Him" (Mk. xiv. 21). But there is nothing written in the Old Testament regarding the suffering and death of one who is there called the *Son of man*. There is, however, something written regarding the Messiah; and since Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, there can be no doubt that when He speaks of the Scripture regarding the *Son of man*, He uses this title as equivalent to *Messiah*.

Again, the *functions* which Jesus claims for the Son of man are prevailingly Messianic. Thus, the Son of man has authority to forgive sin (Mk. ii. 10); the Son of man sows the good seed, and the good seed are the sons of the kingdom, and so it is the Son of man who establishes the kingdom of God (Mt. xiii. 37); the Son of man must suffer many things (Mk. viii. 31), or, in the language of Jesus after the resurrection, "Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things" (Lk. xxiv. 26)? The Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of power and shall judge all nations (Mk. xiv. 62; Mt. xxv. 31). In all these passages there appears an authority such as no Scripture attributes to a prophet, and which can be no less than Messianic.

We conclude, then, that whatever the source of the title may have been, and whatever may have been its use in apocalyptic literature, its meaning on the lips of

Jesus is undeniable. He does not use it to express the consciousness that He is a *man*, nor does He use it for the purpose of claiming for His humanity something unique, as though it were equivalent to the *ideal man*. He uses it simply to express the consciousness that He is the *Messiah*. It is an official title, and does not directly concern His nature. He could not have applied it to Himself prior to the hour of His baptism by John, for it was in that hour and not before that He became conscious of Messiahship.

The result of this study of Jesus' own usage<sup>1</sup> may be strengthened, in the judgment of some minds, by the famous passage in Daniel, which the New Testament treats as Messianic (Rev. i. 13; xiv. 14), and also by the apocalyptic literature, especially the Book of Enoch,<sup>2</sup> where the *Son of man* is plainly a Messianic title.<sup>3</sup>

In conclusion on these two titles, *The Son of God* and *The Son of man*, it may be said that the latter, since it is purely *official*, is somewhat narrower than the former. The title *Son of God* was Messianic, but it was first ethical. It could be applied to Jesus in a Messianic sense because it was perfectly applicable to Him in an

<sup>1</sup> The view of Lietzmann, that the title *Son of man* is a Christian interpolation, is not well supported. See *Der Menschensohn*, Hans Lietzmann.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter xlvi. 2-4; xlviii. 2; lxii. 7, 9, 14; lxiii. 11; lxix. 26, 27, 29; lxx. 1; lxxi. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Deane, *Pseudepigrapha*, p. 89; Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 261.

ethical sense.<sup>1</sup> It was of course needful that He should be in perfect harmony with God in order that He might execute God's highest commission. If the above positions are correct, it is obvious that the traditional view of these titles, which regarded one as a designation of the divine *nature* of Jesus and the other as a designation of His human *nature*, is fundamentally and entirely wrong. Neither of them refers to His nature; both are primarily Messianic.

Before leaving the subject of Messianic titles, there are two points demanding brief notice. Jesus declared that He was greater than the temple (Mt. xii. 6), greater than Jonah (Mt. xii. 41), and greater than Solomon (Mt. xii. 42). It is difficult to understand this language except as uttered in the consciousness of Messiahship. A Jew could not compare himself with the temple, the holy centre of the religion of Israel, and declare that he was greater than it, unless he was conscious of being the consummator of Israel's hope and redemption.

Another point is the use of the word *Lord*. This was frequently applied to Jesus by others and sometimes by Himself. *Lord* is a word of relation, whose correlative is *servant*. It simply means the master, the superior, and so is applicable alike to man and God. Thus Jesus says that no man can serve two lords, and again,

<sup>1</sup> See Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 180.

c. Other  
Messianic  
data.

“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God” (Mt. vi. 24; iv. 10). The term has then no reference to *nature*. What sort of mastership it denotes, depends in each case upon the context. The term is often applied to Jesus by His disciples and by others, and is always used as a term of respect. Thus it is interchangeable with *rabbi* (Mk. ix. 5; Mt. xvii. 4), *rabboni* (Mk. x. 51; Lk. xviii. 41), *teacher* and *master* (Mk. iv. 38). Manifestly, then, it has no implication of Messiahship, still less of anything peculiar in the nature of Jesus.

The Messianic consciousness of Jesus gives other expression of itself in the Synoptists than that of the Messianic titles. He claims Messianic functions, which have already been enumerated. In like manner, the importance which Jesus claimed for His person (*e.g.* Mt. x. 32-33; Mk. xiv. 9), the promise to give spiritual rest to all who come to Him (Mt. xi. 28-29), the conviction that the Church built on loyalty to Him would be indestructible (Mt. xvi. 18), the assurance that He should speedily rise from the dead (Mk. viii. 31), that He should be present with His disciples till the end of the age (Mt. xxviii. 20), and that He should be manifested in glory at last (Mt. xxv. 31), — all these great utterances of Jesus presuppose a consciousness of Messiahship. It is because He knows Himself to be the Messiah, that He is sure of being able to bestow God's peace upon men, and is confident that whatever may

come to Him of outward shame and suffering, His Church shall be imperishable and His service world-wide.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus rested, according to the Synoptists, upon a divine revelation which came to Him in the hour of His baptism. It was not an attainment either sudden or gradual. The revelation was doubtless ethically conditioned, as is all revelation, and this ethical preparation extended through the entire previous life of Jesus; but the Messianic consciousness was originated by God in the hour of baptism. And there is no evidence that this consciousness *developed* as the months of the ministry passed. It does not appear at first wavering and afterward firm. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, but the temptation touched the *manifestations* of His Messiahship rather than its existence. Jesus did not make a public verbal claim to Messiahship at the beginning of His ministry, according to the first three Gospels. There is a noticeable reticence on His part. He checks the demonized who address Him as Messiah (*e.g.* Mk. i. 34; iii. 12). He avoids publicity in the working of some of His most impressive miracles

<sup>1</sup> Mt. xiv. 33 is not discussed among the data for Messianic consciousness, because of the manifest bearing which the parallel in Mk. vi. 51-52 has upon it.

(e.g. Mk. v. 40). He does not call Himself by the popular titles of the Messiah, as, for example, *Son of David*. He does not do the things which people expected of the Messiah. The first explicit verbal claim to Messiahship, made in public, was at the trial by the sanhedrin (Mk. xiv. 62). But these facts are not proof that the consciousness of Messiahship developed from weakness to strength. There are facts, moreover, which preclude such a development. Thus the account of the baptism of Jesus is not the picture of a human spirit catching a glimpse of a new and divine mission that opens suddenly before it, but rather of a human spirit at whose very centre God creatively awakens a new consciousness. This consciousness at once expresses itself in unmistakable, though not unexpected, ways. It gives to the teaching of Jesus a tone of authority which astonishes the worshippers in the synagogue (Mk. i. 22). It finds utterance in the forgiveness of sin (Mk. ii. 10), in the claim to fulfil the Law, and in the quiet unchanging assumption of Jesus that a man's attitude toward Him is of endless importance. These facts are of paramount significance, and reveal even at the beginning of the ministry a deep, clear consciousness of Messiahship. The solemn affirmation of Messiahship before the sanhedrin at the close of the ministry presupposes no clearer consciousness of this fact on the part of Jesus



than the early word in Peter's house. "Son, thy sins are forgiven."

The thought of Jesus regarding His own person occupies a much larger space in the fourth Gospel than in the Synoptists. This is in keeping with the confessed purpose of the author, which is to prove that Jesus is the Messiah (Jn. xx. 31). The kingdom of heaven, which is prominent in the Synoptists, gives place now to the King. In the teaching of Jesus regarding His person, which we find in John, there are marked peculiarities, and the emphasis upon some points differs notably from the Synoptic presentation; and yet I believe that no injustice is done to this teaching by the statement that it follows the same fundamental lines that we have found in the Synoptists.

And, first, there is *the truly human consciousness*. This is less prominent, as compared with the consciousness of Messiahship, than it is in the earlier Gospels, and this fact has sometimes led to the unjust conclusion that the humanity of Jesus is suppressed in the fourth Gospel.<sup>1</sup> In reality, however, the fourth Gospel, though especially concerned with the Messiahship of Jesus, contains an even more forcible affirmation of His humanity than do the Synop-

IV. The teaching of the fourth Gospel.  
a. The human consciousness of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Holtzmann, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 455.

tists. I am thinking now of the words of Jesus Himself, and not of the observations made by the author, though these, in which Jesus is represented, for example, as being *wearied* at Jacob's well (Jn. iv. 6), and as *weeping* at the tomb of Lazarus (Jn. xi. 35), do not betray a desire to deny the genuineness of Jesus' humanity. But let us consider simply the language which is attributed to Jesus. As in the Synoptists, so here, He ranks Himself with men. He says to the Jews, "Ye seek to kill me, a *man* that hath told you the truth" (Jn. viii. 40). He declares that the very reason why Messianic judgment has been given to Him is His *humanity* (Jn. v. 27). He is a *son of man*, that is, a human being. He speaks of *His* will as distinct from God's will (Jn. v. 30; vi. 38), though it is never opposed to that (Jn. v. 30; viii. 29). He includes Himself with the Jews as one of those who know what they *worship* (Jn. iv. 22), thus taking a human position over against God. In line with this, He speaks of God as *His* God (Jn. xx. 17), and as the *only* true God (Jn. xvii. 3). He *prays* to Him, as in the Synoptists. It is true that we see Jesus in prayer fewer times in the fourth Gospel than in the three earlier ones, and on two occasions He says that the words of prayer which He has spoken are on account of those who stand by (Jn. xi. 42; xvii. 13). Once when an audible response was made to His

prayer, He said it came not for His sake but for the sake of others (Jn. xii. 30). But these features of the fourth Gospel are not important. One prayer is as significant in regard to the consciousness of Jesus as ten or twenty would be. The repeated statement that His audible prayer was for the sake of those around Him, by no means shows that it was not *genuine* prayer. When He says that the audible answer to a particular prayer was not for His sake, but on account of others, He does not intimate that He could do without *any* answer whatsoever. He only says that He did not need this particular answer. He spoke a word at the tomb of Lazarus, which implies the same life of prayer that we find in the Synoptists, namely this, "I knew that thou hearest me *always*" (Jn. xi. 42). This word *always* surely implies that He was in the *habit* of praying.

While dependence is clearly implied in the simple fact of prayer, it is also repeatedly affirmed by Jesus in the most explicit terms. Twice the Jews accused Him of claiming to be God (Jn. v. 18; x. 33). In the first case, Jesus in His reply declared His complete dependence upon God. He says and does only what the Father shows and teaches Him (Jn. v. 19-30). And the reason why the Father shows Him what to do is that the Father *loves* Him—an ethical, not a metaphysical, ground (Jn. v. 20).

In the second instance where He was accused of making Himself God, His reply was different but equally clear and important. He said that the Scriptures justified His language, for they call certain men *gods*, to whom the word of God came. The reference is to Ps. lxxxii. 6, where we read:—

“I said, Ye are gods,  
And all of you sons of the Most High.”

The word of God, which Jesus says “came ” to these persons, is the word which appointed them rulers over God’s people,<sup>1</sup> and hence made them in a degree His representatives. If now the Scripture, which cannot be broken, calls these earthly rulers *gods*, it was certainly lawful for Jesus, whom the Father had consecrated to the Messianic office, to call Himself God’s Son. Thus He rests His right to the term on His divine appointment, and not on His nature. So in both these most significant controversies, where Jesus is accused of making Himself God, we have from Him only expressions of a human and Messianic consciousness (comp. Jn. x. 29; xiv. 28). He affirms His absolute dependence upon God, and rests His claim to the title *Son of God* on His appointment to the Messianic office. Therefore we conclude that, while in the fourth Gospel there is relatively less said of the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Meyer’s *Commentary on John*.

humanity of Jesus than in the Synoptists, the genuineness of that humanity is even more forcibly affirmed.

The consciousness of *perfect moral union* with God is far more prominent in the fourth Gospel than in the Synoptists. It is here directly and repeatedly affirmed, while in the Synoptists it is only implied. There are two general forms in which the consciousness of a unique moral union with God expresses itself in the fourth Gospel. First, there are the declarations which Jesus makes regarding His own will and regarding the character of His life. Thus He says that He finds His inward satisfaction in doing the will of God (Jn. iv. 34), and that it is impossible for Him to do anything of Himself (Jn. v. 19, 30). This inability to do anything of Himself is *moral*, for Jesus has a will of His own (Jn. v. 30; vi. 38); but it is completely devoted to the Father. He does *always* the things which are pleasing to God (Jn. viii. 29, 55). He is sure that God *always* hears and grants His petitions, and this assurance implies that He is conscious of unbroken obedience to God (Jn. xi. 42). On one occasion He was troubled and seemed in doubt what to ask of the Father, but His holy *purpose* did not waver (Jn. xii. 27). The question arose within Him whether He should ask the Father to save Him from

b. Jesus' consciousness of union with the Father.

the approaching suffering, but when He recognized that the Father had plainly led Him to this suffering, He said, "Glorify thy name." This passage, like the Synoptic scene in Gethsemane, shows the working of a truly human mind, but a mind which was at the same time ideal in its loyalty to the will of God.

A consciousness of perfect moral union with the Father is further expressed in Jesus' statement that He had kept the Father's commandment (Jn. xv. 10), and had accomplished the work which the Father had given him to do (Jn. xvii. 4); for a perfect keeping of the Father's commandment, and a perfect accomplishment of the Father's work, cannot have rested upon an imperfect moral union with the Father. Here belongs also the great word which Jesus spoke concerning the function of the Spirit, that He, when He should come, would convince the world in regard to *righteousness*, for the context shows that Jesus has in mind His own righteousness (Jn. xvi. 8-10). The sin of which He will convince men, is the sin of not believing in Jesus; the judgment of which He will convince them, is the judgment which they are to share with the prince of the world because like him they are opposed to Jesus. In like manner, He will convince the world, not in regard to righteousness in the abstract, but in regard to the righteousness of Jesus, His perfect righteousness and consequently the truth of His claim.

Secondly, there is a large class of passages in which Jesus directly affirms a unique union with the Father. These passages constitute a marked feature of the fourth Gospel. They are such a lofty expression of the claim of Jesus that on two occasions they caused His enemies to bring against Him the charge of blasphemy (Jn. v. 18; x. 33). The fundamental claim is contained in the words, "I and the Father are one" (Jn. x. 30). This appears in various forms, as, "The Father in me and I in the Father" (Jn. x. 38), "He that beholdeth me beholdeth Him that sent me" (Jn. xii. 45), and, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. xiv. 9). It is made abundantly plain in the words of Jesus Himself that this union with the Father is a union of *character*, that it is ethical and not metaphysical. This is the only inference to be drawn from the saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. xii. 45; xiv. 9). For plainly the *seeing* which is here meant is not physical, for the Father is spirit (Jn. iv. 24), and as such is invisible to eyes of flesh. This seeing is defined in part in Jn. vi. 40, where Jesus says, "Every one who beholdeth the Son and believeth on Him hath eternal life." "Beholding Him" evidently means looking through that which is outward and material to that which is within: it is spiritual apprehension. The Jews beheld Jesus and His works, and yet they did not behold the real Jesus, the spirit and character of the man.

Therefore in the passage in question, Jesus says in substance, He that hath seen my *character* hath seen the Father.

Again, after mentioning His words and works which the Jews had seen, Jesus said that they had seen and hated both Him and His Father (Jn. xv. 22, 24). This can mean only that the words and works of Jesus manifested the character of the Father, as they also manifested the character of Jesus; and consequently to hate these words and works was to hate God. Once more, Jesus indicates that His union with the Father is a pure union of character when He prays that His apostles may be one as He and the Father are one (Jn. xvii. 11), and again that all believers may be one "even as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee; that they also may be in us" (Jn. xvii. 21). And then, according to another verse, this unity of the disciples implies that Jesus is in them and the Father in Him (Jn. xvii. 23). Now it is obvious that the union of the disciples which Jesus brought about was purely *ethical* and *religious*. They became one through their common love and loyalty to Him, one in the purpose and the spirit of their lives. This is the only sense in which they became one; and the language of Jesus makes this unity the exact counterpart of His union with the Father. It is impossible, therefore, from the standpoint of Jesus, to predicate of His union with the Father anything



which cannot be predicated of the *ideal* union of His disciples.

Finally, Jesus indicates that His union with the Father is purely ethical when He represents it as ethically *conditioned*. Thus Jesus gives, as the reason why the Father is with Him, the fact that He always does the things which are pleasing to the Father (Jn. viii. 29). The same truth is expressed in other words when He says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (Jn. x. 17; xv. 10). There is nowhere a suggestion that the Father is with Him, or that He abides in the Father, because He is of the same nature or substance as the Father.

We conclude, therefore, that the oneness of Jesus with the Father, as far as we can learn from His words in the fourth Gospel, is a oneness of character. He was perfectly obedient to the Father, and so His will was the Father's will manifested in the flesh. They who heard His words heard the thought of the Father perfectly transmitted. They who felt His love, felt the love of the Father in its most appreciable, because human, form. They who submitted to His will thereby became submissive to the will of the Father. They who felt themselves quickened under His gracious influence, were quickened by the power of the Father in the form of its highest potency.

In Jesus' teaching in regard to His own person, according to the fourth Gospel, the most prominent

fact is the *consciousness of Messiahship*. This consciousness expresses itself in the forms which are found in the Synoptists, and in still others.

c. Messianic consciousness in the fourth Gospel.  
 1. Messianic titles.

We meet the two chief Messianic titles of the earlier Gospels, the *Son of man* and the *Son of God*, but with certain noteworthy, though not essential, differences. The fourth Gospel uses the second of these titles, either in the full form, the *Son of God*, or in the form, the *only begotten Son*, or most frequently, in the abbreviated form, the *Son*, much oftener than do the Synoptists. It is still used in a Messianic sense both by Jesus and by others; but in some passages, where Jesus employs it, the personal relationship of love between Him and the Father becomes the prominent thought.<sup>1</sup> Jesus plainly uses it as a Messianic title in Jn. x. 33-36, for He there declares that it is applicable to Him because of the high commission which He has from the Father; and again in xi. 4 He uses it in the same sense. He said that the sickness of Lazarus was in order that the *Son of God* might be glorified, and then, at the tomb of Lazarus, He said that the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 238; Weiss, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 612; Stevens, *The Johannine Theology*, p. 124.

object of His audible utterance was that the people might believe that God had *sent* Him, or, in other words, might believe that He was the *Messiah* (Jn. xvii. 8). Thus the *Son of God* is glorified when men believe that He is the Messiah; and hence this term *Messiah* might be substituted for the *Son of God* in xi. 4; in other words, Jesus plainly uses the term *Son of God* as a Messianic title.

In the other passages where Jesus speaks of Himself as the *Son* or as the *only begotten*<sup>1</sup> *Son*, the ethical element comes to the front; but this unique ethical union with God is the basis of Messiahship, and Messiahship is inseparable from it. But there is nowhere an intimation in the fourth Gospel, as there is not in the Synoptists, that the term is used in any other than a religious or a Messianic sense.

What I have said thus far concerns the usage of Jesus. On the lips of others, the title *Son of God*, in the fourth Gospel, has an exclusively Messianic significance, as in the earlier Gospels. Thus it is used by the Baptist (Jn. i. 34), by Nathanael (Jn. i. 49), by Martha (Jn. xi. 27), and by the evangelist (Jn. xx. 31). Nathanael employs it as a synonym of the Messianic title, *King of Israel*, and Martha and the evangelist use it as a synonym of *Christ*.

The title *Son of man*, though not as common in

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that this epithet belongs to the author of the Gospel.

the fourth Gospel as in the Synoptists, is used in the same sense. It is Jesus' own self-designation, and is found only where the most obviously Messianic functions are affirmed. Thus the *Son of man* is the one who has unique knowledge of the Father (*e.g.* Jn. xvii. 25), the one who is to be lifted up (Jn. iii. 14; viii. 28; xii. 32), the one who has been consecrated by the Father (Jn. x. 36), the one who must be personally appropriated in order that the soul may have life (*e.g.* Jn. vi. 53), and the one who glorifies God, and is Himself glorified, by the crucifixion (Jn. xii. 23, 28).

One passage makes the meaning of the title especially plain, and that is Jn. ix. 35-38. Here Jesus asks the man whom He had healed whether he believed on the Son of man, and then tells him that *He* is the Son of man, just as He tells the Samaritan woman that He is the Messiah (Jn. iv. 26). It is manifest that this title is here a pure synonym of Messiah, for the faith which Jesus ever sought to win was faith in His Messiahship, and nothing else. When, therefore, Jesus tells one receptive soul that He is the *Messiah*, and another that He is the *Son of man*, He puts it absolutely beyond question that the terms are equivalent.

2. The call for faith. The Messianic consciousness of Jesus has an emphatic expression in the fourth Gospel in the *call for faith in Him*. In the Synoptists

this call is implied rather than expressed. Jesus there asks for faith in connection with His miracles of healing; but that is faith that He is able to *work* the miracle, and never faith that He is the Messiah (*e.g.* Mt. ix. 28). A call to accept Jesus as the Messiah is doubtless *involved* in His whole work, as reported by the Synoptists; and we see a company of disciples gather around Him, who come gradually to the settled conviction that He is the Messiah; but the case is quite different in the fourth Gospel. Here believing in Him as the Messiah is a conspicuous feature. The belief which is called for is always belief in the Messiahship of Jesus. Thus, when Nathanael confesses, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art King of Israel," Jesus replied, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee underneath the fig tree, *believest* thou?" It is plain that the unexpressed object of this verb is the Messiahship of Jesus, which Nathanael had just confessed. Again, in viii. 24, Jesus makes it plain what He wants men to believe. "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for except ye believe that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins." This *I am* is equivalent to *I am the Messiah*, as may be seen from the conversation with the Samaritan woman (Jn. iv. 25-26). This is the one great truth which they are to accept. Jesus occasionally speaks of believing in God, but only in

connection with belief in Him whom God hath sent (Jn. v. 24; xiv. 1). This faith in the Messiah is the work which is acceptable to God (Jn. vi. 29), an act on which Jesus pronounces a beatitude (Jn. xx. 29). This is the belief which He puts in parallelism with belief in God (Jn. xiv. 1). It is so vital that a refusal to cherish it constitutes the preëminent, and, as it were, the only, sin (Jn. xvi. 9). This lofty claim that men should believe in His Messiahship is surely the utterance of a lofty consciousness.

Another form in which we find the Messianic consciousness expressed in the fourth Gospel is the claim of Jesus that He came *not of Himself*, but <sup>3. Sent by the Father.</sup> was *sent* by the Father. He affirms this directly some sixteen times, and implies it in yet other passages (*e.g.* Jn. vii. 28; viii. 42; v. 36, 38). In order to understand what Jesus means by the word *sent*, we must understand His meaning in the accompanying clause *into the world*. This meaning is clear from a passage in His last prayer, where He says, "As Thou didst send me into the world, I also sent them into the world" (Jn. xvii. 18). With this we may take His word to the disciples after the resurrection, "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you" (Jn. xx. 21). Now it is plain that when Jesus speaks of sending His disciples into the world, He does not refer to their coming from some other

world into this world. The sending is from His presence, and the world is the field of their labors. Therefore, when Jesus speaks of being sent from the Father, we are not to suppose that He has in mind a change of worlds, or a change in the form of His existence; but simply the change from the quiet life of a private citizen in Nazareth to the public Messianic career of preaching and establishing the kingdom of heaven. This view is confirmed by the reference which Jesus makes to a *scaling* and a *consecration* which preceded His coming into the world (Jn. vi. 27; x. 36). This consecration by the Father can be found nowhere else than in the great event, recorded by all the evangelists, namely, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus in the hour of His baptism, and the divine announcement which separated Him unto the Messianic office, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Mk. i. 10-11). This was the hour, according to the Synoptists, when Jesus became conscious of His Messianic mission. If, then, the consecration by the Father was in the hour of the baptism of Jesus, and if this consecration was *prior* to the sending (Jn. vi. 27; x. 36), it is plain that Jesus could not have meant by the expression *coming into the world*, or being *sent from the Father*, a local coming from heaven to earth. When He says that He was sent from the Father, His memory goes back to the great

hour by the Jordan when the voice of God resounded in His soul, saying, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Nazareth was then left, and Jesus came into the world to accomplish the work of the Messiah.

