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The supreme revelation

THE SUPREME REVELATION

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THE SWANDER LECTURES 1913

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THE SUPREME REVELATION

STUDIES IN THE SYNOPTIC
TEACHING OF JESUS

BY

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PREFACE

How may we know God? That has been the age-long cry of humanity, as deep and as wide as human aspiration. God has answered the cry in many ways, in nature and history, by prophet and seer. Every religion, professed among men, has had some response to this universal longing. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Wise men of every age and clime have been listening to that divine voice; and they have interpreted that utterance, as best they could, to the men of their own time. God has also spoken in history. "He made known his ways unto Moses, his doings unto the children of Israel." So with every subsequent prophet and seer. And so it has come to pass that there has been a progressive revelation of God throughout the ages. Last of all God has spoken to us through his Son. He, and he only, has known the Father perfectly; he, and he only, has been able to reveal him fully. Hence in him—in his life, in his work, and in his teaching—do we have the supreme revelation.

Is there room for another book on the teaching of Jesus? The best minds of the Church in all ages have

been employed with the study of that teaching; and it might seem as if another interpretation could scarcely be in order. But as long as our finite minds have not comprehended the infinite, so long will there remain aspects of that glory to be caught and reflected by new study. As the great ocean is ever casting up on the shore new forms of beauty, so is the supreme revelation of Jesus ever giving up new treasures to every devout inquiry; and as any child may find a pearl upon the shore, so may every honest inquirer perchance find some new truth in the teaching of our Lord.

The following chapters contain the substance of a course of lectures on the teaching of Jesus, delivered for several years to the Junior class in The Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in the United States, at Lancaster, Pa. In 1913 the Faculty kindly designated them as the Swander lectures for that year. In accordance with the requirements of that foundation, they are now given to the Church in book form, in the hope that they may find a larger sphere of usefulness, and with the assurance that the members of the Church will be glad to know, in part at least, what is being taught in their school of the prophets.

FOUNDATION OF THE SWANDER LECTURESHIP

The Swander Lectureship in the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in the United States, located at Lancaster, Pa., was founded by the Reverend John I. Swander, D.D., and his wife, Barbara Kimmell Swander, for the twofold purpose of promulgating sound Christological science, and of erecting a memorial to their daughter, Sarah Ellen Swander, born April 30th, 1862, died September 29th, 1879; and to their son, Nevin Ambrose Swander, born August 7th, 1863, died March 29th, 1884. It shall be known as the "Sarah Ellen and Nevin Ambrose Swander Lectureship." For its maintenance a sum of money was given to the Board of Trustees of the said Theological Seminary, the interest of which is to be applied for the publication of lectures in book form, in accordance with the conditions defined by the terms which accompanied the conveyance of the fund into the hands of the aforementioned Board of Trustees.

These lectures are delivered by members of the Faculty of the Theological Seminary, and others whom the Faculty may select and secure for such service; and while the said Faculty shall guard diligently against the admission of anything into these memorial volumes at variance with the truth as it is in Jesus, they shall not be held responsible for the views of the individual lecturers.

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I

INTRODUCTION

1. *The Influence of Jesus*

NO one has ever exerted an influence on the history of mankind, which can for a moment be compared with that of Jesus of Nazareth.

The humble carpenter of an obscure village, in an insignificant province of the Roman empire, he has yet been a more potent factor in shaping the course of history, and in moulding the destinies of mankind than all the statesmen and generals, the sages and philosophers of that once proud and mighty empire.

His life was short, and his public career among the briefest. At the age of about thirty, he left the obscurity of his workshop. He spent a few years in a ministry of kindly benefaction, mostly among the humbler classes of his native land. He delivered his God-given message. Then, because he had excited the jealous hatred of the great and powerful, he died the shameful death of the cross. But at the moment, when his enemies thought that he had been crushed, he began to live in a new form in the faith and in the hearts of his followers; and by the very shame of his cross he attained a crown of

glory, which has been shining with increasing brightness throughout the ages since.

The impression which Jesus made upon the men of his own generation was most profound. This may be seen in the attitude both of his enemies and of his friends. Was there ever hatred more bitter than that which made scribes and Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians forget their mutual jealousies and join hands to bring him to the cross? And was there ever devotion like that which bound those humble fishermen of Galilee to his person, and which inspired them for his sake to defy all the great and powerful of the land? When the great crisis in his Galilean ministry had come, when for a moment it looked as if all men were leaving him, and when he turned to the disciples with the question, "Will ye also go away?" the foremost of them exclaimed, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God" (Jn. 6: 68, 69). And in that faith they persisted, following him through obloquy and shame to the end; and although they were for a moment scattered by the tragic issue of his conflict with his enemies, they soon rallied from what they had believed to be his defeat; and they began to look upon his cross of shame as the very symbol of victory, with which they now started out to conquer the world.

And the impression which Jesus thus made upon his contemporaries, he has continued to make upon

every generation since then. Though his followers started out with no other weapon than the gospel, which to the Jews was a stumblingblock and to the Greeks foolishness, they yet won their way in the face of all opposition, until their faith became the accepted religion of the empire, and until the advent of their Lord came to be regarded as the central fact in all history. And that victory has persisted throughout the centuries. Though still rejected and derided by many, Jesus Christ is the greatest force in the world to-day. He is still the subject of keener discussions, bitterer controversies, and profounder study than any other character in history. And what is more, he is still inspiring a larger number of men with deeper devotion and more heroic endeavour than any other man that has ever lived.

2. *The Influence of Jesus that of a Teacher*

What is the secret of this marvellous influence? It would be incorrect to ascribe it solely to any one aspect of his many-sided character. We would not be understood as implying that he was only, or even mainly, a teacher. He was vastly more than that; and regard must be had for other aspects of his marvellous personality, if one would estimate aright his great influence upon men. Yet he was a great teacher; and a large part of his influence must be attributed to the power of his message.

A distinction should, no doubt, be made between

Jesus' preaching and his teaching. The former consisted in the simple proclamation of the glad tidings of the kingdom. This he did everywhere, so that Mark opens his account of the ministry by saying, "Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Mk. 1:14). But Jesus did more than preach. He expounded unto the people everywhere the significance of his message. "And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught" (Mk. 1:21). And that statement, "he taught them," is repeated over and over again in the Synoptic record. It was the daily occupation of his public ministry. Other activities, such as his marvellous cures, may have attracted more attention; but this was his constant work from day to day. At first he taught the multitudes everywhere, wherever they might gather together to hear him; afterwards, when he had passed the crisis of his great ministry, he went into retirement, only however for the sake now of instructing the Twelve.

And the impression, which was from the beginning produced by his teaching, was most profound. This, too, the evangelists have not failed to record. Mark records, at the very beginning of his Gospel, how "they were astonished at his teaching" (1:22). Matthew also makes mention of the fact. After recording the Sermon on the Mount, he goes on to say, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished

these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching" (Mt. 7:28). And both give the same reason for the astonishment. "For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Mk. 1:22; Mt. 7:29). There was that in his teaching which spoke home to the hearts and minds of men, and which "found them." Men are everywhere open to the truth; they have an intuitive perception of it; and whenever it is proclaimed with directness and sincerity, they respond to it. Men are governed by ideas; and wherever any one is able to open up to them a new realm of truth and reality, they become willing listeners and enthusiastic followers. Conviction and evident sincerity on the part of the teacher, and truth in the message which he proclaims exert an influence which nothing in the world can resist. Especially is this the case, when the truth, which is proclaimed, touches that deepest of all chords in the hearts of men—the chord which binds them to their Maker; for all men have a consciousness of God, which controls the inmost springs of their hearts.

Now, just these are the factors, which we find in the teaching of Jesus, and which gave to it its tremendous power. His voice had the ring of sincerity. It was this ring of sincerity in all that he said and did that caused his disciples to apply to him the prophecy of the sixty-ninth psalm and ninth verse, "The zeal of thine house shall eat me up" (Jn. 2:17). Then, he spake the truth, and in such

a manner that it went home directly to the hearts and consciences of men. An illustration is found in that touching story, which has been preserved at the opening of the eighth chapter of the Fourth Gospel. When Jesus had spoken to the woman's accusers, they "went out one by one, beginning from the eldest, even unto the last" (Jn. 8:9). His word had in it that sharp thrust of truth, which went home to the heart. And it went home, because there was in it that which appealed to their consciousness of God. His words satisfied men's hunger for him who is invisible. His teaching was a revelation of God.

3. *The Supreme Revelation*

And not simply was his teaching a revelation, it was *the* revelation, the revelation in which God spake to men as he has spoken nowhere else. This is the conviction, which forced itself upon the disciples at an early period; and it became the settled conviction of the primitive church, and has continued to be the conviction of the church to the present day. Seldom, if ever, has it been challenged; and those even, who are inclined to dispute the Christology which has usually been accepted in the historic creeds and confessions, yet make their appeal to the teaching of Jesus.

This conviction was undoubtedly from the beginning based on the claim which Jesus had made for himself. He himself said, "All things are delivered

unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22). Reported by the two evangelists in the same form, the passage belongs to the oldest tradition, and its genuineness is beyond dispute. Attempts have been made to break its peculiar force; but that the statement was understood by the first interpreters of Jesus as implying a claim to a unique relation to God, a relation which gave him a knowledge of God altogether peculiar, and which placed him in a position for making the full and final revelation of the Father, there can be no doubt. For that was the view held by the earliest of the New Testament writers; and it is well nigh inconceivable that they should have taught what they did, if they had not understood Jesus himself as making the claim attributed to him in the passage.

We know that Paul looked upon Jesus as the eternal Son of God, who by his unique relation to the Father was enabled to give us the perfect revelation of the Father's glory. "Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of the darkness, who shined in our hearts to give light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1:15). "In whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. 2:3). No sane exegesis

can, I think, make anything else out of such statements than that Paul conceived of Jesus as giving us the supreme revelation of God.

The thought is brought out with still greater clearness and force in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The purpose of the author was to prove to certain Christians, who were in danger of apostasy, that Christianity is the final and the perfect religion. In his argument, he places Jesus into a number of contrasts, showing his superiority to the prophets, the angels, Moses and Aaron. The first contrast is drawn in the opening verses of the epistle. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:1-3). The revelation in the prophets had been given "in divers portions," bit by bit, and "in divers manners," as the people were able to receive and understand it. But Jesus stood to God in the relation of a son; he knew the inmost heart of God through that relation of love which his sonship implied; and such was his likeness to the Father that he is described as "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance." He was himself the mani-

festation of the Father's character, just as the light which streams forth from the sun is the manifestation of what the sun is; and just as we can know what the sun is only through the rays which stream forth from it, so can we know what God is only through Jesus, the effulgence of his glory.

The thought reaches its fullest expression in the Fourth Gospel. Here we have the statement, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (Jn. 1:18). The only begotten Son is identified with the eternal Word, through whom the otherwise invisible and unknowable God has come forth in self-expression. And this eternal Word is further identified with the historic Jesus. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). Jesus was the Word incarnate, in whom dwelt "the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9); and because of that he could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9).

The revelation of Jesus, therefore, is the norm by which all other revelations must be judged. We accept the teaching of the prophets in as far as they are found to be in agreement with Jesus. If at any point their conception falls short of his, we have no hesitancy in setting it aside as belonging to an economy which has been superseded. The same holds true of the apostles and prophets of the New Testa-

ment. They were at best sinful men, as the rest of us are, and, though they were under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit, they were fallible, as we are. Peter, as we know, erred most grievously at Antioch; and he was sharply rebuked by Paul (Gal. 2: 11, 12). Paul distinguishes between what he says and what he had received from the Lord (1 Cor. 7: 10); and he does not hesitate to give the preference to the teaching of Jesus. And following his example, we are under the necessity of comparing his teaching with that of the Master. Where he agrees with the revelation of Jesus, all are ready to accept his doctrine; should any one succeed in showing that he teaches a different doctrine, we should have to reject his teaching. And the same is true of the historic creeds and confessions. In as far as they are a correct formulation of the revelation of Jesus, they must be accepted; wherever they contradict that revelation, they must be rejected. Yea, and if any of them contain statements based on imperfect or mistaken interpretations of his words, they must be superseded by new and more adequate formulas.

4. Present Day Appeals to the Teaching of Jesus

This position is now generally accepted; and hence we have had the cry, "back to Christ," from more than one quarter. In the attempted reconstructions of doctrine and life, which are going on on all sides,

men have made their appeal to the revelation of Jesus. These appeals have been of a twofold character, doctrinal and practical.

In the attempted doctrinal reconstructions of the present day, the appeal has been from the traditional dogmas to the teaching of Jesus. Christian theology has been very largely under the dominance of the Pauline influence. What is known as Paulinism in the narrower sense has been disputed again and again. It has been allowed to fall quietly into the background, as during the semi-Pelagian reaction and during the period preceding the Reformation. And yet even in that form, it has reasserted itself again and again. But taking Paul's conception of Christ and of the Christian redemption in the deepest and broadest sense, and there has scarcely been a dissent. As Professor A. C. McGiffert says, "The entire system of Christianity hangs together. . . . As a matter of fact it can be traced back in all its essential features to the second century of our era. . . . And not simply can the historic system be traced back to the second century; it can all be found in Paul."¹ But he raises the question, "Where did it come from? Was Jesus its author, or was Paul?" After a somewhat lengthy discussion of the subject, he concludes that the entire doctrinal system of the Christian church owes its origin to Paul; and he then places the accepted doctrinal system into contrast with the teaching of Jesus. He concludes that

¹ *The American Journal of Theology*, 1909, p. 15.

a liberal Christianity, which bases its teaching on the revelation of Jesus, has consistently and properly broken with the historic dogmas which have prevailed from Paul's day to this.

Professor McGiffert places the matter in such clear light that we venture to quote his words at some length. His statement gives us an excellent illustration of one kind of appeal that is being made to the teaching of Jesus, and what are the conclusions which some very able scholars are drawing from it. He says: "One thing is clear. Between Paul and the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel the connection is very close. Many of the essential features of Paul's system reappear in that Gospel; the necessity of regeneration changing a man from a fleshly to a spiritual being (Jn., chap. 3), union with Christ (chap. 15), the deity of Christ (chap. 1 and often), the sacramental view of baptism and the Lord's Supper (chaps. 3 and 6)—all these are found in the teaching of the Johannine Christ. But all the more striking by contrast is the lack of these elements in the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. Of the essential fleshly and evil nature of man nothing is said; nothing of the consequent need of regeneration; nothing of the mystical union with Christ, and nothing of his deity; and no trace of the sacramental appears in connection with baptism and the Lord's Supper. It is not merely a difference of emphasis or of statement. There is wanting altogether in the Synoptic Gospels the great and con-

sistent body of teaching, which is not merely present, but is fundamental and controlling in the Fourth Gospel and in the First Epistle of John. When this is once recognized it must be clear that that body of teaching came from some other source than Jesus himself; and the conclusion can hardly be resisted that it came from Paul, in whose writings it is found, and whose experience fully accounts for its origin. The despair into which he had fallen as a result of his total inability to keep the law of God, as he felt it ought to be kept, a despair shared by no other Christian of his day, so far as we know; the revelation of Christ as a spiritual being freed from evil flesh, a revelation whose tremendous and revolutionary influence can be matched nowhere else in the first century; his contact with hellenistic life and thought, making the dualistic explanation of human corruption more natural to him than to Jesus and his primitive disciples; the cataclysmic character of his conversion, rendering the cataclysmic interpretation of Christian experience and the Christian life almost inevitable to him—all this makes it easy to explain the remarkable conception of Christianity which appears first in his epistles and which can be accounted for in no other way.”¹

The appeal is from Paul to Jesus; and because Professor McGiffert finds a disagreement between the two, he does not hesitate to discredit the teaching of Paul and that entire system of doctrine which has

¹*Op. cit.*, pp. 17, 18.

been based upon it. Nothing could better bring to our minds the serious character of the appeal that is being made to the teaching of Jesus, nor illustrate the tremendous challenge which that appeal makes to all earnest thinkers of the present day. The challenge (however much one may disagree with Professor McGiffert) calls for a new study of the teaching of Jesus and for a reëxamination of the fundamentals of our Christian theology.

And there is yet another appeal to the teaching of Jesus. There is much in our modern Christianity, as that is found exemplified in the life of professed Christians of the present day and in that of our organized churches, against which the modern conscience has revolted. Our civilization calls itself Christian; and yet there is in it very much which is far from Christlike. Conditions have been precipitated by our modern industrial order which have created widespread discontent. It has introduced inequalities between the rich and poor which seem incompatible with the idea of brotherhood. The poor have been sinking deeper and deeper into misery and want. The number of the helpless and dependent is becoming greater and greater. At the same time the rich are revelling in senseless and wasteful luxuries. Many who call themselves Christians, and who occupy the foremost seats in the synagogue on the Lord's day, spend the remaining six days of the week in questionable business and financial transactions. Though they give munificent

gifts for so-called charitable purposes, the poor are looking upon those gifts with ever-increasing suspicion. They regard such munificence very much in the same light as the ancient prophets looked upon robberies as burnt-offerings. They look upon them as an effort to cover their wicked practices. And not only are the masses revolting against the injustice of our civilization, as that is exemplified in our industrial order; they are beginning to cry out against much that is considered unchristian in our so-called Christian governments. Especially are they beginning to protest against the burdens which are being laid upon them by the insensate race for increased armies and navies. And in making their protest, they appeal to the life and teaching of Jesus. Such things, they claim, are unchristian; and they appeal from the Christianity of our modern organized churches to the Christianity of Jesus.

If anything the latter appeal is more serious than the former. That is concerned with our intellectual apprehension of Christianity; this has to do with our Christian life. That has grown out of a widespread intellectual revolt against accepted dogma; this was born from an earnest desire to realize a higher and better standard of Christian living. But both appeals are serious to the last degree. They come to us with a demand for a new study of the life and teaching of Jesus. They present a problem which no honest student of the New Testament dare decline.

5. *The Problem*

What is the nature of this problem? It is to ascertain just what Jesus was and what he taught. At first sight it might seem simple enough. The appeal is from the orthodoxy of the present day to the teaching of Jesus, from the life of our organized Christianity to the life of the Master. Is it not enough to go to our New Testaments, and there read what he taught and how he lived? No; the problem is far more complicated. Jesus wrote nothing. We are dependent for our knowledge of his teaching on reports which have been handed down by his disciples. So far as we know, none of his sayings or sermons were taken down on the spot. His teaching was first handed down by oral tradition; and when it was finally reduced to writing, it assumed slightly variant forms in the several Gospels. The same sayings are sometimes reported in different forms by the several evangelists. There is hence always the question, What did he actually say? And when that has been determined, there remains another, often more important and far more difficult, namely, What did he mean?

A brief glance at each of these questions may serve to bring before us the nature of the problem, as well as its difficulty and delicacy.

The former is a question of criticism. This is made imperative by the manner in which the Gospels came into existence. If Jesus had carefully

written down his teaching in books, like Plato, or if he had transmitted it in carefully written epistles, like Paul, the case would be different. But he chose to write it upon the living tablets of human hearts; and he depended upon his disciples to reproduce it and give it to the world. Even if the disciples had at once written down what they had heard him say, the necessity for criticism would not be so urgent. But as we said above, there is no evidence that they did anything of the kind. There seems at first to have been no thought even of a written record of the words and acts of Jesus. As a matter of fact, it was not until some time had elapsed that the first beginnings of Gospel narrative were made. Those who first wrote down what Jesus had said and done were, no doubt, perfectly honest. They had excellent facilities for ascertaining the facts in the case. But they could not divest themselves of their personality. They could only report his words and deeds as they understood them. There is, indeed, evidence here and there that they reported words and incidents, the full significance of which they did not comprehend; but, as a rule, they reported the words of Jesus, as they understood them. They, moreover, each wrote with a purpose of his own. And they not only arranged all their material with a view to the purpose which they had in mind; but they often cast it into a form to suit the end in view. So that there is a personal equation, in the case of each evangelist, which must be constantly kept in

mind. And because of this fact, it is often difficult, yea, impossible, to determine the exact words which Jesus used. In some cases, where there is a discrepancy, we may determine from the context what Jesus must have meant to say. Where this can not be done, we must rely upon the general tenor and spirit of his teaching. In all such cases, however, we need to remember that our results are obtained by a process of deduction and criticism; and we can not put forward our conclusions with the certainty of a "thus saith the Lord."

After criticism comes interpretation. After we have ascertained as nearly as possible what Jesus did say on a given subject, we must raise the question, What did he mean?

A great teacher is always greater than the mere words which he may utter. While his teaching is one of the ways for studying his personality, a knowledge of his personality is necessary before one can understand his teaching. Of no one is this more true than of Jesus. His teaching must be interpreted on the background of his life. And if the question be raised, How may this be done? our answer must be twofold.

We must approach the teaching from the standpoint of his entire life and spirit. We must get before us a picture of his life. This is far more difficult than is often imagined, and also far more important. Every one acquainted with the modern Jesus-research knows how many scholars have given

their best endeavours to the task of reproducing a picture of the historical Jesus, as he lived and walked here among men; and he knows also how various have been the answers to the question who and what Jesus was. And beyond that every one who would correctly interpret the sayings of Jesus must be in living sympathy and touch with the spirit which animated what he said and did; for one who is of a different spirit can never fully enter into his meaning. There is a spirit which breathes through all that he said and did; and the interpreter must get himself into *rapport* with that spirit, before he can hope to enter sympathetically into his thought. So long as he looks at the teaching of Jesus from a different point of view, he is sure to misunderstand him. Hence the problem is transferred from the sphere of criticism to that of life. As the teaching must be interpreted on the background of the life of Jesus, so the interpretation must proceed on the basis of the life which the student himself lives. The student must live himself into the spirit, which breathed through all that Jesus said and did; otherwise he will be blind to his real meaning.

Regard must also be had to those who were with Jesus during his public ministry. Not that we assume that they were always correct in their estimate. We know from the records that they were sometimes mistaken. But they had opportunities for knowing him such as no generation since then has had. They saw his daily life. They heard him

speak. They had the opportunity of marking his tones and accents. They could see the light kindle in his eyes. They had experience of his goodness and love. They hence had an opportunity of forming an estimate of his personality such as we do not possess at the present day. Hence if, in our study, we find the immediate disciples forming a certain estimate of his personality, and by common consent putting a certain interpretation on his words, we have at least a strong presumption of its correctness.

II

OUR SOURCES OF INFORMATION

THE basis for our study must be the Synoptic Gospels. For this there are two reasons. By common consent, we have the teaching of Jesus there more nearly in its original form than anywhere else; and, because of that fact, the appeal has been to that teaching as over against Paul and John. We, of course, distinguish between the revelation of Jesus and his mere words. The former is much the broader conception; and yet the words of Jesus must be our starting-point. Whatever information we may be able to gather from other sources must ultimately be measured and judged by them; and while other sources may help in interpreting the words attributed to Jesus, we can admit of no contradiction between them and any other teaching. Should it be found, on careful examination, that the teaching of either Paul or John is contrary to the teaching of Jesus, as found in the Synoptics, we should have to give the preference to the latter.

Once it would have been enough simply to say this. All that was required was to ascertain what the words of Jesus are, as reported in the Synoptics. The Gospels were regarded as of equal value, and all

the words of Jesus, as therein reported, as of equal authority. But careful study of the Synoptic Gospels has revealed the fact that they are interdependent, and that they rest upon easily distinguishable sources. Matthew and Luke clearly used Mark; and ninety-three per cent of his material is taken up by one or the other, or both. Once men were accustomed to speak of the triple tradition, meaning thereby the matter common to the three; and any statement found in this triple tradition was supposed to have a threefold attestation, and to be consequently by so much the more authoritative. More careful study, however, has revealed the fact that such is not the case. If Matthew and Luke in their narrative sections both copied Mark, there is really not a triple tradition. All rest upon the same source; and they have the authority which that source possesses, not very much more. It is also quite clear that Matthew and Luke have much material in common, which is not found in Mark. Here the verbal resemblances are more marked than in the material which they have in common with Mark. We hence conclude that they had a second source, not known to Mark, or else very sparingly used by him. This is now generally designated by the symbol Q, though by many New Testament students identified with the Matthæan Logia. Another fact is also apparent. There is a large section in Luke, chaps. 9:51-18:14, which contains much material not found in either Matthew or Mark. Luke must hence

have had still another source. So there are brief passages peculiar to Matthew, which seem to imply that the author of the First Gospel also had still other sources of information.

Now, the student who would carefully estimate and accurately interpret the teaching of Jesus, must have regard to these sources, which lie back of our present Gospels; and, before he is ready to pronounce a judgment on any point, he must try to ascertain the character and the authority which they possess. And there is a manifest advantage in so doing; for the Gospels themselves are, none of them, much older than the year seventy. Between the time when Jesus taught and the time when the earliest of them was written almost a generation passed away. How can we be sure that the words, which they attribute to him, were really spoken by him? He himself wrote nothing. He was content to write his teaching on the living tablets of the hearts of his disciples. How can we feel confident that what is reported as from him really came from his lips? The question requires us to inquire into the method by which the teaching of Jesus was transmitted; and that necessitates a discussion of the sources which lie back of the Gospels, as we now have them.

1. *The Oral Gospel*

“ ‘Commit nothing to writing’ was a maxim with the Rabbis”; and we know that for a long while

their interpretation of the law was preserved by means of oral teaching. It was the business of the *Chazzan* (the attendant, Lk. 4:20) in the Jewish synagogue to teach the boys; and the instruction consisted almost entirely of oral lessons out of the law and out of the tradition which had been handed down. And there were those who had thus committed a large part of the Old Testament, some perhaps the whole of it. This point it is important to remember in our study of the manner in which the gospel was at first transmitted; for the first Christians were all Jews, and had learned the methods of the synagogue. And when they began to teach, as we are told in the opening chapters of the Acts of the Apostles they did from the very beginning, they employed the methods with which they were familiar.

One of the characteristics of the first congregation at Jerusalem was just this—that its members “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ *teaching* and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). There was a distinction made between teaching and preaching (Acts 5:42). The latter consisted especially in the proclamation of the glad tidings to those that were without; the former, in communicating to those who believed the knowledge of the life and teachings of the Lord Jesus. When the apostles taught in the temple and at home, they instructed those who attended after the manner which was common in the synagogue; and the par-

ticular lesson to be taught would be repeated, as the *Chazzan* in the synagogue repeated a passage from the law, until those in attendance had committed it to memory. This seems to be implied in the word, which is used for "instructed." When Luke, in writing to Theophilus, says, "That thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed" (Lk. 1:4), he used the word, *Κατηχήθης*, which means to sound down, to resound; and the thought is that the instruction was resounded in the ears of the pupil, until he had learned the lesson by heart.

But the time soon came, when churches became multiplied, and when the apostles could no more perform these duties of teaching. Catechists then came in; and these did just as the apostles had done. They repeated the lesson which they had learned. Dr. Arthur Wright, who is an earnest advocate of this view, is of the opinion that Mark had first been a *Chazzan* in the synagogue, and that he then became a catechist, continuing in the church the exact work which he had formerly done in the synagogue, only with altered lessons. He also believes that, when Mark accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey, he went as their catechist. And it is to be noted that Luke uses the same word, *ὑπηρέτης*, in referring to Mark in this connection (Acts 13:5), which he uses in referring to the *Chazzan*, "the attendant," in the synagogue (Lk. 4:20).

Now this oral gospel served the church well for some years. Dr. Wright calls attention to the fact that, when Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, he seemed to have known of only two kinds of instruction, this oral gospel, and his own letters (2 Thess. 2: 2, 15). And we can readily understand why that first generation was satisfied with such a gospel. They lived in the expectation of the speedy return of the Lord, and so long as the eye-witnesses lived, even so long as they could hear the story told by those who had heard the words of the Lord from the lips of eye-witnesses, they did not feel the need of a written gospel.

Now, while the verbal accuracy of the teaching of Jesus may not have been preserved in this way, its substantial accuracy certainly was. Peter was the foremost of the apostles in the early days of the church at Jerusalem; as Papias tells us, Mark was his interpreter; and, if Mark was a catechist, as there seems to be little doubt, then we have in his record the testimony of Peter, and that testimony as it was given during the very first days of the church at Jerusalem. When Mark gives us what he recollected of the teaching of Peter, he gives us recollections which are, not as the recollections of a modern student, who is accustomed to depend on notes or on the printed page, but like those of a student in the synagogue school, whose only concern was to commit accurately the very words which fell from the teacher's lips.

2. *The Gospel According to Mark*

Eusebius has preserved from Papias the following interesting account of the origin of our Second Gospel. "This also the presbyter said; Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not indeed in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said and done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely" (*E. H.*, iii. 39).

Now, there seems to be no reason for questioning the substantial accuracy of this statement; and the book by Papias from which the quotation is made must have been written during the first half of the second century. Papias, moreover, was an "ancient man," when he wrote it, and had himself been "a hearer of John and a companion of Polycarp." The significance of the statement for our purpose consists in the fact that it enables us to connect the account of our Second Gospel with the primitive apostolic tradition. Peter was the foremost of the apostles in the early days of the church at Jerusalem. Mark also was at Jerusalem during those days. The sug-

gestion that Mark became a catechist, and that as such he taught what he had learned from the lips of Peter in those early days at Jerusalem, seems probable; so that, in this first of the two main sources which lies at the basis of our Synoptic Gospels, we have a source on which we can place the utmost reliance as possessing substantial accuracy. Whether the work to which Papias refers was in all respects the same as our present Mark, is a question which is still in dispute; but there are many New Testament scholars who are of the opinion that it was the same, or so nearly identical with it that it was practically the same.

Now, it should be noted that Mark's Gospel consists for the most part of narrative. About half of it is taken up with narratives of the various miracles, which Jesus performed. It contains only a few of the parables; and it is not nearly so rich in the words and discourses of Jesus as Matthew and Luke. Yet there are sayings in it of inestimable value for determining the teaching of Jesus. But probably its chief value, in a study like this, will be found in the general impression of the life and character of Jesus and in the light which the life sheds on the teaching. Of the mere words of Jesus we have a richer store in Matthew and Luke; and to estimate the value of that store we must turn to the source or sources which lie back of the teaching which is peculiar to them.

Neither the date nor the place for the composition

of the Gospel according to Mark can be fixed with certainty. Indications, however, point to Rome as the place, and 60-70 A.D. as the time. Possibly the date may be even earlier than 60 A.D. Were we to accept the theory of an Un-Markus, we should have to assign that to a still earlier date.

3. *The Q Source*

A comparison of Mark with Matthew and Luke at once reveals the fact that the latter have much material in common which Mark does not have at all. And striking as the resemblances between Matthew and Luke on the one side and Mark on the other are in the material which the former have drawn from the latter, the similarity between Matthew and Luke in those sections, where they have this material which is not found in Mark, is still more striking. If there were no other evidence than just this fact, a careful analysis of these sections would suggest a second source, from which this material must have been derived.

This second source is now generally designated by the symbol Q, which is simply the initial letter for *Quelle*, the German for *source*. Some critics have identified Q with the Matthæan Logia, though there are many who think that we do not have sufficient data to warrant the identification. But even if we should agree that Q is simply a mass of discourse

material, it is almost certain that we should have to recognize the Logia as part of it.

Here again Eusebius has preserved an interesting quotation from Papias. "But concerning Matthew he (i.e., Papias) writes as follows: So then Matthew wrote the oracles in Hebrew, and every one interpreted them as he was able" (*E. H.*, iii. 39). There has been much discussion as to the exact meaning of the word "oracles"; but it is probable that it refers to a collection of the sayings and discourses of Jesus. If that view is correct, then the theory that this collection is the second of the sources back of our Matthew and Luke would seem to satisfy the conditions.

Into the question as to how Matthew and Luke each used this source, we need not here enter. Suffice it to say that, either they had the source in a different form, or else that they used the same source each in his own way, as best suited his purpose. In Matthew, we find a tendency to gather the sayings into collections, as may be seen in the Sermon on the Mount; while in Luke they are given in a more detached form, as may also be seen in the manner in which he distributes the material of the Sermon. This last fact has suggested the idea that Luke probably followed the Logia more closely.

The point of interest for our present study lies in the fact that there was such a second source, and that we thus seem to be able to trace a part of it at least to the apostle Matthew, just as we were able to trace the other source to the apostle Peter. Almost

the whole of the Second Gospel, and a very large portion of the First and Third are thus traceable to eye-witnesses.

This Q source is now lost; and it is questionable whether we shall ever be able to recover it. There have been attempts at a restoration, based on a comparison of the two Gospels; and these attempts have been made by some of our foremost New Testament scholars. Yet, beyond pointing out the material which must have been derived from it, the attempts have probably not been successful.¹ But even what has been accomplished is an immense gain; for it enables us to depend with much confidence on certain sayings for determining the teaching of Jesus. When, for instance, we find Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22 in this source, we have traced it beyond even

¹ The proposed reconstructions of Q have generally rested on the assumption that it contained only the discourse material common to Matthew and Luke. This theory has, however, been challenged. If Mark had been lost and Q preserved, we should make a sorry mess of it, if we should attempt to reconstruct Mark from the narrative material common to Matthew and Luke; for we know that about seven per cent of Mark has not been taken up by either, and that Matthew has taken up considerable material which Luke does not have at all, and *vice versa*. The same is likely true of Q. Archdeacon Allen has maintained, and we believe rightly, that Q contained much more than the discourse material common to Matthew and Luke. In his recent *Introduction to the Books of the New Testament*, he says: "This source (i.e., Q) is generally constructed by putting together the material common to Matthew and Luke. It may be doubted, however, whether the document so reached gives

our evangelists; and we can be as certain that, at least in substance, it came from the lips of Jesus, as we can be of any thing in New Testament criticism.

As to the date when Q was written, we are left almost entirely to conjecture; and the opinions of scholars have differed. Professor Ramsay thinks it was written while Christ was still living. "It gives us the view which one of his disciples entertained of him and his teaching during his lifetime." And with this Dr. Salmon seems to agree. But that is not the view generally accepted. It must, however, have been written some time before the year 70 A.D.; whether before Mark or after, we can not be absolutely certain, though the probability is that it is earlier. That it embodies the testimony of an eye-witness there seems to be no reason for doubting.

us an adequate idea of the real Q. For it is quite unlikely that Matthew and Luke both incorporated the whole of it. Both of them have probably omitted some portions of it. That, if true, means that we ought to put into it sayings that occur only in Matthew or only in Luke, and that it may have contained much that has been omitted from both Gospels. The present writer believes that the source is most truly represented in Matthew, and that we reach a true conception of its character by placing in it the material common to Matthew and Luke, and also most of the discourse material peculiar to Matthew. In this way we can build up a source with several marked features. He believes, further, that Luke used the document, not directly, but indirectly, when its material had been dispersed and incorporated into other evangelical books" (pp. 5, 6).

4. *Other Sources*

After we have traced all the material in Matthew and Luke to these two sources, which can be thus traced, there remain considerable portions of both Gospels unaccounted for. Matthew has forty-two per cent of peculiarities, and Luke fifty-nine per cent, as over against seven per cent in Mark. How are these sections to be accounted for?

There are portions of the Sermon on the Mount, some parables, notably those of the Tares, the Ten Virgins, and the Talents, the sayings concerning the church in 16:17-19; 18:16-20, some of the instruction given to the Twelve, and the gracious invitation at the close of the eleventh chapter, which are found only in the First Gospel. Where did the author of the Gospel get those sayings? Archdeacon Allen, in his recent commentary on Matthew in the *International Critical* series, refers them to the Logia. A number of the remaining peculiarities, he refers to Palestinian tradition, and to unknown sources. Some are quotations from the Old Testament, and others are editorial passages, by which the author connects what he has taken from his various sources. Clearly those which come from a floating tradition and from unknown sources will have to be received with more caution than those whose apostolic authorship we can trace.

When we turn to Luke we find a still larger percentage of peculiarities. Chaps. 9:51-18:14 are

often spoken of as the Perean section; and while much of the material in it is given in Matthew in a different connection, it contains much that is peculiar to Luke. Some of the most beautiful of our Lord's parables are found here, such as the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. A number of the most striking sayings attributed to the Risen Christ are also found in Luke. In what light are we to view the sayings of the Lord which come to us from these sections?

Luke has fortunately given us a hint as to his method; and we know something of the opportunities which he had for gaining correct information. He himself refers to many who had before him undertaken to draw up narratives, and he refers to eye-witnesses as the sources from whom he had drawn (1:1-4). We know also that he was with Paul, when the latter came to Jerusalem, immediately before his arrest (Acts 21:15); and we know that he was with him again, when he started on that memorable voyage to Rome two years later (Acts 27:1). We do not have any definite information as to his whereabouts during the two years that intervened; but it is a reasonable conjecture that he was with Paul at Cæsarea, or at least within easy reach of him, so that he had ample opportunity for thorough investigation. At Cæsarea he was the guest for some days of the evangelist Philip and his four daughters (Acts 21:8, 9), who had been at Jerusalem during the period immediately following the Ascension, and

were presumably also in Palestine during the public ministry of Jesus. In the case of any other historian, who had similar opportunities for studying his subject, we should be disposed to give the utmost credence to what he says; and in the case of Luke, who has been found an accurate historian in other respects, we should be willing to accept his statements, unless contrary evidence should compel us to believe him to have made mistakes. On the basis of his statement in 1:1-2, we may assume that the sayings of Jesus reported in his Perean section rest upon the testimony of eye-witnesses as well as those which are found in Mark and in the Matthæan Logia.

