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THE
THREE TEMPLES
OF
THE ONE TRUE GOD
CONTRASTED.

BY THE
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OXFORD.



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PREFACE.

THE following contrast of the Three Temples comprises, together with much additional matter, the substance of two Sermons preached before the University of Oxford, on the morning and afternoon of Whitsunday, 1829. To this has been appended the substance of another Sermon, in consequence of its connection with a portion of the former, which will be noticed in its proper place.

It has occurred to me, that the title of the work may appear strange and quaint to some even of those who are not likely to dissent from the view which it contains. Whether any objection lies against it on the score of incongruity, must, of course, be determined by a perusal of the book itself. But I may be

permitted to remark, that the analogy I have been pursuing has been denoted in the title, in Scriptural terms; and these terms have been purposely introduced with a view to recall a Scriptural view, which the more needs to be prominently set forth, in proportion as it has been overlooked, or insufficiently attended to. And that this is the case with many persons—that the view to which I allude is less familiar to their minds than it ought to be—may be inferred from the very circumstance, that the Scriptural expression of it, sounds to them strange and inappropriate.

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THE
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INTRODUCTION.

IN no view of Revelation is the wisdom of God more conspicuous than in the *slow* and *gradual* development of truth—the admission of more and more light, according as mankind have been able to endure it, and have been capable of walking by it. Contrast, for instance, the obscure hint given to our first parents, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, with the Christian doctrine of fallen man's redemption through Christ; and observe how progressively the original outline has been filled up and finished. The first intimation of a Redeemer, compared with our present knowledge of that great truth,

was like the confused mass of colouring which the painter's canvass at first exhibits, and in which no eye but his own can discover a future form or meaning. Slowly it received touch after touch, and line upon line, until at length the understanding of a child may comprehend its import, and the heart of a child be touched and awakened by it. So again, with respect to our knowledge of a future state. From a few passages in the writings of Moses, it may be *elicited* and *inferred*; in the long interval between Moses and Christ, a series of inspired messengers *suggest* it with increasing clearness; at length, the Finisher of our faith—the Author as well as Finisher—brings life and immortality to light by his Gospel.

Remarkable as this progressive system has been in the disclosure of all revealed truth, it has been more especially so in God's revelation of Himself. His immediate presence, his undelegated intercourse with man, has gradually assumed a character more and more unlike our gross conceptions of any earthly or created object, until we of these latter days are found acknowledging the reality of the Divine presence

and communion, without any sensible manifestation at all. To his first chosen people, God was made known as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and his presence was associated with a pillar of fire, or a cloud, a tabernacle or a temple. The Israelites were taught to address Him as especially present in a building made by men's hands, as their forefathers are alleged by the woman of Samaria to have associated his worship with mount Gerizim^a. Their prophets, at length, hinted at a new idea of God's presence, in which the analogy to an earthly abode and a local existence was to be more distant and shadowy. "The Lord himself," said Isaiah, "shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," i. e. as the Evangelist explains it, "God with us^b." Accordingly the Immanuel came; and his coming taught the worshippers of God so far to divest their minds of an association between his holy presence and a local habitation, as to contemplate the Divine nature in its connection with the immaterial qualities of

^a John iv. 20.

^b Isaiah vii. 14. compared with Matt. i. 23.

a human mind. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory^c." But there was yet a further stage of revelation, to which the Immanuel himself directed the views of his Church. Not only that worship of God was to be done away with, which connected his presence with a mountain or a building—with Jerusalem or Gerizim—it was expedient that Christ, the fleshly manifestation, should go away. He foretold a day, in which the true worshippers were no longer to say, "Lo, He is here," or "Lo, He is there;" for the kingdom of God was to be "within them." They were to worship him as present by his Spirit—present in no one place—in no one man—but in his new body the Church, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all^d."

It is my purpose, to compare together these three successive stages, in which God has revealed Himself as the Ruler of his elect:—in other words, to contrast the three Temples of the one true God. I call these three channels of divine

^c John i. 14.

^d Compare Ephesians i. 22, 23. Luke xvii. 20, 21. Matt. xxiv. 23—27. John iv. 21—24.

intercourse, *temples*, because inspired wisdom has thought proper so to represent them, in reference to certain important points of analogy. Our Lord, for instance, spoke thus of himself; “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up^e.” His apostles hold a similar language, saying, that “in Him *dwelleth* all the fulness of the Godhead^f ;” and, that the Word was made flesh, and *dwelt* or *tabernacled* amongst us^g. Again, with respect to the Church, St. Paul frequently reminds his Christian brethren, that they are “the temple of the Holy Ghost,” and “the temple of God.” In his first Epistle to the Corinthians he writes, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God *dwelleth* in you? if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the

^e John ii. 19.

^f Coloss. ii. 9.

^g Ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. John i. 14. The expression seems to be an allusion to the tabernacle, to which the Divine presence was attached, during the period that was preparatory to the establishment of Israel in the promised land and the building of a temple. The correspondence between this period and our Lord's ministry, considered as preparatory to the final establishment of his Church, is obvious.

temple of God is holy, which temple ye are^b:" and in his second Epistle to the same Church, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in themⁱ." To the Ephesians also he writes, "Ye are *built* upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit^k." To the same source must be assigned the repeated use of the metaphorical expression "edification" or "building up;" and this, not by St. Paul alone;—it was no fanciful train of allusion which his peculiar habits of thinking suggested; but an image derived from the very essentials of that Gospel, which all the apostles alike preached. St. Jude as well as St. Paul speaks of Christians "building up" themselves on their most holy faith^l; and in St. Peter's Epistles, as in St. Paul's, the exhortation to come unto Christ as "unto a

^b 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.
ii. 20, 21, 22.

ⁱ 2 Cor. vi. 16.
^l Jude 20.

^k Ephes.

living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious," is followed up with the declaration, "ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house ^m."

This comparative survey, which I propose to take, will require, in the first place, a statement of those *marks* which God set on his three Temples, for the purpose of connecting them, and of calling attention to the analogy: and secondly, a consideration of the resemblances, and of the differences between the three Temples, and of the ends which appear to have been contemplated by these points of resemblance or difference. It is an inquiry, which, with the full blaze of Gospel light to guide us, will remind us at every step of our weakness and blindness. It is the lifting up of the eye to Him who gives it sight; it is the exercise of our understanding on Him, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being;" and every Christian should approach the discussion, with the reverence and humility that is due to so high and solemn a theme: but he should do so with the full conviction likewise, that whatever it has pleased God to reveal to us of Himself, is

^m 1 Peter ii. 4, 5.

like the burning bush on Mount Horeb,—it is *our duty* to turn aside, and draw near, and examine it; only remembering, that the ground whereon we tread is holy.

CHAPTER I.

DEDICATION OF THE THREE TEMPLES.

THE Dedication of the three Temples is the first feature to be considered in the comparison. There was a solemn consecration of each ; and a miraculous sign declared each, in succession, to be the abode of God—the appointed channel of his communications—in other words, his Temple.

I. To begin with the Temple of stone at Jerusalem. The mark by which God signified its holy character was given on the completion of the building, and preparatory to its use. It was formally and solemnly dedicated ; and at its dedication, it was miraculously filled with a “glory,” or mysterious light^a. With the meaning of this light, as the established sign of God’s immediate presence and undelegated communications, the Israelites, it will be observed, were, at that time, fully acquainted. They knew it by the Shechinah which had signified Jehovah’s abode in the tabernacle, by the

^a 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. 2 Chron. v. 13, 14. and vii. 2.

pillar of fire which had conducted their fathers through the wilderness, and by the lightnings that played about the summit of Mount Sinai on the delivery of the Law. They knew it also by the record of the burning bush, out of which God called to Moses to appoint him their lawgiver and leader^b; and, to add no more instances, they knew it by that more awful record of man's exclusion from paradise, which was accompanied with the display of "cherubims and a flaming sword^c."

In manifesting this light then, at the dedication of Solomon's temple, God declared, by a well-known symbol, that it was the appointed place where men ought to worship Him—that there He was to be found when *called on*—that thither, as to the abode of the first *Paraclete*^d, the court of their heavenly Sovereign, both king and people, priesthood and laity, were to

^b Exodus iii. 2.

^c Genesis ii. 24.

^d The etymological meaning of the term *παράκλητος* is *one called in*; and in reference to this may be explained all the significations which are claimed for it. God, as presiding over his Church, is *called in* by the afflicted to *comfort* them, by the ignorant to *instruct* them, by the weak to *strengthen* them.

resort. Though, in the words of Solomon on that occasion, "God dwelleth not in a temple made by hands," yet the circumstances of his presence here were analogous to the local residence of a human governor, and it was therefore called "the house of the Lord."

II. Christ's human nature was the next Temple to which God's presence and intercourse with man was attached. Considered in this point of view, his baptism corresponded to the dedication of the temple of stone. It was the period from which his holy service commenced. And accordingly the baptism of Jesus appears to have exhibited a scene answering to the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem. There is every reason to understand the sacred writers, in their narration of that event, to be recording the descent of the well-known symbol—the Shechinah. The Spirit of God is said indeed to have descended on Him, in bodily shape, like a dove; but this must allude either to the easy motion with which the holy flame descended, or to the figure which it assumed; for it is plain, that no other semblance of a dove would have impressed the spectators with the idea of the Divine presence.

The Shechinah was the only recognised and established symbol of this ; and it was doubtless the rekindled Shechinah which so descended^e. With this, as well as with the fuller display on the Mount of Transfiguration, was joined a voice from heaven, saying, “ This is my beloved Son.”

The repetition of these words, and their use at the Transfiguration more especially, deserves particular notice, in reference to the view which we are now taking of our Lord, as the new Temple. On two favoured servants of God in old times this mark of his presence was known

^e The author of “ The Gospel of the Nazarenes ” mentions the appearance of “ a great light ” at our Saviour’s baptism. The independent authority of such a document is, of course, nothing ; but it may nevertheless be allowed to strengthen a probability already resting on grounds certainly Scriptural. The passage, to which I allude, will be found in Jones’s Canon of the New Testament, part ii. c. 25. §. 11. See also the remarks of Paley on the allusions made to this tradition by Epiphanius and Justin Martyr. Evidences, part i. chap. 9. §. 1. A similar notice, mixed up with a great deal that is mystical, occurs in the Sabeen books, where John the Baptist’s part in this scene is recorded. See Fragments to Calmet, DCXXII.

to have rested, and on two only—on Moses after he came down from Mount Sinai, and his face so shone that he wore a veil ; on Elias or Elijah, when he was caught up into the heavens, seated on a cloud so irradiated^f. By these very marks, no doubt, the disciples recognised Moses and Elias, whom they had never seen, but with whom, so characterised, their Scriptures had made them acquainted. They on that occasion saw them both “ in glory ;” to these servants of God, even as to Jesus, the Shechinah was attached. Were they then Immanuels too? Were they (their hearts might have suggested) to be considered as Beings of the same order as their Master? Were they, like Jesus, *temples* of the living God? The suggestion was natural, and seems to have been anticipated by the voice that told them, “ This is my beloved Son.” Twice to our Lord this “ glory” had been attached, and on each occasion, that same voice accompanied it, to guard against the possibility of our supposing, that in his case, it denoted no more than in the case of Elias or Moses. This was probably indeed the main purport of the Transfiguration.

^f Called a chariot of fire, 2 Kings ii. 11.

It declared Jesus to be, not like Elias, nor like Moses, an inspired man—but the Immanuel—the Christ—the Son of God—the Temple of his presence and communication.

III. We come now to the last great and glorious scene—that scene, for which the preceding stages in God's revelation of himself were preparatory. Christ had spoken of yet another Paraclete, for whose coming it was expedient that He should go away. He had told his disciples that He would come again; but warned them against supposing that his new body, the future Temple of God, was to be even so local, as when God was manifested in Him. “And then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ; or, Lo, He is there; believe him not ^g.” “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo, here; or Lo, there; for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you ^h.” But this was not all; his last and most important declaration, was prophetic of that scene, which, like his own baptism, was to be the dedication of the last Temple; the correspondence between the two events being most pointedly marked by his manner of express-

^g Matt. xxiv. 23.

^h Luke xvii. 20.

ing himself. Not long before his ascension, He commanded the apostles, "that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which," saith He, "ye have heard from me. For John truly baptized with water, (alluding probably to his own baptism by John,) but ye shall be *baptized* with the Holy Ghost not many days henceⁱ." Accordingly, on the day of Pentecost, the mysterious emblem of God's abiding presence and covenanted intercourse was once more displayed. On the assembled Church the Shechinah was poured out and dispersed. The metaphor of "pouring out"^k is used as if to denote that it was the Church's spiritual anointing. It was, in the language of St. John^l, the unction from the Holy One. The Church became the Lord's anointed. It was the Church's baptism; it was the dedication of the last Temple of the one true God.

ⁱ Acts i. 4, 5.

^k Ἐκχύω. Acts ii. 17.

^l 1 John ii. 20. See also ver. 27. where he speaks of this anointing "as *abiding in*" Christians, and as "*teaching all things*," expressions used by our Lord in his promise of the Comforter.

It is this view of the Christian fraternity throughout the world, and of each separate Church, and its several congregations, that entitles it to be called the Temple. No building made by hands corresponds to that which was honoured, of old, by the abiding presence of Jehovah. We, the worshippers of God, are now his Temple. Buildings of stone we have, indeed, which are dedicated to God's service ; but if any analogy must be sought for these from an earlier dispensation, it will be found rather in the Jewish *proseuchæ* or synagogues. Our churches do not, at least, correspond to the Temple at Jerusalem. Of no literal edifice in the Christian world has it been written, that the Holy Ghost dwells in it, and has filled it with his presence ; but only of that figurative structure, in which we are "as lively stones." Whatever reverence, therefore, may be due to places set apart for divine service ; that reverence ought neither to supersede, nor yet to be confounded with, the sense of God's presence which we are required to attach to the *congregation*. They, and not the walls that occasionally enclose them, are the dedicated Temple.

And yet, it is melancholy to reflect on the

cold-hearted indifference, with which this the true sanctuary is regarded, even by numbers who value the good-tidings of the Gospel. Has Christ indeed gone and left us comfortless, that we must look back for the source of our holy love and zeal to days of miracle and manifestation ; and, like Peter, stand gazing with misplaced enthusiasm on the goodly stones of an earlier Temple, unmindful of that to which the Shechinah has been transferred? How poor, after all, is that use of Christian privileges, which awakens no habitual sense that God is present, and Himself dispensing their secret virtue ! It savours of the dulness with which numbers came to the Immanuel to be healed or to be fed, and yet failed to recognise “ the Lord that healeth^m,” and Him who provided their fathers with manna in the desert.

Is this apathy increased, or is it diminished, by the further view which that same truth carries along with it—that we are *individually* portions of this sacred edifice—“ lively stones,” as St. Peter expresses it? I fear it is increased. We could be content to visit, at stated periods, a

^m Exod. xv. 26.

shrine or a holy person ;—once or twice in our lives, to make a toilsome pilgrimage to Jerusalem or Mecca, and for the occasion to put any restraint on our conduct, and to wind up our hearts to any pitch of devotion and holy fear : but to feel that we have not to go to God, but that God has come to us—that He is mysteriously with us, within us, and ever mingling the operations of his Spirit with our own government of our will and affections—that, do what we may, whether good or evil, we are doing it with Him, and either going along with Him or resisting Him—that in every act, and word, and thought, we are either led by the Spirit, or else are grieving the Spirit—to live under the habitual sense of this, what is it, but to struggle through the narrow path, which he only treads, who is “ crucified unto this world,” and has “ tasted the powers of the world to come?” On the other hand, to entertain such a feeling *occasionally*, but fills us with an undefined horror, which forces us to dismiss it, and to emancipate ourselves, if possible, from its harrowing influence.

Still it does return ; and then, how does the

Christian behave? Does he feel that it is indeed the Lord God from whose presence he has been vainly hiding himself? Does he recognise the still, small voice that asks, Where art thou? Let him then come forth trembling, ashamed, and resolved thenceforward to walk humbly with his God. He is yet in time; for the Lord has called him, and him who cometh He will in no wise cast out. But does he still reply, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Alas! for him—a little while and indeed the Lord will be no more with him; and where his Saviour is, he cannot then come. Or, does he plead with conscience, and allege that it is impossible habitually to recognise the Divine presence, because he is not sensibly reminded of it? O! let him beware of this worst delusion. It is not now for the first time, that God has come to his own, and his own have received Him not. It has occurred quite as remarkably with those who have had sensible manifestations and ocular proof, as it does now with Christians, who complain of the absence of such evidence. This is never the real cause. We all know, if we have duly inquired, that God is with us; and if He has chosen to assure us of

this by any one sufficient method, let us not say, that we neglect the behaviour due to his presence, because it ought to have been made known to us in some other way. Let us think on those who, amidst a series of miracles wrought, and prophecies fulfilled, yet said to the Immanuel, "We would see a sign from theeⁿ."