Parallel to being sent from the Father is the statement of Jesus, repeated on several occasions, that He *came forth from God* (Jn. viii. 42; xvi. 27, 28; xvii. 8). In xvi. 27-28 we have an authoritative suggestion as to the meaning of Jesus when He says that He came forth from God. In this passage He declares that the Father loves the disciples because they have loved Him and have *believed* that He came forth from God. Now we know very well what Jesus required men to believe in regard to Himself. They must believe that He is the *Messiah* (e.g. Jn. viii. 24). He did not demand belief in His preëxistence, or in any other relationship to the Father than an ethical one. In view, then, of the explicit demand of Jesus for faith in His Messiahship, and in view of the patent meaning of the expression *sent from God*, which is similar to the expression in question, we must hold that His statement of having come forth from God is not an assertion regarding His nature, but regarding His Messianic commission. This interpretation is illustrated and confirmed by the words of Nicodemus,

4. Come  
forth from  
God, come  
from heaven.



who says for himself and for others like minded, "We know that thou art a teacher *come from God*" (Jn. iii. 2); and yet when he used this language, he believed that Jesus was a man, and had no more thought that He had come down out of heaven than that John the Baptist had descended from the sky. It is obvious that, on his lips, the words *come from God*, as applied to Jesus, meant simply that Jesus was appointed of God, as Moses and the prophets had been. There is no ground for a different understanding of the words when they are used by Jesus.

There is another expression of the fourth Gospel which is to be mentioned in this connection. Jesus speaks of having *come down out of heaven* (Jn. iii. 13; vi. 33, 38, 50, 51, 58), and also of *being from above*, and not of this world (Jn. viii. 23; xvii. 14, 16). The meaning of all this language is made plain by Jesus Himself, when He says that His *disciples* also are not of this world *even as He is not of this world* (Jn. xvii. 14, 16), and when He says to the Jews, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above" (Jn. viii. 23; comp. xviii. 36). When he says that the Jews are *from beneath*, He evidently does not mean that they have come up to the surface of the earth from some subterranean abode: He simply characterizes them ethically. In like manner, the language must be taken ethically when He says that

He is *from above*. And if, when He says that His disciples are not of this world, He refers to *character*, so must He also when He says that *He* is not of this world. The language has no reference, then, to His origin. He is from above, and His disciples are from above, because they are not actuated by the spirit of the world, but by the Spirit of God.

In the light of this sure result, we cannot be in doubt as to the meaning of Jesus when He speaks of *coming down out of heaven*. This is plainly parallel to *being from above*.

It is easy to bring the claim of having come down out of heaven into connection with the evangelist's doctrine of the *Logos* (Jn. i. 1-5), and to suppose that it means a personal descent out of heaven; but this interpretation is possible only when we take a superficial glance at the words in question. In Jn. iii. 13 Jesus says to Nicodemus, "No one has ascended into heaven except He who came down out of heaven, the Son of man." Plainly we must understand this *descent* out of heaven as we understand the *ascent* into heaven; but when Jesus uttered these words, He certainly had not ascended into heaven except in a spiritual sense—the sense that He had lived in personal fellowship with the heavenly Father. Hence the descent out of heaven must be figurative. The thought seems to be that of perfect communion with God, as when Paul says that

the Lord has made us to sit *in heavenly places* (Eph. ii. 6). The Scriptures make heaven, in a peculiar sense, the abode of God, and hence it was natural to express the thought of immediate fellowship with God by the figure of an ascent into heaven. Now this thought is all that the context requires; and, moreover, it is *just what* it requires. Jesus can declare "heavenly things," that is, Messianic truths,<sup>1</sup> because He stands in perfect fellowship with God. If He had said that He could make known the Messianic truths because He, personally, had been in heaven, His conclusion would have been too great for His premise. An angel might have come down out of heaven, but that would not have fitted him to declare the things of the Messianic kingdom. Jesus gives a real and sufficient ground for His authority to declare Messianic truths, and that is His perfect communion with the Father. This statement, then, that He came down out of heaven, like the statement that He was from above, is ethical.

It is in connection with the Messianic consciousness of Jesus that we must understand His *allusions to pre-existence*. These allusions constitute a feature of that consciousness which is peculiar to the fourth Gospel. The Synoptists do not

5. Jesus' thought of preëxistence.

<sup>1</sup> See Meyer's *Handbuch über das Evangelium Johannes*, fünfte Auflage, p. 163. The argument is equally strong if we take Holtzmann's view of the "heavenly things." See *Hand-Commentar*, vierter Band, erste Abtheilung, p. 54.

touch this point. As already suggested, it is with *allusions*, not with a clear and fixed doctrine, that we have to do, with a point that, even in John, clearly belongs to the incidental rather than the essential. Therefore differences of opinion as to the meaning of these allusions—and there are wide differences among Christian scholars—are less significant than they would be on many another subject.

The first passage on preëxistence is Jn. vi. 62, "What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where He was *before*?"<sup>1</sup> In the preceding discourse of Jesus two words had given offence. He had said that He was the bread which had come down out of heaven, and also that it was needful to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man in order to have life. He solves the difficulty of this last word when He says, in verse 63: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing. The *words* that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life." It is the difficulty of the other saying, more particularly, which is referred to in verse 62. The statement that He had come down out of heaven, or, dropping the figure, that He had authority from God to give life to men, would be justified, Jesus suggests, by his approaching ascension into heaven (comp. Jn. xvi. 10).

<sup>1</sup> Wendt (i. 244-248) regards this saying as unhistorical on the ground that it does not suit the context.

The argument is not perceptibly changed by the clause "where He was before," and hence the allusion to pre-existence is subordinate. The prominent thought is the ascension.

This allusion seems to be most naturally explained with the aid of Dan. vii. 13, which probably furnished the starting-point for Jesus' use of the title *Son of man*. In a night vision Daniel saw one like unto a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. But this coming from heaven does not assume a real preëxistence there, any more than the fact that the four beasts of this same vision came up out of the sea assumes that they had really preëxisted in the sea (Dan. vii. 3), which is an impossible view, for Daniel says that the four beasts are four kings who are yet to arise upon the earth (Dan. vii. 17). The only preëxistence, therefore, which is assumed for the one like a son of man who comes on the clouds of heaven, is purely ideal. If now the word of Jesus in Jn. vi. 62 was spoken in view of the passage in Daniel, we should be justified in thinking that it contemplates the same sort of preëxistence which we have there. Moreover, this result is confirmed by the fact that Jesus speaks of the *Son of man* as ascending where *He*, that is this same Son of man, was before; but Jesus was the son of Mary, and His humanity is thought of as derived, not as preëxistent. So it is

obvious that this language cannot be taken literally. Therefore, in view of these considerations, I conclude that the preëxistence alluded to in this passage is ideal, and this conclusion will be greatly reënforced by the other passages which bear upon this difficult point.

The second allusion to preëxistence is the word of Jesus in the temple, "Before Abraham was born I am" (Jn. viii. 58). The reference to Abraham had been made natural by the foregoing controversy. When Jesus had promised freedom through the truth, the Jews proudly replied that they were children of Abraham, and had never been in bondage. Jesus allowed their claim in a physical sense, but denied it in the spiritual sense (verses 37, 39-40). They were seeking to kill Him, He said, while Abraham, on the contrary, had *rejoiced* to see His day. These words seemed to the Jews to involve a preposterous claim. They inferred that if Abraham had seen the day of Jesus, then Jesus must claim to have lived at least as long as from the time of Abraham. Hence their contemptuous question, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" To this Jesus replied in words which involved a higher claim than that which they had just attributed to Him, and declared, "Before Abraham was born I am."

Now it must not be forgotten that it is Jesus who is speaking, and that, in the preceding verses, He has

been emphasizing His *Messianic* claim. He does not say that before Abraham was born the *Logos* existed; He says "I am." It is Jesus the Messiah, Jesus the man whom the Father had consecrated to the Messianic work, who speaks. Just before this He had spoken of "my day," which Abraham saw (Jn. viii. 56), by which we must understand the historical appearance of Jesus as the Messiah. Abraham had seen this, virtually seen it in God's promise of a seed (Gen. xii. 3; xv. 4-5), and had greeted it from afar (Heb. xi. 13). And now it is this one who consciously realizes the distant vision of Abraham, who says, "Before Abraham was born I am." Jesus, therefore, seems to affirm that His *historic* Messianic personality existed before Abraham was born. If that be the case, then its existence before Abraham must of course be thought of as ideal.

This view satisfies the context, for it involves the claim of a dignity and an importance which immeasurably transcends that of Abraham. The Jews had asked scornfully, "Art thou greater than our father Abraham?" and the words of the reply of Jesus are equal to a lofty affirmative. They imply that His work, His deliverance, which is the meaning of His *day*, had been the heart of God's plan from the beginning—a plan which embraced Abraham not only, but also all mankind. The Messiah who reveals God

and redeems the world cannot properly be compared even with an Abraham, and it is noticeable that Jesus does not make a comparison. He does not say, "Before Abraham was born, I *was*," thus simply affirming priority; but He says, "I *am*," an expression which suggests that He belongs to the entire course of history, if it does not certainly reach beyond the bounds of time. The projection of this present I *am* into the remote past seems to imply a conviction on the part of Jesus that His Messianic personality is above time, and that His Messianic *day* is part of the eternal order of things.

Strong as the argument seems to be for this interpretation of Jn. viii. 58, it may be well to suspend final judgment upon it until the remaining allusion to preëxistence has been analyzed. It is a sound principle of exegesis that of several kindred passages the more obscure should be interpreted by the less obscure; and of the three allusions to preëxistence made by Jesus the last is the clearest. This last passage is found in the farewell prayer, and reads as follows,—"Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (Jn. xvii. 5). This *glory* seems to be regarded as a *reward* for the work which Jesus had now accomplished. He says in the preceding verse that He has glorified God on the earth, having accomplished the



work which had been given Him to do; and now He prays that the Father will glorify Him. This order of thought certainly suggests that He looks at the anticipated glory as His proper reward. Moreover, the *character* of this glory establishes the view that it is indeed the reward for the Messianic work. We have the following data for the determination of the character of this glory. Jesus speaks of a glory which He has already received (Jn. xvii. 10, 22), and also of a glory which He hopes to receive in the future (xvii. 1, 5, 24). Again, with regard to the Father, Jesus speaks of having already glorified Him (xvii. 4), and also of glorifying Him in the future (xvii. 1). Now in all these passages the *glory* is apparently one in kind, though not necessarily the same in degree. There is no suggestion that the words *glory* and *glorify* have a peculiar content when Jesus is speaking of the future—a content essentially different from that which they have when He speaks of the past. Moreover, there is no need of making such an assumption in order to a clear and harmonious interpretation of the chapter. Therefore we must hold that the words *glory* and *glorify*, as used in this passage, now of the past work of Jesus and again of His future state and activity, have the same essential meaning. But this meaning, when Jesus refers to the past, is put beyond question by the language of Jesus Himself: it is the glory of *redemption*. He has glori-

field the Father on the earth by accomplishing His work (xvii. 4), that is, the Messianic work. He has manifested the Father's *name* to His disciples (xvii. 6), or has given them the Father's *word* (xvii. 14). And this is also the way in which He will glorify the Father in the future, for He says that He will still make the Father's name known (xvii. 26), and give eternal life to all whom the Father shall give to Him (xvii. 2). Thus the glorification of the Father of which Jesus speaks in this chapter is surely accomplished by the Messianic work of Jesus, as He makes the Father known, and through their faith in Him brings men into the love of the Father and gives to them eternal life. This is the past glorification of the Father and it is also His future glorification.

Now in regard to the past glorification of Jesus, of which the chapter speaks, we are not left in doubt. Jesus says that He is already glorified in His disciples (xvii. 10), and He indicates in what this glorification consists. He is glorified in them because they have recognized Him as the Messiah, and have given their allegiance to Him (xvii. 8). This glory which Jesus has received from His disciples may be said to have been given to Him by the Father (xvii. 22), because the Father gave to Jesus that revelation through which Jesus had brought men to accept Him as the Messiah sent from God (xvii. 7).

Now from that which is clearly defined we proceed, and proceed safely, to that which is less clearly defined. The glory which Jesus has already received is, as the chapter plainly teaches, the glory of having been recognized as the Messiah. It is the glory of having established the Messianic kingdom. Therefore we must say that the glory for which He prays (xvii. 5), and which He anticipates receiving in heaven (xvii. 24), is of the same sort, that is to say, it is the glory of doing Messianic work and of being recognized as the Messiah. It may differ vastly in degree from that glory which He has already received, but not in kind. One glory is the glory of *beginning* the kingdom; the other is the glory of *completing* the kingdom.

This important conclusion touching the glory for which Jesus prays is variously confirmed. The fact that the future glorification of the Father in this chapter is of the same sort as His past glorification, which we have seen to be the case, makes it natural to hold that the future glorification of the Son is thought of as being of the same sort as His past glorification. Not only so; but the future glorification of the Father depends upon the future glorification of the Son (xvii. 1). Now since this future glorification of the Father depends upon the future glorification of the Son; and since the past glorification of the Father depended upon the Messianic work of Jesus, we are

fully justified in the position that the future glorification of the Son, which is to promote the glory of the Father, will consist in the continuation and completion of His Messianic work. It is for this, then, that Jesus prays.

This conclusion is made still more certain, if possible, by words which Jesus spoke earlier in the last week. He referred to the hour of His crucifixion as the hour of His *glorification* (Jn. xii. 23), and also as the hour when the name of His Father would be glorified (Jn. xii. 28). Now the hour of the crucifixion of Jesus was the hour of His glorification, according to the fourth Gospel, because by the events of this hour Jesus was most manifestly revealed as the Messiah. He regarded His crucifixion as the supreme act of self-revelation (Jn. viii. 28). For this reason, He could say that His lifting-up was to be the great motive to draw men unto Him (Jn. xii. 32). Thus Jesus, on this occasion, thought of the culminating act of His Messianic work upon earth as a future glorification, and He prayed to the Father in regard to this glory (Jn. xii. 28). Therefore, when, a few days later, we hear Him praying again for a future glorification of Himself, which future glorification is not directly described, we are compelled to believe that His thought is upon the consummation of His work.

Therefore we hold as a fixed and unshakable con-

clusion, that the glory for which Jesus prays in the seventeenth chapter of John is of the same sort as that glory which He had already received (xvii. 10, 22). It is the glory of being recognized and loved as the Messiah. He prays for the divine consummation of the great work which He has begun. He has received a foretaste of that glory, and He prays for its fulness.

Having now shown that the glory for which Jesus prays is the fruition of His Messianic work, or the *reward* for that work, it follows that He cannot have possessed this with the Father before the foundation of the world, except as it was His in the purpose and decree of God (comp. Mt. xxv. 34). Rewards are bestowed after the work is done, and then only can be appreciated as rewards. Jesus possessed this glory before the foundation of the world in the sense that it was divinely purposed for Him. He knew that His Messianic work had been planned of God from eternity, and that the glorious outcome of it had been fixed, and was kept in store for Him.

Thus in the very shadow of the cross, when to human view the work of Jesus seemed to be a complete and shameful failure, He calmly and confidently asks for the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. This is surely the utterance of one who was conscious of being the Messiah sent

from God ; but the preëxistence which is involved is simply and only ideal. The glory of completed redemption cannot be literally possessed until redemption is complete. If now the preëxistence of Jesus, according to the seventeenth chapter of John, is clearly ideal, this fact confirms the interpretation which has been given of the other passages which are less clear. We conclude, then, that these three passages in John, in which Jesus alludes to His preëxistence, do not involve the claim that this preëxistence was personal and real. They are to be classed with the other phenomena of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, none of which, either in the Synoptists or in the fourth Gospel, have to do with metaphysical relationships.

This conclusion in regard to the meaning of Jesus' allusions to preëxistence is in line with the fact that neither the Old Testament nor other Jewish writings, prior to the time of Jesus, know anything of a personal preëxistence of the Messiah. When the conception of the Messiah was individualized by the people of the Old Covenant, He was usually thought of as a descendant of David (see Hos. iii. 5 ; Amos ix. 11 ; Is. ix. 7 ; xi. 1 ; Jer. xxiii. 5 ; Zech. xiii. 1 ; Mic. v. 2 ; Ps. lxxix. 20-21 ; cxxxii. 10-11), though this descent may not always have been understood literally ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Cheyne, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, p. 47.

and whether as a literal descendant of David or not, He was invariably thought of as a divinely appointed earthly ruler and deliverer. The glowing language of Isaiah (vii. 14, ix. 6) cannot be regarded as presenting a conception of the Messiah fundamentally different from that of other Old Testament writers both earlier and later, which is the case when it is understood metaphysically; but it must be regarded as in line with Jesus' use of Ps. lxxxii. 6, that is, as an exalted description of one who was to be the supreme and final representative of Jehovah for the deliverance and perfecting of His people.<sup>1</sup> When Micah speaks of Him who is to be ruler in Israel as one whose "goings forth" are from "ancient days" (v. 2), he marks Him as one who comes from an old and illustrious lineage. It is manifest that his thought does not go beyond an earthly ruler clothed with divine authority, for he speaks of the coming deliverer as one who will stand and feed his flock in the name of the Lord *his* God (v. 4).

Likewise in later pre-Christian Jewish writings, though the idea of preëxistence begins to appear, it is only an ideal preëxistence. The Sibylline Oracles

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, pp. 772-773; Cheyne, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, 3d ed., i. 61-62; Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 195-201.

and the earlier part of Enoch know only of a divinely sent king, sprung from the purified people of God.<sup>1</sup> In the Psalms of Solomon the Messiah is a righteous king, the son of David, but without a trace of pre-existence.<sup>2</sup> In the Parables of Enoch, which probably antedate the life of Jesus,<sup>3</sup> it is said that the *name* of the Son of man was called before the Lord of the spirits, before the stars were made, and that this Son of man was chosen and hidden before the Lord, before the creation of the world. Here is, indeed, the idea of preëxistence, but it is doubtful whether the author thought of this as real and personal. In the Assumption of Moses, which belongs to the same period with the Parables of Enoch, even Moses is represented as saying, "The Lord prepared me before the foundation of the world, to be the mediator of His covenant" (i. 14); but it is not probable that the author thought of a personal preëxistence of Moses. The origin of a belief in personal preëxistence is later than the time of Christ.<sup>4</sup> But if preëxistence in the Assumption of Moses is ideal, that is a reason why we should understand it in an ideal sense in the Parables of Enoch.

<sup>1</sup> See *Or. Sib.* iii. 652 f.; *Enoch* xc. 37; Hilgenfeld, *Die jüdische Apokalyptik*, p. 143.   <sup>2</sup> See Ps. xvii.

<sup>3</sup> See Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, pp. 113-115.

<sup>4</sup> See Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 131; Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 340-341.



Since then the Old Testament conception of the Messiah is opposed to the thought of personal pre-existence, and since other Jewish writings of pre-Christian date have no clear reference to personal pre-existence, we conclude that there is no historical reason for doubting the position taken in regard to the teaching of the fourth Gospel.

The last expression of a Messianic consciousness which we have to consider in the fourth Gospel is the fact that *Jesus accepted worship* from the man whose eyes He had opened (Jn. ix. 38), and allowed Thomas to address Him as *Lord* and *God* (Jn. xx. 28). In the case of the man in the temple the homage is plainly paid to Jesus as Messiah. Jesus asked the unnamed person if he believed in the *Son of man*, that is, as we have seen, the *Messiah*; and when the man replied, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him," Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee." Then the man, believing that Jesus was the Messiah, did Him reverence. It does not follow from this that he regarded Jesus as of the same *nature* with God. The term which is translated *worship* is used of the homage which subjects pay to their sovereign, and simply implies that the one who receives it is of a *dignity* superior to that of the one who renders it (comp. Rev. xxii. 8). The word implies nothing in

regard to the *nature* of the one who receives the homage. The man worshipped Jesus because he believed Him to be the Messiah of his people; and Jesus accepted the homage because He was conscious of being the Messiah.

In the other passage, we are told that Thomas addressed the risen Jesus as *Lord* and *God*, and it is implied that Jesus accepted this homage. Then He said to Thomas, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (Jn. xx. 29). Now we know what belief Jesus sought from men, according to the fourth Gospel. It was belief in Him as the *Messiah*. When, therefore, He said to Thomas, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed," that meant simply and only, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed that *I am the Messiah*. It appears, then, that Jesus accepted the homage of Thomas as homage rendered to His Messiahship. His language seems to imply that any one who believed in Him as the Messiah might be expected to adore Him. There is no suggestion that He regarded the homage as implying that He was of the same substance with the Father.

Now we shall go safely if we argue from Jesus' acceptance of the homage to the thought of Thomas when he said, "My Lord and my God." If we do so argue, we shall conclude that Thomas was in the

same spiritual condition as the man who worshipped Jesus in the temple (Jn. ix. 38), and like him recognized Jesus as the Messiah. But if his adoration was for Jesus as the *Messiah*, then it is wrong to treat his language as a theological statement regarding the *nature* of Jesus. It is impossible to say that when this Jew addressed Jesus as *my God*, his thought was that of the theologians of the fourth century, who said of Jesus, "Deus ex substantia Patris."<sup>1</sup> Since Jesus Himself justified that Scripture which calls men *gods* on the ground that they *represent* God (Jn. x. 35), and since He once bases His claim to the title *Son of God* upon the fact that He has been *consecrated* by the Father to the Messianic work (Jn. x. 36), it is plainly wrong to regard the language of Thomas as an affirmation regarding the essential being of Jesus. Thomas is ocularly convinced that Jesus is risen from the dead, and so is convinced that He is the Messiah, and as the Messiah he worships Him. Jesus accepts the worship because He is conscious of Messiahship. But the fact that Thomas calls Him *God*, judged by the standard which is set for us in the usage of Jesus Himself, cannot be held to involve anything more than a recognition of the office, the commission, the divine authority, and function of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup>See *Symbolum Quicunque*, 31.

It may be remarked, in conclusion, that this interpretation is in harmony with the expressed purpose of the evangelist, which was to prove that Jesus was the *Christ* (Jn. xx. 31). He does not set out to prove that Jesus is of the same *nature* as the Father, but to prove that He is the one anointed of the Father to give eternal life to men. Therefore, he appropriately closes his Gospel with the scene in which Thomas adores the Messiah.

This interpretation is also in harmony with the fact of the human consciousness of Jesus, which is evidenced throughout the entire Gospel; in harmony with the fact of Jesus' consciousness of absolute moral union with the Father, which is manifest throughout the entire Gospel—a consciousness that uttered itself in such a word as "I and the Father are one;" and it is in harmony, finally, with the fact of His Messianic consciousness.

Jesus as the Messiah is the perfect revealer of the Father, the perfect representative of the Father, the perfect redeemer of those who accept Him, and He is, therefore, infinitely worthy of the adoration and worship of all mankind.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MESSIAH'S EARTHLY WORK

As the purpose of any man may be inferred from his work, so we may infer the purpose of Jesus from His work; but we are not now concerned with possible inferences. We are asking rather after the direct and positive teaching of Jesus: what He Himself said of His purpose, and how He sought to achieve it. According to the Synoptic Gospels the Messianic consciousness of Jesus dated from the hour of His baptism, and by the meditation and temptation in the wilderness He adjusted His thought to the new consciousness. He came forth from the wilderness, and for a little more than two years engaged in public work, which clearly had as its sole aim the establishment of the kingdom of heaven. We cannot go back of the baptism of Jesus and speak of the purpose which actuated Him in the earlier years of His private life, except to say that the purpose of the boy Jesus, to be about the things of His Father (Lk. ii. 49), was doubtless the purpose of the youth and the man. We are

I. The purpose of the Messiah.  
a. In the Synoptists.

sure as we look at the public life of Jesus, that in His earlier private life His deepest concern had been to please God, and day by day to follow perfectly the guidance of His Spirit. But we know of no other plan or life-purpose which He had at that time. When, however, the consciousness of Messiahship had been divinely awakened within him, immediately His life came entirely under the sway of the great purpose which that Messianic consciousness called forth, namely, the purpose to do the work of the Messiah as God should make it known to Him. All His time and all His energies were henceforth consecrated to this single end.