5. *The Personal Equation*

After the careful student of the Synoptic teaching of Jesus has analyzed the Gospels, traced the different sayings of Jesus to the sources through which they have been transmitted, and estimated the value of these sources, he must give attention to the personality of the evangelists, the angle from which they viewed the teaching of the Lord, and the motive which prompted them in writing. It is evident that none of them wrote in the spirit of an annalist, whose sole motive is to record facts, and whose task is done when he has recorded the facts accurately. The evangelists wrote for edification. They were all filled with enthusiasm for their subject. They

believed Jesus to be the Messiah; and they felt confident that they had found in him both life and peace. And their concern was so to present the facts, which they recorded, that the same faith might be produced in those whom they addressed. They, moreover, addressed different audiences, who had variant needs, and who needed the story told in a particular way. The question, therefore, arises, To what extent is the message of Jesus coloured by the medium through which it has passed? To answer the question we must inquire especially into the motive which prompted each evangelist.

It is now generally conceded that the author of our First Gospel was a Jew, that he wrote for Jews, and that they were probably Palestinian Jews. His aim was to show that Jesus is the Messiah, foretold by the prophets, rejected by the Jews, but vindicated by God through the resurrection from the dead. He aimed to prove that Jesus was the founder of the kingdom of heaven, which, having been rejected by the Jews, has now become a universal kingdom, for all men, Gentiles as well as Jews. There is an apologetic strain running through the entire Gospel. The author sympathized with the disappointment of the ordinary Jew in the fact that Jesus was a Messiah of a different kind from what had been generally expected; but, like the rest of the Christians of that generation, he comforted himself with the thought that the Lord would speedily return, and that he would then set up the kingdom in outward

visible form, for which the Jews had all been looking. Hence he had a predilection for the eschatological teaching of the Lord; and we need not be surprised to find him emphasizing that teaching. When we find that he has changed the statement in Mark 9:1, "Verily, I say unto you, there are some here of them that stand by, who shall not taste of death, till they see *the Kingdom of God come with power,*" into "Verily I say unto you, there are some that stand here, who shall not taste of death, till they see *the Son of man coming in his kingdom*" (16:28), we have no difficulty in explaining the variation by the personal equation of the first evangelist. (See also Mk. 13:4-Mt. 24:3). He viewed the whole gospel from his own peculiar angle; his view-point was Jewish; he lacked the comprehensiveness of view which Jesus had; and hence he presented the teaching of Jesus with a bias. He could think of the coming of the kingdom of God with power only by thinking of the coming of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven, surrounded by the holy angels, and for the purpose of setting up an outward visible kingdom upon earth.

In the case of the Second Gospel we find it somewhat more difficult to ascertain the motive with which the author wrote. It is probable that Mark wrote at Rome, and for Romans. We can be sure, at least, that he wrote for Gentile readers, not for Jews, as the author of the First Gospel did. Hence we find the absence of many things found in the First Gospel.

Aside from the quotations from the Old Testament found in the words of Jesus, there is but one such quotation in the entire Gospel. So we find that that Jewish view-point, which we detected in Matthew, is likewise lacking. Mark is concerned with telling the story of the public ministry of Jesus. As Peter, whose teaching he records, was especially impressed with our Lord's deeds of power (Lk. 5:8), so it seems to have been with Mark. What Jesus did convinced him that he was the Messiah; and he seems to have gone on the assumption that others would be similarly impressed. Hence he tells the story of the public ministry, and especially the deeds of power, which characterized it; and tells it in a simple, straightforward manner. Aside from his predilection for the deeds of power, it is difficult to detect a personal bias in his narrative. There is an *à priori* reason for saying that, where either Matthew or Luke differ from Mark, we have in Mark the better authority; for did not the others use him as a source? But beyond that, the fact that he tells a straightforward story, without argumentative purpose or bent, would seem to indicate that, other things being equal, we are safe in placing our reliance on him.

Luke has prefaced his Gospel with a statement of the purpose with which he wrote. It was that his friend Theophilus might know the certainty concerning the things wherein he was instructed (Lk. 1:1-4). His motive was more nearly that of the

historian, namely, to record the facts after careful investigation. But he was unable to divest himself of his personality and of his previous position and training. He was himself a Greek, and a physician. He had much sympathy with suffering humanity. He felt the brotherhood of man, as neither of the other evangelists did. He traces the descent of Jesus from Adam, revealing his universalistic tendency. He had been a companion of Paul; and he was much influenced by Paul's passion for humanity, and for bringing the gospel to all men. Hence we find in him an open ear to all the social teaching of Jesus. He has sympathy with the poor, and he feels the danger of wealth. Hence we are not surprised to find him give the first of the beatitudes in this form, "Blessed are ye poor," and to set opposite to it this, "But woe unto you that are rich."

All this, now, means that Jesus was larger than any of his disciples, and his teaching more profound than that of any of the evangelists. Each of them caught one aspect of his many-sided glory. Instead of one, we have four different portraits, painted by four different artists; and the church is richer, because she has the four different interpretations of his life. Instead of stumbling at the facts, we can only wonder at that perfect wisdom of Providence which has given us, not a single, but a four-fold Gospel.

6. *The Ipsissima Verba of Jesus*

We have already referred to the fact that Jesus wrote nothing. He intrusted his teaching to the keeping of loving hearts; and the world is entirely dependent on them for its knowledge of what he taught. All we know of his teaching we get from them; and we have it in each case through an interpretation; for the disciples could only report him as they understood him. There is, indeed, evidence that they have here and there reported sayings whose full import they had not understood; but generally we have his words in the form in which they understood him. In other words, we have the teaching of Jesus through an interpretation—the interpretation given to it by the minds, the hearts, the experiences, and the lives of those into whose hearts he first wrote his message.

It is sometimes objected to the Fourth Gospel that the discourses, which are there attributed to Jesus, are in the style of the evangelist; and it is now pretty generally agreed among New Testament scholars that they give us the teaching of Jesus, not in his exact words, but in those of the evangelist. It all passed through the melting-pot of the evangelist's mind and heart; and we have it through an interpretation,—the interpretation given to it by the thought and the experience of the beloved disciple. Something of the same kind must be admitted in the case of the Synoptic teaching.

That, however, brings us face to face with a very serious question. Do we have the very words which Jesus uttered? Much of his teaching was in the form of brief, pithy sayings, many of which were, no doubt, frequently repeated. They were, moreover, put into such concrete form that a number of them were indelibly impressed on the minds of his disciples; and thus many were probably preserved in their original form. But even then, it must be remembered that he spoke in Aramaic, while the Gospels were written in Greek. We hence, at best, have them in a translation; and every translator becomes also at once an interpreter. In every process of translation, there is the possibility of expansion and contraction, and of a modification of the shades of meaning in an expression. These possibilities become greater where the teaching is first of all oral and transmitted through a number of years by word of mouth. Hence we are not surprised at the fact that in so many cases the same sayings of Jesus are reported differently by the different evangelists.

It may at first sight seem almost irreverent to ask whether Jesus acted wisely, when he committed his teaching to the loving hearts of his disciples, instead of committing it to writing; and yet the question can not be avoided. If his is the supreme revelation, as we believe, how much better it would have been, one is tempted to exclaim, if we had his words in clear, unmistakable form; so that no one could ever be mistaken or in doubt as to what he really

did say! Yes; if his religion had been a religion of authority, in which men's salvation depended on the form of words in which they make their profession; but not, if it is first of all a religion of the spirit, and if men's salvation depends not primarily on doctrine, but on life. According to the teaching of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus assured the disciples that it was expedient for them that he should go away; because that was the only condition on which it was possible for the Holy Spirit to come (Jn. 16:7). What they needed was that they should be guided, not by an external hand or by external authority, but by an inner light, by means of which each of them should become a law unto himself,—by the law written in his heart, not by its precepts written over against him in external commands. But that implied that each should learn to know the truth through the inner testimony of the Spirit. Hence the important thing was that Jesus should impress himself, that he should allow his life and his personality to speak, and that his disciples should learn to interpret his words on that background. Words are at best only symbols, into which the teacher must first of all translate his thought; and before the pupil can understand their meaning, he must translate them back into the teacher's thought. And that can be accomplished only where there is such a community of life between teacher and pupil that the latter has come to have fellowship with the spirit of the former. Hence more important than the

exact words are his life and spirit; and where the pupils have entered into that life-fellowship with the teacher, it matters little whether they remember his exact words. They have something deeper and better, which enables them to reproduce the teaching of the master. Something like this, we think, must be said of the teaching of Jesus. He lived with his disciples until he, by his words and acts, had impressed his personality and Spirit on them; and after that had been accomplished (and it was the greater and more difficult task), he could safely trust them to reproduce and interpret his teaching to the world.

But all that does not free the student from the necessity of examining into the credibility of the words which are attributed to Jesus. On the contrary, it makes such an examination all the more imperative. But in the examination it is always necessary to remember that the words must ultimately be interpreted on the background of his life.

7. *The Doubly Attested Sayings of Jesus*

Above we referred to what has often been called the triple tradition; and we remarked that, since Matthew and Luke in their narrative portions both used Mark, they are all dependent on the same source, and that consequently the sayings of Jesus thus reported have, not a threefold, but only a single attestation, that namely of the source which lies

back of them all. They do not possess the authority of three independent witnesses, but of the one source. And yet one thing more needs to be said. The first and third evangelist each lived in a time when the oral tradition was still alive, and when they had the opportunity of testing the report, contained in Mark, as we can not do now. Luke claims to have "traced all things accurately from the beginning" (Lk. 1:3); and we have reasons, gathered from other sources, for believing that he was a reasonably painstaking and accurate historian. Hence we may add that, while these sayings in this so-called triple tradition do all of them rest on a single source, they have the endorsement of the first and third evangelists, in addition to the authority of that single source.

But if we may not speak of a triple tradition, there is a double tradition which later study has brought to light; and of the sayings contained in this we may say that they contain a double attestation. Such sayings are those which have been transmitted through both Mark and Q or one of the other sources. At first sight, one might be disposed to say that, like those referred to above, they all come from the common source in Mark; but when it is observed that Mark has them in one connection, which is itself paralleled in Matthew or Luke or in both, and that either Matthew or Luke or both have them also in a different connection, it becomes apparent that they come to us through two streams

of tradition. Take for example the saying in Mark 3:4, "And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill?" This is reproduced in Luke 6:9 in the same connection, that is, the healing of the man with the withered hand. But Luke gives us substantially the same saying again in 14:5, 6, in connection with the healing of the man with the dropsy. The former cure was wrought in the synagogue and near the beginning of the Galilean ministry; the latter took place in the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees, and apparently near the close of the ministry. It will not do to say that they are simply confused accounts of one and the same cure; for Jesus performed many cures, and he doubtless repeated many of his sayings often in different connections. Where this saying comes to us in the one connection, it is from the source which lies back of Mark; where we find it the second time, it comes to us through one of the other sources, which Luke used.

Professor F. C. Burkitt, in his recent book on the *Gospel History and Its Transmission*, has collected thirty-one such doubly attested sayings. This is his list: Mk. 3:4 = Lk. 14:5, 6; Mk. 3:22-26 = Lk. 11:15-18; Mk. 3:27 = Lk. 11:21-23; Mk. 3:28-30 = Lk. 12:10; Mk. 3:31-34 = Lk. 11:27-28; Mk. 4:3-9 = Lk. 8:5 ff.; Mk. 4:21 = Lk. 11:33; Mk. 4:22 = Lk. 12:2 ff.; Mk. 4:23 = Lk. 14:35; Mk. 4:24 = Lk. 6:38; Mk. 4:25 = Lk. 19:26;

Mk. 4:30-32 = Lk. 13:18, 19; Mk. 6:4 = Lk. 4:24; Mk. 6:10, 11 = Lk. 10:5, 7, 10, 11; Mk. 8:12 f. = Lk. 11:29; Mk. 8:15 = Lk. 12:1; Mk. 8:34 = Lk. 14:25-27; Mk. 9:42 = Lk. 17:2; Mk. 9:43-48 = Mt. 5:29, 30; Mk. 9:50 = Lk. 14:34; Mk. 10:11, 12 = Lk. 16:18; Mk. 10:42-45 = Lk. 22:25-27; Mk. 11:22, 23 = Lk. 17:6; Mk. 11:24 = Lk. 11:9; Mk. 11:25 = Mt. 6:14, 15; Mk. 12:32-34a = Lk. 10:25-28; Mk. 12:38, 39 = Lk. 11:43; Mk. 13:11 = Lk. 12:11, 12; Mk. 13:15, 16 = Lk. 17:31; Mk. 13:21 = Lk. 17:23; Mk. 13:34, 35 = Lk. 12:37, 38.

Alongside of these may be placed another double attestation of very great importance. In Matthew 11:27 = Luke 10:22, we have "the Father" and "the Son" placed in such correlation as to imply an altogether unique relation. As we saw above this comes from the Q source. The same thing occurs in Mark 13:32, but in an entirely different connection. This, moreover, comes to us through the Petrine tradition, making it thus doubly sure that Jesus must have used such an expression, and that he must have claimed to stand in such a unique relation to the Father. As we shall see, when we come to study what Jesus thought and taught concerning himself, this is very important.

III

JESUS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

THAT Jesus was truly and fully man is a truth which, in a study like this, we can not guard too jealously. His life conformed to all the true and legitimate laws of our human life. He was a child of his own age and nation; and he shared in all the pious hopes and aspirations of his people. The God whom he worshipped was the God who in times past had spoken unto the fathers through the prophets. His revelation, unique and glorious as it is, has throughout an Old Testament basis. So of the morality which he taught. The roots of his teaching can in nearly all cases be traced to the Scriptures which he had learned at his mother's knee, and which he had heard and studied in the synagogue. Unless we remember this, we shall likely fail to grasp the uniqueness and the originality of his teaching, when we come to study those aspects of it in which its transcendence especially appears.

1. *His Use of the Old Testament*

There is abundant evidence that Jesus, like his contemporaries, looked upon the Old Testament as

Scripture, and as being in an especial sense connected with the revelation which God had made of himself to his people. It is true, indeed, that he says nothing on the subject of inspiration; and he has not stopped to tell us just how God spake through the prophets. He was neither a theologian nor a philosopher, and he does not give definitions nor propound theories; if we would know how he looked upon the Scriptures, we must approach the subject from the standpoint of the use which he made of them.

We would probably be quite safe in saying that he used the Old Testament for purposes of study and edification; for the freedom with which he quotes it bears testimony to that fact. He knew the Scriptures; otherwise it would be difficult to explain the astonishment of the Jews at his teaching (Mk. 6:2, 3; Jn. 7:15), for the body of the teaching in their schools was the Old Testament and its explanation. From it he drew precepts for his own and others' guidance (Mt. 9:13); in it he found weapons of defence, when he was assailed by temptation (Mt. 4:4, 7, 10), or by his enemies (Mt. 22:41-46); and in it he likewise found a basis for some of his profoundest teaching (Mk. 7:6, 7). He not only read the Scriptures in the synagogue for his own and others' edification, but he made the passage which he had just read the basis for his address (Lk. 4:17-21). He even quoted the pre-

cepts of the law as a foil to set off and enhance the beauty and the superiority of his own doctrine (Mt. 5:21-47).

The quotations of Jesus form a very interesting study. Men usually quote those books, and those passages which have impressed them and made an especially strong appeal to their sense of truth and reality. This is above all else true of quotations from Holy Writ. A passage on which the heart has long fed, and which has been a source of comfort and inspiration in the hour of trial and temptation, is apt to rise to the lips when we quote. The same was true of Jesus. He had his favourite books, on which his soul seems to have fed; and in those books he found the passages which most frequently suited his purposes. By noting which books he thus quoted, and by studying the passages which came to his lips in his temptation, during his controversies, and upon the cross, we gain, not simply a glimpse into the working of his inner consciousness, but often also an insight into his own estimate of those Scriptures themselves.

Professor James Stalker says, "If his quotations are examined, it will be found that they are derived from every part of the book, showing his acquaintance not only with its prominent features, but with its obscurest corners."¹ Considering the many allusions to Old Testament events and personages and the quotations which are often so interwoven into

¹ *Imago Christi*, p. 154.

the warp and woof of his own statements as to escape the notice of the casual reader, the statement is perhaps correct so far as our Lord's knowledge is concerned. So far, however, as concerns his quotations, it is too sweeping. Jesus had his favourite books in the Old Testament; and there are books from which there are no direct quotations. There are, moreover, customs to which there is no allusion whatever. Thus, for example, there is no mention of circumcision in all the Synoptic teaching. All of which shows that, while Jesus held the Old Testament in high regard, he did not esteem all its books as of equal value.

2. *His Estimate of Its Value*

In endeavouring to appraise the value which he put on the Old Testament and its several books, we have need constantly to keep in mind the fact just mentioned; for whatever he might have said on the modern doctrine of inspiration, if it had been presented to him, it is clear that he had no sympathy with that notion, now happily passing, which looks upon all portions of the Bible as equally inspired and hence of equal value. With his quotations before us, we can say with much confidence that he had a predilection for Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and the Psalms; but we have no way of telling what he thought of books like Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, or Lamentations, except by his silence.

Taking the Old Testament as a whole, we may distinguish two main tendencies, the priestly and the prophetic. The one emphasized the legal and the ceremonial, the other laid stress on the ethical. The charge has been made that the author of the Priest's Code did not attach any importance to moral precepts. This, as Kautzsch¹ has pointed out, is doubtless a mistake; yet it is true that he has emphasized the ritual ordinances to such an extent that moral precepts have been pushed into the background. And in the latest development of the religion of Israel, there was a growing tendency to emphasize the ritual and the ceremonial to the utter disregard of the ethical. Against this the prophets protested, saying, "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice" (Hos. 6: 6), or as Samuel had put it long before, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15: 22).

Now, there can be no doubt on which side of this age-long controversy the sympathy of Jesus was. The purely legalistic ideal, which emphasized ritual and the scrupulous observance of ritual observances, had found its highest expression in that Pharisaism with which Jesus came into such deadly collision; and his estimate of it may be seen, if we carefully note the several facts in his controversy with the scribes and Pharisees.

We may distinguish three kinds of legislation;

¹ *Religion of Israel*, Hastings Bible Dictionary, Extra Vol., pp. 727 f.

and the attitude of Jesus differed according to its character.

1) There was much that had simply symbolic value. It had value for the time being, in so far as it was capable of pointing the people to some spiritual truth; but as soon as the truth itself had been revealed in a higher and more perfect form, it was destined to pass away. All this Jesus treated as indifferent; and, where the purely symbolical was lost in the ceremonial, even as injurious.

An illustration of this kind of legislation, and of Jesus' attitude with reference to it may be found in an incident which occurred about the time of the Galilean crisis. The Pharisees and certain of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem saw the disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, unwashed, hands; and they asked Jesus, "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands?" The question, it is true, has reference primarily to the tradition of the elders, and not to the precepts of the written law; but it grows out of that scrupulous care for ritual, which characterized the entire legalistic tendency. The traditions of the elders were intended to be a hedge about the law, so that its precepts might be kept more carefully. And the answer of Jesus shows his attitude towards that tendency. He first of all said, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honoureth me with their lips,
But their heart is far from me.
But in vain do they worship me,
Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.

Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men.” Then, after pointing out how they were constantly rejecting the commandment of God through their tradition, he added, “Hear me all of you, and understand; there is nothing from without a man, that going into him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile him.” And, as he afterwards explained to the disciples, the things to which he referred are the things which come out of the heart, evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, and such like (Mk. 7:1-23). As is clearly implied by the true text in Mark, Jesus by saying this made all meats clean; and he thus put the stamp of disapproval on that entire Old Testament code of laws which regulated the difference between clean and unclean meats.

2) We may distinguish a second kind of legislation. This had value in itself; and, at the time it was given, it was an advance on what had existed before; but in itself it was imperfect. It was the best that the people were able at the time to receive; but it was far below that which man is able to receive, when he is at his best. This, too, was destined to pass away; but only when it had found its fulfilment in that which is higher and better. The law of divorce and the law of retaliation are examples.

Once the Pharisees asked Jesus, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" He referred them to the law of Moses; and when they affirmed that Moses had "suffered to write a bill of divorcement and to put her away," he pointed out that from the beginning it had not been so, and that Moses had allowed the divorce because of the hardness of their hearts; and he then immediately followed that with the higher law, saying, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery" (Mk. 10:1-12). Here Jesus clearly implies that a specific enactment of the Old Testament was of temporary validity only, because pitched on a lower plane. It was the best possible at the time, and vastly better than the laws of the surrounding heathen nations; but it was still an imperfect legislation, which had to give way to something higher and better, when men's hearts should be prepared to receive it.

Another illustration of this same attitude towards the Mosaic law is found in what Jesus says on the subject of retaliation. The old law was, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." It looks, at first sight, like a barbarous regulation; but like the law concerning divorce, it was given to the people of Israel because of the hardness of their hearts. It was in reality a great advance on the law which was universally recognized in the Orient at the time,

when it was promulgated; for, according to that, a man who was injured was permitted to take vengeance upon his enemy to the fullest extent possible. But the law of Moses stepped in as a policeman, and regulated and limited the revenge which a man might take. Has an eye been injured? then you may exact an eye in return. Has a tooth been knocked out? then you may demand a tooth in return. But you must stop with that. Your revenge must not go beyond the injury which has been inflicted. It was a beneficent limitation of the old law of retaliation which had prevailed round the children of Israel on all sides; but it was notwithstanding a very imperfect law. Jesus recognized that fact, and proclaimed its limited and temporary character, when he added, "But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Mt. 5:38, 39).

3) And there was still another and higher kind of legislation, which was right and good in itself; but much of it had been misunderstood by the Jews, and overlaid by ritual regulations, so that, instead of being a boon, it had become a burden. With reference to this, Jesus broke through the regulations, which had come to hide the beneficent purpose; and he placed all on a higher plane by pointing out that obedience to it consists, not in conformity to the outward letter, but in the cultivation of its

animating spirit. An illustration may be found in his teaching on the sabbath.

In the sabbath controversy we find a hint as to the estimate which Jesus put on the Decalogue. As is well known, among the subjects on which the Jews found fault with him was the manner in which he and his disciples broke through the traditions of the elders with reference to the observance of this day. It is to be noted that Jesus made no attempt to abrogate the sabbath, just as he made no attempt to abrogate any of the Ten Commandments. He everywhere held them in honour, and taught men to do so. They are based on eternal principles of right; and no society can exist permanently, in which they are habitually disregarded. So there is an element of good in the law which commands a weekly rest. Man needs it for his physical and moral good; and, in his controversy with the Jews, Jesus recognized that fact. In vindicating his disciples for plucking the ears on the sabbath day, he said, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2:27). And that brings out the entire difference between him and the Pharisees on the subject. Originally the sabbath was instituted as a beneficent institution, as a help to man's physical and moral life. Physically he needs the day for rest and recreation; morally he needs it for the cultivation of those higher and finer qualities, which he can get only through fellowship with his brethren on a plane higher than the sordid cares of business

and work; and spiritually he needs it for communion with his Maker. Jesus recognized that fact, when he said that "the sabbath was made for man." But the Jews, in their insistence on legal observances, had reversed the relation. Instead of holding the day as a means to man's well-being, they had made it an end in itself, as if man had been made for the sabbath. They had hedged it about with a set of rules and regulations, which made the day neither a day of recreation nor a day for moral and spiritual uplift. As Professor A. B. Bruce finely puts it, "The Pharisees made the day, not a boon, but a burden; not a day given by God to man in mercy, but a day taken from man by God in an exacting spirit."

That was the whole occasion for the quarrel between Jesus and the Pharisees on the subject of the sabbath. He did not object to the sabbath as an institution. He recognized it as made for man, and, of course, made for him by a beneficent Creator. What he refused to observe was the ridiculous and burdensome regulations of the Jews, which turned what should have been a blessing into a curse.

We hence find him laying emphasis on those portions of the Old Testament, which show that the whole law is fulfilled in the one word love. When asked, "What commandment is first of all?" he answered, "The first is this, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy

soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. And the second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mk. 12:29-31). He changed even the Ten Commandments from their negative into a positive form, from ten separate precepts into one all comprehensive principle.

3. *His Sympathy with the Prophetic Ideal*

From all this now it is apparent that Jesus sympathized with the prophetic ideal. The ceremonial and the legal had value in his eyes only so far as they subserved moral and spiritual ends. "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. 7:21). And that will, as we have just seen, is love. Hence only he who lives the life of love, no matter what his professions may be, has part in the blessedness of the kingdom. Those only who have done deeds of beneficent kindness to their fellow-men are welcomed to the Judge's right hand in the great day of judgment (Mt. 25:31-46).

How Jesus placed the moral and the spiritual above the legal and the ceremonial is shown by an incident in the sabbath controversy. When the Pharisees found fault with his disciples for plucking the ears on the sabbath day, he first called their attention to what David had done, when he came to the high priest at Nob, and when he was an hun-

gered,—how he took the shew bread and ate of it, an act which was unlawful except for the priests. The ceremonial law was made to yield to a higher law of nature. So the sabbath, which was intended for man's good, must be made to yield to man's well-being. And then he called the attention of his critics to the prophetic ideal, as that had been expressed by Hosea: "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless" (Mt. 12:7). That is, if ye had known that goodness, righteousness, and mercy are more pleasing to God than any outward legal or ritual observances, ye would not have condemned an act, which in itself is not only perfectly harmless, but even beneficial.

For Jesus the purpose of religion was to restore man to right relations to God and to his fellow-men. In that we find our highest well-being. Everything that contributes to that end is in accordance with God's holy will; for that will is love, and seeks only to bless. As our Father, "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Mt. 5:45). He knows what we have need of, before we ask him; and he is ready to bless us, and does not require us to weary ourselves with long and repeated petitions (Mt. 6:5-8). All that he requires of us is that we should learn to live by that same law of love (Mk. 12:29-31). And that law, when put into practice, restrains a man from injuring his neighbour. Yea, it induces him

to bestow good on all men, the evil as well as the good, enemies as well as friends (Mt. 5:44, 45). That is the ideal of Jesus. Goodness, righteousness, and mercy are what he requires; and he asks for rules and ceremonial observances only so far as they may help us to attain these moral ends. Where they interfere with the attainment of these ends, they are to be disregarded and set aside as injurious and as contrary to the will of God.

This shows why the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees was so irreparable. The Pharisees had a totally different conception of the meaning and purpose of religion. For them it meant the securing of God's favour through the performance of a certain number of ritual acts, the laying up for themselves of a certain quantity of merit, on which they might draw to balance their errors and defects. They had exalted their cult to the place of supreme importance. They had allowed their relations with their fellow-men to become a matter of secondary importance (Isa. 1:10-17). They failed to realize that their sacrifices had value only in the proportion in which they were an expression of their love to God, only so far as they had the power of drawing the hearts of the people after them to God. Instead of making the sacrifice a means for the cultivation of love to God, they had made it an end in itself. Jesus reversed the order. He placed all sacrifice into its proper secondary place, as a means to an end. Even prayer has value only as it helps to lift the soul into

communion and fellowship with God. Where it fails to subserve that purpose, it is a hollow mockery, and it brings down only God's displeasure (Mk. 7: 6, 7). Only when worship inspires to well-doing does it fulfil its purpose.

4. *His Conscious Superiority*

While Jesus thus recognized the value of the Old Testament, and while he used it as Scripture for his own edification and guidance as well as for the edification and guidance of others, he was not a slave to its letter. On the contrary, he always maintained the independence of his own judgment; and where necessary he did not hesitate to put his own word alongside of it, yea, and even above it. This is one of the most remarkable facts connected with his teaching. Highly as he revered the Word, he always maintained his position as the authoritative Interpreter and Judge; and he never hesitated to put his own word over against what was said to them of old time.

The classic illustration of this truth we find in the Sermon on the Mount; and it is both interesting and profitable to note how he there supplements and amends the legislation of the Old Testament. He first takes up the law of murder, and shows that it means not the overt act of taking a man's life, but that hatred of the heart out of which springs the murderous deed (Mt. 5: 21-26). Then he turns to

the seventh commandment, and traces the violation of that to lustful passion (Mt. 5:27-28). Then he passes to what was said about the oath (Mt. 5:33-37); then to the law of retaliation (Mt. 5:38-42); and in each case he so interprets the old law as to put an entirely new and original meaning into it. To say that he supplements it is not putting it too strongly. And the remarkable thing about it is that he does not hesitate to place his, "But I say unto you" over against, yea, and above what was said to them of old time. What else can it mean but that he occupied a position where he could declare the will of God with an authority such as no one else before had ever had?

As we just saw, Jesus gave the preference to the prophetic ideal. In his eyes, the prophet, whose mission it was to declare the will of God, stood on a higher plane than the legislator, who reduced that will as known to formal rules for the regulation of conduct. And he took his place consciously among the prophets (Mt. 13:57). It is true that, because of what we have in the Sermon on the Mount in the way of interpretation of the law of Moses, he is sometimes called a legislator; yet he never assumed that title, as he did the other, nor did he leave any legislation behind him except such as is embodied in general principles, such as may be applied to all time. But as a prophet, he consciously assumed a position of superiority over all who had preceded him. As just intimated, the prophet's mission was

to declare the will of God; and in that Jesus declared that he had no equal. "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Mt. 11:27).

This claim to superiority to all that is contained in the Old Testament naturally raised the question, Was Jesus then a revolutionary? Did he come to destroy the law or the prophets? Evidently such a question may be raised in view of his claim. Whether or not it was raised in just that form we do not know; but Jesus assumed that either it might be raised or that it would be raised. And so we hear him say, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Mt. 5:17). But that very statement implies a claim of superiority to both law and prophets, as perhaps no other statement does; for, as we shall presently see, it implies that all the truth which had found a partial and imperfect expression either through the law or the prophets had found its full and perfect expression in him.

5. *How He Fulfilled the Law and the Prophets*

After Jesus had declared that he had not come to destroy the law or the prophets, he went on to affirm their truth and their permanent validity. "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth shall

pass away, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Mt. 5:18). Two things are implied in the statement: the first, that there is a permanent and an abiding element in every part of the Old Testament revelation; the other, that the whole would be taken up into some new and higher form, in which it would reach its fulfilment, and in it pass away.

There is a permanent element in every part of the Old Testament revelation. This is true even of the merely ceremonial, for which Jesus seems to have had the least to say. Every rite or ceremony had a symbolic significance, in which it bodied forth, in sensible form, some aspect of the truth. The form was but transitory, like the breath which passes our lips, when we speak; but just as our breath, when articulated into speech, expresses truth, so did they. And however little the symbol in itself may be worth, the truth which it bodied forth was as real and abiding as God's Word anywhere. And then there were aspects of the law, which were partial expressions of great and eternal principles. They were only partial expressions; for neither did the lawmaker have a complete vision of the truth, nor did he succeed in giving it an expression suited to all time. As the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses it, God in times past spake unto the fathers through the prophets; but the revelation was "by divers portions and in divers manners" (Heb. 1:1). Or as it is put in Isaiah, "For it is precept upon precept,

precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, there a little" (Isa. 28:10). The people were at no time prepared for anything more. God had to teach them as they were able to understand; but however small the portions, in which it was given, every revelation contained some truth, which was destined to be taken up finally into a new and higher form. And until it had fulfilled the purpose for which it was given, it was proof against corruption and decay.

But not only was that which was spoken by the prophets thus given in divers portions, but it was spoken at divers times, as it suited the need of the people. And this implies its transient character. The form in which the revelation was given was at no time adapted to all people of all times. It was adapted to a particular people at a particular time; and hence, when those people and those times passed away, the form in which it was expressed itself grew old, and became ready to vanish. Yet it formed part of a progressive revelation; and hence as soon as the more perfect was come, in which it itself reached its fulfilment, it passed away.

Now, Jesus is the fulfilment of all that was thus given "by divers portions and in divers manners," because he has given us a full-orbed revelation of the Father, and because he has given it in a form which is suited to all times. Just this is the peculiarity of his teaching that it is given, not in the form of rules and regulations which are adapted to

one peculiar people at a given time, but in the form of principles which may be applied to all times, and to all peoples. Beyond his teaching is the revelation which is given in his person and life. All people, even the most illiterate and degraded, can understand a life of love. A deed of beneficent kindness speaks home to the hearts of men everywhere and at all times; hence all that the missionary needs to do to make himself understood is to follow the injunction which was given to the disciples of John. "Go and tell John the things which ye have seen and heard; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed; and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the good tidings preached unto them" (Lk. 7:22).

We may, therefore, say that whenever a truth, which had received a partial expression in the Old Testament, is led back to the ultimate principle which underlies it, it has received its fulfilment. Whenever the spirit which underlies any regulation has been caught and given an expression in such a way as to make it universally applicable, it has been fulfilled. Of this we have several illustrations in the fifth chapter of Matthew. When the law had said, Thou shalt not kill, it expressed a great truth in a negative form; but it required the magic touch of Jesus' own hand to make it appear as forbidding all forms of hatred and anger. So again, the law expressed a great truth, which lies at the foundation of all human well-being, when it said, Thou shalt not

commit adultery; but the full meaning of that law became apparent only when Jesus pointed out that what it ultimately aimed at is absolute purity of heart. So again the law had made a great advance on all previous legislation, when it limited retaliation to the exact amount of harm which had been done; but the full purpose of that regulation, the inner spirit on which it rested, came to light only when Jesus had shown how the only true retaliation is that which returns good for evil. Or taking the whole of the Mosaic legislation, the true meaning of any and all its parts becomes apparent only when it is seen that the aim of all is found in evoking love to God and man.

6. *His Relation to Contemporary Jewish Thought.*

As a child of his own age and nation, and as sharing all the pious hopes and aspirations of his people, Jesus was necessarily influenced by the thought of the age in which he lived. He used the thought-forms which were current about him, and his teaching is cast into the moulds of expression with which his hearers were familiar. And not only did he use those thought-forms in expressing his ideas, he must have used them in his thinking; and he would not have been truly human, if he had not been influenced in his development by them, and by the thought which lay back of them.

There is no evidence that he was in any way

influenced by Greek culture. Growing up in Nazareth, where he was in constant touch with the currents of Greek life passing to and fro between the East and the West, he undoubtedly knew Greek; but that is far from saying that he was in any way influenced by Greek speculative thought. His contact with the Greek life of Galilee may have helped to give him that broader outlook on humanity which the ordinary Jew did not have; but there is no trace of Greek influence in his teaching, as there is, for example, in Paul and in the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But that can not be said of contemporary Jewish thought. He was powerfully influenced by both the religious tendencies, which we have observed in the Old Testament.

It may perhaps, at first sight, seem incredible that Jesus should have been influenced in any way by that legalistic tendency, which reached its full development in the Pharisaism of his day; for did he not come to a deadly break with it? One, however, only needs to study carefully the story of his temptation to realize how deeply the false Messianic ideals of his people took hold of him, and how strenuously he had to gird up the loins of his mind against the insidious poison. He was doubtless superior at all points to the false ideals of that legalistic tendency, as he was to the imperfect legislation of the Old Testament; yet he could not help standing in constant relation with it, and feeling its destructive influence. He was repelled by it, and he

denounced it; yet his thought could not help being influenced by it. That influence was, indeed, almost, if not quite, entirely of a negative character, repelling him, and making it necessary for him to bring out the contrary ideal in stronger colours.

It was with the other tendency, the prophetic, that Jesus stood in sympathy. Although the spirit of prophecy seems to have departed from the mass of the people, there were persons of deep spirituality, in whom the ideals of the old prophets still lived. These were "looking for the consolation of Israel" (Lk. 2:25). What their hopes and aspirations were may be dimly seen in the songs of Elizabeth and Mary, of Zacharias and Simeon, and in certain of the Apocalypses, which were written during the century preceding the coming of Christ. Chief among these are the Similitudes of Enoch. As we know, the book of Enoch was by many looked upon as Scripture, and it is quoted as such in the Epistle of Jude (vs. 14-16). There are striking resemblances between its teaching and that of Jesus. Here we find the title, "The Son of man," used as a name for the Messiah; and much that is found in Jesus' conception of his Messianic mission is foreshadowed.

The question, How shall we account for the similarity? unavoidably presses for an answer. It is admitted now that the book is prechristian. Did Jesus borrow from its pages? We may freely admit that he used the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, and that they helped him in the development of

his Messianic programme. Such was almost surely the case with the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; and we need not stumble at the thought that he may have used the elements of truth which he found in the Similitudes of Enoch. And yet it may not be necessary to go to the length of saying that he either knew or used the book. It is possible that he did; and yet it is far from certain. The similarity between his teaching and that found in the book may possibly be accounted for on the supposition that its ideas had become current in that pious circle to which he belonged. But whatever the explanation, the fact of some relation between the book and the teaching of Jesus, as that has come down to us, is beyond dispute; and the fact helps us to realize the relation which existed between him and contemporaneous Jewish thought. In it and in the other Pseudepigrapha, we find the immediate historical background on which the teaching of Jesus must be studied.