True—we are not assured of the co-operation of the Holy Spirit by the same means as we are of the operation of our understanding on our affections or passions. We are not conscious of it. But what then? Our condition in this respect may be after all very like the condition of the first followers of our blessed Lord, which we would fain represent to ourselves to be so much more favourable than our own. They believed in Him, they obeyed Him, they loved Him, before they knew that it was God in Christ, who was the object of their regard and veneration. The proof, the sensible manifestation of this, was the reward of a faith exercised in partial blindness. May it not be even so with us? In another life, although no other connection should be established between God and his Church than now

ⁿ St. Matt. xii. 38.

exists ; if we should be so far changed as to be made *conscious* of this connection, what a new and exalted state of being might be the result ! The difference between the first and the last stages of apostolic faith and knowledge, would be surely but a faint type of this. Nor is the expectation unreasonable. That such a change at least *may* take place, is conceivable, although the precise character of the change be not. One, for instance, who should be born blind, and acquire the use of his eyes after his other senses and faculties had been matured and exercised, would perceive not only objects imperceptible by any senses which he had before employed ; but would discover in the objects around him, and most familiar to him, relations which had been hidden from him, and qualities hitherto incomprehensible°. In another life the controlling influence of the Divine presence on our hearts and conduct may be only in itself the same as now ; and our security from sin, as well as our chief happiness, be made to consist in the exercise of a new or latent faculty

° I have here availed myself of an illustration, furnished by one, to whose valuable suggestions in the course of the inquiry I have been often indebted. See Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State, by a Country Pastor, Lect. ix.

by which we shall be conscious of it. God may not be more intimately present, more with us, than He now is ; and yet, as often as we address Him, our hearts may be assured of his presence, and our devotions kindled, by a ray of glory which eye hath not yet seen, only because the eye is not yet framed to perceive it. When exercising that more perfect control on our desires and affections, for which our present life is training us, what if that benignant countenance—that same look of affectionate remonstrance at which the apostle wept and repented—shall be turned on us, to check impulses that now lead to sin, even before an evil thought should be conceived, or actual temptation have commenced ? The present Temple may remain unchanged ; save only, that by the rending of another veil, we shall see God face to face, and “ shall know even as we also are known.”

CHAPTER II.

MATERIALS OF THE THREE TEMPLES.

THE expressions “ true” and “ truth” are used by the writers of the New Testament not only in their ordinary sense, as opposed to what is *false* and *untrue* ; but to signify *reality*, or *substance*, as opposed to *types*, *emblems*, *similitudes*. Accordingly these terms are often applied to Christianity, or to some feature of the Christian scheme, for the purpose of contrasting it with the Jewish dispensation ; that being considered as the shadow, and the Christian as the body, or “ the truth.” All the rites and ordinances of the Mosaic Law are, by the last Revelation, declared to have been patterns, or images, or symbols, of events and appointments in the Christian covenant ; for which, exclusively, this character of truth or reality is claimed. Even the personages of Jewish history are represented as forming a part of this preparatory and promissory system ; and to have held office and ministry, the real efficacy of which belonged to the analogous office

and ministry of Christ, the true King,—the true Priest,—and the true Prophet ^a.

It is, for instance, in opposition to the prejudices of the unbelieving Jews, who contended for the eternal obligation and permanent character of the Mosaic Law, as such, that our Saviour tells them, “The *truth* shall make you free ^b”—alluding to the release which Christianity offered from the burthensome rites of the Law. Such too was the meaning of St. Paul, when he drew the allegorical parallel between the child of the *free-woman* and the child of the *bond-woman* ^c—and of St. John, when he wrote, “The *Law* was given by Moses, but *grace* and *truth* came by Jesus Christ ^d.”

Again, particular portions of the two dispensations are set in contrast by our Saviour; as when he tells the Jews, “Moses gave you not *the* bread from heaven, but my Father is giving you *the true* bread from heaven ^e”—in allusion to the manna, with which God fed the Israelites in the wilderness, and which he thus intimates to have been a

^a See e. g. 1 Cor. x. Hebrews viii. ix. x. Rev. xiii. 8.

^b John viii. 32.

^c Galat. iv. 22.

^d John i. 17.

^e John vi. 32.

type of the spiritual food he was to become to the Church. So also, when he says, “my flesh is meat *indeed*, and my blood is drink *indeed*”^f—the word which is rendered *indeed* in our translation being in both places (ἀληθῶς) “in truth.”

It is in this sense, that the words “true” and “truth” are used in his remarkable words to the woman of Samaria, “the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth^g.” The *true* worshippers were so designated in opposition to the typical Church under the old dispensation—the *true* worship, of which the Temple service had been the prelude and preparation, was that, in which God’s attested presence should be attached neither to a holy mountain, nor to a holy city—neither to Mount Gerizim, nor yet to Jerusalem—in which the Church should be at once the Temple and the worshippers.

By what successive stages God has, as it were, educated the Church for this last and most abstract Revelation of Himself—what are the resemblances and the differences between these three Temples, which we recognise as such by one

^f John vi. 55.

^g John iv. 23.

common symbol being annexed to their dedication, and a common language applied to them by inspiration—in what respects the gradual change thus made in God's Revelation of Himself has been accommodated to the slowly-opening capacity of his Church—to the prejudices, the corruptions, and the weakness of his worshippers—these will be now the objects of inquiry.

The subject will be arranged under the following heads. I. The materials of the three Temples. II. The mode of divine residence in them. III. Their duration and stability. IV. The Temple services. V. The persons officiating. VI. The connection of the three Temples with the doctrine of the Trinity. The remainder of the present chapter will be occupied with the first of these topics.

I. That the Temple of stone was appointed in condescension to the weakness and prejudices of God's first worshippers, will be evident, if we consider what was the character and condition of the Israelites, and the time of its building. They were even then so imperfectly cured of the idolatrous habits of the heathen around them,

as to be continually incurring divine chastisements for worshipping strange gods. Obstinacy so blind as this is unaccountable, except on the supposition, that their notion of the distinct nature of God was still very faint and confused; and such as must have perpetually yielded to the influence of example and habitual hereditary corruption.

All the nations around were worshipping, each its own deities, attached to a people, a district, a mountain, or a grove. There were gods of the hills, and gods of the valleys^k. The Egyptians had theirs, the Canaanites had theirs; every region, and every city, and almost every family of the heathen world, had its own god. Could the Israelites have been exempt from the influence of this view? We know that they were not. The Israelite in Egypt had been a bondsman in morals and mind as well as in body, and he continued to wear the chain that fettered his heart and intellect, long after he had shaken off external servitude. It was doubtless in ten-

^k See 1 Kings xx. 23, and 28. So Eteocles in the Phœnissæ is made to address Polynices, *Μυκῆναις, μὴ ἴθαδ' αἰνόκαλι θεούς*. Phœniss. 67.

derness to this weakness, that God's first Revelation of Himself to them was as a tutelary deity—as *their* God, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. Nor was it until a sufficient interval had elapsed, that he formally and explicitly declared Himself to be the God of all the earth likewise¹.

It is true, that before the building of Solomon's Temple, many must have been more enlightened than to be included in this description; still, the ready relapse of monarch and people, priesthood and laity, into gross idolatry—and this in periods long subsequent—shews how unfit they were generally for any Revelation of God's presence and communication, but such as should be attached to *a place*. Possibly any other view would, as yet, have been incomprehensible. The Temple of stone was an accommodation to this spiritual infancy of the mind. Because the king dwelt in an house of cedar, it seemed unfitting that the ark of God, which had been honoured with the sign of his presence, should dwell within curtains^m. All the circumstances

¹ Compare Exodus vi. 7. with xix. 5.

^m 2 Sam. vii. 2.

of an earthly and local theocracy were demanded ; and in compassion to their weakness they were granted.

Let us for a moment contrast the frame of mind which all this supposes in the Israelites, with the exercise of faith, necessary to embrace the doctrine of God's presence and intercourse by his Spirit—his present indwelling in the hearts of the faithful—and it is impossible not to admit that this last revelation would have been amazing and inconceivable to the worshippers in the first Temple. Scarcely could they be brought, by a series of severe national judgments up to the period of the Babylonish captivity, to adhere even to the earliest improvement on their original corrupt views ; and to worship without any sensible image to represent the object of worship. To have attempted, in the first instance, to impress them with the idea of a Divine residence amongst them, in which there should be no local object at all—no fixed habitation to mark the Divine presence and communication—this would have been surely unavailing. It was only, when they had entirely cast off their hereditary habits of idolatry, and had been thoroughly cured of image-

worship, that they were fit for being taught to worship Jehovah, "neither in mount Gerizim, nor yet at Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth."

And yet, so abrupt would have been the transition of thought, from the contemplation of God's presence, as it was manifested in the Temple of stone, to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within our hearts; that some intermediate stage was requisite, for the mind to pause and rest on in the immense transfer of its conception. That stage was the Immanuel—God dwelling, not in a house or tabernacle, but in the mysterious abode of a man's human nature—united with the human heart and mind, as well as with the human body. There was just so much of locality about the material part of Christ's human nature, as to convey men's views, by an easy transition, to that last mode of residence, which was to be divested of all local associations—that kingdom, in which we are appointed to walk by faith, and not by sight—that Temple, in which the worshippers now worship in spirit and in truth.

II. There is another aspect under which the difference of materials in the three Temples may be surveyed—one associated not so much with

the weakness of man, as with the wisdom of God —with the progressive scheme of salvation, which, even in our imperfect view of it, has been plainly best accomplished in its several stages, by precisely such a kind of divine manifestation as was attached to each. The comparison which has been hitherto made relates to a difference in the *degree* of revelation ; that which is now proposed regards certain differences in *kind* between the revelations.

In order to estimate the importance of these differences, we must bear in mind, that the Mosaic dispensation was *partial*, the Christian, *universal*. The old Church of God was, not accidentally, but designedly and by positive institution, limited to one elected people and one place. Its first institution was on a principle of preference, election, and separation ; and its partial extent and exclusive character was further preserved, by a strict command to celebrate the appointed means of grace in the Temple only ; and so frequently, as to render it impossible for distant strangers to be in habitual and full communionⁿ. Into the object of this limitation

ⁿ See Exod. xxxiv. 23. Deut. xii.

I am not now inquiring; but such was the case.

The Christian dispensation, on the contrary, began with the avowed design of embracing all mankind. The commission of the Apostles was “to baptize and make disciples of *all nations* °.” The commandment was that *all men every where* should repent^p.”

It is obvious then, how fit, how essential it was, that there should be a Temple of stone for the partial dispensation; the presence of God in Christ for the transition state, when it was yet partial, but preparing to be extended; and for this last dispensation, which was to embrace all the world, what Temple would have been sufficient, but a Temple co-extensive and identical with the worshippers themselves? As in the true atonement, there was no victim worthy of the priest, no priest worthy of the victim, but He who combined both in his own person; so in the true worship, there could have been no adequate Temple, unless the worshippers and the Temple had been the same.

° Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15.

p Acts xvii.

Let us, for a moment, imagine it otherwise. Suppose, that, in order to enjoy the benefits which we now derive from God's spiritual presence amongst us as a Church, the Christian world were obliged to resort, once even in a year, to some appointed place where God had fixed his name. Suppose it Jerusalem—suppose it Rome—suppose it where you will, and you create an insurmountable obstacle to the universality of the Christian religion. As soon as the work of conversion extended beyond the limits of the country where the Shechinah rested, the impossibility of a general conformity must have been felt. But when a distance of half the globe intervened, a few occasional pilgrimages could have been the only mode of compliance with the bond of the covenant; and even these would have been limited to the robust and the wealthy⁹. If again the possibility of removing all these impediments were granted, the very removal of them would at once create a stronger case of impracticability. A Temple must have been provided,

⁹ Mahomet felt this difficulty when he ordered his disciples to repair to Mecca *once in their lives*.

whose courts should be so spacious as to contain all the families of the Christian world.

In a less degree, but only in a less degree, the residence of the Saviour in the flesh amongst us would have been inconsistent with the enlargement of his train of disciples into a fraternity which comprehends some of all the portions of civilized mankind. He must have continued to be the source of all ecclesiastical authority at least—all reference and appeal on religious questions must have been finally made to Him—and how could all this have been done, in the case of Churches, established in distant quarters of the world, and varying in circumstances as much as in distance? I say nothing of the disturbance of society arising out of the casual journeys to the seat of spiritual empire; or of the throng which must have been for ever pressing on him, not, as heretofore, from the small district of Palestine, but from all the kingdoms of the world.

All this, and much more, that renders our Saviour's fleshly residence amongst us inconsistent with our present established state of probation, is overlooked in those wild schemes of the fulfilment of prophecy, which would realize this very

scene as the promised Millennium. From the Anabaptists of the Reformation to the more innocent speculators of the present day, no prospect has been more attractive to the imagination than this; and yet it implies a change of condition in the Christian world, which is at variance, it would seem, with the very essentials of the final dispensation. As soon as the Church of Christ began to increase and spread, it became expedient that He should go away. For a train of disciples, which was to reach from one end of the earth to the other, and to occupy a range of countries and communities differing in all ways, in their political institutions and domestic habits, there could be no visible Head on earth—supposing of course Christianity to be otherwise uncorrupted and unchanged. It was expedient for the universal establishment of God's Church throughout the world that the Temple of stone should be destroyed—it was expedient that the Immanuel even should go away: and those who would turn our contemplations and hopes to a renewal of God's distinction of his once holy city, or to the reign of Christ in the flesh amongst his Church militant here on earth, these do seem

to bring us back, if not to “ the beggarly elements” of the Law^r, certainly, to a stage in God’s progressive dispensations, which we have long since passed.

And if this be so, what is the judgment we are called on to pronounce on the claims of a mere human Being to that earthly throne, which it was expedient for us that even Christ should leave vacant. If it be a fond enthusiasm to mourn for the Immanuel’s departure, or to expect his return to govern us in our period of warfare and probation, it is a weakness, which may be pardoned—it is a weakness, which saints, which apostles, for a time, felt. But for man to rebuild the throne which God has pronounced inexpedient—to take his seat thereon—and to exercise that universal spiritual dominion, which could have been attached only to the Immanuel’s throne—this is indeed “ to oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God .”

III. There is yet another point of view, in which, as in the preceding, we discover the fit-

^r Gal. iv. 9.

^s 2 Thess. ii. 4.

ness of the materials of the three Temples for the several stages of Revelation to which they respectively belong. In this again, both the visionary speculations respecting the Millennium, and the claims of the Romish Church, and the Romish Bishop, will be found to be inconsistent with the very essentials of the last dispensation of God—the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. In other words, they both imply a relapse into a stage in the progressive dispensations, which has been long past and superseded.

Under the Mosaic covenant, the Church was not only confined and partial; but conveyed its privileges to the members in very unequal degrees. The mere believer in the one true God was considered as possessing a claim, superior indeed to the idolater, but much inferior to the proselyte to Judaism. There was a distinction between the parts of the Temple to which these two kinds of strangers were admitted: and from their respective places there, the one was called the proselyte of the gate, while the other was named the proselyte of righteousness. Again, the lineal descendant of Abraham—the Hebrew of Hebrews—considered himself heir to promises,

which set him higher than the most perfect proselyte. Nor did the system of gradations end here. From the first institution of the Mosaic Church, the principle of inequality was laid down in the division of the Israelites into the class which the Levites composed, and those who were not, like them, to exercise certain sacred functions. The very Levites again were marked by a strong line of separation; and the family of Aaron reserved for the priesthood and its attendant privileges.

In God's new dispensation, on the contrary, there were to be no corresponding distinctions—there were to be no degrees of Christianity. Once a Christian, whether previously, a Jew, a proselyte, or an idolater, the churchman was to claim and to enjoy the highest privileges of the covenant. In the new Temple there was to be no family like Aaron's; no tribe like Levi's; no nation like the Israelites. Christ "our peace made Jew and Gentile one, having broken down the middle wall of partition between them^t."

It is this that is emphatically called by St. Paul, "unity of the Spirit^u," (*ἐνότης τοῦ Πνεύματος*)—

^t Ephes. ii. 14.

^u Ephes. iv. 3.

that is, the unity, singleness, or oneness of faith and of privileges, which, in opposition to the gradations of the former dispensation, characterizes that Church in which God's Holy Spirit presides and rules.

But how could this characteristic have been preserved, had either of the former divine manifestations—either of the former Temples—been made the permanent one? In the case of the Temple of stone, the impediments are as obvious as those which made it inconsistent with the universality of the Christian dispensation. That all men every where should equally enjoy the privileges of the Christian covenant, it was expedient that God should be worshipped, neither on mount Gerizim, nor yet at Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth. And equally inconsistent and inexpedient would have been the abiding presence of Christ in the flesh. Those removed by distance from his personal intercourse, could not have been considered as having the privileges of communion in an equal degree with his immediate followers. There would not have been equally for all “ One Lord,” however there might have been “ one faith and one baptism.”

It appears then that our present trust in the Divine presence, communion, and assistance, (marked as that presence is by no sign, and attached to no place,) is a frame of mind, for which the Church of God had been in gradual training, from the delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai, to the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. First was removed the prejudice which connected the one true object of worship with a sensible representation. And this was done, not by addressing to the mind an idea altogether spiritual, but by permanently establishing that symbol, which, beyond all others that could have been devised, was farthest removed from solid substance and distinct form—a holy Light. Still for a time it was necessary to attach this evanescent and unsubstantial emblem to a Temple of stone; until the Church was prepared for a purer and more spiritual view to be exhibited in the Incarnation. The display of that mysterious union of the Divine nature, not merely with the body but with the heart and intellect of a man, was itself the prelude and preparation for a view of the Divine presence and intercourse, in which we cannot point to any one place, or to any one

human being, as the residence of the Godhead. The sacred language is, not “ye are the Temples,” but “ye are the *Temple* of the Holy Ghost”—the Temple, collectively, and lively stones individually. We at last worship God in spirit and in truth.