And the work of the Messiah, the work of His earthly life, as Jesus regarded it, was the establishment of the kingdom of heaven, the realization among men of that ideal relationship to God of which He was conscious in His own soul. It was this which He constantly preached, and for the coming of this He taught His disciples to pray. Sometimes Jesus speaks of the aim of His mission in more specific, or in narrower, terms than the establishment of the kingdom of heaven. Thus it is to call sinners to repentance (Mk. ii. 17; Lk. v. 32), or to fulfil the Law and the prophets (Mt. v. 17). Again, it is to sow the good seed (Mt. xiii. 37), to preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Lk. iv.

19), to induce men to choose the one thing needful (Lk. x. 42), to give rest to those who labor and are heavy laden (Mt. xi. 28), and to give His life a ransom for many (Mk. x. 45). But all these ends are subordinate to the establishment of the reign of God in the heart of man.

The Messianic purpose is differently stated in the fourth Gospel, but the difference is formal rather than essential. We find it, for example, in the word of Jesus in the allegory of the Good Shepherd, "I came that they may have life and may have it abundantly" (Jn. x. 10). b. In the fourth Gospel. Other closely related terms are incidentally employed. Thus, Jesus came to *save* the world (Jn. v. 34; xii. 47). He came to give men the *truth* (Jn. viii. 31-32; xviii. 37); to give them the *glory* which the Father had given to Him, that is, the *name* of the Father (Jn. xvii. 5-6). But the characteristic designation of the aim of His mission is to give *life* (e.g. Jn. iii. 15; v. 40; vi. 33; viii. 12; xi. 25; xvii. 3).

The conception of eternal life which we find in the fourth Gospel is narrower than the conception of the kingdom of God, as I have indicated in another connection. It has a close correspondence to the first meaning of that term in the Synoptists, namely, the reign of God in the heart. That is life, eternal life. But, as we have seen, the term *king-*

*dom of heaven* has other meanings than that of a divine reign in the heart, and to these other meanings the conception of eternal life in the fourth Gospel is not akin.

This life which it is the purpose of Christ to give is prevailingly thought of in the fourth Gospel as a *present* possession,<sup>1</sup> while eternal life in the Synoptists is always regarded as belonging to the future age (e.g. Mk. x. 30; Mt. vii. 14; xxv. 46). The idea that the believer *has* eternal life even now is necessarily involved in Jesus' conception of that life, according to the fourth Gospel. He always associates it with His own person, and regards it as resulting from the appropriation of Himself by faith. Thus He says: "I am the bread of life" (Jn. vi. 48); "I am the living bread" (Jn. vi. 51); "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life" (Jn. vi. 54); "He that eateth *me*, he also shall live because of me" (Jn. vi. 57); "I am the life" (Jn. xi. 25). The Father has given Him authority to have life in Himself (Jn. v. 26), and this life is communicated through a personal relation in which Jesus and His disciples become one (Jn. vi. 56; xv. 4; xvii. 23). Such a relation is implied in *eating* Him, or *abiding* in Him as the branch abides in the vine. It is manifest, then, that eternal life becomes the

<sup>1</sup> It is referred to the future in Jn. iv. 14; vi. 27; xii. 25.



possession of a soul when Jesus is accepted, and therefore it is spoken of as something which the believer has here and now. Were this not the case, then the Messianic purpose, according to the fourth Gospel, would be a purpose whose realization belongs to the future age. But since the Messianic purpose is stated by John as the purpose to give a present life, it is manifestly the same purpose that is involved in the Synoptic expression of a present heavenly kingdom. The Synoptic expression of the Messianic purpose, however, gives a certain prominence to God, and the Johannean expression gives an equal prominence to the Messiah.

Jesus began to realize the Messianic ideal by *teaching*. He came not as the Jews had expected, with outward pomp and military power, but as a herald and teacher. He appeared in Galilee calling men to repentance and faith in the Gospel (Mk. i. 15). He taught in the synagogues (Mk. i. 21). When He left Capernaum, after His first activity there, He told His disciples that He must go to the other villages, to preach there also (Mk. i. 38). According to Mark, He had come forth from *Capernaum* in order to preach elsewhere; while, in Luke, this was the purpose for which He had been *sent*, that is, the purpose of His life *as a whole*. Of these two ver-

II. The  
Messianic  
purpose  
realized by  
teaching.  
a. In the  
Synoptists.

sions of the word of Jesus, Mark's is probably the historical one; but the broader idea of Luke is surely in accord with the manifest aim of the life of Jesus.

Again, the Synoptic report repeatedly summarizes the tours of Jesus in Galilee as tours of preaching, or of preaching and healing (Mk. i. 21; vi. 6; Mt. iv. 23). When He went from Galilee into Perea, Mark says that, as his *custom* was, He taught the people (Mk. x. 1). When He came to Jerusalem, He taught in the temple, and at the time of His arrest, He rebuked those who came against Him as against a robber, with the words, "I sat *daily* in the temple teaching, and ye took me not" (Mt. xxvi. 55). Jesus represents the unfaithful as saying, at the last day, "We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst *teach* in our streets" (Lk. xiii. 26). Thus He seems to have regarded teaching as His primary and fundamental work. In harmony with this fact, we find that His disciples and people in general most commonly addressed Him as *teacher* or *rabbi* (*e.g.* Mt. viii. 19; xii. 38; Jn. i. 38, 49; iv. 31).

Jesus never put His miracles by the side of His teaching, as though they were coördinate with it. As we have shown elsewhere, Jesus subordinated miracles to teaching. They were a proof of His Messianic claim, but in themselves they involved no teaching in regard to God which was not contained in the miracles of the prophets. The distinctive religious

message of Jesus to the world was not expressed through His miraculous works. These works, however, since they confirmed the Messianic claim of Jesus, were of course of great value, and Jesus could say to the lake-cities, that because His mighty works had not led them to repentance, their fate should be less tolerable than that of Sodom and Gomorrah (Mt. xi. 20-24). They had seen these works, and could not, without wilful hostility to the truth, deny that they were proofs of power and of a beneficent purpose. They ought, then, to have perceived that these mighty works were God's visible seal upon the claim of Jesus. This is their significance both in the Synoptists and John; but this function does not raise them to a place beside the teaching of Jesus.

The importance of the revelation of Jesus, as a means of realizing the Messianic purpose, lay in the fact that He thereby communicated a unique and absolute knowledge of God. It is plain, even in the Synoptists, that He claimed to have such knowledge. He claimed it when He said that He came to fulfil the Law and the prophets (Mt. v. 17). For the Law and the prophets had as their great aim the effectual revelation of God's will to men; and they did, indeed, reveal it by "divers portions and in divers manners," and they had a "shadow of the good things to come" (Heb. i. 1; x. 1). But one who should *fulfil* the Law

and the prophets, who should perfectly realize the ideal after which they struggled, must of necessity have a perfect knowledge of the divine will.

Again, the Synoptists have the claim of unique knowledge in the word of Jesus which was spoken when He realized that the mystery of the Gospel had been effectually made known to His disciples through Him. First, He thanks God that He has revealed "these things" of the kingdom to "babes"; and then says that no one knows the Son but the Father, nor who the Father is but the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him (Mt. xi. 25-27; Lk. x. 22). Here is the claim to an absolute knowledge of the Father, also the teaching that this knowledge can be communicated, and that Jesus regards the acceptance of it by men as the accomplishment of His mission. He speaks of this knowledge as given by the Father, and then declares that it is given through the Son, which obviously shows that, in His thought, what He reveals, God reveals.

It is significant that the invitation of Jesus to men to come unto Him for rest follows immediately upon this statement, that He alone can reveal the Father (Mt. xi. 28-30). The evident implication is that men find rest for their souls as they receive from Jesus His revelation of the Father, or, to put it in another form, as they find the Father in Him. Thus the Mes-

sianic purpose of Jesus was fulfilled by the way of teaching; but it is of vital importance to bear in mind the *personal element* in this teaching. Since it is *Jesus*, and no other, who communicates the saving revelation of the Father (Mt. xi. 27), the acceptance of the teaching involves the acceptance of the Teacher as the Messiah sent from God to bring this teaching to men. The work of Jesus as a teacher cannot be separated from His work of winning disciples. He taught men in order that they might desire to follow Him; and He called men to follow Him in order that He might teach them (Mk. iii. 14). Discipleship was the fruit which He always sought. "Follow me," now used in a literal sense (Mk. ii. 14; x. 28; Mt. viii. 21-22), and now in a figurative sense (Mk. viii. 34-35; Mt. xvi. 24-25), are the words which perfectly express the sole end of His teaching. They who really accepted His teaching, accepted Him; and they who accepted Him accepted Him as revealing the Father, and also accepted the Father as revealed by Him. Thus the teaching of Jesus is not abstract, but personal. A man cannot accept it without becoming a disciple of Jesus, for the very heart of it is that Jesus Himself is the revealer of the Father. In so far as men do accept it, the Messianic purpose of Jesus is accomplished, and the purpose of the Father is accomplished, who sent Jesus to do the

Messianic work. Thus the life-work of Jesus, according to the Synoptists, was the work of a teacher, a revealer of God; but this work was accomplished through the offer and acceptance of a perfect embodiment of the revelation in the person of the Revealer, and not alone by the offer and acceptance of a new conception of God.

In the discourses of Jesus in the fourth Gospel, the realization of the Messianic purpose, as far as it is accomplished by the life of Jesus, is accomplished *solely* by His work as a *teacher*; and thus we have the same thought as in the Synoptists, but it is expressed with greater clearness and urgency.

The value of the revelation of Jesus rests upon the fact that it springs out of an immediate knowledge of God. The claim of Jesus to an absolute knowledge of the Father is presented much more fully by John than by the earlier evangelists. We meet it near the beginning of the Gospel, in the dialogue with Nicodemus (Jn. iii. 13), and all the way through the narrative till the final conversation with the Roman governor (Jn. xviii. 37). Thus He said that no one but the Son of man had ascended into heaven, and hence no one but He could declare "heavenly things," that is, Messianic truths (Jn. iii. 13). Likewise He says that the Father shows the Son all things which He Himself doeth (Jn.

b. In the  
fourth  
Gospel.

v. 20), which implies that He shows them to no one else. Again, Jesus claims full and unique knowledge when He says that no one has *seen* the Father save He who is from God (Jn. vi. 46), and when in His last prayer He speaks twice of giving to His disciples the *name* which the Father had given to Him (Jn. xvii. 11, 12). In like manner He says that the world knew not the Father, but He, in solitary contrast with the world, knew Him (Jn. xvii. 25). This knowing the will of the Father is expressed by Jesus in a variety of figures. Thus He *hears* the Father speak and teach (Jn. v. 30; viii. 28); He *sees* in the presence of the Father the things which He speaks (Jn. viii. 38); the Father *shows* Him all that He doeth (Jn. v. 26), or, in general terms, the words that He speaks and the revelation that He imparts have been *given* to Him by the Father (Jn. xvii. 8, 11). This language of Jesus implies that He felt perfectly certain of His teaching. What He had heard from the Father, or seen in His presence, He could and must utter without hesitation. And His teaching does indeed bear the stamp of perfect assurance. There is never a tone of doubt in it. Jesus is never confused or unprepared.

The claim of Jesus to teach what He has *seen* with the Father does not imply that He ignored the Old Testament, and claimed direct and immediate revelation as the source of all His teaching. He regarded the

Scriptures as witnessing concerning Him, and intimated that the sum of their teaching was that men should come to Him for life (Jn. v. 39-40). But this thought, that men have eternal life in *Him*, is surely a part of the doctrine which He said was not His but the Father's (Jn. vii. 16). This is one of the Messianic truths which He has learned in communion with the Father (Jn. iii. 12-13).

Again, His conviction that the Son of man must be *lifted up* may have come to Him, in part at least, by reading the experience of Israel in the wilderness (Num. xxi. 9; Jn. iii. 14). Occasionally Jesus uses the Scriptures in His controversies with the Jews, and in conversation with His disciples, and yet at the same time He says that He speaks the things which He has *seen* with the Father (Jn. x. 34-35; vi. 45; xiii. 18; xv. 25). Therefore it seems plain that with reference to some of His teaching, at least, He *heard* the Father's voice and *saw* the Father in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, — a conception which is in fundamental accord with that idea of the Old Testament which we find in the Synoptists (*e.g.* Mt. v. 17-19; Mk. xii. 30-31; Mt. xxii. 37-40).

This leads to another point, namely, that Jesus *acquired* His knowledge of the Father in His earthly life. Some of the passages in which He speaks of this knowledge harmonize with the view that He gained it in



a preëxistent state,<sup>1</sup> though not one can reasonably be said to *require* that view. Jesus speaks of the Father's commandments to Him in the *aorist* tense, which points to past time and so *might* refer to a preëxistent state. Thus He says, "As the Father *taught* me, I speak these things;" and "The words which Thou *gavest* me I have given to them" (Jn. viii. 28; xvii. 8). Oftener He uses the *perfect* tense in speaking of what He has seen with the Father, which also *allows*, but does not *require*, a reference to preëxistence. Thus He says, "I speak the things which I *have seen* with the Father;" and, "The Father who hath sent me, He *hath given* me a commandment, what I should say" (Jn. viii. 38; xii. 49-50). But still more frequently Jesus uses the *present* tense when speaking of the Father's communications to Him, and once the future. Thus He says that the Father *shows* Him what He does (Jn. v. 20), shows Him day by day, as need arises. Again, He judges as He *hears* from the Father (Jn. v. 30), and the Father abiding in Him *works* (Jn. xiv. 10). He knows that His Messianic witness is true, because He is conscious that He is not *alone*. He knows that the Father is with Him, and that the witness which He bears is also the Father's witness (Jn. viii. 16-18). These passages, as those in which He draws His teaching from Scripture, and that one in which He refers to

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Weiss, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, p. 616.

a future teaching by the Father (Jn. v. 20), show that when Jesus speaks of seeing things in the Father's presence and hearing words from Him, we are not warranted in supposing that He refers in any single instance to a preëxistent state. He refers rather to the teaching of the Father which He was constantly receiving in His earthly life. None of the passages require that this statement should be modified. When Jesus says that the Father *taught*, using the *aorist* tense, the word is spoken in both cases from the standpoint of the end of His life; and as *summarizing* what had been experienced in His earthly life, the *aorist* is appropriately used. And when Jesus says that He speaks the things which He has seen with the Father, using the *perfect* tense, nothing suggests that this form of the verb implies preëxistence. One must bring that thought to the text before it can be found there. The significance of the perfect is simply this, that what Jesus has seen with the Father abides in full force with Him to the present hour.

Moreover, this view that Jesus acquired His knowledge of the Father in His earthly life<sup>1</sup> is the only one which accords with the fact that Jesus in the fourth Gospel lays great stress upon His *moral* union with the Father, but nowhere distinctly alludes to a metaphysical relationship.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Lk. ii 40, 52.

Now the communication of this unique knowledge of the Father, on which the fourth Gospel puts so much emphasis, is the Messianic work. This thought appears in various forms on the lips of Jesus. In the consciousness that He has this life-giving knowledge He calls himself the *light* of the world (Jn. viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 35). He sums up His activity in behalf of mankind as a bearing witness unto the *truth* (Jn. xviii. 37), and the centre of His claim to Thomas is that He Himself is the truth (Jn. xiv. 6). He is the *way* to the Father because He is the truth, and He is the *life* of men because He is the truth. His truth is the spring of His life and the light of His way. Again, Jesus says that it is His mission to speak what He has *seen* with the Father (Jn. viii. 38), and to make known all things which He has *heard* from the Father (Jn. viii. 26; xv. 15). In His closing prayer He refers to His life-work as a manifestation of the *name* of the Father, or a giving to men of the *word* of the Father, which is truth, or a giving to them of the *glory* which the Father had given to Him, which is nothing else than the Father's revelation of Himself (Jn. xvii. 6, 8, 17, 22). They who *hear* His word from the Father live, because His word is spirit and life (Jn. v. 25; vi. 63; comp. Mk. iv. 4, 14). They are quickened by it, and pass out of death into life (Jn. v. 21, 24).

Such is the prominence which is given in the fourth Gospel to the teaching function of Jesus as the means

of realizing His Messianic purpose. This is virtually the exclusive means, for the *signs* of the fourth Gospel (eight described) are subordinated to the teaching, as in the Synoptists. Jesus reproached the nobleman of Capernaum, and with him the Jews of that day in general, when He said, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will in no wise believe" (Jn. iv. 48). This implies that He thought there was a better ground of belief in Him as Messiah than mere signs and wonders. Of course it does not follow that He regarded the signs as unimportant. The next day after feeding the multitudes near Bethsaida He said to the Jews, "Ye seek me not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled" (Jn. vi. 26). Here it is implied that, in His judgment, the signs which they had seen *might* well have led them to seek Him. In like manner He spoke of the resurrection of Lazarus as an event which manifested the glory of God, and which glorified the Son of God (Jn. xi. 4, 40). It glorified the Son of God because, in connection with His claim, it showed Him to be the Messiah, which is the function of all the signs of Jesus in the fourth Gospel.

But while Jesus thus spoke of His signs, He did not coördinate them with His teaching. In His final prayer, wherein He reviews His life-work and speaks of what He has done for the disciples, He does not mention the miraculous works, but speaks of the Father's *words* and

the Father's *name*, which He has given to them. This is His great work, and it is this which is to be continued by His successor. The Holy Spirit will *teach* them, and bring to their remembrance all that Jesus *said* to them (Jn. xiv. 26). He is to bear witness of Jesus (Jn. xv. 26). Thus the revelation of Jesus remains the essential means of accomplishing the Messianic work, while His signs had only a passing and incidental importance.

As the fourth Gospel gives prominence to *teaching* in the realization of the Messianic purpose, so it gives a corresponding prominence to the personal relationship which is involved in the acceptance of the teaching. Jesus manifests the *name* of the Father (Jn. xvii. 6, 26), that is, the Father's *character*, and He manifests this in His *own* character. "I am the light of the world" (Jn. viii. 12); "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn. xi. 25); "I am the way and the truth and the life" (Jn. xiv. 6); "This is life eternal that they should know thee, the only true God, and *him* whom thou didst send, Jesus Christ" (Jn. xvii. 3). The thought of accepting the words which He has received from the Father alternates with the thought of appropriating Him (Jn. xvii. 8; vi. 57). In John, then, as little as in the Synoptists does Jesus ever separate between the verbal and the personal revelation of the Father, or think of the acceptance of His doctrine apart from the acceptance of Himself.

From the realization of the Messianic purpose in the life of Jesus we pass now to consider the bearing of His death upon the realization of that purpose, and first we must notice *the progressive unfolding* of the thought of death.

III. The Messianic purpose realized through death.  
 a. Progressive unfolding of the thought of death.

The evangelist Mark, when he gives Jesus' first formal announcement of His death, intimates that the Lord had referred to the same subject before, but in a veiled manner, for after recording what Jesus said of His death when He was at Cæsarea Philippi, he adds that He spake the word *openly* (Mk. viii. 31-32). We find in Mark's Gospel one obscure reference by Jesus to His death made prior to the sojourn at Cæsarea Philippi. This reference was made on the occasion when Jesus was called to account for allowing His disciples to drop the fasts which the Pharisees and the disciples of John observed. He then said that the present was a time of joy for His disciples, and therefore fasting, which should express sorrow of heart, would be quite out of place. His disciples were sons of the bridechamber, and had the bridegroom with them. The time would come, however, when *the bridegroom would be taken away from them*, and then fasting would be appropriate (Mk. ii. 20). Jesus does not intimate *how* the bridegroom would be taken away, whether by a violent or a natural death, or by a trans-

lation such as Enoch and Elijah experienced. The fact that His removal would cause them sorrow may best accord with the thought of a violent death, but plainly does not require it.

In Matthew and Luke we find another allusion by Jesus to His death, which antedates the word at Cæsarea Philippi; but it is hardly more definite in its implication in regard to the method or significance of Jesus' death than is Mark's saying about the removal of the bridegroom (Mt. xii. 38-41; Lk. xi. 29-32). The occasion of the remark was the desire of scribes and Pharisees to see some sign from Jesus, some sign according to their own fancy of what a sign should be, in order that it might give convincing proof of the Messiahship of Jesus. Their unbelief and hostility were so bitter that they had just before this declared that Jesus was possessed by an unclean spirit (Mk. iii. 30). In reply to this request of the Jews for a sign, Jesus uttered the severest words regarding that generation which He had thus far spoken. He declared that it was evil and adulterous, and that no sign should be given it but the sign of Jonah.

In Luke's version Jesus says that the Son of man shall be a sign to that generation as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites (Lk. xi. 29-30). This statement is quite general, and does not suggest *how* Jonah was a sign. He came to Nineveh as a prophet of Jehovah.

and so Jesus had come to His generation. The Old Testament does not say that Jonah told the Ninevites of his strange experiences as he sought to flee from the face of the Lord. That which is said to have moved Nineveh to repent was the announcement that judgment would soon fall upon it for its wickedness, unless it turned to the Lord. But in Matthew's version Jesus makes the sign of Jonah to consist in the fact that he was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish (Mt. xii. 39-40). He said that the Son of man, in like manner, should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. There is no reason to doubt the genuineness of this saying which Matthew records;<sup>1</sup> and it justifies, as Luke's version does not, the use of the expression the *sign of Jonah*. It does not imply that Jesus regarded Jonah's experience as prophetic of His own, or even that He regarded it as historical; but He saw in it a convenient illustration of His own thought. It was suggestive, but also obscure. The hearers would not regard it as necessarily foreshadowing the *death* of the Son of man, for as Jonah had been three days and three nights in the heart of the sea without tasting death, so might the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth without

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 279, thinks Matthew's narrative shows the ingenuity of a Jewish-Christian rabbinism.



dying. Then the plain intimation that He would be in the heart of the earth *only* three days and three nights would sooner turn the hearer's thought away from death than toward it. But the language of Jesus would at least suggest something dreadful as about to be experienced by Him, and it taught that this dreadful experience, when it should come, would be a sign to that generation. We cannot doubt, however, that for Jesus Himself, the sign of Jonah involved the thought of death and resurrection.

These two obscure sayings are the only words of Jesus, spoken before the crisis at Cæsarea Philippi, which allude to His death, and one of these has no hint whatever as to the meaning of that event.<sup>1</sup> This period which, in the Synoptic narrative, furnishes but two allusions by Jesus to His death, included about three-fourths of His public ministry.<sup>2</sup> But from the day of the first formal announcement of death onward to the close of Jesus' life, we find references to His death comparatively frequent and perfectly explicit. All the Synoptists record three announcements by Jesus in very similar language, two of them near together and at the beginning of the last six or seven months, and the other near the close of this

<sup>1</sup> The word about bearing the cross (Mt. x. 38) is regarded as subsequent to the confession of Peter (comp. Mk. viii. 34).

<sup>2</sup> See *The Student's Life of Jesus*, p. 242.

period (Mk. viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 33-34; Mt. xvi. 21; xvii. 22-23; xx. 18-19; Lk. ix. 22, 43-44; xviii. 31-33). While these announcements are similar, it is to be noticed that the last one is made more dreadful than the first two by the addition of some details of suffering. Thus it is in this announcement that Jesus speaks for the first time of *mocking, spitting, scourging*, and according to Matthew, of *crucifixion*, as part of the cup of His approaching trial. Besides these formal announcements which are given by all the Synoptists there are no less than fourteen other references, more or less explicit. Of these, ten seem to belong to the last week; three are associated with the transfiguration and thus follow closely upon the formal announcement at Cæsarea Philippi, and one belongs in the Perean ministry. Hence we conclude that, as far as the Synoptic report informs us, Jesus only *alluded* to His death during the first three-quarters of His ministry; that He spoke of it several times in the days spent near Cæsarea Philippi, after the close of His public work in Galilee; and that in the last week He referred to His death still more frequently and fully.