IV

THE CONCEPTION OF GOD

THE central theme of the teaching of Jesus is the kingdom of God. That was the subject of his preaching at the beginning of his Galilean ministry. "Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel" (Mk. 1:14, 15). That it formed the constant theme of all his teaching is apparent from the Sermon on the Mount and from his many inimitable parables. The Sermon on the Mount, especially in the form in which it is recorded in the Gospel according to Matthew, is a collection of the teaching of Jesus. It is not clear whether it is a collection of the teaching during the entire period of his public ministry, or simply a collection of the teaching of the early Galilean ministry. Probably the latter is the more nearly correct view. But whether we say that it was spoken at one time, or that we have in it a collection of the teaching of the entire ministry, or simply a collection of the early Galilean teaching, its theme is the kingdom of God. It presents the character of the citizens of the kingdom, their place

in the world, the righteousness which is required of them, and the kind of life which they must live. So the parables are, all of them, parables of the kingdom. They illustrate what the kingdom is, how it is established and built up, and how the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of God.

Because of this fact, it might seem as if, in a study like this, one ought to begin with the idea of the kingdom of God. Many have done so; and there is much to be said in favour of such a method. Jesus' conception of the kingdom doubtless determined his plan of work; and it finally precipitated that conflict between him and the Jewish hierarchy which brought him to the cross; and it lies at the basis of all his teaching. No one can understand his teaching who does not have a correct conception of his idea of the kingdom. Yet it is to be observed, Jesus did not take as his theme simply the idea of a kingdom, but of the kingdom of *God*. Who and what God is determines what the kingdom is to be. Hence the idea of God is determinative of the conception of the kingdom; and before any one can get a correct conception of Jesus' idea of the kingdom, he must ascertain what his conception of God was. That in the end is fundamental in all his teaching, just as it is in all religion; and hence our proper starting-point is Jesus' conception of God.

1. Names Used by Jesus to Designate God.

Jesus was a Jew. As such, he, of course, was a monotheist. This appears, not so much from his express sayings, as from his entire religious attitude. He always spoke of the one, only, true God. Him he addressed in his prayers. On one occasion, when he was asked by one of the scribes, "What commandment is first of all," he replied by quoting Deuteronomy 6:5; and according to Mark, he quoted the introductory words, which emphasize the unity of God. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Mk. 12:29).

On several occasions Jesus referred to God as King. This, however, occurs quite incidentally, as if he were employing the language of everyday life. In speaking about oaths, he said, "Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; neither by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King" (Mt. 5:34, 35). In two parables, the kingdom of heaven is likened to a certain king, where the king is clearly intended to represent God (Mt. 18:23; 22:2). And the conception underlies all that he says on the subject of the kingdom of heaven; for such a kingdom is possible only, if God is a sovereign King, whose will is supreme, and who governs by the laws of his ordaining.

But Jesus' characteristic designation for God is Father. That is the name which he used in the first

word which we catch from his lips. "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house" (Lk. 2:49). And it is found again in the prayer which he uttered with his expiring breath on the cross. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46). It is the name, moreover, which is constantly found on his lips in all his prayers during his entire public ministry. The only exception is the anguished cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:34); and that is a quotation from Psalm 22:1. And he put the same name into our lips, when he taught us to say, "Our Father who art in heaven" (Mt. 6:9). So likewise did he speak of God as Father, when he referred to him in the third person. Sometimes he referred to him as "my Father" (Mt. 11:27), sometimes as "thy Father" (Mt. 6:6), sometimes as "your Father" (Mt. 6:15) and "your heavenly Father" (Mt. 6:26), and sometimes simply as "the Father" (Mk. 13:32).

We can hence not go wrong, when we say that the name expresses that which is characteristic in his conception of God; and considering the manner in which the name is used, we infer that it is expressive of his own peculiar religious experience. When he replied to his mother's question in the temple, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" he undoubtedly gave expression to his deepest religious consciousness at the time. The same may be said of that remarkable

thanksgiving, in which occur the words, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father" (Mt. 11:27). And certainly nothing less can be said of his last prayer on the cross. All else was about to be shut out from his view; he was then alone with God; and "Father" is the name which came welling up out of his deepest consciousness.

As the name Father expresses that which is characteristic of Jesus' conception of God, so it denotes that which is fundamental in the character and being of God. Hence when we say that God is Father, we have given the fullest definition of what God is that it is possible to give. According to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus once gave a definition of what God is as to his nature: "God is spirit" (Jn. 4:24). And in the First Epistle of John there are two definitions of what God is as to his character. The one is, "God is light" (1 Jn. 1:5); and the other, "God is love" (1 Jn. 4:8, 16). But none of them expresses so fully what God is in his inmost being as the name Father. Hence by ascertaining what Jesus meant when he used this name, we shall get at the very heart of his great and unique revelation.

2. *What Meaning Jesus Put into the Name*

The first thing that is to be observed is that the name expresses the idea of personality; for only a personal God can be Father. When Jesus said, "My Father," he was conscious of standing in a

personal relation to God; and when he taught us to say, "Our Father," he likewise suggested that we stand in personal fellowship with him.

Now, when we come to define this personal relationship more closely, it is possible for us to approach the subject from several points of view.

Fatherhood suggests the idea of origin. The child owes his very being and life to his parents. So does man owe his existence to the God who made him. Hence it is easy to think of God as Father because of the fact that he created us. That seems to be the thought in Malachi 2:10: "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?" The thought is, no doubt, valid; "for we are his workmanship" (Eph. 2:10); but it is to be observed, when Jesus speaks of God as Father, this is not the point of view from which the relation is contemplated.

Then again the idea of fatherhood suggests natural kinship. The child is the offspring of the parent, a partaker of his nature, bound to him by natural kinship. And that conception has been emphasized in describing our relation to God. Thus Paul, in his address before the Areopagus, quoting a heathen poet, says, "For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28). It is a very lofty conception; and it implies the idea that, as it is put in 2 Peter 1:4, we are "partakers of the divine nature." But again it is to be noted, Jesus does not have this idea in mind, when he speaks of God as Father. He rather con-

templates God in his ethical relations; and his conception of God's Fatherhood is based especially on what he is in his character, on what he has done for us, and what he is still doing for us.

Now, the fundamental fact in God's character as Father is his love; and in what his love prompts him to do we have the highest and most perfect expression of his Fatherhood. When Jesus points out what we must do to be children of God, he says, "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Mt. 5:44, 45). And in the exercise of his fatherly love, he watches over us, so that not a hair can fall from our heads without his will (Mt. 10:30), so that we can also rely on him for all things necessary for soul and body (Mt. 6:24-34). He offers us free forgiveness of our transgressions, whenever we put ourselves into the condition, where forgiveness is possible (Mt. 6:14). In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the father is indeed represented as waiting at home, until the prodigal comes to himself through sad experience; but it is to be noted, he is represented as waiting in an expectant attitude; and as soon as the prodigal has determined to return, the father runs to meet him. He sees him while as yet he is a great way off; and when he meets him he falls on his neck and kisses him, before ever the son is able to make

his carefully framed confession. As Father, God is not merely willing to meet the penitent halfway; but he himself goes to seek the lost. In the companion parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, the Father's love is set forth in its seeking and saving activity. And so Jesus represents himself as having come from the Father "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10).

And this is borne out, not simply by the explicit teaching of Jesus, but also by that revelation which is found in his life and deeds. Jesus was himself the highest revelation of God; and in what he was and did we see what God is and does. This is explicitly stated in John 14:9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And that which was characteristic of the life of Jesus was his deeds of beneficent kindness. When John became despondent in prison, and sent two of his disciples to ask, "Art thou he that cometh, or do we look for another," Jesus replied by referring him to his works. "Go your way, and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good tidings preached to them" (Mt. 11:3-5). His deeds of beneficent kindness were his credentials, and that because they were manifestations of God's character in him.

And this love is represented as existing in the Father in absolute perfection. When Jesus wished

to hold up before the disciples an ideal, he pointed to the way in which the Father is showing love to all, the just and the unjust alike (Mt. 5:43-47). And then, as if the disciples might feel discouraged because the ideal was so high, so far above their reach at the time, he gave them the promise, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). The goal is indeed far off, exceedingly high, so that many of us are constantly in danger of despairing of our ever being able to attain it; yet such is God's love, such is his constant help in our weakness, that we have the assurance that by and by, if only we submit in patience to his fatherly chastening, we shall become like him. But the point to be especially noted is that God is represented as perfect, and perfect in that quality which was just under consideration, namely, in love. And to this that other statement in Mark 10:18 also points. The young ruler had said, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" and Jesus replied, "Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God." That does not mean that Jesus had any sins to confess; but simply that he himself had not yet attained unto a state of perfection. He was still in the stage of moral development and trial, in which he was beset by temptation. But of the Father he affirms such perfection. In that fullest, highest sense, in which temptation is not possible, and in which there can be no moral development, but in which all the virtues are fully and

absolutely realized, the title could be applied only to God. He is the only supremely good, the only One in whom perfect love is fully and forever realized.

3. *The Extent of God's Fatherhood*

Of whom now does Jesus affirm that God is Father? Several things are clear from what has already been said. Jesus called God, "My Father," implying that he had no doubt about the fact that God stood in that relation to himself. He likewise said "Your Father," when speaking to the disciples, implying with equal certainty that he is the Father of all such as believe in him.

Is God likewise the Father of all men? That might be open to question; for Jesus nowhere specifically says so. Yet there are statements which clearly imply it. It might perhaps be inferred from his use of the simple title, "the Father." But we have better evidence. Inasmuch as his Fatherhood consists primarily of those ethical qualities which are summed up in the word love, we may affirm that he is the Father of all towards whom he exercises his great love; and that includes all men. "He maketh his sun to rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt. 5:45). In the same connection he affirms that we *become* sons of God (for the verb used in the Greek is *γέννησθε*, not *ἦτε* as one might be led to infer from our versions); but such an affirma-

tion is nowhere made with reference to God. He *is* the Father. The difference arises out of our difference in moral status. We were created to be sons. That is the high destiny to which we were called from the beginning. But our moral characters had to be formed; and when we began our moral existence, we began to realize a contrary ideal. We failed to realize the ideal for which we were created; and hence we must all *become* sons of God. But such was not the case with God. He was always what he should be. He has always realized the ideal of his being fully; and hence he always *is* Father. And he is the Father of all who are the recipients of his love.

But that suggests another question. Did Jesus think of God's Fatherhood as eternal like his being? Or did he represent him as becoming Father through the act of creation, because he has called a universe of intelligent and moral beings into existence? Perhaps it is impossible to give a definite answer; for Jesus has nowhere left us a specific statement on the subject. And yet there are statements in which he sets the two concepts, the Father—the Son, over against each other in such a correlation as to suggest, if not to imply, that the distinction belongs to the very being of God. One of these we find in the passage, already quoted several times, Matthew 11:27; another is found in Mark 13:32, also quoted above. And it is to be observed, the one comes from the Logia of Matthew, while the other belongs to

Mark; so that we have a double attestation to the fact that it was Jesus' custom thus to refer to himself in relation to God. The Father and the Son are in both passages spoken of absolutely, not as entering into that relation, but as being in it.

And if this is correct, then there are several other things which may be affirmed. God is Father in the very essence of his being. His Fatherhood is not a state into which he enters by any act of his in time; it is the state in which he has always been. As the idea of love is inseparable from the conception of his being, so is his Fatherhood. If he had become Father by virtue of the creation, we should have to think of his almighty power as the fundamental attribute of his being; and that would give us a being, whom we might fear, but whom we could not approach in filial trust and confidence. But if he is Father in the very essence of his being, from eternity, and not simply from the beginning of the creation, then he stands before us in a different aspect. There is nothing so signally characteristic of him as his fatherly love; and hence we may at all times, even in our state of alienation and sin, look to him with confidence and trust.

And a second consequence must follow. If God is eternally Father, in himself and not simply in relation to the creation on the outside of him, then he must have the social distinctions, implied in Father and Son, within himself. The word Trinity nowhere occurs in the New Testament; and we may

freely grant that Jesus did not teach the doctrine of the Trinity, at least not in its later ecclesiastical form. But are not the elements of the doctrine implied in his teaching? and is not the basis of the doctrine to be found in the very fact which we are now considering? Our answer to the question depends on the interpretation which we put on Jesus' use of the name Father. And it certainly seems more likely that Jesus conceived of God's Fatherhood as inhering in his very essence, than as an attribute which he has acquired through his creative act.

In dealing with this subject it is well for us to remember that the first disciples were all Jews. The doctrine of God's unity was ingrained in their very bones; and anything which could in any way suggest the polytheistic conception of deity which prevailed in the surrounding heathen world was absolutely abhorrent to them. And yet in the very earliest Christian literature, written within the first quarter of a century after the death of Jesus, he is referred to in such a way that it is difficult to describe the effect of the language in any other way than by saying that he is placed on an equality with God (Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Thess. 3:11). How can we account for it, except on the basis that Jesus himself had given them a teaching which implied that God is, not a single monad, but a being who possesses the social distinctions within himself; and that when he spoke of "the Father—the Son,"

he did so in a way to impress the disciples with the thought that the Fatherhood is an eternal quality, inherent in his very being, rather than a secondary quality which was acquired through his creative activity.¹

4. *The Attitude of the Father's Love Toward Sin*

Paul speaks of a revelation of God's wrath as well as of his righteousness and love. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18). A similar conception is found in the Johannine interpretation of Christ. "He that believeth on the Son hath

¹ On this point Professor W. Sanday has a paragraph, in his *Outlines of the Life of Christ*, which is suggestive. He says, "When, therefore, we find that one Gospel ascribes to our Lord rather full and detailed teaching respecting the Paraclete, which is explained to be another name for the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16, 26; 15:26), when there is held out a clear hope and promise of a new Divine influence to take the place of that which is withdrawn, and when in another Gospel we are also told of the institution of a rite associated with a new revelation of God under a threefold name, that of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19), these phenomena are just such as we should have had to assume even if we had no definite record of them. We may, then, regard them as having received—whatever the antecedent claims of the document in which they are found—a very considerable degree of critical verification. The single verse 2 Corinthians 13:14 seems to require something very like what we find in St. Matthew and St. John" (pp. 99, 100).

eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him" (Jn. 3:36). So our Christian theologies have been full of the idea of God's wrath. Is this idea also found in the Synoptic teaching of Jesus? Is it compatible with the idea of God's fatherly love? To find the answer to the questions, we must inquire into the attitude of the Father's love towards sin.

It should be noted, in the first place, that no expression at all parallel to the two just quoted can be found in the Synoptic teaching of Jesus. He does not speak of the wrath of God as he does of the love of God. And yet there are sayings which seem to imply something of the kind. In the apocalyptic discourse, as recorded by Luke, Jesus is made to say, "Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath upon this people" (Lk. 21:23); and there can be little doubt that in the mind of the evangelist the wrath referred to is the wrath of God. But it is to be noted that neither Matthew nor Mark have the words, "and wrath upon this people," in the parallel passages, which seems to imply that the words are not the words of Jesus but an interpretative enlargement of the evangelist's. And if we had nothing more, we should be compelled to doubt whether Jesus shared the conception with reference to God's wrath which was prevalent in his day.

In the two parables in which Jesus represents God

as a King, we have statements which approach more nearly to the Pauline and the Johannine teaching on the subject. In the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, after the other servants had brought the news of his ungracious conduct to the king, the statement is made, "And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due" (Mt. 18:34). So in the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, we have a similar statement. When the report is brought to the king that those, who had been bidden to the marriage, had not only made light of the invitation, but treated his servants shamefully and killed them, he too is said to have been wroth, and to have "sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city" (Mt. 22:7). In both cases, the king represents God, and what is said of him is naturally taken as referring to God. And yet it must be admitted that in neither case is that the main point in the parable; and one might say that, belonging to the subordinate features, it is part of the parabolic drapery. And it must be still further admitted that it is perilous to rest any important teaching wholly in a parabolic representation, and especially if, as is the case here, the representation comes to us in one of the subordinate features of the parable. It may serve as a part of a cumulative argument; but it can scarcely stand as its main basis. We must, therefore, say again, if this were all we had, we should hesitate to affirm that Jesus taught anything

on the wrath of God, sufficiently definite to enable us to affirm that his teaching is the basis of what Paul and John and the church have taught with reference to that subject.

Is, then, this all that we have? In the way of explicit teaching it is about all; and yet that can not be taken as representing all that we find in the revelation of Jesus. As we said above, his revelation is broader than his mere teaching by word of mouth; and in this broader revelation, which comes to us through his life, we do have more.

We have above recognized his deeds of beneficent kindness as a part of his great revelation of the Father's love. As we may see the Father's attitude towards the suffering and the fallen in the way in which Jesus dealt with them, so we may find the Father's attitude towards the impenitent in the way in which Jesus bore himself towards them. And on this point we have the direct evidence of the evangelist, and also of his own deeds. Mark tells us that, when the man with the withered hand was before him, "they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day." He then put to them the question, "Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good or to do harm? to save a life or to kill?" And when they refused to give him any answer to so plain a question, he looked round about on them "with anger," being grieved at the hardening of their hearts (Mk. 3:5). Jesus knew how to "be angry, and sin not"; and there were times when

he allowed his indignation to break forth into terrible and most withering rebukes. Where is there a Philippic, which burns with such indignation and wrath, as his denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew? And if he is indeed the perfect revelation of the Father, we must recognize that as part of it, just as much as his deeds of beneficent kindness.

Our second question, however, still remains. Is such a conception compatible with the idea of God's fatherly love, which causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and which sendeth rain on the just and the unjust?

The answer to the question depends on our conception of what is meant by the wrath of God; and in trying to define that we need to remember that we are dealing with an anthropopathism. In the poverty of human language, we have tried to describe our conception of God's feeling by ascribing to him our own. The description rests on our likeness to God. And within limits it is valid. It is important, however, to remember that the parallelism between God and man holds only to a certain extent, only as far as we have proved true to our likeness to him. Now, he is affected by sin just as we are. His heart is wounded by it. It is an evil which he rejects with the whole energy of his being. There is a self-determination against sin of such a kind as to array against it all that is in him. As it is a violation of his holy law and of the law of his universe, it has

arrayed against it all the force and energy of that law; and that means that the penalty of that law must be inflicted on it. And such self-determination against sin is not a contradiction of his love. In fact it is the self-determination of love itself against sin. But here the analogy between our feeling with reference to sin and God's ends. With us, even with the holiest of us, there is always an element of hatred against the sinner mingled with our indignation against the sin,—an element which gives us satisfaction, when we see the impenitent sinner suffer for his sin. That we are apt to transfer to God, when we use the word wrath with reference to him. But that is never there. God is not simply pained by the sin, but he is equally pained by the suffering which the sinner brings upon himself by his sin.

But all this now suggests still another thought. As God is pained by the sufferings which the sinner endures as a penalty for his sin no less than by the sin itself, so he is said to rush to the sinner's relief with infinite compassion and with the offer of a free and full forgiveness. Just as there is a self-determination against sin of infinite intensity, so there is a self-consecration of equal infinite earnestness for the removal of the sin. Hence he is represented as running to meet the returning prodigal at the first resolve to turn. He is represented as sending his one, beloved Son (Mk. 12:6). And that Son is represented as having come "to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45).

The Father's attitude towards sin is, therefore, first of all one of self-determination against the sin, a self-determination which arrays against it all the infinite resources of his being; and secondly, it is one of absolute self-consecration to the removal of the sin, and the salvation of the sinner. So long as the sinner remains impenitent and holds on to the sin, so long he suffers under its just penalty; and if he ever reaches the point where he says to his sin, "Evil be thou my good," so that the sin becomes an eternal fact in his being, the penalty becomes eternal likewise (Mk. 3:29). But whenever he turns from the sin, no matter where or how far down the steep incline he may be, the Father's help is near, and he has the gracious promise of a free and full forgiveness.

5. *God's Presence*

The way in which God's love is thus said to be exercised suggests, in the next place, the thought of his continual presence with men. He is not a distant, transcendent deity who knows of what is taking place among men only through the mediation of angels, and who governs the earth and its inhabitants only through a host of intermediary beings whom he sends forth to do his will. He knows us even to the smallest minutiae of our being. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Mt. 6:8). As he knows us and all

our wants, so he also watches over us in such an immediate, beneficent manner that nothing can happen to us contrary to his holy will. "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Mt. 10:29, 30). Because he knows us thus intimately, and because he thus watches over us, we may rely upon him to care for us, and to provide for us all needed good.

In the Old Testament Job is represented as uttering the plaintive cry,

"Oh that I knew where I might find him!
That I might come even to his seat!"

(Job 23:3.)

And again,

"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there;
And backward, but I can not perceive him;
On the left hand where he doth work, but can not behold
him;
He hideth himself on the right hand, that I can not see
him."

(Job 23:8, 9.)

And that is not the sole instance where we have such a representation; it expresses rather the uniform conception of the Old Testament. Though Jehovah was thought of as present in the Shekinah, that was a symbolical representation. God was looked upon as a God who hideth himself. "Verily

thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (Isa. 45:15). Jesus, however, had a different conception. He had an answer for Job's complaint. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Mt. 6:6). That is, God is near; all that is necessary is that we should shut out the world, and we are in his presence.

Jesus himself lived in the constant realization of this blessed fact. The Fourth Gospel represents him as saying, "And he that sent me is with me; he hath not left me alone" (Jn. 8:29). Though there is no saying of his, exactly like it, reported in the Synoptic Gospels, these constantly represent him as acting in that consciousness. When, at the beginning of his Galilean ministry, he was in danger of being overwhelmed by the enthusiastic attentions of men, he rose up a great while before day, and went out into a desert place to pray (Mk. 1:35). When at the period of the great Galilean crisis the multitude was ready to take him by force to make him a king, he went up into the mountain to pray (Jn. 6:15; Mt. 14:23). Even while he stood in the midst of the disciples, he would at times stop speaking, lift his eyes to heaven in thanksgiving or prayer (Mt. 11:25). He lived, as it were, in an atmosphere in which God seemed as really present as the air he breathed. And he taught the disciples likewise to

pray thus, assuring them that, no matter where they might be, God was present to hear (Mt. 7:7-11).

All these representations emphasize God's presence in his beneficent goodness and love. There is, however, also a complementary truth. As present, he sees and knows, not simply our wants and wishes, but our sins and follies likewise. As his love impels him evermore to supply the former, so it likewise impels him to remove the latter. As his ear is open to the faintest whisper of our prayer, so is his just resentment ready to exact the penalty for every idle word (Mt. 12:36). As not a hair can fall from our heads without his knowledge, so can not even the smallest deed of unkindness be committed without his notice (Mt. 25:45).

6. *The Originality of Jesus' Conception*

We need not enlarge on the sublimity of this conception of God. There is none higher or more worthy. The question, however, remains, to what extent is it original with Jesus?

No less an authority than Professor Bernhard Weiss says, "Jesus brings no new theology; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is his God."¹ Professor Willibald Beyschlag speaks of this as a misunderstanding, and adds, "All New Testament views are, of course, as already remarked, rooted in the Old Testament. But they only come to flower

¹ *New Test. Theol.*, Vol. I, p. 64

in the New Testament, and in relation to their Old Testament stage of development they appear as really new.”¹ Professor Wendt says, “Speaking paradoxically, we can say that Jesus taught no new doctrine of God, but adopted and built upon the Old Testament Jewish view; and, at the same time, that his conception of God stands on a specifically higher level than the Jewish view; and that in the distinctive peculiarity of that conception lay the root of all the new elements of his teaching, and of the whole divergence of the Christian religion from that of the Old Testament.”²

There can be no question about the fact that Jesus built on the Old Testament. God was called Father by the prophets in many a noble passage. Even the Greeks, from Homer’s day on down, had spoken of Zeus as “the father of men and of gods.” But it is to be observed that the conception nowhere reaches either the height or the depth which we find in the teaching of Jesus. As above indicated, Malachi in 2:10 speaks of God as the Father of Israel, but it is of Israel only, and that because he had created them. The same holds true of such beautiful references to God’s Fatherhood as those in Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1; Isaiah 63:16; Jeremiah 31:20. They all conceive of God as the Father of Israel, and of Israel only. He is also spoken of as the Father of the theocratic King (Ps. 2:7); and even of the

¹ *New Test. Theol.*, Vol. I, p. 80.

² *The Teaching of Jesus*, Vol. I, p. 184.

pious Israelite (Ps. 103:13). Even such passages as Ecclus. 23:1, 4, and Wisdom 14:3 do not go beyond this. There is no intimation that any one before Jesus ever thought of God as the Father of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, and much less that he can be the Father of the unthankful and evil as well as of the good and the just.

The conception of Jesus, therefore, is original in this that he first of all apprehended in his own experience all that is involved in the ethical content of God's Fatherhood. He was the first one to apprehend to the full what is implied in that personal relationship which is expressed in the names Father and Son; and, as thus apprehending fully the character which the name Father implies, he was the first to see and teach the boundless love which it expresses. While he did not teach any new name for God, and while he built on the Old Testament conception of Jehovah, as the God and Father of Israel, he filled the name with a new and higher content, so that now all men may come and address him as "Our Father."

The originality of Jesus' conception is seen still further in what he taught of God's presence. He lived as if he were everywhere with the Father. All he needed to do was to lift his eyes, and he was able to look into the Father's face, and to hold communion with him. In a measure this was true of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets; and yet they needed visible symbols to represent God's presence with them, such as the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar

of fire by night, and the Shekinah. Their idea of holiness implied God's separateness from the sinful world; and as their history unfolded they emphasized the idea ever more and more, until finally they could think of his governing the world only through a host of intermediary beings, such as the angels. They thought of him as exalted far above all heavens, while they tried to bridge the chasm which separated him from the world by the idea of the angels ascending and descending. But Jesus brought in a new conception. For him God was always near. And he taught that he is near to us. We may speak to him anywhere and everywhere, whenever we can muster strength to shut out the world from our eyes and hearts.

We often hear it said that one of the characteristics of the modern conception of God, as contrasted with that of the past, is the idea of the divine immanence. The ancients, especially the Jews, emphasized his transcendence. That has been the vice of much of our so-called Christian theology; and one of the hopeful signs of the times is that theologians and philosophers have come to emphasize the divine immanence. But it is to be noted that the divine immanence was first of all a Christian experience; and it entered into men's thinking only after it had long been a matter of experience. The experience, moreover, was first of all that of Jesus; and the idea entered into the world of thought through his teaching. It is true, the philosophical form in which the

conception is now usually presented is not found in him; for he was not a philosopher. But a philosophical concept is valid only when it rests upon a genuine human experience; and in that way, all that has been so learnedly written in modern philosophy and theology about God's immanence is really found in the gospel of Jesus.

IV.

THE ESTIMATE OF MAN

PROFESSOR A. B. BRUCE has called attention to the close connection between Christ's doctrine of God and his doctrine of man. "Every doctrine of God," he says, "has its congruous doctrine of man."¹ Unworthy views of God lead to degrading views of man. No one ever realized this more fully than Paul. In the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans, he has pointed out how the heathen's unwillingness to have God in their knowledge led to all forms of idolatry, and how this led to all sorts of shameful excesses. They had "changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things"; and therefore "God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonoured among themselves" (Rom. 1:23, 24). And the opposite is equally true. Exalted views of God beget exalted views of human life. As the degraded views, which the heathen had of God, led to the beastly abominations of heathen morality; so has the Christian conception of God, as our Father, grad-

¹ *The Kingdom of God*, p. 128.

ually transformed man's estimate of himself. It has given us a new conception of the worth of human life, and thus broken the shackles of the slave, opened the doors of the prison-house, and set the captive free.

1. *The Inestimable Value of Human Life*

We hence naturally pass from Jesus' conception of God to his estimate of man. The two are so closely related that it is impossible to form an adequate idea of the kingdom of God without a reference to both. His exalted view of God requires an equally lofty estimate of the worth of man.

Our starting-point here is the idea of God's universal Fatherhood. If he is the Father of all men, then all men must be his kin, fitted by their very nature to become his children. While God cares for the birds of heaven, so that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his knowledge and will (Mt. 10:29), he loves those who are called to be his children. "Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt. 10:31). Love can exist only between personalities. In the very nature of the case, God can not love a stone or a beast; he loves those only who are created in his image, and who are sharers with him of the attributes of reason and will. And when we are told that God loves us, that he loves all men, the unthankful and evil, as well as the good and gentle (Lk. 6:35), man as man is exalted far above all creatures.

In his dealings with men, Jesus always acted on this principle. All his acts show that he had a profound respect for human nature as such. For him human life was a sacred thing. No cry of distress ever reached his ear without awakening in him the tenderest compassion. In his eyes the meanest was worthy of being saved. He found in human life everywhere a worth which called forth his profoundest sympathy. This is seen in the manner in which he dealt with men, especially in the way in which he bore himself with reference to the children, the poor, and the outcast.

It is not too much to say that Jesus discovered the child. When anxious mothers brought their little ones to him that he might lay his hands upon them and bless them, the disciples thought it an unseemly interference with his precious time, and they rebuked the mothers. Jesus had a different mind. He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God" (Mk. 10:14). In the little children he found the disposition which is needed for the kingdom of heaven. Hence he added, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein" (Mk. 10:15). The nature of the child, unspoiled by selfishness and sin, has the disposition which fits one for fellowship with the living God. And hence also little children are said to be the special objects of God's care. "See that ye despise not one of these

little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 18:10). That is sometimes taken as teaching the doctrine of guardian angels, implying that there is a special angel appointed over each little child to watch over it and to guide it through life. The interpretation has been challenged; and we believe with good reason. The least, however, that it can mean is that little children are the special objects of God's care. He watches over them with the tenderest care; and that because of the value which every child has in his sight.

Another indication of the value which Jesus placed upon human life is found in the manner in which he dealt with the poor. It was not an accident that he himself was poor, and that he chose his disciples from those in humble circumstances. In them he found humanity stripped of adventitious circumstances. The world notices a man, when he is clothed with influence, position, or power. A mere man, without distinctions of any kind, does not count for much in the social scale. The world estimates a man by what he has, or by what he has attained, rather than by what he is. The estimate of Jesus was different. He said, "Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of heaven" (Lk. 6:20). And this, not because Jesus was an ascetic, and found moral value in poverty as such; but because he found value in human nature, and because human nature, which is so much more valuable than all else, is so apt to

be hidden by the cares, and the riches, and the pleasures of this life.

The fact under consideration is emphasized still further by Jesus' attitude towards sinners. Honest poverty may, and often does, win respect; but when character is gone, all is gone. The world as such has no care or respect for the man who is down; all it has to give him is blows to send him further down the steep declivity of his fall. Jesus was "the friend of publicans and sinners" (Mt. 11:19). He received the outcast and ate with them. That was, indeed, at first a cause of offence, and especially the Pharisees counted it a reproach against him. But that term, "the friend of publicans and sinners," has long since been woven by a grateful humanity into a chaplet in his crown of glory. The Christian world now honours him for receiving sinners and eating with them; but it is because we have come to know something of the motive which lay back of his act. He received them, because he knew what possibilities lay hidden beneath even the most degraded. He saw their humanity, so precious in God's sight, and what may be made out of it, when redeemed from sin and death. That explains a number of his sayings. "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10). "How think ye? if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go into the mountain, and seek that which is gone astray?" (Mt. 18:12). It

is true, many who were called sinners in his day were so principally when viewed from the standpoint of the self-righteous Pharisees. In reality, many of them were far nearer the true standard of righteousness than the scribes and Pharisees, who so severely condemned them; and part of Jesus' attitude towards them is to be explained by that fact. He abhorred the complacent self-righteousness of the Pharisees, and he denounced it as he did nothing else. But when due allowance is made for that, the fact remains that he received sinners who were really such. He knew the character of the woman, who anointed his feet in Simon's house. He knew it as well as Simon himself, who censured him for allowing her to touch him; and he knew her much better than Simon did. He knew her guilty past; but he also had insight to recognize the penitence of her sad present; and seeing the infinite value of her immortal soul, which had hitherto been covered and concealed by her sin and shame, he turned to her and said, "Thy sins are forgiven. . . . Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Lk. 7: 48, 50).

And with all this agrees what Jesus has expressly taught. "For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Mt. 16: 26). Modern science has taught us to look upon man as the product of a long line of evolution, as the crown and culmination of the entire creative process. All below him has existed in order that

he might come to be; and hence all below him exists for his benefit and use. Jesus was, of course, not an evolutionist; but he had taught the same truth long before the modern idea of evolution was conceived; only he put it into a concrete and poetic form. He put a single human life into one side of the balance, and he placed the whole world into the other; and he gave it as his judgment that the one human life is worth more than all the world besides.

2. *Evil and Lost*

While Jesus thus appraised human life at its true value, as more precious in God's sight than all the rest of the creation, he did not deceive himself or us as to its actual condition. He himself described men, even the best of them, as evil and lost. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him" (Mt. 7:11). "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10). "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 15:24). To ascertain what Jesus thought of man in his present actual condition, we must try to find out what he meant by these two terms, "evil" and "lost."

Now, the word, which is translated "evil" in Matthew 7:11, is *πόνηροι*, the same as that employed in the sixth petition of the Lord's prayer (Mt. 6:13),

and which both Revised and Standard Versions translate "the evil one." It is the same also as that which is used of Satan in the parable of the Sower (Mt. 13:19). It can have only one connotation. It means, If ye then, being morally evil, know how to give good gifts, etc. And inasmuch as the statement was made to the disciples as men, in contrast with the heavenly Father, it must be taken as expressing the view which Jesus held of men universally.

It is true that an objection has been made to this interpretation, on the ground that the statement, in which the word is found, is incidental. It is said that we ought not to found so important a doctrine on a passing remark. But it is to be observed that the very fact that the word fell from the lips of Jesus incidentally, when he was illustrating another truth, adds to its impressiveness rather than the reverse. Jesus was teaching the disciples on the subject of prayer. He had encouraged them to ask of God, with the assurance that their prayers would be heard. To enforce the lesson, he appealed to their own experience. "Or what man is there among you, who, if his son ask him for a loaf, will he give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish, will he give him a serpent?" And then, to give point to his comparison, he said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" The very point of the comparison lies in the contrast between what God

is and what man is. God is good; man is evil: if man who is evil gives good gifts, how much more will God who is good?

When Jesus was illustrating the place of the disciples in the world, he used two expressions, which imply the same thing with reference to mankind. "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13). The point in the metaphor lies in the use which is made of salt. It is a preserving agent. It keeps food from decaying. Similarly the disciples, as the embodiment of the Christian character, are a preserving power in the midst of a wicked and corrupt world. The world as such is corrupt. Left to itself it will decay and perish. And very much the same thought is implied in the statement which follows: "Ye are the light of the world" (Mt. 5:14). The world is in darkness. It needs illumination. And darkness is but a metaphor for sin and evil.

Jesus likewise spoke of man as "lost" (Lk. 19:10). It is true, the word does not occur often in his teaching; but it is found often enough to indicate that he looked upon man, in his present condition, as lost. What did he mean by it?

There has been a tendency to use the word in a sense which implies far more than Jesus meant by it. Often the lost are taken to be those who are irrecoverably and irretrievably lost, who have been condemned to everlasting perdition. One only needs to note the connection in which Jesus used the word to be assured that that is not the sense in which he

employed it. He meant that man had gone astray, like the lost sheep (Lk. 15:6); that he had fallen from his place, like the lost coin (Lk. 15:8); that he had left and forfeited his place in the Father's house, like the lost son (Lk. 15:24); but each of the parables, just referred to, implies that his condition was not hopeless nor beyond the possibility of recovery. The lost sheep was found, the lost coin was recovered, and the lost son returned and was restored to his former place in the father's house. No doubt, Jesus meant to convey the idea that in his lost state, man is in an unfortunate and unhappy condition; and the representation implies further that he can not of himself find his way back to the state from which he has fallen. He can not, by any power which he has in himself, recover what he has so insanely thrown away in his pursuit of illicit and unnatural pleasures. The best that the lost son could think for himself was a place among the hired servants. But he was not irrecoverably lost. He was in a condition from which he might still be saved; yet he was in a condition in which he needed salvation; and that is the point especially to be noted.

3. *The Depth of the Depravity*

To what extent did Jesus conceive of man as evil and lost? In our creeds, confessions, and theologies, we find much on the subject of total depravity. Did Jesus teach that doctrine? In the passage above

quoted, Professor McGiffert denies that Jesus taught that conception of man; and he finds here one of his main points of difference between Jesus and Paul.

Our answer depends very much on the meaning which we attach to the idea of total depravity. Does it mean that man's whole being has become so absolutely depraved that there is no least spark of good left in him, and that he is no longer able to think a good thought, to experience a pure affection, or to will a single good deed? It is the meaning which has often been attached to it. But if that is the sense in which the expression is to be taken, then it is no doubt true that Jesus did not teach the doctrine. Though it is not within the province of the present discussion to determine the Pauline teaching, the question may be fairly raised whether Paul taught the doctrine in that sense. Certainly Jesus did not; for in the passage above quoted (Mt. 7:11), he distinctly implies the contrary. He puts the being evil and the giving of good things side by side, as actually found in the same individual. Those who are evil by nature are not simply capable of doing good to the extent of giving good gifts; but, under the impulse of the parental instinct, they do it so habitually that Jesus was able to build his argument for the doctrine of prayer on it.