Worthy notions indeed of his presence, we cannot presume that we have even yet acquired. We are now doubtless only in training for that further stage of divine communion, which is described in Scripture as seeing God “face to face,” and knowing Him even as we are known by Him^x. Nay, do we always take care to render our present views of Him habitually even as pure and spiritual as we are able? We have learnt that He is omnipresent—we should bear in mind therefore, that the diffusion of the Shechinah through the Temple of stone, its descent on the Immanuel, and lastly on the Church, were only *symbols*, to attest God’s presence and intercourse; and that He could not have *been* more present then, than he was before, or has been since. Or rather in acknowledging his omni-

^x 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

presence, we must be careful not to allow our mind to dwell on the idea, as if God's presence were the same in kind, and only different in degree, from what we mean by the presence of any created object. God's omnipresence means, not, strictly speaking, that He is present to all things and all men; but, that all things and all men are present to Him. As far as regards his being present to us, He is, correctly speaking, nowhere. His existence cannot reverently be supposed to require the accident of locality. We say indeed, conformably with Scriptural language, that He dwells in heaven. But where and what is heaven? Not surely a *place*—not an abode which can be described by the lines of the astronomer or the geographer. It is a figurative expression, involving a negation of all the circumstances of an earthly residence, and especially of the limitation of space. It is still the infirmity and want of capacity in man, as he now is, that is consulted by the all-merciful Revealer of Himself; and even in this last stage of his Revelation, we must adopt the spirit of the humble confession which Solomon made when he dedicated

the Temple of stone, “ The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot *contain* thee ; how much less this house that I have builded ^y. ”

^y 1 Kings viii. 27.

CHAPTER III.

MODE OF DIVINE RESIDENCE.

WE have now traced the erection of the three successive Temples ; and have recognised them as such by one common symbol being annexed to their dedication, and a common language applied to them by inspiration. Beyond this, the proposed inquiry into the resemblances and the differences between these three Temples has been pursued as far as relates to the materials of which they were composed—the structure of stone—the human nature of Christ—and the Christian congregation or Church. From this comparison it has appeared, that the gradual change so made in God's Revelation of Himself, has been accommodated to the slowly-opening capacity of his worshippers ; and to the progressive scheme of salvation, which, even in our imperfect comprehension of it, has been plainly best accomplished in its several stages, by precisely such a kind of divine manifestation as was allotted to each.

The next feature of contrast which I propose

to examine, is, *the mode of Divine residence* exhibited in these three Temples; which, no less than the materials, will be found most wisely and mercifully adapted to the several stages in the divine economy of grace.

The question respecting the mode of Divine residence, Divine presence, Divine connexion, or by whatever name we choose to designate the mystery, may be answered in two ways; and on the difference between these two modes of viewing the question a great deal of practical consequence depends. When we venture to suggest to our minds any inquiry respecting the presence of God in Christ, or the presence of God in the Church, that inquiry, it is plain, may turn either *on the effect produced by the Divine presence* on the human nature of Christ on the one hand, and the Church on the other: or again, the view taken of this mysterious presence, union, or connection, may be to consider the Immanuel, or the Church, as *the channel of the divine oracles*—the medium of divine communication. The object of the one, in short, may be expressed by calling it *divine communion*,

that of the other, by calling it divine *communication*. Now these two views are not only wholly distinct, but by no means equally open to investigation ; and questions, which in the one may be safely and certainly answered, are, in the other, often beyond our faculties, certainly beyond our knowledge. In the comparison which has been now pursued, of the three stages of God's Revelation of Himself, it is only as the channels of divine *communication* that the three Temples have been contrasted ; and, indeed, it is only in this point of view that they can be considered under the common aspect of *Temples*. To the Temple of stone—the Temple at Jerusalem—no other view of the Divine presence, of course, belongs, than that of communication. It was no otherwise connected with God than as the channel of his messages to man, and of man's service and addresses to Him. The same is therefore the only view, which should be pursued in contemplating either the Immanuel or the Church, in an aspect analogous to that of the first Temple.

Still, as the two others do admit of a different view ; and as the inquirer is often tempted to stray

from one path of research into another closely connected with it, although eventually leading to a different point ; I am perhaps called on to place the following cautions at the entrance of a course of inquiry into which I may possibly be leading some.

First then, in Christians, as in Christ Himself, there is an union of the Godhead with man ; but we must beware of supposing, that in the two cases, it is the same. Scripture declares that it is different ; but does not further explain the difference, than by intimating that He was *individually*, we, only *collectively*, the Temple of God. We are told that God gave “the Spirit to Him not by measure ;” and that in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He was perfect God as well as perfect man ; and this, we know, is not our state of being. But, in what way his human nature was conscious of the Divine presence and union ;—in what way the man Christ Jesus was preserved from sin—was supported under suffering—enjoyed perfect communion with God—and yet remained in all other things like unto us ; these are matters not revealed ; and the suggestion of them is only

caused by the incidental contact into which these questions are brought with the practical and intelligible doctrines of the Incarnation—and of the Holy Spirit's assistance.

At the same time, a caution of an opposite tendency may be necessary too ; namely, not to suppose that the two cases of Divine union are so wholly dissimilar, as to destroy the efficacy of Christ's example. He could be to us no pattern, if we were not, like Him, supported by the Divine presence, guided by it, and comforted by it. The record of his life—his temptations and his sufferings—would then be a picture which we might admire indeed, but hardly presume to copy. It is true, that to us the Holy Spirit is given *by measure* ; still that measure is a measure of grace sufficient for *us*. It is true, that it is given in a way, which does not render the Christian, as his Lord is, both God and man : but still, the moulding of our nature into the highest perfection of which it is capable, is one promised result of that union ; and to this we may hope to attain, if “ that mind be in us ^a which was also in Christ

^a Philipp. ii. 5.

Jesus," who "suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps^b."

These questions related, as I before observed, to the *communion* or intercourse between God and his chosen abode. The other view which may be taken of the Divine presence in, or the union or connection of God with, his Temples, relates to the form of *communication* attached to the Temple—the appointed means by which He issued his commands and made known his will.

In the Temple at Jerusalem this was effected by means of a voice, it is supposed, which proceeded from between the cherubims^c. During

^b 1 Peter ii. 21. This part of the subject is more fully discussed in the view of Christ, as a pattern of Christian humility, which has, on this account, been appended to the present inquiry.

^c See Exod. xxv. 22. Numbers vii. 89. Psalm lxxx. 1. 2 Kings xix. 15. Isaiah xxxvii. 16. The traditionary account of a revelation by the Urim and Thummim on the breastplate of the High Priest is very doubtful. It probably had its origin in the circumstance of his being bound to wear this ornament when consulting the oracle, the twelve precious stones on it designating the twelve tribes whose representative he then was. See Graves on the Pentateuch, note to part ii.

the continuance of the Temple of stone, however, God frequently varied this expression of his will, by raising up prophets especially commissioned; and as the period approached when the Shechinah^d was to be wholly withdrawn, we find the number and importance of the Revelations of those human oracles proportionably great. By this means, from the period of the establishment of the Temple Oracle, to the close of prophecy, there was a gradual departure from the system of communication first annexed to the Temple; as if to smooth the way for the second method, for which that had been preparatory^e.

lect. v. which contains reference to the opinions of Lowman, Spencer, and Witsius.

^d This holy manifestation appears to have ceased with the destruction of Solomon's Temple, which took place A. C. 588. See Prideaux's Connection, part i. book iii. Lightfoot on the Temple, ch. xv. sect. 4. and Calmet's Dictionary, Shechinah. By the absence of this then from the subsequent building, Haggai's prophecy, that "the glory of the latter house should be greater than of the former," is fixed in its application to the appearance of Christ as "God manifest in the flesh." See Haggai ii. 9.

^e The Jewish account of the Bath Kol, (*daughter of the Voice*), by which it is pretended that occasional revelations

That mode of communication was, the oral instruction of the Immanuel. His words became equivalent to the mysterious intimation from the cherubim ; to the voice or vision which instructed the prophets ; and to that more awful Voice which dictated the Law from Mount Sinai, when as yet there was neither Temple nor Tabernacle, but heaven was the throne, and earth the footstool, in the glorious scene of manifestation and revelation.

Lastly, to the Voice or Word of God in the Jewish dispensation, and to the words of Christ in the second Temple, corresponds the Christian record in the Temple of the Holy Ghost. It is true, that during the apostolic age—the age of inspiration—the analogy was not between the Bible and the former modes of communication ; but between those modes, and the gifts and endowments of the Spirit. But nevertheless, it is the Christian *Record*, and not the many forms

were made, subsequent to the cessation of prophecy, is altogether unworthy of credit. See Lightfoot's *Harmony of the Evangelists*, Matt. iii. 17. Prideaux supposes it to have been a mode of divination like the *Sortes Virgilianæ*. See *Connection, &c.* part ii. book 5.

of *Inspiration*, that constitutes the proper oracular appendage of the last Temple. The apostolic period embraced only the *erection* of the holy edifice ; and, as the apostles were removed one by one, the Temple rose, was completed, and was left to its present provisions. The apostolic age may be compared to the giving of the old Law from Mount Sinai. That preceded the building of the Tabernacle or Temple, the appointment of the mystic holy of holies, and the supplementary inspiration of the prophets ; that too was a scene more splendid and awful than the permanent state to which it led. Even so the apostolic delivery of the Christian Law exhibited a more dazzling spectacle of glory than do the provisions for its permanency ; but it was a display of glory which was to be done away. God was not to continue to speak in the same manner, and with the same circumstances, as in the first promulgation of the Gospel Law. Appropriated to his third Temple—preserved within his sanctuary the Church—there was to be an abiding oracle. The Bible was appointed the permanent channel of divine communication. It rests its claims to be so considered, on the same strong

grounds which supported the authority of those oracles of God which it has succeeded ; and demands from us the same implicit obedience and belief. Like them, the mode of delivery has been made miraculous ; nor is any difference of authority implied in the difference that exists between them in this respect—that the earlier oracles, namely, were intermittent, and renewed, as occasion called for them ; whilst ours were given once for all, are perpetual, and so constituted as to serve all occasions.

The fitness of this very peculiarity about the Christian Record, no less than of those points which characterize respectively the Jewish oracle, and the teaching of Christ, will be very apparent from the following obvious considerations.

In the first place, the whole system of God's dealings with his elder Church, was accommodated (as I have already had occasion to point out) to a far less advanced condition of spiritual, moral, and intellectual being than ours. He addressed them and governed them, in comparison with us, as children. He taught them by specific rules ; to us He merely holds out motives, and, for our guidance, provides general principles. In

accordance with this view, He gave them oracles to answer specifically on every point of difficulty—which should dictate to the Church almost its daily duty, with that tender allowance for its weak capacity, and inaptitude to higher views and a larger responsibility, which is shewn by the parent or teacher, to the child. Trained by this gradual progressive system of salvation, the Church has been at length released from its schoolmaster the Law—its education is completed; and it is sent forth to act on the principles of the Gospel, enforced by motives more high and heavenly. These principles and these persuasives are the substance of the Christian Scriptures^f. Not requiring to be continually

^f It may perhaps be necessary to point out, that I am not, by this expression, excluding the Old Testament from the Christian rule of faith. By the Gospel-fulfilment of the Law and Prophets, the Old Testament volume becomes part of the *Christian* Scriptures. What was shadowy and elementary knowledge to the Israelites, has been converted by that event into solid and perfect knowledge for the Christian. The whole character of the book has been changed. To us its prophecies assume the form of miraculous history, and to us its historical records discover the purport of God's mysterious dealings with his people, and the end to which the series of

given, like the specific commands to the Jews, they have been there permanently fixed; and being permanently fixed, it was only necessary once for all to declare their authority by miracles. A recurrence of Revelation requires a renewal of miracles; but the volume of the book once closed, the object of miracles ceases.

Whilst the conformity of the oracular vehicle to the character of the first and last Temples respectively is thus beautifully exact, it is no less interesting to reflect on the place occupied by the teaching of the Immanuel—the Oracle appended to the second Temple—and the very appropriate form of communication which was so provided for the period of transition from the first to the third.

Our Lord, whilst He was accomplishing the

events led; whereas to their eye all this was dark and perplexed. Its moral and religious precepts, again, have undergone a change, which may be compared to that of compound substances submitted to some powerful test, which separates the various ingredients—the fixed, from the volatile—and exhibits the more valuable in their unmixed purity. The Gospel has *analysed*, as it were, the Law, and enables us to separate from the dross of peculiar temporary and local ordinances and precepts, the eternal commands of God.

scheme of man's redemption, was also training his followers for the knowledge of what He was doing. His lessons, however, contrasted with those of divine inspiration, (as it appears on the pages of the apostolic writings,) were not properly *explanations* of the scheme, but *statements* accompanying the things done, which statements were left by him to be afterwards explained. They were, in this respect, like the heads of a lecture, which a professor first puts into the hands of his pupils, and afterwards fills up by word of mouth. Without the after comment and explanation, the lecturer's synopsis would be imperfect, and in many parts unintelligible; although the synopsis is highly useful in preparing the class for his lectures, and afterwards in recalling to their memory the train of instruction hinged on it. Like this class-paper then, our Lord's teaching contained hints and expressions, which, little comprehended at the time, it was the office of the Holy Spirit to recall to the minds of the inspired, and to point out all to which these hints were intended to lead —“ to guide them into all truth ^ε.” In conning

* John xvi. 13.

over the scheme of Christianity, as presented to them in the parables and discourses of Christ, one disciple would probably anticipate with more readiness than another the filling up of the many heads which his instruction embraced ; but to all, until the day of Pentecost, that instruction was only an outline ; and if the whole of Christianity was stated, and enunciated, no part was fully developed.

The advantage of such a transition-stage between the very different modes of instruction in God's will, which the Christian and the Jewish oracles exhibit, is obvious. But how could that have been so well effected as by attaching the oracle of *enunciation* (if I may be permitted so to describe our Lord's teaching) to the person of an Immanuel ; one whose character and life should awaken such a lively interest in each brief announcement that was made, as to fix the lesson indelibly on the mind, and to keep it there ready for the enlightening of God's Spirit. His lessons were not addressed to the understanding alone, but to the heart, with all its human sympathies and moral associations awake ; they were engrafted on passing occurrences and present scenes

of lively, intense, and often painful interest ; and the minute impression produced thereby was precisely such as the character of his teaching required. To take an instance connected with the present view. When standing in the Temple, he told the Jews mysteriously and solemnly, “ Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up ^h.” The declaration so made was of course imprinted to the letter on the disciples’ minds. It was from God, (they might have argued,) for no man could do those things that He did unless God were with him. But, added to the awful sanctity of a divine message, there was an awakening of personal feelings towards him as a man—as their friend, their Master, their future King. The remark took root, and entwined itself in their minds, amidst many clinging associations, which had connected the Messiah’s glory with the glory of that edifice, whose ruin his words mysteriously implied. All this served the needful purpose of fixing the unexplained lesson on their memory, until the Comforter, who was to teach them all things, should explain it.

^h John ii. 19.

Another, and not the least important, aspect, in which we may contemplate the several changes in the appointed mode of divine communication, is that which is connected with the extent of the people for whose use the oracles were respectively intended. A voice speaking from between the cherubim, was the most convenient for being consulted in the guidance of a single church and people; the words of Jesus sufficed, and were best, for his immediate followers; whilst for that dispensation, in which the Church was to acknowledge no limits but the boundaries of earth, no period but the end of time, there was need of a voice which should go forth and be equally heard in all lands, and its sounds unto the end of the earth. The Bible is the only form of divine oracle, which could have been unvarying, and universally accessible.

The view which has been now claimed for the Scriptures, supposes, of course, a certain estimate of their inspiration—it is indeed the reasonable criterion of that estimate. The Bible is the present vehicle of God's oracles. On the one hand, therefore, to claim inspiration for its every word,

or even for that portion of its matter which involves no divine appointment, revelation, or command, is as unreasonable, as if the disciples of Jesus had contended for every word which fell from his lips, on whatever subject, being part of the instruction from God to man, and had applied it accordingly. As in Himself, (if such an illustration may be used,) its divine character is mixed with much that is purely human; and to confound and level the two is unwise, unwarranted, and irreverent.

On the other hand, whatever portions of the sacred record, whether prophecy, precept, or history, exhibit an appointment of God, a revelation, or a divine command, in all these, we know that the Lord is instructing us. The oracular vehicle may indeed be employed (as must sometimes have been the case with the discourse of Jesus) on subjects not the material of divine communication; but, whenever the relations between God and man, the dealings of God with man, or the will of God respecting man, are the subject, then, as if the Immanuel were still speaking, whatever it declares, records, or com-

mands, it is "as the voice of the Almighty God when He speaketh ¹."

¹ Ezekiel x. 5. In the Appendix to my "History of the Rise and Early Progress of Christianity," vol. ii. p. 334. I have stated the several limitations of scriptural inspiration, which may be recognized without infringing on the sufficiency and supremacy of the Bible as the rule of faith. It is perhaps necessary for me to add one caution in reference to the view there briefly given—that in cases where we might otherwise have been left free to suppose the absence of Divine interposition, the *assertion* of this by the writer excludes all right to do so.

CHAPTER IV.

DURATION AND STABILITY OF THE THREE TEMPLES.

CONTRASTED with the knowledge which was granted to former ages, the Christian's view of the scheme of Providence is indeed glorious. He sees—what prophets and patriarchs vainly wished to see—the connection of a series of appointments from Adam unto Moses, from Moses unto Christ, from Christ still further on to the completion of all by his Spirit. In this respect, the Scriptural representation of the Gospel as of a “new creation” is beautifully appropriate^a. Antecedently to this, the materials of man's salvation wore the aspect of a chaos dark and formless; and the change was truly as if Christ had said, “Let there be light, and there was light.”

