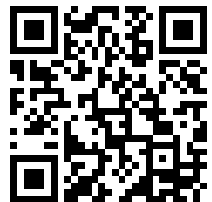


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*Robert Manley Lowe.*

*April 1847.*

**THE GOSPEL NARRATIVE.**







Bible - N.T. - Gospels - Harmonies  
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THE  
GOSPEL-NARRATIVE,

*ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED TEXT OF THE EVANGELISTS,*

WITHOUT REPETITION OR OMISSION.

WITH

A CONTINUOUS EXPOSITION, MARGINAL PROOFS IN FULL, AND NOTES,

BRIEFLY COLLECTED FROM THE BEST CRITICS AND COMMENTATORS.

BY THE

REV. JOHN FORSTER, M.A.

*HER MAJESTY'S CHAPLAIN OF THE SAVOY*

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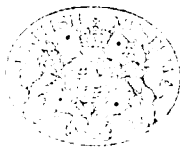
THE THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED.

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JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

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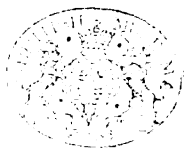
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TO  
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY  
QUEEN VICTORIA,  
DUCHESS OF LANCASTER,  
THIS VOLUME,  
WHICH HUMBLY ATTEMPTS, BY CONCENTRATING THE PIOUS LABOURS OF AGES,  
TO ILLUSTRATE THE SAYINGS AND ACTIONS OF OUR BLESSED LORD,  
IS  
BY SPECIAL PERMISSION  
INSCRIBED,  
WITH THE DEEPEST RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,  
BY HER MAJESTY'S FAITHFUL SUBJECT AND SERVANT  
THE AUTHOR.



2000  
71111



## P R E F A C E.

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THIS Work was originally designed for the use of Students in Theology, but there are many persons, whose necessary avocations prevent their entering on deeper researches, to whom it may prove acceptable from the character of general usefulness which it has been endeavoured to impress on it.

In its plan it embraces some old and approved, as well as several new features—the former, however, applied more simply, and it is hoped more in accordance with the teaching of the Church. The Sacred Narrative has been faithfully compiled from the several accounts of the Evangelists, with a strict adherence to the text of the Authorized Version. The Continuous Exposition, which has been kept distinct in the Italic character, consists in part of Emendations (either literal from the Greek\*, or free) of particular passages or expressions, to which they are immediately added on within parentheses for the sake of further distinguishing them. The whole is given as briefly as perspicuity would allow, and as plainly, without familiarity, as the Sacred Writings admit of; although, as it has been well observed, they are a Directory of Common Life, they never lose their essential dignity.

A Harmony, thus continuously illustrated, has been adopted as the most useful channel for shewing forth the doctrine of the Anglican Church in accordance with the teaching of her Divine Head; more especially as her mind is discovered in her admirable formularies—our never-failing guard against all aberrations, whether of Romanizing excess or of latitudinarian defect. Difficult and disputed passages† there will indeed always remain, and differences of opinion as to these will still exist;

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\* Wherever this is the case, the mark Ga. will be seen attached.

† “It cannot be dissembled that, partly to exercise and whet our wits, partly to wean the curious from loathing the Scriptures for their everywhere plainness, partly also to stir up our devotion to crave the assistance of God’s Spirit by prayer, and, lastly, that we might be forward to seek aid of our brethren by conference, and never scorn those that be not in all respects so complete as they should be, being to seek in many things ourselves, it hath pleased God in His divine Providence here and there to scatter words and sentences of that *difficulty* and doubtfulness—not in doctrinal points that concern Salvation (for in such it hath been vouched that the Scriptures are plain), but in matters of less moment, that fearfulness would better beseem us than confidence, and, if we will resolve, to resolve upon modesty. It is better to make doubt of those things which are secret, than to strive about those things that are uncertain.”—*Preface to the last Version.*

but wherever any additional interpretation has been met with, at all worthy the reader's attention, it will be found in this Work, added in a Note. Although extreme systems and varying views of doctrine have been from time to time advocated by different Commentators, and the Compiler of these sheets has been most anxious to avoid all extremes of opinion, (especially in times so peculiar as the present,) he has thought it right to consult all Expositors of note, inclusive of eminent writers of Sermons on the Gospel texts. He has not, however, adhered exclusively to the authority of any. Happily, the points of agreement are in themselves more important, as well as more numerous, than those of difference: and the hope is indulged that a recurrence, upon sound *Via Media* principles, to these Four Sacred Books,—containing as they do the root and foundation of every article of our Faith, and in which our Blessed Lord speaks most in His own Person,—may not be without its especial use in times of controversy. Men, we are told on the highest authority, “do therefore err, because they know not the Scriptures.”

There are conscientious persons who object altogether to Expositions of Scripture, yet surely without sufficient reason. Preaching might be objected to upon the grounds which are commonly brought forward. How can ordinary readers understand what is written—and Scripture itself has resolved a somewhat similar question—“except some man guide” them? (see Acts viii. 30, 31.) Uninterpreted, the Sacred Page can decide nothing, and by human beings, aided by Divine Grace, it must be explained at last: and since every sentence which it contains is from God, every man is interested in the true and *complete* meaning of it. This reasoning applies with especial force to the Four Gospels. In them, more than in any other division of Scripture, the particular signification of words is found to vary much with the occasion: the Evangelists appear (though they only appear) to differ among themselves: and there is, occasionally, such extreme brevity, (particularly in the more important discourses as recorded by St. John,) that, to acquire a full understanding of what has been written, deficiencies ought to be supplied for the general reader. In furtherance of so desirable an object, it is a favourable circumstance that a more critical understanding of the original tongue has prevailed since the adoption of the common Version now in use. Yet we do not, even now, possess an authorized translation of the New Testament taken directly from the Greek: it was from the Latin Vulgate that Wickliffe's early English translation in 1380 was taken; Tindale's, Coverdale's, and other versions succeeded, forming the groundwork of the Compilation ordered in 1568, but the Revisers appear to have only partially collated the works of their predecessors with the Original Scriptures; while the last learned Editors in 1611 expressly state that *their* object was to improve that (“the Bishops' Bible” as it was called), but not to make

a new translation. As a whole, the Version now in use is unquestionably one of great value, and there is no danger (at least in our day) of its being estimated too low; yet, in consequence of the fluctuations to which all language is subject, some of its words and phrases are no longer intelligible to the unlearned reader, and even the main sense has in certain passages become affected. Such incidental obscurities the lapse of time cannot fail to superinduce upon all records of departed ages. It is also observable that the Translators have arbitrarily rendered the same Greek word in *parallel* passages by different English ones—an inaccuracy by no means unfrequent\*.

It has been often said that the inquirer cannot with more advantage discover Truth *for himself* than by *comparing Scripture with Scripture*. In the belief of the importance of thus studying the Sacred Volume, the collection of Expository Quotations has been made a principal feature of this Work. Ordinary readers seldom trouble themselves to consult those references of chapter and verse commonly added in the margin of our Bibles; and when they do so, the citation may be merely of a verbal kind, or they may not readily find that portion of the verse or verses which alone may be relevant. The References, which are the most valuable and conduct to the true sense, lie scattered up and down the pages of the better Commentators: they have here been collected, and, without multiplying them too far, are given at length in the Margin of the Work along with the text which they illustrate.

The more modern and approved plan of distributing the matter of the Sacred Narrative, according to its subjects, in Sections and Paragraphs—rather than by arbitrary divisions of chapter and verse—has been adopted: but it has not been thought advisable to break up the Narrative into any divisions of a more comprehensive character. Neither the successive Jewish Passovers, nor the occasional journeys of our Lord, seem to convey any definite idea of the peculiar propriety of the events recorded. The simplest, and also the most edifying plan, appears to be a Gradual Development of the Christian Scheme, springing from the continuous and united testimony of all the Evangelists.

The Notes, besides illustrating more at large important points of Doctrine, embrace all those varied matters which could not, briefly or

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\* Thus, in Section CII. of this work, more than one instance may be noticed:—The Greek verb rendered “charged” at Mark x. 48, is, at Matt. xx. 31 (and again at Luke xviii. 39), rendered “rebuked.” The verb rendered “made thee whole” at Mark x. 52, is, at Luke xviii. 42, “saved thee.” In consequence of these frequent variations, the most apposite sense has alone been retained in passages where two or more Evangelists are harmonized. Wherever an actual variation occurs in the *Original* text, such variation is expressly added within brackets, together with the name of the Evangelist who employs it.

with convenience, be introduced with the Text. They explain collateral points of History, Geography, Usages, &c., an acquaintance with which is often necessary for understanding the Text, and they are always interesting in themselves. These might have been given as introductory matter; but, if read there at all, would detain the reader from the main work, and seem to fall more usefully under notice in connection with the portions of Scripture to which they severally refer\*.

Nor,—in the desire to render this Work complete as a Manual of Theology, so far as its character and limits would allow,—has *Practical Improvement* been forgotten. That, unquestionably, is the great *end* of all Revelation: And it is the fervent prayer of the Writer of these pages, that all, into whose hands the Work may chance to fall, may derive from it that unspeakable benefit—that by studying more earnestly the vital truths of our Religion, they may know the real value of the soul, as redeemable by a Saviour's blood; and that, laying hold of this one ground of Justification, our only title to Heaven, they may be enabled, by God's grace, to attain to that *Sanctification* which alone can fit us for it.

The Author desires to add his own heartfelt thanks to Divine Providence, that, with limited means, and in the midst of parochial duties and family avocations, he has been permitted to accomplish this labour of love: he puts it forth under the deepest sense of responsibility—*anxious* before all other things to do some service, in his vocation and ministry, among his fellow-men, and to become an instrument, however humble, of God's glory in the world.

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\* Should the reader prefer to see at the outset what is known of the Evangelists and their respective Gospels, the accounts will be found as follows:—St. Matthew, Section XXXV., Note 1. St. Mark, Section CXXII., Note 6. St. Luke, Section I., Note 1. St. John, Section XXX., Note 4.

LANCASTER PLACE,  
SAVOY.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

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A FURTHER Edition of this Work being required, the Author cannot omit the opportunity of stating, that it has been favoured with most gratifying marks of approval from upwards of twenty Prelates of our Church—the greater part of whom have kindly permitted copies of their Judgments to be laid before the influential Clergy. It should also be added, that several distinguished Prelates have condescended to supply Emendations, and valuable suggestions for the improvement of the Work, which are embodied in the present Edition.

*February, 1847.*



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# THE GOSPEL-NARRATIVE.

## SECTION I.

### ST. LUKE'S PREFACE OR INTRODUCTION.

*Luke i. 1—4.*

**F**ORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration (*have undertaken to compose a narrative*) of those things which are *now* most surely believed as *certain truths* among us *Christians*: even as they, —which from the beginning were eye-witnesses<sup>a</sup> of *what the Lord Jesus did*, and became Ministers<sup>b</sup> of the Word, —delivered them unto us; it seemed good to me also,<sup>(1)</sup> having, *by personal intercourse with them and by tracing up everything to its source*, had perfect understanding of all things *which were done* from the very first, to write of *them* unto thee in order<sup>c</sup> (*distinctly and particularly*), most excellent Theophilus;<sup>(2)</sup> *to the end that, by means of the written and uncorrupted Word*, thou mightest know the certainty<sup>d</sup> of those *important things* wherein thou hast *already* been *catechetically* instructed.

<sup>a</sup> And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning. John xv. 27

<sup>b</sup> I, who am a witness of the sufferings of Christ. 1 Pet. v. 1.

The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness. 1 John i. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ. 1 Cor. iv. 1.

<sup>d</sup> But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them. Acts xi. 4.

<sup>e</sup> These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. John xx. 31.

(<sup>1</sup>) *It seemed good to me also.*] St. Luke, who here explains why he wrote a Gospel, was a native of Antioch. According to the most ancient writers he became the companion of the Apostles, and certainly of St. Paul (see Acts xvi. 10, 11; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24; Col. iv. 14); but, most probably, this Evangelist was not an eye-witness of what he relates. Although he is more particular in his account of the Commission of the Seventy (to which body he has been supposed to belong), and although the frequent Hebraisms of his style have led to the idea of his being a Jew by birth, yet the comparison of Col. iv. 11 with Col. iv. 14 would alone seem to decide that he was *not* "of the Circumcision."—The style of this Evangelist confirms what is related of his general history. It is copious, and often elegant, as might be expected from his Gentile descent: the knowledge of Jewish usages which it exhibits, shews him to have been a Jew in religion; and the scientific and more appropriate terms employed

when diseases are mentioned, leave no doubt that he was by profession a physician.—The most received and probable opinion is that he wrote his Gospel for the use of Gentile converts, in or near the year 64, and in Achaia, where he died at an advanced age.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Most excellent Theophilus.*] The person here addressed appears to have been some official or otherwise-distinguished individual, known to St. Luke, and probably one of his Gentile converts. The Evangelist's other Book, that of the Acts, commences with an address to the same. Josephus refers to a person of this name, of rank among the Jews, and contemporary with St. Luke. (Antiq. xx. 8.)—The title, "Most Excellent," given to Theophilus, and the adoption of a similar phrase of courtesy by St. Paul, when before Festus (Acts xxvi. 25), show us that those Christians are *over scrupulous*, who refuse to employ such modes of address as have become established by custom.

B



## SECTION II.

EXORDIUM OF ST. JOHN: SETTING FORTH THE PRE-EXISTENCE, DIVINITY, AND INCARNATION OF THE WORD, OR ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD; AND THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST CONCERNING THE LIGHT.

John i. 1—18.

<sup>a</sup> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Gen. i. 1.

—from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Prov. viii. 23.

<sup>b</sup> O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. John xvii. 5.

The Son is before all things. Col. i. 17.

That Eternal Life which was with the Father. 1 John i. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given—the mighty God, the everlasting Father. Isa. ix. 6.

And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. John xx. 28.

Christ who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Rom. ix. 5.

Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Phil. ii. 6.—Unto the Son, God saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Heb. i. 8.—This (Jesus Christ) is the true God and Eternal Life. 1 John v. 20.—the only wise God, our Saviour. Jude 25.

<sup>d</sup> Thus saith thy Redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb: I am the Lord that maketh all things. Isa. xlv. 24.—By Him (the Son) were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible. Col. i. 16.—The worlds were framed by the Word of God. Heb. xi. 3.

<sup>e</sup> As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given the Son to have life in Himself. John v. 26.—He giveth life unto the world. John vi. 33.—Jesus said, I am the Resurrection and the Life. John xi. 25.—God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 1 John v. 11.

<sup>f</sup> Then spake Jesus. I am the Light of the world. He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life. John viii. 12.—The darkness is past, and the True Light now shineth. 1 John ii. 8.

**I**N the beginning<sup>a</sup> of the Creation, and from all eternity, was the divine Word in existence: and the Word was originally with God<sup>b</sup> the Father, pre-existing as a distinct Person in the closest union with Him; and the Word was Himself God<sup>c</sup> (1) (the Eternal Jehovah), participating in the same divine nature and the same essential perfections.

The same was in the very beginning with God, being equally the Author of Creation, and not a subordinate instrument in that work of Omnipotence. "By the WORD of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. xxxiii. 6); and in like manner all things, visible and invisible, throughout the universe, were made by Him;<sup>d</sup> (2) and without Him (without His co-operating agency and power) was not anything whatsoever made, that was made. And not only did He create the material and inanimate world; but centered in Him was the power of giving life,<sup>e</sup> natural and spiritual, to the whole creation; and He, the fountain of all Life, was especially the Light<sup>f</sup> (the Enlightener and Instructor)

(1) *The Word was God.*] This is one of the two principal passages which establish the Divinity of the Saviour (the other being Rom. ix. 5); and, after the most diligent inquiry into different Versions,—especially by those who impugn the doctrine conveyed,—not a single various reading of this passage has yet been discovered. The doctrine, instead of being shaken by such collations, has been rendered more certain than ever.—By the "Word" or *Logos*, here plainly declared to be a Person equal with the Father, and not an Attribute, it is plain that St. John means Jesus Christ; for he goes on to speak of the Baptist as preceding Him. (See also 1 John i. 1, and Rev. xix. 13.) Eleven times in this first chapter of his Gospel is the word "God" used in its *proper* sense by the Evangelist, nor can a single instance be produced from the entire New Testament, where in the singular number it is used in any other sense.

The very remarkable expression, "The Word," is derived both from the Jewish and Gentile theology of that period, and its then familiar use accounts for the Evangelist's brevity in delivering so great a mystery. It was

always used to signify a vital and divine subsistence. Philo applies it to Jehovah, or the Creator of the world; and in the Jewish synagogues the expected Messiah was designated under the same term. And for this other simple reason, St. John might adopt so appropriate an expression: the Father makes known His will by His Son, the Word (see Heb. i. 1, 2), in the same manner as a man makes known his mind by means of words.

(2) *All things were made by Him.*] There can be no higher proof of Omnipotence than this; and it is to His work of Creation that Jehovah appeals as the particular proof that He is the true God in opposition to idols. (See Ps. c. 3.) To the same proof our Saviour himself appeals. (John x. 37.)—And yet the First Great Cause as plainly declares, "My glory I will not give to another." "Beside Me there is no God." (Isa. xlii. 8; xlv. 6.)—It appears from Gen. i. 2, that the *Third* Person in the Holy Trinity is also equally the Creator; and the patriarch has said, "The Spirit of God hath made me; the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." (Job xxxiii. 4.)

of men. And *this*, the glorious Light, shineth in darkness,—enlightening with its beams a benighted, ignorant, and wicked world; and the darkness was so thick that at first it comprehended it not—it would not admit even that Light to penetrate and disperse it.

It was in the manner following that this Divine Dispensation commenced.—There was a man,—for he was not a divine person as some supposed, though unquestionably, as had been foretold,—sent from God;<sup>h</sup> whose name was John, afterwards called also the Baptist. The same came expressly for a Witness,<sup>i</sup> to bear witness of the Light, that so all men, without exception of any,—having through him their attention powerfully awakened to the truth,—might believe in their Saviour when He appeared. He (John), although a shining light, was not that Great predicted Light,—the Sun of Righteousness and fountain of all Light,—but was sent, as the morning-star and harbinger of its rising upon the world, to bear witness of that Light. That was the only true and infallible Light that cometh into the world;<sup>(3)</sup> which, setting aside all the false lights of merely human philosophy, effectually lighteth (is able to enlighten) every man<sup>k</sup> whose mind is duly prepared for the reception of it.

He was incarnate in the world; and the world itself was made by Him, and yet the blind and ungrateful men of the world knew (acknowledged) Him not, either as their Maker or Redeemer. He came unto His own,—for every territory was His,—but He was pleased to make the land of the Jews His peculiar dwelling-place upon earth; and even His own people, favoured as they had ever been above all other nations, received Him not<sup>l</sup> as their Benefactor. But as many as received Him,—for some there were waiting for the redemption of Israel,—to them gave He power (privilege, MARG.) to become the adopted sons of God,<sup>m</sup> even to them that believe on his name (in Him): which were born again,<sup>n</sup> not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man (not as by birth from earthly parents of whom they received flesh and blood—for no means of Nature could possibly convey Regeneration); but entirely of the will and free mercy of God, conforming them to His image and accepting them through His Son. From this Divine Source was their birth thenceforward to be reckoned.

And to procure for us so glorious an adoption, the Word was made (became) flesh,<sup>o(4)</sup> and dwelt: (pitched His

<sup>g</sup> This is the condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil. John iii. 19.

<sup>h</sup> Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me. Mal. iii. 1.

<sup>i</sup> John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. Acts xix. 4.

<sup>k</sup> I will also give Thee for a Light unto the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth. Isa. xlix. 6.

A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Luke ii. 32.

<sup>l</sup> We hid as it were our faces from Him: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Isa. liii. 3.

<sup>m</sup> Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Gal. iii. 26.

<sup>n</sup> Of His own will beget He us with the Word of Truth. Jas. i. 18.

— Which according to His mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope . . . . .

— born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. 1 Pet. i. 3, 23.

<sup>o</sup> He took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Phil. ii. 7.

God was manifest in the flesh. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same. Heb. ii. 14.

Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. 1 John iv. 2.

(3) That cometh into the world.] These words are transposed on the best critical authority, and that they must be referred to "the Light" is corroborated by John iii. 19; xii. 46.

(4) The Word was made flesh.] The fourth

General Council thus defines this great mystery: "He was so made flesh, that He ceased not to be the Word, never changing that He was, but assuming that He was not." The Godhead was not converted into flesh, but the Manhood taken into God.

<sup>p</sup> Jesus manifested forth His glory, and His disciples believed on Him. John ii. 11.

We were eyewitnesses of His majesty; for He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a Voice to Him from the Excellent Glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the Holy Mount. 2 Pet. i. 16—18.