But if total depravity means that the depravity has extended to the entire human race, and that it has so affected each individual in it that it has extended to his entire being, involving all his capacities

and powers, so that there is no part of his being free from the taint, then the answer must be different.

That Jesus conceived all men as evil and in need of pardon is evident from the prayer which he has taught us. Among the things, necessary for soul and body, is the forgiveness of our debts (Mt. 6: 13). And how great those debts are, he has illustrated in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Mt. 18: 23 ff). That servant, in his relation to his lord, represents man in his relation to God; just as the fellow-servant, in relation to himself, represents man in his relation to his fellow-men. Now, that servant's debt was ten thousand talents; while his fellow-servant's debt to himself was only an hundred pence. The former represents a debt which is practically infinite, and which the debtor, when left to his own resources, can never repay. Such is man's debt to God.

About the time of the great Galilean crisis, Jesus was drawn into a controversy with the Pharisees and certain of the scribes on the subject of clean and unclean meats. The Pharisees had seen his disciples eat bread with unwashed hands; and they demanded of him, "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders?" In his vindication of the disciples, Jesus called attention to what now seems a self-evident truth, namely, that the food which enters into a man can not involve any moral or religious defilement, for it only concerns the body. It does not touch his inner moral and spiritual being.

It enters the stomach and not the heart. But then Jesus at once pointed out whence moral and spiritual defilement really does come. The things which come out of the man, out of his heart, those are the things which defile him. And in pointing out what thus comes out of the heart, he paints a picture of human depravity which has probably not been equalled anywhere in literature. "And he said unto them, That which proceedeth out of the heart, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of man, evil thoughts proceed, fornication, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within, and defile the man" (Mk. 7: 21-23).

Now, the "heart" here, of course, means more than the feelings and the emotions. In our common speech, that is about all that the expression signifies. But in the New Testament, it means much more. It refers to the inmost and deepest part of our being, that out of which come the issues of life, the source and fountain of our thoughts, feelings, and volitions. It is equivalent to our inner moral and spiritual being. But if that is of such a character that such things naturally come out of it, it must be depraved indeed. Whatever reminiscences of a former and better self may still be found there in connection with our natural affections, the entire inner being must be so involved in the evil which is in human nature that there is no part absolutely clean.

4. *Despairing of No Man.*

But although Jesus thus regarded man as evil and lost, he did not look upon humanity as beyond the possibility of redemption. Indeed, he defined his mission as that of seeking and saving the lost. His seeking and saving love is beautifully illustrated in the trilogy of parables, recorded by Luke in the fifteenth chapter of his Gospel. And not only do those parables set forth the idea of his seeking and saving love; they illustrate, as far as this can be done in a parabolic representation, the successful issue of his redemptive activity. The lost, in each case, was found.

This shows the optimism of Jesus. Whether he dealt with the individual, or whether he regarded humanity as a whole, he always went on the assumption that redemption was possible. Neither the bitterest opposition of his Pharisaic enemies, nor the most stubborn obduracy of the generation in which he lived ever made him lose faith in the ultimate triumph of his kingdom. He looked beyond the stubborn unbelief of his own people, and he saw them coming from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in his kingdom. And in his dealing with the individual, he never refused his help to any one, nor turned away from any one, as if he were incapable of being saved. Publicans and sinners were eagerly welcomed; and though he re-

peatedly warned the scribes and Pharisees, and though he publicly denounced their hypocrisy and sin, he freely accepted their invitation, sat down to their feasts, and freely mingled with them, as if he regarded each individual among them as capable of being saved.

This attitude is beautifully brought out in what is probably the correct reading of a saying, which Luke has preserved in 6:35. The Authorized Version is here no doubt incorrect, as well as unfortunate. It renders, "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again." Both the Revised and the Standard Versions say, "But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing." The Greek for the last clause is *μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες*. Now, *ἀπελπίζοντες* does not mean what the Authorized Version makes it mean; it means "despairing"; and with *μηδὲν*, it can not well mean anything but what the Revised Version makes it mean, "never despairing." But instead of *μηδὲν*, some ancient authorities read *μηδένα*, using the masculine instead of the neuter; and that may be the correct reading. If that reading, however, be adopted, then the rendering of the Revised Version in the margin must be accepted; and that will make the passage read, "But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, despairing of no man." To make the passage teach a lesson of indiscriminate lending, without the thought of getting back what is loaned, is beside the mark; but to make it teach a

lesson of confidence in human nature, and of hopefulness of winning even the most unworthy by confidence and love, is in harmony with the teaching of Jesus elsewhere.

This is, of course, not equivalent to the doctrine of universal salvation. That Jesus does not teach. There is, at least, one passage in which he teaches the opposite. In his teaching concerning the sin against the Holy Spirit, he distinctly states that sinful character may become a fixity, so that the individual becomes guilty of eternal sin (Mk. 3:29). And if a man may become guilty of eternal sin, his sin has become as permanent a factor in his being as that being itself. It is the state of final hardening, in which the individual, having rejected all the overtures of God's grace, has said to his sin, "Evil be thou my good." Repentance is then impossible. The individual can no longer comply with the conditions requisite to forgiveness; and hence there is no forgiveness for him, either in this world or in that which is to come.

And yet it is to be observed that, while Jesus warned the Pharisees of the possibility of their committing such a sin, and that while his warning implied that they were dangerously near the brink of that fearful catastrophe, he dealt with them as if they might still be saved from it.

Very much the same may be said with reference to Judas. The time came, after Judas had covenanted with the Jews to betray his Master, that

Jesus said of him, "Good were it for that man if he had not been born" (Mk. 14:21). That may mean, probably does, that Judas, by his resistance of the gracious influences which had been at work in his life, had passed into that condition of final hardening. Yet it is to be noted that Jesus, even then did not discontinue his warnings; neither did he treat the traitor as if he were absolutely without hope. When they sat down to the last supper in the upper room, Judas had already consummated his agreement with the Sanhedrists; yet Jesus washed his feet as lovingly as those of the beloved disciple.

Again, when Jesus was about being fastened to the cross, he prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). It is true, that prayer has been so construed as to make it refer only to the ignorant Roman soldiers, who were carrying out the cruel sentence for which others were guilty. Thus Professor Seeley says, "The words of forgiveness uttered on the cross refer simply to the Roman soldiers, for whom pardon is asked expressly on the ground that they did not understand what they were doing. The words may even contain distinct allusion to that other class of criminals who *did* know what they were doing, and for whom therefore the same prayer was not offered."¹ But it may well be questioned whether this interpretation is correct. Who will say that even Caiaphas and the Sanhedrists fully understood the significance of

¹ *Ecce Homo*, p. 298.

what they were doing? They were doubtless committing the darkest crime of all history; and yet did they know who Jesus really was? And did they comprehend what their rejection of him signified? Assuredly not; and it is far more in accord with the entire life and conduct of Jesus to suppose that he included all, who had a part in his condemnation, in his prayer for pardon, than to suppose that his resentment was such that he did not pray for even his bitterest enemies. But if he thus prayed for them, it is evidence that he was only acting on his own principle of "despairing of no man."

Certainly, we may affirm one thing with perfect confidence. So far as our conduct is concerned, we are absolutely safe in following the injunction, "despairing of no man." Only he who looketh upon the heart can know whether or not any given sinner has passed the bounds whence he can not be recovered. We can not know it; and the only thing we can do is to deal with all men as if they were still within reach of love and mercy. It is, of course, theoretically possible that some men may have committed the sin against the Holy Spirit in this life; but we lack the discernment which enables us to say with reference to any one that he has done so.

5. *Sons of God.*

Now, this beautiful optimism of Jesus rests on his insight into man's true destiny. Man is by nature

God's kin, created in his image and likeness, and called to become a son of God; and Jesus exhorted his disciples so to live that they might realize their high calling. In the passage, already quoted, Jesus said, "Love your enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you: that ye may become (*γένησθε*) sons of your Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 5:44, 45).

The exhortation contains a paradox. God is spoken of as "your Father which is in heaven," while the disciples are exhorted to imitate the Father's love towards the unthankful and the evil in order that they may *become* sons of God. The paradox compels us to return to the question which was briefly discussed in the last chapter. If God is the Father of all men, as we have the best of reasons for affirming, can we say that all men are sons of God? At first sight it would seem that the two statements are correlative, and that, if the former is true, the latter must be true likewise. Yet there is nothing clearer in the New Testament than that its several writers think of the necessity of men becoming sons of God. Thus in John 1:12, we have, "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name." It is likewise the Pauline conception, underlying all that he has to say on the subject of adoption. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear;

but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:14, 15). And that is clearly the teaching of Jesus in the passage just quoted.

Of course, much depends on the point of view from which the subject is approached. As we said above of God's Fatherhood, so we may now say of man's sonship. As it is possible to speak of God as Father, because as Creator he is the Author of our being; so we may speak of man as God's son, because he is God's offspring. We can, of course, not define the process of creation. We do not know how God has called us into being; but the conception, which is everywhere present in Scripture, is that we are vitally and organically related to him, as a child is to its parent. We were created "in his image"; we are "his offspring"; we are "partakers of the divine nature." And because of this relation it is possible to speak of our being sons of God by nature. The parable of the Prodigal Son may be quoted in favour of it; for the prodigal, though he forgot all that he owed to his father, yet continued through all the vicissitudes of his wandering life still to be a son. It was a relation which no act of disobedience or disloyalty could destroy. And the same may be said of our relation to God. Created in his image, we can never by any act of our own destroy that original relation which is implied in our being his offspring.

And yet this does not say it all. There is still

another aspect under which the subject may be viewed. Just as Jesus does not make God's Fatherhood rest on the fact that he is the Creator or that we are his offspring, so he does not make our sonship rest on our natural kinship. As he makes God's Fatherhood rest in his infinite goodness and love, so does he make our sonship depend on our responding to that love. And there is a legitimate distinction between the idea of offspring and that of sonship. The scion of the oak is the offspring of the oak, but it is not a son. So the young of an animal is the offspring of the animal, but it is not a child. The intellectual and ethical elements which are characteristic of sonship are lacking. Even of the human offspring we may say that it needs, so to speak, a second birth, before it can really be a son. It is the intelligence beaming from the mother's eye that awakens intelligence in the mind of the child. It is the warmth of her love, enveloping the child in a moral and spiritual atmosphere, that kindles the flame of love in its breast. And until these higher moral and spiritual elements are awakened, the mother's offspring is not really a son, at least not in the highest and best sense. And so of our relation to God. It is perfectly legitimate to say that we are by nature his offspring, akin by nature and made for the closest communion and fellowship with him; but in the higher sense we are sons only when we respond to his love in such a way that we learn to love our enemies even as he does. And this is the point of

view from which Jesus views the subject. Though we are God's offspring by nature, we become the children of God in the full, rich sense of the term, which enables us to attain to the full blessedness and the high privileges of sons, only when we learn to believe on the Son and through believing learn to love as God loves.

Another fact needs to be taken into consideration. It is no doubt true, that the ideal relation between God and us is that between father and son. Now, God has realized his ideal fully and perfectly. He always is what he ought to be. Man, however, has never yet, except in Jesus, realized his ideal fully. Yea, and from the very beginning he began to realize a contrary ideal. In order that he may become what he was destined to be, that contrary ideal must be broken down, and the true ideal must be realized in its stead. And both require a long and tedious process, which is both slow and painful. The sinner, who has realized the contrary ideal, has in reality become a son of the evil one; and before he can become a son of God, that wrong relation must be broken down, and a new relation must be formed.

In the passage under consideration, Jesus has indicated how we may thus become sons of God. We must allow the love of God, which from the beginning has enveloped us as with an atmosphere of beneficence and goodness, to awaken a like love in us. We must learn to respond to that love; and that not

simply to the extent of loving God, but of loving all men, even as he does. And the awakening of such love in our hearts implies a second birth, just as the little child must be born again through the beaming of the mother's love upon it before it can realize its high privileges. Or in other words, to become sons of God we must realize the high ideal which God has written into our very constitution.

Can we realize that ideal? It may be said in reply that our ideals always recede into the clouds as we painfully climb upward to reach them; and that this is especially true of this highest of all our ideals. As if Jesus had realized that such a feeling might be awakened in the bosom of the disciples, he added a gracious promise to the exhortation. "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). The Authorized Version has here again obscured the meaning by giving us an inadequate rendering. It has changed the promise into a command, as if Jesus had said, "Be ye therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." But the Revised Version has undoubtedly given us the better rendering. The verb is future, not an imperative. And the meaning is: however much you may seem to fall short of your highest ideal now, be not discouraged. You have all eternity before you; and, if you keep on trying, exercising love under whatever trying circumstances may confront you now, by and by you shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Then you will have realized

the ideal of your being; then you will be sons of God, in the fullest, highest sense.

It is in this thought that the teaching of Jesus with reference to the worth of man reaches its culmination. Man, created in the image of God, fitted by nature to live in communion and fellowship with him, by responding to his love, will by and by attain unto that for which he was created. And because of this fact, a man is of such inestimable worth, that, when a single soul is put into the one side of the balance with all the world in the other, it is seen to be of more value than all else.

VI

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

RICH and diversified as the teaching of Jesus is, it ultimately revolves round a single conception. That is the kingdom of God. With that he began his preaching in Galilee (Mk. 1:15); with that he was still occupied, when he sat with the disciples at the last supper (Mk. 14:25); and of that he is said to have spoken after the resurrection (Acts 1:6). Around it may be grouped all the topics that still claim our attention in the study of his teaching.

. That Jesus, in choosing this as the central theme of his teaching, made use of a conception which was familiar to the people of his day, there can be no doubt. The Old Testament is full of the idea of God as King, of his reign over his chosen people, and of the kingdom which he would establish among men; so that the idea of the kingdom of God can not have been new to the people to whom Jesus delivered his message. The only question which is open for discussion is, to what extent is the teaching of Jesus on this subject new? To what extent may it be found in the writings of the prophets? As was to have been expected, different views have been held.

There are those who have tried to reduce to a minimum the difference between the teaching of Jesus and the Old Testament. These have sought to find all the elements of what he said on the subject in the Scriptures and in contemporary literature. Others have magnified the difference, and made small account of the background on which his teaching rests. They have gone immediately to his words, and have deemed it enough to study what he himself has said. There can be little doubt that here the golden mean holds the truth. Jesus started with a conception which was familiar to his contemporaries; he dealt with a subject for which the people had had a long preparation, and with reference to which they were in constant expectation (Lk. 3:15); but he filled the familiar conception with a new content, so that the majority of men who heard him failed to recognize the kingdom, for which they had been led to look and long, in the picture which he painted.

It will be to our advantage, therefore, first of all to recall briefly the Old Testament conception of God as King, of his reign over men, and how far even that conception had been misapprehended by the Jews of our Saviour's day.

1. *The Old Testament Basis*

That God is sovereign Lord of heaven and earth is an idea which runs all the way through the Old Testament. The idea lies back of the creation story.

The Almighty Maker of heaven and earth, his government is over all.

“Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens;
And his kingdom ruleth over all.”

(Ps. 103:19.)

The one hundred and fourth Psalm is a beautiful poetical expression of just this idea. In an important sense, the idea of God's kingdom is laid deep down in nature. And to this conception of the ancient Hebrews, all modern science cheerfully subscribes, at least, all science which acknowledges an intelligent Creator; for the laws of nature are but the expression of his immanent reason and will, and not even the minutest atom moves or exists except in obedience to law.

But God's reign in nature is but a distant analogy of his reign in human hearts. In nature all is in obedience to fixed and undeviating law. The stars in their courses yield a blind obedience to their Maker; for they have neither reason nor will, neither intelligence nor freedom. It is only in the realm of freedom that God becomes a sovereign worthy of his great and excellent name. But according to the Old Testament, no sooner had the creative process entered upon the stage where freedom reigned, than God's will was disobeyed. Sin entered, and marred the beauty and harmony which had hitherto characterized the creation. Yet God found a way to reassert his sovereignty. Through the redemptive

processes, which were instituted immediately after the Fall (Gen. 3:15), he began to find his way into the hearts of men, and gradually to lead them to an acknowledgment of his gracious purposes. It is true, the movement seems for centuries to have been one of exclusion, in which he chose his instruments from among those who were susceptible, and in which he seems to have passed by the great masses of mankind. But his chosen ones were in each case his servants, who like Abraham were blessed in order that they might become a blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:1-3).

Without attempting to follow the process by which through his providence God is thus represented as preparing a people for himself, through whom his will and purposes might be accomplished, we note that the Old Testament conceived of that people as God's heritage and, as such, in a peculiar manner under his government and guidance. First Moses, the lawgiver, was regarded as Jehovah's representative; and the laws, which he enacted, were looked upon as God's laws. The judges all claimed to execute his will. The kings afterwards, especially David and his house, were looked upon as his vicegerents; and their failures, as well as the calamities of the people, are uniformly traced to disobedience of his laws. To borrow the word, which seems first to have been used in this connection by Josephus, the Jewish commonwealth was a *theocracy*, a kingdom in which God was King.

And while this kingdom was at first limited to the

Jewish people, the idea of universal dominion soon began to prevail.

“ Oh clap your hands, all ye peoples;
 Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
 For Jehovah Most High is terrible;
 He is a great King over all the earth.
 He subdueth peoples under us,
 And nations under our feet.”

(Ps. 47:1-3.)

Even when the outward fortunes of the kingdom had fallen into ruins, the prophets pointed forward to a time when Zion should again be exalted, and when kings should come to the brightness of her rising (Isa. 60:1-3). “ For that nation and that kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted ” (Isa. 60:12).

This kingdom, moreover, was conceived as an everlasting kingdom. This thought received its fullest expression in Daniel. After describing the four great world kingdoms, which are represented by the four great beasts, which the seer saw coming up out of the sea, and after stating how each of them was destroyed, he goes on to tell how “ there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man,” to whom was given “ dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,” whom all peoples, nations, and languages should serve. Then the prophecy is uttered, “ His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed ” (Dan. 7:13, 14).

The Old Testament, therefore, had the conception of a kingdom, in which God should be King, which should at last embrace in its dominion all the peoples of the earth, and which should be everlasting in its duration. But the strange fatality of the Jewish people was that they persistently misunderstood and perverted the teaching of their noblest prophets. Instead of recognizing that God had chosen them and blessed them in order that they might become his servants to transmit his blessings to all nations, they believed that they had been chosen as his favourites; instead of realizing that the blessings which God had promised them should serve for their own and others' spiritual uplift, they allowed themselves to become steeped in earthly good, so that the very favours of Jehovah only served to hide him from their eyes; and instead of learning to subordinate themselves and all their possessions to the accomplishment of God's will among men, they sought to make his gracious purposes subservient to their own selfish aggrandizement. Under the guise of realizing God's kingdom among men, they sought to realize a kingdom of their own, in which God as well as the nations should serve them.

2. *The Name*

As is well known, Mark and Luke uniformly speak of "the kingdom of God," while Matthew generally uses the phrase "the kingdom of heaven." In a few instances, Matthew also has the title kingdom

of God, which seems to indicate that he had no prejudice against it, and that he practically used the two as synonymous. Still, the question has been raised, Why does he use the expression the kingdom of heaven, where the other two evangelists have the kingdom of God?

It should be remembered that the Gospel according to Matthew was written by a Jewish Christian and for Jewish Christians, and that we find many of the Jewish preconceptions and prejudices reflected in it. Now, we know that, especially in later Judaism, there was a strong prejudice against pronouncing the divine Name. Other names were found, which were used in its stead. This usage is well illustrated in the book of Daniel, where, with the exception of chapter nine, the name Jehovah is uniformly avoided. He is spoken of as Lord in 1:2, as the Holy One in 4:13, as the Most High in 7:18, and as the Heavens in 4:26. And by an easy metonymy, the last of these titles came into use as a substitute for the name which the Jews hesitated to pronounce. The author of the First Gospel being himself a Jew, would naturally fall in with this usage, and the more so as he would respect the feelings of those whom he was addressing; while Mark and Luke, who were writing for Gentile Christians, had no such scruple.

This, one should have thought, might have been accepted as a sufficient explanation of the difference between our several Gospels on this point. The

question has, nevertheless, been raised as to the name which was used by Jesus himself. Did he say, the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God? Inasmuch as Jesus preached exclusively to Jews, it has been assumed that he likewise said the kingdom of heaven, thus avoiding offence. And if we assume that he did so by way of accommodation and out of respect for the prejudices of his hearers, we may grant the assumption; but we can hardly suppose that he himself had any prejudices against the use of the divine Name. In fact, we know from the testimony of Matthew himself that he used the name in other connections (Mt. 5:8, 9).

3. *The Meaning*

It must be apparent to every careful observer that there is considerable fluidity in the manner in which Jesus uses the term. It does not always have quite the same meaning; and hence we find considerable difficulty in framing a definition. Probably the best definition, which has thus far been given, is that of Dr. Hort, and given too quite incidentally. He calls it "the world of invisible laws by which God is ruling and blessing his creatures."¹

We will probably do best, if we approach the subject from several different points of view. We may view it as a divine rule in the hearts of men, as a

¹ Quoted by Dr. Sanday in *Outlines of the Life of Christ*, p. 79.

realm of celestial powers and forces, and as a spiritual commonwealth.

1) *A Divine Rule.*—This is the most obvious sense in which the term is used by Jesus, and also the most fundamental. It is the sense which it has in the statement which comes nearest to a definition to be found in the New Testament. In the prayer which Jesus taught the disciples, the second petition is, “Thy kingdom come,” and that is followed at once by a third, which states the condition on which alone it is possible for the kingdom to come. “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” (Mt. 6:10). The idea is that the will of God is done perfectly in heaven, and that, when it is done in like manner on earth, the kingdom of heaven will have come on earth also.

A little further on in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus is teaching the lesson of perfect trust in the love and care of our heavenly Father. He sets the Christian spirit into contrast with the pagan spirit. The pagan seeks first food and raiment, and the things of this present life. The Christian is exhorted to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, with the promise that all these things will be added (Mt. 6:33). The correlation, in which God’s kingdom and his righteousness are put, indicates that righteousness is the chief characteristic of the kingdom. To seek God’s righteousness is to seek the kingdom; and, by implication at least, the teaching is that whosoever attains unto that righteous-

ness will also have attained unto the kingdom. And God's righteousness can be nothing else than the complete realization of his righteous and perfect will.

On a certain occasion, Luke tells us, Jesus was asked by the Pharisees, "when the kingdom of God cometh"; and he answered, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17: 20, 21). Now, while it is true that another rendering is suggested in the margin for the phrase "within you," making it "among you," the probability is that the better translation is found in the text. Certainly that is a perfectly correct and natural rendering; and, if adopted, the suggestion is that the kingdom of God is an inward spiritual affair, consisting of the reign of God in the heart.

2) *A Celestial Realm.*—But it would be a mistake to suppose that the kingdom of God is entirely a subjective affair, as if it consisted solely in a disposition of the heart. On the contrary, there are many passages which clearly assume the objective existence of the kingdom. To recall the definition of Dr. Hort, "it is *the world of invisible laws* by which God is ruling and blessing his creatures." It is a realm of invisible powers and forces, which, having their origin in heaven, have reached down into this earth, and are now moulding and shaping the destinies of mankind. All those passages, which speak of the kingdom as "given" (Mt. 21: 43), as

“received” (Mk. 10:15), as “prepared” by God (Mt. 25:34), as “inherited” by men (Mt. 25:34), and as something into which men may “enter” (Mt. 5:20), imply its objective character.

When Jesus said to the Jews, “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof” (Mt. 21:43), he can not have meant simply that God’s reign would be taken away from them; for they had not accepted that reign. They would not let God rule in their hearts. That which would be taken away from them was certain blessings and privileges, which as God’s people they had enjoyed. They would be left without those blessings, and consequently also without the help of those celestial powers and forces which had been at hand in their past history to assist them in the attainment of their high ends.

Something of the same meaning attaches to the first of the beatitudes. “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5:3). The kingdom is viewed as a possession, on which the poor in spirit have already entered, something which may be regarded as a gift and blessing bestowed. Similarly with the statement which follows soon after in the same chapter. “For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5:20). Here the righteousness which

is required is the condition for entrance into the kingdom, which is itself conceived as an objective fact, with blessings to be desired. It is a good which is to be attained by conformity with certain conditions. And this idea of the kingdom as a good to be attained is contained in the parables of the Pearl of Great Price and the Hid Treasure. Both represent the kingdom as a good for the possession of which one may well give up all else.

3) *A Spiritual Commonweath.*—Consisting of the divine rule in the heart, and bringing certain privileges and blessings to those who are under that rule, the kingdom next comprises certain men, who are under that rule and in the enjoyment of those blessings. It is the select company of those who have responded to the divine challenge and obeyed God's will. In other words, it is a spiritual commonwealth, composed of men who have certain possessions in common. We may point to certain passages in which this is the predominant idea.

Several of the parables present this conception, notably those of the Tares and the Drag Net. The good seed are the sons of the kingdom, while the tares are the sons of the evil one (Mt. 13:38). The tares are now in the kingdom, that is, they are in the society of the righteous, and so nearly like them in outward appearance that it is impossible to separate them. They remain in the kingdom until the end, not in the sense that they are under the divine rule, for that they have not at any time been; nor in the

sense that they are in the enjoyment of the blessings of the kingdom, for in the true sense of that word they have never known what those blessings mean; but they remain in the kingdom in the sense of being outwardly comprehended in the society of those who are under the divine rule and in the enjoyment of the blessings. And very much the same thought is found in the parable of the Drag Net (Mt. 13:47-50). Those caught by the net are the men and women who have been gathered out of the world into the society of the righteous. They are not all good. Some of them are bad; but they have been gathered together with the good, and together they form a society of men.

Now this society may be spoken of as a commonwealth; for there are certain things which its members possess in common. Of course, these possessions are not primarily material or earthly; they are spiritual in character, and have come down from that celestial realm out of which the kingdom itself is descended. Hence we designate it a spiritual commonwealth. The bond which binds the men together into a society is spiritual; and the privileges and blessings which constitute their commonwealth are spiritual likewise. To such an extent is this true that Paul could say, "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).

This conception of the kingdom, as a society of those who are under the divine rule and in the en-

joyment of the divine blessing, forms the natural connecting link with the later idea of the church.

4. *The Nature of the Kingdom*

Can we now define the nature of this kingdom more nearly? If it is an objective reality, to what realm does it belong? If it is a "world of invisible laws," is it supernatural in character, or does it belong to the realm of nature? Can we speak of it in any real sense as from heaven, as now existing in heaven, or is it simply of the earth, earthy, achieved and realized by men? Or if both, to what extent is it from heaven, and to what extent is it an achievement realized by human effort? Dr. H. J. Holtzman has admirably characterized it first as a gift, "*eine Gabe*," and then as a task, "*eine Aufgabe*." We believe that the questions, just raised, may be best answered, if we approach the subject in this way.

1) *A Gift*.—The kingdom of heaven is "given." This appears in a number of ways. It has been "prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25:34). In its ultimate form, it can be possessed only as an inheritance. According to the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, it once belonged to the Jews, but was "taken away" from them, and "given" to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Mt. 21:43). Of course, there can be no doubt as to the person by whom it was prepared. According to the whole tenor of the teaching of Jesus,

God alone can have prepared it. He alone was in the beginning, from the foundation of the world; and he alone can be its author. So there can be no doubt as to the place where it was prepared, and from which it has come to us men. The place was where God is; and where God is there heaven is; so that it can have come from heaven only. It is from above, and belongs in its inmost and deepest essence to heaven.

That Jesus conceived the kingdom as supernatural or heavenly in its very constitution or essence is brought out very forcible by the answer which, according to the Fourth Gospel, he gave 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 unto the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (Jn. 18:36). That is, his kingdom was at that very moment in heaven. His servants were there; and from thence, and thence only, did he look for strength and support. And this teaching is supported by the Synoptic record. When at the moment of his arrest Peter drew the sword and struck off the ear of the high priest's servant, Jesus said to him, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Or thinkest thou that I can not now beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Mt. 26:52, 53). He would use no earthly weapons for the establishment of his kingdom; he relied solely

on the help which cometh from God for the furtherance of his cause. And the reason for it is not hard to find. His kingdom being supernatural in its origin, and supernatural in its character, it can be advanced only by superterrestrial and heavenly means.

The same thing must be said of the blessings which the kingdom brings. They are likewise celestial in their origin and character. Jesus had not come to give earthly stations or worldly rewards. This is forcibly illustrated by the incident related of James and John on the last journey to Jerusalem. Thinking that the kingdom was now about to be set up at Jerusalem, they came to Jesus to ask that they might sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left in his kingdom. Their meaning is, of course, perfectly clear. They were still thinking of an earthly kingdom, and they wanted the highest offices in the gift of the King. Jesus sternly rebuked their unhallowed ambition. He told them that they knew not what they were asking. So far as their request could be granted in the same earthly sense in which it was made, it meant the sharing with him of his cup of suffering; but in reality, their request could not be granted. To sit on his right hand, and on his left in his kingdom, was a gift, which had been prepared, as the kingdom itself had been prepared, and could be given only to those for whom it had been intended by God (Mk. 10:35-40).

Should we now endeavour to define more closely what these heavenly gifts, this supreme good, is,

that is brought unto us in and through the kingdom, we should say that on its negative side it consists in the forgiveness of sin. This is already implied in the very message with which Jesus opened his public ministry in Galilee. That was, according to Mark, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mk. 1:15). Not only was repentance the indispensable condition for the coming of the kingdom; it is also the indispensable condition for the forgiveness of sin; and wherever that condition is at hand there also is found forgiveness. For this reason probably the removal of transgressions is associated in the Old Testament with the coming of the kingdom, with the anointing of the Most Holy (Dan. 9:24); and in the New Testament forgiveness is equivalent to salvation (Lk. 7:47, 50), and being saved is equivalent to entering into the kingdom (Mk. 10:23, 26).

On the positive side, the good which the kingdom brings is summed up in the conception of eternal life. Indeed, eternal life and the kingdom of God are used synonymously by Jesus. The rich young ruler came to ask what good thing he must do in order that he might inherit eternal life. After he had received that supreme challenge to his loyalty to God, in which Jesus told him to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor, and after he had made his great refusal and turned away sorrowful, Jesus turned to his disciples and exclaimed, "How

hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God" (Lk. 18:24). Where the young man had said eternal life, Jesus now says the kingdom of God, showing that in his view the two are synonymous. And it was probably because of this co-ordination of the two terms by Jesus that the author of the Fourth Gospel has almost entirely displaced the latter by the former. And when we have thus placed these two side by side, we realize how the kingdom is a gift; and when we realize what eternal life is, the life of God in the soul of man, we see, as perhaps we can in no other way, how the kingdom, in its inmost essence, first of all belongs to the celestial realm.

2) *A Task*.—But if the kingdom of God is thus a heavenly good, a divine gift to be bestowed on men, it is none the less a task to be achieved. It can be received only in accordance with certain conditions. In as far as it is the divine rule in the hearts of men, it must be freely accepted. God's will, which is first of all an objective fact, must become man's will, and thus a subjective factor. The law, which was at first written in ordinances, must be written in the heart; and the good, which comes down from heaven, must be transmuted into character. This holds both for the individual and for the community.

Hence it is that the kingdom is represented as an object of endeavour. When on a certain occasion one said, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Jesus

replied by saying, “*Strive* to enter in by the narrow door.” And he immediately added the reason for the exhortation; “For many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Lk. 13:23, 24). And the word used in the Greek is intensive, suggesting the idea of earnest endeavour. Not every one will succeed in entering the kingdom; only those who put forth the requisite effort. And with this agrees what is said in the Sermon on the Mount. “Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mt. 6:33). Those whose chief endeavour is given to the things of the world may succeed in getting them; but they can never hope to obtain the blessings of the kingdom. These can be won by those, and those only, who make the kingdom the supreme end of their lives.

The same thought is presented under slightly different aspects in other passages. The challenge from the beginning was, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel” (Mk. 1:15). Man could not ascend into heaven to bring the kingdom down from above. It had to come as a divine gift. But now that it was at hand, the necessity was upon men to repent; otherwise it could bring them, not the blessings which it was intended to impart, but condemnation and death only. Its realization, whether in the form of divine rule in the heart or in the form of blessing, was conditioned on man’s turning from sin unto

holiness. Hence only the righteous are represented as finding admission into the kingdom (Mt. 13:43, 49; 25:37, 46).

Should we therefore attempt to define the nature of the kingdom, we would say that it is supernatural and divine in its origin and constitution, but human and natural in its realization in men and in human society. The individual must make it his own by cheerful and willing obedience to the divine will, by appropriating the gifts and blessings which it brings, and by transforming them into his own individual character. And it can come to its realization in the community and the world only as the men of the community are won to a similar free acceptance of God's will in all things. It is utterly idle to dream of the coming in of the kingdom by a sort of divine catastrophe, till both these ends are achieved. And they can be achieved only by human endeavour—of course, not human endeavour apart from the divine inspiration and help; but still really and truly by human endeavour. For however much the individual may rely on the divine help in the time of difficulty, temptation, and trial, it must be his own work to turn from sin and to realize the divine righteousness in his life. And the same thing holds for the community. It is well to pray God to break down the works of darkness; but he uses human agencies for the accomplishment of his will in this respect. The men who have accepted God's will for their own lives must, by patient effort, help to win others to

do likewise; and they must, by continued well-doing, overcome the evil that is around them in the world.

5. *The Kingdom as a Present Possession*

In recent years there has been considerable discussion of the question as to whether Jesus conceived the kingdom of God as already present or as something to be realized only in the future. Since the appearance of the first edition of Johannes Weiss' book, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reich Gottes*, in 1892, in which the eschatological teaching of Jesus was especially emphasized, a number of scholars have held that Jesus conceived of the kingdom simply as future. The contention has been either that Jesus did not come to establish the kingdom at all, or else that he did not do so during the days of his flesh, but looked forward to its establishment in connection with his future return in glory. However, the majority still hold to the view that there is a real sense in which Jesus proclaimed the kingdom as a present possession. Even Johannes Weiss, in the second edition of his book, 1900, grants this position, claiming that he is not responsible for the narrowing of the discussion to a bare alternative between present and future. He insists that with Jesus the main thought was the certainty of the coming of the kingdom, and that it was now even at the door.

We may make this our starting-point here. Jesus taught the certainty of the coming of the kingdom,

and also that it is nigh, even at the door. About so much there can be no doubt whatever. His opening proclamation makes this certain. "Repent ye," he said; "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 4:17; Mk. 1:15). And not only was this the burden of his own preaching at the beginning; but, when he sent out the Twelve, he put this same message into their mouth (Mt. 10:7). So when he sent out the Seventy, that is what he commissioned them to preach (Lk. 10:9, 11). So also, after he had told the disciples of the signs of his coming, he concluded by saying, "Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh" (Lk. 21:31). Language like that can not be tortured into meaning that the kingdom would come only after centuries had elapsed. It can only mean that Jesus looked upon the kingdom as certain to come, and that in the immediate future.

But if that were all, it might still be maintained that Jesus had not established the kingdom during his lifetime, but expected to do so in the immediate future, when he should have given his life "a ransom for many," and when he should return again in glory. Can we point to anything more definite, as showing that he looked upon the kingdom as present, already within the possession of his people?

On one occasion, after Jesus had cast out a demon, the Pharisees tried to explain the miracle by saying, "This man doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of demons." Jesus defended himself

against the sinister attack first by referring to the well-known principle that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, and that if he were casting out Satan by the help of Satan then his kingdom would be brought to desolation and have an end. Then he referred to what some of them were doing, and concluded by saying, "But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you" (Mt. 12:28; Lk. 11:20). Now, the Greek word for "is come" at this place is *ἐφθασεν*, a much stronger word than *ἤγγικεν*, the word translated "is at hand" in Matthew 4:17. But even if we should forbear to insist on the strict meaning of the word, as Johannes Weiss thinks we should, the idea of the actual presence of the kingdom is involved in the very argument which Jesus is making. He was casting out a demon, and he insisted that that was an evidence of the presence of a power higher and greater than that of Satan; and inasmuch as it was an evidence of a power opposed to Satan, it could be none other than the power of God. But if it was that, then the kingdom of God must have been actually present, destroying the kingdom of Satan.

Very much the same thought is implied in Luke 10:9, though there the verb *ἤγγικεν* is used. The disciples were to heal the sick, and say, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Their power to heal the sick was an evidence that they were possessed of something which men ordinarily did not

possess. It was a sign to the disciples, and to those to whom they were sent, that the kingdom was actually come, not simply a promise that it was to come at some future time.

Another saying in which the same aspect of truth is presented is the reply of Jesus to John, when the latter sent two of his disciples to ask, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" (Lk. 7:19; Mt. 11:3). Jesus did not give a direct answer, but pointed John's disciples to the works which they saw done before their very eyes; and then he told them to report these things to their master. The reply, however, amounted to an affirmation that he was the coming One, the Messiah. The works foretold of the Messiah (Isa. 35:5, 6; 61:1) were the very works he was doing. They were the evidence that in him the prophecies had been fulfilled, that the expected salvation was at hand, and hence that the kingdom had already come in a very real sense.