But we cannot at once infer that, because Jesus gradually *unfolded* the thought of His death, therefore this thought was only gradually *formed* within His own mind. Gradualness of unfolding might, obviously, be due to other causes. And, moreover, it seems

decidedly probable that Jesus, who everywhere reveals a profound spiritual acquaintance with the Old Testament and an unparalleled insight into the character of men, had from the beginning of His ministry seen that His way would be one of suffering. The reference to the removal of the bridegroom came very early in the Galilean ministry, and its accent is not uncertain. "The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away." From the beginning of the ministry, too, Jesus could not fail to hear a note of defiance and of inextinguishable hatred in the cries of the demoniacs and in the sullen murmurings of the scribes (*e.g.* Mk. i. 26; ii. 7). And, finally, there is no proof that, in the early part of His ministry, the eyes of Jesus were holden so that He could not read in the Old Testament what He plainly saw there in the later months of His life. But at the same time it is not necessary to suppose, and it is not probable, that Jesus from the beginning of His ministry foresaw the *details* of His suffering and death. These were not suggested by the Old Testament.

Hence we conclude that the lateness of Jesus' first explicit reference to His death is most probably to be attributed to the condition of His disciples. Mark says that Jesus spoke the word of the kingdom as the disciples were *able to hear it* (Mk. iv. 33); and it seems quite certain that they had not been able to

hear the announcement of suffering and death earlier than the days at Cæsarea Philippi. Even then they were in danger of stumbling at it, and till the last day of the life of Jesus they failed to comprehend it. But while the disciples could not understand the saying about the death of their Messiah, they were at this time inwardly prepared to hear it, because they had come to have a personal attachment to Jesus which was stronger than their attachment to their own peculiar ideal of the Messianic kingdom. They had stood the strain of the last days of the public ministry in Galilee, when the multitudes and many of the disciples of Jesus had turned away from Him.<sup>1</sup> They had acquired a strength of conviction which made it safe for Jesus to begin to teach them in regard to His death.

Jesus was clearly led to the thought of His death by His study of the Scriptures. The first suggestion of this fact is found in the account of the transfiguration scene. According to Luke, the three disciples on the mountain saw Moses and Elijah, and heard them talking with Jesus about His decease in Jerusalem (Lk. ix. 30-31). One object of this vision which was granted to the disciples was to reconcile their minds to the thought of the death of Jesus, which had now for the first

b. The source of Jesus' thought of death.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 264-267.

time been formally announced to them.<sup>1</sup> It was to suggest to them that, both in the Law and the prophets, the death of the Messiah was foreshadowed, and consequently that their view, which was also the view of the Jews in general, that the Messiah should come in glory and abide forever, was incorrect. But if this thought was communicated to the disciples as the teaching of the Old Testament, whether by a vision or otherwise, we cannot suppose that Jesus had failed to find it there.

Again, as they went down from the mountain, and talked about the appearance and mission of Elijah, Jesus suggested that Elijah's restoration of *all things*, which the scribes taught, was in conflict with the Scriptures concerning the Son of man, which said that He must suffer many things and be set at naught. Manifestly, if Elijah had restored *all things* and had made them ready for the Messiah, there would have been no opposition to Him, and He would not have been put to death by the Jews. Consequently that passage of Scripture which Jesus had in mind about the suffering of the Messiah, whatever it may have been, would have failed of fulfilment. It is plain that Jesus, at this time, read His death in the Old Testament, or, if not his *death*, as in Mt. xvii. 12, at least His suffering of many things and being

<sup>1</sup> See *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 275-276.

set at naught (Mk. ix. 12). In other words, He was convinced that He must experience an outward and ignominious defeat.

Once more, it is plain from the words of Jesus that the fate of the prophets had suggested that His own fate would be a violent death. In the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, He represents God's messengers, the prophets, as being beaten and killed, and says that the householder's son — meaning Himself — is to share the same fate (Mk. xii. 6-8). At an earlier day He said that a prophet could not perish out of Jerusalem, and as this word was occasioned by Herod's threat to kill Him while in Perea, He evidently thought of Himself as being in the prophetic line. Their fate suggested His.

Again, on the last evening before the crucifixion, Jesus spoke frequently of His death as being foretold in Scripture. Thus, the Son of man goes "as it is written of Him" (Mk. xiv. 21); and, again, "I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered" (Mk. xiv. 27); and, again, "This that is *written* must be fulfilled in me, 'He was numbered with transgressors'" (Lk. xxii. 37), and, finally, "Thinkest thou that I am not able to pray my Father, and He shall give me presently more than twelve legions of angels? How then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, that *thus* it must be" (Mt. xxvi. 53-54)? It seems plain in view

of these passages that the thought of suffering, and even the certainty of death itself, was derived by Jesus from the Old Testament, though contemporary Jewish teachers saw there no such doctrine concerning the Messiah.<sup>1</sup> But His own experience from a very early day echoed the voice that came to Him out of the Scripture, and confirmed it. He could not fail to see the deep-seated hate of scribe and Pharisee, and He knew that they would gladly kill Him (Mk. ii. 7; iii. 6). He must have seen that His conceptions of the kingdom of God and of the religious life were fundamentally opposed to those of the teachers of His day, and that sooner or later there must be a determined effort to crush Him. And thus the *experience* of Jesus was a commentary on the Old Testament text of a suffering Messiah, and as the opposition to Him deepened, it may have served to make the word of Scripture plainer and more sure.

It is significant that, as regards the idea of a suffering Messiah, Jesus saw in the Old Testament what neither the Jews of His own day nor of previous generations had seen. To His disciples, who represent the popular belief of His day, the thought of the Messiah's death was intolerable. Jesus did not tell them of His tragic fate until He had bound them to Him with strong

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 333-348; Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 288.

bonds, and even then there was imminent peril lest their allegiance to Him should be shattered against this rock. The words which the fourth evangelist puts upon the lips of the Baptist, "Behold, the lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. i. 29), can by no means be regarded as proving that the Jews were familiar with the thought of a suffering Messiah. The character of the fourth Gospel rather requires that we should regard these words as the evangelist's idealization of the Baptist's testimony; and this is required also by the fact that the *disciples* of the Baptist were the very men who could not bear the thought of the Messiah's suffering and death. It is obvious that Peter and the other apostles who had been pupils of the Baptist had heard nothing of this doctrine while in his school.

We come now to the great question, What significance did Jesus attach to His own sufferings and death?

c. The meaning which Jesus attached to His death. It is plain, as we have seen, that Jesus was led by the Scriptures to regard His death as a necessary part of the Messiah's career; but with the exception of five, or possibly six, passages, He gives no suggestion in regard to the *ground* of this necessity, or the spiritual *significance* of His death. In other words, out of something more than twenty Synoptic references by Jesus to His death, about seventeen treat it simply and only as a fact in the



Messianic career. But before proceeding to an analysis of the exceptional words in which Jesus refers to the meaning of His death, it will be of advantage to take a rapid survey of the other words which show the character of His habitual allusions to this event. It first appears as a fact which will cause *sorrow* to His disciples. "Days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in that day" (Mk. ii. 20). The three solemn and formal announcements which are given by all the Synoptists are simply announcements of the fact of death with more or fewer details of suffering and shame (Mk. viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 33-34). In the first, the *necessity* of Jesus' death and resurrection is explicitly stated, but in no one of the passages is there any allusion to the meaning of the event. On the mount of transfiguration Moses and Elijah were seen talking with Jesus about His decease (Lk. ix. 30-31), and as they came down from the mount Jesus charged the disciples not to tell what they had seen until the Son of man should rise from the dead (Mk. ix. 9). But in neither case is there a word of explanation. Nor is there when, in the same hour, He said that it was according to Scripture that the Son of man should suffer and be set at naught (Mk. ix. 12). On one occasion certain Pharisees told Jesus that Herod desired to kill Him (Lk. xiii. 31). Jesus said, in His reply, that He must go on His way that day and

the next because a prophet could not perish out of Jerusalem (Lk. xiii. 33). In the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen Jesus alluded to His own death at the hands of the Jews, when He said that the husbandmen killed the *son* of the owner of the vineyard (Mk. xii. 6-8); and when He was anointed in the house of Simon He said that the act was an anticipation of the final anointing of His body for burial (Mk. xiv. 8). Then, on the last evening, He said that He had greatly desired to eat the Passover before He should suffer (Lk. xxii. 15), and, again, when speaking of the traitor, He said, "The Son of man *goes* as it is written concerning Him" (Mk. xiv. 21). Here, also, belongs the word that the Scripture must be fulfilled in Him which says, "He was numbered with transgressors" (Lk. xxii. 37). And finally, after the resurrection, Jesus told His disciples that the death and resurrection of the Messiah were *written*, that is, of course, in the Old Testament (Lk. xxiv. 46). But in all these passages it is simply the *fact* of death which comes into view; nothing is said of the *meaning* of the fact. It is sometimes referred to as necessary and as foretold in the Scriptures, but nothing is said of its place in the Messianic work of Jesus.

Such, then, is the character of the habitual references which Jesus made to His sufferings and death. He spoke of them as approaching facts, but without explanation.

We pass now to the consideration of those exceptional words of Jesus in the first three Gospels, which involve more or less of explanation and comment on the fact of His death. And first, we notice that some of these words make the significance of the death of Jesus *personal to Himself*. This is the suggestion of the message which Jesus bade the Pharisees take to Herod, "Go, say to this fox, Lo, I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and on the third day *I am perfected*" (Lk. xiii. 32). This saying is obscure. If with Meyer<sup>1</sup> and others we understand Jesus to say that on the third day He will finish *the work of casting out demons and performing cures*, then of course there is here no direct allusion to death; and if with Godet<sup>2</sup> we understand Him to say that on the third day He will finish *His life*, then plainly there is no allusion in the verse to the significance of His death. But we cannot regard either of these interpretations as well supported. For we find that in every case where this verb is used in the New Testament, with a personal subject and without an object, as here, it is used of a moral and spiritual process. So Jesus used it once, when He prayed that His disciples might be perfected into one (Jn. xvii. 23), and Paul says that he

<sup>1</sup> See *Handbuch über die Evangelien des Markus und Lukas*, fünfte Auflage, p. 453.

<sup>2</sup> See *Commentaire sur L'Évangile de St. Luc*, Tome second, pp. 154-155.

does not count himself made perfect (Phil. iii. 12). The author of Hebrews uses this same word three times when speaking of Jesus (Heb. ii. 10; v. 8-9; vii. 28), and five times when speaking of other persons (*e.g.* Heb. ix. 9), and in every case he thinks of a moral or spiritual perfecting.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, this meaning which seems to be required by New Testament usage suits the present context as well as the other. Jesus says, "I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and on the third day I am *perfected*." That means that Herod cannot interrupt His Messianic work. It will go forward to its consummation at the appointed time. And that consummation will be in some sense His own personal consummation. The character of this reference to His death is similar to that of the well-known reference in John, where He speaks of the hour of His death as the hour of His *glorification* (Jn. xii. 23). Doubtless the Pharisees did not understand this word of Jesus; and if it was reported to Herod, it must have been fully unintelligible to him; but this is not against the correctness of our interpretation. For the main purport of the reply of Jesus was perfectly clear. He told Herod, in effect, that He should keep right on in His Messianic work until the appointed time was fulfilled. And the one obscure term which He used had a subtle fitness in view of Herod's desire.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Plummer, *Commentary on Luke*.

He wanted to kill Jesus, and so destroy His influence. The death of Jesus would be, in his thought as in that of the Pharisees, the end of Him and of His work. Jesus in His reply intimates that His death is His perfecting; it will make Him the finished and absolute Messiah. Thus, in this passage, Jesus thinks of His death not in relation to others, but only as a necessary part of His Messianic experience and discipline.

Another word of Jesus which suggests a similar thought in regard to the significance of His death is that in which He speaks of His approaching baptism (Lk. xii. 49-50). "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished" (comp. Mk. x. 38; Mt. xx. 22)! If He thinks of His sufferings and death as His *baptism*, then He must necessarily regard them as having a significance personal to Himself. The very figure seems to require this, for a man's baptism is for himself. It may have most important consequences for others, but only by way of the man who experiences it.

The remaining word of Jesus which belongs in this class is also found in Luke's Gospel and nowhere else. It is the word spoken to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. "Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory" (Lk. xxiv. 26, 46)? Here the suffering of death appears to be regarded as a necessary stage in the

Messiah's progress to glory. This is the only aspect of it to which reference is here made, and this, therefore, seems to have been the aspect which Jesus regarded as of chief importance to His disciples at that time. They were to see that the death of their Messiah was not an accident, and not a fact unfavorable to the Messiahship of Jesus; but that it was rather a clear part of the divine plan and a necessary preparation for Messianic glory.

It remains to consider the Synoptic words of Jesus which refer to His death as having significance *for others than Himself*. There are but two of these sayings, for the word about the sign of Jonah has, as we have seen, nothing to teach on this subject. The first of the two passages is the word which Jesus spoke to His disciples as they journeyed for the last time toward Jerusalem. He declares that the Son of man came to give His life a *ransom* for many (Mk. x. 45; Mt. xx. 28). He had just laid upon His disciples the necessity of serving one another. Their spirit must be the opposite of that which exists in the world, where great ones exercise authority and lord it over the masses. The ground which Jesus gives for this law of service is His own example. *He* came to serve; therefore His disciples should serve. Now the example of the Son of man apparently covers both the infinitive clauses in this weighty sentence. He

came to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. The giving of His life is the final and culminating act of ministering. It is the highest evidence that He has a true spirit of service. Thus Jesus refers to His own life as furnishing a law to His disciples, and it seems impossible to interpret the passage as meaning that the disciples can imitate Jesus in serving, but not in laying down their lives. This interpretation would run directly against more than one explicit word of Jesus. He repeatedly told His disciples that they must be willing to lay down life for His sake and the Gospel's (*e.g.* Mt. x. 21-22). He said that if any one would come after Him, he must take up the cross (Mk. viii. 34), and that in order to save one's life, one must lose it (Mk. viii. 35). Thus, the teaching of Jesus elsewhere confirms the natural, grammatical understanding of Mk. x. 45, which makes the example of Jesus that is to be imitated by His disciples an example which consists in serving *and* in laying down life as a ransom. Thus the logical connection of the verse with the preceding seems to mark off, at the outset, the general meaning of the word *ransom*.

It is to be noticed, in the next place, that the thought of the word *ransom*, since neither this term nor any word from the same root is elsewhere used by Jesus, must be understood in the light of His teaching in regard to the conditions of His salvation. Now the word *ransom* implies that those for whom it is given

are in a state of bondage.<sup>1</sup> This bondage in which the many are held can be understood, in the teaching of Jesus, in one way only: it is the bondage of sin.<sup>2</sup> Jesus gives His life to deliver them from this bondage. It is not said that He gives His life *in place* of the lives of many, though the Greek preposition here used often has this meaning. That cannot be the sense of the word here, for the many have no longer lives to give, if they would. They are in bondage; their lives are already given away to sin. In the language of Jesus used elsewhere, they are *dead*. It is impossible, then, to introduce here the thought that the life of Jesus is given *instead* of the lives of many. Moreover, in cases of exchange, as when Esau sold his birthright *for* one mess of meat (Heb. xii. 16), and Jesus endured the cross *for* the joy that was set before Him (Heb. xii. 2), the preposition employed is the same that we have in the verse under consideration, where it is said that Jesus came to give His life a ransom *for* many. This usage, therefore, suggests that Jesus gives up His life and gets *the many* in return. They become His possession, won by His sacrifice in their behalf, or, as the fourth Gospel says, *drawn* by the power of Jesus when He is lifted up (Jn. xii. 32). So the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 511-513; Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 292.



thought of the passage under consideration is that of delivering men from the bondage of sin, winning them to discipleship, by the laying down of Jesus' life.

Now Jesus had already been accomplishing this very end by means of His Messianic ministry. He had made the Father known, and through the influence of His teaching and His presence men had come into possession of a new life. They had been *ransomed*, and had found rest unto their souls (Mk. ii. 5; Mt. x. 40; xi. 25, etc.). A personal allegiance to Jesus had been developed in them which was sufficiently strong to control their thought and life. If, then, by His revelation of the Father He had led men into the kingdom of heaven during His ministry, He could do no higher thing by His death. He might conceivably ransom *more* by His death than He had ransomed by His ministry; but the deliverance would be the same *kind* of deliverance that He had already accomplished in His life.

We cannot say, therefore, that when Jesus speaks of giving His life a ransom for 'many, He represents His death, *apart from His life*, as *absolutely* necessary to the salvation of men. He had taught that God freely forgives the penitent, and He had Himself welcomed many penitent souls into the kingdom of God without any allusion to His own death. We are, therefore, plainly constrained to say that, so far as Mk. x. 45

is concerned, Jesus regarded His death as a service of the same sort as the service of His life. It naturally had an intenser meaning than belonged to any other single act of His divine ministry, for the highest that a man has to give in proof of his love is his life; but the meaning, though more intense, is not essentially different. If the death of Jesus was necessary, so in like manner was His life necessary. If His death ransomed, so, also, had His life.

The other passage concerning the significance which, in the thought of Jesus, His death had for others than Himself, is the account of the Lord's Supper, "the weightiest, most precise, and defining expression which He has yet used."<sup>1</sup>

Of the bread which He took before the wine He said: "This is my body" (Mk. xiv. 22; Mt. xxvi. 26), or, "This is my body given for you" (Lk. xxii. 19), and "Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk. xxii. 19), that is, *Eat* this in remembrance of me.

The bread represents His body which is *given* for the disciples, that is, naturally, given to *suffering and death*. This thought is required by the context. The body must needs be broken, or given to suffering and death, in order that the blood may be shed, and the shedding of His blood is necessarily presupposed by the symbolic use which is made of it in the subse-

<sup>1</sup> See Fairbairn, *Expositor*, 1897, vol. v. p. 25.

quent verses. In Mark and Matthew this thought is not expressed. The bread is simply given to the disciples, and they eat it. But the very fact that Jesus gives the bread to them implies that it is *for their good*, the thought that is expressed in Luke and Paul (Lk. xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24); and the fact that the bread, which symbolizes the body of Jesus, must of necessity be broken into pieces in order that each disciple may partake, implies the thought, which is expressed in Luke, that it is given to suffering and death. And since the bread symbolizes the body of Jesus, to partake of it inevitably turns the thought to Him, and so the act has a memorial character, as Luke and Paul explicitly teach.

We have, then, in all the Synoptic narratives, expressed or implied, these thoughts regarding the body of Jesus which is symbolized by the bread: first, that the giving of the body of Jesus to death is *for the good* of the disciples; second, that they experience the benefit of this act of His as they *do the thing that is symbolized by the eating of the bread*. Now since the bread represents His body given to death for them, to eat the bread symbolizes the spiritual appropriation of Jesus as one who had given His life for them. And, third, we have the thought that eating this bread is a *memorial* service which brings Him to their minds.

Now, as far as the meaning of the death of Jesus is concerned, this first part of the Lord's Supper contains only the general thought that it is *for the good* of the disciples. There is great emphasis given to this thought by the fact that Jesus, formally and in a most sacred hour, instituted the observance. This emphasis is further heightened by the circumstance that the Lord's Supper is the *only* outward observance which Jesus did enjoin upon His disciples.

But this thought that the death of Jesus is *for the good* of the disciples is not here more nearly defined. *How* it is for their good is not said. There is, indeed, a suggestion in the fact that the bread must be *broken* in order that the disciples may partake of it; and the suggestion is this, that the death of Jesus is necessary in order that His disciples may appropriate Him. But this suggestion, thus stated, is not true, for the disciples had already appropriated Jesus. They had given their allegiance to Him, and He was their hope and joy. They had appreciated His love, and fed upon it. But they had not appreciated it as it would be possible for them to do in case He should die for them. We may then hold, as a suggestion of the text, that the death of Jesus was to be for the good of the disciples, because it would *promote* their appropriation of Him, their use of Him as spiritual nourishment. This suggestion appears to be confirmed by the service of Jesus

as a whole. For the very aim of His work was that men should accept Him as Messiah, and then live in obedience to Him. To this end He gave Himself to them in a continuous service of love. The culminating act in this life of love was the laying down of life itself. All His ministries had been for the good of the disciples, just as this was. All had been for the purpose of binding them to Him and reproducing His spirit in them. But the laying down of life for them, as the last and supreme manifestation of His love, was for that reason peculiarly adapted to strengthen their personal attachment to Him, and therefore peculiarly adapted to enable them to appropriate His spirit.

This suggestion, then, which the text itself furnishes in regard to the meaning of the death of Jesus, as far as the first act in the Lord's Supper involves the thought of death, commends itself because it views the death of Jesus as in harmony with His life. And the very fact that Jesus did not explain how His death was for the good of the disciples is a strong argument for the view that this *how* must be understood in the light of the life of Jesus as a whole. Had its meaning, in His mind, been foreign to the general teaching of His ministry, then He could not have left it to be inferred.

We pass now to the second part of the Lord's Supper in its bearing upon the thought which Jesus

had in regard to the significance of His death for others. All the Synoptists agree that Jesus referred to His blood as *covenant* blood (Mk. xiv. 24; Mt. xxvi. 28; Lk. xxii. 20). Mark and Matthew say, "This is my blood of the covenant," and Luke says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." In speaking of His blood as blood of the *new* covenant, Jesus recognizes a parallelism between it and the blood of some well-known *old* covenant.<sup>1</sup> Now the great covenant of the olden time was the covenant between Jehovah and Israel by the hand of Moses at Mt. Sinai (Ex. xix. xxiv.). Jehovah said to the people through Moses, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples (Ex. xix. 5); and all the people answered and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do" (Ex. xix. 8). Then again, after some days, in which Jehovah gave to Moses the ten words and other commandments, Moses came to the people and told them what Jehovah had said; and they all answered with one voice and said, "All the words which Jehovah hath spoken will we do" (Ex. xxiv. 3). Then Moses built an altar under Mt. Sinai, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings unto Jehovah (Ex. xxiv. 4, 5). He took the blood,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 518; Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, i. 297.

sprinkled half of it on the altar, and after reading again the words of Jehovah, to which the people responded as before, he sprinkled the other half of the blood upon the people, saying, "Behold, the blood of the covenant which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. xxiv. 8).

The blood which Moses sprinkled upon the people was a visible token that they pledged themselves to be obedient unto the Lord. It was the solemn seal of their covenant.<sup>1</sup> The covenant was made when the people accepted all the words of the Lord and thrice promised to be obedient to them. Consequently the blood which was afterward sprinkled upon them was not the *ground* or basis of the covenant.<sup>2</sup> It was a solemn ratification of the compact. It sacredly bound the two parties, Jehovah and Israel, to keep their promises to each other. There is no intimation whatever in the story that this blood was designed to have any purifying influence upon the people.

Accordingly, when Jesus spoke of His blood as blood of the new covenant, the presumption is that He thought of it as a solemn seal of an already existing covenant. His death, therefore, is not here presented as an act by virtue of which men are admitted into the favor of God, but as an act which solemnly

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Dillmann, *Commentar über die Bücher Exodus und Leviticus*.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Delitzsch, *Briefe an die Hebräer*, p. 414.

assures them that they *are* now the objects of His favor, their covenant with God being sealed with the blood of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> This thought is not only made probable by the Old Testament scene which the language of Jesus calls up, but it is also required by the fact that Jesus addressed these words to men who were already members of His kingdom. The significance of this fact is very great. By their acceptance of Jesus and His revelation of the Father, the disciples had become as houses built upon a rock (Mt. vii. 24), their names had been written in heaven (Lk. x. 20), and they had chosen the good part which should not be taken away from them (Lk. x. 42). When the Israelites accepted the book of the covenant and said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient," they entered into covenant with Jehovah. So when men accepted Jesus as the Messiah sent by the Father, they entered into covenant with God and God with them; and they received the blessings of forgiveness and life, which the Father sent Jesus to communicate. The wine which symbolized the blood of Jesus was a visible pledge of the covenant which Jesus had established between His Father and His disciples. It was a solemn seal and ratification. The authority of the pledge was the authority of the Messiah put in the most intense form possible, for

<sup>1</sup> See Fairbairn, *Expositor*, 1897, vol. v. p. 28.



the pledge was His own life-blood freely shed. As they accepted the wine which symbolized that blood, they thereby pledged themselves to God in the most solemn and sacred manner conceivable. The blood was the blood of their Messiah, their redeemer, their personal and divine friend. A covenant sealed with His blood bound them as nothing else could. The motive of gratitude to Jesus and love for Him—a motive which would be renewed with every observance of the Supper—must hold them to their allegiance with unwasting force. This covenant was a covenant of love, a covenant which involved a spiritual apprehension of Jesus as the Messiah, a covenant to be true to God as revealed in Christ; and so it was indeed a *new* covenant, as Luke calls it (comp. Jer. xxxi. 31).