This very enlargement of spiritual view, however, is the occasion of certain new and peculiar doubts and difficulties. It sounds strange, but it

^a 2 Corinthians v. 17. Galat. vi. 15. and compare Revelations xxi. 5.

is unquestionably true, that the more fully the Almighty has vouchsafed to allow us to comprehend his counsels—the more freely He has walked and talked with man—the stronger has been man's propensity to pry into secret things which belong unto the Lord. He has placed the Christian—his new probationary creature—in a spiritual Eden. He has supplied him with the true bread from heaven and the living water of his Spirit. He has opened for him a free access unto Himself; nay, He has come and taken up his abode with him, and calls him no more servant, but friend. And yet, it is out of this very condition of things, that a tree of forbidden knowledge springs up before our eyes; and we can scarcely persuade ourselves, that its fruits are not as lawful to taste, as they are goodly to look at.

Why did not God at once place mankind under the present dispensation? Why did not the atonement and the assistance of the Holy Spirit immediately succeed to that sad event which manifested the need of both? Why, indeed, should man have been permitted to fall; seeing that God had in store provision, which can

enable him to stand, even when enfeebled by defeat and misery and sin? Such are the speculative questions which are suggested by our very advancement in the knowledge of God's wisdom and mercy; and which, whatever other reply may be given, ought always to be first answered by this—*It was the will of God.* No reply which is furnished, even by the additional light that He has now granted to his Church, is adequate fully to explain these and the like questions: and explanations and arguments such as are offered, always suppose the existence of some difficulty, for the solution of which we must be content in humble faith to wait.

At the same time it is no unimportant step to have fixed on that which is the improper subject of further inquiry—the point to which the character of *inexplicable* belongs. Having ascertained this, we may then proceed with confidence to examine and account for such difficulties as may attach to other points, which, however connected with these, are not in this respect similarly circumstanced.

In the present instance we have no possible clue to guide us in the inquiry why man was not

prevented from falling, rather than assisted in rising again—we are equally in the dark perhaps about the withholding of the Atonement and the other glories of the Gospel from Adam and his immediate posterity. But if we take up the question from the period when Scripture helps us, and thereby encourages and invites inquiry, we thenceforward trace a reasonable and a wise administration of grace. From the earliest times of which we have any record to the Gospel era, human nature appears so grossly debased by the corruption of evil—so weak and unfit for the fullest scriptural blessings—that the delay of those blessings is no matter of surprise. They would have been lavished in vain on mankind. What sort of influence can we conceive the Gospel scheme likely to have had on the patriarchal tribes? What on the gross and degraded minds of the Israelitish bondsmen? Nay, in the days of Israel's brightest national glory, would it not have been a pearl cast to the swine? Did it not actually prove so with far the majority, even when at length their Messiah came, in accordance with long-cherished expectation, and in fulfilment of a law, unto which they had

been laboriously trained for 1500 years? And this too, after exile and Gentile oppression had long cured them of their worst disqualification—the passion for idolatry; while intercourse with various nations had at the same time given them the opportunity at least of strengthening their understanding, and applying the intellectual powers so derived to the comprehension of evangelical wisdom. They were, it is true, prejudiced—deeply prejudiced; and at that time, their prejudices were the chief impediment to the reception of Christianity. But the dulness of the apostles themselves, of those who did bow their hearts to humble faith, exhibits the remnant of an inaptitude to comprehend, and to adapt the whole man to, the Christian system, which in an earlier age must have amounted to absolute incompetency.

All this is obvious, and matter of historical fact; and with this before us, a scheme of salvation in all respects gradually progressive, is obviously that alone which was suited to the accomplishment of God's merciful purpose. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son^b;" and we can so far account for the

^b Gal. iv. 4.

delay of that period, as to see that mankind were blessed with it as soon as ever they were prepared for it. We must leave to the secret and reserved counsels of the Most High the cause why man was permitted to fall; but in the condition of man fallen we see all the circumstances so clearly demanding a preparatory training until Christ, that we may appeal to the progressive system, as proof of the wisdom and merciful care of God; and dwell with gratitude and edification on every particular measure and appointment so characterised.

I. Not the least striking instance of this appears in the difference of *duration* and *stability* allotted to the three successive Temples, and to the dispensations which they respectively introduced. The Temple of stone was continued as the abode of God, and the centre of his government and spiritual influence, for more than one thousand years, and was soon after destroyed utterly and for ever. The second Temple—the Immanuel—was only for a few years exhibited to the world. And this too was destroyed; but not like the Temple of stone, utterly or for ever—it was only partially destroyed; and soon

raised again, and reserved for a future manifestation. The last Temple—the Temple of the Holy Ghost—in contrast to both these, was so established, that, according to the express declaration of God, no decay or destruction awaits it—“the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”^c

Was this striking diversity in God’s successive appointments accidental? Impossible. Let us for a moment reflect how completely the object of either dispensation would have been defeated, if this very diversity had not been established. The Temple of stone with its appended service was needed just for so long a period as the first Church of God required preparatory training; and longer than this, it might have proved, like the brazen serpent of the Israelites, a snare and a source of error^d. The duration of the first Temple, if limited to the same brief period as was the Immanuel’s, would have given no time for the Law to do its work of education; but, on the other hand, to have preserved the consecrated building—the nucleus of the Mosaic service—after Christianity had been established, would have been to sanction a commixture of

^c Matt. xvi. 18.

^d 2 Kings xviii. 4.

the Mosaic and Christian dispensations wholly at variance with the true relation which they bear the one to the other. Judaism was introductory to Christianity—the Temple of stone to the Church—but it is highly important to understand in what sense it was introductory. It was not in the same manner as the Law from Mount Sinai was introductory to the revelations and instructions of the prophets; nor again was it in the same manner as the dispensation of Christ was introductory to that of his Holy Spirit; for in both these cases, the earlier was not necessarily done away with by the coming of the latter. Whereas St. Paul speaks of the Gospel as “a disannulling of the commandment going before^e,” “a new covenant, that hath made the first old;” adding, “now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away^f.” Judaism was introductory to Christianity in another sense; it was introductory, in the sense of *representing* it. The word *represent* combines in its two meanings the office which the Mosaic dispensation fulfilled in reference to the Christian—it was the *type*

^e Hebrews vii. 18.

^f Hebrews viii. 13.

or *picture* of that which was to be recognised when it came, and in this sense its *representative*. It stood also *in the place* of it, and exercised a sort of delegated virtue which it derived from the Gospel, and which therefore the very coming of the Gospel destroyed. The Mosaic Temple being the seat of a typical religion, it was essential, in order to fulfil its object, that it should not be merely superseded, but that it should be utterly and finally destroyed. This doubtless, and not the divine vengeance on the guilty generation which rejected the Messiah, was the main purpose of the eternal decree that it should never be rebuilt. Had the Jews unanimously received their Saviour, we can hardly doubt that that same destiny would have awaited his former residence, differing only in the circumstances of national suffering which their rejection brought upon them. Had the Jews become merged in the Christian Church, the destruction of the Temple might have been even a work of holy zeal, like the breaking of the brazen serpent by Hezekiah; lest haply it should divide their heart, and either allure them back to “the beggarly elements of the Law,” or

mislead them into a confusion between the substance and the shadow of God's appointments.

II. Both the Law of demolition, to which the Temple of God manifest in the flesh was subject, and the period allotted to its duration, are no less in unison with the great scheme of Providence. With respect to its duration, it was exceedingly brief. If we measure it by the whole space of the life of Jesus, it was only 33 years; if we confine it, as more properly we should, to the period of the manifestation of his glory, considerably less. This which would have been wholly inadequate for the purposes of the first and the third Temples, was not only sufficient for the object of the second, but adapted to it far better than a longer period. In the first place, it is plain He could not have continued with the Church after he had laid its first foundation, without assuming a character widely different from that of Founder—he must have become its Governor. This is in other words to say, that having provided a society to be governed by the insensible operations of the Spirit, and the law of an unvarying Record, He would, just so long as He remained, have violated the principles He was

establishing, or rather have suspended the law He had appointed. It was, in his own words, “expedient that He should go away,” for had He not gone away, the Comforter could not have come^s. Come indeed, God’s Holy Spirit might, and had, in all ages; but He could not have come (as our Lord evidently means) as the guide and Governor of the Church. For the Church to walk by faith and not by sight, the visible guide must be withdrawn. He had remained long enough to lay the foundation of it, on principles which excluded his further manifestation in the flesh; and all longer abode with us thus would have been to retard the operation of the system.

He had remained also with us long enough to accomplish what likewise appears to have been one benevolent purpose of his coming. The main peculiarity of the second Temple is not that it was destroyed—but that, after temporary destruction, it was raised again, withdrawn, and reserved for a future manifestation. Christ came to found his kingdom on earth, and then left the world, on a similar but more glorious errand, viz. to prepare a kingdom for the same Church in

^s John xvi. 7.

heaven. He went from his own, to meet his own again. His presence, though only "for a little while," was enough to introduce Him as it were to us—to establish an acquaintance and friendship with mankind—that in the final abode of heaven, where in our turn we go to Him, we may go to a friend already known and loved. Can we doubt that such an object was intended? Let us only ask the question, what is the first natural impression made by a perusal of the Gospels? Is it not sympathy, acquaintance, and friendship with the Saviour of the world? Is not that perusal the best comment on the fervid expression of the apostle, "God is love^h." I see no reason that so forcibly suggests itself as this for the fact, that the register of Gospel truth is a biographical memoir. It might have contained, equally perhaps for all other purposes, a statement of objects accomplished—an enumeration of an atonement—a resurrection—an ascension—of miracles and lessons. It might have been, at least, historical; merging the individual in the great results of his ministry. But it is strictly biographical. Without pretending to give an entire history of the

^h 1 John iv. 8.

Lord Jesus, it throws a biographical character over all the monuments of Christianity which were to be preserved; and when we close the book, we feel that something besides instruction has been given—something besides salvation proffered; we feel, in short, as if to us were addressed the very language he used to his apostles, “I call you not servants, but friends¹.”

III. Of the duration and stability of the last Temple, we have the sure word of prophecy—the express declaration of our Lord. He has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; an expression which will be set in a clearer light by bringing in contrast with it his declaration concerning the Temple of his body, that it was to be destroyed, and raised again. By coupling the intimation conveyed in his words to the Jews, “Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up^k,” with those remarkable words to Peter, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it^l,” we arrive at the right interpretation and full spirit of both. When speaking of his own body as analogous to

¹ John xv. 15.^k John ii. 19.^l Matt. xvi. 18.

the Temple of stone, he said that it was *to be destroyed*, as well as raised again; and the very fulfilment of this saying in his death and descent into the grave, must have thrown light enough on his meaning; but when speaking of his Church, his congregational Temple, he provides a hint of contrast in the remarkable words, “the gates of hell (or the grave) shall not prevail against it^m.” The third Temple *was not to be destroyed*—not to go down into the grave—the doors of no sepulchre (πύλαι ᾄδου) were to be closed on it, as in the

^m The expression, “I will *build* my Church,” οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,—natural and easy as it sounds to our ears, partly from our being familiar with Scripture, and partly, perhaps, from the twofold meaning of the word *church*, an *edifice*, and a *body of Christians*—must have been, at the time, very strange and striking. Ἐκκλησία then meant only an *assembly* or *congregation*; and to give any of the original force to a translation of the Greek words, they should be rendered, “I will *build my assembly* on this rock.” The declaration implied, that the Temple to be built under the new covenant, was to be an assembly of men. It implied this very obscurely, no doubt; but our Lord’s other declaration respecting his own body as the Temple—the residence of God—was surely sufficient to throw light on his expression, οἰκοδομήσω τὴν ἐκκλησίαν μου, κ. τ. λ. when the Holy Spirit brought both assertions to the minds of the apostles.

case of the Temple of his body. It is only to end with the end of all things in this world; and in token of its unchanging condition during the interval, (so far, I mean, as regards its divine provisions,) the whole of that period has been entitled “the last days,” “the end,” and the like. Indeed, its splendid character, as comprising the fulfilment of all the preparatory types and promises, and the completion of Christ’s ministry, more certainly declare this, than even such implied declarations. If the third Temple, like the former two, has been accommodated to the circumstances of the worshippers, and is adapted to the object of its appointment, we must suppose that still as heretofore no renewal of inspiration will suspend the sole supremacy of the sacred Record—no new display of miracles will alter the established grounds of our faithⁿ. Ages may yet be requisite for the completion of that object on which the present Temple’s duration depends; but it cannot continue the same dispensation, (as we believe it will,) if changes so destructive of its essential character were to take place.

ⁿ See History of the Rise and Early Progress of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 70.

Do we presume to look farther onwards, and to inquire what that object is which is to be accomplished by the Lord's tarrying? Of this we know no more than of the day and the hour of his coming. We must wait to discover and admire the expediency of this, for that period when we shall be looking back on the finished history of the three Temples of the living God, with a far clearer eye than we now contemplate the two. We shall then know why the fulness of the time is not yet come.

There is however a definite and satisfactory reply which every man may give and ought to give to his heart, when it has been beguiled into speculations about the probable duration of the Church in this world. To *him* it is bounded by the period of his own life. For the guidance of the individual's conduct it can make no difference whether the world and he expire in the same moment; or the change from the kingdom on earth to that in heaven be yet postponed for ages. His duties, his hopes, and his fears, must be in either case the same; and would be no less the same, if a view of the future were allowed him. We are told that God "hath appointed a day in the

which He will judge the world in righteousness °.” Prophecy could have added no stronger motive to holiness, no clearer assurance of responsibility, though it should have disclosed to us that day and that hour.

° Acts xvii. 31.

CHAPTER V.

THE TEMPLE SERVICES.

ALL conformity to the will of God is, properly speaking, religious service, whether the obligation be made known to us by a law of our nature, or by an extraordinary revelation; for, the obligation rests ultimately, in both cases alike, on the supreme authority of our Almighty Lord. But by religious service, we ordinarily understand, not those duties which natural conscience enjoins, but those which have been prescribed by a miraculous revelation; and not only so, but prescribed for us as attached to the Temple of God—as members of his Church or his Kingdom.

This service has varied most strikingly in accordance with the other variations in the three successive Temples; and the points of difference constitute indeed one of the most important and interesting features in the comparison. To begin with the Jewish.

I. This consisted of numerous ceremonies, many of them apparently trifling, but all enjoined with extreme, and, if one may say so, fastidious minuteness of detail. It was moreover strictly and altogether a *histrionic* service—a service consisting not of words, but of action. For, although prayer by word of mouth was probably always practised individually among the Israelites, and unquestionably for the greater part of their existence as God's people; yet it appears to have made no part of the Levitical ordinance—to have been no portion of the regular Temple-service. The exceptions which are recorded, such as Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple, rather strengthen the conclusion to which we are unavoidably led, by the omission of all command to pray, in a code of directions so minute as the Levitical.

Several circumstances about the Israelites combined to call for this particular kind of service; which, in itself, and without a due consideration of these circumstances, cannot fail to impress the mind with a mean and unworthy idea of God's appointments for his chosen people. So contemplated, however, the Jewish ritual not

merely exhibits marks of extraordinary wisdom and far-looking design; but its convenience, its expressiveness, its wisdom in short, arising from its connection with events then buried deep in futurity, could not have been the invention of the Jewish legislator, however wise and learned.

The pervading principle of the first Temple-service was, that it was not only *typical*, but *prophetic*. Its sacrifices, its purifications, its offerings, all its solemnities, constituted a perpetual volume of prophecy expressed by sign; in which the atonement of Christ, the sanctification of his Spirit, and all the leading features of the Gospel, were prefigured. To the Jews themselves it no more conveyed this meaning indeed, than did their more obscure prophetic Scriptures. Their service was to them, in this respect, like a task which a child has learnt by rote, without being required or being able to comprehend its import. The Law was their schoolmaster; and it was their duty and their service to trust for an application of the lesson, to Him who set it them.

But was this lesson, this service, reasonable?

Was it necessary that prophecy should be so embodied, and imposed in so cumbrous and burthensome a form, in order to be handed down from age to age, by persons too who could not, generally at least, have derived from it any of the appropriate hopes—any satisfaction beyond the sense of doing blindly, although humbly and confidently, the will of God? The object *was* of the last importance. “The Law was their schoolmaster to *bring them unto Christ*.”^a Nothing less than this toilsome training of generation after generation can be conceived adequate to have given that bent to the national mind—those habits of religious view—which should prepare the appointed future generation for recognising their Messiah, and embracing the Christian doctrines thus made beforehand familiar and congenial. Scarcely indeed, with all this preparatory discipline, were any found, at the allotted season, ready for the fulfilment of the types. Without any such provision, what reception was the Gospel likely to have met with?

It may be said indeed, that the Gospel was, after no great interval, proclaimed to the Gentiles

^a Galatians iii. 24, 25.

also ; and that the obstacles to its reception among them were not much, if at all, greater than those which barred its access to the Jews. If it was foolishness to the Gentiles, who had not gone through this training of generation after generation, it became also a stumblingblock to the Jews. We should recollect, however, that the dispersion of the Jews through the Gentile world was the very means by which Christianity was first introduced to the heathen. The apostle Paul appears invariably to have preached in the first instance in the synagogues^b. Through the

^b See the account of Paul and Barnabas's ministry in Cyprus, (Acts xiii. 4); at Antioch in Pisidia, v. 14; and, more especially, the latter part of the chapter from v. 42. At Iconium, the next stage of their journey, the synagogue is still the place where they preach, notwithstanding their late ill-usage, and Paul's bold declaration. Acts xiv. 1.