If now we recall our definition of the kingdom, we can not be at a loss to know in what sense the kingdom is thus a present possession. The primary and fundamental conception of the kingdom is the reign of God in the hearts of men. In the heart of Jesus that reign had already begun, and was indeed perfect. In the hearts of the disciples it was beginning; in a feeble way indeed, but really beginning; and even if not perfect, it was, in as far as it had begun, the real presence of the kingdom. And so we can say, in as far as through the gospel of Jesus,

the church is now overcoming the powers of evil, it carries within itself the assurance that the kingdom is at hand. The kingdom is in one sense synonymous with salvation; and every one who through the grace of Jesus Christ is finding his deliverance from the power of sin has entered the kingdom, and is a living witness of its presence.

6. *The Kingdom as a Blessed Hope*

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Jesus primarily emphasized this aspect of the truth, or that he laid the emphasis on the kingdom as already come. Rather the emphasis is on the other side. In its full glory, its perfect realization, it is even now a thing of the future, a blessed hope rather than a present possession. In as far as it has already been realized either in the hearts of individual Christians or in the life of the church, it is an earnest of what is to come, rather than the full gift of God.

This appears first of all, and perhaps most clearly, in the prayer which he has taught us. The second petition is, "Thy kingdom come;" and that is a petition which not only fitted the position of the first disciples, but that of all Christians even to the end of time. We can not conceive of a time in this present world order, when the petition will become obsolete. There is not a prayer which we have reason to offer with greater fervency. But that only means that Jesus first of all conceived of the kingdom as

something still to come, as a good to be earnestly sought and desired; and it means further that the church, in her own experience, has verified this conception as true.

Now, it is scarcely necessary to collect the various sayings of Jesus which emphasize this aspect of his teaching. Whenever he speaks of our entering into the kingdom, of the kingdom as coming, this is the conception which underlies his statements. A few examples may suffice as illustrations of the entire class. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:20). That was spoken to the disciples, and at a time when they had already made their first response to his call, and when in a most real sense the reign of God had begun in their hearts; and yet, although already in possession of that eternal life which is the inmost and deepest of the gifts which the kingdom brings, they were still very far from a complete realization of its full significance. Again he said, "Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. 9:1; Mt. 16:28; Lk. 9:27). The time was immediately after Jesus had for the first time told the disciples in unmistakable language of the necessity of his sufferings and death, and just after the great confession. The disciples had risen to the point where

they had learned to recognize Jesus, in the real splendour of his person, as the Messiah; and hence they had come to stand to him in that inner mystical relation which made them participants of his undying life. And yet even then there was a sense in which the kingdom was clearly still in the future for them. Once more, when Jesus stood before the assembled elders of the people, and when the high priest asked him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" he replied, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mk. 14: 61, 62; Mt. 26: 63, 64). Now the coming of the Son of man is elsewhere associated with the coming of the kingdom (Mt. 25: 31-34); so that the kingdom is really again projected into the future. According to Matthew this coming of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven is indeed spoken of as taking place "henceforth" (Mt. 26: 63), that is from that day onward; yet even under that view it belonged to the future.

A number of other passages might be brought forward to show that this is the prevailing view. Jesus emphasized the fact that the kingdom is still to come.

But how shall we reconcile the apparent contradiction? How can the kingdom be a present possession, and yet continue to hover over us as a gift of God for which we must continue to pray and strive? It is present as a principle, as a power in the hearts and lives of God's people, but as yet imperfectly

realized. It exists now alongside of, and in antagonism with the kingdom of evil, with which it is continually in conflict. Even the hearts of the best of men are not wholly free from the power of sin and evil; and hence the kingdom can not yet have come with its full glory and power into any life. The same is true of every community. Evil still exists everywhere; and until Satan and his kingdom are overthrown, the kingdom of God can not be manifested with its full plenitude of grace and power.

VII

THE FOUNDER OF THE KINGDOM

THE idea of the kingdom of God implies the thought of the King. The two are correlative; and the hope of the coming kingdom is, in the Old Testament, very closely connected with the coming of the King. Indeed, the coming of the kingdom is everywhere made dependent on the appearance of the King.

Now, primarily the King was none other than Jehovah himself; and the coming of the kingdom was conceived as connected with the personal coming of the Lord. This is the burden of the great Book of Consolation, which occupies the centre of our present book of Isaiah. The comfort which the great Unknown gives to Israel is made to rest on the assurance that the glory of Jehovah was about to be revealed. Hence the cry, "The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah: make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain: and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall

see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it" (Isa. 40: 3-5). It is true, this passage is quoted by all three of our Synoptists as referring to the Messiah; and it undoubtedly has Messianic significance. But it was first of all spoken of Jehovah himself; and it represents him primarily as the King, whose coming would bring salvation.

In later times, however, the coming King came to be identified with the Son of David. The Messiah was anointed of God to speak peace to the nations, and he was destined to establish the kingdom whose dominion should be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. The classic passage on this point is Zechariah 9: 9, 10, itself quoted in the New Testament in connection with our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: he is just, and bringing salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth." As Kautzsch says, the expectation of a king of David's family is found without doubt in this beautiful passage, though the expected One is simply called a king. "The idea of the world empire of the Messiah appears here with its final stamp, and indeed in a form which goes far beyond all prophecies uttered hitherto, and to

which there is no parallel except in passages like Psalm 2:8." ¹

Now, just as a number of passages, of which the one above quoted from Isaiah 40:3-5 is an example, connect the coming of the kingdom with the personal coming of Jehovah; so do another set of passages, of which this latter from Zechariah is a classic illustration, represent the appearance of the Messiah as the signal for the ushering in of the long-expected kingdom. On the one side the kingdom is represented as coming from above by the direct intervention of the strong right hand of Jehovah himself; on the other the king who brings it to pass is none other than the mighty son of David.

What was the attitude of Jesus with reference to this twofold expectation? Did he conceive of the kingdom as founded directly and immediately by Jehovah? And did he think of God as the King of this kingdom? Or did he represent the kingdom as founded by human agency, albeit through the super-human might of Jehovah himself? The significance of these questions appears the moment we take up the problem of the relation of Jesus himself to the kingdom.

And one thing with reference to his message should be noted at this point. According to the Synoptic Gospels, the emphasis in the teaching of Jesus was on the idea of the kingdom. That he proclaimed as at hand. Did he also proclaim the presence of the

¹ Hastings' Bible Dictionary, Extra Vol., p. 713 f.

Messianic King? Our answer depends on the answer which we give to still another question. Did he conceive himself to be the Messiah? And did he go on the assumption that he was commissioned to be the founder of the kingdom? The question is one which has been much debated in recent years. To answer it we must turn to the self-consciousness of Jesus. What did he think and say of himself?

As we said before with reference to the proper starting-point in our study of the kingdom of God, so we must say here. It is important that we should observe the place on which the emphasis lies. As it was necessary for us to inquire into Jesus' conception of God, before we were prepared to study his idea of the kingdom; so we must inquire into what he thought of his relation to God, before we can fully estimate what he said of his relation to the kingdom.

1. *His Filial Consciousness*

The first thing that impresses the careful student, who inquires into the self-consciousness of Jesus, is the fact that he always spoke and acted as if he knew himself to be the Son of God. In all his relations to God he bore himself as one who was dominated in every word and deed by a filial consciousness. This is seen in the way in which he constantly spoke of God as Father.

Our first glimpse into this filial consciousness we get through the very first words which have been

preserved to us from his lips. When he was twelve years old, he visited the temple with Joseph and Mary, and became a son of the law. When his mother then reproachfully said to him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," he replied, "How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" (Lk. 2:48, 49). We, of course, do not know what lay behind that expression in the previous life of the boy Jesus; but it is a significant fact that, at this the first glimpse which we get into his inner life, we find him possessed with this consciousness of sonship. And there can be no doubt about the genuineness of this portion of Luke's Gospel. We do not know from what source the narrative is derived; but it bears unmistakable evidence of being genuine. As Arno Neumann has pointed out, it has all the marks of Schmiedel's famous foundation pillars; and it is well to remember that Neumann was a pupil of Schmiedel's. "Such statements could not have been invented by worshippers of Jesus, nurtured in a later dogma regarding his person."¹ It must hence rest on a genuine tradition. It is true, Neumann thinks that the saying, "Know ye not that I must be in my Father's house," is a later addition; but he advances no argument for his opinion beyond his general assumption that all statements which imply a superhuman origin and character of Jesus can not be genuine. But as we

¹ *Jesus*, p. 47.

decline to follow him in that assumption, so we decline to follow him in the inference which he has drawn from it. We believe that the question came from the lips of Jesus, just as we believe the entire story to be genuine history. The question is so much a part of the entire story that to eliminate it would be to destroy the point in the narrative. We believe that it gives us a true account of the God-consciousness of Jesus at the time; and we regard it exceedingly suggestive that at the first glimpse which we get of his inner consciousness, he is thus in the full possession of this certainty of standing in a filial relation to God.

This filial consciousness of Jesus is brought to our attention in several different forms in his public teaching. It may be well for us to examine these somewhat carefully, before we enter on a study of its significance.

1) It is brought to our attention, in the first place, in the way in which he refers to God as Father and to himself as Son. It is true, in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus is not represented as using the title "Son of God," as he is made to do in the Fourth Gospel. Yet there are expressions which clearly imply it. It is implied in the parables of the Wicked Husbandmen (Mt. 21:33-41), and of the Marriage of the King's Son (Mt. 22:1-14). It is implied likewise in that classic statement, which has been preserved, in almost identical words, by both Matthew and Luke, and which undoubtedly comes to us from our

oldest source. "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22). And there is another saying in Mark, derived from our next oldest source, which has the same implication. "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Mk. 13:32). And it is to be observed that Schmiedel puts the passage among his foundation pillars for a scientific study of the life of Jesus. Judged by all the canons of a sane and sound criticism, there can be no doubt as to the genuineness of either of these passages. As near as criticism can establish any fact, it has established that both these sayings, in substantially the form in which we now have them, came from the lips of Jesus; and they establish beyond the peradventure of a doubt that Jesus spoke of God as Father and of himself as Son. And the very collocation into which the two terms are put implies that there was something extraordinary in the relation between Jesus and God, as he conceived it. There was only one who can be conceived of as meant by Father; and so there can be only one to whom the title Son, in the sense in which it is here used, can be applied.

2) The same fact is brought to our attention in the manner in which Jesus constantly addressed God in his prayers. As we have before noted, there was

only one occasion when Jesus addressed God simply as God. That was in the agonized prayer on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, it is to be observed, that is a quotation from Psalm 22. On all other occasions he is represented as addressing God as Father. And when he taught the disciples how to pray, he likewise put this name into their lips. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven" (Mt. 6:9). Now, all this is supremely significant, as revealing the God-consciousness of Jesus; for if ever there is a time, when a man's conception of God and of his relation to God finds expression, it is when he is in his closet alone with God.

3) Again, Jesus is represented as saying "my Father," implying not simply that he had the filial consciousness, but that he was conscious also of standing in a peculiar relation to God such as no other man can claim. And that claim is made in other ways. While Jesus taught the disciples to say "Our Father," there is no record of his ever having used that formula in any of his own prayers; neither is there any record of his ever having spoken of God as his Father and our Father in such a way as to include both him and the rest of God's children under the same category.

It is true that when we follow the expression, "my Father," through the Gospels to the sources which lie back of them, we are confronted by a somewhat surprising fact. The expression is not found

in Mark; and as that is one of the main sources back of Matthew and Luke, the question naturally arises whether we must give up the Markan source as authority for this peculiar claim on the part of Jesus. There is one expression, at least, which may be quoted in favour of it. It is found in Mark 8:38, "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and 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." Here, if the Son of man refers to Jesus, as we believe it does, then the pronoun "his" must be equivalent to "my" in the expression "my Father" elsewhere. Luke has the expression four times (2:49; 10:22; 22:29; 24:49). One of these passages comes from the Q source, namely 10:22. Here Matthew also has the pronoun "my"; but in his reconstruction of Q, Harnack expresses the opinion that, in the most ancient authorities, it was lacking. Matthew has the expression at least sixteen times; and in one other place it seems to come from the Q source (10:32, 33); but the curious thing about it is that in the parallel passage in Luke (12:8), a different expression is substituted, and here Harnack gives the preference to the form in Luke. The question therefore arises whether we can quote the Q source as favourable to the expression, and whether perhaps we do not owe it to an interpretation on the part of the evangelists. The careful student will doubtless recognize that Matthew has a

peculiar predilection for it; but he will also note that it is in harmony with other expressions which undoubtedly come to us from the lips of Jesus. Even if we were to admit that the expression is an interpretative addition of the evangelist, it is in harmony with the claim contained in the peculiar collocation of "the Father—the Son" in both Matthew 11:27 and Mark 13:32.¹

What now is implied in this filial consciousness? What did Jesus claim for himself, in view of the fact that he felt himself thus related to God?

¹ Dalman, after discussing the Aramaic forms which lie back of our Gospels, and which represent the expression "my Father," goes on to say, "Jesus never, as it seems, addressed God in prayer as 'My Father in heaven,' but only as 'My Father.' It makes no difference whether the Greek has merely *πάτηρ*, as in Mt. 11:25 (Lk. 10:21), Lk. 22:42; 23:24, 46; or *ὁ πάτηρ*, as in Mt. 11:26 (Lk. 10:21), Mk. 14:36; or *πάτηρ μου*, as in Mt. 26:39, 42. For in each case the word to be presupposed on the testimony of Mk. 14:36 (*cf.* Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6) is *ābbā*. This is just the definite form, and therefore means strictly, 'The Father'; but during the obsolescence of the form with the pronominal suffix it became the regular form for 'my Father.'"—*The Words of Jesus*, pp. 191, 192.

Archdeacon Allen also, in discussing the same subject, and especially the claim of some Hebraists that Jesus could not have used the expression "my Father" in Aramaic, says, "But what is there here to conflict with the evidence of the Gospels that Christ spoke of God as 'My Father'? Surely the language is not so inadequate to express personal relations that if he wished to break away from the common usage and to say 'my Father' instead of 'the Father,' he could not have found words to do so."—*Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, p. 311.

1) Jesus claimed unique knowledge of God. "Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Mt. 11:27). That can mean nothing less than that Jesus claimed to stand in such relation to God that he had full insight into his being and counsel, and that he, moreover, stood in such relation to men as to be able to give to them a full revelation of God. The statement is introduced by, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father," which, in the connection in which it stands, can not refer to the fulness of divine power, as in Matthew 28:18, but must refer to the revelation which the Father was pleased to make unto babes. As possessing the filial spirit in a unique sense and in an absolute degree, Jesus had insight into the depths of the divine being, so that nothing was hidden from him, and so that he was enabled to make to men the full and complete revelation of what God is and wills. This claim in itself implies the consciousness of standing in a unique relation to God, of a sonship of a kind so high and unique that, in this sense, he can have no brethren. It implies that, on the plane of revelation at least, he stands as the only Mediator between God and man, who can alone give us the knowledge of God which we need to be saved.

2) But this filial consciousness doubtless implies also much more. It must mean more; for if Jesus thus stood in such a unique relation to God so far as his knowledge is concerned, he must have stood in

the same unique relation with reference to his will. The will is deeper than the intellect; and, in the last analysis, the intellect can perceive the truth only where the truth has first of all been apprehended and embraced by the will. As the Son, Jesus stood in a relation of perfect obedience and absolute love to the Father. This is already implied in the voice which greeted him at his baptism, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased" (Mk. 1:11). How well pleased? The reference is to the past. The verb is *εὐδόκησα*, an aorist, and may be translated, as Gould does, "in thee I came to take pleasure."¹ Such had been his past life, such his ethical harmony with God, that he was owned as God's beloved Son. And the same thought of an ethical oneness with the Father is involved in the story of the temptation, which follows immediately. According to Matthew, his reply to the first temptation was, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4). The expression must have been reported by Jesus himself, and was doubtless transmitted through the Q source. It is true, Luke does not have the second clause; and, in his reconstruction of Q, Harnack omits it from what he regards the original form of the logion; yet it is to be observed that it forms a part of the original statement in Deuteronomy 8:3, and correctly carries out the thought implied in the first. And the entire expression means

¹ *Com. in loc.*, p. 12.

that Jesus recognized the whole will of God as the law of his life, and that he was conscious of rendering a complete obedience to every precept which had come from him. As on the intellectual side of his being, Jesus stood in such a unique relation to God that he had complete insight into his being and will; so on the moral side, he realized such absolute harmony with God's will, that he stands out among men in a similar preëminence.

3) In Paul Jesus' divine sonship is represented as unique also in this respect that he is conceived as the eternal Son, as having existed from the beginning, before all things, and as having come into this world from heaven (Col. 1:15-17; Phil. 2:6-8). The same conception is found in the Fourth Gospel (Jn. 1:1-18). Is it also found in the Synoptic teaching of Jesus?

Archdeacon Allen finds it in the passage which we discussed a little while ago: "All things were delivered unto me by my Father" (Mt. 11:27). He says, "For the aorist *παρεδόθη* cf. *ἐνδόκησα* 3:17; *ἑδύθη* 28:18. The idea involved is that of a pretemporal act, and carries with it the conception of the preëxistence of the Messiah. The same thought probably underlies the *ἦλθον* of 5:17; 10:34, and the *ἀποστείλαντα* of 10:40."¹ It may be questioned, however, whether this is not hanging a very heavy weight on a very slender thread. To say that the use of a tense may be made the basis for such

¹ *Com. in loc.*, p. 122.

a doctrine as that of the preëxistence of Jesus is carrying a grammatical argument to undue length. Yet does not the passage in question furnish a perfectly natural and legitimate basis for such an interpretation of the sonship of Jesus as that found in Paul and John? Father and Son are used in the absolute sense; and when Jesus uses the terms in that sense, as he does also in Mark 13:32, he certainly places himself into a relation which far transcends the limitations of all merely human experience—how far we can not say.

We are safe, therefore, in saying that Jesus claims to be the Son of God in a unique sense. We can mark the lines of demarkation which separate him from us on the lower side. We have no means of determining how far he transcends us on the divine side; and surely, no one is justified, on the basis of the Synoptic teaching, in denying the Pauline and the Johannine interpretation. The Synoptists may not give us the evidence out of the mouth of Jesus for affirming that doctrine; but they certainly do not give us the evidence for denying it. They do give us an estimate of the greatness of Jesus, which naturally suggests the later doctrine. They represent him as standing in a peculiar and unique relation to God, a relation which so far transcends all we know that we have no way of limiting his transcendent greatness.

2. The Messianic Consciousness

If such was the conception of Jesus with reference to his relation to God, what did he conceive his relation to the kingdom to be?

In turning to this side of the self-consciousness of Jesus, the student notices a second fact. Jesus always acted under the consciousness of a mission. He felt himself called with a high and holy calling. This is suggested already in that expression which comes from the lips of the boy Jesus, especially if we adopt the expressive rendering of the Authorized Version: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business" (Lk. 2:49). And it recurs again and again in his subsequent teaching. He speaks of himself as "sent." "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (Mt. 10:40; Lk. 9:48). "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 15:24). So he speaks of himself as having "come" for the accomplishment of a specific purpose. "I came to cast fire upon the earth" (Lk. 12:49). "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10).

Now there is undoubtedly a connection between this consciousness of a mission and his consciousness of sonship. Because he felt himself to be God's Son, he also felt himself called to a specific work in the accomplishment of the Father's purpose. He knew the Father's will perfectly; he was fully consecrated

to the accomplishment of that will; and knowing that that will is love, yearning for the salvation of all the lost, he could not but feel himself called to the great task of realizing that will in the salvation of men.

What, then, did Jesus conceive his mission to be? Had he simply come to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand? Or did he feel his mission to be also that of establishing it among men? Did he claim to be the Messiah, God's Anointed?

That Jesus believed himself to be something more than the herald of the coming kingdom is clear. That he conceived of himself as the actual founder of the kingdom appears from the following considerations:

1) Jesus came both to reveal and to accomplish the will of God. This is explicitly stated in the Fourth Gospel. "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn. 6:38). "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me" (Jn. 4:34). And it is clearly implied in the Synoptic teaching. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4); and that was not simply the principle on which he resisted the temptation in the wilderness, but it was the guiding star of his entire life. In the last great struggle of his life he exclaimed, "Not what I will but what thou wilt" (Mk. 14:36). And that is what he taught the disciples to crave. "Thy

will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10). Every one who does that will, he taught, is entering the kingdom (Mt. 7:21). Now, in as far as the kingdom consists of the rule of God in the hearts of men, Jesus actually established it through his own obedience, through his revelation of it to the disciples, and by leading them to the beginnings of a similar life of obedience.

2) Jesus came to bring salvation (Lk. 19:10). But being saved is equivalent to entering the kingdom (Mk. 10:23, 26). It includes the forgiveness of sin on the one side, and eternal life on the other. That Jesus claimed authority to forgive sins, and that he actually exercised that authority is clear from the manner in which he healed the man who was sick of the palsy (Mk. 2:9, 10). And that he claimed the power to give eternal life is apparent from his conversation with the rich young ruler (Mk. 10:17, 21). But the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life are, as we saw above, the two great factors in the blessings which constitute the kingdom in its objective sense.

3) Once more, Jesus founded the brotherhood, which became the nucleus of that spiritual commonwealth through which the kingdom of God is being realized among men. The question has been raised whether Jesus came to establish a church. The answer depends on the meaning which we put into the word. If we regard it as a spiritual commonwealth, a brotherhood in which his Spirit dwells, then there

can be no doubt as to the answer which must be given. We know that he did establish such a brotherhood even during the days of his flesh. He left to the brotherhood the authority of binding and loosing, the power of deciding for itself what should be valid and what invalid in the establishment of its own orders. He himself did not ordain bishops and priests, with certain rights and privileges to be handed down from generation to generation by a sort of tactual succession; all that he left to the brotherhood to determine as might seem best under given circumstances. But he established the brotherhood, and he inspired that brotherhood with ideals, which, when realized, would also realize the kingdom of God on earth. But that is only saying in another form that he actually founded the kingdom in a real, outward form.

But does all this now mean that Jesus was the Messiah, and that in exercising these high prerogatives he laid claim to that distinction?

It may be well here to recall what was said at the beginning of this chapter. Throughout the Old Testament there are two lines of prophecy with reference to the kingdom. The one connects the coming of the kingdom with the personal coming of Jehovah himself; the other looks for the establishment of the kingdom through the mighty Son of David. He is looked upon as the founder of the kingdom on the human side—not, of course, apart from the power of God, but through the help of the outstretched arm

of the Almighty. Now, that Son of David is everywhere spoken of as the Lord's anointed. He is conceived as able to accomplish all that the prophets hoped for just because he is the Lord's anointed, endowed with power from on high for the accomplishment of his mighty task. In other words, the founder of the kingdom was to be none other than the Messiah; and the question comes back to us, Can Jesus have consciously founded the kingdom of God without at the same time being conscious of being the Messiah?

If there is anything clear in early Christian history, it is that the disciples from the very beginning looked upon Jesus as the Christ. It is true, they were for the moment confounded by the tragic issue of his controversy with his adversaries; and the two disciples on their way to Emmaus were led to say, "But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel" (Lk. 24:21), as if despair had crept into their hearts. But no sooner did they have their vision of the risen Lord than their hope revived; and they were ready now to ask, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel" (Acts 1:6). And that was the message which was the central theme of the very first preaching of the apostles at Jerusalem (Acts 2:36). Now, with reference to all this the question arises, How can we conceive of this conviction on the part of the disciples, if Jesus had not in some way declared to them his own conviction that he was the Messiah? On this point

Professor W. Bousset has aptly argued, "We have certain knowledge that the belief existed from the very beginning among the Christian community that Jesus was the Messiah, and, arguing backward, we can assert that the rise of such a belief would be absolutely inexplicable if Jesus had not declared in his lifetime that he was the Messiah. It is quite conceivable that the first disciples of Jesus, who by his death and burial had seen all their hopes shattered and their belief in his Messiahship destroyed, might have *returned* to that belief under the influence of their resurrection experiences, if they had formerly possessed it on the ground of the utterances and general conduct of Jesus. But it would be wholly incomprehensible that that belief should have *originated* in their hearts after the catastrophe, for in that case we must assume that those marvellous experiences of the Easter days produced something completely new in the disciples' souls by a process of magic, and without any psychological preparation."¹

3. *The Lordship of Jesus*

But we are not compelled to rest on inference and conjecture. Jesus himself declared his Messiahship in unequivocal terms. When he stood before the council, the high priest asked him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" (Mk. 14: 61). It was the question which had been discussed by the

¹ *Jesus*, pp. 168, 169.

chief priests and elders. It was on everybody's lips. The reply which Jesus gave to it is, therefore, the more noteworthy. "I am," he said; "and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mk. 14: 62). It was the ground on which the Sanhedrim condemned him; and it was back of the accusation which Pilate, in mockery, caused to be affixed to the cross.

Now, this answer contains a double affirmation—the affirmation of his Messiahship, and the affirmation of his lordship in the kingdom of God. The latter is, indeed, implied in the former; and it is the form in which that is exercised. Only the Messiah can be Lord in the kingdom of God; for only he can be lawgiver, ruler, and judge within its sacred confines. And by noting how Jesus laid claim to the exercise of these mighty prerogatives, we get our final proof that he believed himself to be the Messiah.

As noted elsewhere, Jesus consciously placed himself among the prophets (Mt. 13: 57). He did not in the same way explicitly assume the rôle of legislator; and he did not leave behind him a body of laws, like Moses, Solon, or Lycurgus, which were afterwards to be observed in an outward or legalistic sense. But he laid down certain principles of conduct, which he sought to introduce as controlling principles into men's hearts, and which were to govern their conduct from within. He took the old precepts of the Mosaic law; and by pointing out the

motive out of which all true obedience must spring, he gave them new meaning and authority. He quietly and without apology assumed the place of authoritative expounder of the old law; yea, he placed his own word alongside of and above that of Moses and the prophets. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time"; and with that formula he referred to some of the most important of the laws of Moses, those of murder, adultery, the oath, and retaliation. In each case he followed the reference with "But I say unto you"; and he either gave the old law a new and wider application, or showed how it was lifted up and lost in a new and higher law.

And more than this. Jesus laid claim to actual sovereignty in the kingdom. "And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." "The right hand of Power" can mean only one thing. It can only mean that Jesus claimed to be invested with divine authority. From that time on he claimed the right to exercise the authority of the Most High. And to this the other expression, "coming with the clouds of heaven," likewise points. It does not refer to a supposed outward second coming on the clouds of heaven. It is an apocalyptic expression, meaning that he would henceforth be clothed with the authority and power of the Almighty. Like the statement in Mark 13:36, it must be interpreted in accordance with the apocalyptic usage of the Old Testa-

ment. When, for instance, we read in Isaiah 19:1, that "Jehovah rideth upon a swift cloud, and cometh into Egypt," the meaning is that God was about to exercise his dominion and power over Egypt, so that the idols of Egypt should tremble, and the heart of Egypt melt like wax in the midst of it. The same thought occurs in Psalm 97:1, 2.

"Jehovah reigneth; let the earth rejoice;
 Let the multitudes of the isles be glad.
 Clouds and darkness are round about him;
 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne."

And so in many places (See Ps. 18:5-16; Zech. 9:14; Dan. 7:13). When God comes to exercise his dominion, he is represented as coming with the clouds of heaven. And so when Jesus speaks of coming with the clouds of heaven, the meaning is that he comes, clothed with divine authority and power, and that he is the divinely appointed ruler in the kingdom of God.

According to Matthew the statement is introduced by "henceforth" (Mt. 26:64). And Luke has a similar modification of the saying in Mark. The meaning is that Jesus would from that day on exercise such dominion. And were this the place for it, we might vindicate the high claim by an appeal to history; for, although there are still many people who do not recognize Jesus as Lord, his lordship is freely and cheerfully recognized by all who are in the kingdom. Wherever men have any realizing sense of

truth and righteousness, there his law of love is freely accepted as supreme.

Jesus likewise claimed authority to execute judgment. Usually this is understood as referring to the end of the world; and the judgment programme, which is outlined in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, probably refers primarily to that. But there is evidence that Jesus also thought of the judgment as a present process, and of himself as exercising the functions of Judge even now. That thought seems to be especially implied in the teaching which we find at the close of the Sermon on the Mount. "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house on a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded on a rock" (Mt. 7: 24, 25). Together with the opposite picture, which follows immediately after this, the teaching contains a tremendous claim on the part of Jesus, the claim, namely, that his teaching is of such authority that its acceptance or rejection constitutes the reason why a man finds admittance into the kingdom, or is rejected therefrom. Acceptance of his word results in the formation of a character, which will stand in the midst the stress and storms of life; as a house that is founded on a rock stands in the midst of a storm. But that implies that Jesus sits as Judge or Arbiter in the midst of history, and that he and his word are the ever-present power by

which men are judged, or perhaps better, by which they judge themselves.

In one passage Jesus proclaims himself as Judge in unmistakable terms. It is the great judgment programme in Matthew 25:31-46. He there represents himself as seated on the throne of the universe, with all nations assembled before him, and as separating them one from the other as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. The righteous are welcomed to his right hand, with the welcome plaudit, "Well done"; while the wicked are sent to the left, with the terrible condemnation, "Depart from me, ye cursed." And the one are shown to be righteous, because they had been obedient to his word; while the other are shown to be unrighteous, because they had not been so. That is, the attitude which men assume with reference to him and his word forms the basis on which they will be judged in the last day.

VIII

THE FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM

AS Messiah, Jesus consciously accepted as his mission the great task of founding the kingdom of God. To that he consecrated himself with whole-hearted devotion. How did he conceive his task? What did he think of the work necessary to its accomplishment? To answer these questions, we must study his teaching on the background of his life. Here, as perhaps nowhere else, his work sheds light on his words.

The kingdom had to be established in the midst of a sinful and hostile world. It had to be founded in the face of misunderstanding and opposition. Consequently the first thing that had to be done was to overcome certain difficulties, and remove certain obstacles out of the way.

1. *Correcting Misapprehensions*

Foremost among the obstacles which hindered the establishment of the kingdom was the universal misapprehension of its true nature on the part of the people. There existed a widespread expectation of the kingdom. Somehow the people had come to be-

lieve that the long-expected Messiah was about to appear; but they had sadly misconceived his true character and mission. They looked for an outward, material, and political kingdom, in which the hated Roman yoke should be thrown off, and in which the riches and the glories of this world were to flow into Zion, bringing to them, as the chosen people, the comforts and pleasures of time and sense. Even the disciples, whom Jesus had chosen to be with him and to become his representatives, entertained this idea; and it was not until after his crucifixion and resurrection that they were enabled to escape the delusive snare.

One only needs to study the decisive crisis of his own life to realize how formidable an obstacle this misconception was.

Immediately after his Messianic ordination, when he had just come to a full realization of his great mission, he was called to confront this great perversion of the Messianic ideal. As Mark has so forcibly put it, "And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan" (Mk. 1:12, 13). It could not have been otherwise. In view of the great mission which now opened out before him, he had to come to an understanding as to the method by which his work was to be accomplished. He knew the false Messianic ideal which had taken possession of his people; and he could not help being confronted by it in all his thinking. It

formed the burden in his great temptation. Should he yield to the popular desire to establish an outward kingdom of prosperity and plenty? And should he use his marvellous powers, of which he was just becoming conscious, to bring about that condition for which his people were looking and longing? Should he, as if by magic, turn the wilderness of this world into a paradise of ease and luxury? No; that would be to overlook all the higher needs of man's life, his need for food which only the Word of God can give (Mt. 4:4). Or should he yield to the popular demand for the spectacular, and by marvellous feats satisfy the craving of the curious, in the expectation that God would bring him safely through to the successful accomplishment of his mission? No; that would be to tempt God (Mt. 4:7). Should he then consent to the employment of illegitimate means for gaining an influence over the people in the hope that, after he had won his way to the throne, he might transform the kingdom, thus established, into a divine rule over men? Should he make a compromise with the rulers of his people in order later on, when he had gained position, influence, and power, to use them for higher and nobler ends? No; that would be to give away the whole idea of the kingdom from the beginning. It would be to exalt the wrong into the place of the right, to worship Satan rather than God (Mk. 4:10). It was in some such way that the false Messianic ideal appealed to him; and how powerful the appeal was appears from

the fact that he wrestled with the problem, by prayer and fasting, for forty days and forty nights.

But if such was the struggle required to remove the false ideal from his own spotless soul, what must it have required to deliver his nation from it? He first tried teaching. He taught in their synagogues, by the seaside, in their streets, on the mountain top,—everywhere where people gathered to hear him. But the people would not understand. Their foolish hearts were darkened. When after nearly a whole year's work in Galilee, he finally sent forth the Twelve to preach that the kingdom was nigh, they only thought the more of their hoped-for earthly kingdom. Probably the disciples coloured their message with their own misconceptions; and when they finally gathered themselves together again to the Master, they were so thronged by the multitudes in their eager expectancy that they had not time so much as to eat bread (Mk. 6:31). The people were coming and going; and the meaning of their excitement became apparent the following day, when, after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, they attempted to take him by force to make him a king (Jn. 6:15). When he refused the proffered crown, they went back and left him alone with the Twelve. Though his ministry continued for another year, his fate was sealed from that hour. The cross now loomed darkly above his horizon; and as is apparent from the conversation at Cæsarea Philippi, he knew it. Rather

than forsake their false ideal, his people were willing to reject him and to nail him to the cross. Even the subsequent overthrow of Jerusalem and the temple did not suffice to deliver the people as a whole from the false ideal. The Twelve were finally delivered from it by his persistent teaching, and by the experiences which came to them through his death and resurrection. But it required all the teaching of his ministry, together with those experiences, to bring about the deliverance.

2. *Forgiving Sin*

But great as was the obstacle which these misconceptions of the Jewish people had placed in his way, they were not the greatest hindrance to the establishment of the kingdom. The ignorances and prejudices of the people were themselves the fruit of a deeper malady. The people as a whole had submitted themselves to a rule other than that of God. They had sinned and were guilty before God. Before they could be brought under the divine rule, their guilt had to be pardoned, their sins forgiven. Hence forgiveness had long been associated by the prophets with the Messianic hope (Isa. 40:2); hence also John the Baptist, when he began his ministry, preached "the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins" (Mk. 1:4). And so when Jesus began his Galilean ministry, he proclaimed the same message. He called the people to repentance; and repentance

was, as it is now, the indispensable condition to forgiveness.

No inconsiderable portion of the ministry of Jesus was devoted to the proclamation of the glorious fact of the divine offer of forgiveness. He proclaimed the message both by word and deed. Mark puts into the forefront of his Gospel a miracle, which seems to have just this for its central truth. It was in that beautiful dawn of the Galilcan spring, when the people were crowding round him in great numbers to hear the Word of God. He had been out on a preaching tour in Galilee, and had been away from home some days. Then when on his return it became noised abroad that he was at home, the people so filled the house in which he was "that there was no more room for them, no, not even about the door." A paralytic was brought to him; and when those that were carrying him were not able to get near for the crowd, they let him down through the roof. When Jesus saw their faith, he at once addressed the man, "Son, thy sins are forgiven." It was probably what the man needed and longed for much more than bodily health. And when the scribes who were present reasoned in their hearts, saying, "Why doth this man speak thus? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God"; he demonstrated his power by an incontestable sign, showing that "the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins" (Mk. 2: 1-12). He repeated the same great lesson in the house of Simon the Pharisee,

when he turned to the woman who was a sinner, and who had just anointed his feet, with the gracious benediction, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Lk. 7:48). So he taught us and all men to pray, "Forgive us our debts," with the assurance that, if we cultivate the forgiving spirit in our hearts, our heavenly Father will forgive us (Mt. 6:14, 15).

The connection, in which this promise is given, suggests what Jesus meant by forgiveness. It is not simply the removal of the penalty, due to our transgressions. It involves the removal of the sin itself. So much is implied in the Greek word which is used to express the notion of forgiveness. That is *ἄφεσις*, and is derived from *ἀφιέναι*; and this means to send away, to remove. Wherever the verb is used, the object is the sin to be pardoned, not the penalty to be removed. Hence the form in which the promise, just referred to, is stated. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt. 6:14, 15). It does not mean that the ground of our forgiveness is found in the fact that we forgive those who have trespassed against us. That is found in God and in what Jesus Christ has accomplished for us. God forgives because of his own infinite compassion and love, not because of what we have done or can do. And yet his forgiveness is conditioned on the disposition which his forgiving love may be able to awaken in our hearts. When we

refuse to allow his love to awaken in us a like love, he does not and can not forgive; and that, not because his love is unwilling to grant us the boon, but because it can not. The forgiveness means primarily the removal of the sin; and that means that a new impulse of love must be awakened in our hearts. Where such an impulse is not awakened, forgiveness is impossible, and that because the individual chooses to hold on to his sin. This is brought out in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant. He had obtained mercy; but he refused to exercise the same mercy towards his fellow-servant; and hence the sentence of forgiveness, which had been pronounced in his favour, was immediately cancelled (Mt. 18: 32-35).