But this statement does not exhaust the significance of the wine, or the blood which it symbolizes. It is, indeed, a divine seal on a covenant of infinite love; but this is not all. The blood of the old covenant was *sprinkled* upon the people, or rather upon a few who represented the entire host; the blood of the new covenant, under the symbol of wine, is *drunk* by each disciple. This act is obviously parallel to that of eating the bread, which symbolizes the body of Jesus. The blood which seals the covenant has also the profounder significance of suggesting how the disciple can remain loyal to the covenant, namely,

by appropriating the very life of Jesus. Partaking of the wine is not different from partaking of the bread, unless we regard it as a more intense symbol.<sup>1</sup> Each act is symbolic of a spiritual appropriation of Jesus. But the appropriation of Him is emphasized by the two symbols of food and drink, for the thought is thus expressed that the *entire* spiritual nourishment of the disciple is found in Jesus the Messiah. Therefore the significance of the death of Jesus, as seen through the second part of the Lord's Supper, is the significance of the first part, namely, that His death promotes the appropriation of Him; and it is also the significance of a *seal* upon the covenant which Jesus has established between God and His disciples.

It remains to consider a statement which Matthew has in regard to the significance of the blood of Jesus as symbolized by the wine (Mt. xxvi. 28). He says this blood is shed *unto remission of sins*. It seems probable that these words are an addition by the evangelist, or, at any rate, are not words of Jesus. They are not only wanting in Mark and Luke, but also in Paul, whose teaching concerning the blood of Jesus would hardly have allowed him to omit these words from his account of the institution of the Supper, if he had known them and had regarded them as spoken by Jesus. Moreover, these words

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Hoffmann, *Die Abendmahlsgedanken Jesu Christi*, p. 96.

seem to obscure the reference to the blood as blood of the *covenant*, which are common to all the four versions of the institution of the Lord's Supper; for the blood of the covenant, historically understood, was not "unto remission of sins." Further, these words of Matthew seem not to be in harmony with Luke's version, for he says, "shed *for you*," that is, for the *disciples*, whose sins had been forgiven already.<sup>1</sup>

But while the genuineness of these words of Matthew may be called in question, the thought which they contain is not foreign to the teaching of Jesus. They do not suggest that forgiveness *necessarily* rests upon the death of Jesus, and on this alone. Matthew says that the blood is shed *unto* forgiveness of sins. He does not say that the blood *must* be shed in order that sin may be forgiven. Jesus was speaking to those whose sins had been pardoned, and not on the ground of His death. Some of them became His disciples before He had even alluded to His death. To interpret the statement of Matthew to mean that the blood of Jesus *must* be shed in order that sin may be forgiven, would be to make Jesus overthrow His own Gospel of the fatherhood of God, and would set His word and His practice in sharp conflict with each other.

<sup>1</sup> Hoffmann, *Die Abendmahlsgedanken Jesu Christi*, pp. 68-69, rejects the words *for you*, saying that Jesus did not lay down His life for His disciples, but for unbelievers.

We say that Matthew's words "unto remission of sins" do not contain a thought which is foreign to the teaching of Jesus. Since the death of Jesus was a part of His Messianic work, it could be said of this, as of His entire ministry, that it was *unto* remission of sins. Forgiveness of sins was the first great end which the Messiah sought to realize, for this must precede the reign of God in the heart. The entire revelation of the Father which Jesus gave was unto remission of sins. His deeds of love and mercy were, in an important sense, unto forgiveness of sins. He came to call sinners to repentance, to seek and to save that which was lost; and so we might write over His entire ministry, as expressing the first stage in the establishment of the kingdom of God, these words, "Unto remission of sins." In this sense, and in this sense only, can the retention of Matthew's words be justified.

In passing from the Synoptists to the fourth Gospel we are soon impressed by two facts in regard to the present topic of study: first, by the greater frequency of the references of Jesus to His death; and, second, by the simplicity and uniformity of their content. Jesus speaks of His death in one way only: it is an act of *self-revelation*. And hence the purpose of His death is not different from the purpose of His life.

d. The teaching of Jesus in regard to His death according to the fourth Gospel.

The first allusion that Jesus makes to His death in the fourth Gospel is obscure. It was on the occasion of the first Passover in His ministry, and He was in the temple. The Jews asked for a sign of His authority after He had cleansed the temple, and the reply of Jesus was, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up" (Jn. ii. 19). If the temple was a figure for the body of Jesus, as the evangelist thought (Jn. ii. 21), then Jesus said, in substance, that His resurrection would be a proof of His Messianic authority. His death is, of course, involved, but nothing is directly suggested in regard to its meaning. This saying, therefore, is similar in its main purport to the Synoptic word regarding the sign of Jonah.

Again, Jesus says that the Son of man must be *lifted up*, as Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness (Jn. iii. 14). Now the serpent was lifted up on a pole in order that it might be *seen*, because the sight of it was a divinely appointed remedy for the bite of the fiery serpents (Num. xxi. 8). Accordingly, the lifting up of the Son of man, which Jesus puts in parallelism with the lifting up of the brazen serpent, is naturally thought of as an event that is necessary in order that He may be made manifest, that His character may be known. This view is definitely established by another passage which

speaks of the lifting up of the Son of man. At the feast of Tabernacles, in the last year of the ministry of Jesus, He said to the Jews, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he" (Jn. viii. 28). Their knowledge of His Messiahship is thus thought of as a consequence of His being lifted up; and we may hold that this *consequence* shows the purpose of His being lifted up, or at least *one* purpose of it. Thus the meaning of the death of Jesus, according to this passage, is that it makes His Messianic character known. It reveals Him to men.

Now it is true that the crucifixion, considered by itself, did not have any such effect as this upon the Jews. His crucifixion, regarded from the human point of view, marked the lowest ebb of His cause. But the crucifixion is not to be separated from its great and necessary concomitants,—the resurrection, the ascension, and the sending of the Spirit. It was all these events together which constituted the final proof of the Messiahship of Jesus. Yet inasmuch as His death was the fact which revealed His inmost spirit, not His resurrection, or ascension, this might surely be put forward as the vital and determining element in the proof of Messiahship which Jesus said that the Jews should have.

Again, we have the thought of self-revelation by death when Jesus says that He lays down His life

for the sheep (Jn. x. 11-18; comp. xv. 13). The statement that He lays down His life is made in proof of the declaration that He is the *good* shepherd. The hireling is proven to be a hireling, when the wolf comes, for he leaves the sheep and flees. But the good shepherd is manifested as such by the sacrifice of himself in behalf of the sheep. Thus the fact of death is adduced in showing the character of the shepherd, and not because of its significance with regard to the deliverance of the sheep.

Once more we have the same general view of His death when Jesus speaks of the hour of His *glorification* (Jn. xii. 23). It is plain from the context that He is thinking of the hour of His death. This will glorify Him, He says, and will also glorify the name of His Father (Jn. xii. 27-28). *How* the suffering of death will glorify Him is not said, but it may be safely inferred from the seventeenth chapter, where the glorification of Jesus and the Father, both past and future, is accomplished through the manifestation of their character and the acceptance of their revelation by men. The cross glorifies Jesus because it reveals His love, and as it reveals Him it reveals the Father. Now since the lifting up of Jesus is His glorification, He can say that, when lifted up, He will *draw* all men unto Himself (Jn. xii. 32). For when men see Him as He is, when they know His heart, they

are drawn to Him. According to this passage, therefore, the death of Jesus is regarded as the culminating manifestation of His character. It differs from His acts of mercy and words of love only in degree. It is the same essential thought, but written in His own life-blood.

And it is to be especially noticed in this connection that, according to the words of Jesus in the fourth Gospel, the sole significance of His death in relation to God is, that God is "glorified" thereby. There is no suggestion of any other meaning which it has. It glorifies Jesus, it glorifies the Father, even as the Father had already been glorified by the life of Jesus. There is here no intimation that the death of Jesus changes the attitude of God toward men. It glorifies Him in that it *reveals* Him. As the death of Jesus did not change *His* attitude toward men while glorifying Him, no more, according to this Gospel, did it change the attitude of *God* toward men. It is not an event that *secures* His love, but an event that reveals and seals His love. No other aspect of His death in its relation to God is touched by Jesus.

And it is to be remembered here for what purpose John wrote. It was that his readers might believe that Jesus was the Christ, and believing might have life in His name (Jn. xx. 31). Therefore we must hold that, in his presentation of the work of Jesus, he mentioned



every element which, in his judgment, was essential to the securing of life in Jesus' name. Hence, in his view, the vital aspect of the death of Jesus, both in regard to Jesus and in regard to God, was that it revealed the character both of Jesus and of God.

In the saying about the grain of wheat (Jn. xii. 24-25), the suggestion is, that as the death of the individual kernel is followed by much fruit, so the death of Jesus will have much fruitage. But the simile does not suggest how it comes about that the death of Jesus produces a rich harvest. This question must be answered, therefore, in the light of the other passages in the fourth Gospel relating to the death of Jesus; and the answer from this source is that the death of Jesus brings rich fruitage of disciples because it makes His inmost spirit and character known.

There remains yet one word of Jesus in the fourth Gospel which involves a reference to His death, and that is the word which was spoken in the synagogue in Capernaum about *eating His flesh and drinking His blood* (Jn. vi. 51-63). This passage may be said to imply the *necessity* of His death; for though the figure of eating His flesh and drinking His blood contains no essential thought which is not involved in *believing*, He could nevertheless hardly have used the figure except in the certain anticipation of His own death. But if the passage suggests the necessity of His death, it also

suggests that it is necessary in order that He may be appropriated. It has no other suggestion in regard to the ground of the necessity. The prominent thought of the entire discourse is not the *death* of Jesus, but the *appropriation* of Him. His death is subordinate to this thought, and is mentioned only to give to it an intensely vivid expression. But the appropriation of Jesus is promoted by His death because that death, being the supreme manifestation of His love, helps men to understand Him and draws them to Him.

It is obvious that this thought of the death of Jesus is essentially the same as the thought of His words regarding the bread and the wine of the Last Supper, if we except the reference to the blood as blood of the covenant. Eating the bread and drinking the wine, as emblems of the body and the blood of Jesus, are expressive of the same fundamental thought that we have in the sixth chapter of John, namely, a personal, vital appropriation of Jesus.

Such, then, is the view of His death which Jesus presents in the fourth Gospel. It is the glorious consummation of the revelation of Jesus, and so of the character of the Father. It belongs in the same class with the words and works of Jesus. It is not presented as being absolutely necessary to the deliverance of men from sin, for Jesus said to His disciples on the last evening, "Ye *are* clean" (Jn. xiii. 10; xv. 3). They had

already been *bathed* by the hearty acceptance of Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Jesus was already glorified in them (Jn. xvii. 10), because they had received the words which the Father had given to Him, and had believed that He was sent from God (Jn. xvii. 8). Their sins had been forgiven, and as in the Synoptists, so here, this forgiveness is not brought by Jesus into connection with His death. Therefore we say that the death of Jesus is not presented in the fourth Gospel as necessary to salvation except as His self-revelation *in general* was necessary to salvation. It was a part of His Messianic work and His Messianic revelation of the Father, the most intense part, and that which best represents the spirit of it all; but the fourth Gospel does not attribute to it a necessity which does not belong equally to the ministry of Jesus in His holy life and divine teaching.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CONSUMMATION OF THE MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

THE teaching of Jesus in regard to the Last Things is almost wholly personal and Messianic in character.

Introduction. He is the central figure in the future development and consummation of the kingdom of God, as He is central in the kingdom of the present. What He says of the fate of men after death is not only subordinate to what He says of His own personal future, but it is part and parcel of that future. Therefore in studying the thought of Jesus in regard to death and what comes after death, for His disciples and for men in general, we must study it in closest connection with what He taught about His own future. In His references to that future, the central thought is the full realization by Him of the Messianic purpose. This purpose had begun to be realized by the work of Jesus as a teacher, and had been realized still further by His death, which completed His revelation of the Father, and which was at the same time the last and highest act in His own self-revelation; but the realization of this Messianic purpose

was to be promoted and consummated by the activity of the Messiah after His death. Now as the thought of Jesus in regard to the present life of men laid supreme stress upon their attitude toward Him and His kingdom, so in His thought regarding their future destiny He proceeds along the same line. He does not speak of that destiny in an abstract manner, but He speaks of it in a personal and concrete way, as being a matter of relationship to Him, and bound up with His own Messianic destiny.

In Jesus' thought of the future we begin with *resurrection*, for though this, of course, presupposes death, death is not a subject on which Jesus has left any teaching. He said of the daughter of Jairus, when she was dead, "She sleeps" (Mk. v. 39), and later said the same in regard to Lazarus (Jn. xi. 11); but He did not thereby intimate that death, in general, is a sleep. He did not say it of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or, indeed, of any departed ones save these two whom He was about to raise again to life. It was in view of His miraculous awakening of these persons that He spoke of their condition as a sleep. But on the general fact of physical death Jesus seems to have had nothing to say. He greatly changed the thought of death for His disciples, but He did it by glorifying what lies beyond and by making them sure of possessing it.

I. Resurrection.  
 a. The thought of Jesus in regard to His own resurrection.

We cannot infer from His reticence regarding death that He thought His *parousia* near, and that the dominion of death was accordingly soon to cease;<sup>1</sup> but it is to be regarded rather as indicating that, in His thought, the death of the body is a relatively unimportant incident in the career of the spirit.

The thought of resurrection in the teaching of Jesus, unlike the thought of death, calls for special consideration. We cannot doubt that Jesus, in common with the great majority of the Jews of His time, had believed in His own personal immortality long before He became conscious of Messiahship. In His case there was one peculiar and irresistible argument for immortality, and that was His consciousness of perfect moral union with God. The consciousness of pleasing God perfectly, and the consequent sense of God's love for Him, must have raised the fond *hope* of the Old Testament saints to an absolute *certainty* in His case, and must have made the thought of eternal life in God as familiar and clear as the thought of His own existence.

But however this may have been, the references which Jesus makes to His resurrection are plainly associated with the thought of His Messiahship. This appears, for example, in the first obscure allusion to His resurrection which is involved in the sign of Jonah (Mt. xii. 38-40; Lk. xi. 29-30). It was in the light of

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 606.

His Messianic consciousness that the story of Jonah acquired the significance which He saw in it. To Him it foreshadowed His death and resurrection; but there is no indication that any one else had attached such a significance to it. Then, as His three formal announcements of death were based on His Messianic reading of the Old Testament, so the thought of resurrection, which is associated with each of these announcements, is to be regarded as a conviction which was inseparable from His consciousness of Messiahship. According to Luke, Jesus found His resurrection written in the Old Testament (Lk. xxiv. 46); and if so, we must either suppose that He found it in such obscure forms as the experience of Jonah, or that He saw it implied in the prophetic pictures of the everlasting glory of the Messiah's kingdom, for it is nowhere explicitly taught. But the hints of His resurrection which He found in the Old Testament became a certainty for Jesus in the consciousness of His own Messiahship. He knew that His defeat by the power of evil could not be permanent because He knew that He was the Messiah. He was perfectly sure that He should speedily rise from the dead, and thereby establish His Messianic work among men, because He was sure that He had been anointed by God to be the Saviour of the world.

According to Mark the resurrection of Jesus was

to be after *three days* (Mk. viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 34); according to Matthew and Luke, it was to be on the *third day*, though Matthew in the passage regarding Jonah represents Jesus as saying that the Son of man must be in the heart of the earth *three days and three nights* (Mt. xvi. 21; Lk. ix. 22; Mt. xii. 40). It is most probable that the expression *three days* was used to designate a *short* time (comp. Hos. vi. 2), and that the language of Matthew and Luke is a modification of the popular expression made natural by the historical fact that Jesus actually rose on the *third day*, after He had been in the tomb *two* nights and a little more than *one* day. But however this may be, it is plain that Jesus was confident of a speedy resurrection.

Further, it appears that Jesus thought of His resurrection as a *visible* phenomenon, a bodily return from the grave. The analogy of Jonah's experience suggests this thought, whether the book of Jonah be regarded as historical or not, for Jonah returned in the body from his burial in the sea. Moreover, a visible, bodily resurrection of Jesus seems to be implied in the promise of the last evening, that Jesus, after He had risen from the dead, would go before His disciples into Galilee (Mk. xiv. 28; Mt. xxvi. 32), for this language seems to involve the thought that He would meet the disciples there, and that they should see Him (Mk. xvi. 7; Mt. xxviii. 16).



The Messianic significance of the resurrection of Jesus is clearly indicated by Him. It was to be a *sign* to that generation, that is, a sign of His Messiahship (Mt. xii. 39-40; Mk. xiv. 27-28; Lk. xxiv. 46). That was what the scribes and Pharisees were seeking on the occasion when Jesus spoke of the sign of Jonah. That was what they sought from Him, but did not believe that He could give, and what they certainly would not have appreciated had it been given. Jesus replied to their sceptical demand with an intimation that His resurrection would be the sign which they sought. And thus, as far as its significance was concerned, He put it in the same class with His words and works. It is well known that from the day of the resurrection onward the event actually had this significance both for the few who had already believed in Jesus, and for many who had not yet believed. It was the crowning proof of His Messiahship, or at least the proof which was most easily taken hold of by men in the apostolic age.

Again, Jesus gave substantially the same intimation regarding the meaning of His resurrection when, on the night of His betrayal, He told His disciples that they all would be *offended* in Him, that is, would deny and forsake Him; and then added that after He was risen He would go before them into Galilee

(Mk. xiv. 27-28). Here it is His resurrection that is to rally them and bring them back to Him; and this prophetic word of Jesus had a perfect fulfilment within a short time after the resurrection. Thus, according to the Synoptists, Jesus saw in His resurrection a visible demonstration of His Messiahship.

It may be said that the resurrection of Jesus gave an ocular proof of the personal immortality of a good man, for the disciples were convinced that the Jesus whom they had seen expire on the cross was with them again on the third day, not in a wholly intelligible manner, but really with them, person with person. This, however, is not the significance of the event in relation to the general subject of resurrection. On this subject, the significance of the resurrection of Jesus is wholly negative. It was bodily, but this fact does not prophesy a bodily resurrection for the disciples of Jesus, or for any one; it rather precludes such a resurrection, because the bodily resurrection of Jesus, like His visible manifestation to His disciples after the resurrection, was Messianic, and so peculiar to Him. The miraculous occurrence which was necessary in His case, as a final proof of His Messiahship, can never be necessary in the case of another man, for there cannot be another Messiah. It is as impossible to argue from the bodily character

b. The bearing of Jesus' resurrection on the resurrection of other men.

of the resurrection of Jesus to a bodily resurrection for His disciples as it would be to say that because Jesus could raise the dead, therefore His disciples also can raise the dead.

Since, then, Jesus regarded the material and bodily character of His resurrection as designed to accomplish a Messianic purpose, we may safely say that He did *not* think of the resurrection of others as having this character.

This inference is confirmed by the sole passage in which Jesus gives anything like formal teaching in regard to resurrection, namely, the passage which reports His reply to the question of the Sadducees (Mk. xii. 18-27; Mt. xxii. 23-33; Lk. xx. 27-38).<sup>1</sup> For here He proves the fact of resurrection by citing a passage which implies that certain persons were already risen. The language of God to Moses involves the thought that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who had died long before, were living, and therefore were risen from the dead. But there is no evidence that Jesus thought of their graves as empty, or supposed that their mortal dust had been in anywise affected by their resurrection. And the Jewish teachers had no such thought as this. They had long believed, indeed, in a bodily resurrection,<sup>2</sup> but they thought that this

<sup>1</sup> Lk. xiv. 14 is merely incidental.

<sup>2</sup> See *Enoch*, li. 1; xcii. 3; lxi. 15; ciii. 4; civ. 2; c. 5; *2 Macc.* vii. 9,

resurrection was still in the future, and was to take place at the beginning of the Messianic age, or during its progress.<sup>1</sup> This resurrection for which the Jews were looking was to be a resurrection into an earthly life, and of this doctrine there is no trace in the teaching of Jesus. He thought of the patriarchs as being in heaven, and their resurrection was accordingly past (Lk. xvi. 22; Mk. xii. 27). Therefore we say that this passage supports the inference from the resurrection of Jesus, namely, that He did not think of the resurrection of men as being material and bodily in character. If this be true, then we should expect to find that Jesus refers to resurrection as belonging to the moment of death; and this is indeed the case. In His reply to the Sadducees He speaks of the patriarchs as though they were living with God in the days of Moses; and if that was the case, there is no reason to think that this had not been true of them every hour since their death. In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Jesus represents the spirit of Lazarus as passing into heaven in the moment of death, for the *bosom of Abraham* is a synonym of heaven (Lk. xvi. 22, 25-26). And finally, He assured the penitent robber, who was ex-

14, 23, 36; xii. 43-44; *Ps. of Solomon* iii. 16; xiv. 2; *2 Esdras* vii. 32; Cheyne, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, p. 244.

<sup>1</sup> See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 347-354.

piring on a cross by the side of His own, that he should be in Paradise with Him that day; and Paradise is heaven, and to be in heaven is certainly to be risen from the dead (Lk. xxiii. 42-43).

The reply which Jesus made to the Sadducees bears also upon the point whether He believed in a *general* resurrection. His language certainly is not limited. He says when *men* rise from the dead (Mk. xii. 25), concerning the *dead*, that they are raised (Mk. xii. 26), concerning the resurrection of the *dead* (Mt. xxii. 31). This is general, just as we might expect, for what the Sadducees denied was not the resurrection of a particular class of men, as the unrighteous, but the resurrection of any one. And inasmuch as the Sadducees were silenced by the argument of Jesus (Mt. xxii. 34), we may infer that they regarded it as an argument for the resurrection of man as such.

It is true of the fourth Gospel, as it is of the Synoptists, that the thought of Jesus regarding the future after His death is preëminently Messianic. It all has a direct connection with the realization of the purpose of the Messiah. The teaching is personal, and He is its centre.

*c.* The thought of resurrection in the fourth Gospel.

There is no word by Jesus in the fourth Gospel in regard to His own bodily resurrection, such as we have seen in the Synoptists; but He refers to the resurrection of others, and claims a vital relation to it.

The central saying is that which was spoken just before the raising of Lazarus. Martha had expressed the common belief of the Jews, that her brother would rise in the resurrection at the last day (Jn. xi. 24). Jesus replied in substance that the present spiritual resurrection is the all-important fact; that He gives this resurrection to all who receive Him; and that this spiritual resurrection is unto a life which is not affected by physical death (Jn. xi. 25-26). He makes no reference to a resurrection of the body, or to a future resurrection. He speaks as though the spiritual resurrection in the present were the only thing about which one need be concerned. Life once begun, true life, continues without cessation. Physical death does not touch it. The body collapses and falls, but the life goes on. Now this continuance of the spiritual life, when considered by the side of the physical collapse, is equivalent to resurrection, for it of course implies that the spirit escapes from the crumbling body.

There are several references in John to the *last day*, but they contain no specific thought in regard to resurrection (Jn. vi. 39, 40, 44, 54; xii. 48). In each of the four cases where Jesus declares that He will raise up His disciples in the last day, the prominent thought is not one of *time*, but of spiritual relationship. Jesus will perfectly keep him who be-

lieves; He will *lose* nothing. No one shall pluck the disciple out of the hand of Jesus, now or in the hour of death and judgment. Jesus will see His disciple safely through to the end. It is this thought of *perfect keeping* which is central in the use which Jesus makes of the Jewish expression, "Raising up at the last day." This view is in harmony with the spiritual character of the fourth Gospel, and in harmony also with the Synoptic teaching of Jesus regarding resurrection. In the other passage where the *last day* is referred to (Jn. xii. 48), the prominent thought is that of judgment by the word of Christ, and the meaning is wholly unaffected by the location of this *last day*, whether it be referred to the end of life or the end of the present dispensation.