<sup>q</sup> It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell. Col. i. 19.

In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. ii. 9.

<sup>r</sup> Freely ye have received. Matt. x. 8.

<sup>s</sup> —justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. iii. 24.

Ye are not under the Law, but under Grace. Rom. vi. 14.

<sup>t</sup> The Truth shall make you free. John viii. 32.

<sup>u</sup> And the Lord said, Thou canst not see My face, for there shall no man see Me and live. Exod. xxxiii. 20.

<sup>v</sup> I am in the Father, and the Father in Me. John xiv. 10.

<sup>w</sup> No man knoweth the Father, save the Son. Matt. xi. 27.

*tent, Gr.) among us,—even as the manifestation of the Deity had been visibly present of old in the Tabernacle,—full of grace and truth. And we, His disciples, beheld His glory,<sup>p</sup> so plainly manifested in His mighty works, and the wisdom with which He spake: more particularly did some of us (Peter, James, and John) behold His transcendent glory, when He was transfigured on the Holy Mount; which was indeed the glory such as might be expected of the only-begotten Son of the Father.*

John bare the like witness of Him, asserting His pre-eminence above all; and cried aloud, saying, This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh into His high office after me is to be preferred before me; and most fitly so, for He ever was (He existed) before me.—And of His inexhaustible and overflowing fulness<sup>q</sup> (the fulness of the eternal Godhead) have all we that believe, without any exception of persons, received;<sup>r</sup> and grace for grace (grace upon grace,—in abundant and still-increasing measure)—even the grace of Remission, the grace of Holiness, and the grace of Acceptance: He remains our complete Saviour,—our Guide in every step we make to Eternal Life.

Even to our Lawgiver, great though he was, the Blessed Word is manifestly superior: for the Law was given indeed by (through) Moses, which was a high distinction conferred upon that patriarch: but the Law was only a preparatory and so far imperfect dispensation; and Grace,<sup>s</sup> bringing a free pardon instead of its rigorous demands,—and Truth,<sup>t</sup> the substance of those good things which the Law did but shadow forth in types and ceremonies,—these came (had their very being, Gr.) by Jesus Christ.—Since He is infinitely above all, there can be no other way of arriving at Truth or of obtaining Grace: no man,—not Moses himself,—hath seen, or hath ever been able perfectly to comprehend the nature and attributes of God at any time;<sup>u</sup> the only-begotten Son, for such was Jesus Christ by a mode of generation peculiar to Himself,—and which is in the bosom of the Father,<sup>v</sup> <sup>(b)</sup> being intimately and inseparably connected with Him,—He alone hath declared His will and fully made Him known.<sup>w</sup>

(<sup>b</sup>) *In the bosom of the Father.*] This phrase denotes the most entire intimacy and affection. See Deut. xiii. 6, where it is spoken of a wife.

The metaphor is probably taken from the familiar custom among the ancients of reclining at meals. (See John xiii. 23.)

## SECTION III.

THE BIRTH OF THE BAPTIST FORETOLD IN A VISION TO ZACHARIAS;  
AND THE CONCEPTION OF ELIZABETH.

Luke i. 5—25.

THERE was in the days of Herod *the Great*, the King of Judea,<sup>(1)</sup> a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia,<sup>a</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> or *Abijah*; and his wife was *one* of the daughters (*female descendants*) of Aaron; and her name, *like that of the wife of the first High-priest*, was Elizabeth.—And they were both *accepted as righteous* before God, *for they were persons of genuine uprightness and integrity*, walking in *the observance* of all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord (*the moral as well as the ceremonial Law*), and blameless<sup>b</sup> *before men as well as pious towards God*.—And they had no child, *nor indeed now the hope of any*, because that Elizabeth was barren—*notwithstanding which she had never been divorced by her attached and pious husband*; and they both were now well stricken (*advanced*) in years.<sup>(3)</sup>

And it came to pass, that while he executed (*discharged*) the priest's office before God, in the order of his course, his lot,—*the most solemn and honourable of all the offices so distributed*,—was, according to the custom of the priest's office, to burn *the evening incense*<sup>c</sup> <sup>(4)</sup> when he went into the Temple <sup>(5)</sup> (*the Sanctuary*) of the Lord, *where the golden Altar of incense stood*.—And the whole multitude of the people *assembled* were *silently praying in the courts* without *the Sanctuary* at the time of *the oblation* of incense—*a solemnity which lasted about half an hour*.—And *as Zacharias entered the Sanctuary with his face towards the*

<sup>a</sup> Thus were the priests divided by lot. . . . The eighth lot came forth to Abijah. 1 Chron. xxiv. 5, 10.

<sup>b</sup> Touching the righteousness which is in the Law blameless. Phil. iii. 6.

<sup>c</sup> And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon the altar, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. Exod. xxx. 8.

(1) *Herod, the King of Judea.*] This Herod, misnamed the Great,—for he was remarkable only for the greatness of his vices,—obtained the crown through the influence of Marc Antony at Rome. He was a foreigner and a cruel prince, but by his address reigned thirty-seven years.

(2) *Of the course of Abia.*] This was the eighth of those twenty-four courses or classes into which the priests had been divided by David, each officiating one week. (See 1 Chron. xxiv. 3, &c.) *Abia* is the Greek for the Hebrew *Abijah*.

(3) *Well stricken in years.*] Yet the age of Zacharias could not have exceeded fifty years, for after that a priest was superannuated. (See Numb. iv. 3.)

(4) *To burn incense.*] A rite typical of the Intercession of Christ.—Incense was an aromatic compound, consisting chiefly of a gum obtained from the trees of Arabia, and only allowed to be used in the Temple. This part of the Jewish ceremonial supposed the prayers of devout worshippers to be wafted to heaven in odoriferous wreaths. So David says, "Let my prayer be set

forth before Thee as the incense." (Ps. cxli. 2.) See also Rev. viii. 4.

(5) *When he went into the Temple.*] This is a general expression for all the numerous buildings connected with the sacred edifice; but Zacharias entered the Inner Temple or *Sanctuary*. This was separated from the Holy of Holies (into which the High-priest entered only once a year on the great day of Atonement) by a Vail, the same which was rent at the Crucifixion. The surrounding courts were thus divided:—the Outer Court, encompassing the whole, was named the Court of the Gentiles, which they alone occupied, and beyond which they could not pass: within this court, and separated by a stone wall (to which St. Paul alludes, Ephes. ii. 13, 14), stood the Court of the Israelites, where the people were assembled for prayer on the present occasion; it was divided into two parts, one for the women and the other for the men. Again, within this court was the Court of the Priests, and here the Altar stood, to which the people brought their oblations, though not permitted to enter.—For an historical account of this Second Temple, see Section XXII. Note 5;

<sup>c</sup> Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court. Ezek. x. 3.

<sup>d</sup> And Elizabeth brought forth a son, and her neighbours and cousins rejoiced with her. Luke i. 67, 68.

<sup>e</sup> A Nazarite shall separate himself from wine and strong drink. Numb. vi. 3.

<sup>f</sup> The child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb. Judg. xiii. 5.

Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Jer. i. 5.

<sup>g</sup> God separated me from my mother's womb. Gal. i. 15.

<sup>h</sup> Then went out to John Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Matt. iii. 5, 6.

<sup>i</sup> Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Mal. iv. 5.

His disciples asked Him, saying, Why say the Scribes that Elias must first come? Jesus answered, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things; but I say unto you, that Elias is come already. . . . Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist. Matt. xvii. 10—13.

<sup>k</sup> And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. Mal. iv. 6.

<sup>l</sup> And being not weak in faith, Abraham considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief. Rom. iv. 19, 20.

<sup>m</sup> While I was speaking in prayer, even Ga-

*west*, there appeared unto him an Angel of the Lord standing *near the table of shew-bread* on the right,—*or north, which was reckoned the propitious*,—side of the Altar of incense.<sup>d</sup> And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled at an appearance so unusual in those days, and fear fell upon him. But the Angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer now offered up for the welfare and delivery of the people is heard,<sup>(6)</sup> as also the prayer of thy youth for offspring: and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, the forerunner of that illustrious Deliverer who is to come; and thou shalt call his name John (signifying that "God is gracious" to you). And thou shalt have joy and gladness at his birth, and many more shall rejoice<sup>e</sup> with thee: for he shall be a blessing to all mankind, and be great,—not indeed in outward splendour, but, which is of infinitely greater moment,—in the sight of the Lord Himself, on account of his distinguished office. And, since it will be his part to preach Repentance, preparatory to the remission of sins, he shall set forth in his own person a remarkable pattern of self-denial: devoted entirely unto God, he shall drink neither wine nor strong drink<sup>f</sup> (fermented liquor of any kind); and he shall be filled with the influence of the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb<sup>g</sup> and his days of childhood.—And many of the children of Israel shall he turn (convert) by repentance to seek the Lord their God,<sup>h</sup> worshipping Him henceforth in spirit and in truth. And as the Prophet foretold, he shall go before HIM,—the Redeemer,—in the spirit and power of Elias<sup>i</sup> (the zeal and mighty endowments of Elijah, the restorer of the Law), to turn again the hearts of the fathers to the children,<sup>k</sup>—now so divided among themselves through their differences,—by directing them all to One Master; and by guiding the disobedient to the wisdom of the Just One: thus, to make ready a people prepared for the service of the Lord.

And Zacharias,—being weak in faith, and forgetful of the example of his great ancestor Abraham<sup>l</sup> upon a like occasion,—said unto the Angel, Whereby (by what sign) shall I know this improbable thing to be true? for I am growing an old man, and my wife is already well stricken in years. And the Angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel<sup>m</sup> (<sup>7</sup>) (i. e. "the Power of God"), of whom thou hast

(<sup>6</sup>) *Thy prayer is heard.*] That the prayer of Zacharias on this occasion was for the public welfare we must conclude, as the priests in this office considered themselves as the mouth of the people. Yet from the known wish of Jewish parents for offspring,—especially those who, like this aged couple, were looking for the Messiah,—and also from the exulting speech of Elizabeth,

that her reproach was at length taken away, we may conceive that they had in their younger days wished for a son.

(<sup>7</sup>) *I am Gabriel.*] This angel, who appeared to Daniel at the same time of the Evening Oblation, had been in like manner sent to speak to that prophet concerning the Messiah, and to reveal the particular time of His coming.

read, that stand,—so highly favoured am I,—in the immediate presence of God; and, as one of His chief ministering spirits, am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, both as a sign that I come from God, and as a judgment upon thy want of faith, thou shalt be from this moment dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed<sup>a</sup> in the birth and circumcision of thy son,—because thou believest not my words, which shall assuredly be fulfilled in their season.

And the people waited the usual time for Zacharias to dismiss them with the accustomed blessing;<sup>o</sup> and they marvelled what could have happened that he tarried so long in the inner Temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the Temple, for he beckoned unto them, intimating by signs what had taken place: and afterwards he remained speechless (both deaf<sup>p</sup> and dumb, GR.), thus greatly exciting the public expectation of what would follow.

And it came to pass, that as soon as the seven days of his ministration were accomplished,—for he still attended the Temple to finish such official duties as he was able to perform,—he departed to his own house at Hebron, situated in the hilly country of Judea. And soon after those days, his wife Elizabeth conceived in accordance with the declaration of the Angel, and hid (sequestered) herself from the world for the space of five months, saying, Thus mercifully hath the Lord dealt with me, in the days wherein He looked with favour on me, to take away my reproach<sup>q</sup> among men<sup>(\*)</sup> in being childless.

bril, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation; and he informed me and talked with me. Dan. ix. 21, 22.

<sup>a</sup> In that day shall thy mouth be opened, and thou shalt speak and be no more dumb; and thou shalt be a sign unto them, and they shall know that I am the Lord. Ezek. xxiv. 27.

<sup>o</sup> On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. Numb. vi. 23—26.

<sup>p</sup> And they made signs to his father how he would have him called. Luke i. 62.

<sup>q</sup> And she conceived and bare a son, and said, God hath taken away my reproach. Gen. xxx. 23.

(\*) *My reproach among men.*] To be childless was reckoned a great affliction among the Jews, and was even looked upon as a sign of God's displeasure; for, besides the promises connected with the multiplication of the holy people (Gen. xiii. 16; xv. 5), it was a gloomy prospect that a family-name should perish.

Elizabeth may have sought retirement on this occasion, not only for the reason to be inferred of devout meditation, but also to avoid the doubts and comments of the world upon her situation; likewise it would be proper to avoid ceremonial defilements, as she was to give birth to a Nazarite.

## SECTION IV.

THE ANNUNCIATION BY THE ANGEL GABRIEL TO THE VIRGIN  
MARY AT NAZARETH.*Luke i. 26—38.*

AND in the sixth month of *Elizabeth's pregnancy*, the same angel Gabriel who had appeared unto Zacharias, was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,<sup>(1)</sup> to a Virgin, of the royal though now decayed house (*family*) of David, and recently espoused<sup>(2)</sup> (*contracted in marriage*) to a man whose name was Joseph,—*a poor carpenter, but descended from the same illustrious ancestor.* And the Virgin's name was Mary.<sup>(3)</sup>

And the Angel came in *to the house where she abode*, and said unto her, Hail, thou that art highly favoured above all other Jewish matrons: the Lord is (*be*) with thee: blessed (*most happy*) art thou among women!<sup>a</sup>

And when she saw him, she was troubled (*perplexed*) at his saying, and cast (*revolved*) in her mind what manner of salutation this should be (*what could be the import of so remarkable an address*). And the Angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found peculiar favour with God: and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS,<sup>(4)</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be. Judg. v. 24.

(1) *A city of Galilee, named Nazareth.*] Galilee was the most northern part of Palestine, divided into Upper and Lower Galilee, the former being called also "Galilee of the Gentiles," because it bordered on the Gentile nations and was partly inhabited by heathen. On its north side it was bounded by Lebanon and Syria; on the south by Samaria; on the west by Phoenicia; and on the east by the river Jordan. Josephus represents the whole country as being in his time fruitful and exceedingly populous, there being in the lesser towns fifteen thousand inhabitants. Nazareth was one of the small cities of Lower Galilee, lying westward of Mount Tabor. The place is said to contain now about three thousand inhabitants. The valley on the western slope of which it stands is described as being still a very beautiful and fertile spot, fifteen barren mountains rising in a circle—as round the edge of a shell—to guard it from intrusion. In our Lord's time it had sunk very low indeed. (See Section XIV. Note 1.)

(2) *Espoused.*] It was common among the Jews, after a woman had been betrothed, for her husband not to take her home or celebrate the nuptials immediately. (See Gen. xxiv. 55; Deut. xx. 7; Judg. xiv. 8.)

(3) *And the Virgin's name was Mary.*] This name signifies "Exalted." It is the same with the Hebrew name of *Miriam*, Aaron's sister, while that of *Elizabeth* is the same with that of *Elishaba*, Aaron's wife.

(4) *Thou shalt call His name Jesus.*] This name, which signifies "God the Saviour," or "the

Salvation of God," corresponds with the name of Emmanuel,—that is, "God with us,"—in the celebrated prediction of Isaiah (vii. 14), to which no doubt allusion is made here. Jesus is a Greek corruption of *Joshua*, a name which had before been borne by two eminent men, both types of the divine and true Joshua. The first was the son of Nun, the friend and successor of Moses, who led the chosen people to the earthly Canaan, and gave them rest from their enemies; a rest which St. Paul calls a figure of that rest which yet remaineth in heaven (the true Canaan) for the people of God. The other Joshua was the son of Josedek, who was High-priest on the return from the Captivity; several prophecies are addressed to him by Haggai and Zechariah, who call him "the Branch," as typical of Jesus.

Although our blessed Lord has many names which command our reverence, that of "Jesus," or *Saviour*, is to us higher than any, pre-eminently claiming our gratitude. That it might in all ages be honoured as it deserved, St. Paul tells us, that the Father had decreed, that "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow." (Phil. ii. 10.) The other usual name, that of "Christ," (equivalent to the Hebrew *Messiah*), is chiefly used as our Lord's official designation, meaning one who is "Anointed." It is perhaps better to employ the name of *Jesus* when we would draw attention to the Salvation which He has wrought for us, and that of *Christ* when we would dwell upon His dignity and claims to obedience as our King: and to those who have the faintest notions of His excellence and their infinite obliga-

because He is to be the Divine SAVIOUR of mankind. He shall be beyond all conception great, and shall be called (shall be) the Son of the Highest;<sup>b</sup> and the Lord God shall give unto Him that *Spiritual Kingdom typified* by the throne of David, His earthly father,—to whose Seed the memorable promise of an everlasting Kingdom was made. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob (His peculiar Church and people) for ever; and, while all other empires shall successively be dissolved, of His Kingdom there shall be no end.<sup>c</sup>

Then said Mary unto the Angel, How shall this be, seeing that I am a virgin and know not a man? And, as she spoke this in a surprise which was but natural at so strange an event, and not like Zacharias in any spirit of unbelief, the Angel graciously answered, and said unto her; “The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth” (Jer. xxxi. 22), for the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow (exert its Omnipotent energy over) thee: therefore, also, that Holy Thing (that Holy Progeny) which shall be born of thee shall be truly called the Son of God. And behold, to assure thee of the fulfilment of this promise, thy cousin Elizabeth,<sup>(b)</sup> she hath also, through the favour and miraculous interposition of God, already conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month of pregnancy with her who was commonly called barren. Doubt not thou therefore; for, as it was said in rebuke of the incredulous Sarah, with God nothing shall be impossible.<sup>d</sup>

And Mary said, Behold the unworthy handmaid of the Lord,—perfectly resigned to the Almighty will: be it unto me according to thy word.—And the Angel departed from her.

Now to Him, these names, whether taken together or separately, sound too familiar from their resemblance to ordinary names and surnames, unless accompanied by the title of *Our Lord*.

*Overshadow.*] There is an elegant metaphor in this word. The power of God, by which He guards and protects His people is frequently compared in Scripture to a shadow (Pa. lvii. 1; xci. 1); but it appears in this passage to have another and peculiar meaning:—The operation of the Holy Spirit was secret, as though an intervening cloud did not permit it to be beheld by mortal

<sup>b</sup> Jesus, Thou Son of the most High God. Mark v. 7.

Unto which of the angels said God at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son? Heb. i. 6.

<sup>c</sup> When thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy Seed after thee; and I will establish the throne of His kingdom for ever. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne for evermore. Ps. cxxxii. 11, 12.

Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder. Of the increase of His government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, from henceforth even for ever. Is. ix. 6, 7.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Dan. vii. 14.

Unto the Son, God saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Heb. i. 8.

<sup>d</sup> And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard for the Lord? Gen. xviii. 13, 14.

All things are possible to him that believeth. Mark ix. 23.

eye. In the performance of miracles, God withholds the manner of His proceedings; and that which He manifestly chooses to conceal from us must be submissively viewed on our part with silent seriousness and adoration.

(<sup>c</sup>) *Thy cousin Elizabeth.*] They were kinswomen by the mother's side, Elizabeth being a descendant of Aaron by her paternal line. Heiresses of the family of the priesthood were alone forbidden to marry into another tribe; and it appears that the families of Aaron and David had frequently intermarried.



## SECTION V.

## MARY VISITS ELIZABETH.

*Luke i. 39—56.*

<sup>a</sup> Hebron, in the hill country of Judah. Josh. xxi. 11.

AND Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country<sup>a</sup> with haste, into *Hebron*, a city of *Juda*,<sup>(1)</sup> to visit her kinswoman *Elizabeth*, whose miraculous conception the Angel had announced. And having arrived there, she entered into the house of *Zacharias*, and saluted *Elizabeth*.

<sup>b</sup> As He spake, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee. Luke xi. 27.

And it came to pass, that when *Elizabeth* heard the salutation of *Mary*, the babe, moved by a Divine impulse, leaped, as it were, in her womb; and *Elizabeth* was immediately filled with the Holy Ghost (with the Spirit of Prophecy), and she spake with a loud voice, and, saluting *Mary* in the very words of the Angel, said, Blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the holy fruit of thy womb!<sup>b</sup> And whence is this honour done to me, that the Mother of my Lord should deign to come to me, as a guest under my humble roof? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And truly blessed is she that believed, — a worthy daughter of faithful *Abraham*, and staggering not at the promises of God; for there shall assuredly be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

And *Mary*, confirmed the more in her belief by these inspiring words, broke forth into a transport of holy joy, and said:—

“My soul, with its utmost powers, doth magnify and praise the Lord;”<sup>(2)</sup> and my spirit hath rejoiced in God,

(1) *Into a city of Juda.*] The city of *Hebron*, which is no doubt here referred to, was given to the children of *Aaron* the priest (Josh. xxi. 13); and after the Captivity, the priests returned to their heritage. There *Abraham* had his first land, *David* his first crown; and it was suitable that the Saviour's forerunner should be born at a place which on many other accounts had been so celebrated. No traces now remain of its ancient glory. Earthquakes and wars, pestilence and famine have passed over it; and a small town of white houses, compactly built on the side of the mountain, a mosque and two minarets, are all that mark the ancient city of *Hebron*. The inhabitants consist chiefly of seven or eight hundred Arab families, and are reckoned the most lawless and desperate in the Holy Land.