3. *His Holy Life*

Important as the removal of these obstacles was, that was only the negative side of the great work which Jesus had undertaken. After the obstacles were removed, the rule of God had to be established in the hearts of men, and the blessings which that rule alone can bring had to be realized in human experiences.

Inasmuch as the kingdom is the rule of God in the hearts of men, its founding had to do primarily with human personalities. Whatever blessings it may bring are such only as can be realized in the hearts and experiences of men. Hence the kingdom had to have its earthly origin in a human personality;

and human personalities became the seed for its propagation. "The good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom" (Mt. 13:38). The kingdom had its earthly origin in the life of its Founder. He realized the divine rule first of all in his own life; and he, moreover, realized in his own personal experience all the blessedness, which he so beautifully portrayed as belonging to the citizen of the kingdom.

Throughout the Synoptic narrative this side of the work and teaching of our Lord is constantly brought to our attention. How uniformly it is asserted that he is doing God's will! How constant is the reiteration that only those who do that will can have fellowship with him! The first glimpse which we get of his inner life reveals him fully consecrated to God's work. "Wist ye not that I must be about the things of my Father?" (Lk. 2:49). When he stood in the midst of the great crisis of his own life, he found his very meat and drink in every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Mt. 4:4). When finally he was confronted by the bitter cup of agony, and when he cried out, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," he yet added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt. 26:39). And that was only the crown and culmination of his entire life. It was the way in which he had lived.

And as Jesus had thus realized the divine rule in his own life, so he insisted on its realization in the lives of all who would come into fellowship with him. "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 in heaven. For many will say unto me in that day, did we not prophesy in thy name, and in thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity" (Mt. 7:21-23). Not only was the doing of the Father's will the pole star of his own life, he always insisted that all who would stand in any sort of fellowship with him should follow the same rule. "Who is my mother and my brethren? And looking round on them that sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mk. 3:31-35).

The same result is obtained, if we view the kingdom as the sum total of the blessings which the divine rule brings unto men. These are first of all found exemplified in his own personal life. The beatitudes are but a record of his own personal experience. There is not one of them which a close study of his life does not reveal. Take but a single one as an illustration. He had the blessedness of the pure in heart. He had the vision of God; and to such an extent that it was possible for him to claim that unique knowledge of God, which has made him the sole Mediator between God and men.

So too if we view the kingdom as the society of those who are under the divine rule. He was from

the beginning the head and centre of that mystic brotherhood, which has been dimly realizing the ideal of his own life. It was the spark of love which he kindled in their hearts, and which has been communicated from life to life since then, that lies at the basis of all that is God-like in human history.

It was hence in his own personality, in his holy life, and in the aspiration to holy living which he inspired in his followers and through them in men generally, that we find the beginnings of the kingdom of God on earth. His own loving obedience was the positive factor which lay at the basis of his great work in founding the kingdom, just as the forgiveness of sin was its negative factor. And when once we have realized fully how much was involved in that life of obedience, how much he had to do and suffer in obeying that will in the midst of a sinful world like this, and in inspiring other men to a life of obedience, we shall be in a position to understand what was implied in his mighty task.

4. *His Sacrificial Death*

How great this task of founding the kingdom through a life of loving obedience really was, we may see if we study the significance of his death. Though we have very little specific teaching on the subject, until we reach the scene at Cæsarea Philippi, and although there are only a few specific utterances with reference to it after that period, we have yet

enough to convince us that Jesus clearly foresaw the tragic issue of his life. He probably foresaw the necessity of his death long before he began to teach the disciples about it. Indeed, there are indications that he looked forward to some such outcome of his work from the very beginning. Certainly, as he approached the awful hour of his sacrifice, he had the consciousness that he could fulfil his great mission only by giving his life a ransom for many (Mk. 10:45). What was the significance which he himself attached to his death?

1) We note first of all what Jesus himself said about the *necessity* of his death. The saying belongs to an important turning-point in his life, and is recorded by all three of the Synoptics. It was at the end of that period of retirement, into which he had withdrawn with the Twelve for the purpose of giving them instruction and of training them for the great work and the great trials which awaited them. As the culmination of that period of training, he had just drawn from them a confession that he was the Christ. Then, in order that they might not entertain any false hopes, he "began to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Mt. 16:21). Each one of the Synoptists has that "must" (Mk. 8:31; Lk. 9:22). What does it signify?

There can be no question but that Jesus had come

to recognize that, if he would accomplish his great task, he must give his life. From that there was no escape. Still the question remains, How did he conceive of the necessity which was thus upon him? Was it a necessity growing out of the circumstances in which he found himself, a hard lot which his enemies forced upon him? Or was it a part of his God-given task, a work which he must perform in the accomplishment of his mission?

It is easy enough to affirm that it was the former. Jesus had incurred the implacable hatred of the scribes and Pharisees. His ideals were the polar opposite of theirs. They could not and they would not understand him. The message which he had declared unto them was an offense. They wanted a Messiah, were supremely anxious for his appearance, but a Messiah of a totally different kind from him. They looked upon his claims as blasphemous. As he would use no force to coerce them into his way of thinking, there remained only one alternative. Either he must convince them and so win them, or else they must crush him. It is probable that Jesus had long foreseen this issue, even if he did not have it consciously before his mind from the very beginning of his ministry; and after the Galilean crisis, it must have stood out in ever clearer and clearer form. To be true to his ideals, to be true to his mission as he conceived it, he must be prepared to endure the utmost which their opposition and hatred could bring upon him. And we thus get as the first point

in the significance of his death, that it partook of the nature of a *martyrdom*. He had to die in order that he might bear witness unto the truth.

But clear as this fact is, it is also just as clear that it does not exhaust this divine necessity for his death. As we follow the subsequent teaching, it becomes ever clearer that Jesus felt a deeper constraint than that. Somehow he felt that God had laid this necessity upon him, and that dying for men was part of his mighty task. This is perhaps brought out nowhere more clearly than in the prayer in the garden. Jesus was now under the very shadow of the cross. The unspeakable horror of the crucifixion filled his soul. His whole humanity shrank from the terrible ordeal. His soul was sorrowful unto death (Mt. 26:38). In his agony he cried out, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me." Yet he did not even in that hour allow that to become the supreme desire of his heart. He still wished above all else to do the Father's will. Hence the prayer closed with the fervent petition, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt. 26:39). And it was through that affirmation of the Father's will that the agony was lifted, and that he was enabled to go forward unflinchingly to meet the death which was before him. All that, however, implies that he saw a divine necessity for his death. He could realize the divine will with reference to him only by accepting the bitter cup and drinking it to its dregs. The necessity for his death was not simply

an outward necessity laid upon him by the circumstances in which he was placed; it was much more an inner necessity, growing out of the very nature of his high calling. To see how he conceived this inner necessity for his death we must proceed to his subsequent teaching on the subject.

2) Another of the great words on the death of Christ has been preserved in Mark 10:45. "For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (*δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἅντι πολλῶν*). The saying is not found in Luke; and, when we consider its similarity to the Pauline teaching on the death of Christ, this is rather surprising; yet there is no sufficient reason to question its being a genuine saying of Jesus.

In the interpretation of this passage, there are two words which claim special attention. They are the noun, *λύτρον*, translated "ransom"; and the preposition, *ἅντι*, translated "for."

Now, the noun, *λύτρον*, is found nowhere else in the New Testament, though its cognate verb, *λυτρόομαι*, to redeem, to liberate on the payment of a ransom, is found in Luke 24:21; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18; and as one of the components of the word, *ἀπολύτρωσις*, redemption, it is found in a number of passages, notably in Romans 3:24. It denotes the ransom price paid for a slave; so that our versions have given us the proper translation, when they have rendered the word by "ransom."

With reference to the preposition, *ἄντι*, this should be noted. It is found nowhere else in the New Testament in a similar connection with the death of Christ. It is often used to denote an exchange of some kind, and means "for," "instead of," "in place of," and so suggests the idea of substitution. Paul uniformly uses a different preposition to express the relation of Christ's death to the sinner. He uses either *ὑπὲρ* or *περὶ*, prepositions, which at least do not primarily suggest the idea of substitution, but that of interest. Where they are used the idea is that Christ died in our behalf, for our sake, rather than in our stead.

What then can be the meaning of the expression "to give his life a ransom for many?" There can scarcely be a doubt but that it conveys the idea in some form that Jesus gave his life as a ransom price to redeem us from a state of bondage. Neither can there be much doubt as to what this state of bondage is. It is the bondage to sin and death, in which we were all held. To redeem us from that state of bondage it cost him his life. That was the price which he had to pay; and short of that price our deliverance could not have been obtained. That, too, seems reasonably certain. But it is to be observed that is as far as the expression goes. At best the expression is metaphorical; and, as is true of metaphors generally, we can not "make it go on all fours." And just that is the difficulty with so many of the theories of the atonement. Men have tried to define what Jesus has left undefined. They have

tried to define the person to whom, or the object to which the ransom price was paid. For a thousand years the answer was that it was paid to the devil. Then, after Anselm, the theory was that it was paid to the honour of God. Later men thought that it was paid to the justice of God. None of these theories finds any support in this teaching of Jesus, except as they make the metaphor, which Jesus used, bear a load which he himself did not put on it. All that he says is that death is the price which he paid to redeem us from sin and death; and to that we can safely hold, no matter how far our theories of the atonement may fall short of a perfect explanation.

The passage should manifestly be studied in connection with its context. Jesus had just spoken the third distinct prediction of his death. He and the disciples were in the way, going up from Jericho to Jerusalem. The time was just before his last Passover. In spite of his repeated teaching on his approaching sufferings and death, his disciples continued to misunderstand him. James and John, supposing that he was about to set up his kingdom, had just made their ambitious request that they might sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left, in his kingdom. The rest were filled with indignation when they heard it. And then Jesus gave them that great lesson on what constitutes greatness in his kingdom. "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is

not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:42-45). That is, his death was part of that self-sacrificing ministry which he came into the world to render to us men. And that ministry consisted in seeking and saving that which was lost (Lk. 19:10). Inasmuch, however, as that was the great mission which had been given him by the Father, his death must have been part of the task which God had assigned him; so that the necessity for his death was something deeper than simply that growing out of his relation to the unbelieving hierarchy. His death, therefore, has a significance also beyond mere martyrdom.

3) There is another saying, in which Jesus indicates his conception of the significance of his death. According to the form of the logion in Matthew, he connects it with the forgiveness of sins. When he instituted the Lord's Supper, in taking the cup he said, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins" (Mt. 26:27, 28).

Now, it is true that these words, like all the others connected with the institution of the Supper, have been the subject of much controversy. Matthew is the only one who has the words "unto remission of sins." Mark says, "This is my blood of the cove-

nant, which is shed for many" (Mk. 14:24); and Luke's statement is very similar, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you" (Lk. 22:20). Paul reports the words in this form, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Cor. 11:25). And because the words, "unto remission of sins," are thus omitted in all the other sources, it has been argued that they are not a part of what Jesus originally said, but an interpretative gloss added by the first Evangelist.

Several things, however, should be noted. According to all four of the witnesses the blood is connected with the idea of the covenant. Luke says "the new covenant"; but the best manuscript authorities omit "new"; and it is probable that we ought to read the passage without the adjective. But the idea is not thereby altered. The covenant contemplated can be none other than a new covenant, distinct from the old which was made with Moses. It was to be a covenant inaugurating the new time, in which the kingdom should be established among men. It can not well be conceived as any other than that new covenant, spoken of by Jeremiah. "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their hearts will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33). And just as the first covenant was inaugurated by the blood of the sacrificial victim, so was it to be with the second. But

here Jesus was himself the victim, and his blood was that through which the covenant was constituted.

But what was the purpose which the blood subserved in the institution of the first covenant? The Epistle to the Hebrews connects it with cleansing. "For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleansing of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works" (Heb. 9:13, 14). And that is but in harmony with the whole tenor of the Old Testament. Blood was the means by which atonement was made. "And Aaron shall make atonement upon the horns of it (i.e., the altar) once in the year; with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement once in the year shall he make atonement for it throughout your generations" (Ex. 30:10). So that even if we should admit that the words "unto remission of sins" are an interpretative gloss of the first Evangelist, we should still have to contend that it is a correct interpretation. Just as "new" in the statement contained in Luke is a correct interpretation of the kind of covenant which is intended, so is this addition in Matthew a correct statement of the purpose of the shedding of the blood.

We hence get a twofold result. Jesus conceived of his death as the inauguration of the new covenant, the ushering in of the kingdom; and he thought of

it as a means by which forgiveness of sins was obtained for the many. How his death was to accomplish these results, he does not undertake to tell. He is content to point out the fact; the explanation he leaves to the church to think out for herself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But the facts are writ large, and deserve our most careful consideration, even though the church has hitherto failed to formulate an altogether satisfactory theory as to the connection between his death and the forgiveness of sins.

5. *Establishing the Church*

Did Jesus also found a church? Evidently the church, as the historical embodiment of that ideal society, in which the rule of God in the hearts of men was to be realized, was a necessity; and in the course of history, it was organized immediately after the day of Pentecost. Did Jesus himself lay its foundations? And was it in accordance with his purpose that the kingdom should be realized through such an outward embodiment?

It is a singular fact that, although Jesus constantly speaks of the kingdom, he speaks of the church only twice. As we pointed out before, the kingdom is the one great theme of all his teaching in the Synoptic Gospels. There are only two passages in which the word church occurs; and those are singularly enough found only in Matthew. Because of

these facts, some have doubted whether Jesus himself ever actually used the word, or whether he had any thought of founding a church. We shall hence have to examine the passages themselves, and raise the question as to the probable source or sources from which the author of the First Gospel derived them.

The first passage is found in Matthew 16:18, 19. "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto 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." Where does it come from? Mark does not have it; and hence we can not trace it back through him to the preaching of Peter. Luke does not have it; and hence some have concluded that it can not have belonged to Q, the second of the common sources back of the First and Third Gospels. If the theory, on which Harnack proceeds in his reconstruction of the Q source, is correct, namely, that only so much of the discourse material as is found in both Matthew and Luke can be attributed to it, then those who have taken this position are no doubt right. But that theory has been challenged, and we believe with good reason. If Mark had been lost, as was the document in which that Q source was embodied, and Q had been preserved, we should make a sorry mess of it, if we attempted to reconstruct his Gospel from the common

narrative material which has been preserved in Matthew and Luke. As a matter of fact, we know that the two evangelists did not both embody the whole of Mark; and why should we suppose that they have both embodied the whole of Q? It is much more reasonable to suppose that, as in the case of Mark, they have each preserved some of the material of that source which the other does not have; that the theory of Archdeacon Allen, which he has consistently carried out in his Commentary on Matthew, is correct; and that this passage is also from the Q source, or as he prefers to say, from the Logia of Matthew. Or if there should be a valid objection to that view, why may not the author of the First Gospel be credited with having a special source here, as he certainly had at some other places? Such a view is surely more reasonable than to assume that he has invented the saying for dogmatic or ecclesiastical purposes. And the words can certainly not be excluded on any textual ground. There are no important manuscript authorities which omit the passage; and there is no escape from the conclusion that it formed a part of the First Gospel as originally written.

But granting that the passage represents a genuine saying of Jesus, what does it mean? Is the word church to be understood in its later ecclesiastical sense, as an outward institution with a visible organization, and with certain divinely established offices? Or are we to think of it primarily as an

invisible, spiritual entity, working itself out through a brotherhood to an ideal society? That Jesus did not have the former in mind seems evident from what he says about the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He committed to the disciples themselves the power to bind and to loose; and that, according to the current conception of the Jews, meant authority to permit and to forbid. What they should permit in the way of outward organization, that should have validity; and what they should in like manner forbid, that should be invalid. But he himself took steps to gather together the spiritual brotherhood, in which that life of love, which is the informing and inspiring principle of the ideal society, is gradually finding its realization. Without such a brotherhood, his kingdom on earth is simply unthinkable; and in this sense certainly we must hold that Jesus both intended to establish a church, and that he actually did establish it. His entire ministry, especially his calling and training of the Twelve, were in a most real sense the founding of the church.

A question as to the manner in which he built his church still remains. Peter had just made his great confession. Jesus had just said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church" (Mt. 16: 17, 18). What is meant by "this rock"?

The Roman Church has answered that it means

Peter, and that he was thereby constituted the official head of the church. Protestants have denied the interpretation, and they have made the rock to mean the faith which he had just confessed. It is probable that neither interpretation is entirely correct, and that we must combine the two to get the real meaning of Jesus. The church is built up of living stones; and, as its walls consist of living personalities, so we must say of the foundation. Jesus did not build his church on abstract principles, but on living personalities. Hence the rock denotes Peter, but not Peter simply as an individual, but as the embodiment of the faith which he had just confessed. As soon as he allowed that faith to become dimmed by the assertion of his self-will as over against the will of Christ, Jesus said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block to me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men" (Mt. 16:23). But as the living embodiment of the faith which he had just confessed, and just so far as he was a living embodiment of that faith, he was the rock on which Jesus built his church. But the same distinction belonged also to all the rest in that company. It is probable that Peter simply acted as the spokesman for the rest; and if so, the rest must be included in the blessing which Jesus pronounced on him. Or if Peter was in advance of the rest, he had a preëminence over them only in so far as his faith had attained a clearer insight than theirs. As soon as they came to share

his faith, they shared his blessedness and his distinction.

As to the other passage in which the word church occurs (Mt. 18:15-17), not much needs to be said. It likewise means the spiritual brotherhood, in which the life of love is being realized. It contains directions how an erring brother may be reclaimed. "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone." It is what the spirit of love dictates. "If he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." He is restored to the fellowship of the brotherhood. "But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established." By implication it is, of course, to be added, if he hear them thou hast gained thy brother. The purpose of the admonition is to win the brother from his evil ways. "And if he refuse to hear them, tell it to the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." If in all these kind and loving admonitions, he refuse to forsake his sin, you are to let him go his way, as you do a Gentile or a publican. But notice, not a word is said about ecclesiastical censures or excommunication. Those came in later through the church's power to bind and to loose; but Jesus says nothing about them. The church for him is the brotherhood; and her function is to exercise that loving ministry by which the reign of God is to be established in the hearts of men.

IX

THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

EVERY kingdom must have a king. So must every kingdom have subjects or citizens. In the kingdom of heaven, the Lord is King. Who are the citizens?

In accordance with our definition of the kingdom, the citizens are those who are under the divine rule, who are in the enjoyment of the blessings which that rule brings, and who belong to that spiritual commonwealth which is constituted by the common possessions which the enjoyment of those blessings implies. Has Jesus more definitely described those of whom these things may be affirmed?

The Sermon on the Mount is the *Magna Charta* of the kingdom; and, while the word citizen does not occur in it, it describes, as is done nowhere else, who and what those are who have been admitted to the privileges and blessings of the kingdom. By noting what is said of the character of those of whom these things are said, we may ascertain who belongs to the kingdom, and who may hence be described as the citizens of the kingdom.

1. *That Which Constitutes the Citizen Is Character*

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus unfolds the nature and the laws of the kingdom of heaven. In doing so, he begins with a description of the character of its citizens. This is really the significance of the beatitudes. As Bishop Charles Gore puts it, "They (i.e., the beatitudes) are a description of the character of the citizen of the kingdom; that is, the character of the man who, enjoying the freedom of the kingdom of God, has entered into the inheritance of true blessedness. Observe, we have a description of a certain character, not of certain acts. Christ requires us, not to do such and such things, but to be such and such people."¹

It is at this point that the teaching of Jesus differs very widely from the conceptions which prevailed in his day. According to the Jewish conception, that which conferred upon a man the right of citizenship in the kingdom of God was the accident of birth. Descent from Abraham was, according to them, the characteristic thing in a member of the Jewish commonwealth. In exceptional cases, the acceptance of a creed and the observance of a rite might confer the same prerogative. But no one ever thought of character as the sole condition on which a man might be admitted to the rights of Jewish citizenship; and no one ever thought of making the lack of a suitable character the reason for exclusion from it. The same

¹ *The Sermon on the Mount*, p. 15.

thing held true of the Roman world. A man might have the right of citizenship, because he was born a freeman; he might have the right conferred upon him because of distinguished services to the empire; or it might be purchased by a sum of money (Acts 22:28). Mere character, except in the case of distinguished services to the empire, counted for very little. The veriest wretch might be a citizen; nor would the foulest crimes necessarily deprive a man of his citizenship. Not so with the kingdom which Jesus came to establish. Here for the first time in the history of mankind character was made the essential thing. Birth counts only in so far as a child, born of godly parents, has a good heredity and the guaranty of a careful training in the formation of a worthy character. Before the blessings, which belong to that heredity, can really count to make one a citizen of the kingdom, they must be freely accepted and appropriated by the individual himself. And in order that one may continue to live in the enjoyment of the rights and privileges of this citizenship, he must maintain that godly character. So on the other side. Only the sullyng of that character can abridge the rights which that citizenship confers; and only the utter loss of it can exclude any one from the kingdom.

2. *What This Character Is*

In describing the character of the citizen of the kingdom, Jesus enumerates certain qualities which

enter into its composition. We do not have here seven different characters, to be sought in so many different persons, but seven different characteristic qualities which go to make up the one character of the citizen. Just as the different colours of the solar spectrum are not so many different rays of the sun, but only the different constituents of the one white light, so are these seven qualities simply the constituents of the one Christian character.

Jesus begins his description by saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." In Luke the statement is, "Blessed are ye poor," with special reference to the actual condition of the disciples at the time. But not all who are poor in this world's goods are blessed, neither is such poverty a necessary passport into the kingdom. The greed and the rapacity of the rich may be, and often are, found in conjunction with actual poverty. What Jesus had reference to is a quality of spirit, and not simply an outward condition; and hence the form of the beatitude in Matthew must be taken as the interpretation of what is meant in Luke. It is poverty of spirit that counts; and by that is primarily meant inward detachment from the world and the things of the world. A man may possess riches in such a way as if he had them not. That is, he holds them as a trust from God; and he uses them for God and for his fellow-men. He does not allow his life to become entangled by them in such a way as to become dependent on them for his true happiness. He has so consecrated them to

God that he is able at any time to give them up, if God so wills. And with this detachment from outward possessions goes an inward quality of spirit, which recognizes that a man is not sufficient unto himself, but is dependent for his true welfare on the grace of God. It is the opposite of that self-sufficiency, which so often accompanies the possession of wealth, and which leads a man to imagine that he can rely on his own strength. It leads him to recognize that he has needs which neither he nor the world can supply, that of himself he is nothing.

When a man comes to realize this, he naturally mourns over his condition. Hence the second beatitude follows: "Blessed are they that mourn." Ordinarily we associate mourning with sorrow, and we do not think of making it a condition for true happiness. Yet when it springs out of a recognition of our real condition, of our own insufficiency, and when it brings with it a sense of the fact that so much of our insufficiency is due to our unworthiness and sin, it becomes a necessary condition for the realization of the kingdom in our hearts. Immersed in sin, as we are, and laden with guilt, we need first of all forgiveness; and only when our sin is taken out of the way can we begin to live under God's rule. And the first prerequisite to forgiveness is that we should learn to know and to repent of our sins. But no one ever repents who does not mourn over his sins.

Poverty of spirit and mourning for sin lead to meekness. This is the opposite of that spirit, so

constantly found in men of the self-sufficient type, which is ever ready to stand up for one's own, for one's rights and possessions. It is the quality of spirit which leads a man to suffer wrong without bitterness or the desire for revenge. It recognizes the wrongs and inequalities, which seem to be inseparable from this present life; it bears the resulting injustices patiently and submissively; and it looks to God for the rectification of the ills which now exist.

Next follows hungering and thirsting after righteousness. When one recognizes his true condition, when one truly mourns his unworthiness and his spiritual destitution, and when one realizes the actual condition of the world in which he lives so as to bear his share of the ills inseparable from the present state without murmuring, he soon begins to long for a higher and better state both for his inner life and for the world in which he lives. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness, as a weary traveller in the desert hungers and thirsts after the good things of the fertile land. Luke here again reports Jesus as saying, "Blessed are ye that hunger now," referring to the actual condition of the disciples, to their outward destitution; and when hunger and thirst are endured for the sake of enabling one to do his part in righting the ills of life, there is glory and blessedness in it. But again the blessedness of such a condition depends on the cause which has produced the want. Want which is the result of sin or wasteful-

ness is not blessed, nor is it a mark of a true character. The quality referred to again is one of the spirit—an inner longing, which amounts to an actual hunger and thirst after a state of righteousness, in which the ills of the present shall be righted.

The man in whom are found the above characteristics will be merciful. He will pity the unfortunate and the sinful; but his feeling with reference to them will not exhaust itself in sentimental commiseration. It will stir him on to action, to bring relief to the suffering. The man who realizes his weakness and shortcoming, who really mourns over his own deficiency, who bears the ills and the inequalities of life without murmuring or the desire for revenge, and who is sincerely in earnest in his desire for a better state of things, will not harshly condemn others in their shortcomings. He will be merciful in his dealings with them. Wherever possible, he will labour to turn men from their sins; and he will be slow to condemn and ready to forgive. In all cases he will strive to mitigate the penalties and the sufferings which his fellow-men bring upon themselves by their sins.

And all this will have a most powerful influence upon his own life. It will have a tendency to cleanse the springs of action, so that his heart will become clean; and by the heart here we mean, not simply the feelings and the affections, but the whole inner man. He will by and by become a man of pure

heart. And that, as used by Jesus in this Sermon on the Mount, means much more than we usually make it mean. Generally when men speak of purity of heart they mean absence of lustful desire, especially sexual desire. That is doubtless included; but it is by no means all of it. It means rather that the whole inner man becomes so attuned to the will of God that evil desires of all kinds are banished. The heart, as denoting the inner man, our inmost and deepest part, is the spring of our actions, the prolific source out of which come thoughts, feelings, and volitions. By nature it is evil, so that only those things enumerated in Mark 7:20-23, evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness, come out of it. But when the heart is pure, this entire spring of action is cleansed, so that none of these evil things continue to have their lodging place there.

And finally such men become peacemakers. Men are at enmity with each other and with God, because they are sinful and evil. Because men are so much attached to the things of the world, because they are so self-sufficient, because they are ever ready to stand up for their rights, because they are so largely satisfied with the world as it is, because they have so little mercy for each other in their weaknesses and sins, and because in their hearts they are ever hatching out schemes of plunder and evil, the world is topsy-turvy, and men are continually at war with

each other. And only the man who has begun to realize the opposite of all this in himself, can begin to exercise an influence which makes for peace. He can attain to that blessed state in his own life only when he has made his peace with God; but having made peace with God, he is in a position where he can lead others to God, and help men to become reconciled to each other.

It will thus be seen that these qualities, which Jesus describes, hang together. There is a wonderful logical connection between them. One naturally grows out of the other. Together they form that perfect character, which the citizen of the kingdom must acquire.

3. *Entering the Kingdom*

And all this now leads us to inquire, how such a character may be acquired. No man is born with it, just as no man is by nature born into the kingdom. We may ascertain how such a character is formed, if we note what Jesus has to say about entering the kingdom of God.

According to Mark, Jesus began his ministry with the proclamation of the presence of the kingdom of God; and he made that the ground for the twofold challenge, "Repent ye, and believe in the gospel" (Mk. 1:15). This challenge presents the twofold condition on which alone it was possible for the kingdom to find a place in the hearts of men. Repent-

ance and faith were hence from the very beginning made the conditions for entering the kingdom.

1) What did Jesus mean by repentance? The Greek word, *μετάνοια*, implies a change of mind. One only needs to recall our Lord's teaching on the actual condition of man in order to realize what sort of a change is intended. As we saw, Jesus looked upon man as sinful and evil. He is in a depraved and lost condition. This depravity has extended to his entire being, so that there is no part of it free from the taint. The taint, moreover, has extended to all men, so that all, even the holiest of us, have need constantly to pray, "Forgive us our debts." And the depravity is of such a kind that the very heart of man, his inmost and deepest self, has become polluted. Only evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, etc., come out of it, so long as man is in his natural condition. His whole mind is wrong. It has found its chief desire, its highest good, in the things of this world; and hence it is at enmity with God. Now, when Jesus called upon men to repent, he did not mean merely that they should experience a certain sentimental sorrow for their sins; he meant that they should change their minds with reference to the one great end of life, that they should undergo such an inward change as to find their chief and their highest good, no longer in the world and the things of the world, but in God and in his kingdom.

This interpretation is supported by the word which

Jesus used in another connection to denote the same idea. When they were in the way, returning from Cæsarea Philippi, the disciples had disputed about who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Mk. 9:33-37). After they had entered Capernaum, Jesus asked them about their dispute; and he made it the text for a much-needed lesson. He took a little child, and set him in the midst; and, according to Matthew, he said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 18:3). The Greek for turn is *στραφῆτε*, and it is properly translated "turn," as in the Revised Version, and not "be converted," as in the Authorized Version. It implies a turning from one state to another. Where the natural mind is fixed on the world, it must turn and become fixed on God. In the case immediately under discussion, the disciples were moved by worldly ambition. They thought the kingdom of God was about to be ushered in. They had just confessed Jesus as the Messiah; and, although he had taken occasion immediately to warn them against a wrong conception, they had continued to think only of an earthly kingdom. They were making their calculations as to the positions which they were to occupy. Their minds were filled with the thought of earthly glory and worldly good. Hence Jesus told them that, unless they turned from that sort of ambition and became with reference to all that which they had in their minds

as a little child, they could not so much as enter the kingdom.

Very much the same thought is presented in the teaching of Matthew 6:19-34. Jesus is there urging the necessity of trust in our heavenly Father. He tells the disciples not to lay up for themselves treasures upon earth. Their chief concern should not be food and raiment, and the things of this present life. They should seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And then, after presenting this teaching in the most beautiful comparisons, Jesus goes on to point out the difference between the Christian and the pagan, between the citizen of the kingdom and the citizen of this world. "For after all these things (i.e., food and raiment, and the things of the present life) do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt. 6:32, 33). As the Jew was wont to divide the whole human race into two classes, the children of Abraham and the rest of mankind, whom he called Gentiles; so does Jesus here divide the race into two classes, disciples or Christians and Gentiles or pagans. Now the difference between the two is that the latter has made the world and the things of the world his chief end; while the former has set his heart on the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The pagan lives for the world and the things of the world; the true Christian lives for God and for his

kingdom. Now, before the pagan, whether he be found in Christian or in heathen lands, can become a true Christian, a genuine citizen of the kingdom of God, he must change his mind; he must turn about in the inmost centre of his being; he must learn to place the kingdom of God into the place of chief end for his entire existence.

2) With repentance Jesus joins faith. "Repent and believe in the gospel." The two are inseparably conjoined. The latter is the positive condition, without which the former is impossible.

We have said that repentance is the turning from sin to holiness and righteousness; it is the changing of one's mind with reference to the true aim and end of life; it implies the putting of the kingdom of God, instead of the world, into the first place in our affections. But before this can be done, we must learn to recognize God and his kingdom as the highest good. A man always puts that which appeals to him as the highest good into the first place in his affections. For that he lives and strives. If he lives for the world and for the things of the world, it is because in his eyes these things are really of greater value for his true life than anything else; and before he can be persuaded to put into their place the kingdom of God and his righteousness, he must be enabled to see that these are really a higher good than those. In other words, a man always lives for that in which he believes. If he believes in the world, as that which is able to satisfy his needs and desires,

he will make that his chief end, and he will live for it. If on the other hand he believes in God and his kingdom, as that which is able to satisfy his deepest need and to fulfil his most ardent longings, he will make them the chief end of his being and he will live for them.

An illustration of this truth we find in the case of the rich young ruler, who came running to Jesus, saying, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life" (Mk. 10:17). With marvellous insight Jesus laid his finger on the one thing that was lacking. The young man was religious and moral, as he understood religion and morality; but he had never learned what demands true religion really makes. He was rich, and he believed in his riches as a very real good. In fact, when it came to the test, it was found that in his eyes his wealth was of greater value than the kingdom of God. Hence when Jesus told him to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor, he was offended and went away deeply wounded. What he really lacked was the insight of faith to recognize God and his kingdom as the highest good. With all his apparent zeal for eternal life, he, deep down in his heart, believed the transitory things of this present life to be a greater good than the imperishable things of heaven. His failure was a failure first of all of faith; and hence he failed to repent, to turn, to be converted.

It is thus apparent how faith is the positive side

of the process by which a man gains entrance into the kingdom; and also how repentance, which is the negative side, naturally grows out of it. Faith is the motive power which leads a man to turn from sin and the world to God. As such two other things are implied.

a) If faith recognizes God as the highest good, it begets perfect trust in him. He is spirit and he is invisible. The things which we need for this life are largely material and visible; and because they are thus visible and tangible, we are in danger of imagining that we must make them our chief care. They seem to be nearest to us and most necessary. Now, before we can give ourselves, with a whole-hearted consecration, to the invisible and the eternal, we must learn to trust God for that which we put into the secondary place. And just that is the lesson which Jesus teaches. "Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they?" (Mt. 6:25, 26).

b) Above we noted that the kingdom is a gift as well as a task,—in fact, a gift before it can become a task. The will of God, as our highest good, must enter our wills, as an informing power, before

we can obey it. The kingdom of God, as a world of supernatural and heavenly powers, must first of all descend and lay hold of our lives, before we can lay hold of it as a good to be appropriated. And the power which thus lays hold of it, or rather the power which opens thus to receive this heavenly gift, is faith. It not simply recognizes the kingdom as our highest good; but in as far as it is a good which must be received and appropriated by us, faith is the faculty by which we receive it.

4. *True Blessedness*

Jesus begins his description of the character of the citizen of the kingdom by calling attention to the blessedness of the man who is in possession of it. He assumes what every Jew had taken for granted, and what all of us now take for granted, namely, that the life of the kingdom is blessed, or, as we would likely say, happy. But it is to be noted, Jesus does not make happiness the chief end of the kingdom, nor the chief end for which a man ought to live. That, as we just saw, is righteousness (Mt. 6:33). But he takes it for granted that, when any one has attained to the chief end of his existence, when he has attained the righteousness of the kingdom, he will be happy.

Another fact should be noted. Jesus' idea of blessedness differs from that which was held by the Jews. They made happiness to consist in a man's

circumstances, in his position, his influence, his possessions. Jesus makes happiness dependent on character. Not what a man has, but what he is, determines his blessedness.

Now, just as Jesus analyzed the character of the citizen of the kingdom into its constituent elements, so he gives in connection with each of them the peculiar kind of bliss which it brings.

The poor in spirit are blessed; "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Heaven is where God is; and God is everywhere. "Closer is he than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." Like the air we breathe, he is round and about us everywhere, above, beneath, around; and just as the air enters the lung when there is nothing there to obstruct it, so does he enter the heart, when emptied of sin and the world. With the self-emptying which always comes with true poverty of spirit, there comes that divine infilling which brings the kingdom of heaven with it.

They that mourn are blessed; "for they shall be comforted." They mourn their imperfect and sinful condition; but that is the very attitude of heart needed for forgiveness. And with forgiveness there comes a new status in which the individual is clothed upon with a righteousness which is from God. And however imperfectly he may realize all that is involved in that blessed state, he can even now realize enough of it to have a foretaste of its joy.

The meek are blessed; "for they shall inherit the earth." A seeming contradiction, one is apt to ex-

claim. The meek endure wrong patiently, he does not forever stand up for his rights but suffers injustice,—the very way to lose all of the world that one may seem to possess. Yet Jesus says, the meek shall inherit the earth. How? The man who elbows his way to the front, who refuses to bear his share of the inequalities of life, and who always looks out for “number one,” may seem to succeed for a time. He may even seem to be climbing up towards the top. But such a man always elbows his way into much that is not strictly his own; and in the long run, he is compelled to take a lower room. On the other hand, the man who meekly takes the place which God in his providence gives him will by and by hear the welcome call, “Friend, Go up higher.”

The man who hungers and thirsts after righteousness will be filled. And the reason is not hard to find. His earnest longing is an indication that inwardly he is already in harmony with the will of God. Outwardly he may fall far short of what he ought to be; but inwardly he is in accord with the will of God; and that is the best guaranty that he will be so finally in his outward life.

The exercise of mercy also brings the blessedness of mercy. Mercy is twice blessed; it blesses him that gives, and him that takes; only he who gives receives the richer blessing. The exercise of mercy on his part only shows that God’s love has already found lodgment in his heart; and as that love is as infinite as God himself, it bestows richer gifts the

more the heart becomes attuned to its sweet influence.

The pure in heart shall see God. He attains to the beatific vision. Only that eye can see light which has the capacity of responding to the solar ray. All eyes which have not that capacity are blind. So of our spiritual vision. That we may see the truth, and so ultimately see God, we must have within us the capacity of responding to the truth. We must have within ourselves that which is like God; and because God is pure, we must be pure in the very inmost depths of our being if we would see him. And this vision of God is the beatific vision, the supreme blessedness. Our happiness now is always bound up with the enjoyment of some form of the true, the beautiful, or the good. But the true, the beautiful, and the good are only the forms in which God manifests himself. He is the absolute truth; he is the altogether beautiful; he is the supreme good. Hence when we shall see him face to face, we shall see the true, the beautiful, and the good, in the highest, the absolute form, shining upon us in a single unbroken ray. And when once we are strong enough and pure enough to have that vision, we shall have attained unto the perfection of blessedness.