So again in Paul's second journey, we find him at Philippi preaching "on the Sabbath at the river side, where prayer was wont to be made;" (xvi. 13.) and at Thessalonica, we are expressly told that "there was a synagogue of the Jews, and Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." xvii. 1, 2. The like notices occur of his ministry at Athens, at Corinth, and at Ephesus.

conversion of the Jews, partial though it was, the spiritual conquest of their Gentile brethren was effected. The important point to be considered, however, is not the actual result which the training of the Levitical service produced on the Jews; but the result which *it was calculated to produce*. It is by this, and not by the abuse or the neglect of the system, that the system must be estimated. It was a provision to prepare the Jews for the Messiah and his revelation; and was no less a wise provision, because the Jews did not generally and completely avail themselves of it.

To understand fully, however, the fitness of the Temple-service—the grounds which rendered such a typical and prophetic monument needful, and especially for the Israelites—we must bear in mind the rude, the slavish condition of that people, both in a moral and in an intellectual point of view, at the time this service was composed for them. Of all periods in the history of mankind, the present age is perhaps the least suitable for duly estimating the necessity of a histrionic service, which this poverty of mind.

occasioned. The great mass of such a people were, possibly, incapable of having their attention excited, or their hearts elevated to God, by the abstract thinking which the use of language on such a theme supposes. Men so circumstanced must have their outward senses first strongly stimulated, in order to call forth the exercise of the understanding^c.

It scarcely needs to be further pointed out, that if a typical service, comprising obscure prophecies, were necessary, it must have been likewise necessary, to have this service described with the most minute exactness—that the observance of every tittle should be enforced—and

^c There is much probability in the view which assigns to some of the Mosaic rites another instructive purpose, by supposing them framed in opposition to the idolatrous practices and false creeds of the heathen. Certainly no method could have been devised more likely to prevent all religious communion between the worshippers of Jehovah and the rest of the world, than to appoint for the former a service which should exhibit to the latter a scene of impiety that was revolting to their most sacred prejudices. “Lo shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?” was doubtless a feeling which was designed to be strongly impressed on the Israelites.

no discretion allowed to deviate from the formula—to add or diminish or alter. The performance of such a service was like taking a copy of a book in an unknown tongue—we dare not alter word or letter or dot ; because we may be destroying the sense in some material point. The service of the Jewish Temple was a holy Record, the language and characters of which, few of those who were perpetuating it understood ; and none perfectly enough to make it safe to give them liberty to alter one tittle. It was therefore the command of God to observe a literal fulfilment of his service.

At the same time, this very restriction would have been impracticable, but for a feature in God's first Church, which has been already the subject of discussion—*its narrow limits*. Precise rules about so intricate a ceremonial would have rendered conformity impossible, in all climates, and under all governments, as the Christian Church exists now. The colder regions of the north would have presented an insuperable obstacle to the many ablutions ; whilst differences in the government, laws, and national customs of the different states of the world, would, in many

instances, have occasioned impediments no less insurmountable. No discretion was left—all exercise of it expressly forbidden; because the limitation of God's kingdom was an essential principle of his dispensation. The more we compare together the several parts of each dispensation, as well as the dispensations themselves, the more clearly we thus perceive a consistency and harmony pervading the whole scheme of salvation. No analogy, perhaps, is worthy of this vast and complex moral system so exhibited, but the system of the universe; and how much (we may add) that is sublime and astonishing in both, escapes the observation of the careless beholder, from the very circumstance that the attention is not startled by any jarring and disturbance. In both, the various parts have been adjusted with so delicate a mechanism—the movements are all so easy and imperceptible—that we are apt to forget the mysterious impulse by which the course of the moral no less than of the natural world glides on from time to eternity, accomplishing for us, silently though certainly, the vast designs of Almighty wisdom.

II. The Law being a shadow of good things to

come, there is, as might be expected, not only a difference, but a contrast between the service of the first and third Temples. The Jewish ritual was prophecy, which was now fulfilled; a pledge, which was now redeemed; and the service of the new and last Temple was accordingly framed in reference to a real scene that had been exhibited, instead of the representation of that scene when only existing in promise. Hence it not only differs from, but is, in several respects, (as I have said,) expressly opposed to, the Levitical service.

As to the *form* of this service—the vehicle of expression—the clumsy and cumbrous method by symbol was no more requisite. Higher intellectual endowments were contemplated in the new Israel. The Temple-service was now made verbal; and thereby was established one of the most important channels of its influence. A Christian habituated to address God altogether in the same way as he communicates with his fellow-creatures, must needs have his prayers influenced by his use of language or other subjects; and his conversation, and indeed all that he utters, influenced by his addresses to God. This, at

least, is the obvious and natural result which must take place, unless there be some powerful impediment to the process of association—such, for instance, as prayers with the lips and not with the heart and understanding ; or, if the converse be supposable, the habit of conversing and using language on every other topic without regarding the meaning of what we say, and attending only to one's prayers. Some cultivation of mind too, more at all events than the Israelites originally had, is necessary for the benefit accruing from this to take place—that is, for the ordinary intercourse of men to give increased facility to the communication of their thoughts in prayer to God ; and for their conversation with one another to catch, not indeed the terms of their addresses to God, but the frame of mind under which they are uttered—that consciousness of the Divine presence, which shall habitually render all intercourse among Christians, as the intercourse of beings to whom the ear of God is open, not for prayer alone, but for every word, evil or good, idle or seasonable.

It is not, however, merely for the purpose of enforcing a change from the Temple-service of

the Jews to our own, that the New Testament contains such earnest injunctions to *pray*, and such solemn assurances of the efficacy of prayer, notwithstanding that our "Heavenly Father knows beforehand what we have need of." The foundation of Christianity was laid for a superstructure which did not immediately and at once rise on it. After a time, the wise of this world mingled with the simple and unlearned in seeking for admission into the Church. This new class of converts were persons trained to doubt, to inquire, and to speculate; and this habit of mind, which their philosophy and their learning produced, was not to be confined to their age or particular pursuits and circumstances. In all times it was sure to appear among the vigorous weeds of man's cultivated intellect; and it has been accordingly provided against in the instructions of the Gospel, and in none more than in the importance assigned to prayer. *No point was so likely to be questioned* (by men of a speculative turn) as the reasonableness and utility of prayer had prayer been left to our choice, or enforced with less earnestness. That God must know what we need, before we ask, was a truth which would be likely to make

it seem frivolous and vain to ask. Hence, the assertion of this very view of Providence is made prominent, as well as the importance of prayer; as if to indicate that it had been distinctly recognized, and was nevertheless considered as not at all interfering with the duty to which our presumptuous reasonings might have opposed it^d.

The assertion, that the Christian service is a service of words, will not, of course, be understood to imply that *all* our Temple-service is comprehended in prayer. As was before observed, moral conformity, no less than obedience to ritual precepts, must, in an accurate estimate, be regarded as religious service. Whatever, in short, conscience dictates, is the *natural* service of mankind, performed by an obligation, which the Author of our being thus declares and commands^e. The revelation therefore of any ad-

^d See Matt. vi. 8, 9.

^e That a recognition of this service, and of the obligation to perform it, survived in the heathen world the knowledge of Him who is the object of it, is plain from the occasional avowal of a sentiment so forcibly expressed by Persius.

Quin damus id superis, de magna quod dare lance
Non possit magni Messalæ lippa propago,
Compositum jus, fasque animi, sanctosque recessus

ditional service, supposes this, as the original stock to which all other is only an addition. In the case of the Jewish ritual, the addition was, for the special reasons assigned, immense, and of a distinct character. But even during the Jewish dispensation, the prophets, as occasional messengers of God, were commissioned to remind the people, that this service was not a substitute for, but a temporary appendage to, that which had been enjoined from the creation, by a law, no less than the law of God—the dictate of natural conscience^f. When however the object of all the extraneous ceremonial of Judaism was accomplished; the erection of the new Temple involved no need of additions foreign to the natural service of a holy life. Contrasted with the former indeed, the Christian *θρησκεία* was—to use the words of the apostle—“to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world^g.”

Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto?

Hæc cedo ut admoveam Templis, et farre litabo.

Satyr. ii. v. 71.

^f See e. g. Isaiah i. 14, 15, 16, 17.

^g James i. 27. The word *θρησκεία* is improperly rendered in our translation “religion”—it should have been “service.”

The service of the last Temple has been regulated solely by reference to relations between Man created, redeemed, and sanctified, and his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. The only novelties, in short, are those which have arisen out of the revelation of so much of these relations as were new, or before unknown.

Again, as these points were not, like the subjects comprised in the Levitical service, obscure and veiled in futurity; but views so clear, that those who ran might read; the old system of minute, unvarying rules, was no longer requisite or suitable. The Christian was fully instructed in the *object* of the service required of him; and provided with *principles* to which he was to conform at discretion, according to the diversities of age, climate, or country, to which he might be subject.

In noticing this feature of contrast, I cannot omit to observe, that the very opposite system to that which was made an argument for the divine legation of Moses, becomes an argument now for the divine legation of the apostles and their inspired coadjutors. That the Israelites should have been bound to the observance of a

most minute and circumstantial ceremonial, without any discretionary power to deviate from the least tittle, was a system that must be referred to divine, and not human, wisdom ; because the only intelligible account of such a ceremonial is, that it involved obscure prophecy, which would have been exposed to corruption, by permitting the least alteration ;—that the founders of the Church should omit to dictate any service at all, can only be explained, by supposing their own natural suggestions to have been restrained by divine control. It would indeed have been the natural course for men under any circumstances, who were establishing a religious society, and enjoining a religious service, to dictate, more or less precisely, that service ; but with Jews, who had been educated in conformity to the minute and literal directions of their Law, there was the force of peculiar habit aiding the common tendency of human nature. And yet no Christian liturgy appears on the pages of the New Testament—no directions about forming one. Was this man's doing, or God's ?

The absence, then, first of typical institutions, and next of minute and unchangeable rules, appears to constitute the main peculiarity

of the Christian service, as contrasted with the Jewish. It will be recollected however, that there are two exceptions to this general statement. Two typical ceremonies have been admitted into the service of the Christian Temple—Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Their dissimilarity, in this respect, from the rest of the Christian service, deserves an attentive consideration. It plainly indicates, that there is in the events typified by them some distinguishing feature, which has rendered this form of expression suitable or needful for those events especially. Now one difference between such a mode of expression and that by words, is, that it is invariable and universal. It addresses itself alike to the apprehension of all ages, and of all people. Record an incident, or register a precept, in terms ever so definite, still the change of language necessary for conveying it from one people to another, nay the change which time produces even in the original language in which it is deposited, (supposing no corruption of the document to take place,) renders such a record more or less liable to misrepresentation; although it doubtless possesses, in other points of view,

great advantages over a symbolical representation. To uncultivated minds moreover, a symbolical rite is more impressive and attractive, and often more intelligible; and it should be recollected, that although the Gospel is adapted and addressed to a more enlightened state of society than was the Law, it recognises, and has provided for, those portions of an enlightened society, which fall short in most, if not in all, Christian countries, of the preparatory capacity for the whole sum of Gospel-truth. Whilst therefore to the Christian volume was committed the whole of Gospel-Revelation, it was doubtless a wise and merciful provision, to select the two most important features for the record of type and symbol, as well as of language. The doctrines of Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and of Atonement by the death of Christ, followed by his spiritual indwelling in us—these form the epitome of Christianity. Extracted from the full record of Revelation, translated, as it were, into symbol and type, and so, engrafted on the Christian service, their eminent importance was thereby signified, and a preservative furnished against our overlooking either the meaning or the importance

designed to be attached to the corresponding passages of the sacred volume.

Still, even in the instance of these, we may perceive a deviation from the method of prescribing the symbolical service under the Law. Those portions of our Christian rites have been made the subject of an unvarying command, which are the main and essential features, and the exact observance of which no differences of age or civilized society can affect^f; whilst all the service requisite to be appended for the completion of each, has been left to the discretion of the Church, limited only by the principle of adding nothing that is either incongruous to the rite itself, or otherwise inconsistent with the religion of which it forms a part.

III. In the foregoing remarks, the service of the third Temple has been considered immediately after that of the first; and a comparison instituted between them, which contains no reference to the intermediate Temple—the Immanuel. For the reason of this, the inquirer must be reminded of a distinction already pointed out between the

^f It has been remarked, that *bread* and *wine* are articles in common use among all the civilized world.

ministry of Christ and the instruction of the Law, as both of them introductory, though in a different sense, to the Christian scheme^g. Agreeably to that distinction, the first Temple and its appendages were, from their very nature, utterly destroyed by the establishment of the Christian Church; whereas the Immanuel was eternally connected with it, and formed its foundation and its corner stone. To the Temple of God “manifest in the flesh” there was accordingly, in the strictest sense, no peculiar service attached. All that related to a service, was that preparatory training for one, which his followers received; and it is in reference to this that He must have drawn the analogy between their attendance on Him, and that of the Levitical priests on the Temple of stone^h. Hence the very striking reply which He made to one who consulted Him about the best method of fulfilling the old service, “This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him whom He hath sentⁱ;” which was as much as to say,

^g Chap. iv. p. 70.

^h Matth. xii. 5. The text is a very remarkable one. See some observations on it in the note appended to Dr. Whately’s Essay “On the Abolition of the Law.”

ⁱ John vi. 29.

“ Why ask me about the best method of fulfilling a service, which God is even now abolishing. The only present service is to believe in me—to trust to me, and wait humbly for that which I am preparing my disciples to receive.” Faith in Christ is still, as it was then, the very essence and vital principle of the Christian service ; but it was then the *only* service ; inasmuch as that to which it led, and with which it is now connected, was not yet given. The period of the intermediate Temple was an interval of anticipation, surmise, and preparatory training. Like Israel waiting at the foot of mount Sinai, the elect of Christ, without as yet discarding the obsolete observances of their fathers, kept their eye anxiously fixed on a mingled scene of light and darkness, from which a new law and a new service were about to be developed.

To this view the teaching of the Lord’s Prayer is no exception. Our Lord, as well as his followers, recognized and performed no public service but that of the old Temple. This prayer did not, during his abode with them, correspond to its subsequent use, and make a part of any form of worship analogous to our Church Liturgies, but

answered rather to domestic and family prayer. The leader of every sect was then considered in the light of father or head of a family, whose members were quite as intimately connected with him and with one another, as a natural household; and they accordingly joined as such in certain common devotional exercises. "Lord, teach us to pray, *as John also taught his disciples*¹," was the request, in compliance with which the Lord's Prayer was given; and it was, on the same principle, contrasted with the long prayers made by *the disciples of the Pharisaic doctors*^b. Its transfer to the public service of the Christian Church was reasonable, and in no respect inconsistent with its original use; but could only take place when a public Christian service was established.

It is pleasing to trace in this, and in other instances, a manifest desire on the part of the first Christians, to perpetuate, as far as was possible, the domestic character of that little circle of familiar friends, out of which the Church arose. The feeling was natural in the apostles and other

¹ Luke xi. 1.

^b Compare Luke v. 33. with Matth. xxiii. 14. and Luke xx. 46.

immediate followers of Jesus ; but to do this was plainly a fulfilment also of his will. For this very purpose he seems to have accustomed them to consider one another as brethren, and to address one another by that title. For the same reason, apparently, they were taught to evince their union with Him, by love to one another, and to all who should bear his name : “ a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another¹.”

I cannot but think, that our present use of the Lord's Prayer, so considered, is more impressive, and connected with more delightful associations, than if we view it as originally framed in reference to the condition of the Christian world at large. It seems thus, every time we utter it, to carry us back to those holy moments, when a beloved few sat at the feet of Jesus, or joined Him in prayer to the Father ; and reminds us that we are now “ the Disciples.” Its use becomes, not indeed as in the case of the Sacrament, the fulfilment of an express command, “ Do this, as

¹ John xiii. 34, 35.

oft as ye do it, in remembrance of me," but is a dictate to the same effect, suggested by personal attachment, and by those hopes of re-union with the Lord in the flesh, which it was his own affectionate wish to see preserved in his Church until his second coming.

Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find this feeling on the earth? Are our homes prepared for his reception, our hearts for his sympathy, our lives for his scrutiny? Are we, in short, so living, that we should, above all things, *like* the Son of man to come and live with us? Or do our hearts say, what our lips dare not, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord?"

CHAPTER VI.

THE PERSONS OFFICIATING IN THE THREE TEMPLES.

ALTHOUGH the second Temple is excluded in the comparison between the several *services*, it assumes an important place in the inquiry to which that comparison directly leads—that, namely, which regards the *officiating class* in the three stages of communion between God and man. To this point I now proceed; and intend to consider it so far as it is connected with those differences and resemblances, which have been developed in the preceding chapter.

I. The character of the Jewish priesthood was intimately connected with the prophetic object of their service. They were the principal actors in the figurative representation of the Law—it was *the same sacrifices*, which they offered oftentimes^a. They were, as a Body, and the high priest individually, the type of the true

^a Heb. x. 11.