(2) *My soul doth magnify the Lord.*] The admirable Hymn commencing with these words will be familiar as incorporated into the Evening Service of our Church. The Hebrews were accustomed thus to express their joy or affliction

in irregular hymns without metre. Many of the phrases employed on this occasion are taken from the Old Testament; and the circumstance is one collateral proof that the Old and New Testaments are from the same Spirit of Inspiration; it also shews that the mind of the Virgin was deeply impressed with the language and sentiments of Scripture: her hymn resembles in particular that of *Hannah*, the mother of *Samuel* (1 Sam. ii. 1, &c.), in which the blessed fruit of the Virgin's womb is first celebrated by a woman, and under the title of Messiah, or King: there is, however, this striking difference, that *Hannah*, in the fulness of her triumph, dwells on her aggrandisement, while *Mary* thinks chiefly of the lowliness of her condition.—It is remarkable that two of the sentiments expressed in this Hymn, as illustrative of the Divine Power, are found in a heathen writer. *Seneca* says, with *St. Luke* (i. 51), *Sequitur superbos Ulter a tergo Deus; and again* (at i. 52), *Qui regna misericis donat, et celsis rapit.*

“—*who is my Saviour,<sup>c</sup> as He is the Saviour of all man-kind. For He hath favourably regarded the low estate (the mean condition) of His handmaiden: for behold from henceforth, not thou or my contemporaries alone, but all future generations shall call me blessed (shall pronounce me truly happy among women). For He, that is beyond conception Mighty, hath done to me great and unheard of things,<sup>d</sup> and Holy is His name.<sup>e</sup> And His mercy is ever shewed from generation to generation (descending even to children’s children) on them that fear Him;<sup>f</sup> for in me hath He now eminently rewarded the piety of David, my illustrious forefather. Likewise His power is seen in His wonderful dispensations; for thus ‘He hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty’ (1 Cor. i. 27): He hath shewed strength with His arm;<sup>g</sup> (<sup>h</sup>) He hath scattered (utterly discomfited) the proud in the vain imagination of their hearts; He hath put down the mighty from their seats (deposing even princes from their thrones), and exalted them of low degree.<sup>h</sup> He hath filled the hungry, and such as implicitly trust to His gracious Providence, with all good things<sup>i</sup> needful for them; and the arrogant, self-satisfied rich He hath stripped of their possessions, and sent them empty away:<sup>k</sup> in like manner will the Almighty Father watch over and cherish those who hunger after righteousness, while the self-righteous He utterly rejects.—To His own peculiar people He hath been ever gracious; and now by fulfilling the great promise of a Saviour He hath especially holpen (succoured) His servant Israel,<sup>l</sup> in remembrance of His mercy to Abraham and to his seed for ever, as He spake to our fathers.”*

And Mary abode with her *kinswoman* about three months, and then returned to her own house in *Nazareth*.

grass, the rich shall pass away. Jas. i. 10.

<sup>1</sup> He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel. Ps. xcvi. 8.

<sup>c</sup> My soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in His salvation. Ps. xxxv. 9.

I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Hab. iii. 18.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord hath done great things for us. Ps. cxvi. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Holy and reverend is His name. Ps. cxi. 9.

<sup>f</sup> Showing mercy unto thousands. Exod. xx. 6.

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children’s children. Ps. ciii. 17.

<sup>g</sup> Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord. Is. li. 9.

The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations. Is. lii. 10.

<sup>h</sup> The Lord raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of glory. 1 Sam. ii. 8.

To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted. Job v. 11.

Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly; but the proud He knoweth afar off. Ps. cxxxviii. 6.

<sup>i</sup> They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Ps. xxxiv. 10.

He filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Ps. cvii. 9.

<sup>k</sup> He that trusteth in his riches shall fall. Prov. xi. 28.

As the flower of the

(<sup>2</sup>) *He hath shewed strength with His arm.* ] The arm is the chief symbol of strength in Scripture, by which God is said to avenge Himself. Thus, in the display of the Egyptian wonders, the smaller plagues, such as that of the lice, are said to be wrought by the *finger* of God (Exod. viii. 19); some of the greater miracles by His *hand* (Exod. iii. 20), but the utter discomfiture of

Pharaoh and all his host, “by the greatness of His arm” (Exod. xv. 16).—In the passage of the text which follows this, “He hath put down the mighty,” &c., there may be an allusion to the exaltation to the throne of Mary’s great ancestor David, he being taken from the sheepfold, while Saul was deposed and completely overthrown in battle.

## SECTION VI.

## ELIZABETH BEARS A SON, WHO IS NAMED JOHN; AND ZACHARIAS PROPHESES.

*Luke i. 57—80.*

**N**OW Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son, *according to the prediction of the Angel*. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her, *in giving her a child after so long a period of barrenness*: and they *congratulated and rejoiced* with her.

\* And Abraham circumcised his son ISAAC, being eight days old, as God commanded him. Gen. xxi 4.

And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came, *as the Law required*, to circumcise,\* *and, as was customary at the same time, to name the child*. And they called (*were about to call*) him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother, *having understood beforehand from her husband what was the command given by the Angel*, answered (*addressed them*) and said, *It must not be so, but he shall be called John*. And they said unto her, *But there is none of thy kindred that is called by this name*. And they made signs to his father *to ascertain* how he would have him called. And he asked *by signs* for a writing-table,<sup>(1)</sup> and wrote, saying (*wrote these words*), His name is John. And they marvelled all, *for they knew not that it had been already so determined by the Angel*.

And *the period, during which Zacharias was to continue dumb, having now expired with the naming of the child*, immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue *became loosed*, and he spake *plain*; and, *as the first and most fitting employment of his restored faculty, he praised God,—acknowledging his sin and the justice of his punishment*. And fear (*religious awe*) came on all that dwelt round about them; and all these sayings *and remarkable events* were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all they that heard them *treated them not as matters of ordinary intelligence, but laid them up in their hearts, saying one to another, What manner of child shall this be (what sort of man will this child become), whose birth has been so extraordinary?*

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

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath *once*

(1) *A writing-table.*] This is supposed to denote the small square writing-board whitened over, or smeared with wax, on which the Ancients, not having the use of paper, were accustomed to write. Such a contrivance is said to

be even now used in the East. The instrument employed for writing was an iron pen or style, by which characters were marked on the soft material covering the table.

“again mercifully visited and redeemed His people,<sup>b</sup> and hath at length raised up for us an Horn of Salvation<sup>(\*)</sup> (a mighty royal Saviour) in the house of His servant David, as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began;<sup>c</sup> namely, That we should be saved, as from our temporal, so from our spiritual enemies, Sin, and Death, and Satan, and from the hand of all that hate us.<sup>d</sup> And this will He now fulfil, in order to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant,—confirmed by the oath which He sware to our father Abraham,<sup>e</sup>—that unto us,<sup>f</sup> the heirs of the Promise, He would grant, that we, being delivered without fear out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him, walking in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.

“And thou, my highly-favoured child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord Jesus, to prepare His ways,<sup>g</sup> as it has been foretold of thee by the Prophets: to give unto His people knowledge of Salvation,—no longer attainable by the righteousness of the Law, but—by the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the Day Spring,—the dawning which precedes the “Rising Sun of Righteousness” (Mal. iv. 2),—hath already visited us, to give light from on high to them that, as prisoners in a dungeon, sit in spiritual darkness and in the shadow of death<sup>h</sup>—to guide our feet, as those of benighted travellers waiting for the dawn, into the way of safety and peace.”

And the child John grew, and the hand of the Lord was with him:<sup>i</sup> and he waxed strong in spirit, increasing daily in wisdom as in stature; and was there in the deserts (the hill country), devoutly meditating and preparing for his work, till the day of his shewing himself unto Israel and entering upon his public ministry.

<sup>b</sup> The Lord visited the children of Israel, and looked upon their affliction. Exod. iv. 31.

<sup>c</sup> And the Lord God said unto the serpent, The Seed of the woman shall bruise thy head. Gen. iii. 14, 15.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper; in His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. Jer. xxiii. 6, 6.

<sup>d</sup> He saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. Ps. cvi. 10.

<sup>e</sup> I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember. Lev. xxvi. 42.

<sup>f</sup> I will establish My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. Gen. xvii. 7.

<sup>g</sup> The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Isa. xl. 3.

Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me. Mal. iii. 1.

<sup>h</sup> The people that walked in darkness have seen a Great Light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the Light shined. Isa. ix. 2.

<sup>i</sup> And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. Judg. xiii. 24.

(\*) *An Horn of Salvation.*] The strength of beasts is in their horns, and hence the sacred writers, when they would speak of great strength, make use of this metaphor (see Ps. lxxv. 10; Jer. xlvi. 25).—Next it imports honour and triumph, as when the horn is “exalted” (Ps. lxxv. 4; lxxxix. 24).—From the union of these, it comes to signify, as it does here, *Regal Power* (Zech. i. 18, 19; Dan. vii. 24; Rev. xiii. 1).—The Horn of Salvation in the house of David especially denotes the Kingdom of Christ (Ps. xviii. 2; cxxxii. 17).

(\*) *The Day Spring.*] Many Commentators understand the Messiah Himself to be intended by this expression—for which interpretation some forcible arguments might be adduced; but it seems to apply here with a more striking propriety to the Baptist,—that Dawning Light which had already appeared to the Jews. (Consult John i. 7–9; v. 35).—This view of the passage is adopted by some able foreign commentators, and by Bentley, Parkhurst, and Bowyer among our own critics.

## SECTION VII.

## AN ANGEL INFORMS JOSEPH OF THE MIRACULOUS AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF HIS VIRGIN BRIDE.

*Matt. i. 18—25.*

**N**OW the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise (*in the manner following*):—When as (*Namely*) His mother Mary was espoused (*contracted in marriage*) to Joseph, and before they came (*cohabited*) together, she was found with child, *by the miraculous power* of the Holy Ghost *overshadowing her*. Then Joseph her husband<sup>(1)</sup> being a just<sup>a</sup> man (*observant of the Law*), but on the other hand of *merciful disposition* and not willing to make her a public example *by exposing her sin*, was minded (*was inclined*) to put her away privily<sup>b</sup> *in the manner prescribed by the Law,—that is, by giving her a bill of divorcement, without assigning any cause, in the presence of two witnesses.*

But while he thought *within himself* on these things, *for he would not proceed hastily*, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream,—*in the manner of the Divine communications to God's prophets and people of old*,—saying, Joseph, thou son (*descendant*) of David, fear not, *from any doubts of her purity*, to take unto thee Mary thy wife, *but receive her at once from her parents into thine house*; for that which is conceived in her is *begotten by the miraculous energy* of the Holy Ghost.<sup>c</sup> And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS, for He shall SAVE<sup>d</sup> His people from *both the punishment and the dominion* of their sins.<sup>(2)</sup>

Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled<sup>(3)</sup> which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet (*so that that was made good which was spoken by the Holy Spirit through the prophet Isaiah, ch. vii. v. 14,*) *seven hundred and forty years before*, saying, BEHOLD A VIRGIN (*the Virgin*,

<sup>a</sup> And they sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men: and they asked Him, Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Cæsar? Luke xx. 20—22.

He is just to forgive us our sins. 1 John i. 9.

<sup>b</sup> When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. Deut. xxiv. 1.

<sup>c</sup> When He cometh into the world, He saith, A body hast THOU prepared Me. Heb. x. 6.

<sup>d</sup> There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12.

<sup>1</sup> (*Her husband.*) So was the bridegroom called during the space of time which usually intervened between the espousals and the nuptials (see Section IV. Note 2). Such, however, was the strict nature of this engagement, that unfaithfulness to each other was considered as adultery, and, upon proof of guilt, the punishment was lapidation (Deut. xxii. 23, &c.)

<sup>(2)</sup> *He shall save His people from their sins.*] A short but a very weighty phrase. By our Lord's *people* is clearly meant *all* the faithful, whether Jews or Gentiles (Isa. liii. 11; John vi. 37). The name of "Saviour" having been hitherto appropriated by the Jews to such as delivered them from their enemies, is here applied by the Angel in a *spiritual* sense to correct, at the very commencement of the New Kingdom,

the idea of a *temporal* Messiah. So at Acts v. 31.—The words in the text should always remind us of our salvation, not only from the *consequences* of sin, but from its *slavery*: the influence of the Spirit of Christ is to lead on believers to personal holiness; and sanctification, as well as justification, must be considered as implied in the Gospel-Covenant.

<sup>(3)</sup> *That it might be fulfilled.*] It must not be supposed that predicted events accomplished in the Gospel were *decreed* by God. What the Prophets had predicted was indeed certain to come to pass; but such events did not happen because they were foretold; they were for the wisest reasons foretold, because it was foreseen that they would happen.

“whose Seed should bruise the Serpent’s head”) SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BRING FORTH A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME (*His name shall be called, i. e., He shall be*) EMMANUEL,<sup>(4)</sup> which being interpreted is, GOD WITH US.

Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, *for he doubted not that the message was from God*; and *he forthwith took home unto him Mary his wife, and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born Son.*<sup>(5)</sup>

## SECTION VIII.

JOSEPH AND MARY GO TO BETHLEHEM IN JUDEA, WHERE THE HOLY CHILD IS BORN.

*Luke ii. 1—7.*

AND it came to pass in those days,—*soon after the birth of John*,—that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus<sup>a</sup> <sup>(1)</sup> that all the world <sup>(2)</sup> should be taxed (*the Roman emperor issued an edict that the whole population of the empire should be enrolled for the purpose of assessment*). And this taxing<sup>b</sup> (*the assessment itself*) was first made when Cyrenius, *eleven years after*, was governor

<sup>a</sup> When Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept that I might send him to Cæsar. Acts xxv. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the taxing. Acts v. 37.

(4) *Emmanuel.*] It is no objection that Christ was not called by this name, if He was actually “*God with us.*” The Hebrew verb rendered “*shall be called*” commonly signifies “*shall be.*” With respect to the famous prophecy here referred to (Isa. vii. 10–16), the sign which it speaks of does not necessarily relate to a child born in the time of Ahaz, for the promise of a sign was not made to him who distinctly *refused* to ask a sign, but to the house of David at that time endangered. The Evangelist cites no more of it than that part which relates to the miraculous birth of Christ, and which is addressed in the plural number to the house of David, assuring them in effect that the promises to their fathers should be fulfilled. What follows afterwards of the prophecy relates to Isaiah’s son, and is addressed in the singular number to Ahaz to support him in his immediate distress.

(5) *Her first-born Son.*] The expression *first-born* (which the Coptic Version,—one of great value and antiquity,—omits here) does not determine whether Mary had more children or not, but it is sometimes employed where there was *only one* child. The suffrage of Antiquity for the most part decides that the Virgin had *not* any other children. We find our Lord consigning her at His death (as though she had none to whom she had a right to look for maintenance), to the care of the beloved disciple. The words “*knew her not, till &c.*” do not

necessarily imply Joseph’s knowledge of her afterwards. Compare 1 Sam. xv. 35. This point, however, is one of those into which we need not particularly enquire. And we may best conclude, with Basil, that “*though it was necessary for the completion of Prophecy, that Mary should continue a Virgin until she had brought forth her first-born Son, yet what she was afterwards need not be determined, as it is of no manner of concern to the mystery.*”

(1) *Cæsar Augustus.*] This was Octavianus, the nephew of Julius Cæsar. When he succeeded to the empire, he took the name of Augustus (that is, *august* or “*honourable*”), as a compliment to his own greatness. Judea was tributary to Rome, and he ordered this Census to be taken, for registering the *population*, preparatory to taxation.

(2) *All the world.*] This expression is often used in a *confined* sense by those later Greek writers, who, like the Jews, were subjects of the Roman empire: and the writers of the New Testament following the example of the *politer* writers of the time, *may* be only alluding here (as some think) to Palestine, and we find them doing so elsewhere when using the same expression (see Matt. iv. 8; Acts xi. 28; Rom. iv. 13). It appears, however, from history, that a Census of the *whole* Roman empire was taken about this time.

of Syria.<sup>(1)</sup> And all *the Jews* went to be taxed, every one into his own city, *for there the records of each family were kept.*

\* But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me, that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Mic. v. 2.

<sup>d</sup> Hath not the Scripture said. That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem where David was? John vii. 42.

And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite. 1 Sam. xvii. 68.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem,<sup>c</sup> (4)—because he was of the house and lineage of David,<sup>d</sup>—to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being *now* great with child. And so it was *providentially brought to pass* that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son and wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes, and laid Him in a manger<sup>(5)</sup> *of the nearest stable or out-building*, because, *from the great influx of persons who had come to be enrolled*, there was no room for them in the inn.

## SECTION IX.

### LEGAL GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST.

(FROM ABRAHAM, THE LEGAL ANCESTOR OF JESUS, DOWN TO JOSEPH, HIS REPUTED FATHER.)

*Matt. i. 1—17.*

\* This is the book of the generations of Adam. Gen. v. 1.

<sup>b</sup> Jesus asked them saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. Matt. xxii. 41, 42.

Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the Seed of David according to the flesh. Rom. i. 3.

<sup>c</sup> And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of Heaven, and said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, . . . . In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Gen. xxii. 16—18.—To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one; and to thy Seed, which is Christ. Gal. iii. 16.

**T**HE Book of the generation<sup>a</sup> (*the genealogy*) of Jesus Christ, the Son (*descendant*) of David,<sup>b</sup> the son of Abraham<sup>c</sup> *to whom the promises were first made.*

Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; and Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab (*Boaz of Rahab*); and Booz

(<sup>1</sup>) *Syria.*] The exact bounds of ancient Syria have never been determined, but such was the general name for the country north of Palestine, which lay between the Euphrates on the east, the Mediterranean on the west, Mount Taurus on the north, and Arabia on the south. The region *now* called Syria includes Palestine.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Bethlehem.*] Prophecy had declared that Christ was to come "out of Bethlehem of Judaea." This village, seated on a hill, six miles from Jerusalem, was formerly called Bethlehem Ephrata or Ephrath (Gen. xxxv. 19), and afterwards Bethlehem Judah, to distinguish it from another place of the name in Galilee (Josh. xix. 15). That Bethlehem Judah and Bethlehem Ephrata were the *same*, appears from comparing Ruth i. 1, with Ruth iv. 11.—However improbable it might seem that the Saviour should be born at a distance of fifty miles (or about three days' journey) from the abode of Joseph at Nazareth, the event was providentially brought

about by this enrolment. Another prophecy, by the dying Jacob (Gen. xlix. 10), was thus verified, for the enrolment being made by order of a *foreign* potentate, proved that the Sceptre *had* departed from Judah, and that the full time had arrived for "Shiloh" to appear. Bethlehem now appears as a confused and irregular pile of white buildings; but the Christian convent there is one of the largest and finest in the Holy Land.

(<sup>5</sup>) *A manger.*] The spot on which our Saviour was born appears to have been a place of accommodation attached to the inn, either for cattle to stand in, or for the poorer sort of lodgers. From the nature of the country it *may* have been (as some suppose) a cave. Justin Martyr, born himself in that country, and living sufficiently near the time to know the fact, informs us that the inn, with this its place of accommodation, was then standing, and that it was situated in the suburbs without the town.

begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the King.

And David the King begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias (*Uriah the Hittite*); and Solomon begat Roboam (*Rehoboam*); and Roboam begat Abia (*Abijah*); and Abia begat Asa; and Asa begat Josaphat (*Jehoshaphat*); and Josaphat begat Joram (*Jehoram*); and Joram begat Ozias (*Uzziah*); and Ozias begat Joatham (*Jotham*); and Joatham begat Achaz (*Ahaz*); and Achaz begat Ezekias (*Hezekiah*); and Ezekias begat Manasses (*Manasseh*); and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias (*Josiah*); and Josias begat Jechonias or *Jehoiachin* and his brethren about the time they were carried away captive to Babylon.<sup>d</sup>

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel (*Zerubabel*), *the restorer of their Commonwealth*; and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat Sadoc (*Zadok*); and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary,—of whom was born JESUS,<sup>(1)</sup> who is called, *and is, the Christ*.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.<sup>(2)</sup>

(FROM MARY THE MOTHER OF JESUS UP TO ADAM.)