There is one word of Jesus in the fourth Gospel that might at first be thought to indorse the Jewish teaching of a resurrection at the end of the present age. It occurs in a passage which deals with the Messianic prerogatives of Jesus, His authority to quicken those who are spiritually dead (Jn. v. 21, 25-26), and to judge men (Jn. v. 22, 23, 27). It is in subordination to this thought of Messianic authority that Jesus refers to a future resurrection of the bad and the good (Jn. v. 28-29). Hence the resurrection is not treated here for its own sake, but incidentally. Therefore this passage cannot be regarded as direct

teaching on the subject of the resurrection; and in view of what Jesus said to Martha and His teaching in the earlier Gospels, it cannot be regarded as even implying a belief of Jesus that resurrection is long subsequent to death.

As Jesus looked out upon the future and contemplated the realization of His Messianic purpose

II. The after His death, one fact on which His mission and work of the Spirit. thought rested was the activity of the Spirit, and this subject properly claims attention immediately after the topic of the resurrection of Jesus.

a. In the Synoptists.

In the Synoptic teaching of Jesus there is little reference of any sort to the Holy Spirit. We can hardly say that we have even the elements of a doctrine. The Spirit is referred to on but two or three occasions, and then very briefly. These passages, however, are perhaps of more importance than might appear on first thought, for they do suggest a vital service of the Spirit, and they help to explain two statements made by the evangelists in regard to Jesus, which seem to involve a contradiction. The only Synoptic word in regard to the *sending* of the Spirit is found in Luke, and was spoken by Jesus after His resurrection (Lk. xxiv. 49). The disciples were gathered in Jerusalem, and Jesus said to them, "I send forth the promise of my Father upon you,



but tarry ye in the city until ye be endued with power from on high." These words are spoken by Jesus from the standpoint of His heavenly glory. He will *send* the promise upon the disciples. This, of course, implies that He is separated from them at the time when He sends the Spirit, and as the promise is to be sent *from on high*, it is further implied that He will be on high when the Spirit is sent. There is no suggestion here of a personal return of Jesus from on high, that He may be with the disciples to the end of the age, as is said in Matthew (xxviii. 20). Jesus speaks of sending upon the disciples only the *promise* of the Father. He does not say *Spirit*. Yet this promise, in the light of its fulfilment at Pentecost, must be referred to the Old Testament promises of the Spirit of Jehovah (*e.g.* Joel ii. 28; Ez. xxxvi. 27; xxxix. 29). Jesus does not here speak of the sending of the Spirit as something original with Himself, but only as the fulfilment through Him of the promise of the Father.

Jesus had already spoken of the Spirit when foretelling the fate of His disciples, apparently on two occasions (Mt. x. 20; Lk. xii. 12; Mk. xiii. 11; Lk. xxi. 15). It is noticeable that on the second occasion, when Mark says that the Holy Spirit will speak in the disciples in their hour of peril, Luke represents Jesus as saying, "*I will give you a mouth and wisdom.*"

In view of Lk. xxiv. 49, it is natural to suppose that he thought of this promise as accomplished through the Spirit.

The *function* of the Spirit, according to these two earlier passages, is to help the disciples bear witness for Jesus. He will speak in them, or will teach them, in the time of their need; and therefore they are not to be anxious. It is not to be inferred from these passages that Jesus thought of the Spirit as aiding His disciples *only* when they should be brought before governors and kings. The Spirit is represented as speaking in them or through them, not, of course, in an outward and mechanical way, apart from their will and reason, but as an inspiring force at the centre of their being. Luke plainly thinks of a permanent gift when he represents Jesus as saying, "I will give you a mouth and *wisdom*, which no one shall be able to withstand." A man who has heavenly wisdom has it every day and for all days. It is a quality of the man himself.

In view now of this explicit teaching in regard to the sending of the Spirit by the exalted Lord, the word of Mt. xxviii. 20, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age," can hardly be taken as a promise of the strictly personal presence of Jesus. It must rather be referred to the presence of the Holy Spirit. But since the Spirit is *sent* by Jesus (Lk. xxiv. 49), He certainly does the will of Jesus, and therefore

Jesus can say to His disciples, "*I am with you.*"<sup>1</sup> This is precisely parallel to the conception of the fourth Gospel, that because Jesus perfectly *represents* the Father, they who see and hear Jesus see and hear the Father; and it is also parallel to the Synoptic conception that they who receive Jesus receive the Father (*e.g.* Mk. ix. 37).

There is another passage which must be considered in this connection. In Mt. xviii. 20 Jesus says, "If two of you shall agree upon earth regarding anything which they may ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven; for where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Now the presence of Jesus is here given as the *reason* why the Father grants the petitions of the disciples, and, accordingly, it cannot be understood as a *real* presence of Jesus, inasmuch as the teaching of Jesus elsewhere represents God as hearing and answering all who come to Him as children, in faith and love. Wendt<sup>2</sup> understands this word of Mt. xviii. 20 in analogy with those passages where Jesus declares that He counts certain acts done to others in His name as done to Him. Thus, "He who receives one of such little children in my name receives me" (Mk. ix. 37); and, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 546-548.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 548.

even these least, ye did it unto me" (Mt. xxv. 40). Now Jesus is not thought of as being really present in the man who receives Christian service from His disciples; but He reckons the service of the same value as though it had been done to Him in person. So in the passage under consideration, where Jesus says that the Father will surely hear the smallest circle gathered in His name, because He, Jesus, is with them, He affirms only that the Father will regard the prayer of these two or three disciples *as though* it were the prayer of Jesus.

Now this thought of Wendt is doubtless in harmony with the teaching of Jesus, but it seems questionable whether it is just the thought of the present verse. This seems to go further, and to suggest that the Father's answer is certain because of some relationship between the disciples and Jesus. Now to be gathered in the *name* of Jesus implies faith in Him, and something of His spirit. It implies a certain christlikeness of character; for, in Scripture language, *name* expresses character (*e.g.* Jn. xvii. 26; Mt. i. 21; vi. 9).<sup>1</sup> But where there is likeness to Christ, there Christ *is*, not personally of course, but virtually. As Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," so of a perfect Christian it might be said,

<sup>1</sup> See Cremer, *Biblisch-Theologisches Wörterbuch*, dritte Auflage, pp. 590-593.

“He that hath seen his character hath seen the character of Christ.” Therefore we may think that it is this fact of *christlikeness* which justifies the assurance that God will grant the request of the disciples.

In conclusion regarding the Synoptic teaching on the Spirit, it may be said that Luke and Matthew agree in the suggestion that the realization of the Messianic purpose by Jesus from His heavenly glory will be powerful and victorious (Lk. xxiv. 49; Mt. xxviii. 18). He has all the authority that is requisite for the accomplishment of His desire, and a perfect agent in the Spirit, through whom that authority can be exercised.

On passing from the Synoptists to the fourth Gospel and to its account of the last days of Jesus' life, we find a relatively elaborate and fixed doctrine regarding the Holy Spirit.

The only early reference in John to the Spirit, namely, in the conversation with Nicodemus (Jn. iii. 5-8), is such as might be made on the basis of the Old Testament revelation. It implies nothing with regard to the Spirit's relation to Jesus. But the character and function of the Spirit, according to the later words of Jesus, are exclusively Messianic. He is regarded as the successor of Jesus in the work of realizing the Messianic purpose.

*b.* In John.  
*1.* The coming of the Spirit.

The *coming* of the Spirit is conditioned in a two-fold manner. As regards the disciples, it is necessary that they should be united to Christ in order that the Spirit may come to them. "If ye love me," Jesus says, "ye will keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Helper" (Jn. xiv. 15, 16). His asking the Father is here conditioned upon the keeping of His commandments by the disciples, but this is in turn only an evidence that they truly love Him, or are truly united to Him. This condition is elsewhere implied, as when Jesus says that His disciples know the Spirit because He abides with them, and is in them (Jn. xiv. 17). That is to say, they already know the Spirit because they know Jesus. The world, on the other hand, *beholds* not the Spirit, that is, beholds Him not in Jesus, or, in other words, sees not the real character of Jesus. For this reason it cannot receive the Spirit. There has been no preparation made for Him. He has no point of contact with the world, but He has a point of contact with the disciples, because they are united to Jesus. Thus the entire ministry of the Spirit which is contemplated in these words of Jesus, presupposes the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah.

The coming of the Spirit is also conditioned upon the prayer of Jesus, and upon His departure to the Father. First, the necessity of His prayer is implied

when He says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Helper" (Jn. xiv. 16). This thought of the necessity of Christ's prayer is in keeping with the general teaching, that He is the sole channel through which the Father's love and truth come to the disciples. When Jesus says that *He* will send the Helper, He does not represent Himself as the ultimate source of the Spirit, but rather as the channel through which the Father bestows this gift upon the disciples (Jn. xv. 26; xvi. 7). Whenever the Spirit goes forth, He proceeds from the Father (Jn. xv. 26); but just as the name, or *character*, of the Father is manifested through Jesus the Messiah, so the Spirit comes through His agency.

Then, further, the Spirit's coming is conditioned upon the departure of Jesus to the Father. "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Helper will not come unto you; but if I go away, I will send him unto you" (Jn. xvi. 7). The hearers were left to explain for themselves why the presence of the Helper required the absence of Jesus. The Lord simply states the fact. The explanation, however, is not far to seek. In another connection, when manifestly referring to the Spirit's coming to the disciples, Jesus says that *He* will come to them and will manifest Himself to them (Jn. xiv. 18, 21). Now it is obvious that before He could come to them in the

Spirit, He must depart from them in His own person.

Jesus says, moreover, that this departure will be *profitable* for the disciples. The Spirit will be to them more than He could be. He does not explain this statement, but we doubtless have its explanation in the fact that the Helper is *spirit* (Jn. xiv. 17), and so is free from the limitations which rested on Jesus. The Successor of Jesus could be with each disciple of the widely scattered band; and their fellowship with Him, being wholly spiritual, would be higher and more complete than any fellowship through the senses could be.

The character of the Successor of Jesus is comprehensively defined when Jesus calls Him *another* Helper (Jn. xiv. 16). This shows that the *mission* of the Spirit is essentially the same as that of Jesus; and this fact seems to justify the inference that His *character* is essentially the same. If He is a helper like Jesus, one who can take the place of Jesus, then He has the same tender love for the disciples that Jesus had, the same purpose, the same understanding of their needs, and the same divine ability to help them.

Jesus twice calls the Helper the Spirit of *truth*, which means that it is the function of the Spirit to lead the disciples into all truth (Jn. xvi. 13). He is

2. The  
character of  
the Spirit.



the Spirit of truth because He *reveals* the truth. And here is suggested the intimate relationship between the Spirit and Christ. Jesus said of Himself that He was the truth (Jn. xiv. 6), and now He says that the Spirit *reveals* the truth. This really implies that He is of the same character as Jesus, just as Jesus reveals the Father, because He is of the same *character* as the Father.<sup>1</sup>

In regard to the *personality* of the Spirit, it is plain that this is everywhere assumed in the statements of Jesus. Thus He says that the Spirit teaches (Jn. xiv. 26); that He witnesses of Jesus (Jn. xv. 26); that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (Jn. xvi. 8); that He speaks what He hears (Jn. xvi. 13), and that He takes of the things of Jesus and declares them to the disciples (Jn. xvi. 14-15). Now all these expressions are such as would be used of a person; and, indeed, most of them are actually used in regard to Jesus. Not only do these expressions imply personality, but so in like manner does the relation of the Spirit to Jesus. He is represented as taking the *place* of Jesus; and it seems obvious that an impersonal principle could not take the place of the personal Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> The adjective *holy* is associated with the word *Spirit* but once in the words of Jesus (Jn. xiv. 26), and then helps to explain the word *Helper*. The term *Holy Spirit* is used as well known, and no stress is laid on the idea of the adjective.

The work of the Spirit in the disciples is represented as simply a continuation of the work of Jesus. The Spirit is, as it were, the other self, the *alter ego*, of Jesus, and He carries forward what Jesus began. He teaches the disciples, and this teaching consists in an unfolding of the meaning of all that Jesus had said to them (Jn. xiv. 26). He takes of Christ's things and shows them to the disciples, thus glorifying Christ (Jn. xvi. 14), even as Christ in the same way glorifies the Father (Jn. xvii. 4). Like Jesus, the Spirit does not speak of *Himself*, but speaks what He hears, that is, what He hears from Jesus (Jn. xvi. 13). It is suggested that He supplements the teaching of Jesus (Jn. xvi. 12-13), but this is not by communicating doctrines not found in the Master's words. The *name* of the Father, the *entire* name, Jesus had Himself made known (Jn. xvii. 6). *All* the things which He had heard from His Father, He had made known to His disciples (Jn. xv. 15). The *name* which the Father had given to Him, and He to the disciples, is thought of as a complete revelation, for Jesus prays that the disciples may be "kept" in it unto a spiritual unity, and may be "sanctified" by it (Jn. xvii. 11, 17). Moreover, this word which He has given to His disciples is one through which others are led to believe in Jesus (Jn. xvii. 20).

The same great thought, that the revelation of Jesus was not to be supplemented by the addition of any essential truth, is also found in the last references which He made to His life-work. He said that He had accomplished what the Father gave Him to do, that is, the Messianic work, and that He was glorified in His disciples (Jn. xvii. 4, 10). He was glorified in them because they accepted Him as the Messiah (Jn. xvii. 7-8). They are united to Him as the branch to the vine (Jn. xv. 4-5); they are in His love as He is in the Father's love (Jn. xv. 9); and He has commissioned them as the Father commissioned Him (Jn. xvii. 18). This language plainly implies that, in the thought of Jesus, He had given to His disciples, and they had received, all the essentials of His Gospel. They need the Father's gracious help through the Spirit, that they may live this Gospel (Jn. xvii. 11, 15; xiv. 26, etc.); but there is no further Gospel, no other essential truth of salvation, for them to receive. Thus, according to John, Jesus plainly teaches that His Gospel needs no supplement; and, as for the Synoptists, they contain no slightest suggestion that Christ's revelation of the Father and of the conditions of salvation is incomplete and needs to be supplemented.

But the disciples did not understand all that Jesus had said, and did not know the practical inferences which were to be drawn from the principles of His

teaching. Here, then, was the large sphere of the Spirit's activity. He was to unfold the teaching of Jesus, and help the disciples to secure a spiritual apprehension of it. He was to help them in the application of Christ's revelation to the manifold needs of life. Along these lines He could say many things which Jesus had not said (Jn. xvi. 12); and in particular He would unfold the thought of Jesus in regard to future things (Jn. xvi. 13).

Jesus does not refer to any action of the Spirit upon the world except through the disciples, or, perhaps we should say, any action of the Spirit as *His* Spirit and Successor. A certain activity of the Spirit of God is involved in the case of all souls who are disposed to receive Christ when they meet Him. These are they of whom Jesus says that they are *of the truth*, or *of God* (Jn. xviii. 37; viii. 47; iii. 21). A spiritual disposition is here assumed to exist before there has been any contact with Christ or His disciples. But these passages lie apart from the direct teaching of Jesus regarding the Spirit as His Successor. This contemplates the activity of the Spirit in the world only as He acts through the disciples in whom He dwells. Jesus says, "I will send Him unto *you*, and He shall convince the world" (Jn. xvi. 7-8). This language suggests that the Spirit will convince the world *through* the disciples.

The work of the Spirit is broadly characterized by Jesus as a convincing or persuading in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment (Jn. xvi. 8-11). This passage does not contemplate a fruitless activity of the Spirit through the disciples, but a successful activity. The words are spoken for the encouragement of the disciples in view of the departure of Jesus.

This characterization of the Spirit, as convincing men in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment, shows Him engaged in an activity which aims at the realization of the purpose of the Messiah. For each of these facts is considered in its relation to Jesus as Messiah. Thus men are convinced of sin, that is, of their own sin, because they believe not in Jesus. The Holy Spirit is not needed to convince men that there is such a thing as sin in their lives: conscience does that. Jesus, while on earth, did not teach men that they were sinners: He simply took it for granted. What He sought to bring home to men was the necessity of accepting Him and His revelation (*e.g.* Jn. iii. 18). Not to do this was the fatal sin. Now the Spirit continues this work of Jesus, and seeks through the disciples to convince men that the sin of sins is not believing in Jesus.

The Spirit also convinces men of *righteousness*, but this, too, with reference to the Messiah. He shall convince the world in respect of righteousness, Jesus says, because He goes to the Father. The ascension of Jesus

to the Father, which began with the resurrection, was indeed the seal of God's approval, and confirmed the claim of Jesus, that He was the Messiah (comp. Jn. viii. 28). Under the influence of the Spirit, according to the present passage, men will be convinced by the resurrection and ascension of Jesus that He was righteous, absolutely so, and therefore that His claim to be the Messiah sent by God was justified.

Finally, the Spirit of Jesus will convince the world in regard to *judgment*, "because the prince of this world has been judged" (Jn. xvi. 11). To be convinced that the prince of the world has been judged is to be convinced that the world itself has been judged—the world that is subject to him and pervaded by his spirit. This passage does not say *how* the prince of the world has been judged, but we learn the thought of Jesus on this point from an earlier word. When contemplating His cross, He said, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn. xii. 31). This passage connects the judgment of Satan with the cross, as it also connects the glorification of Jesus with the cross. It *judges* Satan in that it reveals his character. To have him fully unmasked is to secure his condemnation by all right-thinking intelligences. This, however, is not all. Satan is not only judged; he is also *cast out*, that is, out of the world, out of his throne in the hearts of men (Jn. xii. 31). Jesus, when

lifted up, draws men with a power that is stronger than the bondage of Satan. Thus the cross judges Satan and also defeats him. But the judgment of the prince of the world is virtually a judgment of the world itself and of each member of it in particular. As long as one is a part of Satan's world, one's spirit is revealed by the cross as a spirit of enmity toward God, and it is that which is judged. Thus the Holy Spirit of the Messiah, working through the disciples, convinces the world that Jesus is its judge, because He has already judged Satan, the prince of the world. To sum up the thought of this passage, we may say that the Spirit's mission to the world through the disciples is to present, and urge upon men, the supreme claims of Jesus as the Messiah. It is thus purely religious, being entirely limited to the sphere of Christ's teaching, and it is accomplished only through living men.

As the thought of Jesus went out over the future, it touched upon His resurrection, His presence with the disciples by His Spirit, and then upon the great, and for us complex, subject of His *parousia*, or "the active appearance of the glorified Messiah."<sup>1</sup>

The Synoptic Gospels are unequal in their respective amounts of matter regarding the par-

III. The thought of Jesus in regard to His *parousia*.  
a. Survey of the data.

<sup>1</sup> See Haupt, *Eschatologische Aussagen Jesu in den Synoptischen Evangelien*, p. 115.

ousia, as they also differ somewhat in their conception of what that is. The narratives of Mark and Luke have each four direct references to the parousia, while Matthew has nine (Mk. viii. 38; xiii. 24, 33; xiv. 62; Lk. xxi. 25; xvii. 26; xviii. 8; xii. 40; Mt. x. 23; xvi. 27; xxiv. 3; xxvi. 29, 64; xxiv. 37, 42, 44; xxv. 31-46). The first reference by Jesus to His parousia was probably made at Cæsarea Philippi in connection with the first formal announcement of His death and resurrection. In the parable of the Tares, and again in that of the Drag-net, Jesus had spoken of the end of the age, with the gathering together of the elect by the angels whom the Son of man should send forth; but He made no direct reference to the parousia.

Matthew represents Jesus as speaking on the subject in His address to the twelve at the time of their first mission, which was long before the days spent at Cæsarea Philippi (Mt. x. 23); but it is well known that the first evangelist arranged many sayings of Jesus topically, without regard to the time when they were uttered. So he has brought together, in this address, sayings of the Master which must have been spoken much later than the first mission of the twelve, and to these belongs the word in question, "When they persecute you in this city, flee into the next; for, verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of man be



come." But there is no likelihood that the apostles, when they went through Galilee healing and proclaiming the nearness of the kingdom of God, were persecuted. On the contrary, it is decidedly probable that they were welcomed; and, furthermore, when they made their report to Jesus, they said nothing of persecution (Mk. vi. 30). And then, it is unlikely that Jesus spoke to His disciples about His *coming* before He had told them that He was *going away* from them. Therefore we are justified in regarding this word of Mt. x. 23 as a word which was spoken late in the ministry; and hence the first reference to the parousia was that which Jesus made at Cæsarea Philippi. From this time forward we do not find references to the parousia which are chronologically fixed until we come to the last week. Here there are at least two clearly marked occasions on which Jesus spoke of His parousia: one the occasion of the discourse on the Mount of Olives, when Jesus spoke at length of future things; and the other the trial of Jesus by the sanhedrin. According to Luke, Jesus spoke the parable of the Pounds as He drew near to Jerusalem at the beginning of the last week (Lk. xix. 11-27). This parable does not mention the parousia by name, but certainly refers to it. Again, it seems probable that the various exhortations to watchfulness in view of the coming of the Lord, which Matthew

associates with the discourse on Olivet, may have been spoken at that time. In any case, we are safe in saying that most of the references to the parousia belong to the last week of the ministry of Jesus. Only one can be definitely located before this time, and there is no allusion to the parousia after the resurrection.

As we examine the data regarding the parousia, it appears that the evangelists spoke of two separate events under the name of a *coming of the Son of man*, or a *parousia*. If this be a fact, it is plainly of fundamental importance, and therefore the evidence must be somewhat fully given.

*b.* The parousia not a single event.

In Mt. x. 23 Jesus says to His disciples, "Ye shall not complete the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come." In Mt. xxv. 31-46 He speaks of a coming of the Son of man which is accompanied by a universal and final judgment, and which is therefore thought of as being at the end of the present age. Now it is plainly impossible to identify this coming of the Son of man, which is subsequent to the preaching of the Gospel to all nations, with that other coming which is to precede the evangelization of the cities of Israel. In these two statements Jesus cannot have referred to one and the same event, for we cannot believe that He thought it would take as long to evangelize the

cities of Israel as it would to evangelize all the rest of the world.

But again, there are a number of passages which speak of a coming of the Son of man which will be *sudden* and wholly *unexpected*. Thus, as the lightning cometh from the east and is seen even unto the west, so shall be the coming of the Son of man (Mt. xxiv. 27). Both Matthew and Luke compare the coming of the Son of man with the coming of the flood in the days of Noah, which took the generation by surprise (Mt. xxiv. 37-39; Lk. xvii. 26-27), and Luke compares it with the rain of fire and brimstone which destroyed Sodom (Lk. xvii. 28-30). It will be as sudden as were those events. To this class of passages belong the exhortations to watchfulness in view of the fact that the time of the coming of the Son of man is unknown. Thus Matthew says, "Watch, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh" (Mt. xxiv. 42); and, again, "Be ye also ready, for in an hour when ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Mt. xxiv. 44). Mark and Luke have similar exhortations (Mk. xiii. 33; Lk. xii. 40), and the parable of the Virgins emphasizes the same point (Mt. xxv. 1-13).

Now over against this class of passages in which the coming of the Son of man is represented as sudden and unexpected, we have passages that speak of a coming which is to be heralded by well-known signs, and which

therefore is not unexpected and sudden (Mk. xiii. 24-26; Mt. xxiv. 3, 29-30). Not only will it be ushered in by these signs, but it is thought of as a "birth," which will be preceded by travail-pains (Mk. xiii. 8; Mt. xxiv. 8). Thus it is clearly not an unexpected event. This difference between the two classes of passages goes to show that when Jesus spoke of the coming of the Son of man, He did not always have the same event in mind.

Once more, Jesus says of a certain coming of the Son of man that no one knows the day or the hour. The angels do not know it, neither the Son: it is known to the Father only (Mk. xiii. 32). But there is also a coming of which Jesus sets the date within narrow limits. Thus, it will be before the cities of Israel are evangelized (Mt. x. 23); it will be in the lifetime of some of those who heard Jesus speak of His death and resurrection at Cæsarea Philippi (Mk. ix. 1); it will be within the lifetime of Caiaphas and the members of the sanhedrin (Mk. xiv. 62). These specifications can hardly belong to one and the same event. In one case, Jesus has positive chronological knowledge, which is quite definite; in the other, He declares explicitly that He knows not the time of the event. Moreover, this argument is strengthened by the fact that Jesus speaks of certain things as preceding His parousia which are of such a character that He can hardly have thought

of them as lying within the horizon of His own generation. Thus there are to be wars and rumors of wars. Nation is to rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There are to be earthquakes and famines, and all these calamities are only the *beginning* of travail (Mk. xiii. 7-8).