The peacemakers are blessed; "for they shall be called the children of God." Being like God in the purity of their hearts, reproducing in their lives the righteousness, mercy, and peace of God, they become

partakers of his very nature. They become children of God, because they now begin to realize the high ideal of their lives, responding to his love and fulfilling his will.

5. *The Citizen of the Kingdom in Relation to the World*

What now, it may next be asked, is the relation of the citizen of the kingdom to the world? Is not the character here portrayed too ideal to be of any practical value in a world like this? In reply to this question, Bishop Gore has finely said, "Now our Lord at once anticipates this kind of argument. He says at once, as it were, No, you are to help men by being unlike them. You are to help men, not by offering them a character which they shall feel to be a little more respectable than their own, but by offering them a character filled with the love of God. They may mock it for a while; but in the 'day of visitation,' in the day when trouble comes, in the day when they are thrown back on what lies back of respectability, in the day when first principles emerge, they will glorify God for the example you have given them. They will turn to you then, because they will feel that you have something to show them that will really hold water, something that is really and eternally worth having."¹

To point out the place which the man, with the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

character above described, holds in the world, Jesus uses two metaphors. "Ye are the *salt* of the earth." "Ye are the *light* of the world" (Mt. 5:13, 14). The world, as such, is corrupt, and is sinking into decay. As salt has the property of preserving food, so has the Christian character the quality of keeping the world from corruption. And the way in which it accomplishes this great end is by ever holding up before it a higher and purer ideal. The genuine Christian has caught a vision of God, of his righteousness and truth. By it he has received an inner illumination by which he is enabled to see things in the right relation. He has learned to know what is the highest good, and with it he has learned to put first things first. And that is what gives him his abiding influence. Where all others seem to be plunged into the darkness of eternal night, he stands as a living witness to that which is higher and better.

Both the metaphors under consideration imply that, as the citizen of the kingdom has been blessed, so he is to become a blessing. God has blessed him, not primarily as a favourite, but as a servant, to diffuse his light among all with whom he is associated. Hence the exhortation follows, "Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:16). The Jews, under the old economy, had also been blessed; but their misery was that they fancied themselves to be the favourites of Jehovah, and so tried to keep the blessings to themselves. As

with Abraham, God had blessed them that they might be a blessing (Gen. 12: 2, 3); and the same holds true of the Christian. "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house" (Mt. 6: 14, 15). It is the property of light to shine; and the only way its rays can be extinguished is by extinguishing the light itself. So the Christian character can remain Christian only where it shows itself in good works, and where it stands as a perpetual witness to the light and truth of God.

Hence the citizen of the kingdom stands in the world as the medium through which the light and the truth of the revelation of Jesus are to be propagated. Hence also the last word which Jesus is reported to have spoken to the disciples. "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28: 18-20). Whatever may be said on critical grounds with reference to the genuineness of that statement, there can be no doubt that it expresses the mind of Jesus with reference to the relation of the disciple to the world. He is its preserver; he is its light and its guide; and if he fails to exercise his high commission, there is no

other way by which corruption may be warded off. "If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men" (Mt. 6:13). It can neither renew itself, nor can it be renewed by any power outside of itself. So with the Christian character. If once it is lost it can not be regained. It can neither recover itself, nor can it save the world.

To accomplish this high and holy mission, the citizen of the kingdom must have a spiritual and heavenly mind. He must not be worldly minded. On this Jesus insisted again and again. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through and steal: for where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:19-21). To lay up treasures in heaven means to be engaged in the pursuit of the things which pertain to the kingdom. To be engaged in the pursuit of the things that belong to this world is to lay up treasures upon earth; and that, as we saw above, is characteristic of the pagan spirit. Neither is it possible to divide one's time and affections between the things of the kingdom and the things of the world; for "no man can serve two masters." "Ye can not serve God and mammon" (Mt. 6:24). The eye must be single, if the

body is to be full of light. So the life must be characterized by a whole-hearted devotion to the kingdom, if it is to be indeed a light in the midst of a dark and benighted world.

Does this now mean that the citizen of the kingdom must renounce all riches and embrace a voluntary poverty? A hasty reading of the story of the rich young man might lead to such a conclusion. Jesus told him to go and sell all that he had and give it to the poor, and then to come and follow him (Mk. 10:21). But alongside of that must be placed the story of Zacchæus, who though he voluntarily gave half his goods to the poor, and though he volunteered to restore fourfold whatsoever he had taken from any one wrongfully, yet is not told to part with the rest of his property. He continued in the possession of a large part of his wealth; and he was rich. No; while Jesus warned against the dangers of wealth, he did not teach that the mere possession of it is in itself ruinous to the Christian character. According to a reading, contained in many manuscripts, it is not the *possession* of riches, but the *trust* in them that is the hindrance (Mk. 10:24). Even if that be a gloss, it undoubtedly is a correct interpretation. Jesus does not demand actual poverty, but poverty of spirit—that inward detachment from the world and the things of the world, which enables one to possess the things of the world as a trust from God. And such possession is not inconsistent with a spiritual and heavenly mind.

X

THE LIFE OF THE KINGDOM

IN the last chapter we studied the character of the citizen of the kingdom. We found it to be made up of elements and characteristics which are totally different from those which made up the characters of the men who were admired by all in the Saviour's day. We quote Bishop Gore once more. "The character of the citizens of the new kingdom described by our Lord was so surprising, so paradoxical, that it was inevitable that the question should arise, Was he a revolutionary who had come to upset and destroy all the old law—was this a revolutionary movement in the moral and religious world? To this question, then, our Lord directly addressed himself. The rest of the first chapter of the Sermon on the Mount—Matthew 5:17 to the end—is simply a statement of the relation in which the new righteousness, this righteousness of the new kingdom, stands to the old righteousness of the Mosaic law."¹

1. *The True Righteousness*

In proceeding now to study Jesus' conception of righteousness, we note two things: that he em-

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

phasizes the continuity between the Mosaic law and his own teaching; and secondly, that he is equally emphatic in pointing out how the new righteousness of the kingdom surpasses and supersedes the righteousness of the Old Testament.

1) Jesus says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." He recognizes that both the law and the prophets are part of the revelation which God made to his people; and that they hence contain elements which are immutable and divine. "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Mt. 5:17, 18). But the precepts of that old law had been given to an immature race and had been adapted to its circumstances and needs. It had been given "by divers portions and in divers manners" (Heb. 1:1). It was given in such portions and in such forms as the people were prepared to receive. It contained eternal and immutable truths; but these were so expressed as suited the imperfect condition of the people. Hence what was needed was not the destruction of the law or the prophets, but their fulfilment.

We may well imagine the wonder with which even the disciples must at first have received this announcement that their law needed fulfilment. Was not the law of the Lord perfect, as they had been taught? (Ps. 19:7). Had it not been given to them

by God? And was it not divine? How then could it need fulfilment?

What is meant by fulfilment may be seen, if we bear in mind what was just said about the manner in which the law was given. It was given "by divers portions and in divers manners." The people were not prepared to receive the full-orbed revelation of God. He revealed only so much of his glory as they were prepared to behold. As Jesus pointed out in the subsequent portions of this chapter, every revelation was a substantial advance on what the people had known before; but it was still partial, and so imperfect, because it was adapted to the peculiar needs of the people at the time. Now, what was needed was that the truth, which was contained in every form of this partial revelation, should be conserved in the new revelation, but expressed in such a form as to be suited to the needs of all peoples and all times. Or to put it in another form. Though the truth contained in every expression of the law was divine and immutable, it was given in the form of precepts which had reference to particular forms of outward activity. The law was throughout negative, saying, thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not do that. It was not given in the form of a principle which laid hold of the inner life, and controlled the conduct from within. It had not been written in the heart in the form of an all-controlling motive which made the man a law unto himself. But just that is what Jesus undertook to do. He penetrated be-

yond the outward precept, and laid hold on the principle out of which the precept had grown. He sought, not primarily to control the conduct from without, but to shape it from within by changing the impulses of the heart. And when that one all-comprehensive principle, out of which all the negative precepts of the old law had grown, had found expression, and when it had been written in the heart, the law itself had reached its fulfilment, and the forms in which it had found expression were ready to pass away.

2) But all this now implies the idea of supersession. Excellent and divine as the old law was, it had to give way to something higher and better. This Jesus illustrated by referring first of all to the typical representatives of the old righteousness, and then by pointing out the inner principle which underlies its several precepts.

The old righteousness had found its typical representatives in the scribes and Pharisees of his day. They were the religious people, to whom men generally looked up as correct in life and conduct. They had made a careful study of the law; and they had made an effort to obey it, as they understood it. Yet Jesus said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5: 20). The difficulty with them was that they emphasized the letter, and neglected the spirit. They aimed at outward conformity to pre-

cept; they did not grasp the principles, out of which the precepts had grown. Hence while their conduct might be formally correct, their hearts remained cold and selfish. Hence also Jesus complained of them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honoureth me with their lips,
 But their heart is far from me.
 In vain do they worship me,
 Teaching as their doctrine the precepts of men."
 (Mk. 7:6, 7.)

In showing how the old righteousness of the law has been superseded by the new righteousness of the kingdom, Jesus threw his teaching into a concrete form. He used illustrations to set forth his meaning. A glance at each of these will enable us to grasp his thought.

He begins with the law of murder. The scribes and Pharisees had interpreted the law in such a way as to make murder to consist in the overt act. Jesus pointed out that the violation of the law really consists in that disposition of the heart out of which the act grows. Anger exposes a man to judgment; while the open expression of the angry feeling, whether in word or deed, aggravates the offense.

In the case of adultery, the sin consists in lustful desire, consciously and wilfully entertained. So long as the desire to commit lewdness is entertained, and so long as the fear of consequences or the lack of opportunity is the only thing that keeps a man from

committing the sin, he is guilty. The principle is thus established that the Lord, who knoweth the heart (Lk. 16:15), judges a man according to the motives which lie back of his actions.

Again, Jesus refers to the law of the oath. The Jews had insisted on the sacredness of the oath. They, moreover, had a superstitious reverence for the divine name. This led them to substitute other forms of the oath, instead of a direct calling on the name of God. Jesus taught that we should not swear at all. The oath implies that there is a possibility of our placing ourselves in a special way into the presence of God, and calling upon him to witness to the truthfulness of what we say. Jesus teaches that we are always in the presence of God, that he is a witness of everything we say, and that we shall have to give an account for every idle word (Mt. 12:36).

Jesus next takes up the law of retaliation. "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." The old law seems to be little removed from barbarism; yet in its day it had been a great advance on the customs which prevailed in the heathen nations round about Israel. Among them the law allowed revenge to the uttermost. The law of Moses stepped in as a beneficent policeman, and said, Have you been injured; has an eye been put out, then you may exact an eye in return; has a tooth been knocked out, then

you may demand a tooth in return: but you must stop there. The penalty which you inflict must not be greater than the injury which you have suffered. But Jesus teaches a higher law. The principle which should govern a man's conduct towards his fellows is, not bare justice, but love. Instead of returning like for like, we should return good for evil (Mt. 5:38-42).

And this leads to the summing up of his teaching on this point. "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may become sons of your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:43, 44). Love is the informing principle of the whole law; and a man is right in the sight of God only when he exercises love as the Father in heaven does. This is brought out more fully elsewhere, where Jesus points out the sum of the whole law. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets" (Mt. 22:37-40). And what he meant by the word neighbour may be gathered from the parable of the Good Samaritan. Not my kin, nor the man who may reside next door, but any one to whom I may show kindness and benefit (Lk. 10:25-37).

It will thus be seen that, according to the conception of Jesus, true righteousness consists in the right disposition of the heart, not primarily in any set of external or overt acts. And by heart here, it is well to remember, is meant the inner man,—not simply one part of the inner man like the feelings and the affections, but the whole inner man. It includes intellect, feeling, and will; it is the spring out of which come thoughts, feelings, and volitions; and it has moral quality in itself even before these things are thrown up out of it into our upper consciousness. It is good or bad, not because our thoughts, feelings, and volitions which come out of it are good or bad; but these receive their moral quality from the moral quality of the heart out of which they come. Hence only when the heart is right, both in its relation to God and to man, does any one possess true righteousness; and it is right when its controlling motive in all things is love.

And yet, while all this is true, the heart must reveal itself in external conduct. As the spring of action, it must be continually throwing up into the outward life the things which are its natural product. There must hence be a right conduct, corresponding to the right disposition which exists within. And this conduct must have reference to the two great relations in which we stand,—our relations to God and to man. The true righteousness must hence produce the true religion and the pure morality.

2. *The True Religion*

What the true religion is Jesus has also indicated in the Sermon on the Mount. It is the theme which he takes up immediately after he is through with pointing out the superiority of the righteousness of the kingdom over that of the scribes and Pharisees. "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 6:1). That is, when you now come to give expression to this inner disposition of your hearts, be careful of the motive which controls your conduct. In performing your religious acts, see to it that the motive which prompts you is love to God and not vainglory.

Jesus next illustrates this principle by giving three examples. He takes what the Jews regarded as the three principal forms of religious activity, almsgiving, prayer, and fasting; and he shows what each must be, if it is to be acceptable to God.

And it is to be noted that Jesus includes almsgiving and fasting under the head of religion. Almsgiving might be taken up as a form of morality, inasmuch as it is benevolence, the relief of the poor and destitute; but Jesus does not depart from the old Jewish idea that it is a part of true worship. It is in all cases inspired by the love of God; and in the last analysis, while it is an expression of love to our fellow-men, it is first of all an expression of our love to God. And it is a singular fact that

genuine benevolence begins with the religion of Jesus; and true charity is not found where the name of Jesus is unknown. So with reference to fasting. In one aspect of it, it is part of our self-discipline; and we occasionally find it in men who will abstain from certain things merely out of considerations of health. But genuine reverence for the body comes only where men learn to recognize it as the temple of the Holy Spirit; and so fasting in the highest sense is a religious activity.

1) Almsgiving may spring out of one or the other of two motives. It may have its root in vainglory. A man may give to objects of benevolence in order to win the applause of men; many did so in our Lord's day, and many are doing so to-day. Jesus discourages that; and he plainly teaches that such benevolence has no value in the sight of God. It is what the hypocrites do, that is, those who are playing a part in religion, who are trying to appear other than they really are. But not self-love, but the love of God is the spring of all true benevolence. If God is our Father, then all his children are our brethren; and our love to God must prompt love to them. As is so forcibly brought out in the First Epistle of John, "We love, because he first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:19). That is, love has found a place in our hearts, because our hearts have first of all been touched by the finger of his love. And that love is not simply our love to God, but love as such; for the true reading is not, "We love him, because he first

loved us," as in the Authorized Version; but "We love, because he first loved us," as in the Revised Version. And that implies that where the love of God really has found a lodgment in the heart, it will show itself in deeds of love to our fellow-men. And hence John adds, "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can not love God whom he hath not seen" (1 Jn. 4:20).

And with this agrees what Jesus said about the relative importance of offering our gifts on the altar and being reconciled to a brother. "If therefore thou art offering thy gift before the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Mt. 5:23, 24). Sacrifice as an expression of our love to God can have little or no value, so long as the relation between us and our fellow-men is one of enmity. Hence reconciliation must be effected before our worship can be acceptable.

2) The same principle is next applied to prayer. To be acceptable to God, it must spring, not out of regard for the good opinion of our fellow-men, but out of sincere love to God. It must be the genuine expression of our heart's desire, and not a stage play to impress men with our piety (Mt. 6:5, 6). Neither is it made more acceptable by vain repetitions. That was a heathen fault, just as ostentatious

display was a fault of the Pharisees. It is just as offensive; for it implies a lack of faith in God's ability and willingness to hear, just as the other implies a lack of genuine love for him. To enable us to avoid both errors, Jesus first of all directs us to pray in secret, in our inner chambers; and then he gives us the *model* prayer, which in six brief petitions contains all things necessary for soul and body.

As is well known, Luke gives this model prayer in a slightly different form, and in a different connection (Lk. 11:1-5). It may well be that it was given twice; and in our study of it both forms should be kept in mind.

a) In this model prayer, Jesus teaches first of all what should be our attitude when we approach the throne of grace. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven." It is the proper form of addressing God; and as such, it teaches us the proper attitude of prayer. If we would pray aright, we must recognize God as our Father. One who fails to recognize the Fatherhood of God, is not in a position, where he can offer either a believing or an effectual prayer. At the basis of all true worship lies the filial spirit; and that implies confidence and trust. As it looks up into the Father's face, it recognizes that God knows what we have need of before we ask him (Mt. 6:8); and it also perceives that he is willing to give good things to them that ask him (Mt. 7:11).

b) The question has been asked, Did Jesus in-

tend this prayer to be a form which his people should always and only use? We may confidently answer in the negative. It is a model, indicating the *sphere*, within which our prayers should move. The child in its prattle, as it sits on its father's knee, is apt to say many a foolish thing. So are we apt to say many a foolish thing, when we attempt to tell our wants and wishes to our heavenly Father. What it is proper for us to ask, we may see if we note the petitions which find a place in this model prayer.

The petitions of the model prayer point us in two directions. In the longer form, given in Matthew, there are three petitions with the pronoun *thy*, pointing our thoughts upward to God and his kingdom; and there are three with the pronoun *us*, pointing to ourselves and to our needs.

As we approach the throne of mercy, our first thought should not be of ourselves. Beholding the Father's glory, our thoughts should first of all be engaged with his holy name, with his glorious kingdom, and with the doing of his holy will. In the proportion in which we are able to realize how much is included in these three simple petitions, will we be able to realize how broad a sweep Jesus has given to our prayers. The hallowing of his name, the coming of his kingdom, the doing of his will on earth as it is done in heaven—that includes all that men and nations need wish or strive after. It includes all proper forms of government among men,

all forms of missionary effort, all forms of benevolence in human society.

After we have prayed for that which pertains to the honour and glory of God, it is proper for us to turn our eyes inward upon ourselves and to think of our own needs and desires. The natural heart would begin there; and our constant danger even in our prayers is to dwell on these, and to make them the sum and substance of our petitions. How often, even with this model prayer before us, we begin and end our petitions with things that pertain solely to our own welfare! Many so-called Christian prayers have their inspiration, not in the spirit of adoption, but in the spirit of selfishness. The place for petitions which have reference to our own needs is *after* we have prayed for the glory and the kingdom of God.

Among the petitions which have reference to our own needs there is one, and only one, which touches our bodily wants. "Give us this day our daily bread." That is all of earth that Jesus teaches the child of God to ask of the heavenly Father. The two petitions, which specially refer to our higher spiritual needs, have reference to our sinful state. Perhaps we might say that the first of the three includes a petition for spiritual food as well as for that which sustains the body; and if we adopt that interpretation, then there is a reference to our higher spiritual needs in them all. But it is nevertheless an impressive fact that so large a part of this second half of the prayer is taken up with petitions bearing

on our spiritual conflict. Every one of us is a debtor; and we have need to pray for forgiveness as long as we live. Though trials are needful for the development of our characters; yet, inasmuch as every trial involves a temptation from the evil that is round about us in the world, we have need to pray for deliverance from the evil one.

c) According to Luke, Jesus, at least on the occasion when he gave the prayer the second time, added a lesson on the proper spirit in which our prayers should be offered. In the parable of the Importunate Widow (Lk. 11:5-8), he teaches the necessity of earnestness and perseverance in prayer. Often the heavens seem to be shut; we seem to be pouring out our hearts' desire upon the empty air; there seems to be no one to hear or answer our petitions. When that happens, he encourages us to persevere earnestly in our devotions. God's ways are not our ways; his thoughts are not our thoughts; and often the granting of our feeble petitions would not be a blessing but the reverse. Hence God, who is good, and who loves us more than we can love ourselves, withholds in his wisdom what we think we need, only however to give us what he sees that is really for our good. But whenever that happens, Jesus teaches that we should earnestly persevere until God's will is plain.

Such perseverance in prayer is not vain repetition, such as Jesus discourages; it is rather the imitation of his own example. Three times at least, we are

told, he spent an entire night in prayer; and in the garden, he repeated the same petition three times, and with the greatest earnestness. Yet each time the petition was coupled with the prayer, "Not my will, but thine be done" (Lk. 22: 42); and with each repetition of the prayer the Father's will became clearer, until he was able to go forth to meet the traitor and the band which was with him.

3) Does the teaching of Jesus also put fasting among our proper religious activities? As we have already noted, he does not break with the Jewish conceptions on the point. They had included it among those religious activities by which a man attains righteousness in the sight of God; and Jesus left it stand. Only he corrected the abuses which had grown up in connection with it; he gave it a new meaning; and he taught us both by precept and example how it may be made a legitimate and helpful activity in our religious life.

Again he starts with the principle that fasting, if it is to be a help and not a hindrance in our religious life, must proceed from a right motive. When we fast, we should not seek to gain notoriety for religious earnestness. It dare not be a stage parade to impress men with our piety. It must be an affair between us and God alone. There are times when it is out of order, and when there can be no fasting. This Jesus plainly declared, when the Pharisees came to ask him why his disciples did not keep the fasts which tradition had ordained. He replied, "Can

the sons of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they can not fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast" (Mk. 2:19, 20). A genuine fast must have its occasion in the inner life; it can not take place simply in conformity with an external rule. When it is the expression of genuine sorrow; when it is prompted by an all-absorbing interest in higher things, like his own fasting in the wilderness (Mt. 4:2); or when it is done to mortify the flesh for the purpose of overcoming some sinful propensity (Mt. 5:29, 30), then it is in order and may become a useful exercise in our spiritual life. In each case, however, it grows out of a genuine desire to realize God's will; and thus it becomes an expression of our love to God.

Jesus had no sympathy with asceticism, such as was practised by certain Jewish sects in his day, and such as has been practised by many Christians since then. That assumed that there is virtue in the mortification of the body as such, as if God delighted in self-inflicted pain. Jesus' own example teaches that a whole life is better than any form of mutilated life. The best life is that in which the individual is in the healthy exercise of all his powers. But when any one is in danger of wrecking his true life through the temptations which arise from the exercise of any one of its functions, Jesus teaches that it is better to undergo any kind of self-limitation

rather than run the risk of making shipwreck of the entire life through sin. "And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell" (Mt. 5: 29, 30). That is, better undergo any form of self-denial than fall into sin. But it is to be noted that self-denial, if it is to be profitable, must not be for the sake of the self-denial, as if that were a good in itself; its motive must be found in our conflict with sin. So with fasting. If it is to be a proper part of the activities of a righteous life, it must have its motive in something beyond itself, in helping to make us more fit for the full realization of God's will in us.

True fasting thus aims at helping us gain self-control. It is not simply nor primarily abstinence from food or pleasure. It is equivalent to self-denial; and it should be a free activity of our religious life. So long as we are what we are, denizens in the flesh, there is constant danger that sin, taking advantage of our weakness, may lead us astray. Hence when temptation comes, it is well for us to deny ourselves in that out of which the temptation arises. By so doing we are strengthened in the inner man, and thus become more able to do our heavenly Father's will.

For this reason, however, fasting to be profitable must be the free activity of our inner, religious life. It can not be determined by times and seasons, as so much of our outward religious custom tries to do. It must grow out of the necessities of our inner life; and it cannot conform to outward rule without degenerating and losing its vitality and power.

3. *The Pure Morality*

True righteousness must also include pure morality. That inner attitude of the heart, which puts a man into right relation to God, must also place him into right relation to his fellow-men. It must determine his conduct with reference to others as individuals, with reference to the family, and with reference to the state. On each of these relations Jesus has left us illuminating instruction.

1) With reference to a man's relations to his fellow-men as individuals, we need to study first of all what Jesus has denominated the second commandment. The principle in it is the same as that of the first, namely, love; but the measure of its exercise is different. The first commandment requires supreme love to God—love with all our soul, mind, and strength. God brooks no rival in our hearts. Either we must give him all, or he will accept nothing. In our relation to our fellow-men, the case is different. There the measure is the love of oneself. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.

22:39). That implies that there is a love of self which is legitimate and proper. Self-love becomes selfishness only where this second commandment is violated, and where a man loves himself more than he does his neighbour. And just what is involved in such love for our neighbour, Jesus has stated in another place. "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" (Mt. 7:12). It has been called the golden rule; and its meaning can not easily be mistaken. If ever perplexity arises as to what the love of God requires us to do for our neighbour, we can resolve it by this rule. Put yourself into your neighbour's place, and then ask yourself what you would have him do to you, and you will readily see what you ought to do to him. Of course, this does not mean that, if you were in his place, you would wish him to do wrong for your sake, and that hence you must do wrong for him. Jesus assumes that you are a child of God, that you are governed by a sincere desire to do his will, and that you would not wish your neighbour to do anything contrary to God's will for you any more than you would be willing to do that for yourself.

There are two things implied in the exercise of this law of love, on which Jesus lays special emphasis. On the one side, it requires us to resist the temptation to censoriousness; on the other it should prompt us to forgive our enemies.

With reference to the former Jesus doubtless had

the Pharisees in mind in what he said. Imagining themselves better than others, they continually sat in judgment on them; and the character of their judgments may be seen when we recall that they accounted the common people accursed. Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mt. 7:1, 2). But does that mean that God will deal mercifully with us, because we deal mercifully with our fellow-men? No; the ground of his mercy is always found in his infinite love, which is as deep and as broad as his being. But love and mercy are transitive in their nature; they must pass over from God to the man who is to be in the enjoyment of their blessing; and they must awaken in him a responsive chord. The first and greatest thing which love bestows is itself; that is, it awakens love in the heart of him who enjoys its sweet influence; and where the heart does not allow that to happen, it can not be in the enjoyment of its blessings. And so it is with mercy. Only he who is merciful can hope to obtain mercy; and hence he who is continually standing in judgment over his fellows, condemning them with cold and critical eye, can only hope to bring down similar judgment on his own head.

Again, Jesus demands that we should forgive. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father

forgive your trespasses" (Mt. 6: 14, 15). It is what the golden rule demands of us. We are all sinners, and stand in need of forgiveness. And as Jesus has taught in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Mt. 18: 23-25), our debt to God is infinitely great compared with any debt which a fellow-creature may owe to us. If we would that God should forgive us the greater debt, we must cultivate the forgiving spirit with reference to our fellows. And the force of all this becomes doubly clear, when we recall that forgiveness is primarily, not the removal of the penalty of our transgressions, but the removal of the sin itself. But if we refuse to allow God's forgiving love to remove the unforgiving disposition from our hearts, we refuse to allow him to remove the sin.

2) Jesus honoured the family. At the age of twelve years, he went down from Jerusalem with Joseph and Mary, and "was subject unto them" (Lk. 2: 51). He lived the life of an obedient and dutiful son. Not only was he present at a marriage feast and performed his first miracle to help the festivities of the occasion; but he has emphasized both the sanctity and the indissolubility of the marriage relation.

On one occasion towards the close of his ministry the Pharisees came to Jesus with the question, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" (Mk. 10: 2). The evangelist adds that they did this to try him. They themselves had very loose views on the subject of marriage and divorce. Indeed, their

law had made divorce easy. Deuteronomy 24:1, 2 contains this regulation: "When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." Their interpretation of the "unseemly thing" was so broad that they had come to sanction divorce for almost any cause. After telling them that because of the hardness of their hearts, Moses had suffered them to write a bill of divorcement and to put away their wives, Jesus went on to point out the sacredness of the marriage relation. He referred to its institution. "From the beginning of the creation, male and female made he them" (Mk. 10:6). It was hence divine in its origin and intent, written deep down into the very constitution of human nature; and hence there is no other human relation more tender or more close. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh: so that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let not man put asunder" (Mk. 10:7-9).

The implication clearly is that he looked upon marriage as indissoluble; and this he now taught clearly, when he and the disciples were alone in the house. According to Matthew the disciples seem to

have been perplexed; for they said to him, "If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry" (Mt. 19:10). According to Mark, they "asked him concerning this matter"; and he then gave them his views on the subject of divorce in unequivocal terms. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery" (Mk. 10:11, 12). This clearly forbids divorce, with the privilege of marrying again, in all cases.

It should be noted, however, that in Matthew an exception is given. Here the statement is, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery" (Mt. 19:9). This is usually, and I think correctly, interpreted to mean that in case of adultery divorce is permissible, and that then the innocent party may marry again. But the question remains, which of the two accounts gives us the teaching of Jesus correctly? When we take into consideration that Mark is the source which Matthew here used, and the further fact that the first evangelist probably reflected the difficulty which the disciples themselves seem to have had with our Lord's declaration, the probability is that we have the more original and the more accurate account in Mark. We hence conclude that Jesus meant absolutely to prohibit divorce with the privilege of remarriage.

It should, however, be noted still further that the emphasis lies on the idea of remarriage. Jesus does not here insist that a woman must, under all circumstances, live with her husband. If she has had the misfortune of marrying a brute, or if her husband is untrue to his marriage vows, Jesus does not say that she may not leave him; he simply teaches that, if she does leave, she may not marry again while he is living. And so with the man. The teaching implies that, when one marries, he enters into a relation which only death can sever; and further that he assumes responsibilities and burdens, which he can not lay aside, so long as his partner is living. If this seems a hardship, it only serves to emphasize the sacredness of marriage, and to show how jealously the right to marry should be guarded by society.

3) Jesus also recognized and honoured the state. This is seen first of all in his conduct, and then in his teaching.

As we conceive it, the false Messianic ideal of his people lay at the very heart of his temptation in the wilderness. No sooner had he come to the full consciousness of his Messiahship than he felt himself confronted by that ideal. But one of the elements of that ideal was that of a temporal Messiah, who should throw off the Roman yoke. Inseparably connected with it was disloyalty to the government under which he lived. Now, his resistance of that temptation was not simply the affirmation of a different, a

spiritual ideal; but it also involved the refusal to lead his people in insurrection against the lawfully established government. And the same must be said of the attempt of the people to take him by force to make him a king, immediately after the feeding of the five thousand (Jn. 6:15). So when the question about the temple tax arose. Though he said that, as the Son, he might claim exemption, he sent Peter to catch the fish wherewith to make the payment (Mt. 17:24-27). The temple was a part of the national organization of his people; and he did not refuse to bear his share of the burden of its maintenance.

On the last great day of his public ministry, the day of controversy in the temple, the Tuesday of Holy Week, the Pharisees with the Herodians came to ask him about paying tribute to Cæsar. They thought they would place him on either horn of a dilemma. If he should say, Yes; it is lawful, they expected him to alienate the people: if he should say, No; it is not lawful, they thought he must offend the Roman government. How he walked through the snare which they had laid for him is well known; but in doing so, he laid down a doctrine which clearly showed his attitude towards the state. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's" (Mk. 12:17). By accepting the coinage of the Roman empire, the Jews had acknowledged their indebtedness to it; and it was hence their duty to support it. And that is

the teaching of Jesus with reference to our relation to the state universally. Imperfect though it may be, we should give to it our loyal support.

The same truth is probably implied in another of the Lord's sayings. When speaking of retaliation, he said, "And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two" (Mt. 5:41). The reference is to a law which had been introduced from Persia, in accordance with which an officer of the government might impress any one into the service to assist in carrying burdens, especially those of the army. Now, the meaning of Jesus seems to be, if the government makes such exactions of you, be ready not simply to do what is demanded but even more. Translated into our modern conditions, it means, Be willing, as a citizen, not simply to perform your duty to the state, but to offer yourself, when occasion requires it, to her service.

XI

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM

ABOVE in chapter VI, we saw that Jesus spoke of the kingdom both as present and future. It is a present possession for all who have responded to his call to repentance, and who have, however imperfectly, submitted themselves to the divine rule. They have a foretaste of the joys and blessings which the kingdom has in store for all the faithful. They now have eternal life. And yet the kingdom is also a blessed hope. It is that even more than a present possession. All that the best can claim is a foretaste of the glorious reality. Their best obedience is but an earnest of what it will be, when at last God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. Looked at from any point of view, the consummation of the kingdom is in the future; and between that and the present there remains a marvellous transformation to be accomplished. How are we to conceive of that transformation?

Two answers have been suggested; and both claim to have the support of the teaching of Jesus. The one represents the kingdom as reaching its consummation through a long and slow process of development; the other, as ushered in by some great catas-

trophe, breaking in upon the world suddenly, like a lightning flash, which shineth from one part of the heaven to the other, and as taking place in the lifetime of some of his disciples. The one represents the kingdom as subject to the law of growth having its origin in a small beginning, as in a seed, and then through a silent and secret process of growth overspreading the earth, and transforming the world; the other conceives of it as ushered in through the direct intervention of Almighty God, who will vindicate the right and overthrow the wrong in some great and final crisis.

Both views make their appeal to the teaching of Jesus; and there are passages which may easily be brought forward in support of either. At first sight they seem to be contradictory. Whether they are really so can be determined only by a careful study of the actual sayings of Jesus.

1. *The Kingdom Subject to the Law of Growth*

There are two classes of passages which support the former view. The one emphasizes the idea of delay in the final consummation; the other, in addition to this conception, represents the kingdom as subject to the universal law of development and growth.

1) There is first of all the statement with reference to the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. According to Mark, Jesus is reported to have said,

“And the gospel must first be preached to all nations” (Mk. 13:10). It is part of the great discourse, which Jesus spoke on the Mount of Olives on the Tuesday evening of Holy Week. As the discourse stands in Mark, it may be a question whether the reference is to the destruction of Jerusalem exclusively, or also to the end of the world. In either case, the idea is that before the catastrophe under consideration could take place, there would be a period of delay, during which the glad tidings of salvation would be presented to the whole of the Gentile world. Even though Jesus may have thought only of the Roman world, it presupposes a period of delay before the final consummation. And the form given to the saying in Matthew clearly refers to it to the end. “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Mt. 24:14). And if, as seems to be the case, the saying implies that there would be a day of grace for the Gentiles, as there had been for the Jews, then certainly it suggests a long period of delay; for the Jews had centuries for their preparation for the reception of the kingdom, and one would expect God to give no less to all the nations of the Gentile world.

A number of parables contain the same suggestion. In the parable of the Ten Virgins, the bridegroom is represented as tarrying long beyond the expected time, so that all those virgins nodded and slept (Mt. 25:5). A similar suggestion is contained in the

parable of the Unjust Judge. There Jesus says, "And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry unto him day and night, and yet he is longsuffering over them" (Lk. 18:7). It is a parable teaching the lesson of God's justice mingled with mercy. His elect are suffering many things; they are crying to him day and night; and he seems not to hear their cry. Yet his indifference to their cry is only apparent; he is only giving their enemies time for repentance; he will avenge his elect; and, when looked at from the standpoint of the eternal years, the day of vengeance will come speedily; but looked at from our point of view it seems long delayed. The same moral is practically implied in the repeated exhortations to "watch"; for while all these exhortations emphasize the uncertainty of the day and the hour, they also imply that it may be delayed much beyond the expected time. This is especially true of the parable of the Unfaithful Upper Servant (Mt. 24:45-51). That was spoken to illustrate the need and the meaning of watchfulness. To watch means to be always about one's duty, as if one were looking for the appearance of the Lord every moment. But this servant said in his heart, "My lord delayeth his coming"; and with that thought in mind, he began to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken. There must have been some justification for his conclusion that the lord was delaying his coming. Some considerable time must have elapsed, before he could have ven-

tured to resign himself to such an attitude of mind. So in the parable of the Talents, the lord is represented, not simply as going into another country, but as being absent a long time. The servants had sufficient time to trade with their talents and to multiply them. "Now after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them" (Mt. 25:19).

All these representations suggest the idea of a considerable period of time intervening between the founding of the kingdom and its consummation. They do not suggest the thought that the final judgment would take place immediately. All of them point to a suspended judgment rather than to a judgment close at hand.

2) Alongside of this representation, we have another, which points to the condition of the kingdom during this interval. While the Son of man is tarrying, the kingdom itself is growing. This idea of the growth of the kingdom is brought forward in, at least, five distinct parables. These are the Sower, the Tares of the Field, the Seed Growing Secretly, the Mustard Seed, and the Leaven. These illustrate various aspects of the growth of the kingdom of heaven.

In four of these parables the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a seed that is sown. Like a seed, the kingdom is at first very small; and from small beginnings it grows into something that is large. But more than that. It has life in itself; so that,

when it is surrounded by the proper conditions, it unfolds and grows. That is the point especially emphasized in the parable of the Seed Growing Secretly (Mk. 4:26-29). The husbandman casts his seed into the ground; then he sleeps and rises night and day; and the seed springs up and grows, he knows not how. That is, after the ground has been properly prepared and the seed properly sown, the husbandman has done his part, beyond which he can do nothing more. The growth and the subsequent harvest then depend on the seed and on the ground into which it has been sown. If the seed has vitality, and if the soil has the proper elements suited to the development of the plant, the growth will come of itself. The husbandman can go about his business, until the time of harvest comes, assured that in due time there will be blade and ear and full corn in the ear. And so with the kingdom of heaven. It too has a vitality of its own; and, when sown into the heart of man, if that heart has been properly cultivated, and if it has the disposition needed for the development of the kingdom, it too will grow of itself; and, however mysterious the process may be, the harvest is sure to come.