Luke iii. 23—38.

JESUS,—being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, which was the son *in law* of Heli;<sup>(3)</sup> which was the son of

(<sup>1</sup>) *Of whom was born Jesus.*] In this instance alone St. Matthew avoids using the term "begat" which is invariably employed before. St. Luke also, it will be seen, takes care to insert a qualifying clause, when giving the lineage of Mary.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Fourteen generations.*] It was a practice of the Jews to *equalize* similar things; and it appears to arise from the wish of St. Matthew to arrange the genealogy in divisions of fourteen generations each, that he has omissions (as between Jehoram and Uzziah, and of Jehoiakim after Josiah); contenting himself only with those descents which are most distinguished, or more requisite to notice. The first and third divisions consist of *private* persons; the intermediate one of *Sovereigns*.—There is no doubt that both this Evangelist and St. Luke copied from the Public Records which were then kept. For the complete correctness of those documents *they* are clearly not responsible, and their only object was to shew

that Jesus of Nazareth was descended *from Abraham and through David*. Between their relative statements no discrepancies were ever urged by the *early* enemies of Christianity, bitter and persevering though they were.

(<sup>3</sup>) *The son of Heli.*] The father of Mary having no son, her husband is here reckoned to *him*, for it was not the Jewish custom to trace pedigrees through a female. Among the Greeks and Romans, however, it was customary so to do, and St. Luke, writing chiefly for Gentiles, adopts it; likewise their custom of *ascending* from the person whose lineage is given up to the founder of his race.—Since Jesus was only as it were the step-son of Joseph, or son of his betrothed bride, it was very important to show that Mary was *also* descended from David: equally so to show to the Gentiles that the common Saviour of all men was "the Seed of the woman" promised to our first parents.



Matthat; which was the son of Levi; which was the son of Melchi; which was the son of Janna; which was the son of Joseph; which was the son of Mattathias; which was the son of Amos; which was the son of Naum (*Nahum*); which was the son of Esli (*Eli*); which was the son of Nagge (*Naggia*); which was the son of Maath; which was the son of Mattathias; which was the son of Semei (*Shimei*); which was the son of Joseph; which was the son of Juda; which was the son of Joanna; which was the son of Rhesa; which was the son of Zerobabel (*Zerubbabel*); which was the son of Salathiel; which was the son of Neri; which was the son of Melchi; which was the son of Addi; which was the son of Cosam; which was the son of Elmodam; which was the son of Er; which was the son of Jose (*Joses*); which was the son of Eliezer; which was the son of Jorim; which was the son of Matthat; which was the son of Levi; which was the son of Simeon; which was the son of Juda; which was the son of Joseph; which was the son of Jonan; which was the son of Eliakim; which was the son of Melea; which was the son of Menan (*Mainon*); which was the son of Matatha (*Mattathias*); which was the son of Nathan; which was the son of David—

Which was the son of Jesse; which was the son of Obed; which was the son of Booz (*Boaz*); which was the son of Salmon; which was the son of Naasson; which was the son of Aminadab; which was the son of Aram; which was the son of Esrom; which was the son of Phares; which was the son of Juda; which was the son of Jacob; which was the son of Isaac; which was the son of Abraham—

Which was the son of Thara (*Terah*); which was the son of Nachor (*Nahor*); which was the son of Saruch (*Serug*); which was the son of Ragau; which was the son of Phalec (*Peleg*); which was the son of Heber; which was the son of Sala; which was the son of Cainan; which was the son of Arphaxad; which was the son of Sem (*Shem*); which was the son of Noe (*Noah*); which was the son of Lamech; which was the son of Mathusala (*Methusaleh*); which was the son of Enoch; which was the son of Jared; which was the son of Maleleel (*Mahaleleel*); which was the son of Cainan; which was the son of Enos; which was the son of Seth; which was the son of Adam; which was the son of GOD.\*

\* In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him. Gen. v. 1.

## SECTION X.

THE INFANT SAVIOUR IS ANNOUNCED TO JEWISH SHEPHERDS, WHO PAY HIM HOMAGE.

*Luke ii. 8—20.*

AND there were in the same country, *near to Bethlehem*, a shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch *in turns* over their flock by night.<sup>(1)</sup> And lo, the angel of the Lord *suddenly* came upon (*stood by*) them; and the Glory of the Lord<sup>a</sup> (*the brilliant light of the Shechinah*) shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you Good Tidings,—*a cause* of great joy which shall be *occasioned* to all people. For unto you is born this day in *Bethlehem*, the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord.<sup>b</sup> And this shall be a sign unto you *by which to know Him*: ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes (*swathed*), and lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was, *in company* with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host,<sup>(2)</sup> praising God and saying, *The Good Will*<sup>c</sup> toward men *shewn in the Incarnation of Christ is* Glory to God<sup>d</sup> in the highest heavens, and *the foundation of Peace*<sup>e</sup> on earth.

And it came to pass, *as soon* as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this *wonderful* thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath *so graciously* made known unto us. And they came *thither* with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger *as the angel had described Him to them*. And when they had seen it, and had paid

<sup>a</sup> The priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the Glory of the Lord had filled the House of the Lord. 1 Kings viii. 11.

<sup>b</sup> Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. ii. 11.

<sup>c</sup> God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. John iii. 16.

<sup>d</sup> In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world. 1 John iv. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. iii. 21.

<sup>f</sup> His name shall be the Prince of Peace. Isa. ix. 6.

<sup>g</sup> We have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1.

(1) *Keeping watch over their flock by night.*] Bethlehem lay on the confines of the Desert of Judea, and, when the season permitted, and pasture was to be found, flocks were fed there in great numbers (see 1 Sam. xvii. 28). This circumstance of sheep being out at night would render the winter season an unlikely period of the year for our Lord's birth. Also the taking of the Census would then be inconvenient, and the close of the year has not been usually selected for such a purpose. The most correct supposition at which learned men have been able to arrive is, that the event took place about the vernal equinox, which was it appears the season when Moses, the greatest prototype of Christ in the Old Testament, was born. As a more exact date of our Lord's birth, the 10th or the 11th of the Jewish spring month of Nisan has been conjectured, answering to the 5th or 6th of April, in the 4709th year of the Julian period. Although the precise date of the Saviour's birth has not been positively

ascertained, the whole Christian world have properly agreed to commemorate it on the same day, and from very early times that commemorative day has been the 25th of December.

(2) *A multitude of the heavenly host.*] The doctrine of the ministry of Angels has ever been held in the Church; and it cannot but be a consolatory reflection to the believer, that Angelic beings are around us, watching over us for good, and fulfilling the wisdom of Divine Providence. Angels are mentioned as early as at the Creation (Gen. iii. 24): they were repeatedly manifested during the patriarchal and the prophetic ages: and here, when, after an interval, God again visits His people, they are employed to usher in the New Covenant.—These Angelic beings are to be once more visible in their thousands of thousands, when the whole assembled Universe shall be summoned before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

*religious homage to the infant Saviour, they made known abroad (they published throughout the entire neighbourhood) the saying which was told them by the angel concerning this Child. And all they that heard it greatly wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds: but Mary kept in mind all these things which were said and done respecting her Child,—for they were more to her than subjects of passing astonishment; and she pondered (anxiously revolved) them in her heart.*

And the shepherds returned to their occupation, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, *exactly* as it was told unto them by the angel.

## SECTION XI.

THE CHILD IS CIRCUMCISED, AND NAMED JESUS. THE SONG OF SIMEON UPON HIS PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE, AND THE TESTIMONY OF ANNA THE PROPHETESS CONCERNING HIM AS THE EXPECTED REDEEMER.

*Matt. i. 25. Luke ii. 21—39.*

\* In the eighth day a man child shall be circumcised. Lev. xii. 3.

Jesus Christ;—a Minister of the Circumcision. Rom. xv. 8.

† If a woman have born a man child, she shall be unclean seven days . . . . . and she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days. Lev. xii. 2, 4.

• The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant. Mal. iii. 1.

AND when the eight days required by the Law were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child,<sup>a</sup> (<sup>1</sup>) that rite was performed that He might be duly initiated into the Church; and His name was called JESUS, which was so named (*which was the name given*) of the Angel before He was conceived in the womb.

And when the forty days of her (*of their, Gr.*) Purification<sup>b</sup> (<sup>2</sup>) according to the Law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him in the Temple to the Lord,<sup>c</sup>—as it is written in the Law of the Lord, EVERY MALE<sup>(3)</sup> THAT OPENETH THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY (*consecrated*) TO THE LORD (*see Exod.*

(<sup>1</sup>) *The circumcising of the Child.*] Thus did our Lord submit even to this painful and humbling rite; and His title to be the Deliverer of man was significantly written in His own blood only a few days after He was born into the world. The Law required a perfect obedience, and Jesus came to fulfil it in all things, before He abolished any part of it.—Compliance with this particular rite was also needful, in order to obtain a hearing for the Saviour among His scrupulous countrymen, who looked upon every uncircumcised person as unclean.

Our Lord's obedience in this respect plainly suggests to us the propriety, and (when duly received) the efficacy of visible rites and Sacraments: indeed, it may be truly added,—for experience has lamentably shown it,—that the attempt to divest Religion of outward circumstance, and to spiritualize it to the extreme, must end in its gradual enfeebling, and final decay.—Circumcision among the Jews was in-

tended to be emblematical of something far more important; and we are to remember that what this rite was to them, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is to Christians. "*In Christ Jesus Circumcision availeth nothing, but a new creature*" (see Gal. vi. 15). Both were of Divine appointment, and were significative of incorporation into the Church of God; both required faith, and represented purification from the defilements of sin.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Of her (their) Purification.*] Both the mother and child were looked upon for a time after the birth as ceremonially unclean, which the Greek text (according to the greatest number of Versions) here specifies.—After the birth of a female child the mother was required to remain at home eighty days (Lev. xii. 5), during which she was not permitted to frequent the Temple or mix with the congregation.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Every male, &c.*] Great were the privileges annexed from the beginning to the first-

xiii. 2),—and to redeem Him by payment of the five shekels,<sup>d</sup> and also at the same time to offer a sacrifice suitable to their circumstances, according to that which is said and prescribed in the Law of the Lord, A PAIR OF TURTLE-DOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS<sup>e</sup> (<sup>f</sup>) (Lev. xii. 8.)

And behold there was *then living* in Jerusalem a man whose name was Simeon: and the same man was just before men and devout towards God; waiting for the *Advent of Him who should prove* the Consolation of Israel;<sup>f</sup> and the *Divine Influence* of the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost (<sup>g</sup>) that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (*the Great Anointed of Jehovah*).—And he came by *direction of the Holy Spirit* into the Temple: and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him after the custom of the Law, then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed (*praised*) God, and said;—

“Lord, now by *this glorious sight* Thou lettest Thy servant depart *this life* in peace,<sup>g</sup> according to the *promise* of Thy word: for mine eyes have at length seen *Messiah*, Thy Salvation, which Thou hast graciously prepared before the face of (*hast provided for*) all people; *ordaining Him to be* a Light to lighten even the *ignorant* Gentiles, and to be the *peculiar* glory of Thy people Israel.”<sup>h</sup>

And Joseph and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him by *this venerable Saint*. And Simeon blessed them *both*, and said unto Mary His mother: Behold this *Holy Child* is set as an occasion for the fall through unbelief—and for the rising again (*the rising up*) through faith,—of many in Israel;<sup>i</sup> and for a sign which shall be spoken against;<sup>k</sup> for at Him, as a conspicuous mark, many a shaft of calumny shall be directed; yea, a sword of bitter affliction, reflecting from Him upon thee, shall pierce through thy own soul also:<sup>l</sup> and all this shall come to pass that the thoughts of many hearts (*the true characters of mankind*) may be revealed.

<sup>d</sup> The first-born of man shalt thou surely redeem for five shekels. Numb. xviii. 15, 16.

<sup>e</sup> If she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons. Lev. xii. 8.

<sup>f</sup> The Lord has comforted His people: He hath redeemed Jerusalem. Isa. lii. 9.

<sup>g</sup> I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them. Jer. xxxi. 13.

<sup>h</sup> Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, The Lord shall yet comfort Zion. Zech. i. 17.

<sup>i</sup> And Israel said, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face. Gen. xlii. 30.

<sup>j</sup> I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 2 Tim. iv. 6.

<sup>k</sup> He hath remembered His mercy and truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the Salvation of our God. Ps. xcvi. 3.

<sup>l</sup> My Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth. Isa. xlix. 6.

<sup>m</sup> He shall be for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. Isa. viii. 14.

<sup>n</sup> We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

<sup>o</sup> Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself. Heb. xii. 3.

<sup>p</sup> There stood by the Cross of Jesus His mother. John xix. 25.

born. Theirs was the pre-eminence in power and wealth; and, previous to the appointment of the sons of Levi to the service of the Altar, theirs was the priesthood also. After that event, they continued, as before, heirs of a double honour and inheritance; they were still offered in form to God, though redeemed at a certain price from actual attendance on the Sanctuary.

(<sup>1</sup>) A pair of turtle-doves, &c.] By this humble offering Mary proved her “low estate.” Those who could afford more costly offerings were expected to bring a lamb for a burnt-offering, and a pigeon (or turtle-dove) for a sin-offering (Lev. xii. 8).—The five shekels (amounting to about 11s. 6d. of our money) for redemption of the first-born were required from all without

respect to the condition of the family, a fit memorial of that equality which nature has established between all men upon coming into the world.

(<sup>2</sup>) It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost.] The office of Revelation, here and generally assigned to the Holy Spirit, is seen from St. Paul's writings to be common also to the Father and to the Son, thus illustrating the truth of the Trinity:—“God shall reveal even this unto you” (Phil. iii. 15) . . . “I was taught it by the Revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. i. 12).—Simeon plainly addressed the Holy Spirit as the Lord who had spoken to Him, and whose Salvation he had lived to see.

And there was *then at Jerusalem* one Anna, a prophetess to whom revelations of the Divine will had been also made, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years *only from the time of her virginity*; and she was now a widow of about fourscore and four years of age; which departed not from her attendance on the services of the Temple night and day, <sup>m</sup> (°) but served God with public fastings and prayers, *as well as in private*.—And she, coming in that instant, *while Simeon was speaking*, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord for His unspeakable gift of the Holy Child: and to all them in Jerusalem that looked at this memorable time for Redemption, <sup>n</sup> (7) she spake of Him ° as the Person by whom it should be accomplished.

▪ She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 1 Tim. v. 5.

▪ Joseph of Arimathea, which also waited for the Kingdom of God. Mark xv. 43.

• We trusted it had been He which should have redeemed Israel. Luke xxiv. 21.

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

## SECTION XII.

THE EASTERN MAGI SEEK THE NEW-BORN KING: HEROD'S CONDUCT ON THE OCCASION. *Matt. ii. 1—12.*

NOW when Jesus was born (*after the birth of Jesus*) in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the King, behold, *when Joseph and Mary next visited that city*, there came Wise Men<sup>(1)</sup> from the East<sup>a</sup> (*astronomers and dis-*

▪ The wisdom of the children of the East country. 1 Kings iv. 30.

(°) *Night and day.*] This may simply allude to the morning and evening service; but anthems were occasionally sung by the priests during the night-watches (see Ps. cxxxiv. 1), which Anna might attend. The Apostles are in like manner described as being “continually in the Temple,”—that is, regularly attending its public services (see Luke xxiv. 53; Acts i. 13, 14).

(1) *That looked for Redemption.*] Many of the Jews, and some of the Eastern Gentiles in consequence, were at this time looking for the “*Desire of all Nations*,” as the prophet Haggai calls the Messiah. In the vision to the prophet Daniel, the Angel Gabriel had determinately fixed the period of His arrival (Dan. ix. 26, 27); and now too, after an interval of four centuries, Prophecy had begun again to dawn.—*Josephus* and *Philo* both speak of the general expectation of One who was to be “an Universal Sovereign.” Nor are heathen testimonies wanting:—*Suetonius* (in his life of *Vespasian*, c. iv.) mentions that “it was an ancient and constant opinion throughout the East that sovereignty should belong to One coming out of Judea.” *Tacitus* (Hist. lib. v.) says that “many were persuaded that it was recorded in the ancient writings of the priests, that *the East should prevail*,”—a very remarkable expression, which appears to have been taken from the Prophets. *Virgil*, too, in almost the same terms as those used by *Isaiah*, describes the happy reign of a New Progeny from Heaven,—applying, however, this prediction (from the

Oracle of the Sibyl) to a child in whose fortunes the Consul of the day was nearly interested.

(1) *Wise Men.*] These sages would be acquainted with the prophecy of *Daniel*, who had lived among them, and who had foretold this as the particular period of the Saviour's coming. Also *Balaam* was a countryman of their own, and the unusual Light which they saw would remind them of the “*Star*” that was to “rise out of Israel.” This effulgence was clearly not what we call a star (as it descended low enough to indicate a particular house), but was probably the *Shechinah* which appeared to the Jewish shepherds, and which may have been simultaneously seen by the Magi at a distance. These pilgrims were, it is thought, royal persons, for such belonged to the distinguished Society of the Magi: but what is quite certain is, that they were heathens, the first-fruits of us Gentiles. Unto Christ was the gathering of all people to be; and in the humble place of His nativity, He is acknowledged as a King, by a chosen few, first of Jews, and now of Gentiles.—It would appear that a year at the least must have elapsed between this visit and the Birth of Christ. That *Joseph* and *Mary* should, on their next annual visit to Jerusalem (Luke ii. 41), proceed again to Bethlehem is only what we might have expected. There they had kindred, and they might deem it most proper to educate the infant Jesus in the place of His nativity.

*tinguished men of science from Persia or Arabia*) to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have long expected this illustrious Prince and have seen a new and Glorious Light, which must surely be His Star,<sup>b</sup> while we were in the East country, and are come to worship and do Him homage.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>b</sup> There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. Numb. xxiv. 17.

<sup>c</sup> The Gentiles shall come to Thy Light. Isa. lx. 3.

When Herod the King had heard all these remarkable things, he was troubled (*much agitated*), and so was all Jerusalem with him: for being himself an Idumean, he was alarmed at the birth of any rightful heir to the throne; while the people in general dreaded the consequences of the King's tyrannical disposition; and some of them imagined that the reign of the Messiah would commence with a train of calamitous events.—And when he had gathered together in Council all the chief priests and scribes<sup>(1)</sup> of the people,—whose special duty it was to search and explain the Scriptures,—he demanded of them<sup>d</sup> where, according to their Prophecies, the Christ should be born? And they said unto him, He must be born in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the Prophet Micah: AND THOU BETHLEHEM IN THE LAND OF JUDA ART NOT to be reputed THE LEAST AMONG THE PRINCES OF JUDA;<sup>(2)</sup> FOR OUT OF THEE SHALL COME A GOVERNOR THAT SHALL RULE (*shall feed*, Gr.) MY PEOPLE ISRAEL. (*See Mic. v. 2.*)

<sup>d</sup> The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth. Mal. ii. 7.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the Wise Men, inquired of them diligently (*with exactness*) what time the Star first appeared, that he might form some

(1) *All the chief priests and scribes.*] These priests were the heads of the twenty-four courses into which David had divided the Sacerdotal families.—The Scribes were originally transcribers of the Law, but in process of time they explained it also to the people.

(2) *Thou Bethlehem art not the least, &c.*] Although the sense, or main points, (*viz.*, the birth-place of Christ, and the real greatness or dignity of the small town of Bethlehem), are preserved in the citation of this prophecy, a verbal difference appears between the actual wording of the original, and what is here cited by the Evangelist as the reply of the Council. The clause in the Prophet might be read with an interrogation ("Art thou little among the thousands of Judah?"), which is equivalent to a negation; while the reading occurring in the Evangelist was a mode of expression by no means uncommon; for similarly we find a Roman writer describing a man of remarkable wisdom, *Homo minime stultus*. St. Matthew substitutes the word "thousands" for "princes," which the Prophet uses; but this is a plain and simple allusion to the Israelitish custom of dividing their tribes into *thousands*, over which *princes* or *Chiliarchs* presided.

Variations from the text of the Old Testament, similar in kind to this, repeatedly occur

in the New; the reason of which may be generally explained here. The Evangelists appear to have quoted chiefly from the *Septuagint* (a Greek version of great general fidelity), rather than to have translated the Hebrew for themselves; and they would naturally do this, because such a course would be more conciliatory, and more convincing to the Hellenist Jews, who did not understand Hebrew and were already accustomed to the Septuagint.—In case of any quotation in the Gospels differing also from that version, we must remember that we possess only *two* manuscripts of it admitted to carry real authority; and upon the discovery of the Alexandrian, differences were considerably diminished. Neither could the Evangelists be expected to confine themselves servilely to the Greek version; for some of the books are translated into Greek with less accuracy than others, and in that case they would occasionally alter words.—It is not necessary, in quoting a passage, to adhere strictly to the words, if the *sense* be faithfully preserved, for it is *that* which is truly Scripture. It appears that the Jews in general were not particular in quoting the exact words of their Scriptures; a remarkable instance of which occurs at Mark xii. 19, where, not having chapter and verse to refer to as we have, they quote merely *by subject*.