Priest ; and in Christ, accordingly, the type was fulfilled, and rendered useless for the future^b. It is impossible to state this in any form which shall be more explicit than the original declarations of Scripture. Of the typical character of the old priesthood, St. Paul, for example, writes thus ; “ We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens ; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the *true* tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man^c.” “ There are priests that offer gifts according to the Law ; who serve unto *the example and shadow* of heavenly things^d.” “ Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people ; the Holy Ghost this signifying—that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made

^b The reader will find this view clearly and ably stated in the fifth of Dr. Whately’s “ Sermons on Several Occasions.”

^c Heb. viii. 1, 2.

^d Heb. viii. 5.

manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. *Which was a figure, for the time then present*, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service, perfect, as pertaining to the conscience—which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us^e.” Again, respecting the nullity of the typical appointment, as the necessary consequence of its fulfilment, the same apostle in the same place writes, “In that He saith *a new covenant*, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth, and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away^f.” “He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second^g.”

^e Hebrews ix. 6—12.

^f Hebrews viii. 13.

^g Hebrews x. 9.

II. In the second Temple, then, Christ was the Priest—the Priest, as well as the Temple and the Sacrifice. His sacerdotal office, however, differed from the corresponding office in the Jewish Temple, inasmuch as it was employed about a real and efficacious atonement and sanctification, and He was the real character which the former priesthood had personated. His priesthood differed also from the Levitical, in that *all centered in Him alone*; whereas the priests under the Law were many, and a succession: their service was, to transmit from one generation to another the personification of a character, which was properly his alone; He, in that character, “trode the wine-press alone^h.” “They truly” (in the apostle’s words) “were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue, by reason of death. But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthoodⁱ.”

Another very important feature of contrast is, that they were not exempt from sin; and this circumstance, although it did not disqualify them for *representing* the character of the Mediator

^h Isaiah lxiii. 3.

ⁱ Heb. vii. 23, 24.

between God and man, yet did disqualify them for *being themselves* truly priests and mediators. Such, at least, is the light, in which Scripture exhibits this feature of contrast. "Such an High Priest," writes St. Paul, "became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first, for his own sins, and then for the people's, for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. For the Law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the Law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore^k." "If He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the Law; who serve unto the example^l and shadow of heavenly things^m."

The priesthood of Christ was further dissimilar from its type, in being employed about *a single*

^k Heb. vii. 26, 27, 28.

^l Rather, exemplar or pattern. The original word is ὑποδείγματι.

^m Heb. viii. 4, 5.

sacrifice—made once for all. To recur, as before, to the very words of Scripture. “Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man, after He had offered *one sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God;”—“for by *one offering* He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified^m.” “Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place, every year, with the blood of others; (for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world;) but now, *once*, in the end of the world, hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himselfⁿ.” The need of continual sacrifice by the Levitical priesthood, would seem thus to have arisen from the typical nature of their office; and this need no longer therefore existed after Christ had come. To the same principle indeed we may trace all the several differences between the two priesthoods, which have been now briefly enumerated. It was hence that the new priesthood not only superseded the old; but rendered such an office as that of a sacrificing

^m Heb. x. 11, 12, 14.

ⁿ Heb. ix. 25, 26.

priest impossible. “Where remission of sins and iniquities is, there is no more offering for sin °.”

The priesthood of Christ, however, and of the Levitical type which he fulfilled, comprised more than sacrifice—it was made up of this and of *intercession*. It was the priest’s office, first to prepare, and then to present, the offerings—to convey, as Mediator, the addresses of the worshippers to God. In this respect also, the only efficacy attached to the Jewish priesthood arose from its being the temporary representation and type of Christ; “for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus ^p.” The mediatorship of Christ therefore, the only real intercessor, fulfilled and annulled the type, as in the case of sacrifice. There was “verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God ^q.” But there is this important difference between the two cases. The intercession was appointed to be *perpetual*: not

° Heb. x. 18.

^p 1 Tim. ii. 5.

^q Heb. vii. 18, 19.

so the sacrifice. Christ's fulfilment of the priestly office of intercession, did not, as in the other case, abrogate the office itself. It is not written, as in respect of sacrifice, that after He had once made intercession, He for ever sat down at the right hand of God, but "He ever liveth to make intercession".

This distinction as to the modes whereby the two parts of the typical priesthood under the Law has been fulfilled, requires to be attended to, because it furnishes the main principle which we shall have to apply in estimating the character of the officiating class in our present Temple. In proceeding now to the consideration of this, I would first observe, that in the exercise of our Lord's priestly office as *Mediator*, consists the principal connection which at present subsists between Him and his Church. It is He, to whom unseen we are still directed as "ever living to make intercession" for us. It is of Him in *that* character, that St. John writes, "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins".

' Heb. vii. 25.

* 1 John ii. 1.

III. On turning to contemplate the condition of the Christian Church now, as regards its officiating class, we are immediately presented with the fact—that of the two offices comprised in the priesthood of Christ, one can be no longer exercised, because there is no more sacrificing for sin, and the other continues indeed to be exercised, but it is by Him the invisible Priest. And yet, the language of Scripture would seem occasionally to indicate the continuance of an earthly priesthood, both for sacrifice and for intercession. Are we to understand these expressions then as mere metaphors, derived from the obsolete duties of the priesthood, and employed only for the purpose of illustration? Or are we to suppose, that the Church is really admitted, in some way, to a participation of that high and heavenly character which properly belongs to Christ, and which Aaron and his descendants only personated? Let us, as the easiest method of arriving at the true meaning of Scripture, examine separately—first, those passages which seem to imply that the duty of sacrifice is perpetuated and attached to the Church—and next, those, from which we are led to infer some admission of the

Church to privileges which belong to the mediatorial and intercessorial office of our sole High Priest.

“ I beseech you,” writes St. Paul to the Romans ^t, “ that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God ; which is your reasonable service ;”—to the Philippians ^u, “ I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God ;”—and again to the Hebrews ^x, “ By Him (Jesus) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good, and to communicate, forget not : for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased.” St. Peter again, in his first Epistle ^y, addresses Christians not only as “ lively stones,” “ a spiritual house ;” but as “ an holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” In these passages, and in others which may be added, one point is plain—namely, that the sacrifice alluded to is not *the atoning sacrifice*, which

^t Rom. xii. 1.

^u Philipp. iv. 18.

^x Hebrews xiii. 15.

^y 1 Peter ii. 5.

was limited to Christ alone, and of which the expiatory sacrifices under the Law were mere types. The sacrifice spoken of is the expression of praise, thanksgiving, and other devotional feelings; and it is called a sacrifice or offering, because this symbolical form of expressing such feelings had been in use during the Jewish dispensation, and for ages antecedent to it. From Abel's offering until the last legal service of the Temple, this had been a regular method of performing to God part of the natural service of man. Considered in *this* point of view, the Jewish sacrifices were not types of Christ's great sacrifice; and He therefore neither fulfilled them, nor abolished the duty performed by means of these. The change which took place in the Christian Temple, was only a part of the general change from expression by symbol, to expression by words—from the act of offering, to the voice of praise, thanksgiving, devotion. The Old-Testament-Scriptures bear testimony to this view; for in them, as in the New, we find the metaphor applied to verbal prayer. Hosea, for example, speaks of the "calves of our lips²." The

² Hosea xiv. 2.

old Scriptures too, as well as the New Testament, dwell on the nullity of such sacrifice—of mere outward expression—unless the heart goes along with it ; as, for example, in these words of the Psalmist, “ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit ^a.” It is plain, therefore, that the language which the Gospel-writers hold respecting a sacrifice of praise and prayer, is not peculiar to the Gospel-dispensation ; and that the duty which it expresses is no further contrasted with any service under the Law, than that formerly praise and prayer were expressed partly by symbol, and that now they are not. In both cases, sincerity and a corresponding frame of mind are requisite to give efficacy to the address to God ; and this service of the heart and moral conduct is accordingly considered as the essence of the sacrifice, and even called the sacrifice. It is only the form of devotional expression that has been done away with by Christ’s coming ; and hence, (the duty remaining the same,) the form substituted, has sometimes been called the sacrifice. This was the more natural, because all such service to God, still requires to be presented through the

^a Psalm li. 17.

High Priest, as Intercessor and Mediator between God and man.

We come therefore to the second class of Scripture expressions, those namely which indicate, that the privileges of this mediatorial and intercessorial office, which is Christ's, are, in some sense and in some degree, imparted to Christians. I allude to such intimations as the following, which our Lord gave to his disciples while yet with them. "In that day, *ye shall ask in my name*, and I say not unto you, that *I will pray the Father for you*. For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God^b;" or this declaration of St. Paul, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God^c." That the apostle was here representing the fulfilment of the Lord's promise above quoted, seems the more probable from a subsequent verse of the same

^b John xvi. 26, 27.

^c Romans viii. 26, 27.

chapter, which is evidently connected with the foregoing. “Who is He that condemneth? Is it Christ, that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us ^d?” It certainly looks as if by the intercession which St. Paul had before represented as the joint operation of our hearts, and of that Holy Spirit by which Christ dwells in us, he meant this very intercession which is the continued office of our High Priest—the very point which forms the perpetual exercise of his mediatorial office.

Let it not be supposed that these suggestions tend to mere speculation on matters, which are too high for us to examine. It is not at least in this point of view that I desire to represent them. The arrangement of the scheme of Revelation doubtless requires from us not presumptuous scrutiny, but humble gratitude and confident conformity. But with respect to this point, the language of Scripture furnishes its

^d Verse 34. I have adopted what I conceive to be the right punctuation of this passage. The purpose for which I have quoted it would not however be affected by retaining that of our received version, “It is Christ that died,” &c.

own explanation ; and exhibits a plain practical truth, which the inquirer has already perhaps anticipated. Our Lord spoke mysteriously and obscurely to his disciples, in telling them of a day when they should indeed ask the Father in his name ; but that He did not mean by that, that He was to pray for them. But St. Paul is explanatory enough ; when he introduces the same topic. He there couples the declaration with that which alone renders it intelligible. It is the Spirit, who, by “ quickening our mortal bodies,” and “ dwelling in us,” “ beareth witness with our spirit,” “ helpeth our infirmities,” and makes our prayers as it were his own. “ We know not what we should pray for as we ought : but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” The intercession is really *his*, who, residing by the Spirit in his new Body the Church, so far raises that Body to a participation of his priestly privileges. “ Because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father ^e.” It is to the Church considered in its union with the Spirit of Christ that the

^e Gal. iv. 6.

privilege of the Intercessor—the immediate access and address is granted ; and to this view of the Church, perhaps, applies the language of St. John in the Revelations, “ Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father^f.”

But the Church, it should be borne in mind, inherits its priestly privileges *collectively*. It is no individual man, who is privileged to mediate and intercede for other men ; it is no earthly mediator ; but the Spirit of Christ in the Temple of “ his new Body the Church, which is the fulness of Him that filleth it,” and who is so connected with us now.

It is necessary to keep this steadily in view, in order to distinguish the official character of the Church collectively—of the new body of the Mediator—which alone corresponds to the priesthood under the Law, from the ministerial offices of a certain class of Christians set apart from the rest for especial divine service.

Whatever question may be made about the

^f Rev. i. 5, 6.

precise orders requisite for a Church, there can be no question, as to two points—first, that the inspired founders designed a separate class to be set apart for religious services ; and secondly, that there should be gradation and difference of ministry between them. Such was the method pursued during the exercise of extraordinary gifts ; and such the system, which, in the continuance of the Church's ordinary powers, we have received from the apostles. Christians may differ about the obligation on all ages to adopt the exact gradation of Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and subordinate servants, which was found in the Church at the cessation of miracles and miraculous interposition ; but the historical evidence for the existence of those different orders in that period, is too strong to be resisted by any candid inquirer.

These offices of the Church, both in the days of miracle, and now, are of two different kinds. Each separate Church is a distinct Society ; and one class of offices therefore has for its object the government and regulation of the Society. The Church collectively (that is, the Church universal) is also the Temple ; and another class of offices

attached to it is that of performing service to God. The former involves duties that are *ecclesiastical*, the latter those that are *spiritual*—to the former belongs rule, to the latter ministry. In the episcopal order of the Church of England, both are united. Our Bishops are at once governors of the Christian society, and ministers of the service performed in it to God.

If therefore we seek in the Jewish Church for an analogy, which shall illustrate the place in the perpetual scheme of Providence now occupied by the orders of the Christian Church, it will appear, that the governing or ecclesiastical offices correspond properly to the civil authorities of the Jews, the Jewish civil rulers being at the same time the ecclesiastical. It is in this point of view probably that the apostle calls the Church “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.” To the priesthood of the Jews again, the spiritual officers of the Church correspond in part, and in part not. They correspond, inasmuch as they officiate in the Temple-service performed to God; but they differ, inasmuch as that service no longer

† 1 Peter ii. 9.

includes sacrifice, (the most prominent business of the priest under the Law,) and only comprises intercession as the work of this divine Mediator, who mysteriously resides within the Church as his new body.

But the essential feature of distinction is this. The Jewish priesthood officiated in their Temple-service to the exclusion of the rest of the Church; the Christian Order are indeed distinguished in the part they take from the great body of the Church, but perform that service in common with them ^b. Our ministerial order exercise indeed priestly duties; but *they alone* do not. All Christians are desired to take a share in the service of their Temple. "All have access by one Spirit unto the Fatherⁱ." We are all made priests unto God ^k.

This remarkable difference between the officiating class in the earlier and in the last Temple is an important fact to us. It carries on it (as was observed of the Jewish service) marks of

^b The members of our own Church should never forget the expressive title of our service-book, "The Book of *Common Prayer*."

ⁱ Ephesians ii. 18.

^k Rev. v. 10.

Divine counsel, not of human device. A change like this, made by persons who were accustomed to an *exclusive* priesthood—in an age when no other kind of priesthood was known—cannot fail to strike a reflecting mind as highly unnatural. It was contrary to the one religious prejudice in which Jew and Gentile agreed. But the *unnatural* character of the measure appears in a stronger light, if we go one step further in the inquiry, and ask ourselves, why Gentile agreed with Jew in this prejudice? Our own hearts will tell us, it was because it is congenial to human nature. Men naturally crave after a religion by proxy. Even now, with the Gospel word unveiled and before us; and in the midst of institutions that are framed expressly to counteract this propensity; how prevalent even now is the feeling, that the clergy are to do the service of the Temple, not *with* us, but *for* us; nay, that they alone, and not all in communion with them, are *the Church*. What but this has been the source of that corruption of the Church of Rome, which has gradually assimilated the Christian ministry there to the exclusive priesthood of the Jewish Temple? What but this has led to the conversion of the

communion into a Mass, and the restoration of the Temple's mystic veil which Christ rent at the moment of his death—the closing again of that “way into the holiest of all, which was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing¹.”

No wonder; for this universal access, great and glorious a privilege as it is, is an increase of responsibility, which to carnal, low, and grovelling minds more than outweighs the sense of dignity to which it elevates them. The trust reposed in these, can only be burthensome to them. They cannot but feel as if talents committed to them for improvement—though it be a single one—is a hardship imposed by a hard master; and indolently neglect the service, expecting that it will not surely be exacted of them.

But if such persons endanger their souls, under a delusion perhaps that the humble estimate they make of their fitness for God's service will excuse them at the last account;—if the slothful servant be

¹ Heb. ix. 8. Dr. Whately's Sermon, already referred to, has furnished me with this very important view. The passage to which I allude occurs at the close of the Sermon, p. 167.

threatened with his Lord's eternal displeasure ; where shall the bold profaner of his Temple appear ? he who, anointed by an unction from the Holy One, officially consecrated as a member of the kingdom of priests to the service of God, has become the servant of sin ? Surely " him will God destroy ^m." To the Church, and not to a selected portion alone, are now affixed the mitre and the plate engraven, " Holiness to the Lord." All have access in the Christian Temple, even to its holiest of holies ; all have a portion of the priestly duties to fulfil ; and all alike must therefore ever keep themselves pure, undefiled, and unspotted from the world.

^m 1 Cor. iii. 17.

CHAPTER VII.

CONNECTION OF THE THREE TEMPLES WITH THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

WHAT then shall we say is the natural impression which this threefold dispensation leaves respecting its divine Author? Temple has succeeded Temple, bearing, all, equally strong marks of the Divine presence; but differing from each other in the circumstances of divine Revelation, as much as if three distinct Beings had in turn presided over the changing kingdom of heaven. In the first, we are presented with an object of worship, made known indeed by symbol, but expressly warning his people against supposing that any symbol was a manifestation of Him. In the second ^a, “the image of the unseen God;”

^a Coloss. i. 15. *εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως.* The Apostle's language contains an evident allusion to the Mosaic record, that “God created man in his own image.” Christianity is represented elsewhere as a new creation, and Christ as a second Adam. (See e. g. Isaiah lxxv. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 45—47. 2 Cor. v. 17. Ephes. iv. 24.)

a sensible manifestation is exhibited ; and rendered more mysterious by the instrument of manifestation being the human nature, “in all things like unto ours, sin only excepted.” In contrast with both, the last Temple is dedicated and possessed by an object of worship, of whose permanent residence and presence no sensible sign is established ; no symbol and varying miracle as in the first Temple ; no manifestation of an inferior intelligent nature conjoined, as in the Immanuel.

The differences between the respective modes of Divine government,—the extent and character of the worshippers—the service required,—

Might not the original declaration then, that man was God’s *image*, have had a prophetic reference to the mystery of the Incarnation? The same may be suggested of the wording of the second Commandment of the Decalogue, Thou shalt not *make to thyself* any *graven* image, &c. which seems to convey a hint of the one lawful “image of God,” which He, and not man, was to fashion, and before which, in the fulness of time, “every knee was to bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” Philip. ii. 10.