The parable of the Mustard Seed (Mt. 13:31-32), in addition to this idea of growth, has in it also the thought of growing from a very small beginning to that which is great. It illustrates the external development of the kingdom. As the mustard seed is the smallest of seeds, when it is sown, and yet grows

into a tree larger than all herbs; so was the kingdom in its beginning the most insignificant of all the kingdoms of which we have knowledge, and yet it has grown into the mightiest power which the mind of man has conceived. And it is destined to continue its growth, until it has covered the earth.

The parable of the Leaven (Mt. 13:33) is a companion piece. As that of the Mustard Seed illustrates the external development of the kingdom, so does this set forth its inward transforming power. As the leaven leavens the whole lump in which it is hidden, so does the kingdom of God permeate and transform the whole of human society into which it has come. Not only is it to cover the earth in the way of winning all nations to the standard of the cross; but it is to transform its life so that all its institutions, all its various activities, all its governments, all its commerce and trade shall be brought under the divine rule, and be made to reflect God's will on earth as perfectly as it is done in heaven. All the kingdoms of this world, political, social, economic, scientific, as well as ecclesiastical, shall become the kingdom of God and of his Christ.

Jesus thus marked out for himself and for his kingdom a very large programme, and one which, in the nature of the case, required a long time to realize. If he had any just conception of what is implied in the analogy of growth, which he so freely employed, it is hard to see how he can have thought

of that programme as completed in a very brief space of time. One can hardly avoid the conviction that he must have meant all that is implied in his various statements on the subject of the delayed parousia and the suspended judgment, and that he can not have thought of the consummation of the kingdom as close at hand. And yet, as intimated above, there is another class of sayings, which seem to imply that he shared the common opinion of his day that the end was nigh, even at the door. A complete survey of his teaching on the point will hence require us to turn to these statements, which seem to be contradictory of those which we have just considered.

2. *Development through Crises*

In Matthew 16:28 we have a statement, which, if taken by itself, seems to imply that Jesus thought of the consummation as near. "Verily, I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." To the mind of the evangelist, the coming of the Son of man had reference to the final coming, to the end. But it is worth while noting that in the parallel passages in Mark and Luke, the reference to the end is by no means so clear. Mark, whose narrative here is undoubtedly the source which was employed by both the first and third evangelists, has the saying in this form: "Verily I say unto you, There be some

here of them that stand by, who shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. 9:1); and Luke has here followed Mark more closely than Matthew. He reports the logion as follows: "But I tell you of a truth, There be some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God" (Lk. 9:27). The occasion was our Lord's first prediction of his approaching sufferings and death. After Peter had attempted to rebuke him for entertaining such dismal thoughts about his future, and after Jesus had administered to him that stinging rebuke which he must have remembered to his dying day, Jesus went on to tell the disciples of the cross which they would each of them have to bear, if they would follow him. And then he pointed out that, no matter what they should be called upon to suffer for his sake, there would be ample compensations in his kingdom. And for those compensations they would not need to wait indefinitely. Some of them would live to see the day when they would be distributed. Some of them would live to see the kingdom established with power and then they would begin to realize the blessings which they should receive as compensations for the trials which they would be called upon to endure. Besides the fact that Mark, who was the source here used by the first evangelist, uses the expression in a form which refers to the firm establishment of the kingdom rather than to its consummation, the entire incident can be

more easily interpreted in that way than by making it refer to the end of the world.

Another passage, which seems to refer the end to the generation in which Jesus was then living, is found in Matthew 24:34. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things shall be accomplished." Mark and Luke report the words in the same form, so that there can hardly be any question that this saying was spoken by Jesus in substantially the form in which Matthew gives it. Neither can there be much question as to the meaning of the words, in the connection in which he reports them. According to Matthew, Jesus was speaking of the signs of the coming of the Son of man, and of the end of the world. This is apparent from the manner in which he introduces the discourse. Jesus had just left the temple. As he was leaving, "his disciples came unto him to show him the buildings of the temple"; and he replied, "See ye all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." And then after he had gone out to the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately to ask him concerning the prediction. Their question, however, is reported differently. According to Mark, who here again is the source, which was employed by the other two, the question was as follows: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished?" (Mk. 13:4). That

is, the reference is to the prediction which Jesus had just made on leaving the temple. And with this Luke agrees (Lk. 21:7). But Matthew has allowed his peculiar eschatological predilection again to modify the original saying; and he has reported the question of the disciples in this form, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world" (Mt. 24:3); and he has given a similar colouring to the entire discourse. He makes the discourse have a double reference, that which it has in Mark, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world; and hence he makes Jesus predict the coming of the Son of man and the end of the world in that generation.

But can the entire discourse, even as it is found in Mark, be limited to the destruction of Jerusalem? There is room for difference of opinion; and many have answered the question in the negative. It is indeed generally taken for granted that at verse 24 Jesus begins to speak of the end of the world. "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory. And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of

heaven." Can language like this refer to anything but the end of the world?

Before hastily giving an answer, we need to compare the portents here spoken of with similar ones in the apocalyptic discourses of the prophets. The darkening of sun and moon, the falling of the stars, and the commotion among the heavenly powers are common features of the apocalyptic imagery of prophecy. Thus when Isaiah is speaking of the destruction of Babylon by the Medes, he uses similar language. "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine" (Isa. 13:10). Again in predicting the judgment on Edom, he says, "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fadeth from the fig-tree" (Isa. 34:4). Similar language may be found in Ezekiel 32:7, 8, with reference to the judgment on Egypt; in Amos 8:9 with reference to the northern kingdom; and in Joel 2:30, 31, where the reference is to the judgment on the nations. In none of these places is the reference to the end of the world, but to the judgments about to be visited on different peoples. As Dr. Gould puts it, "This language is intended to portray the greatness of the doom of such nations as come under the judgment of God. When he comes to judgment, the earth, and even the heavens dissolve before him. But it is

needless to minimize these words into eclipses, or earthquakes, or meteoric showers, or to magnify them into actual destruction of sun and moon and stars. They are not events, but only imaginative portrayal of what it means for God to interfere in the history of nations.”¹ And so with the words before us. They do not describe the actual destruction of sun, moon, and stars at the end of history; but they are an imaginative, apocalyptic portrayal of the greatness of the doom which was overhanging Jerusalem. And very much the same may be said about “the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.” A comparison of Psalm 97:1-5, Isaiah 19:1, Zechariah 9:14, Psalm 18:5-16 shows that similar language is used of Jehovah; and as Dr. Gould says, usage makes it unnecessary to take the language literally; and in this case “the immediate connection with the destruction of Jerusalem makes it impossible.”²

We hence conclude that all the references in the great apocalyptic discourse are to the destruction of Jerusalem, and not to the end of the world. It is far easier to believe that, where Matthew has reported the words of Jesus in such a way as to imply that the consummation of the kingdom was about to come in that generation, he has allowed his eschatological predilection to read into the words of Jesus what was not there originally, than it is to believe that

¹ *The International Critical Commentary; Mark*, p. 250.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 251.

Jesus, in spite of so much teaching to the contrary, can have been so greatly mistaken as to imagine the end to be so near.

But if this interpretation eliminates the reference to the final coming from the immediate future, it only emphasizes the certainty that the Son of man is coming all the while, and that with his coming there is always bound up the exercise of his judicial function, by which the wicked are overthrown and the righteous vindicated. There is one statement, which refers to such a continual coming of the Son of man, made too in language almost identical with that which we have just studied. When Jesus stood before the high priest at his trial, the high priest adjured him by the living God to tell whether he was the Christ, the Son of God. His reply was, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mt. 26: 64). The "henceforth" means from now on; and it relates, not simply to the Son of man's sitting at the right hand of power, but just as really also to his coming on the clouds of heaven. That too began from that day, and it has been going on all the while. He came "on the clouds of heaven" in the awful crisis, which overtook Jerusalem and its people in the year A.D. 70; and he is thus coming in every crisis in the history of the world.

There is an element in the teaching of the parable of the Tares of the Field, which throws light on the

coming of the Son of man in the successive crises of history. The kingdom of light at no time has the entire field of the world's history all to itself. After the good seed of the kingdom had been sown, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. These sprang up with the wheat; and so intimately were they related to the wheat that separation between them, prior to the harvest, was impossible. The meaning is that the kingdom of light exists alongside of, and in perpetual antagonism with the powers of darkness. Both have a vitality of their own. Both are growing. And they are never at peace with each other. There is perpetual conflict between the light and the darkness. As the two unfold side by side, crises are precipitated, in which the one or the other comes off victorious. And just as it was with the crisis, in which Jerusalem was overthrown, so is it in every crisis. The Son of man is coming on the clouds, that is, clothed with the power of Almighty God; and through tribulation and anguish, he is bringing victory to his own. And these crises, just like the destruction of Jerusalem, are each of them a type, a prophecy, of the final crisis. They are the outcome of the same conflict between light and darkness; they imply the same coming of the Son of God to judgment; and they bring the same kind of victory, though in a lower degree, for the kingdom of light. They are hence the way through which the development of the kingdom of God is being brought about. The development is

through crises, in which God is continually coming with his almighty power to vindicate the right and to overthrow and judge the wrong.

Both views as to the development of the kingdom, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, have elements of truth. In fact, they are mutually complementary. The kingdom is subject to the law of development and growth, found in all nature; and it is likewise ushered in through the direct intervention of Almighty God. It is the ever-present power of God, working by the Spirit through the Word, that energizes the seed, and gives it the ability to grow; and it is that same power of God, presiding in the movements of history, which, in the ever-present conflict between the good and the evil, brings the evil to judgment and gives the victory to the good. In the apocalyptic representations, this ever-present power of God is always presented in a pictorial form; and in consequence, God is represented as standing on the outside of the movements of history, and coming in external judgments. That representation needs to be complemented by the other, which seems not to take account of the power of God at all, because he is present there as an inward life-giving energy, working from within.

3. *The Propagation of the Kingdom*

What now are the means by which the kingdom, during this period of development and growth, is

propagated in the world? The question leads us to inquire into the weapons which Jesus placed into the hands of his disciples, when he sent them forth to conquer the world.

The fact, which here first of all suggests itself, comes to us by way of contrast. The weapons are not carnal, such as are used by the princes of this world in making their conquests. When Jesus sent forth the Twelve on their mission, he said, "Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the labourer is worthy of his hire" (Mt. 10:9, 10). It is true, that was spoken with special reference to that particular mission; and it would be a mistake to apply it literally to the disciples of all ages. It also had reference primarily to their means of support, rather than to the means to be employed in their work. And yet it suggests an important principle, which is applicable to all the workers of the kingdom, no matter where or when they may be employed. Not only must the minister of the Gospel, who would win the world for Christ, rely on his work for his support; he must likewise look to the message, which is placed into his lips, as the weapon by which to gain his victories. Gold and silver and brass, useful and important as they may be in the affairs of this life, have no value in themselves for the development of the kingdom. They may be used for higher ends; but in themselves they are not coin current in the

kingdom of God. They can not purchase the qualities, which characterize the citizen of the kingdom. Neither is the kingdom propagated by the power of external authority. "Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them." It is the way in which the kingdoms of this world are built up. "But it is not so among you; but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all" (Mk. 10:42-44). Greatness and influence in the kingdom are attained through self-denying service—through the power of love. Hence also the sword is excluded. When at the time of the arrest of Jesus in the garden, Peter drew his sword, and smote the servant of the high priest, Jesus said to him, "Put up again thy sword into its place: for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Mt. 26:52).

The weapons by which the world is to be won for Christ are spiritual. In the great commission, which Matthew has recorded at the close of his Gospel, two of these are mentioned. The one is teaching, the other is baptizing in the triune name. "All authority hath been given me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the

world" (Mt. 28:18-20). That is, teaching and baptizing are given as the means by which the disciples were sent forth to make disciples of all nations.

1) In his explanation of the parable of the Sower, as given by Luke, Jesus defines the seed as the Word of God (Lk. 8:11). That is sown into the hearts of men. If these have been properly prepared, the seed springs up and bears fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold. The power of the Holy Spirit is in the Word, as preached by the disciples of Jesus; and though, like the husbandman in the parable of the Seed Growing Secretly, they can do nothing beyond sowing the seed, that is, preaching the Word, the Word has in it a vitality which will make it sprout and grow and bear fruit. It seems like an insignificant weapon; yet, bearing in itself the truth of God, it is the mightiest power in the world.

In the parable of the Tares of the Field, the subject is presented from a slightly different point of view. Here the good seed is "the sons of the kingdom" (Mt. 13:38). Having themselves been quickened by the power of the Spirit, residing in the Word, they each of them become centres of influence, capable of winning others unto Christ. They become living embodiments of the truth, as it is in Jesus; and by the power of their example they proclaim the gospel of Jesus, and win for it the respect and the allegiance of men. "Ye are the light of the world.

. . . Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:14, 16).

2) The preaching of the gospel aims at producing conviction, and seeks to lead men to repentance and an open confession. Without such a confession, admission into the kingdom is impossible. "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 10:32, 33; Lk. 12:8). Given in almost identical form in Matthew and Luke, there can be little doubt about its coming to us through the Q source; and it implies that the custom, which has prevailed in the church from the very beginning, of requiring a public profession of faith on the part of all candidates for admission into Christian fellowship, rests on the authority of Jesus himself. And hence we are not surprised to find baptism mentioned in the great commission alongside of teaching as a means for the extension of the kingdom.

It is, of course, well known that the baptismal formula, contained in the great commission, has been questioned. It has been contended that it did not form a part of the commission, as originally given by Jesus; and the contention rests upon two grounds. The first argument against it is that Eusebius of Cæsarea often quotes the great commission, and generally omits, or stops short of, the words which speak

of baptism. But it has been observed, on the other side, that, whenever it suits his argument, he does quote the verse which contains the Trinitarian formula. The other argument against the genuineness of the formula rests on the fact that, wherever baptism is referred to elsewhere in the New Testament it is spoken of as "in the name of Christ," not "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (see Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). On the other side, however, it is to be remembered that "the verse is found in every extant Greek MS., whether uncial or cursive, and in every extant version, which contains this portion of Matthew."¹ It is exceedingly difficult to conceive how such a verse could have been interpolated, without some trace of a different reading being found in some ancient MS. or version. Besides, when one recalls how, in the two oldest of our sources, Jesus is represented as using the names Father and Son in juxtaposition in such a way as to imply that the Son occupied an altogether unique relation to the Father (Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22; Mk. 13:32), and when one recalls the way in which Jesus, even in the Synoptics, referred to the Holy Spirit, the use of the Trinitarian formula by him is not inconceivable. At any rate, whatever may be the critical conclusion on that point, there can be no doubt as to the genuineness of the command to baptize as well as to teach. Otherwise the universal

¹ Plummer's *Commentary on Matthew*, p. 431.

practice of baptism in the Apostolic Church would be inexplicable.

What does it signify? It was from the beginning the method by which men made their profession of faith in Jesus as Lord. And it was more than that. Whether we say "in the name of Christ," or "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," the rite signifies and seals the believer's incorporation into mystical communion with God through Jesus Christ. "The divine name is often a reverend synonym for the divine nature, for God himself; and therefore baptizing into the name of the Trinity may mean immersing into the infinite ocean of the divine perfection. In Christian baptism the divine essence is the element into which the baptized are plunged, and in which they are baptized."¹ Surely, that is its symbolic significance; and where the true believer thus makes public profession of his faith in Christ, God honours the profession by giving him full and free admission into the kingdom.

3) May we also include the Lord's Supper among the means for the propagation of the kingdom? Luke, in his account of the institution of the Supper, reports Jesus as saying, "This do in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22:19). Paul also has the same words; and he adds by way of explanation: "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor.

¹ Plummer, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

11:25, 26). That makes the Supper, not simply a memorial of the Lord's death, but also an impressive method for its proclamation. But it is to be observed that both Matthew and Mark omit the words; and even Luke, according to Codex D, which represents the Rewrought or Western text, does not have them. The question has hence almost inevitably arisen, Did Jesus really use them? And did he intend to institute a sacrament which should be perpetually observed in remembrance of him? We, of course, do not know on what source the statement in 1 Corinthians 11:26 rests; but Paul claims to have received, what he has written on this subject, from the Lord (1 Cor. 11:23). And this can not mean less than that he received it from the Lord through credible eye-witnesses. And we know something about his opportunity for making first-hand investigation; so that, even if he stood entirely alone in his report of the words, we might take it for granted that they represent a genuine tradition, rather than that they are an invention on his part.

But not only is the Lord's Supper thus an impressive method for commemorating the death of Jesus, and so of testifying to the greatness and reality of his dying love; it is also an efficient means for edifying the believer. When Jesus said, "Take, eat; this is my body" (Mt. 26:26; Mk. 14:22; Lk. 22:17), he can not well have meant less than that by so doing worshippers would enter into communion and fellowship with him. That is what the

eating of the flesh of the sacrificial victim always symbolized. It implied that the worshipper thus entered into communion with God. And when Jesus thus offered his flesh symbolically as food to be eaten, he invited the believer to vital communion and fellowship with himself. So that the Supper is, not simply an impressive proclamation of his death; it is also, and much more, a means of grace for the inward spiritual edification of the members of the kingdom itself.

XII

THE CONSUMMATION OF THE KINGDOM

THOUGH the consummation of the kingdom may be long delayed, it will come. The transformation, which is required before the kingdom can come in its full power and glory, may still be exceedingly great; yet it has begun, and it is being carried forward under the influence of powers whose efficacy we can not doubt. The Word, when sown, is like a seed which has the power of life in itself; it has found lodgment in the lives and hearts of men; it is growing by means of a vitality which is inherent in itself, and which is not dependent on any power on the outside of itself. When the time is ripe, it will bring forth fruit of itself. There are hostile powers at work now to choke the Word; it will have to pass through many a crisis, in which its very life may seem to hang in the balance; but God is the husbandman, who watches over its destiny; and he is greater than all. He will bring victory out of every apparent defeat, and crown the efforts of his people with complete success. Hence Jesus could say, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk. 12:32).

How does Jesus represent the consummation? What is involved in it? How will it be brought to pass? It is evident that it will involve the complete transformation of the world, so that the will of God shall be done on earth as perfectly as it is in heaven. Sin and evil will be overcome and expelled from the life of redeemed humanity; and God will be everywhere enthroned in the hearts of men. And that will mean that this world will be transformed into heaven; for where God is, there heaven is. Whether we say that heaven will come down and become permanently established on earth, or that earth will be lifted up so as to become a part of heaven, the result is the same. The kingdom of God will be fully realized, and it will thus become the eternal abode of those who are under the divine rule (Mt. 8:11; Lk. 22:29, 30).

1. *The State of the Christian Dead*

Before we are prepared to take up more fully the question as to how the transformation will be brought to pass, we find ourselves confronted by another. If the consummation will be thus long delayed, as we have reason to believe, what will become of those who meanwhile fall on sleep? What is the state of those who have died and who will die? It is the same question that came to the members of the church at Thessalonica in a somewhat modified form. They had been led to believe that the con-

summation of the age was near at hand, that the Lord would come during their lifetime; and when some of them died, the question was anxiously asked, What will become of these when the Lord does come to set up his kingdom? Paul answered their inquiry in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. The question does not come to us in quite the same form. And yet we can not help asking, What is the state of our Christian dead, while the conflict is going on here, and until the kingdom shall be established in its full power and glory? The question compels us to ask, What did Jesus teach on the subject of death and the state of our Christian dead?

We note first of all the way in which Jesus looked upon his own death. At least six months before the event, he foretold how "the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed" (Mk. 8:31). And he repeated the prediction at least twice after that (Mk. 9:31; 10:33). But it is to be noted that with each prediction of his death there was coupled a prediction of his resurrection. He looked forward to a victory over death. However much of bitterness he may have found in the cup, when it was finally pressed to his lips, he never for one moment swerved from the firm conviction that he would pass through death to more abundant life.

And how he conceived the life beyond the grave is indicated by what he said to the penitent thief on

the cross. "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise" (Lk. 23:43). It was but another way of saying that he would presently be with God in joy and felicity. Paradise was a synonym for heaven. And not only did he expect to be there himself; but that word of comfort implied that the penitent thief would be there with him. And the thief received the assurance that he would be there because of his repentance and faith in that eleventh hour. He had done nothing to merit such a blessed termination of his career. It came to him as a free gift of grace because of his prayer of faith; and that, at least, suggests the thought that such will be the state of all who die in the faith.

Another hint of his conception of death we find in the word spoken on the occasion of the raising of Jairus' daughter. When he came to the house, he found the hired mourners weeping and wailing and making a great tumult. Quietly he put them all forth, saying, "Why make ye a tumult, and weep? the child is not dead, but sleepeth" (Mk. 5:39). It was a figure of speech, borrowed from the Old Testament, by which he indicated what, in his view, death means for those who die in him. It does not imply that the dead are in a state of unconsciousness, but rather that death does for them what sleep does for the natural man. As in sleep we rest from our labours; so do the pious dead rest from theirs. Furthermore, as sleep is nature's sweet restorer, so is death. As in sleep the energies, which

have been wasted and dissipated by the labours of the day, are gathered up again and our bodies prepared for the occupations of a new day; so in death are the energies, which have been wasted and dissipated by the activities of this life, gathered up again, and the person prepared for the awakening of a new and more glorious day.

In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, we have two men, whose state after death is represented as diametrically opposite. The rich man, who in this life had an abundance of good things, who had great opportunities for doing good to his fellow-men, but who yet lived in selfish luxury, is represented as being in torments. His experience suggests that the law of retribution extends also to the invisible world beyond the grave. Lazarus, on the contrary, whose condition in this life was the polar opposite, who had nothing but misery and pain, but whose trust, as the name implies, was in God, is seen to be in Abraham's bosom, which was but another name for heaven. The parable implies that death does not end all, and that the state of the dead depends on the character formed in this life.

2. *The Resurrection*

The state of the Christian dead looks forward to a glorious awakening. Not only did the early church teach the doctrine of a resurrection; but we find it in the teaching of Jesus.

In trying to ascertain what Jesus thought on this subject, it is convenient again to begin with what he said of his own resurrection. As we saw above, he not only foretold his own death, but his resurrection as well. In fact the two predictions are always connected. Jesus felt in himself the certainty of victory over death and the grave. "And after three days he shall rise again" (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:34).

It is to be observed, however, that Jesus stops with the prediction that he shall rise again. He indulges in no speculations as to the manner of his resurrection. He has no theories as to the form of it. Just as the New Testament writers speak only of the resurrection of the dead, and never of the resurrection of the flesh, not even of the resurrection of the body, so it is with the teaching of Jesus. He simply says, "he shall rise again." It is true that, according to Luke, he spoke of his having flesh and bones, when he showed himself to the disciples on the evening of the resurrection. When then they were affrighted and imagined that they beheld a spirit, he told them to handle him and see; "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me having" (Lk. 24:39). We may doubtless say that, inasmuch as a body is implied in the idea of our true and full humanity, so the body in some form must share in the victory over death; and we may doubtless say still further that, such being the case, the bodily resurrection must in some form be included in our

Lord's prediction. Yet it is to be observed, Jesus does not put the emphasis on that; the main idea, which is found in his teaching on the subject, is the certainty of his victory over death. He knew that though he should die, yet would he live again; and what he wished to assure the disciples of was the certainty of his triumph over death and the grave.

In one passage especially Jesus teaches the certainty of the resurrection. When the Sadducees came to him on the Tuesday of his last week, he declared his conviction on the subject in unmistakable terms. They denied the resurrection, and they tried to reduce the doctrine to absurdity by their question as to the woman who, under the law of levirate marriage, had been married to seven brothers in succession. After pointing out their error with reference to the possibility of marriage in the state after the resurrection, he went on to give them proof of the doctrine which they had rejected. "But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Mk. 12:26-27). That is often taken to mean that, since God is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, they must be living, because he is not the God of the dead, but of the living. That, however, hardly expresses the thought of Jesus. It

is rather this. Since the Patriarchs had come to stand in such a relation to God that he could be called their God, they must have been like him in righteousness and life, so that they had been admitted into life communion with him. They were more than merely material beings. They were God's kin, and as such shared in his life. But that very life is eternal life; so that their immortality was assured in their very relation to him.

3. *The Second Coming*

The consummation of the kingdom is in the New Testament associated with the coming of the Lord in glory. No sooner had the first Christians recovered from their unspeakable dismay at the crucifixion than they began to look forward to the return of the Lord to set up his kingdom. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16). "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). There can be no question about the fact that the first Christians all entertained this hope.

Now, this universal expectation can be accounted for only on the supposition of a distinct prediction

on the part of the Lord Jesus himself. Other aspects of their belief in the second coming may be accounted for on the basis of the current Messianic expectation; but their abiding faith in the fact itself can not. There was nothing in Jewish literature nor in the current Messianic expectation concerning a second coming of the Messiah. Where else could it have come from but from Jesus himself? And when we turn to his reported sayings, we find abundant evidence that he himself looked forward to his return in glory. In fact that expectation is closely linked with the certainty of his death. No sooner had he told the disciples of the necessity of his going up to Jerusalem to suffer and die, and told them also of the necessity of their bearing the cross after him, than he told them of his coming again in glory. "For 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. 8:38; see also Mt. 24:27; Lk. 12:40; Mk. 14:62).

We should doubtless distinguish between the *fact* of this second coming and the *form* of it. With reference to the former, the teaching of Jesus leaves no room for doubt; with reference to the latter we should recognize that there is a great deal of uncertainty. But even on this side there are a few things which the teaching of Jesus has made clear. It will be a return in glory. It is set in contrast with the

first coming, which was in humiliation, and which culminated in suffering, shame, and death. This contrast is implied in what Jesus said to the high priest, when he stood before him in his trial. He was then under the very shadow of the cross. But when Caiaphas asked him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" he answered, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mk. 14: 62). And there is a second fact which is stated with equal certainty. His coming will be as Judge of the world. "But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Mt. 25: 31-33).

Much of the language, used in describing this coming in glory, is no doubt highly figurative and symbolical. His "coming on the clouds of heaven" is metaphorical just as "the sitting at the right hand of power" is. As Professor Beyschlag puts it, "it reminds us of the repeated Old Testament delineations of Jehovah riding on the storm-cloud of judgment (Ps. 28: 8, f.; 50: 3; 97: 2), still more of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven (Dan. 7: 13). When the event is described as taking place with the accompaniment of great power and glory,

the glory of the Father with the holy angels, the language is not to be taken literally, but as a figurative and pictorial representation of victory and triumph. It means the complete victory of the Son of man, the final triumph of his kingdom over all his enemies."

Evidently this coming in glory is not to be regarded as a single isolated event in history. It is many-sided, and may be viewed from several different points of view.

1) In the last chapter we had occasion to speak of the apocalyptic discourse in the thirteenth chapter of Mark. We saw that, according to Mark, the entire discourse may be easily referred to the destruction of Jerusalem; and we expressed the conviction that that is all that it meant in the first place. But it became linked very early with the second coming of Christ at the end of the world; and, in the Gospel according to Matthew, it is made to refer to both events. Now, the probable explanation is that Christ did come in the destruction of Jerusalem. He came to the disciples in the resurrection, on the day of Pentecost, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and again in the awful judgment which was visited on Jerusalem. And so he is ever coming in all the great crises of history, both in the life of individuals and of nations.

And a hint of this may be found in the word which is used in the Greek. It has been transliterated in *parousia* (παρουσία). But in the Greek it

means *presence*, rather than *coming*; and it refers to any of the various forms in which Christ has been present with his people since his ascension into heaven.

2) This at once suggests a second aspect under which that coming or presence may be viewed. Christ returned on the day of Pentecost in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He is present by his Spirit, and he comes in every manifestation of the Spirit, whether in the form of power or of sanctification. As is well known, the Fourth Gospel lays emphasis on this side of the truth. "I will not leave you orphans: I come unto you"; and what kind of coming Jesus had in mind is indicated by the connection in which the promise stands. He had just referred to the coming of the Comforter. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world can not receive; for it beareth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him: for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I come unto you" (Jn. 14:16-18). And there is, at least, nothing in the Synoptic teaching to contradict this view. Jesus is present, and he comes in ever more glorious forms, in every spiritual triumph of his people.

3) But it would be a mistake to explain all the references to the second coming of the Lord in either of these ways, as if there were no event to be looked for, in which he will come in full and final triumph.

History is a unity; it is moving forward to a definite goal—the final triumph of the kingdom of God over all the powers of sin and evil. The reference in Matthew 25: 31-33 can not well be to anything else. History is now moving forward through a succession of conflicts and triumphs. As we saw in the last chapter, it is the way in which the kingdom is developing. But every crisis in the onward development of the kingdom is only an adumbration of a final crisis, in which the right shall be made to triumph finally and forever. And in that final triumph, Jesus will be revealed in his full splendour and glory. It will be his glorious revelation from heaven. The emphasis is on the finality of the crisis which that revelation introduces, and on the finality of the issues which it brings to pass. “Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . Then shall he say also unto them on his left, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life” (Mt. 25: 34-46). Hence while there is a sense in which his coming is continuous, as was intimated by Jesus himself before the high priest (Mt. 26: 64), that does not exhaust the subject. There will be a final coming, which will involve his complete triumph over his enemies, and which will bring about his perfect revelation in the glory of the Father.

4. The Final Judgment

With this second coming of the Lord, there is associated a final judgment of the nations of the world. The idea, as well as the association, may have been derived originally from the Old Testament, where the coming of the Messiah is spoken of in connection with the judgment (Zeph. 1:14-16). Certainly, Jesus often referred to "the day of judgment." "Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city" (Mt. 10:15), "And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment" (Mt. 12:36).

Inasmuch as Jesus speaks of a "day of judgment," we have been accustomed to think of the judgment as an event. In accordance with the pictorial representation, which is given in Matthew 25:30-46, we are apt to think of it as if it were an isolated event, without direct connection with what goes before and with what follows after. This, however, is a mistake. It is rather a process unfolding through successive crises, and reaching its culmination in a final crisis. It is, in fact, the last great crisis of history, that towards which all the other crises have been pointing, and in which they will all reach their solution. The truth of all this we may be able to appreciate, if we carefully study that

pictorial judgment programme, which is given in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew.

A careful study of this judgment programme reveals three things:

1) The judgment itself brings with it a revelation, a revelation of the characters of men, just as the parousia brings with it a revelation of Jesus Christ. The Son of man is represented as separating between the righteous and the wicked, as a shepherd separates between the sheep and the goats (Mt. 25:32, 33). The righteous receive the joyful welcome to the Judge's right hand, while the wicked are sent away into misery and anguish on the left. The Judge himself sees what the character of each one in his presence is; and more than that. He likewise makes each one to stand out in the nakedness of his true character before an assembled universe. Now, in the numerous crises which occur in history, men may succeed in hiding their real characters from their fellows; and they may succeed in occupying a seat among the righteous, when in reality all their goodness is but hypocritical sham. But in that great day, such a thing will be impossible. Every one will then stand revealed, as he is.

2) With this revelation of the true character of men, there will follow their separation the one from the other. The righteous will stand on the Judge's right hand, the wicked on his left. There will be an outward separation corresponding to the inward separation, which has long been taking place. This is

in reality the central fact in the entire transaction. All else that goes before is but a preparation for it; and all that follows after is but the result flowing from it.

It is when we look at the judgment from this point of view that we can realize how it is first of all a process, before it can be an event. Men and nations are preparing themselves for the great day by the attitude which they assume with reference to the great conflict between right and wrong. With reference to that conflict, the lines are being continually drawn. Men are in reality passing to the right hand or to the left of the Judge by the attitude which they are assuming with reference to the questions of right and wrong which are coming before them every day of their lives. And the same is true of nations. In accordance with the manner in which they are dealing with the great problems of right and wrong, as these come up in the great moral, social, and industrial crises of their history, they too are shaping their destiny in the last great day.

It is interesting, in this connection, to recall the word used in our Greek New Testament for judgment. It is *κρίσις* and has been bodily transferred into English in our word *crisis*. It is derived from *κρίνω*, which means to separate, to put asunder, to select, to choose. And just as every crisis is a separating between hostile forces, which have been opposed to each other and contending with each other; so it is with the final crisis, the judgment. In it

the kingdom of light and the powers of darkness, which have all along through history been engaged in a struggle for the mastery, will come to their last death grapple; and through the almighty power of God, the kingdom of light will come to its full, its final, and its everlasting victory.

3) Flowing from this victory and this separation there will follow the rewarding of each one according to the deeds done in the body. Those who stand on the right hand will then receive the welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25:34); while those on the left will hear the terrible sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. 25:41).

It should be observed that, when stripped of its pictorial imagery, this part of the representation is but a consequence of what has gone before. For the righteous to be finally separated from sin and evil is to be joined forever with that which is good; and that means happiness and bliss forevermore. On the other hand, for the wicked to be finally separated from the righteous and from all that makes for righteousness, is to be separated from all that can give permanent satisfaction and bliss; and that is to be wretched and ruined forever. The rewards, which we are so apt to think the chief thing in the great judgment day, are in reality only the consequence of that which is deeper and more important.

This pictorial representation also suggests the principle, in accordance with which the judgment is to be executed. The judgment is made to turn on deeds, and these the smaller deeds of our ordinary everyday life. "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Mt. 25:35, 36). And so on the other side: the lack of such commonplace services is given as the reason for the condemnation of the wicked.

The representation has given rise to no small amount of perplexity. Is salvation after all by works, and not by faith? The question is irrelevant. The question here is not, how are we saved? It is rather as to the principle on which the judgment turns. And that undoubtedly is works. We shall be judged by what we are, by our character. If that is righteous, we shall have our place at the Judge's right; if that is sinful, we shall stand on his left. And character is formed by deeds. Our faith helps us to love and obey; but unless it produces these fruits, it is dead. It is efficacious only as it helps us to become good and righteous; and it is only when we are righteous that we are able to stand at God's right hand.

Once more, it is the little deeds of our daily life that are represented as deciding our destiny in the great day. Not one word is said about the great

and heroic deeds of life. It is the giving of a crust of bread to a wayfaring man, the giving of a cup of cold water to the thirsty, visiting the sick, and comforting those who are in prison. The reason is not hard to find. Opportunity for doing great and heroic deeds come to very few; and when it does come, we are seldom really ourselves. There is always that in a great occasion which has a tendency to lift a man out of himself, and what he does under such circumstances is never quite his own. He is apt to be swept along in spite of himself; so that it is really easier to do right under such circumstances than it is when we are alone, and when we feel the drag of misery and grime on our spirits. It is the little things, which come to us every day, over and over again, and which we do without thinking much about them, that test what we really are. Do we meet these little things in the spirit of sweetness and love? That tells what we are. Hence it is such things that determine our final destiny in the great day.

5. *The Consummation*

This separation of the final judgment will be the ushering in of the consummation of the kingdom. The kingdom of God will then be fully realized. Under whatever view it may be considered, its ideal will then be attained.

1) Those at the Judge's right hand will then

have realized God's rule perfectly. They will be righteous, and there will be no unrighteousness left in them. God's will will be done by them as perfectly on the earth, as it is done in heaven. In fact, earth will have been transformed into heaven. Whether we say, in accordance with the rich imagery of the book of Revelation (Rev. 21:10), that the New Jerusalem will then have come down from God out of heaven; or whether we say, with the equally rich imagery of St. Paul (1 Thess. 4:17), that all who then remain on earth shall be caught up together with those who have gone before, to meet the Lord in the air, the result will be the same. The redeemed will have become so like their elder Brother that they will have become perfect even as their Father in heaven is perfect (Mt. 5:48).

2) Then, too, those under the divine rule will have realized to the full the blessings, which the kingdom has in store for all who love and obey God. Especially will they then attain unto the beatific vision; for purified from all sin and evil, renewed and transformed in their whole inner life, they will see God. They will be seated with Jesus upon his throne of glory, sharing in his dominion and power (Mt. 19:28).

3) Once more, those under the divine rule will then attain unto a celestial commonwealth, in which they shall enjoy communion and fellowship with all God's saints, and with it the common possession of eternal life and all its rich gifts. Whether there

will be such a thing as an organized society, with its offices, its functions, and its ministries, its citizens will be bound together by that perfect bond, which will make all external organization unnecessary and obsolete; for each one will then do unto others absolutely as he would have them do unto him. External laws will have passed away and been forgotten, because every man will have the perfect law written upon his heart.

But how about those whom the separation of that great day will have placed on the Judge's left hand? One would fain wish that he might include them also in the company of those who are thus caught up to this consummation of happiness and bliss. But the teaching of Jesus speaks of a separation which is final, and which seems to leave them on the outside.

We need to recall here that Jesus speaks of an unpardonable sin; and those who commit that sin become guilty of eternal sin. Theoretically, taking human nature as it is, with the tendency of character both good and bad toward fixedness, no one can deny the possibility of the sinful man attaining that bad eminence. And Jesus seems to have had more than simply the possibility in mind. He warns the Pharisees, as if they stood perilously near the fatal precipice (Mk. 3:28-30). And this but accords with those parabolic representations which speak of the final separation. "As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall

it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ” (Mt. 13: 40-43).

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