*conjecture as to the age of the Child.* And, *having heard their statement*, he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young Child, and when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I also, *in obedience to the will of Heaven, if such it be*, may come and worship Him.

When they had heard *the commands of the King*, they departed *on their journey*. And lo, the Star, which they saw *when in the East*, went before them till it came and stood over *the spot* where the young Child was. When they saw the Star *so distinctly pointing out the spot of which they were in search* they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.—And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother; and *immediately they fell down and worshipped Him; for they stumbled not in their faith notwithstanding the mean condition in which they found the infant Saviour*. And when they had opened their treasures (*their stores*), they presented unto Him, *as it was customary to do to princes, the choicest gifts<sup>c</sup> of their country; namely, gold of the finest quality, and an odorous substance called frankincense, and myrrh<sup>(4)</sup> used for embalming the dead.*

<sup>c</sup> And the queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices and very much gold. 1 Kings x. 2.

The kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Ps. lxxii. 10.

All they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. Isa. lx. 6.

And *after the Wise Men had paid their homage*, being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another *and more private way*.

### SECTION XIII.

#### THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, AND RETURN TO GALILEE.

*Matt. ii. 13—22.*

**A**ND when they (*the Wise Men*) were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou (*continue*) there until I bring thee word *that thou mayest safely return hither*; for Herod will seek *after the young Child to destroy Him*.

When, *therefore*, he arose *from sleep*, he at once took the young Child and His mother by night,—*so as both to hasten and conceal his flight*,—and departed into Egypt; and he was there until the death of Herod, that it might

(<sup>4</sup>) *Gold and frankincense and myrrh.*] These gifts were products of the country from which they were brought, and this would account for the selection of them; but they have also been thought by some to have an *emblematick* mean-

ing: "gold" being offered to the Saviour in acknowledgment of Him as the eternal King; "incense," as He was God; and "myrrh," as signifying that, although God and King of all, He was still to die as man.

be fulfilled (*so that thus that was made good*) which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet *Hosea*, saying, **OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON.**<sup>(1)</sup> (*See Hos. xi. 1.*)

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked (*deduced*) of the Wise Men *by their not returning*, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth *his officers*, and slew all the *male* children that were in Bethlehem<sup>(2)</sup> and in all the coasts (*in the immediate bounds*) thereof, from two years old (*from those entering the second year*), and *somewhat* under that age, according to the time of the *Star appearing*, concerning which he had *so* diligently inquired of the Wise Men.—Then was fulfilled<sup>(3)</sup> (*then happened what more fully completed*) that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, **IN RAMA WAS THERE A VOICE HEARD, LAMENTATION, AND WEEPING, AND GREAT MOURNING—RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CAPTIVE CHILDREN, AND WOULD NOT BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE TO HER THEY ARE NOT.** (*See Jer. xxxi. 15.*)

But when Herod was dead,—*which happened not long after from a painful and loathsome disease*,—behold an angel of the Lord appeareth *again* in a dream to Joseph, *as he abode still* in Egypt, saying, *Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead*<sup>(4)</sup> which sought the young Child's

(1) *Out of Egypt have I called My Son.*] It appears from Exod. iv. 22, that Israel, the son of God by adoption, was a type of Christ, His Son by generation. The low estate of Israel, when sojourning in Egypt, foreshowed our Lord's dwelling there for a time in poverty and danger; and the calling *out* of that country was made good in the Anti-type, as it had been accomplished in the Type,—but with this remarkable difference, that the land which had been a place of *bondage* to the Israelites, became a *refuge* to their new-born King.—Egypt was a Roman province, but it abounded with Jews (see Jer. xliii. 5, 7). The parents of Jesus would be enabled to bear the expense of this journey (one of sixty miles at least), and of residence (probably for six or seven months) in a foreign land, through the oblations of the eastern sages: while the espousals of Mary with Joseph were the means of raising up for her and the Holy Child a protector in the ordinary course of events.—No other occasion is recorded of our Lord being out of Palestine.

(2) *Slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem.*] This event is mentioned by a heathen author, Macrobius (lib. ii. c. 4); and another writer, Cedrenus, distinguishes Herod by the title of "Child-slayer." The silence of Josephus on the subject does not at all lessen the credit due to this part of the Sacred Narrative, for the Jewish historian wrote ninety-four years after the event, compiling many parts of his history from the *partial* account of Herod's minister Nicolaus.—We may well believe, however, that an historian might omit the slaughter of a few infants (estimated as under twenty) in a small town, when we call to mind the *greater* atrocity

of Herod's *other* barbarous acts. Josephus states that, after murdering his wife's brother at eighteen years of age from political jealousy, and his wife's grandfather (who had saved his life) at the age of eighty, he publicly executed Mariamne herself (the second of his nine wives); and her mother followed soon after. Only five days before his death, and while he lay dangerously ill, he killed his son Antipater from political jealousy, having previously put to death two other of his sons: and when approaching his end, having caused the chief men of the nation to be assembled at Jericho where he lay, and having shut them up in the Circus, he entreated his sister Salome and her husband to let in the soldiers and destroy them all, that so Judea might have some cause to mourn at his death.—The event of the slaughter of the children is not without precedent; for Suetonius relates (August. 94), that the Roman Senate made a decree to expose all boys born that year, being terrified by a Sibylline oracle which had predicted a King to the Romans.

(3) *Then was fulfilled, &c.*] This form is sometimes used when the citation is only an *accommodation*, for that may be truly said to be fulfilled which admits of being properly applied. Such is remarkably the case in the present instance:—Rama, where the conquered Israelites were assembled in chains, was not far from Bethlehem, while Rachel's sepulchre adjoined the town (Gen. xxxv. 19). Her language beautifully expresses the anguish of some of her descendants, mothers of Bethlehem, now deprived so barbarously of *their* children.

(4) *They are dead.*] It is the idiom of the



\* And the Lord said unto Moses, in Midian, Go, return into Egypt, for all the men are dead which sought thy life. Exod. iv. 19.

life.—And so he arose, and took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus—a prince who inherited much of his father's cruelty—did reign<sup>(1)</sup> in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither and visit Bethlehem again. Notwithstanding he did not relinquish the plan of residing in the Holy Land, but being warned of God in a dream what he should do, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee, of which Antipas, another son of Herod, of milder disposition than his brother, had been appointed Tetrarch.

#### SECTION XIV.

JOSEPH AND MARY SETTLE AT NAZARETH. THEY GO UP THENCE TO THE PASSOVER AT JERUSALEM, WHERE JESUS, AT TWELVE YEARS OF AGE, QUESTIONS AND REPLIES TO THE DOCTORS IN THE TEMPLE.

*Matt. ii. 23. Luke ii. 40—52.*

AND he (*Joseph*) came and dwelt in a city, the same in which they abode before, called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken in effect of *Jesus*, by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.<sup>(1)</sup> And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, being filled, child though He was, with an uncommon degree of wisdom; and the Grace of God was upon Him.

Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year, as all pious families were accustomed to do, at the Feast of the Passover.<sup>(2)</sup> And when He was twelve years old,—

Evangelists to use the plural, though speaking of the singular person or thing.—A similar expression to that in the text occurs at Exod. iv. 19, though, as Josephus observes, in that case also it was the jealousy of King Pharaoh alone that led him to seek the destruction of Moses and of the Hebrew children.—Yet the use of the plural here might be justified by fact; for the death of Antipater, the son of Herod, and heir-apparent to the crown, took place only five days before that of his father. They had been united in the government; and though latterly much at variance,—so much so, that Antipater was slain by his father's order,—we might expect him to concur in the destruction of Jesus. He had already aided in procuring the death of his two elder brothers, in order to gain the crown.

(<sup>1</sup>) *That Archelaus did reign.*] The expression "reign" is appropriately used with reference to Archelaus, for his father named him in his will as King.—The title was, indeed, at first refused him, until he had rendered himself worthy of it in the estimation of the Romans: accordingly he ordered his soldiers to attack the Jews during a tumult, and slaughtered three thousand of them,—an event which, confirming

the previous opinion of his cruel disposition, may have probably deterred Joseph from settling in Judea. Archelaus also inherited Samaria and Idumea.—After reigning ten years, he was banished on the petition of his subjects, which event is supposed to be alluded to at Luke xix. 14.

(<sup>1</sup>) *He shall be called a Nazarene.*] This refers, not to any particular prophecy, but to the leading characteristic of various prophecies respecting our Lord (as at Isa. liii. 3). The expression had become about this period a common one for a person much despised; for in fact the wickedness as well as insignificance of Nazareth was proverbial. Nathanael, himself a Galilean, asks, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John i. 46); and the only ground of accusation against St. Paul, "as being a pestilent fellow," was, that he was "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts xxiv. 5).—It is said that, in the East, Christians are still called "Nazarenes."

(<sup>2</sup>) *The Feast of the Passover.*] This principal Feast of the Jews was celebrated to preserve among them the memory of their liberation from Egyptian servitude. The name was given

which was the customary age for admitting young persons into the congregation, they went up to Jerusalem with Him, after the custom of the Feast.<sup>a</sup> (3) And when they had fulfilled the seven days<sup>b</sup> of its duration, as they returned home, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to have been in the advanced company of some neighbours who had travelled with them to the Feast, went forward a day's journey; and, when they had overtaken the party, they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found Him not, they turned back again on the second day to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

And it came to pass that after three days<sup>c</sup> (on the third day) they found Him in an apartment of the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and modestly asking them questions,—as it was customary for learners to do,—respecting the Law and the Prophets. And all that heard Him were astonished at the powers of His understanding, and at His answers,<sup>d</sup> which displayed a spiritual energy to which they were altogether strangers.

And when they (His parents) saw Him employed in this manner, they were amazed; and His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought Thee, sorrowing,—fearful lest some calamity had befallen Thee. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must needs be about My Father's business<sup>e</sup> (at the House of My Heavenly Father)? And they understood not perfectly the saying which He spake unto them.

And He went down from Jerusalem with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject as a dutiful Son unto them.<sup>f</sup> But His mother kept all these sayings and re-

<sup>a</sup> Thy males shall appear before the Lord thy God, in the place where He shall choose, in the feast of unleavened bread. Deut. xvi. 16.

<sup>b</sup> Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread. Exod. xii. 16.

<sup>c</sup> We remember that that deceiver said, After three days I will rise again: command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day. Matt. xxvii. 63, 64.

<sup>d</sup> And they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as One having authority, and not as the scribes. Mark i. 22.

And all wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son? Luke iv. 22.

The officers answered, Never man spake like this Man. John vii. 46.

because the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites without slaying their first-born, while those of the Egyptians were cut off.—For further particulars of this Feast, see Sections CXV., Note 1; CXVI., Note 1.

(3) According to the custom of the Feast.] At this and two other Feasts, which were held only at Jerusalem, all the males, including the "men-children," were expected to appear (Exod. xxiii. 17; xxxiv. 23). It appears to have been customary on this principal occasion to admit young persons, of the present age of Jesus, into communion with the Church, by some ceremony corresponding to Confirmation in our own. We find the sons of Eli, and all the family of Elkannah, in attendance with them at Shiloh at a particular time of sacrifice and public worship (1 Sam. i. 3, 21).

(4) About my Father's business.] The original is an elliptical expression; but the word "business" (or affairs) cannot be so properly substituted as "House," an explanation of our Lord's meaning which has been received from the time of Origen. Josephus (contra Ap.) uses the very

same Greek expression in allusion to the Temple. It is further observable that the words of Mary, to which our Lord here replies, refer not to occupation, but to place.

(5) And was subject unto them.] These words contain the only direct information of our Saviour's early domestic life, and probably they are recorded only because they afford a valuable example of Obedience to parents. That commandment had been made the first of the Second Table, from which the others were to spring—it was the first material of social happiness with which God was to bless His people.—More particular information as to our Lord's early life was clearly not expedient for us, since it has been withheld; and it was the main object of the Evangelists to give an account of His public ministry. It is but indirectly we learn that He had not what is called "a liberal education" (John vii. 15),—although no doubt instructed, as all Jewish children were, in the rudiments of the Law (Deut. vi. 7).—Joseph, his reputed father, was a carpenter (Mark vi. 3); and as every Jew was required to learn

\* And the child grew, and the Lord blessed Him. Judg. xiii. 24.

And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men. 1 Sam. ii. 26.

*markable occurrences in her heart,—piously meditating thereon, and patiently awaiting the result. And Jesus increased more and more in wisdom and in stature, and was in favour with God and man.\**

## SECTION XV.

## JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHES AND BAPTIZES IN THE WASTE COUNTRY OR PLAIN OF THE JORDAN.

*Matt. iii. 1—6. Mark i. 1—6. Luke iii. 1—6.*

\* The Law and the Prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached. Luke xvi. 16.

THE beginning of the Gospel *Dispensation* of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *had its rise in the preaching of John the Baptist*;\* as it is written in the last Book of the prophets, BEHOLD I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE THY FACE, WHICH SHALL PREPARE THY WAY BEFORE THEE (see *Mal. iii. 1*), *preaching the doctrine of Repentance as preparatory to the remission of sins.*

Now in those days, *while Jesus continued yet at Nazareth*; in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar,—*two of those years having been passed in conjunction with Augustus as a colleague*; Pontius Pilate<sup>(1)</sup> being Governor (or Procurator under the Romans) of Judea, for Archelaus had been some time banished; and Herod Antipas being Tetrarch of Galilee;<sup>(2)</sup> and his half-brother Philip, Tetrarch of Iturea on the further side of Jordan, and also of the neighbouring region of Trachonitis; and Lysanias, the Tetrarch of Abilene; Annas and Caiaphas being the High-Priests;<sup>(3)</sup> the word (the command) of God came unto John, afterwards called the Baptist,—being the son of Zacharias, and born in the remarkable manner before described,—in a thinly-settled and untilled part of the country, which lay east of Jerusalem, called the wilderness of Judea.—And John did baptize in the wilder-

some trade, there is little doubt that Jesus was engaged in the same occupation; which presents another example to men of honest Industry in their respective callings.

(1) *Pontius Pilate.*—See Section CXXV., Note 1.

(2) *Tetrarch of Galilee.* This title was held by Antipas (now commonly called Herod) because Galilee, which had been left to him with Peræa, was about a fourth part of the dominions of his father, Herod the Great. The contemporary and adjoining Tetrarchies seem to be added in here for greater particularity as to the date.

(3) *Annas and Caiaphas being the High-Priests.* Caiaphas was the High-Priest during the whole administration of Pilate, having been appointed by Valerius Gratus, the predecessor of this Governor, and deposed as a popular act by

Vitellius his successor. Annas, his father-in-law, had been one of his predecessors in the office, but was also deposed by the Romans. It was customary, however, at this period with the High-Priests to consult some senior who had discharged the office, in the way of a coadjutor; and Annas was now in that position, being only named first on account of his seniority. This accounts for our Lord being taken by the Jews, on His apprehension, “to Annas first;” but He was immediately sent on to Caiaphas (John xviii. 13, 24). It was also usual to speak of the high-priests or chief priests in the plural number, and the Evangelists only retain the ordinary way of speaking. Josephus writes, “Then might be seen the high-priests themselves, with ashes on their heads, and their breasts naked.”

ness; and he came into all the country *lying about the river Jordan*,<sup>(4)</sup> preaching the Baptism of Repentance, *as a conditional step for procuring the remission of sins*;<sup>b</sup> and saying, Repent ye (*let your hearts become changed*), for the *long-looked-for Kingdom of Heaven*<sup>c</sup> (<sup>(5)</sup>) is at hand.

<sup>b</sup> Then said Peter, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. Acts ii. 38.

For this *John* is he that was spoken of in the Book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, *There is heard THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT*:<sup>(6)</sup> EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE FILLED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW, AND THE CROOKED WAYS SHALL BE MADE STRAIGHT,<sup>d</sup> AND THE ROUGH SHALL BE MADE SMOOTH; AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD. (*See Isa. xl. 3—5.*)

<sup>c</sup> The God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed. Dan. ii. 44.

<sup>d</sup> Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. Heb. xii. 18.

Then went there out unto him *a very great multitude from Jerusalem, and from all the land of Judea and all the region round about Jordan*; and *after confessing their sins and promising amendment of life, they were all baptized* <sup>(7)</sup> of him in the river of Jordan.

And the same John, *resembling the prophet Elijah in his habits of life as well as in spirit and power*, had his

(<sup>4</sup>) *Jordan.*] This famous river is the eastern boundary of Palestine. It rises in the north at Mount Lebanon, taking thence a southerly direction under ground for thirteen miles, and then bursting forth with a great noise at Cesarea-Philippi. From that place it continues its course for some miles, passing through a small lake, until it falls into the Lake Gennesareth (also called the Sea of Tiberias, and the Sea of Galilee). Through the middle of this lake it flows undisturbed, and then preserves a southerly direction for about seventy miles, when it falls into the Dead Sea.—Here, even in modern times, it is said to be so considerable a river as to discharge several millions of tons of water daily, and its current to be generally so rapid, that the most expert swimmers cannot oppose it.—See Shaw's and Maundrell's Travels.

(<sup>5</sup>) *The Kingdom of Heaven.*] This phrase here signifies the Gospel dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, or that state of things which the Messiah was to set up; whose spiritual reign, commencing in the Church on earth, is to be finally completed in heaven.—The expectations of the Jews in general were turned to a temporal kingdom, for so they chose to understand their prophecies; but these notions are at the outset corrected by the Baptist, who prefaces his announcement of the approaching Kingdom by a spiritual command to *repent*.

(<sup>6</sup>) *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, &c.*] It was anciently the custom to send messengers to proclaim the approach of conquerors with their armies, and as pioneers to prepare the way for them. Thus the Evangelical prophet, describing the Return from Babylon, introduces a crier or herald as the type of the Baptist. In the vast

deserts which lay between Babylon and Judea, he represents this herald as lifting up his voice, and with authority ordering a public road for the return of the Jews from Captivity, the Lord being their deliverer.—Nothing could be more suitable than the entire imagery to the state of the Jews when the Baptist appeared: they were full of prejudices and self-righteousness, with high and haughty thoughts concerning others, and many crooked ways of their own; all which had to be subdued and *levelled* before they could be considered a people *prepared* for the Lord.—John is characterized by the Prophet as “a Voice,” because it was the express object of his mission to *proclaim* the Messiah; yet, compared with Christ, he was *but* “a voice,” the sound of which, when it had expressed the thought of which it was the sign, died, and was heard no more.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Were all baptized.*] Since the return from the Babylonish Captivity, the Jews had been accustomed to baptize proselytes; and the Ordinance was allowed to remain as a significant and appropriate entrance into the Christian religion; for as the convert to the Hebrew faith washed away his idoiatry, so the convert to Christianity was to be enabled to purify his corrupt nature. Notwithstanding their Church privileges, the Jews were equally summoned by the Baptist as sinners to come and be washed,—seeking with the Gentiles that “Fountain which should be opened to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness” (Zech. xiii. 1). He taught them, that instead of attempting to justify themselves, they must now *accuse* themselves; and that they were by nature the children of wrath even as others.

\* And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which told you these words? And they answered him, He was an hairy man and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite. 2 Kings i. 7, 8.

raiment of *rough* camel's hair,<sup>(b)</sup> and a leathern girdle about his loins;<sup>c</sup> and his meat was *such as that wild country chanced to afford, namely, locusts and wild honey.*

## SECTION XVI.

## JOHN REPROVES THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES, AND INSTRUCTS THE PEOPLE.

*Matt. iii. 7—10. Luke iii. 7—14.*

**B**UT when he (*John*) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees<sup>(1)</sup> come to his baptism,—*for they were unwilling to lose their share in the Messiah's temporal Kingdom,*—he said unto the multitude of *them* that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers,<sup>a</sup>—*ye seed of that Old Serpent the Devil,*—who hath warned you to flee from the *divine wrath which is to come on a guilty world? How can men of such principles think of presenting themselves for the baptism of Repentance!* Bring forth, therefore, *first*, fruits worthy of Repentance (answerable to amendment of life, MARG.): and think not to say within

<sup>a</sup> Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. John viii. 44.