Compare with the passages already referred to, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Heb. i. 3. also Romans viii. 29. xii. 2.

and the motives to obedience,—all present features of contrast, and often, at a casual glance, contrariety of views, no less striking than is exhibited in the Revelations themselves. The very Temples differ more widely than any which can be brought into contrast from among all the heathen Temples of all ages.

What then could have been the impression designed to be left on us who are allowed to look back on this past progress of the diversified divine economy? It surely must have been designed to suggest to our minds, and to habituate our minds to contemplate, God as Three. Three different divine Persons appear the agents and rulers, in a threefold dispensation: so different, indeed, that, if left to form our conjectures of the Divine nature from the facts of this progressive economy, all view of *one* God must have been discarded. The facts of Revelation represent God as a Trinity; and it is only by express and perpetual qualifications of a view so suggested, that we are assured of his Unity. It was important and absolutely necessary, that as each Temple arose, and exhibited a distinct divine Person as its possessor, fresh declarations should

be issued, and new signs appended to the mark of distinction, to shew that it was still one and the same God in all. The doctrine of the Trinity, in short, rests primarily on historical facts; the doctrine of the Unity, on a series of declarations and other provisions made in reference to those facts. If we suppose the Bible stript of all those provisions which it contains for qualifying its historical representations of the Divine nature, it would exhibit three distinct Gods; with those provisions, that representation becomes a Trinity in Unity.

Having in the preceding chapters, then, examined the Three Temples in reference to the points of difference and contrast, which most strongly denote the agency of three divine Persons, I shall close the inquiry by pointing out the principal method adopted to prevent the error of supposing that these three are different Gods.

But first, let me not be misunderstood when I assert, that the doctrine of the Trinity rests on historical facts. That God has assumed a threefold character in his threefold dispensation; and that distinct views of the Divine nature attach to

Him accordingly, is the very result of the progressive system of change, and is itself therefore matter of historical fact. But that there are further distinctions unrevealed, or unintelligible to us ; and that the distinctions which are revealed, and understood, have reference to these—all this, of course, is not matter of historical fact ; and can only be derived, by inference, from God's apparent design in creating a threefold impression of Himself, combined with the language of his Scriptures.

I. When the Jewish Church was established, the prevalence of heathen polytheism made it expedient that the Unity of the true God should be set forth as the most prominent feature of belief. But it is only in accordance with the view which we take of the rest of that early dispensation, to suppose that the declaration of God's being one, was also prospective—was a provision, in short, to keep up an habitual impression of the divine Unity, preparatory to the change, in which a new divine Person was to appear. Even as the ceremonial of the Law was probably for the time an antagonist system to certain religious rites of

the neighbouring idolaters ; but contained nevertheless, as its most important object, the prophetic picture of the Gospel scene ; so, the enforcement of the divine Unity, although it served the temporary purpose of a preservative against the worship of false Gods, became, and was designed to become, in the fulness of time, a corrective of a false view of the Trinity. The best preparatory course for this doctrine was an habitual contemplation of God as one. Hence not only was belief in the Unity made the subject of commandment and reiterated assertion, under the first dispensation ; but the Temple was, by the most solemn injunctions, appointed to be but one. Whithersoever the Jews were carried captive, into whatever distant parts of the world they were dispersed by prosperous commerce or disastrous exile ; to the Temple at Jerusalem they were bound to repair, or else to forego the service of Jehovah. No where else must a Temple be built or sacrifice offered ; although thousands should yearly, by reason of distance or other impediments, be debarred from all communion. It seemed safer and better that the service of

God should be suspended, than that the Unity of the Temple should be violated. It is in accordance with this principle, that the existence of the Temple of stone was made incompatible with Christianity; and, in this respect too, it was expedient for us, that Christ should go away before the Comforter came—that “the Temple of his body” should be withdrawn, before his new body the Church was dedicated—and that in the last, as in the earliest, dispensation there should be but one Temple of God on earth, in memorial that there is only one God, and that He is to be worshipped as one.

II. The Unity of the Divine nature was maintained during the second Temple in various ways. It was intimated by the recurrence of the Glory that filled Jehovah’s first Temple, and which now announced the human nature of Christ as the abode of the same God. It was also intimated by Christ’s performing those particular miraculous acts, which God had heretofore taught his people to associate with his peculiar agency. For example, the cure of the leprosy was, by the most express and minute directions of the Law, placed in the light of a miracle, which God

did not delegate to his servants, but exercised Himself. The priest pronounced the leper clean, to indicate the miraculous character of the cure, but he was not allowed to be an agent in the cure: obviously to create the impression of the immediate agency of Jehovah. When Jesus therefore healed lepers, and sent them to the priests, he was placing himself precisely in the same situation that the Father had occupied. It was in doing so, that the God of the old dispensation had been recognized; and the renewal of this, reminded the attentive disciple, that the God of the new Temple was the same. To take another instance. The God of Israel, on leading his people from Egypt to the promised land, delegated to Moses the general administration of their law, their government, their provisions, and the requisite measures for their journeys. In one or two instances, however, an exception is made, and God Himself, not Moses his servant, was the agent. It was not, for example, Moses by delegated power, but God Himself, who fed them with bread from heaven. When therefore Christ, in the wilderness, so performed the like miracle, as to make its cor-

respondence exact in some of its minutest particulars^a, what could have been the inference designed, but that it was God, the same God of their fathers, who was reminding his people of his identity, by repeating his own appropriated miracle?

The miracles of walking on the sea, and stilling its waves, can hardly be considered in a different light, when we remember the many passages of Scripture, of the Psalms especially, that described Jehovah's power under this image, and recollect, that it was to fishermen—to persons on whom such passages were likely to have made the liveliest impression—that these miracles were exhibited.

But perhaps the most striking act of this description was his violation of the Sabbath. It was of all the Jewish observances that, in the enforcement of which Jehovah was considered as most immediately concerned. Those who neglected attendance on the Temple, and were seduced into other habits of alienation from their Law, yet revered this institution, and retained

^a These points of coincidence are enumerated in "The Catechist's Manual," p. 84.

among their last scruples, that of violating its sanctity. It was that portion of time which God had sanctified, detached from profane service, and set apart as his own. It bore the same analogy to the other days of the week, that the Temple did to the land of Israel ;—the tribe of Levi to the rest of his people ;—and all Israel to the world. It was holy to the Lord, and God spake of it as “ His Sabbath.” This observance Christ more than once publicly violated, and gave as a reason for doing so, that the Sabbath had been appointed by God, not for *Himself* to observe, but for man. The way in which the declaration was made provides most expressly for the idea of identity between Christ and that Lord, whose institution was the Sabbath. “ ‘The Sabbath,’” said He on one occasion, “ was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath ; wherefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath ^b ;” that is, “ the institution of the Sabbath is not like the immutable principles of morality and virtue, with a view to which man was formed, and which is an attribute of God ; but is a positive institution, made for man. Therefore the Son of man, as God, is

^b Mark ii. 27, 28.

Lord of the Sabbath, and free from its obligations." On another occasion of his expressing the same, the Jews understood Him, and attempted to stone Him. "My Father," said He, "*worketh* hitherto, and I work^c;" meaning that He who gave Him the injunction to rest on the Sabbath day, did not Himself conform to it, but continued his work in keeping up the course of nature; and that He, Jesus, was to be considered as that same divine Being.

All these indications were combined with repeated hints and express assertions, which confirmed the impression they were of themselves calculated to make. When, for example, Philip said to him, "Shew us the Father;" his reply was, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that has seen me has seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father^d?" an answer which, sufficiently explicit itself, yet refers to a long train of intimations which had been previously lost on Philip—"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" Again, He employed such language as

^c John v. 17.

^d John xiv. 9.

this to his apostles, “ I am in the Father, and the Father in me^e.” “ If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him^f.”

The actual result of all this, appears on the pages of the apostolic writings, where we find attributed to Christ that agency, which the earlier people of God were assured was the agency of the Father; as in this passage of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians, “ by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist^g.” Or again, it is expressly said of Him that He is “ God^h,” “ the true Godⁱ,” “ the great God^k,” “ the Lord of Glory^l,” “ the King of Kings and Lord of Lords^m ;” all titles which were recognised as descriptive of the Father.

^e John xiv. 11.

^f John xiv. 23.

^g Coloss. i. 16, 17.

^h Rom. ix. 5.

ⁱ 1 John v. 20.

^k Titus ii. 13.

^l James ii. 1.

^m Rev. xix. 16.

III. Together with the manifestation of a third divine Person as presiding in a third Temple, there was need of fresh provisions for declaring the divine Unity. The need, however, was less in this than in either of the preceding Revelations. In the first place, the worshippers in the Third Temple had now the full benefit of all the declarations respecting the Unity, which had guarded their predecessors from misapprehension. Of these, the Old Testament Scriptures contained many that had long familiarized those acquainted with them with the idea of identity between God and his Spirit. With the impression of these Scriptures therefore, the coming of a Divine Ruler, claiming to be that Holy Spirit, was in itself less likely to create the notion of a different Being, than the appearance and circumstances of the Immanuel—which was to be, as the prophet intimated, “a new thingⁿ.” From Christ’s own teaching again, which contained on this as on other points of Christianity, preparatory instruction, much had been learnt; or rather much had been treasured up which was now explained by inspiration. He, for instance, had promised them the

ⁿ Isaiah xliii. 19.

coming of another Comforter, describing Him at one time as the Holy Ghost^o, at another as Himself^p, and then again as the Father^q. He describes Him as his own Spirit^r, as the Father's Spirit^s, and the Spirit of truth^t; or (agreeably to the phraseology of the New Testament) the presiding Spirit of the *true* or *real* dispensation.

III. Accordingly, the especial provisions made on the coming of the third Person of the Trinity, for preserving still the doctrine of the divine Unity, are in some instances only allusions to Christ's previous instructions now better understood and applied. Thus St. John's words in his first Epistle^u, "he that keepeth his (Christ's) commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us," are plainly a reference to those passages above noticed, in which our Lord identified his coming and the Holy Spirit's; and prepared his disciples to recognise the abode of the Spirit with them as his own residence—in St. John's own language, to "know

^o John xiv. 26.

^p John xiv. 18.

^q John xiv. 23.

^r John xvi. 14, 15.

^s John xv. 26.

^t John xv. 26.

xvi. 13.

^u 1 John iii. 24.

that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.”

As in respect of the Immanuel’s divine nature, that of the third Person too was identified with the one God, by attributing to Him a sphere of agency which had been before appropriated to the Father, or to Father and Son identified. Thus the Spirit is represented as “searching all things, even the deep things of God^x,” and even as having raised Christ from the dead^y. Sometimes too that which is recorded of the Father in the Old Testament, is quoted or referred to as if it had been the agency of the Holy Ghost; as in Acts xxviii. 25, 26. where the apostle Paul ascribes to the Holy Spirit words which Isaiah declares to have been the words of the Lord^z.

But the one great provision for the doctrine of the divine Unity, which is peculiar to the last Temple—and as belonging to the final Revelation, teaches that Unity at once with respect to all the Persons—is the form of words appended to the rite of baptism. It is plain that Christians

^x 1 Cor. ii. 10. illustrated by Deut. xxvii. 15. “The secret things belong to the Lord our God.”

^y 1 Peter iii. 18.

^z Isaiah vi. 8, 9, 10.

are properly baptized unto Christ ; they are a continuation of his disciples, and in that title, as well as in the title of Christians, is implied that it is so. The natural form of baptism therefore would have been unto Christ. But it was especially enjoined, that it should be unto Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; so as to indicate that in being baptized unto Christ, we are baptized unto that God who has been worshipped as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost ^a.

At the time, this encouraged and obliged the Christian convert to claim connection with the Father, lest ignorance, or error, or prejudice, should disjoin the God of the old dispensation from that of the new. But it was no temporary provision. It was a sacramental seal affixed to the great truth, that God, manifested to Christians only in his Son and by his Spirit, is still the same God of the creation, the same God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, and of Moses. The baptismal form connects the earlier with the latter dispensations—the dispensation of the Law, with that of the

^a The Scriptural expression is properly “*into* the name,” not “*in* the name” according to our version. The mistranslation probably arose from the “*in nomine*” of the Vulgate.

Gospel, as provided by the Son, and taught and perfected by the Spirit. It stamps the baptized with the character of the true Israel—the true children of Abraham, and heirs of the promise made unto the patriarchs and to Adam. It teaches us that in Christianity are comprehended, continued, and completed, all the covenants from the fall unto the redemption and sanctification of man, in whatever divers ways communicated and ordained. It is a memorial to us, that although “God in divers manners spake in times past unto the Fathers^b,” and unto us in his Son, and by his Spirit, no variableness or shadow of turning in Him is implied by these differences of manifestation, and changes of dispensation. He is still Alpha and Omega; the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come^c.”

^b Heb. i. 1.^c Rev. i. 8.

CHRIST A PATTERN OF CHRISTIAN HUMILITY.

IF Scripture did not expressly teach us, that one object of Christ's appearance on earth was to furnish an example for our imitation, it would still be impossible to doubt that such was the design of Providence. The Son of God could not have lived with men on earth, instructed them, died for them, and established a connection and intercourse with them for ever, without being regarded as a model of behaviour by his followers. Imitation must naturally and certainly have taken place, in proportion as the disciple believed and loved Him. All that would seem requisite for the inspired guides of the Church to do on this score, would be, to regulate this strong impulse—to prevent it, if possible, from being directed to any portions of his life and character, in which imitation might be frivolous or wrong; or again to point specifically to those features of Christian perfection, in the attainment of which his example might be most useful.

Both these objects have been admirably accomplished in the Scriptures of the New Testament. There is no one characteristic of those writings, which is more remarkable, or more strikingly evinces the agency of Divine inspiration, than the manner in which the believer and follower of Christ has been secured, by the very record of his life, from misdirecting the strong desire which that record naturally excites, to copy his manners and his actions. Although the Evangelists were all contemporary historians, and two of them his daily companions and familiar friends, we may observe how scrupulously they have abstained from the slightest mention of so many circumstances about Him, which, as uninspired biographers, they most assuredly would have related, and would have descanted on with peculiar interest. Nothing short of inspired prohibition can account for the fact, that, connected as they were with the subject of their biography, they were the authors of such meagre and scanty narratives as the four Gospels—that they should have sparingly selected, and drily stated, a very limited number of facts, instead of recording all that they knew of so wonderful a person, and

expatiating on every particular point. In the narratives of St. Matthew and St. John especially, it is impossible, that, without Divine intervention, there should have been no notice of Christ's person, for instance—his dress—his domestic habits—in short, of all that train of private and familiar anecdote, which every writer similarly circumstanced is irresistibly prompted to give, and every reader, to demand of him. Surely the hand of God was here, forbidding a display of matters which formed not the proper object of Christian imitation; and which, at the same time, would have been the most likely to attract the regard of the unwise and superstitious in preference to, and in lieu of, those features in our great Example, which it becomes us to study and to transfer to our own lives. If the mere traditionary tales of the handkerchief which bore the impress of his features; of the sepulchre in which his body was laid; of the wood of the cross to which he was nailed; and of the blood which issued from his side—if the idle traditions concerning these and the like matters have proved the means of diverting thousands during so many generations from a genuine devotion to Christ, to a superstitious re-

verence for circumstances unessential to his character; what might the result have been, had all these topics formed part of the authentic Gospels? And yet so natural, so strong, must have been the tendency to indulge the curiosity of mankind on these points, that we can scarcely refuse to recognise the prohibitory influence of the Holy Spirit in the total suppression of all such information by the Evangelists and other inspired teachers.

The propriety and wisdom of the scheme of Scripture inspiration, in making prominent, on the other hand, those features of our Lord's conduct and character, which it was most essential to propose as a pattern for imitation, is likewise very obvious. In the code of morality, which the Gospel was designed to purify and perfect, the virtues, which most needed Divine sanction and express precept, were forgiveness of injuries, and humility. Other points of morality required indeed to be enforced by stronger and nobler motives than heretofore, and to be improved and perfected in the Gospel description of them; but, to be "meek and lowly," and "unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek,

to offer also the other”—were maxims of duty not recognized at all by the wisest and best authorities of old time. Condescension and placability were praised indeed by heathen moralists as tokens of a generous and magnanimous spirit^a; but not humility, not free forgiveness of injuries. The “masters in Israel” too—they had converted into a maxim of morals, the law which said, “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth;” and taught their nation to look down with contempt on the rest of mankind—even on the lords of the universe—on the ground, that the children of Abraham were alone the elect of God, and that it was part of their religious character to foster the proud consciousness of so high a distinction. Here then was the pro-

^a *Nec vero audiendi, graviter qui inimicis irascendum putabunt, idque magnanimi et fortis viri esse censebunt. Nihil enim laudabilius, nihil magno et præclaro viro dignius placabilitate atque clementia. In liberis vero populis, et in juris æquabilitate, exercenda etiam est facilitas, et altitudo animi quæ dicitur. Cicero de Officiis, lib. i. 25. The meaning which the expression “altitudo animi” thus appears to have acquired, is very remarkable. Aristotle, in like manner, characterises his μεγαλόψυχος as οὐδὲ μνησικακός. Ethic. lib. iv. c. iii.*

vince, in which the influence of the Saviour's example was most requisite ; and it is accordingly his conformity to these new principles of morality which the sacred writers more especially recommend to our imitation. How far this has been done with respect to humility, is the point which I purpose to examine.