Again, the Gospel is to be preached to all the nations before the parousia, and it seems extremely doubtful whether Jesus thought that this was possible within a single generation. For He thought not simply of a proclamation of the Gospel to all creatures, but also of a process of genuine leavening which was to go on until the whole lump was leavened (Mt. xiii. 33).<sup>1</sup> His own experience with the Gospel was that men were slow to accept it. He foresaw that His disciples were to meet bitter opposition, and that they would have to struggle in order to achieve any spiritual results. Such being the case, it does not seem probable that Jesus expected the world to be leavened before that generation should pass; and if not, then the parousia of which He spoke was not to be in that generation. These statements, therefore, imply that two different events are meant, in different connections, by the term "parousia."

There remains yet another consideration which af-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. on the thought of the remoteness of the parousia, Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 274 f.

fords strong proof of the proposition that the coming of the Son of man did not always have reference to a particular historical event. It is this: one coming of the Son of man is with *clouds* (Mk. xiv. 62), and is associated with *individual judgment* (Mt. xxiv. 37-41; Lk. xvii. 26-37); the other coming is with *angels*, and is associated with *general judgment* (Mk. viii. 38; Mt. xxv. 31). In no case is the coming with clouds alone associated with a general judgment, and in no case is the coming with angels, whether with or without the accompaniment of clouds, disassociated from a general judgment. The coming with clouds is spoken of as falling within that generation (Mk. xiv. 62); the coming with angels is never said to lie within the lifetime of those who heard Jesus.

There are two apparent exceptions to these statements. In Mt. xvi. 28 the coming of the Son of man in His kingdom follows immediately upon a reference to His coming with the angels, and so seems at first to be identified with it; and this coming in His kingdom is to be within the lifetime of some of His hearers. But Mark and Luke report the thought of Jesus in such a way that the event which some of the hearers will witness is clearly discriminated from the coming of the Son of man with angels, which is mentioned in the preceding verse (Mk. ix. 1; Lk. ix. 27). In view of these parallels, therefore, and in

view of the evidence that Matthew himself elsewhere designates two different events by the term *parousia*, and that he puts the coming to general judgment at the end of the age (Mt. xxv. 31), we must conclude that the event of Mt. xvi. 28, even though it may have been regarded by the evangelist as identical with that of Mt. xvi. 27, was different from it in the thought of Jesus.

The other apparent exception is in Lk. xxi. 28, where, immediately after that reference to the coming of the Son of man which Mark and Matthew put at the end of the age, Jesus says to His disciples, "When these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh." This gives the impression that some of His disciples would see the foregoing *parousia*, which both Mark and Matthew speak of as the *parousia* with angels. But the phrase "these things" may go back to the beginning of the apocalyptic section, verse 8, and consequently may not refer to the *parousia* itself. Therefore, the evidence, if not perfectly conclusive, is very strong that the *parousia* with angels, and associated with a general judgment, is never referred to as coming within the lifetime of the first Christian generation; while the *parousia* with clouds, but not with angels, is brought within that generation.

These, then, are the arguments in support of the

proposition that the evangelists spoke of two separate events under the name of a coming of the Son of man. One precedes the evangelization of the cities of Israel; the other is at the end of the age. One is sudden and unexpected; the other is preceded by well-known signs. One is chronologically fixed by Jesus within relatively narrow limits; the time of the other is known to the Father alone. One is associated with clouds and individual judgment; the other with angels and a general judgment. And, lastly, there is the improbability that Jesus expected the world to be leavened within a generation. Taken together, these arguments seem to establish, on a firm foundation, the proposition that the term *parousia* in the Synoptic Gospels designates two different events.

We have now to consider those references to the coming of the Son of man which treat it as falling within the lifetime of the generation to which Jesus spoke; and we might appropriately bring all these passages under the head of the *parousia with clouds*, since this *parousia*, in each of the Gospels, is spoken of as lying within the horizon of people then living.

It was before the sanhedrin that Jesus spoke of a coming with clouds which should fall within the lifetime of His judges. The high priest had demanded

c. The coming of the Son of man within the first Christian generation.



that Jesus should declare, on oath, whether He was the Messiah. Jesus replied, "I am, and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mk. xiv. 62; Mt. xxvi. 64). Jesus stood before the sanhedrin a prisoner. His appearance was wholly un-Messianic, as judged by the popular standard. Yet He declares that He is the Messiah, and the following words seem to be a reference to the future for proof of His claim. The judges shall yet see Him, the prisoner of the present, seated on the right hand of power, that is, at the right hand of God. This language plainly suggests some sort of future exaltation which shall justify His claim to be the Messiah. It is probable, therefore, at the outset, that the words "coming with clouds" express a kindred thought. This probability is strengthened, if not raised to a certainty, by the fact that Luke drops the coming with clouds, and simply says, "From henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (Lk. xxii. 69). This fact may indicate, in the last analysis, that in the circle of Christians from which Luke drew his material, the coming with the clouds of heaven was not regarded as expressing any thought that was not involved in the being seated at the right hand of the power of God. If, however, Luke found the clause in his source, and purposely

dropped it, he probably did so because he did not regard it as adding anything to the thought. Therefore, we conclude that the omission of the clause from Luke's Gospel is an argument for the view, that the essential thought of the verse is that of being seated at the right hand of God. And this language describes an event which Caiaphas and the sanhedrin were yet to see.

We find further light on the meaning of this parousia with clouds in a word which Jesus spoke at Cæsarea Philippi. He warned His disciples against being *ashamed* of Him and His words (Mk. viii. 38; Lk. ix. 26). There was special need of such a warning just at that time, for the people of Galilee, as a whole, had turned against Jesus, and many of His former followers had left Him. He enforced His warning by a reference to the final judgment, when the Son of man will be ashamed of those who are now ashamed of Him. Then Jesus goes on to tell His disciples that a change of tide is coming in the near future, and that some of them will live to see the kingdom of God established with power. That kingdom of which they are now in danger of being ashamed, it is so insignificant and so unlike the kingdom of their national hope—that kingdom will be manifested in power within their lifetime. This is the great hope which He holds up before them.

The language of this prophetic saying of Jesus varies in the different records, and the variations are significant, whether we think of the narratives as independent or not. Mark says, "Until they see the kingdom of God having come with power." Luke has essentially the same thought, for he says, "Until they see the kingdom of God." He has not the words "come with power," but his context implies the thought of these words. For Jesus is promising His disciples a vision to gladden their heart; and when He says, "There are some of those standing here who shall by no means taste of death until they see the kingdom of God," that obviously means a manifestation of the kingdom of God unlike what they see at present, or, in other words, a *triumphant* manifestation, a coming of the kingdom *with power*.

Now Matthew, while having the same situation, uses different language and says, "Until they see the *Son of man* coming in His kingdom" (Mt. xvi. 28). We have shown in the last paragraph that Matthew can hardly have identified this coming of the Son of man with His coming at the end of the age; and therefore the presumption is strong that his language, "the Son of man coming in His kingdom," contains the same thought that is expressed in the plainer terms of Mark and Luke. These writers express the thought in a form intelligible to the Gentiles, while Matthew uses a figure

borrowed from the Jewish literature, which would not be plain to Gentiles.

I hold, then, that Matthew's expression, "the Son of man coming in His kingdom," is the exact equivalent of Mark's language, "the kingdom of God come with power." Now as to the meaning of this last expression, there can hardly be any serious question. The coming of the kingdom of God with power is a powerful triumph of the Gospel, a striking realization of the principles of the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup> This, then, is what Jesus promises that some of His disciples shall see.

Now, in the light of this passage, we turn again to the word which Jesus spoke to the sanhedrin, "Ye shall see the Son of man seated at the right hand of power, and *coming with the clouds of heaven.*" Here, as in the other passage, is an event which the present generation shall witness. Here, as there, we have a coming of the Son of man. Here, as there, the context requires the thought of an exaltation of Jesus. I conclude, therefore, that this language of Jesus before the sanhedrin, interpreted by its own context, and in the light of the parallel passage, looked toward *a great triumph of the Gospel* which His judges should live to see.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Haupt, *Eschatologische Aussagen Jesu in den Synoptischen Evangelien*, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> For the origin of the phrase "coming with the clouds," see Dan. vii. 13.

Hence the event which the judges of Jesus are to see is the same which He held up before His disciples in the days which He spent at Cæsarea Philippi. And the fulfilment of the promise is recorded in Acts. The coming of the kingdom of God with power, or the coming of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven, was realized in the signal triumph of the Gospel through the two decades subsequent to the crucifixion, beginning with Pentecost, and resulting, in this short period, in the establishment of Christian churches throughout Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece, and as far away as Rome in the West, and probably as far as Babylon in the East. These events showed, indeed, that Jesus was seated at the right hand of power.

Further, we must hold that it was this event which Jesus had in view when He exhorted His disciples to be watchful because they knew not the hour when their Lord would come. He uttered such words of exhortation on the Mount of Olives, and perhaps on other occasions during the last days. The briefest statement of the thought is in Mark; the most elaborate in Matthew. In Mark, Jesus likens His disciples to doorkeepers, whose business it is to watch for the return of their Lord. He may come at evening, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning; they know not when. They must watch lest he come and find them sleeping (Mk. xiii. 33-37). In Matthew and Luke this thought

appears in various forms. Thus, the parousia of the Son of man shall be as lightning, that is, sudden (Mt. xxiv. 27; Lk. xvii. 24). It shall come as the flood came upon the generation of Noah, and as the rain of fire came upon Sodom (Mt. xxiv. 37-41; Lk. xvii. 26-37). Therefore, the disciples are to be as wise servants who watch (Mt. xxiv. 42-44; xxv. 1-13; Lk. xii. 39-40; xxi. 34-36). Their readiness for the coming of the Son of man will consist in the faithful doing of the duties which He has appointed them (Mt. xxiv. 45-47; Lk. xii. 41-46; Mt. xxv. 14-30; Lk. xix. 11-27).

Another word of Luke's Gospel belongs here, namely, that of xvii. 22. According to this, Jesus said to His disciples on a certain occasion that a time would come when they would desire to see one of the *days* of the Son of man, and would not see it. This is to be taken in connection with the prospect of the suffering and trial to which the disciples will be exposed. When severe trials come upon them, they will long to see the days of the Son of man, that is, days of His *triumph*. This passage plainly contemplates a *period* in which the Son of man will give deliverance and prosperity to His disciples—a conception which is obviously in line with the interpretation which makes the near coming of the Son of man, or His coming with clouds, equivalent to the triumph of the Gospel.

We pass on now to consider that coming of the Son of man which is at the end of the age. There are three passages which speak of a parousia with angels (Mk. viii. 38; Lk. ix. 26; Mt. xvi. 27-28). The first is found in all the Synoptists, though Matthew's version is somewhat different from that of Mark and Luke. It is the word which was spoken at Cæsarea Philippi. Jesus had announced that the way of His disciples, like His own, would be a way of self-denial and death. Hence, they would be tempted to deny Him. He warns them against this by stating the immeasurable evil which results from such a denial. It will involve a rejection by the Son of man when He comes in the glory of the Father with the holy angels (Mk. Lk.). Matthew's report is more general. He says that the Son of man will render to each according to his deed, that is, to the good and the bad alike. He has not the saying about being ashamed of Jesus and of His words; but he connects the announcement of judgment with the general law, that he who will save his life shall lose it, and he who will lose it shall find it (Mt. xvi. 25-26). The argument is that one who loses life for Christ's sake makes an infinite gain; for when Jesus comes in His great glory at last, He will render to each man according to his work.

*d.* The coming of the Son of man at the end of the age.

The second passage is in the Eschatological Discourse.

Mark and Matthew give it in essential agreement, while Luke omits the gathering of the elect (Mk. xiii. 26-27; Mt. xxiv. 30-31; Lk. xxi. 27). The coming of the Son of man is here preceded by great signs, and is witnessed by all men. The signs are those which in the Old Testament are associated with *the day of Jehovah* (Joel ii. 30-31; Amos viii. 9; Is. xiii. 10; xxxiv. 4). Sun and moon are darkened, the stars fall, and the powers of the heavens are shaken. Matthew seems to think also of a particular phenomenon which he calls *the sign of the Son of man* (Mt. xxiv. 3, 30), but he leaves it undefined. Both Mark and Matthew say that when the Son of man comes, thus heralded, He will send forth His angels, and they will gather His elect together from the whole earth.

The third passage is the great judgment scene in Mt. xxv. 31-46, where the Son of man comes in glory with His angels and holds an assize upon all nations. No function of the angels is here directly mentioned. Not only the good, but the bad also, are gathered. The passage deals particularly with the *test* of judgment.

These are the only passages that speak of a parousia with angels, but they are not the only data which we have to consider. Before the time of Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus had spoken of the end of the age, when the angels would be sent forth by the Son of man to



gather His elect, and to remove out of His kingdom all stumbling-blocks, and consign them to the furnace of fire (Mt. xiii. 30, 50). These two scenes in the parables of the Tares and the Drag-net are obviously parallel to the three passages which have just been noticed. Their time is the end of the age, and that is manifestly the time of the coming of the Son of man which is heralded by the great signs. The signs themselves, in view of the Old Testament use, point to the consummation of the present order of things, and moreover, Matthew explicitly couples this parousia with the end of the age (Mt. xxiv. 3, 30). Therefore, also, the judgment scene of Mt. xxv., which closes with the irreversible awards, must be regarded as belonging, in the thought of the evangelist, to the end of the age.

The two parable scenes of Matthew agree with the three distinctive parousia passages not merely in time. In those as well as in these, the Son of man takes the initiative in the act of judgment; He sends forth the angels who gather the elect; there is a final separation of bad and good; and the two classes receive their awards from the Son of man.

We are now ready to ask after the *meaning* of this parousia with angels, or the coming of the Son of man at the end of the age. It is to be noticed that there are two constant elements in the various passages, and these are a *general Messianic judgment* and the *end*

*of the age.* The angels contribute nothing essential. In the great scene in Mt. xxv. 31-46, they have no part, and seem to be mentioned only to heighten the glory and majesty of the event, as in the Book of Enoch;<sup>1</sup> and the same is true of the judgment scene to which Jesus referred at Cæsarea Philippi. Then, what is still more striking and important, the *coming* itself seems not to be treated as *essential* to the thought of these judgment passages. For in two of the five scenes the Son of man is represented as *remaining in heaven*, and as sending forth His angels from thence, to gather His elect unto Him. Again, in the Olivet discourse, the coming itself seems to have no other significance than to mark the end of the age. It is followed by the sending forth of the angels, who gather the elect, just as was done in the two preceding scenes *without* a coming of the Son of man. Therefore, I incline to hold that, in the thought of Jesus in these passages, the *coming* of the Son of man was not a feature of fundamental significance, but was rather a figurative announcement of the consummation of the age. It is a grand, luminous *Finis* at the bottom of the last page of earthly history.

The two ideas common to all the five judgment passages are the end of the age and Messianic judg-

<sup>1</sup> Chapter i. 4, 9; comp. Haupt, *Eschatologische Aussagen Jesu in den Synoptischen Evangelien*, p. 116.

ment. To sum up, now, the discussion of this most difficult point, we may say that the teaching of the Synoptic Gospels in regard to the parousia of the Son of man, in either sense of that term, does not involve any personal return of the Lord Jesus to this earth. The earlier coming consisted primarily in the triumph of the Gospel within the first Christian generation, though not to be *limited* to that generation; and the coming at the end of the age, according to the intimation of the words of Jesus, is simply a mark of the consummation. It is a figurative expression, just as the *coming with clouds* is figurative. One is a symbol of power; the other a symbol of the arrival of the time of judgment.<sup>1</sup>

The most difficult topic in the eschatology of Jesus is that which has just been discussed, namely, the parousia. The silence of the fourth Gospel in regard to this subject accords well with the interpretation which has been given. When this Gospel was written, the coming of Jesus on the clouds had long been a reality in the history of the Church, and might easily be dropped; and the coming with angels at the end of the age does not appear, for the author lays all stress upon a *present* judgment.

Closely associated with the parousia in the teaching of Jesus is the subject of *judgment*, and the first

IV. The thought of Jesus in regard to judgment.  
a. The time of judgment.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. 556.

point to be considered in discussing this subject is the *time* when men are judged. Since judgment is associated with the parousia, both the nearer and the more remote, the time of judgment is determined by the time of the parousia. In connection with the earlier coming of the Son of man, it is said, in Matthew, "There shall be two men in the field: one is taken and the other left" (Mt. xxiv. 40). Both Matthew and Luke report the saying, "Two women are grinding at the mill: one is taken and one is left" (Mt. xxiv. 41; Lk. xvii. 35). Luke has another similar saying, "In this night there shall be two men in one bed: one shall be taken and the other shall be left" (Lk. xvii. 34). Again, we have the thought of judgment in the various sayings about faithful and unfaithful servants (*e.g.* Lk. xii. 37; xxi. 34-36; Mk. xiii. 33-37; Mt. xxiv. 45, 48-51; Lk. xii. 43, 45-46). The virgins whose lamps are trimmed go in to the feast; but those whose lamps have no oil are not admitted (Mt. xxv. 1-13). The servants with talents and pounds are rewarded according to the use they have made of their money, when their master comes back from his journey (Mt. xxv. 14), or when their lord returns, who had gone to seek a kingdom (Lk. xix. 15).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These parables might have been spoken in view of the parousia at the end of the age, but seem not to have been so regarded by the evangelists. Comp. Lk. xix. 11 with ix. 27; Mt. xxv. 13.

Thus we have judgment associated by Jesus with that coming of the Son of man which His own generation was destined to experience. Now this coming, as we have already seen, is not a single fact but a *process*. The coming of the kingdom of God with power, or the coming of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven, was not limited to Pentecost, or to any single victory of the Gospel. That kingdom had a powerful manifestation in the first Christian generation; but the word of Jesus was not exhausted when that generation passed. The events of the apostolic age have been repeated in kind, if not in degree, in all the ages that have followed. The Son of man has been coming, and is still coming, in His kingdom. Jesus foretold a fact that would fall within His own generation, but He did not set bounds to it, and say that this coming on the clouds would not reach into the next generation and the next. Now since Jesus associated judgment with the coming of the kingdom of God, and since that coming was not thought of as a single fact but as a process, it is plain that we have a *process* of judgment coextensive with the process which is called the coming of the kingdom of God.

But in speaking of the parousia at the end of the age, we have seen that judgment is associated with this also, and the judgment which is described in

these passages is general in character. Have we, then, in the Synoptic Gospels, a *process* of judgment and also a *final act* of judgment? Or we may put the question in another form, and ask whether these Gospels, in putting a great judgment scene at the end of the age, think of the essential truth of that scene as *limited* to the end of the age? To this question, I think a negative answer must be given. And this negative reply is justified by the following considerations. First, in no passage regarding the so-called final judgment is there the slightest intimation that it concerns more than a single generation, that is, the generation which is then on the earth. Second, the word of Jesus to the dying robber implies that the final judgment is accomplished *during* the Messianic age as well as its end. Jesus says, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Lk. xxiii. 43). To be in Paradise with Christ cannot be regarded as different from the reward which is bestowed upon the righteous at the final judgment. Paradise means heaven both in the Jewish and the Christian writings.<sup>1</sup> The Jewish view, that it is an apartment in the under-world, is of late origin.<sup>2</sup> But

<sup>1</sup> Comp. 2 Cor. xii. 4; Rev. ii. 7. Also *Psalms of Solomon* xiv. 2; 2 *Esdras* viii. 52; Wünsche, *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Evangelien aus Talmud und Midrasch*, p. 491. The *Book of Enoch* xxxii. 2 seems to think of a Paradise on earth.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 326.

to be in heaven with Christ presupposes the Messianic judgment. Therefore we have in this word to the robber a plain expression of the real thought of Jesus. For we cannot hold that what He promised to the dying robber was exceptional. Had John or Peter or any other disciple died in that hour, trusting in Jesus as did the robber, we must suppose that he would have been in Paradise with Christ immediately after death, and consequently must suppose that for him the final judgment would have been accomplished in that same hour. Therefore we are justified in saying that in the thought of Jesus, according to the Synoptists, the final judgment of the individual is at the close of the earthly life. It is not far hence in the future, at the end of the present dispensation. There is no interval between death and judgment, and therefore there is no intermediate state in the teaching of Jesus.

In conclusion on this point, we may say that, according to the teaching of Jesus in the first three Gospels, the earthly life is the time of judgment. There is no reference to a judgment for any man later than the hour of his passing from the visible to the invisible world. We shall see in another paragraph that Jesus makes no essential difference between the judgment which He associates with His nearer coming and the judgment which He puts at

the end of the age. The only difference lies in the location of the judgment. And looking at an individual soul, the only difference between the judgment which is passed upon it in the course of its earthly history and the judgment at the close of that history is that the latter is conceived of as final, while the other is not. A man who rejects Christ to-day may at some future time before the hour of death turn to Him, and thus reverse the judgment which had been passed upon him; but the judgment at the end of life is the end of judgment. Jesus teaches that this is irreversible. Thus life is the time of judgment, and in the hour when the soul passes from the material to the immaterial sphere, it passes a line beyond which there is no more judgment.

The standard of righteousness which Jesus set up for His kingdom is ideal, and therefore must be the standard for all times. Character that meets the approval of God from day to day will meet His approval in the last day. From the teaching of Jesus in regard to membership in His kingdom here and now, we should feel perfectly certain what must be His final test; and when we examine His words of judgment, we find the same standard, expressed or implied, which is everywhere involved in the religious and ethical teaching of Jesus. In all

*b.* The standard of judgment.



those passages which concern the nearer coming of the Son of man, that event is a blessing or a curse according as a man is prepared for it or unprepared. He is prepared who is keeping the word of the Master ; he is unprepared who is not keeping it. The door-keeper who watches for the lord of the house (Mk. xiii. 33-37), the servant who is wisely administering the household intrusted to him (Mt. xxiv. 44-51), the virgins who are ready for the bridegroom (Mt. xxv. 1-13), the servant who is faithful in the use of the talent or pound committed to him (Mt. xxv. 14-30; Lk. xix. 11-27)—to these the coming of the kingdom, or the coming of the Son of man, brings a blessing.

If now we look at the more formal references to judgment, we shall find the standard defined in both general and specific terms. The parables of the Tares and the Drag-net speak of those whom the angels gather into the kingdom as *righteous* (Mt. xiii. 43, 49). The first parable suggests that this righteousness is connected in some way with the Son of man, for the *wheat*, which symbolizes the righteous, is the harvest from the good seed which the Son of man sowed (Mt. xiii. 38). This suggests, in general, that the acceptance of the teaching of Jesus leads to a righteousness which inherits heaven; but it does not give details.

... Again, we have a general statement of the standard

in Matthew's version of the words which Jesus spoke at Cæsarea Philippi. He says that the Son of man will render to each one according to his works (Mt. xvi. 27), and the foregoing context divides works into two fundamental sorts, — one of which is termed *saving one's own life*, and the other *losing one's life for Christ's sake* (Mt. xvi. 24–26). This limitation from the context makes the standard somewhat specific, for it indicates that the acceptable life is the one in which Jesus has been the central motive. But the standard is stated in a more specific form in the parallels of Mark and Luke (Mk. viii. 38; Lk. ix. 26). Jesus here says, "Whosoever shall be *ashamed* of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Here the test question is the question of the personal relation of the soul to Jesus. Has it confessed Him as the Messiah (Mt. x. 32, 33), or has it been ashamed of Him, and so denied Him? The future depends upon the answer to this question.