(<sup>b</sup>) *John had his raiment of camel's hair, &c.]* The dress of John was that of the ancient prophets (Zech. xiii. 4). This garment was not of the fine hair of the camel from which camlet is made, but of the rougher portions, from which a coarse and cheap cloth is still made for the poorer classes in the East.—Locusts were flying insects, abundant in Palestine (Joel i. 4), and when dried, were eaten as a common sort of food, which the Law allowed (Lev. xi. 22). In the Travels of Arnulphus, a Bishop of Gaul, who visited Palestine in 705, it is mentioned that locusts were found in the deserts of Judea with short bodies about the thickness of a finger: they were easily taken among the grass, and upon being cooked in oil, formed a palatable, though poor food. Wild honey was also common (Exod. iii. 8), and was found in hollow trees and in the clefts of rocks (1 Sam. xiv. 26).—The life of John has, in these and similar respects, been imitated by many a well-meaning but misjudging Christian: there was more of *simplicity* than austerity in the Baptist's habits, and while in his particular case there were *special* and sufficient reasons for all he did, we never find him holding up his conduct in this respect for *imitation*. When asked by his converts what *they* must do to flee from the wrath to come, he dwelt not on bodily austerities, but urged the *reformation of the heart*, and gave them plain *practical precepts* adapted to their several callings.

(<sup>1</sup>) *The Pharisees and Sadducees.]* These were the two chief sects or parties into which the greater part of the nation was divided.—The *Pharisees*, which formed the more numerous

body, took their name from *pharass* 'to separate,' because they separated themselves from other men by a peculiar strictness and punctilious observance of the Ceremonial Law. They believed in the immortality of the soul, but had confused notions of its pre-existence, of future rewards and punishments, and of fate. Their distinguishing character was zeal for the traditions of the elders, to which they made additions as they thought fit: they had, at last, overburdened the Law with a vast number of trifling observances, and even altered and corrupted it in important articles by their perverse interpretations (see Mark vii. 10—12). Though they carefully observed all the externals of religion, making long prayers for a shew in public, and were ostentatious in their almsgiving, they were exceedingly lax in their interpretation of the *moral* precepts, and many of them secretly immoral in their lives. Notwithstanding, they were the favourites of the people, and were generally the party holding office. Modern Jews are chiefly Pharisees, believing in and observing the traditions.

The *Sadducees*, who derived their name from *Sadoc*, one of their leaders, were opposed to this powerful party; rejecting all observances not founded on the text of the Pentateuch, the books of which they more particularly revered. They rejected the doctrine of fate, and held that there is "no Resurrection,—neither angel nor spirit" (see Matt. xxiii. 23; Acts xxiii. 8). The Sadducees were worldly-minded men, and were, many of them, openly profane. They were few in numbers as a party, but still their influence was considerable from their wealth and standing in society.

yourselves, We have *holy* Abraham to (*for*) our father,<sup>b</sup> and can scarcely be rejected as his descendants; for I say unto you, that God, who first formed man of the dust of the earth, is able of these stones<sup>(\*)</sup> of the Jordan lying before your eyes to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now also is the arm of God's vengeance suspended over your guilty nation; the axe is already laid unto the very root of the trees, and the blow when it falls will be quick and sure: therefore every tree which henceforth bringeth not forth good fruit, is to be hewn down<sup>c</sup> and cast into the fire.

And the common people, moved to repentance by his powerful exhortations, asked him, saying, What shall we do then<sup>d</sup> to escape the impending danger and show forth fruits of Repentance? He answereth and saith unto them, The ceremonial duties on which you have been accustomed to rely are powerless to save you; be careful henceforth to observe the great practical duties of life, for God will have mercy rather than sacrifice: he, therefore, that hath two coats, let him impart the one which he can spare to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, which is not needed for the sustenance of his own family, let him do likewise.<sup>e</sup>

Then came also certain publicans<sup>(\*)</sup> to be baptized,<sup>f</sup> and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed<sup>g</sup> by the government for you to receive.—And the Jewish soldiers<sup>(\*)</sup> chancing to be on their march through that country, likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Correct those failings to which men of your calling are so much addicted: do unlawful violence to no man, neither for the purpose of extortion accuse any to your superiors falsely,<sup>h</sup> and be content with your wages (*your lawful allowances*.)

<sup>b</sup> They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. John viii. 39.

<sup>c</sup> The haughty shall be humbled; and He shall cut down the thickest of the forest with iron. Isa. x. 33, 34.

<sup>d</sup> Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none. Cut it down! Why cumbereth it the ground? Luke xiii. 7.

<sup>e</sup> Now when they heard this, they were pricked in the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, What shall we do? Acts ii. 37.

<sup>f</sup> I mean not that other men be eased and ye burthened; but by an equality, that your abundance may be a supply for their want. 2 Cor. viii. 13, 14.

<sup>g</sup> Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 John iii. 17.

<sup>h</sup> The publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. Luke vii. 29.

<sup>i</sup> And Zaccheus stood and said, If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. Luke xix. 8.

<sup>j</sup> Thou shalt not raise a false report; put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Exod. xxiii. 1.

(\*) *These stones.*] Some have considered this to be a metaphorical expression, pointing to the fact of the *Gentiles* becoming also the Israel of God: in support of which it appears to have been a common figure to compare the heathen to stocks and stones, and there might be some *Gentiles* among John's hearers. The literal interpretation, however, seems more natural, and gives a degree of beauty to the expression.

(\*) *Publicans.*] These were the collectors of the Roman taxes, which were farmed by Roman knights; and then underlet to Jews. Such an office, always unpopular, was still more so when undertaken for the support of a foreign power. "Publican," with the Jews, was nearly synonymous with *extortioner*. There were good men among them, for Matthew was one; but there is good reason to think they had much need of repentance. They had strong temptations to enrich themselves by exacting more than was due, especially in a province so remote as Judea

was from the seat of government. The office was generally filled by persons of indifferent character; and the low estimation in which they were generally held, would be both the *cause* and the *effect* of dishonesty. Our Lord speaks but slightly of them (Matt. v. 47).

(\*) *The soldiers.*] The original expression has been considered to denote men under arms on their way to battle, and some chronologists hold that the war of Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, with his father-in-law Aretas (a petty king of the neighbouring country) had already commenced; which would account for soldiers being on their march through the country where the Baptist now was (see Joseph. Antiq. xviii. 5). These troops would probably be Jewish, if they proceeded from Galilee, and John does not urge on them, as upon *Gentiles*, the worship of the true God. "Informers," or *Delatores* so called, were common among the soldiery of those times. Military wages generally consisted of provisions as well as pay.

## SECTION XVII.

JESUS COMES FROM NAZARETH TO BE BAPTIZED BY JOHN.

*Matt.* iii. 13—17. *Mark* i. 9—11. *Luke* iii. 21—23.

NOW in those days, when all the people *who adhered to John's ministry* were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee to be baptized of John in Jordan.

But John, *believing, through the Spirit, that He was the Messiah*, forbade (*would have prevented*) Him, saying, I, a sinner, have need to be baptized *with the Holy Ghost* of Thee, and comest Thou to me *to be baptized with water*? And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now (*for the present*), for thus it becometh us *both* to fulfil all righteousness (*to comply with every holy institution ordained of God*); and such compliance will avail to establish the authority of My mission, and of thine own. Then he suffered Him *to be baptized*.

And Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan; and, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water *without the confession of sins which was required of others, for He knew no sin*: and lo, the heavens were opened (*the sky was parted asunder*) unto Him, *as He was silently praying* <sup>(1)</sup> *after the administration of this solemn rite*; and He, *together with the Baptist*,<sup>a</sup> saw the Holy Spirit of God, descending in a bodily shape *so as to be distinctly visible, —like* (*after the manner of*) a dove,<sup>(2)</sup> *with fluttering or hovering motion*,—and lighting upon Him. And lo, a Voice came from God out of heaven, *proclaiming Jesus to be the Messiah*, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.<sup>b</sup> <sup>(2)</sup>

<sup>a</sup> And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. *John* i. 32.

<sup>b</sup> Behold Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth. *Isa.* xlii. 1.

Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son? *Heb.* i. 5.

<sup>(1)</sup> *The heavens were opened unto Him, praying.*] Our Lord seems to have begun and ended every important event of His life with prayer; as when He chose His Apostles, at His Transfiguration, and during His mysterious Agony in the Garden. And here, as upon the two other occasions when the Father bore witness to Him, the Voice from Heaven is pronounced while He was praying or soon after (see *Luke* ix. 29, 35. *John* xii. 27, 28).

<sup>(2)</sup> *In bodily shape, like a dove.*] On the other supposition that this heavenly appearance was in the form of a dove, then, as the symbol of purity (*Matt.* x. 16), it would be emblematic of the Saviour's innocence; indeed it would appear that the Holy Spirit sometimes assumed a form emblematic of the thing to be represented, for by the form of fiery tongues was typified the miraculous powers of language with which the Apostles were to be endowed (*Acts* ii. 3).—At the beginning of the material Creation the Spirit is

similarly represented as brooding, dove-like, over the vast abyss of waters.

<sup>(\*)</sup> *Thou art My beloved Son, &c.*] Thus at the baptism of our Lord there was an exhibition, even to the senses, of the Three Persons in the Holy Trinity severally engaged: the Voice of the Father is heard, the Spirit is seen visibly descending, while the Son in human form receives the sacrament. Again, as each of the three coequal Persons in the Godhead sustain their important part in the scheme of Redemption, so on this occasion we find them acting in accordance with the beautiful economy of that scheme: the Father appoints the Son to be Mediator, the Son accepts the appointment; while the Holy Spirit qualifies Him for the work.—It should be just noticed that the form of the words spoken on this occasion varies, according to some versions of Matthew, from that recorded by Mark and Luke; but the difference is unimportant, and there are good copies of Matthew in which the form is precisely the same.

And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age <sup>(1)</sup> (*was approaching the age of thirty*) when He commenced His public ministry.

SECTION XVIII.

HE IS LED UP OF THE SPIRIT INTO THE WILDERNESS, WHERE HE FASTS FORTY DAYS, AND IS TEMPTED IN A THREEFOLD MANNER BY THE DEVIL.

*Matt. iv. 1—11. Mark i. 12, 13. Luke iv. 1—13.*

AND Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost,<sup>a</sup> returned from Jordan; and, immediately *after His baptism*, He was led up by *the influence and immediate suggestion* of the Spirit [the Spirit driveth Him, MARK] into the Wilderness, *that He might there prepare for His great work by secret meditation, and so as afterwards to be tempted by evil suggestions* of the Devil.<sup>b</sup> <sup>(1)</sup>

And He was there *abiding* in the Wilderness with the wild beasts,<sup>c</sup> *which, overawed by His presence, hurt Him not*; being forty days *invisibly* tempted of Satan. And in those *forty* days He did eat nothing, *observing the abstinence which Moses<sup>d</sup> had practised previous to giving the Law, and Elias,<sup>e</sup> when called upon to restore it*: and when they were ended, and He had *miraculously* fasted *the forty days and forty nights*, He afterwards hungered.

And when the Devil,—the Tempter,—came *at length* to Him *in visible form*, he said unto Him, If Thou be *indeed* the Son of God,<sup>(2)</sup> command, *as Thou hast the power*, that these stones be made *into loaves of bread to relieve Thy present wants*. But Jesus answered him, and said, It is written (*Deut. viii. 3*) THAT MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD<sup>f</sup> <sup>(3)</sup> (*by whatever His gracious Providence hath appointed.*)

<sup>a</sup> God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. John iii. 34.

<sup>b</sup> He was in all points tempted like as we are. Heb. iv. 15.

<sup>c</sup> At famine shalt thou laugh, neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth, for they shall be at peace with thee. Job v. 22, 23.

My God hath sent His Angel and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me. Dan. vi. 22.

<sup>d</sup> And Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights: he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenants, the ten commandments. Exod. xxxiv. 28.

<sup>e</sup> And Elijah went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the Mount of God. 1 Kings xix. 8.

<sup>f</sup> Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the

<sup>(1)</sup> *About thirty years of age.*] Our Lord's age is supposed to have wanted two or three months of thirty, and this event is placed in the first half of the 13th of Tiberius Cæsar.—At this period of life, when the faculties are considered to be in their full vigour, it was usual for the priests to commence their ministrations (Numb. iv. 3.) Had the Saviour commenced at an earlier age, He would have been charged with ignorance and presumption: had He waited much longer, it would have been asked why He delayed beyond the period absolutely necessary the reformation of a world so sunk in sin. It might also have been insinuated that He was losing the usual interest and concern in this world, and, as a consequence, took different views of things from the bulk of mankind.

<sup>(2)</sup> *To be tempted of the Devil.*] The original does not denote this to have been the *design* of Christ's going into the Wilderness, but only marks the *event*.—We find the Evil Spirit, or

leader of the fallen angels, called in this narrative by the three names which characterize him; "the Devil" or *Accuser*, "Satan" or the *Enemy*, and "the Tempter."—The *form* in which he appeared to our Lord may have been the seductive one of an Angel of Light, which we know that he could assume (2 Cor. xi. 14).

<sup>(3)</sup> *If Thou be the Son of God.*] It is possible that Satan might not yet know Jesus to be the Christ: for though he would know from the Scriptures that the Messiah was to be born of a virgin, he might not look for the mother of the Lord in one betrothed and now married.

<sup>(4)</sup> *Man shall not live by bread alone, &c.*] It is remarkable that this same passage was the declaration to the Israelites respecting the gracious appearance of the Most High on their behalf, *when they were an hungered in the Wilderness*; where too they had sojourned the *same number of years* that our Saviour remained *days* in the Desert.



land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. Amos viii. 11.

My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me. John iv. 34.

§ Jesus taketh Peter and James and John, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart. Matt. xvii. 1.

¶ A land which is the glory of all lands. Ezek. xx. 6.

— the glorious land. Dan. xi. 16.

Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only. 1 Sam. vii. 3.

Then the Devil, upon the failure of this temptation, taketh Him up [brought or conducted Him, LUKE] into Jerusalem, the Holy City,<sup>(4)</sup> and setteth Him (*seateth or induceth Him to sit*) on a certain pinnacle of the Temple overlooking the vast precipice to the east and south. And the Tempter saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence; for it is written, HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER THEE TO KEEP THEE; AND IN THEIR HANDS THEY SHALL BEAR THEE UP, LEST AT ANY TIME THOU DASH THY FOOT AGAINST A STONE<sup>(5)</sup> (see Ps. xci. 11, 12). And Jesus answering, said unto him, It is again (*also*) written [It is said, LUKE], to prevent the abuse of such gracious promises, THOU SHALT NOT TEMPT (*try*) THE LORD THY GOD (Deut. vi. 16.)

Again (*at another time*) the Devil taketh Him up<sup>§</sup> (*induceth Jesus to accompany him*) into an exceeding high mountain,<sup>(6)</sup> and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world (*of Palestine*) and the glory of them<sup>¶</sup> in a moment of time. And the Devil saith unto Him *with false and impious boast*, All this power, and all these things will I give Thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it: if therefore Thou wilt fall down and worship (*adore*) me, all shall be Thine. Then Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee hence behind Me, Satan! for it is written, THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU RELIGIOUSLY SERVE<sup>1</sup> (see Deut. vi. 13).

And when the Devil had *thus* ended all the temptation,<sup>(7)</sup>

(4) *Jerusalem, the Holy City.*] Luke, writing for Gentiles, simply gives the name "Jerusalem;" but Matthew, writing to the Jews, adds "the Holy City," as their Scriptures termed it (Neh. xi. 1; Isa. lii. 1; Dan. ix. 24), because it had the Temple and Worship.—"Jerusalem the Holy" was inscribed on their coin.

(5) *Dash thy foot against a stone.*] That is, "Come to any injury." The expression was proverbial, both in Greek and Hebrew, to denote danger or accident.

(6) *An exceeding high mountain.*] There is a mountainous region on the skirt of the plain of Jericho, the highest point of which is called *Quarantaria*, in allusion to the forty days which our Lord is supposed to have passed there.—The separate provinces of the Holy Land (often called in Scripture "the world") seen from hence, might reasonably be termed kingdoms, as their governors or tetrarchs were called kings.

(7) *When the Devil had ended all the temptation.*] The correct order of these Temptations is evidently the order of their strength; and St. Luke only has placed them differently, because, writing to Gentiles, who were not looking for a temporal Messiah, Estimation in the sight of God (to which principle the last Temptation, as given in that Evangelist, relates) had seem greater

than Power among men.—The first Temptation is an appeal to the Saviour's necessities, tempting Him to distrust God's Providence; and the danger arose from its plausibility, for Satan does not urge Him to create a feast for indulgence, but only to change a stone into bread, that He might not perish from want,—at the same time satisfying Himself by proof that He was the Son of God.—Being defeated by Scripture, the Tempter changes his ground; and by applying in a natural sense what was originally spoken in a spiritual one, and also by a garbled quotation of the passage itself,—the words "in all thy ways" (or, "in the ways of duty") being omitted,—he next tempts Jesus to the opposite sin of presumption. He urges Him to shew Himself to the people suspended in the air, as their long-expected Son of man, "coming in the clouds of heaven, and suddenly to His Temple." Jesus replied by another quotation from Scripture, plainly forbidding all unnecessary appeals to God's providential care, when He has already given sufficient grounds for trust in Him.—The last recorded Temptation was a yet bolder attack. The offer is made of empire, addressed, not only to the ambition of one who would be gladly welcomed as a temporal Messiah, but to every passion which can be gratified by an unlimited possession of the

he departed from Him for a season,<sup>k</sup>—*until the time of the Saviour's Passion, when his malicious attempts were once more permitted.*—And behold, the angels came unto Jesus, and ministered<sup>l</sup> unto Him, *supplying all His wants.*

<sup>k</sup> This is your hour and the power of darkness. Luke xxii. 53.

Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh. John xiv. 30.

<sup>l</sup> Are they not all ministering spirits? Heb. i. 14.

## SECTION XIX.

JOHN SPEAKS PLAINLY OF THE MESSIAH TO THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES.

*Matt. iii. 11, 12. Mark i. 7, 8. Luke iii. 15—18. John i. 19—28.*

AND this is the record (*the testimony*) of John concerning Jesus when the Jews of the Sanhedrim sent Priests and Levites<sup>(1)</sup> from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And though the opportunity offered of proclaiming himself as the Messiah, he at once confessed and denied not the truth, but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What extraordinary being art thou then? Art thou Elias<sup>a</sup> (2) come down from heaven to announce the

<sup>a</sup> Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Mal. iv. 6.

objects of sense. Our Lord rebuked the Evil Spirit in the very words that He applied to Peter, when that Apostle would have had Him prefer worldly grandeur to affliction (Matt. xvi. 23); and addressing him by his proper name of Satan (or Enemy), commanded him instantly to depart.

This mysterious conflict, having no human witness, must have been revealed at the proper season for the edification of the Church; and though we may never be able to fathom the depths of so inscrutable a transaction, we can perceive, with the light afforded us by St. Paul, that it behoved our Lord, in this, as in other respects, to be made "like unto His brethren" (Heb. ii. 17). As the first Adam, by yielding to the first temptation, transmitted a corrupt nature to posterity, it was fit that our New Federal Head should, before He entered upon His office, encounter and triumph over that Tempter whose works He came to destroy. There is, indeed, a remarkable analogy between the Temptations of Adam and Jesus, and they are both reducible to the same threefold order, as summed up by St. John (1 Ep. ii. 16), namely "*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.*" With both, the natural appetite for food was first appealed to; then, as our Lord was tempted by an ostentatious miracle to claim the homage of the assembled crowds, so was Adam tempted by fruit which was "*pleasant to the eye;*" and lastly, as our Lord was tempted by ambition, so was Adam by the pride of life, to desire that which would make him wise.—In some circumstances there is as remarkable an opposition: It was in a fruitful garden, and in the act of eating that Adam fell, but in a barren wilderness and by fasting that Jesus triumphed. Angels appeared after both Temptations, but it was to repel the first Adam, to minister to the Second.

While our gratitude is eminently due for what our Lord thus "suffered, being tempted" for

our sakes, it is important that His great Example on this occasion should ever teach us what we must do when exposed to the fiery darts of our great spiritual Enemy. We see that by Watchfulness and resisting the Devil, he will flee from us; while by Prayer and thankfully using the petition taught us by our tempted Master, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from Evil," we shall be strengthened from above for the conflict. Lastly, the Enemy is to be overcome "by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God;" and when Scripture is artfully used or perverted, it must be met by Scripture rightly applied.

(1) *Priests and Levites.*] The ordinary priests were chosen from the family of Aaron exclusively. They served immediately at the altar: among their peculiar duties (which were distributed by lot on account of their numbers) were those of burning the incense, preparing the victims, and offering up the sacrifices.—The tribe of Levi were also specially devoted (in place of the first-born of the other tribes) to the service of the Temple. To them was committed the care of its revenues, and after David's time they became the conductors of its music. They were subordinate to the Priests, whom they assisted in their duties. The Levites entered upon their office at the age of five-and-twenty, and continued (as did the Priests) in their ministrations till fifty (Numb. viii. 24, 25).