Numerous passages of the New Testament will readily occur, as forming part of the apostolical exhortations, or of our Lord's discourses, in which we are directed to learn of Him, in respect of his being meek and lowly. But there is one in particular, which I would select as the basis of the present inquiry, because it comprises all the different aspects under which Christ is elsewhere separately proposed as a pattern of humility. The passage to which I allude is contained in the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians^b. " Let this mind," writes the apostle, " be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men :

^b Ver. 5, 6, 7, 8.

and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." This passage, I have observed, combines all the several points of view, in which Christ is elsewhere represented as an example of humility for the Christian to follow. These are three. I. In the first He is presented to our contemplation as being originally "in the form of God," and "thinking it not robbery to be equal with God," and yet condescending to assume the nature and condition of a human being. II. The next display of humility alluded to is, that, instead of choosing that sphere of human life which was noblest and most powerful—kingly rank, wealth, and power—He "took upon Him the form of a servant." "He came," as He told his disciples, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister^c." III. The last point introduced into the picture of humility is his death on the cross. "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." What the character and obligation of the whole example so described is, will best appear by considering these several circum-

^c Matt. xx. 28.

stances in the history of our Lord, and seeing in what way we are able and bound to imitate Him in each.

I. The first is, *his being made in the likeness of men*. In applying this view there is a caution to be observed, very obvious when stated, but still perhaps requiring to be stated. The mystery of the Incarnation can only be contemplated as a part of the example of humility, by considering Christ as to his divine nature alone—as Him who in the beginning “was with God,” and “was God,” and yet condescended to be “made flesh,” and to “dwell among us^d.” And yet, to the divine nature, we can no more presume to attribute the very qualities of humility and condescension—such as those qualities exist in a human mind—than we can the passions of men. Christ in his human nature, or considered as to his manhood united with and perfected by the Godhead—Christ so considered, exhibits the very qualities which man is to cultivate, and which man may hope, in a greater or less degree, to attain. But when we speak of imitating the humility of Him who became man for us—if we

^d John i.

use the expression with due reverence—we can only mean the observance of that behaviour which, in us, is the result of humility and meekness. And it is important to observe, that the same may be said in several other cases also. For instance, our Lord bids us be “perfect even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect^e,” intending, of course, that we should aim at the perfection of *our* nature, without supposing, that we are thereby identifying our nature with his. It is more properly, in short, *the works* of God, than *the divine nature*, which we copy; even as we recognise the Divine presence by its results, and not as it were “face to face,” not “knowing Him as we are known of Him.” To speak of God as humble, is indeed an expression from which every serious and pious mind revolts; although humility is among the most pleasing characteristics of Christ, and of Christians.

The mystery of the Incarnation, therefore, if made a part of the example of humility, must be applied in a way somewhat different from that in which Christ’s humility is appealed to in taking on Him the form of a servant, or in submitting to

^e Matt. v. 48.

the disgrace of the cross. Its application is not, however, the less practical or the less important on this account. It is clearly not requisite, either for the excitement, or for the success of imitation^f, that the means or instruments employed by the copyist, should be the same as those employed by him whose work he is studying and copying. All that is absolutely requisite is, that there should be some means in his power capable of producing similar results. We cannot indeed assume, we cannot even comprehend, perhaps, those properties of the Divine nature, whose exercise is developed in the mystery of the Incarnation—so far, I mean, as that mystery looks to us like condescension—but we know that humility is requisite in us, in order that we should do any thing resembling it; and we may be sure, therefore, that we are called on by the example to be humble, and to exercise humility. At the time when St. Paul wrote to the Philippians, the converted Jew must have understood, without any such abstract reasoning, that the example pro-

^f See Archbishop King's Discourse on Predestination, and Dr. Whately's Preface.

posed would be followed, by receiving the despised and unclean Gentile, (whom education and early habit had taught him to consider as essentially belonging to a spiritual grade beneath him,) on equal terms, and as a brother. The convert from heathenism, too, must have felt, in like manner, that he was conforming to the model, by suppressing the contempt so generally felt for that nation to which the apostles belonged, and by condescending to learn wisdom of the simple, and to be governed by the very outcasts of a despised race. And both they and we can alike understand its application to the perpetual condition of men in all ages—to the rich and great, as warning them not to allow the consideration of those worldly distinctions, which set them above others, to enter into their spiritual view of those same persons ;—to the wise, as teaching them a similar lesson with respect to their less learned or less intelligent Christian brethren. In common practice indeed, the very caution, which has been above suggested—namely, that it is the *work* of God, and not God Himself, we imitate—is found unnecessary, as far as regards the imitation of Christ, and is chiefly

needed to guard us against a false view, which may perhaps accompany that imitation.

II. The next feature in the great picture of humility is, that Christ *took on Him the form of a servant*. I have distinguished this view from the preceding, because the apostle has stated them separately, and because they are really and essentially distinct. The mystery of the Incarnation having been accomplished, it would have been a lesson of condescension to us, in whatever station of life the Anointed of God had been placed. But, instead of riches, honours, and empire, he chose a humble condition, and unambitious course of life. The application of the example is, in this case, it will be observed, materially different from the former. It is not merely an act, which it requires humility in us to copy ; but one itself proceeding from the meekness and lowliness of a human mind. In this case, it is not merely a similar result which the imitation attains, or strives to attain, but literally “ the same mind which was in Christ Jesus.”

The particular need of this feature in the example of Christ’s humility—his refusal, namely, to assume temporal royalty or any worldly dis-

tinctions, is apparent, when we recollect the strong prejudices of the Jews at the advent in favour of a temporal Messiah—prejudices from which the apostles themselves were not exempt, until long after the crucifixion—and the worldly-mindedness connected with those prejudices. But the more important and needful application is perhaps to be assigned to a much later period of the Church. Christ's death soon put an end to the vague notions of his followers respecting a kingdom of this world, to be governed by Him; and their despised and destitute condition for a time effectually checked the renewal of a similar ambition in the uninspired Church. Christians soon ceased to feel it an humiliation, that the temporal sceptre had for ever passed away from the true Israel of God. The Lord's conduct in blessing his enemies, and forgiving the injuries of his persecutors—the other feature of his example made prominent by the sacred writers—this was then, it would seem, the most requisite. It was when the Church ceased to be an object of persecution, and rose in favour, in wealth, and in influence, that, like its meek and lowly Founder, it was presented by the Tempter with an offer

of the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. It was then that the Church began to have need to remember his example and his words, "My kingdom is not of this world^f." "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly^g."

It is our happy lot to have lived in an age, in which we look back—it should be with sorrow and fear indeed, as well as with thankfulness—on the overwhelming success of that temptation, and the ineffectual operation of the great example which should have counteracted it. But although we are not members of a Church, which has yielded to that temptation, and has assumed temporal dominion; we must remember, it is to the individual churchman, as well as to the Church, that the example and the warning of our Lord is addressed. Be our Church ever so free from false ambition, its members individually will not be guiltless, if to any one its spiritual dignities shall become an occasion of worldly-mindedness. It is not that wealth, rank, empire, are, in themselves, unlawful—unchristian. It would be absurd to suppose this.

^f John xviii. 36.

^g Matt. xi. 29.

It is essential to the well-being of society that these should be made objects of pursuit; and the acquisition of them is a real blessing to him who rightly employs them. But the pursuit of these objects is condemned by Christ's example, in that point of view in which Christ's example applies—whenever the Church, namely, or the individual, claims these glories of this world as a Christian right, and pursues them as a Christian business. This cannot be “the same mind that was in Christ Jesus.”

III. The last instance that is mentioned, as filling up the Christian pattern of humility, is *the death of Christ on the cross*: “He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” It is not, of course, Christ's *mercy* in making atonement for us, nor his *patience* under suffering, and resignation to the Father's will, that is considered; but, his *humility*, in submitting to the disgrace, the ignominy, of being crucified. How strongly and generally the infamy of such a death was then felt, is apparent, as well from contemporary history, as from the manner in which it is perpetually alluded to by that apostle, who so

eminently united Christian heroism with Christian humility ; and who so often glories in this confessed reproach to his cause. Besides the passage particularly under consideration, may be instanced his words in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the same view of Christ's example in this respect is taken. "Let us run the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith ; who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the *shame*^h." So too, in his Epistle to the Galatians, he speaks of "the offence of the crossⁱ ;" and says of himself with reference to it, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ^k."

The Christian of the present day, however, who should be subjected to a similar death, would evidently find in it no trial of humility ; nor is it now a subject of humiliation to belong to the religion of a crucified Founder. His name has long removed the idea of degradation, which once attached to this kind of death, and has indeed connected it with exalted and holy associations. For the specific application of this part of the

^h Heb. xii. 1, 2.ⁱ Gal. v. 11.^k Gal. vi. 14.

great example, the Christian must, therefore, consider to what portion of religious duty the scandal or offence of shame now attaches—what now corresponds to it. It began with the cross, which was “unto the Jews a stumblingblock, (σκάνδαλον,) and unto the Greeks foolishness¹ ;” but, in the progress of eighteen centuries, and in the numberless variations of condition which have affected the different branches and subdivisions of the Christian world, it has been continually a shifting point. Scarcely one century had elapsed before it was transferred from the *cross* ; and the learned and accomplished converts from heathenism—who then began more freely to embrace the Gospel—felt greater humiliation in becoming disciples of an unlettered Christian teacher, and students of simple Gospel-truth, than appeared in acknowledging a crucified Lord, or in dying themselves on the cross. Onward still in the course of Christian history, we see, the Roman convert especially, struggling with the sense of a different worldly shame, in admitting Christianity as the religion of his country, and, thereby, sweeping away those monuments of paganism,

¹ 1 Cor. i. 23.

with which ancestral and national glory were so intimately associated. The scandal of shame has been different in different times and places, but in no age, in no Church, has Christianity ever been exempt from it. Let us not presume to say, that even we are free from every form of it. If its influence extend to none else, it is at least felt—I believe keenly felt—by young persons in their first free intercourse with the world. It is especially the case, with those who at the age of eighteen or twenty are sent forth from their home, for purposes of education or business, to make their first essay of independent life. There is, at that period of life, a shyness, and dread, of avowing the control and the comforts of religion, which often drives those who have been trained in habits of piety, even into an open disavowal of its influence. How many so circumstanced have, like Peter, denied their Master! not all—would God it were—like him to gather strength from failure, and to deny Him no more.

How can this be remedied? I would suggest to one assailed by this temptation, (which I am far from regarding as contemptible, and easy

of resistance,) to imagine an Apostle saying to him in some of these moments of his weakness, “ I was present when my Saviour was crucified. I saw his cross prepared, and one on either side of it, for a criminal of the vilest class. I saw Him conducted to it, in the midst of a rabble, such as collect at public executions, assailing Him with their savage yells and their inhuman ribaldry—hooting at Him, spitting on Him, buffetting Him, and even while He was nailed to the accursed wood, striving to rouse Him, if possible, from the agonies of the death He was dying, to keep alive the bitter sense of its degradation and infamy. His friends were dispersed, his enemies triumphant; mine own countrymen had been his accusers; the Romans his executioners. I heard Him distinctly say, ‘ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ I saw Him expire, while both enemies and friends around were disposed to think, that the cause expired with Him—that the words, ‘ It is finished,’ were justly applicable to his kingdom. This was *my trial*—the present scene is yours—and to both alike apply that solemn warning, ‘ Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the

Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come, in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels ^m." This is no mere assumed case. It is the very appeal which the apostles still make to us in their writings. And if we refuse to listen to their writings, let us not suppose that we "should be persuaded, though one of them rose from the dead" to repeat it.

IV. One consideration remains. In "looking unto Jesus," and in applying his precept to be "meek and lowly," we must be on our guard against the many counterfeit qualities, which have been mistaken for the true Gospel humility. It is almost as necessary to observe what Christian humility is not, as to observe what it is.

1. And first, it is plain from the case which has been just considered, that we are not to suppose that we are practising Christian humility, because we are humbling ourselves to our fellow-creatures. Humility to God is not only widely different from humility to man, but in some cases calls for a behaviour which is the very reverse. Pride, stubbornness, contumacy—these are among the most frequent charges which have been brought even against

^m Luke ix. 26.

Christ's meekest martyrs, and truest servants. I do not say that the charge has been deserved; but it denotes a display of qualities only exaggerated into their faulty excess. And surely Cranmer was not the meeker Christian, when, in a moment of weakness, he submitted to the will of his crafty adversaries; than when his mild spirit resumed its tone of firmness, and he in the same breath set at nought man's authority, and bowed himself heart-stricken before his Saviour. Luther cast publicly into the flames the warrant of Papal supremacy, renouncing his allegiance to the Romish Church, when, as yet, there was no Church of refuge for him to flee to; and shame on the Protestant, who should construe that noble burst of heroism into a want of Christian humility. And what shall we say of those more ancient worthies, who were even commanded by their Master to confront kings and rulers for his sake and for the Gospel's? Nay, let us look at the example of Christ himself; and recollect his unbending demeanour before Pilate, when the astonished Roman exclaimed, "Knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and have

power to release thee ^m!” In these instances, it is not Christian humility which is absent—not humility to God—but submission to man. A Christian may and ought to be too humble to make up his mind hastily on momentous points; he may and ought to be too humble to satisfy his conscience, without a severe self-examination, as well as an examination of the opinions of others: but there are some who are too humble to acknowledge and to speak the truth.

2. Again, where this confusion of worldly and spiritual humility has not taken place, how often have unchristian, and, at best, frivolous, practices, been palmed on the world for the genuine fruits of “that mind which was in Christ Jesus!” The self-abasement of the monk, the hermit, and the whole class of ascetics, furnishes obvious examples of this false humility—perhaps the most striking instances of it that have ever been exhibited. To the Protestant of our Church and of our times, however, it may be more profitable to contemplate that form of self-abasement, which mistaken piety assumes

^m John xvi. 11.

amongst us now. The hermit and the monk have long since disappeared from amongst us—not so the morbid temperament, which gave that shape to their devotion. Do we doubt it? Look at him, who broods over the picture of man's fallen nature, to find there no trace of the hand which created him, but only one foul, abhorrent mass of corruption. Look at him, who reads in the divine decrees a mystery, not of love—as Scripture represents it—but of harrowing surmise and apprehension—who sees in election and predestination a stern economy, that must render his holiest aspirations and best efforts unavailing—the thoughts of which has withered within his heart the peace, the joy, the hope, of a Christian; and has left him only the faith of those miserable unredeemed spirits, who “believe and tremble.” Look at such as these; and then pronounce whether there be not here an abasement of *mind*, no less pitiable, mischievous, unchristian, than any bodily self-torment, that has ever saddened the cloister of the monk, or the cell of the anchoret. See whether there be not the same spiritual pride combined with this abject humiliation—the like contempt for all who

are pursuing a different path of holiness. Observe, in both cases, the same rapid transition from self-condemnation and despair, to over-weening confidence—to-day the abandoned of heaven, to-morrow the chosen vessel and the spiritual guide of others.

And if the evil results of all this were confined to the deluded individuals—if they extended no further than to those who admire, and approve, and imitate—the mischief would be doubtless great, but it would at least be bounded by some definite line. Unhappily, the sober-minded, as well as the enthusiastic—although in a different way—are ensnared through the prevalence of such behaviour around them—the enthusiastic, from a natural propensity towards the same; the sober-minded, from their very abhorrence of it. These last are tempted to abstain altogether from labouring after the attainment of Christian humility, rather than incur the risque of being numbered with those, who, on every side, are perverting and bringing discredit on it, and rendering it odious by the affectation of pride. Their's is the temptation of the slothful servant, who hid his Lord's talent in a napkin, because the employment of it was

attended with hazard of failure. It may be regarded indeed as one of the standing trials appointed us by Providence, that, exposed as every Christian commandment and institution is to abuse, and abused as every Christian commandment and institution is in turn, we should never shrink from the use of that which is good and holy, because it is abused. The strong tendency to an opposite line of conduct is a matter which demands the most serious consideration of every man. In respect to the outward and ceremonial part of religion, the existence of such a tendency is indeed confessed, and has often been provided against. We all know how much obstinate resistance it has cost the Church of England, to retain the surplice, the church music, and, I may add, the venerable structures in which we assemble for public worship, solely from a reaction of feeling, caused by the abuse of these and other innocent and seemly appendages of devotion. In the case of these outward ordinances, the tendency is obvious. But the exposure and contempt of any flagrant perversion of God's *moral* laws—of inward Christianity—occasions a temptation more subtle, and there-

fore more dangerous. For whilst the recoil of the wrong impulse is the same as in the other case, it is the heart and not the garment—the inward and not the outward man, about which the feeling exists.

Let the sober-minded Christian then beware, lest in the habit of suspicion, which he can scarcely help acquiring from the detection of false humility in its many forms of delusion and imposture—let him beware, lest he forget that there is such a thing as true Christian humility. Let him remember too the place and importance which it assumes in the Gospel scheme. It appears there not only as an eminent and distinguishing feature of Christian practice, but as a previous and conditional requisite for obtaining that divine grace, through which alone we can practise Christianity at all. We are told, to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; forasmuch as “it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure^a ;” to Him therefore, as continually present, we must continually humble ourselves, in order that we may be enabled to do his will—I may add, in order

^a Philip. ii. 13.

that we may be enabled to *understand* it. For it is in the study of Gospel truth, and not only in the practice of the Gospel precepts, that “ God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”

° James iv. 6. 1 Peter v. 5.

THE END.

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