The standard of judgment is described still more simply and practically in the dramatic scene of judgment which Matthew alone has preserved (Mt. xxv. 31–46). Here they are called *righteous* and *blessed of the Father*, who, in the test of life, manifested the spirit of Jesus. They have ministered to the brothers

of Jesus, even the least. When hungry, they have given them meat; when thirsty, they have given them drink; when strangers, they have taken them in; when naked, they have clothed them; when in prison, they have come to them. These common needs are taken as representing all needs. The blessed ones who inherit the everlasting kingdom have felt these needs of the needy as their own, and have responded to them. This lowly service receives so high honor from the King because it is counted as done to *Him*. Now it is perfectly manifest that He could not count a service as done to Him, and reward it accordingly, unless it was done *out of regard* for Him. A self-righteous Pharisee might do all the services which are here enumerated by Jesus. He might do them with admirable patience and zeal and self-sacrifice, as many a Pharisee who expected to *earn* heaven by his good works actually did. But would Jesus say to such an one, "Come, thou blessed of my Father"? That is impossible, for He was radically opposed to this conception of righteousness, and smote it with sternest denunciation. He located righteousness in the purpose of the heart, in trust and love and purity; and taught that the kingdom of God, instead of being earned by meritorious works, which are of value to God, must be received as a gift. It is, therefore, inconceivable that He thought of

these little services, which He mentioned to the credit of the righteous, as being so valuable *in themselves* that the doer merited heaven. This would have been in direct antagonism to His own fundamental teaching. They are valuable rather because of the spirit that is in them, or, in other words, because they are done *unto Him*. The thought of the passage is just that of the other words of Jesus, "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink *because ye are Christ's*, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward." The virtue is in the motive, and the motive is the name of Jesus. The surprise of the righteous at the words spoken by the Judge is simply surprise at the exceeding *grace* of His judgment, that He counts each of the little forgotten services of their earthly lives as a personal service to Him. To be sure, they had done these services to the lowly in His name, inspired by His love; but the heavenly Lord rates each service as though it had been rendered to Him in person. *I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was naked, and ye did it unto me, to me*. This is the occasion of their surprise.

We conclude, then, on this point, that while the standard of judgment is here stated in concrete terms of life, it is essentially the same standard which we have found elsewhere. The standard is *righteousness*, or, more specifically, it is *confessing Jesus*, or, most

specifically, it is *living as Jesus lived*. But these answers are essentially one. To be righteous is to be like Jesus. To confess Jesus truly is, again, to be like Him. Confessing Him is not so much intellectual as vital. And to be like Jesus is to serve men in the love of God. Hence the lowliest service which reveals the spirit of Jesus may be taken as the criterion in the final judgment for eternity.

Thus it appears that the standard in the Messianic judgment is a standard of character and life, wholly simple and reasonable.<sup>1</sup> There is not only no mention of any religious form or any creed, but there is no place for them. For Christ's standard is righteousness, and righteousness He places in the purpose of the heart. Therefore, while outward religious rites may be profitable, and *are*, even from the point of view of the Gospel, they cannot be essential; and while adherence to creeds may be profitable, it is not essential, save adherence to the simple belief in Jesus as Messiah, and the practical acceptance of what that involves in regard to God and our neighbor.

There is no formal parousia of the Son of man in the Gospel of John. The term is not found there. In the Appendix to the Gospel there is a reference

<sup>1</sup> In the *Parables of Enoch* the Messiah is thought of as judge, contrary to the common Jewish view; but there is no suggestion of the profound truth that the Messiah is judge because He is the standard of life.

to some coming of Jesus, in His words to Peter with regard to the beloved disciple, "If I will that he tarry till *I come*, what is that to thee" (Jn. xxi. 22)? The disciples misunderstood this word of Jesus, for the narrative says, "This saying went forth among the brethren, that that disciple should not *die*" (Jn. xxi. 23). When the Appendix was written, John was apparently dead, and then the Christian brethren noted the fact that Jesus had not made a positive statement regarding John, but only a conditional one. "Jesus said not unto him, that he should not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" The coming is not uncertain, but it is uncertain whether John is to tarry on earth to witness it. Now we have seen that the Synoptic narrative speaks of two events as a coming of the Son of man: one in the immediate future, and the other at the end of the age. It seems impossible to associate the word in Jn. xxi. 22 with the first of these events. For Jesus had looked forward to the old age of Peter (Jn. xxi. 18), and then intimated that John might tarry yet longer than Peter. But that coming of Jesus which He anticipated in the near future, and which we find realized in Pentecost and in the great triumphs of the Gospel in the subsequent quarter of a century, was certainly nearer than Peter's death, and therefore cannot have been the

event in the mind of Jesus when He spoke of John's tarrying till He should come. If, then, the coming of Jn. xxi. 22 be identified with *either* of the events so designated in the Synoptists, it must be identified with the final parousia. In that case Jesus must have thought it *possible* that the consummation might come within perhaps a hundred years. It must be remembered, however, that this is only a hypothetical saying, and that it does not belong to the fourth Gospel proper, but only to the Appendix which was made to that Gospel by unknown hands.

The only other passage in John which comes into consideration here is xiv. 3, "If I go and prepare a place for you, *I come* again and will receive you unto myself." It is plain from the context that this was intended to be a word of comfort for the disciples. But if the *coming* which Jesus had in mind was at the end of the age, the comfort of the saying would have been quite vague at the best. According to the plain teaching of the Synoptists the end was at an indefinite remove from the present. It seems impossible also to suppose that, in Jn. xiv. 3, Jesus referred to His coming in the Spirit. For when Jesus came in the Spirit at Pentecost, He did not receive the disciples into the many mansions of the Father's house.

Since, then, the reception of the disciples is *into heaven*, it seems necessary to regard the coming of

Jesus as a fact coincident with their departure from this earthly life. Hence we must apparently consider this saying of Jesus as somewhat in line with His word on the cross to the dying robber, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Lk. xxiii. 43). At the close of this man's life he was received by Jesus into the Father's house. There was a meeting between Jesus and the spirit of the robber, and the Lord welcomed him into Paradise. So, when Jesus, about to depart from His disciples, promised to come again and to receive them into the house of His Father, where He was to prepare a place for them, we may hold that the essential thought of this language is that He would meet them in the hour of death and welcome them into the heavenly mansions.

As the fourth Gospel thus practically omits the Synoptic teaching of the parousia, so it omits the Synoptic teaching of a final future judgment; and as the fourth Gospel lays stress on the thought of the presence of the Spirit, who takes the place of Jesus, so it lays stress on the thought of a *present* judgment. There are but two allusions to a future judgment, and the incidental character of these has already been shown. Aside from these, the Messianic judgment of the fourth Gospel is a *present* judgment — a judgment in life rather than at death. This judgment does not consist in a formal word or sentence by the



Messiah. In this sense of the word *judgment*, Jesus judged no man (Jn. viii. 15). He came not to judge the world but to save (Jn. iii. 17; xii. 47). His judgment is simply the inevitable consequence of His revelation. He stands in the midst of men as the Messiah, and men accept or reject Him. To accept Him is life, to reject Him is judgment (Jn. iii. 18). "This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light" (Jn. iii. 19). Therefore men judge themselves as they refuse the light of the Messiah. The Messiah does not bring this light to them *to the end* that they may be judged, but with a great desire that they would accept it and be saved (Jn. iii. 17; xii. 47). He comes to them not as a judge, but as a saviour. Yet He comes with the final word of God, the perfect revelation of the Father, and therefore His coming involves judgment; but men pronounce their own sentence. This judgment is final in character because Jesus as the Messiah is the final message of God. As long as one rejects this message, one is judged (Jn. iii. 18), and the judgment can be reversed only by accepting the message. It is not final in the sense that one who is judged, because of rejecting Jesus, cannot possibly turn and come to a better mind.

Since Jesus, the Messiah, brings this revelation and

is the revelation, He says that all judgment is given to Him (Jn. v. 22). This judgment and the Messiahship are inseparable. He is judge because He is Messiah, and He executes judgment through His revelation of the Father, which is the last touchstone of hearts. It is, therefore, plain here as in the Synoptists, that Messianic judgment presupposes a knowledge of the Messiah, and an opportunity to accept Him.

In conclusion, we may say that this present judgment of the fourth Gospel is vital and final. He who accepts Jesus has passed out of death into life (Jn. v. 24), and at death is received by the Lord into the Father's house (Jn. xiv. 3). This present acceptance or rejection of Jesus is the great crisis of the soul; and if Jesus thought of a judgment at death, He must have thought of it, according to this teaching, merely as a *recognition* of the soul's estate in Christ. In like manner, this present crisis involves the essential judgment for the unrighteous, and any judgment at death can be no more than a recognition and indorsement of the judgment which they have already passed upon themselves.

In four of the five passages which directly concern the judgment at the end of the age, we find mention of the awards to righteous and unrighteous. These awards are suggested rather than described. They are strongly

outlined by two or three weighty words, and then are dropped. The same is true of the other references which we find scattered through the Gospels.

There is no uncertainty in the tone of Christ's utterances, but there is a remarkable reserve ; and this appears the more remarkable when

*d.* The issues of judgment.  
*i.* Introduction.

we remember at what length the rabbinical teachers dwelt upon the externals of the world beyond and the state of the departed.<sup>1</sup> There is no passage in which Jesus treats the Messianic rewards and punishments for their own sake. They are subordinated to some thought of immediately practical importance. Jesus refers to the future, not to satisfy any speculative interest, but solely to promote righteousness.

It is in line with this fact that the words of Jesus regarding the future refer only to those who have known the Messiah. The allusions to Tyre and Sidon, to the Ninevites and the queen of the South, to Sodom and Gomorrah, serve to describe the fate of the Jews who have rejected Jesus. The lake cities—Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida—are declared to be worse than the proverbially wicked cities of ancient times, and accordingly a darker future is before them. The Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah, and the queen of the South sought the wisdom of Solomon,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Langen, *Das Judentum in Palästina*, pp. 461-519; Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 300-386.

and the example of both condemns the contemporaries of Jesus. The one point with which Jesus is concerned is the exceeding guilt of the Jews in rejecting Him. To state this point strongly He compares His contemporaries with the notoriously bad men of former times. The allusions, therefore, are rhetorical rather than doctrinal, and it remains true that in the thought of Jesus regarding the judgment and the hereafter, only those persons are contemplated who, on earth, have known about Jesus, and who have made "the great refusal" or the great acceptance. This leads to another remark, namely, that Jesus always thinks of the judgment of men as accomplished by Himself (*e.g.* Mt. xiii. 41-42; xxv. 31). He establishes the kingdom of God; He also consummates it by judgment and by eternal awards. The completion of the work is His as truly as its beginning. The beginning is on earth, the completion in heaven, but in both there is one law. The Messiah is central throughout the entire process.

In the references which Jesus makes to the future of the unrighteous we have three elements, namely, the material symbolism, the spiritual symbolism, and the matter of time. The chief material symbol is fire; the incidental ones are worms, darkness, and the being ground to powder. The fire is either in a *furnace* (Mt. xiii. 42, 50)—a figure which

2. The award of the unrighteous.

may have been suggested by the story in Daniel (Dan. iii. 6); or it is the fire of *Gehenna*, a term which Jesus used on three or four occasions (Mt. v. 22, 29-30; xxiii. 15; Mk. ix. 43-48; Lk. xii. 5). The word is borrowed from the rabbinical theology, but is based on the Old Testament. The valley of Hinnom, on the southwest of Jerusalem, is supposed to have originated the name, and the historical use of that valley is supposed to have originated the fundamental conception of Gehenna.<sup>1</sup> It was a place for the destruction of that which was unclean. If, however, Isaiah refers to the valley of Hinnom in lxvi. 24, which seems to be taken for granted by Mark (Mk. ix. 47-48), since the symbolism of Isaiah is here used in describing Gehenna, then the prophet thought of Gehenna as the place where the wrath of God was manifested against His enemies—a place of *judgment* and *punishment*. In any case this is the idea which is associated with the word in the teaching of Jesus. For He uses Gehenna as the antithesis of life, that life which the righteous attain; or as the antithesis of the kingdom of God into which the righteous enter at last (Mk. ix. 43, 47). Thus it stands for the *place* of condemnation and also for the *award* of unrighteousness.

To the fire, which is the characteristic feature of Gehenna, is once added the detail of *worms*—an emblem

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 327.

of physical putrefaction taken from Isaiah's description of God's judgment (Mk. ix. 48). *Outer darkness* is once used as a symbol of the fate of the unrighteous, where it is the antithesis of the kingdom of heaven, in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are blessed (Mt. viii. 11-12). In two other passages it symbolizes judgment, but not specifically the *final* judgment (Mt. xxii. 13; xxv. 30). This figure is indefinite and negative, and owes its significance to the inner light from which the darkness is separated. It is, therefore, a relative term, and applicable alike to temporal and eternal judgment. The remaining material symbol is that of being ground to powder, as a small stone may be crushed by a large one (Lk. xx. 18). Jesus likened Himself to "the stone that was rejected by the builders," and said that whosoever should fall upon this would be broken into pieces; but on whomsoever it should fall, it would grind him to powder. The stone would thus become useless for any building purposes. The obvious suggestion is that any man on whom the condemnation of the Messiah rests, is henceforth of no value for any building of God.

The essential thought of this material symbolism of judgment which Jesus used, with the exception of the last symbol, is *pain*. Thus the fire and the outer darkness produce weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt. xiii. 42, 50), or the flame torments (Lk. xvi. 23). It

seems probable also that the worm was thought of as causing pain by reason of the supposed association of the departed spirit with its earthly body; but this symbol is wholly subordinate, and the plain thought of the passage as a whole is that of pain.

The spiritual symbolism of these passages of judgment is more suggestive than the material. Under this head we may mention, first, the word of Jesus at Cæsarea Philippi, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be *ashamed* of him, when he cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (Mk. viii. 38). With this belongs the word of kindred warning, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also *deny* before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt. x. 33). The inner feeling contained in these passages expresses itself in the awful words, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity" (Mt. vii. 23), and "Depart from me, ye cursed" (Mt. xxv. 41).

There is yet another term which Jesus used concerning the fate of the unrighteous which should be mentioned in this connection. It is the term *destroy* or *destruction*. "Wide is the road which leads unto *destruction*, and many are they who are entering it" (Mt. vii. 13), and, "Fear Him who is able to *destroy* both soul and body in Gehenna" (Mt. x. 28; comp. Mk.

xii. 9). Destruction is defined by being set over against *life*. "Narrow is the road which leads unto life, and few are they who are finding it." Thus *destruction* is the antithesis of life; and as life here is not mere existence, so destruction is not mere non-existence or annihilation. Life is something far richer and better than existence, and therefore destruction is something far poorer and worse than bare existence.

The essential thought of this spiritual symbolism is *separation* from God and from Christ, from the holy angels and the redeemed. This separation by judgment involves separation by choice, and the choice to be apart from God and Christ involves a love of evil which even the grace of Jesus could not overcome. Herein appears the agreement between the material and the spiritual symbolism. The material symbolism expresses the thought of pain, the spiritual symbolism that of separation from God which is made necessary by the love of sin. But a person with an ineradicable love of sin, who is given over to himself by God, is inevitably in a condition of pain. One might say that the fire of Gehenna, the undying worm, and the darkness of judgment are within him. They are *potentially* within him during his earthly life; but when he is separated from all holy influences, and given over to himself, they are fully actualized. His state is henceforth something poorer and worse than existence. Like



a stone that is ground to powder, he cannot be used in building the kingdom of God.

The element of *time* in these passages of judgment, whether we have reference to punishment or reward, seems to be explicit. The thought of Jesus on this point does not depend upon the etymology of any word, as *æonian*; nor is it to be found in the possible inference from the statement which He makes regarding a particular sin, that it will not be forgiven either in this age or *in that which is to come*, for two of the Gospels (one of these the oldest of all) report Him to have said, with slight variations, that the sin in question should *never* be forgiven; but His thought is involved in the very conception of the Messianic judgment, and it is given also in the antithesis of the fate of the unrighteous to that of the righteous. It is involved in the conception of the Messianic judgment, for that occurs once for all in the history of the soul, and comes at the transition from the material to the immaterial sphere. There is no suggestion of two Messianic judgments for the same individual. Further, the element of time is determined by the antithesis between the fate of the unrighteous and that of the righteous. Both destinies are qualified by the same adjectives of time. Everlasting fire is set over against everlasting life (Mt. xxv. 41-46). If either is endless, both must be. But it is not questioned that Jesus

thought of the children of the everlasting Father as living an everlasting life. This seems to be involved in the very conception of personal, loving fellowship with God.

Before leaving this point, reference should be made to Abraham's words in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, "Between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, so that they who wish to cross hence to you cannot, neither do any cross thence to us" (Lk. xvi. 26). This parable was spoken to warn against selfish living, and it does so by picturing the consequences which such a life has beyond the grave. One element in this consequence is its unchangeableness. The "gulf" has been established, and it is impassable to those on either side. In order to get the full significance of this statement, we need to remember that the rich man and Lazarus are separated by this gulf *at death*. Consequently the story involves the thought that the issues of judgment are irrevocable,<sup>1</sup> and that these issues are experienced from the hour of death.

It is worthy of remark that the destiny of the righteous is much more variously suggested by Jesus than is that of the unrighteous, as though

3. The award of the righteous. He dwelt upon this thought with satisfaction, while He expressed the other only when necessity was laid upon Him.

<sup>1</sup> For earlier Jewish thought on this subject, see *Psalms of Solomon* iii. 13; xiii. 9; *Wisdom* v. 15; *Enoch* xxvii. 2; lxi. 5.

In the symbolism which Jesus uses in regard to the future of the righteous, the deepest idea is that of *the exaltation and enrichment of the personal life*. The consummation of the kingdom involves the consummation of the individual life. This consummation is expressed most frequently in the thought of *divine fellowship*. The King says Come, to those who have manifested His spirit (Mt. xxv. 34). The redeemed are to sit with Christ at His table (Lk. xxii. 30), and drink new wine with Him in the kingdom of God (Mk. xiv. 25), that is, they are to have free and glad fellowship with Him. And this fellowship extends to a participation in the authority of the Messiah. When He sits upon the throne of His glory, the twelve apostles also shall sit upon thrones (Mt. xix. 28; Lk. xxii. 30), judging the tribes of Israel. This was not meant literally, for the one condition of sitting upon thrones with Jesus was *following Him*, and there were more than twelve who followed Him. The disciples, moreover, did not understand it literally, for John thinks of every one who overcomes in the conflict of life as sitting with Christ on His throne (Rev. iii. 21). The figure meant simply that those who had shared the toil of Jesus should also share his triumph. As God exalted Jesus to a glorious throne, so Jesus promises to exalt His followers to a seat beside Himself.

Again, it was divine fellowship that Jesus promised to the dying robber, as well as Paradise (Lk. xxiii. 43). It was fellowship with God which Jesus promised to the pure in heart (Mt. v. 8). This word has doubtless a partial fulfilment on earth, as have various promises of reward in the words of Jesus (*e.g.* Mt. v. 3, 5, 6, 7, 9; x. 39-42), but its complete realization belongs to heaven.

Now the significance which Jesus attached to divine fellowship in the hereafter was probably of a like sort with that which He attached to it for this present life. If it means development toward the ideal of God here, it will mean further development toward the ideal there. If it brings peace and joy here, so will it there.

The exaltation and enrichment of personal life is expressed also in the thought of the *glory* and *honor* which are bestowed upon the redeemed spirit. The righteous shall shine as the sun (Mt. xiii. 43), the strongest figure of unwasting glory which is furnished by the natural world. Their names are written in heaven (Lk. x. 20), and Christ will confess them as the names of His faithful followers before God and the angels (Lk. xii. 8; Mt. x. 32). This recognition must be an everlasting stimulus to the divine life. In like manner must we judge of the fellowship with saints and angels. The society of

patriarchs and prophets and of all those to whom the King shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," must have the noblest meaning which the society of the good has upon the earth, namely, to stimulate the best development of the soul (Mt. viii. 11-12; Lk. xiii. 28; Mt. xxv. 34).

Finally, the exaltation and enrichment of the personal life seems to be the chief thought in the promise of *life eternal*. In the Synoptic Gospels eternal life is always regarded as belonging to the future world (Mt. xxv. 46; xix. 29; Mk. x. 30; Lk. xvi. 9; xviii. 30; Mk. ix. 43-48), and yet the disciples of Jesus are thought of as having true life here and now, life that is divine and indestructible, because they have true righteousness. Therefore, from the standpoint of these Gospels, the life eternal which is bestowed upon the righteous at the beginning of the coming age and which is the reward for faithfulness in the earthly life, must be thought of as a higher and more perfect state of the personal life. The term, of course, involves endless existence, but endless existence is certainly not the crown of the promise. As a great reward (Mt. v. 12) and a treasure in heaven (Mt. vi. 20; Mk. x. 21), as the antithesis of Gehenna (Mk. ix. 43-48) and of everlasting punishment (Mt. xxv. 46), eternal life is something infinitely richer than eternal existence. It is better

even than the *redeemed* earthly life, however rich that may become through the influence of the Gospel; for it is presented as a divine *reward*, and as something greater than the hundred-fold reward which is promised to the faithful in this earthly life (Mk. x. 30). Thus the life eternal into which the righteous go away after the Messianic judgment (Mt. xxv. 46), which stands as a synonym of the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world (Mt. xxv. 34; Lk. xxii. 29), must be a divine enlargement and enrichment of the personal life, such as is involved in the intimate fellowship of the redeemed with Christ and the Father, and in their fellowship with the good of all ages.

It is the aim of the fourth Gospel to show the Messiahship of Jesus (Jn. xx. 31), in order that men may accept Him; and it keeps so closely to this aim that it has little to say of the life of the redeemed beyond the grave. Its conception of Christ and of the life which He gives is so exalted that it seems to bring into the present much of the glory and felicity of heaven. Thus, the disciples, because united to Christ, are, equally with Him, the object of the Father's love (Jn. xvii. 23, etc.); they are in a certain degree one, as Jesus and the Father are one (*e.g.* Jn. xvii. 11, 20); they can pray in the name of Christ, and be as sure of the Father's response as Christ

4. The  
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teaching.

Himself was (Jn. xiv. 13-14; xv. 16; xvi. 23, 24, 26); they have a joy like that of Jesus, or may have (Jn. xv. 11; xvii. 13); and they are made glorious in character. For Jesus says that He is glorified in the disciples, because they have accepted Him as the Messiah, and are manifesting His spirit (Jn. xvii. 10); and that the Father also is glorified by their fruitfulness, and by their becoming more and more perfect disciples of Jesus (Jn. xv. 8). But if Jesus and the Father are glorified in the disciples, then surely the character of the disciples is glorious. If the disciples, here and now, glorify Jesus and the Father, then we may surely say that they share in the glory of the Father and of Jesus. Thus in the fourth Gospel more decidedly than in the Synoptists, the believer, because of his relation to the Messiah, is thought of as possessing at present much of the blessedness and glory of heaven. The stress falls upon the present enrichment of life rather than upon its enrichment in the future.

There are, however, in the fourth Gospel, some glimpses of the future life, and they present its glory as the culmination of the glory of the present Christian state. At His departure from His disciples Jesus assured them that He was going away to prepare a place for them, and that after He had come and received them to Himself, they would

be together, the Master and His disciples (Jn. xiv. 2-3). And since they were to be with Jesus, they would be with the Father, for He said that He was going to the Father (Jn. xiv. 12, 28). What He meant by the preparation of a place for them is left undefined. It may be that the only thought intended was that He should continue to be active in their behalf, and that this activity would be especially directed toward the end of making their reunion with Him a joyous one. He wishes to assure His disciples that He will not forget them, when absent, but will still bear them in His heart and still work for their interest. But in any case, the vital thought of the passage is that the disciples will be with the Master. Home consists in the personal presence and love of friends, not in any circumstances of place and adornment. In like manner, in the parting prayer of Jesus, His request is that His disciples may be with Him and behold His glory (Jn. xvii. 24). He is perfectly confident that this will be the case, as is indicated in the very form of the expression, "I *will* that, where I am, they also may be with me." They have been united to Him in the past in the union of an eternal life, and He is sure that they will be with Him in the unseen world. This glory of His which the disciples are to behold is, as we have seen elsewhere, the glory of the com-



pleted Messianic work. It is doubtless a glory commensurate with the death of Christ and the toils of all His saints.

This thought of glorious fellowship with Christ necessarily involves a glorious exaltation and enrichment of the individual life, which we have seen to be the central thought of Jesus regarding the future state, as reported by the earlier evangelists.



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