(2) *Art thou Elias?*] The Jews thought that Malachi's prophecy foretold the return of Elijah in person from heaven, whither he had been translated. This John disclaims, but admits, in his subsequent reply, that in spirit and power he was that forerunner of the Messiah whom they had been taught to expect. Jesus Himself afterward distinctly declares that the predicted coming of Elias was accomplished in the person of the Baptist (Matt. xvii. 10—13).

<sup>b</sup> I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth. Deut. xviii. 18.

*great day of the Lord?* And he saith, I am not *Elias in person*. They said again, Art thou that Prophet<sup>b</sup> (<sup>c</sup>) *who should be raised up like unto Moses?* And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? *Tell us* that we may give an answer to them that sent us: what sayest thou of thyself? He said, *You shall hear who I am in the prophetic words of Scripture*: I am the Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Esaias (*Isa. xl. 3*).

And they which were *thus sent to question John*, were of the *powerful sect* of the Pharisees,—*ever jealously tenacious respecting their rights and ceremonies*: and they further asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then,—*presuming to administer this solemn rite to Jews as well as heathen*,—if thou be not that *expected Christ*, nor Elias, neither that *other prophet*?

<sup>c</sup> Who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like refiner's fire. Mal. iii. 2.

John baptized with the water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Acts i. 5.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts ii. 3, 4.

<sup>d</sup> I will send unto Babylon fanners that shall fan her, and shall empty her land. Jer. li. 2.

And as the people *who stood by* were in expectation (in suspense, MARG.), and all men mused in their hearts *upon the remarkable character of the Baptist*, whether he were the Christ or not, John answered and preached, saying unto them all, I have baptized you *only* with water unto the *exercise of Repentance*; but there standeth (*there is even now*) One *unobserved* among you, whom ye know not: He it is, who, *though coming into the world and into His office after me*, is *beyond conception* mightier than I am, and is *deservedly* preferred before me; whose shoes I am not worthy to bear,<sup>(4)</sup> and the *very latchet (the tie)* of whose shoes I am not worthy *even* to stoop down and unloose. He shall *effectually* baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:<sup>(5)</sup> whose fan<sup>d</sup> is in His hand,<sup>(6)</sup> and He will

(<sup>b</sup>) *Art thou that Prophet?*] This seems to refer to the promise made to Moses; and the people, when they witnessed the miracles of Jesus, exclaimed that He must be "*that Prophet that should come into the world*" (John vi. 14). The only other supposition which deserves the consideration of the reader, is, that it referred to Jeremiah, who as 'a weeping Prophet' was a striking type of the 'Man of Sorrows.' The Jews also seem to have had an expectation of this Prophet rising from the dead, for it is said (Matt. xvi. 14) that some of them supposed Jesus was He.

(<sup>c</sup>) *Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, &c.*] It was the business of the lowest menials to carry about the sandals of their master, and to loosen or bind the straps which fastened them, when required. Doing this was the appointed form and mark of a slave becoming the property of a purchaser. The sense therefore is, that John, though declared to be inferior to none of the human race, was unworthy to perform the most menial office to Christ; who was as much above him, as a master is above the lowest of his servants.

(<sup>d</sup>) *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.*] If there is not an express allusion

here to the miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit in *fiery tongues* on the day of Pentecost, there is nothing unnatural or violent in connecting that remarkable influence with fire. It is the quality of this powerful element to change, break, and melt the thing which it lays hold of; and so the influence of the Spirit consumes the dross and purifies the corrupt affections of human nature,—kindling the flame of divine love in the heart, and illuminating the minds of men. It is the quality of *water* to cleanse the surface only, and thus is strongly marked the greater efficacy of the Saviour's Baptism; which fulfilled the promise of God at Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27, while the baptism of John is fulfilled in the 25th verse immediately preceding. We find St. Paul rebaptizing those who had only received John's Baptism (Acts xix. 2—5).

(<sup>e</sup>) *Whose fan is in His hand.*] The *fan* was a winnowing shovel at that period in use: the threshing-floor was an elevated area formed in the field after harvest; there the corn in the sheaf was trodden by oxen, then winnowed, and afterwards gathered into the *garner* or granary.—By the floor is here denoted the Jewish nation; by the wheat, the righteous; by the chaff, the wicked; by the fan, the Gospel-doctrine

thoroughly purge (*make clear*) His floor,<sup>e</sup> and will gather the wheat into His garner, but the chaff He will burn up with fire unquenchable.<sup>f</sup>

And, *saying* many other things in his exhortation, he preached *the Gospel* unto the people.—These things were done in Bethabara, *the ford or ferry* beyond (*on the eastern side of*) Jordan, where John *usually* was baptizing.

teeness, and their blossom shall go up as dust. Isa. v. 24.—Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble: And the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Mal. iv. 1.

<sup>e</sup> They know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel: for He shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor. Mic. iv. 12.

<sup>f</sup> As the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth and without spot, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust. Isa. v. 24.—Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble: And the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Mal. iv. 1.

## SECTION XX.

JOHN PROCLAIMS JESUS AS THE LAMB OF GOD: ANDREW AND OTHER OF JOHN'S DISCIPLES ARE CONVINCED THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH.

*John* i. 29—51.

**T**HE next day *after his reply to the deputation from the Sanhedrim*, John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith *to those standing by*, Behold the Lamb of God<sup>a</sup> (<sup>1</sup>)—*the true Sacrifice* which taketh away (beareth, MARG.) the sin of the *whole world*.<sup>b</sup> This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a Man which is preferred before me,—*being incomparably greater and more excellent*,—for He was (*He existed*) before me. And I knew Him not<sup>(2)</sup> *to be the Messiah until He came to be baptized*: but *in order* that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come *as His forerunner* baptizing with water.—And John *also* bare *this record*, saying, *When He deigned to come unto me for baptism*, I saw the *Holy Spirit* descending from heaven like (*after the fluttering manner of*) a dove, and it abode upon Him. And, *as I said*, I knew Him *not to be the Christ*; but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same *Omniscient God* said unto me, Upon whom thou

<sup>a</sup> He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter. Isa. liii. 7.

Christ, a Lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Pet. i. 19.

I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain. Rev. v. 6.

<sup>b</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 2.

which separates the one from the other (See Isa. xli. 16); by the garner, the heavenly receptacle of the good; and by the unquenchable fire, the certain and dreadful punishment of the sinner.

(<sup>1</sup>) *The Lamb of God.*] A whole volume of Type and Prophecy is explained in these short words. The remission of sins had always been connected with the shedding of blood. The Paschal Lamb, slain at the Passover to commemorate the deliverance from Egypt (Exod. xii. 3, 5), and the lambs which were daily offered in the Temple at the morning and evening sacrifice, were alike typical of Christ, the *real* Victim. The sacrificing priest put his hands over the head of the victim, and made confession of sin over it; so that the sins committed by the person offering were laid thereon, and God accepted of its blood instead of that of the confessing and repenting sinner (Lev. i. 4).

(<sup>2</sup>) *I knew him not.*] This does not contradict Matt. iii. 14. The Baptist (being filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb, Luke i. 15) might strongly incline to *believe* that Jesus,—whose birth and childhood had been attended with events yet *more* extraordinary than his own,—would be the declared Messiah; yet he would not presume to *pronounce* so (to say he *knew* it) before the time. When Christ came to him for Baptism, he might at once distinguish Him as the *Person* on whom the predicted sign of the Descent of the Spirit was *to be* manifested, designating His *Office*, as that of 'the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost.' The sign followed as an additional confirmation.—It is quite possible that John had not a personal acquaintance with Jesus; as the former, with a perpetual obligation to Nazaritism, would be likely to remain in the hill country of Judea, while Jesus was brought up in privacy with His parents at Nazareth.

\* John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Acts i. 5.

shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth (*is to baptize through His ministers*) with the Holy Ghost.<sup>c</sup> And I saw *this token*, and bare record, (*I have borne and do now bear witness*) that this *Holy Person* is the Son of God.

Again, the next day after, John stood, *as before*, at the *ford of Bethabara*, and with him two of his disciples. And looking in a *marked and stedfast manner* upon Jesus, as He walked *that way*, he saith to them,—*as he had on the previous day said to the people at large*,—Behold the Lamb of God!—And the two disciples heard him speak *these remarkable words*; and *leaving their master, who had before instructed them that his office was to point out the Messiah*, they followed *after* Jesus.

Then Jesus turned *round*, and saw them following; and, to *encourage them in their enquiry after the Truth*, saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him,—*addressing Him at the same time respectfully as their Teacher*,—Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest Thou, *that we may be with Thee, and henceforth learn of Thee*? He saith *graciously* unto them, Come *at once* and see.—They came *therefore*, and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him *the remainder of that day and the night following*; for it was about the tenth hour (*four in the afternoon*).

One of the two<sup>(\*)</sup> which heard John speak *in the manner described concerning Jesus*, and *who afterwards followed Him home*, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. *Anxious to impart the joyful tidings*, he first findeth (*he was the first that found*) his own brother Simon,—*of whom both the disciples, well knowing his zealous disposition, were in search*; And he saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, the Christ,—*or the Anointed One*). And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said *immediately*,—*though He had not been informed either of his name, descent, or character*,—Thou art Simon, the Son of Jona: *as a chosen vessel unto Me and an undaunted preacher of My Gospel*, thou shalt be called Cephas<sup>(†)</sup> (which is by interpretation Peter—*that is, a Rock, or a Stone*).<sup>d</sup>

<sup>†</sup> Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church. Matt. xvi. 18.

The day following, Jesus would go forth (*determined*

(\*) *The two.*] The other, not named, was probably the Evangelist John, who usually, from modesty, suppresses his own name. He mentions the time of day and the words which passed with much exactness, as though he were a party present on the occasion.

(†) *Thou shalt be called Cephas.*] This was the Hebrew or Syriac name given to Simon, Peter being the corresponding one in Greek. It was not unusual with the Jewish Rabbis to give

such new names to their pupils. No appellation could be better adapted to the character which Simon afterwards exhibited; for although before his Master's death he was rash and impetuous, yet, subsequent to that event, he proved himself among the firmest and most zealous in preaching the Gospel. He was chiefly employed in *establishing* the Church, though all the Apostles are equally called *foundation-stones* (Eph. ii. 20).

to go) into Galilee; and there He findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow Me (*Become My disciple*). Now Philip was of Bethsaida,<sup>(\*)</sup> the city of Andrew and Peter, which stood by the Lake of Gennesareth, and was chiefly inhabited by fishermen.—Philip findeth Nathanael<sup>(\*)</sup> (or Bartholomew),—who was also a Galilean, of Cana,<sup>c</sup>—and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law,<sup>f</sup> and also the Prophets,<sup>g</sup> did write; it is Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael,—greatly prejudiced against a place, the wickedness as well as insignificance of which had become proverbial,—said unto him, Can there any good thing possibly come out of Nazareth?<sup>h</sup> Philip saith unto him, Come and see; converse with Jesus, and judge for thyself if He be not the Christ.

Jesus saw Nathanael as he was coming up to Him, and saith of him to the by-standers at the moment of his approach, Behold in this man an Israelite indeed,<sup>i</sup>—such by character as well as merely by birth, and shewing forth in his daily life the virtues of that good old patriarch, the father of the faithful—one in whom there is no hypocrisy or guile.<sup>k</sup> Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me to be such as Thou hast described? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before the moment that Philip called thee,—when thou wast under the fig-tree, engaged there in secret meditation and prayer,—I saw thee,<sup>l</sup> and knew thy inmost thoughts. Nathanael, at once convinced by this striking proof of Divine Omniscience, answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, assuredly Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the long looked-for King of Israel!<sup>(?)</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I only said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see much greater and more convincing things than these.

And He saith unto him, and to those who were present, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see a train of miracles as surprising as though heaven itself were

\* Nathanael of Cana in Galilee. John xxi. 2.

<sup>f</sup> I will raise them up a Prophet from their brethren like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth. Deut. xviii. 18.

<sup>g</sup> Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke xxiv. 27.

<sup>h</sup> Some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? John vii. 41.

They answered and said unto Him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no Prophet. John vii. 52.

<sup>i</sup> If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. John viii. 39.

He is a Jew which is one inwardly. Rom. ii. 29.

They are not all Israel which are of Israel. Rom. ix. 6.

—which say they are Jews, and are not. Rev. iii. 9.

<sup>k</sup> Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. Gen. xxv. 27.

Blessed is the man in whose spirit there is no guile. Ps. xxxiii. 2.

<sup>l</sup> Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Heb. iv. 13.

(\*) *Bethsaida.*] The exact site of this town (the name of which signifies a "Fishing-place") is uncertain. It stood at the head of the Lake of Gennesareth, but it is said (John xii. 21) to be in Galilee, whereas Josephus places it on the eastern side, in Philip's jurisdiction. It may have been so close to the river as to communicate by a bridge and so be esteemed a town of either country. Philip afterwards greatly improved the place, calling it Julia, in honour of Julia the daughter of Augustus.

(\*) *Nathanael.*] There appear sufficient grounds for considering Nathanael to be the same as Bartholomew. That Apostle is paired in all the lists with Philip. The remarkable testimony borne by Jesus, that this person was an Israelite indeed, would render him worthy of the same distinction as others who had believed. Under

his own proper name (for the other of Bartholomew merely signifies the son of Tholomeus, as Barjona signified son of Jonas) he is again mentioned as one of the party fishing, to whom Jesus showed Himself as chosen witnesses of His Resurrection; yet he is not even spoken of to supply the place of the traitor.—This Apostle preached the Gospel among the barbarous Indians, and is said to have suffered martyrdom by crucifixion in Armenia.

(?) *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, &c.*] This was a very remarkable confession, for it sprung from the same conviction of the Omniscience of Jesus, as did the later one of Thomas. Nathanael owns Him as Teacher,—for Rabbi was a title of the distinguished Jewish teachers; he owns His divinity, and he owns Him as the expected Messiah, or King of Israel.

= And Jacob dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Gen. xxviii. 12.

to open, and the Angels of God were ascending and descending<sup>m</sup> <sup>(\*)</sup> to wait upon the Son of man,<sup>(\*)</sup> and to receive and execute His commands.

## SECTION XXI.

### THE BEGINNING OF MIRACLES AT CANA OF GALILEE.

John ii. 1—11.

AND the third day after the arrival of Jesus in the country there was a marriage-feast in Cana, a town of Galilee.<sup>(1)</sup> And the mother of Jesus was already there, being either a relative or intimate friend of the bride. And both Jesus was called <sup>(\*)</sup> (was invited), and so also were His newly-converted disciples, to the marriage.

(\*) *Ye shall see heaven open, &c.*] There is, doubtless, an allusion here to the mysterious dream of the Saviour's great earthly progenitor, Israel. The ladder which Jacob saw may be regarded as a type of Christ, the true medium of communication between earth and Heaven. The prediction here will also bear a literal sense: Angels are described as visibly ministering to our Lord—as at His Ascension (Acts i. 10, 11), when the same witnesses may have been present. The uncertain expression "Hereafter" will also bear a further reference to the Last Day (Matt. xxv. 31).

(\*) *The Son of Man.*] This title, which our Lord assumed as a distinctive character, and uses familiarly of Himself, will be found generally to be an allusion either to His present humiliation or His future glory—strongly implying that the human nature did not originally belong to Him, and was not properly His own. Socinians and others, not perceiving the grounds of this reference to the nature our Lord assumed, catch at such expressions as evidence of His simple humanity. The term certainly occurs in the Old Testament as an oriental idiom for man himself, but even there we have it expressly applied by Daniel to the Messiah; and one of the reasons of our Lord's so frequently adopting it, was to show that He is the Second Adam, the new covenant-head and elder brother of the race,—that one and only descendant of Adam, as the Promised Seed, under whom God had placed all things more completely in subjection than under His type, the original man. Turning to the New Testament, we find the Jews themselves using the expression 'Son of Man' as synonymous with their Divine Messiah: "We have heard out of the Law that Christ abideth ever; and how sayest Thou, the Son of Man must be lifted up?" (John xii. 34).—Our Lord employed this title and connected the two natures on the memorable occasion of Peter's confession of His Divinity (Matt. xvi. 13, 16), and in a still more marked manner just before his death (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64). The title occurs seventeen times in St. Matthew's Gospel, twelve times in St. Mark, twenty-one times in St. Luke, and

eleven times in St. John; and on all these occasions it is alone applied by Christ to Himself.—The Apostle Paul, when he speaks of the Atonement, repeatedly and emphatically dwells on the human nature of the Saviour:—"There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). "By man came death; by Man came also the resurrection from the dead." "The last Adam was made a quickening Spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 21, 45).—The beloved Apostle, in like manner, gives his Master this very title, when he describes Him as appearing in glory too intense for mortal senses to contemplate, and declares Him to be the Almighty, the First and the Last (Rev. i. 13, &c.)

(1) *Cana of Galilee.*] This was a small place lying a few miles north of Nazareth, mentioned Josh. xix. 28. It is here called "of Galilee," because there was another Cana in the tribe of Ephraim. Mary, the sister of our Lord's mother, and wife of Cleophas or Alpheus (John xix. 25), is supposed to have lived here, and to have given this entertainment, for "Simon the Canaanite" was one of the children of Alpheus. This connection, or an acquaintance with the people of the house, would account for the mother of our Lord being there previous to His being invited, as well as for her giving directions about the feast. It is probable that Joseph, who is not mentioned on this occasion, was already dead, as it seems clear was the case at our Lord's crucifixion, when He provided for His mother.

(\*) *Jesus was called.*] This early opportunity seems to have been taken of shewing, that the Saviour did not affect those austerities which became the character and ministry of the Baptist. His manners, although grave, were ever unreserved; and He was serious without severity. The social character which He exhibited on this particular occasion, by mixing in the innocent indulgences of life, conveys to us the important lesson, that virtue does not consist in withdrawing from the world, but in keeping ourselves unspotted by it: we are to carry the Gospel abroad with us into the occupations of ordinary life.

And before the days of the feast were over, when they wanted wine,—for the quantity provided had failed from the great concourse of guests to see Jesus,—the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine left. Mary felt a natural anxiety that He should display His miraculous power on behalf of her friends by a further supply: but Jesus, at once discouraging any dictation in the exercise of His miraculous powers, saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee?<sup>(3)</sup> Mine hour<sup>a</sup> (the proper time) for doing what you suggest is not yet come.

His mother, expecting that at his own time He would gratify the wish she had expressed, saith unto the servants, —that so all might be in readiness,—Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews,<sup>b</sup> for their various ablutions before meals; containing two or three firkins (measures of several gallons) apiece.<sup>(4)</sup> Jesus saith unto them who were in attendance, Fill up the water-pots with water: and they filled them up to the brim. And this being done, He saith unto them, Draw out now some of this liquor, and bear it unto the governor (the manager or president) of the feast. And accordingly they bare it.

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was now made into wine,<sup>(5)</sup> and knew not whence it was,

<sup>a</sup> His brethren said unto Him, Depart hence and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: I go not up yet to this feast. John vii. 3, 6, 8.

<sup>b</sup> The Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not. Mark vii. 8.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* In the use of the term 'woman' in the Greek there is no disrespect. Ladies of the highest rank were anciently so addressed: in Xenophon, Cyrus so addresses the Queen of Armenia, and we find the same in Homer's poems, in the Greek drama, and also in writers of the more refined age of Augustus when Christ was born. It is by the same appellation that our Lord tenderly addresses Mary Magdalene after His Resurrection (John xx. 15); and also His mother, on that most affecting of all occasions, when His thoughts were dwelling particularly on her welfare, and He was Himself expiring on the Cross (John xix. 26).—The words which here follow, "What have I to do with thee?" are merely a formula taken from the language of common life, and are to be interpreted according to the occasion and circumstances of each particular case. It appears to have been chiefly used in repressing any request or intended action, and sometimes shews disapprobation of the proposal (see 2 Sam. xix. 22; 1 Kings xvii. 18; 2 Kings iii. 13; Mark v. 7). The reply of our Lord on this occasion conveyed some reproof, and was, no doubt, an intentional discouragement of the interference of His earthly parent in such matters. It appears to be almost a prophetic and standing protest against the superstition and idolatry of that Church which worships the Virgin.—The same Church disparages Marriage, absolutely prohibiting it in the Clergy: yet it was on occasion of a marriage that our Lord was pleased so remarkably to make His first display of glory, sanctioning this solemn and interesting rite by His presence.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Containing two or three firkins apiece.*]

The quantity of wine made might be, altogether, above a hoghead. We need not suppose that so considerable a quantity was required or consumed at the time, though Jewish feasts usually lasted several days (Judg. xiv. 12), and the guests were numerous; but it was not unsuitable to our Lord's character to provide the new-married persons with the remainder as a stock. The wine of Palestine, it should be added, was not a luxury like that brought to our tables; but, being the ordinary drink, would be much weaker than what is used in northern climates. From this miracle we gather that wine "which maketh glad the heart of man" (Ps. civ. 15), may be innocently drank; and St. Paul recommends it, taken in moderation, to Timothy for his health's sake (1 Tim. v. 23). Christians must, however, bear in mind, that to multitudes it has proved the occasion of guilt and utter ruin, and that it is dangerous even to approach the limits of propriety.

(<sup>5</sup>) *The water that was made wine.*] It is remarkable that the Jewish Lawgiver, who was commissioned to work upon the fears of a tyrant, began his miracles by converting water into blood (Exod. vii. 20); while He who brought in a better Covenant, and whose object was not to terrify, but to persuade men and change the heart, commenced His miracles by changing water into generous wine.—It has been observed, that our Lord might have converted the water brought in the servants' vessels into wine, but that He preferred to fill the water-pots which stood there for purification, and from them to draw out the liquor converted into wine. This may have indicated that He was come to do away with the Old Dispensation of



—but the servants which drew the water *well* knew,—the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning of a feast doth set forth (*setteth on*) good wine, and when men have well (*sufficiently*) drunk, then that which is worse (*of an inferior quality*); but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

This beginning of miracles<sup>(6)</sup> did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and *thereby* manifested forth His *own* glory,<sup>(7)</sup>—“*the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father;*” and His disciples believed *more fully* on (*in*) Him.

## SECTION XXII.

### JESUS ATTENDS THE PASSOVER AT JERUSALEM, WHERE HE COMMENCES HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY WITH THE FIRST PURGING OF THE TEMPLE.

*John ii. 12—25.*

**A**FTER this *miracle wrought by Jesus at Cana*, He went down to Capernaum<sup>(1)</sup>; He, and *with Him* His mother, and His brethren (*His kinsmen*), and His disciples. And the Jews' Passover was at hand, *which required the attendance of all males of a fit age:*<sup>a</sup> and so they continued there not many days.

<sup>a</sup> All thy males shall appear before the Lord thy God in the feast of unleavened bread. Deut. xvi. 16.

And Jesus, *who came to fulfil every righteous ordinance, duly* went up to Jerusalem to attend the Feast. And *when He arrived there, He* found in the outer Court of the Temple, called the Court of the Gentiles, those that, *under pretext of accommodating such as had offerings to make,* sold oxen (*bullocks*), and sheep, and doves; and *also* the changers of *heathen* money<sup>b</sup> into Jewish shekels sitting at their occupation. And when He had made a scourge, of

<sup>b</sup> They shall give, every one, half a shekel, after the shekel of the Sanctuary. Exod. xxx. 13.

outward ceremonial cleansings, and to substitute the Gospel for the Law; the water for purifying representing the one, and the wine into which it was changed representing His blood under the other. Thus our Lord deigned to sanctify the fruit of the vine not only in the *last*, but in the *first* remarkable manifestation of Himself to His disciples.

(<sup>6</sup>) *This beginning of miracles.*] This being our Lord's first miracle, the following definition of a *true* miracle may be given here. It is “a sensible effect, either in itself or in its circumstances supernatural; that is, above the natural powers of any visible agent, or evidently not so produced, or contrary to the general law of God's acting on matter.” The following *criteria* have been proposed in respect to miracles:—1. It is required that the fact be such as men's outward senses can judge of; 2. That it be notorious, performed publicly in the presence of witnesses; 3. That memorials be kept up in commemoration—such memorials commencing with the fact. These *criteria* apply generally to the Scripture miracles; and where they all unite, a fact cannot be false.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Manifested forth His Glory.*] This very remarkable expression is never used concerning the miracles of any *other* Prophet or Apostle. The Prophets of old were merely instruments in the hand of God to display His Almighty power; and the Apostles worked miracles in the name of Jesus of Nazareth alone. The expression shews that the Saviour wrought miracles by *His own* inherent power.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Capernaum.*] This large and populous place lay at the north-west corner of the Lake Genesareth, about a day's journey from Cana, as appears from John iv. 52, 53. It was probably one of the towns built by the Jews on their return from the Captivity, as we do not find it mentioned in the Old Testament. Our Lord wrought many miracles there, but the inhabitants were little the better for such distinguished favours.—In Travels of the seventh and eighth Centuries, the place is stated to have been still in existence under the same name; but in due time our Lord's prediction concerning its destruction (Matt. xi. 23,) had its complete fulfilment.

the small cords or rushes which lay there, as a symbol of authority, He drove them all out of the Temple,<sup>c</sup>—for they were conscience-stricken, and too much awed by His commanding presence to resist,—and with them the sheep and the oxen: And He also poured out upon the ground the changers' money, and overthrew the counting tables; and said unto them that sold doves for the poorer worshippers,—for He would not injure any by the loss of their property,—Take these things (the cages which contained the doves) hence: make not My Father's House an house of merchandize and common traffick. And His disciples, who had been at first surprised at such unusual excitement in their Master, remembered that it was written (*Ps. lxi. 9*), THE ZEAL OF THINE HOUSE HATH EATEN ME UP<sup>d</sup> (\*) (*Solicitude for the honour of Thy Temple hath quite absorbed Me*).

Then answered some of the rulers of the Jews,—who in contempt of the Gentiles connived at this profanation,—and said (\*) unto Him, What sign<sup>e</sup> in proof of Thy authority shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou takest so much on Thyself and doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, *By this sign My Divine mission shall be proved: destroy this temple, and in three days I will of Mine own power raise it up.*<sup>(4)</sup> Then said the Jews contemptuously, Forty and six years was this Temple in building<sup>(5)</sup> (in course of restoration to its present state), and wilt Thou, indeed, rear it up in three days? But He spake of the more sacred temple of His body,—the peculiar habitation of Deity.<sup>f</sup>

When, therefore, He was risen on the third day from the dead, His disciples,—though they did not now understand the saying,—remembered that He had said this unto them: and they then more fully believed,<sup>g</sup> both the Scripture as having predicted that great event, and the word which Jesus had said.

Now when He was in Jerusalem, at the celebration of

\* Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor. *Matt. iii. 12.*

<sup>d</sup> I must be about My Father's business. *Luke ii. 49.*

It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing. *Gal. iv. 18.*

<sup>e</sup> Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee. But He answered, and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. *Matt. xii. 38—40.*

<sup>f</sup> In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. *Col. ii. ix.*

<sup>g</sup> If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? *John iii. 12.*

(\*) *The zeal of Thine House, &c.*] See Section CV., Note 2.

(\*) *Then answered the Jews and said.*] This form is sometimes used when no question has been put. See Section XXXIV., Note 4.

(\*) *I will raise it up.*] What Christ here says He will do, namely to raise His own body from the grave, is elsewhere spoken of as the work of the Father and of the Holy Spirit; being one of the numerous illustrations contained in Scripture of the Trinity:—"God hath raised up the Lord," (*1 Cor. vi. 14*).—"Christ, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (*1 Pet. iii. 18*).

(\*) *Forty and six years was this Temple in building.*] The Temple in which they then were was called the Second Temple, because a small portion remained of the one built by

Zorobabel upon the return from the Captivity. It stood on the same site as the first magnificent one built by Solomon, namely on Mount Moriah, but this is all that is positively known of the more ancient structure. Agreeably to the prediction of Haggai (*ii. 9*) the glory of the Latter Temple, in which our Lord appeared, was the greatest. Herod the Great commenced the repair or rather the rebuilding of Zorobabel's Temple in the eighteenth year of his reign,—that is, sixteen years before the birth of Christ; and as this was now the thirtieth year of our Lord's age, the time hitherto occupied in the work (for it was not yet completed) was exactly forty-six years.—The Temple continued increasing in magnificence till the time of Nero, when it was completed, and 18,000 workmen were dismissed. See Section CXII. Note 1.

Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

I, the Lord, search the heart. Jer. xvii. 10.

Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not. John vi. 64.

I (the Son of Man) am He which searcheth the reins and hearts. Rev. ii. 23.

*this Passover, in the feast day (during the Feast, GR.) many believed, though as yet but imperfectly, in His name (in Him as the Messiah), when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them (did not confide in them), or openly declare Himself to be the Christ, because He knew the hearts of all men, and needed not that any should testify (should acquaint Him with the character) of man, for He, being Omniscient, knew well what deceitfulness was in man.<sup>h</sup>*

## SECTION XXIII.

### NICODEMUS, A RULER OF THE JEWS, VISITS JESUS BY NIGHT.

John iii. 1—21.

\* If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing. John ix. 33.

Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you. Acts ii. 22.

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. Acts x. 38.

† To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John i. 12, 13.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature. 2 Cor. v. 17.

—born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. 1 Pet. i. 23.

‡ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Mark xvi. 16.

Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye

**T**HERE was then at Jerusalem a man of the sect of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus,<sup>(1)</sup> a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night,—for he was unwilling to offend his brethren of the Council by an open visit,—and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know (it is believed by many of us) that Thou art a Teacher come from God; for no man can do these wonderful miracles that Thou doest, except God be with and assist Him.<sup>a</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, *This acknowledgement will not of itself suffice to constitute a member of My kingdom: verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again,<sup>b</sup> (experience an entire change of heart and life by means of Regeneration), he cannot see (discern or enjoy the blessings of) the Kingdom of God: neither can you, while you remain unregenerate, appreciate the true character of the Messiah of whom you would now enquire.*

Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus,—perceiving that he understood what had been said of a natural birth, rather than of Spiritual Generation,—answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man, who has the opportunity of such privilege, be born of water and of the Spirit,<sup>c</sup> (<sup>(2)</sup>)—becoming My disciple by Baptismal Regenera-

(1) *Nicodemus.*] As it was the chief object of John to show that Jesus was the Messiah, he adduces the remarkable testimony of this person, one of rank among the Jews, and a member of their Sanhedrim (John vii. 50). However imperfect the notions of Nicodemus were at first, he was convinced of the Divine mission of Jesus, and retained that belief until his death. He is twice mentioned by John subsequent to this visit; namely, when he openly advocates the Saviour's

cause, defending Him against the unjust suspicions of the Jews (John vii. 50, 51); and when he assists in embalming His body (John xix. 39).

(2) *Born of water and of the Spirit.*] We are naturally led to interpret the *New Birth* of Holy Baptism, when we compare this discourse with the explicit charge to the disciples to baptize; with the promise that "whosoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" and with the declaration of St. Paul, that "we are saved by the

tion,—he cannot be properly initiated into the Gospel Covenant, and so cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, and so partakes of the nature of the parent, is still flesh only, minding carnal things; and that which is born of the Holy Spirit is spirit (is spiritual). Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye (even you who are Jews) must be born again. This birth is not discernible by the eye of sense: the wind<sup>d</sup> in the natural world bloweth where it listeth (where it will), in different directions uncontrolled by man, and thou hearest the sound thereof, and art assured of its existence from its wonderful effects; but, not seeing it, thou canst not tell the manner of its operations,—whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is it with every one that is born of the Spirit.<sup>(3)</sup>

Nicodemus, who had been taught to place religion chiefly in external things, answered again with surprise, and said unto Him, But how can these things possibly be?

shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts. ii. 38.

According to His mercy, He saved us by the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5.

<sup>d</sup> As thou knowest not the way of the Spirit, even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all. Eccles. xi. 5.

There came a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind... and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts ii. 2, 4.

washing (or laver) of Regeneration." Accordingly, such has been the unanimous opinion of ancient interpreters, as well as of the more eminent of the earlier moderns; and in conformity with that opinion, our Church, in unvarying language, has always asserted the doctrine of *Baptismal Regeneration*. In the Ninth of her Articles, speaking of the infection of human nature, she uses the words *regenerate* and *baptized* as equivalent, (for its framers translate the word *renatis* both ways).—We cannot make our Lord speak of two births, when He manifestly speaks but of one. The birth spoken of is not from water by itself, nor from the Spirit alone, but the two agents meet in the production of a new creature. What is granted and received in Christian Baptism is a change from the state natural into the state spiritual; a translation from the curse of Adam into the grace of Christ. By this federal admission into Christianity, many privileges are made over on God's part to the baptized; but all are reducible to two, remission of sins, and a covenant-claim for the time being to eternal happiness. To infants who are brought by believers to the font, original sin is remitted, and the grace of the Holy Spirit conferred: yet the continuance of it is suspended on conditions, which, when they come to years of discretion, they may or may not fulfil. Not only may the grace bestowed be weakened, but entirely lost; and therefore we pray for the person about to be regenerated, "that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him." The original words in the text rendered "Except a man, &c." strictly mean, "Except any human creature,"—whether man, woman, or child, &c.; thus extending the benefits of baptism to the entire flock, irrespective of age. If a child can be esteemed sinful without actual wickedness, so it may be esteemed holy without actual righteousness.

Many of the misapprehensions on this important subject arise from confounding Regeneration with Renovation. Those who hold Baptismal Regeneration according to the mind of the Church, by no means assert that it is all which

is necessary. Although it places us at the time in a state of acceptance and justification, yet there is great need of the constant renewing of the Holy Spirit, to preserve us in that state here, and to secure our reward hereafter. So St. Paul seems plainly to set forth in his admirable summary of Christian doctrine addressed to Titus (see Tit. iii. 5). If those heavenly motions, first vouchsafed at Baptism, are complied with, the renewing proceeds through the whole course of the spiritual life; and in accordance with this view, we do not find any Scripture exhortations to Christians to become regenerated, but there are several urging them to be renewed.—As the Sacrament of Baptism is the prescribed mode of Regeneration, so is the Lord's Supper the chief prescribed mode of Renovation: the soul which is born anew in the one is to be strengthened and refreshed in the other.

(3) So is every one that is born of the Spirit.] Perhaps there is no one subject on which we should be so careful not to go before our chief guide,—the authority of Scripture,—as in this of *Spiritual influences*. Sectarians, who deny baptismal regeneration, stumble at the threshold, and do not recover their steps; they understand "the witness of the Spirit" as an unaccountable enthusiasm, instead of being, as it is, a sober rational testimony. What are miscalled *experiences* are often self-deceptions, and can be no true tests of holiness.—There are many dangerous errors connected with this subject. Thus it is wrong to imagine that to any individual Christian there is not given a sufficiency of grace to work out his salvation; to suppose that grace so given will necessarily produce the effect intended; and above all, it is dangerous to presume upon any absolute assurance of being led by the Spirit without a corresponding practical effect upon the heart and life. This is the only sure testimony (1 John iii. 9). The Church further collects from Scripture that the gift of the Spirit is perfectly gratuitous; that it by no means acts irresistibly; and that its ordinary influence is gradual and progressive.

• The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart. Deut. xxx. 6.

○ God, renew a right spirit within me. Ps. li. 10.

This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. Jer. xxxi. 33.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will put My Spirit within you. Ezek. xxxvi. 26—27.

† As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. Isa. lv. 9.

‡ I came down from Heaven . . . What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? John vi. 38, 62.

‡ The Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery Serpent and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a Serpent of brass; and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the Serpent of brass he lived. Numb. xxi. 8, 9.

† I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. John xii. 32.

‡ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. John vi. 47.

† God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom. v. 8.—He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. Rom. viii. 32.—In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 1 John iv. 9.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master (a teacher) of Israel, and yet knowest not these things, which are plainly enough declared in the Scriptures? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do certainly know<sup>(4)</sup> to be true, and testify that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have thus told you of what may, speaking comparatively, be termed earthly things,—since they admit of similitudes taken from effects witnessed upon earth,—and ye believe them not; how shall ye believe if I go on to tell you of those heavenly things<sup>f</sup> which are still harder for the natural man to receive, and are mysteries much less capable of being illustrated from human experience? And no man hath ascended up to Heaven to bring down information of such things, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of man which is (whose proper dwelling-place is) in Heaven.<sup>g</sup> And, as you would discover the truth, avoid the first error of thinking that I am come as a great temporal prince; for as Moses lifted up (erected upon a pole) the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness,<sup>h</sup> that the people looking thereon might be saved, even so (after a similar manner) must the Son of man be lifted up<sup>i</sup> (2) conspicuously upon a Cross: that whosoever, whether Jew or Gentile, believeth in Him, the suffering Son of God, as the only meritorious cause of Salvation, should not perish under the sentence of Divine justice, but should rise from the grave and have eternal life.<sup>k</sup> For God, who is Love itself, so loved the world, the creation of His hands, that He freely gave and even delivered unto death His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life.<sup>l</sup> For God sent

(4) *We speak that we do know.*] There may be reference here to the Father, who is so often mentioned as agreeing with the Son; or to the Baptist, who gave his testimony to the same truth. Yet the plural number is frequently employed in the purest writings by a person in authority speaking of himself; and our Lord, in the next sentence, proceeds, "If I have told you earthly things," &c. He again uses the plural at Mark iv. 30.

(2) *So must the Son of Man be lifted up.*] This allusion by our Lord to His Passion seems to be one of the heavenly things of which He had just before spoken. The doctrine of a suffering and dying Messiah would be so contrary to all the hopes and expectations of a Jew, that, even to one so well disposed as Nicodemus, it was veiled under a figure. The Brazen Serpent, which is one of the most remarkable types of Christ, afforded a striking comparison, both as to the mode of death and its cause: for as the

Israelites, who looked with faith on the Serpent raised up in their sight, were cured of their wounds, so are all sinners to participate in Salvation who will faithfully "look unto Jesus" (Heb. xii. 2).

It may be observed, in connection with this passage, that a Type is "a designed resemblance between two events, the one which first takes place being a prophetic intimation of the other." Our translators have rendered the original of this word variously: at John xx. 25, Type is rendered *print*; at Acts vii. 43, *figure* or *model*; at Rom. vi. 17, *form* of doctrine; and at 1 Cor. x. 6, *example*. Yet the same idea is preserved of a *pattern* or *copy*,—of something to be imitated. Perhaps nothing will more aptly express the connection between a Type and its Antitype, than the similitude between the first sketch of a picture, and that picture when completely finished.

not His Son into the world to condemn *and punish* the world, *as He so justly might*; but that the world, through *faith in Him and reliance on His atonement*, might be saved.<sup>m</sup> He that *truly* believeth on Him is not condemned:<sup>n</sup> but he that *has the opportunity of knowing the Gospel, and believeth not*, is condemned already *as guilty by the Law, and by his own conscience, and by God; his punishment is inevitable*, because, *notwithstanding such display of the Divine mercy*, he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the *ground of condemnation*, that *Divine Light is now come into the world*;° and men, *resisting the evidence vouchsafed to them, have loved darkness (ignorance and sin) rather than Light*, because their deeds were evil.<sup>p</sup> For *so great is the force of evil passion and prejudice*, that every one that doeth evil hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd<sup>q</sup> (discovered, MARG.) But he that doeth truth<sup>r</sup> (*who liveth uprightly according to the Truth*), *hath nothing whereof to be ashamed, and cometh to the Light,—seeking to approach it more and more by every means of grace,—that so his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God, even according to the Almighty will.*

<sup>m</sup> The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Luke ix. 56.

<sup>n</sup> I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. John xiii. 47.

<sup>o</sup> The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. 1 John iv. 14.

<sup>p</sup> There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Rom. viii. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Then spake Jesus, saying, I am the Light of the world. John viii. 12.

<sup>r</sup> They (the wicked) are of those that rebel against the Light: they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof. Job xxiv. 13.

<sup>s</sup> All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the Light. Eph. v. 13.

<sup>t</sup> The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Eph. v. 9.

## SECTION XXIV.

### THE BAPTIST BEARS FINAL TESTIMONY TO JESUS AT ÆNON.

John iii. 22—36.

**A**FTER these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried *awhile* with them, and *through their agency* baptized *such as believed in Him*.—And John also was baptizing in Ænon,<sup>(1)</sup> near to Salim *on the west side of the Jordan; which was a convenient spot*, because there was much water (*many small pools, Gr.*) there. And they (*those of the people who followed the Baptist*) came *thither to him*, and were baptized; for John was not yet cast into prison.

Then there arose a question (*a controversy*) between some of John's disciples and *certain of the Jews*<sup>(2)</sup> *who had been baptized by the disciples of Christ*, about purifying (*about baptismal purification*). And they, *jealous of the growing*

<sup>a</sup> Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples. John iv. 2.

(1) Ænon.] The situation of this place is somewhat uncertain, but it is supposed to have been in Samaria; and it was certainly on the west side of the river, since John's disciples observe that on a former occasion he had baptized "beyond Jordan." It was most likely the same as Shalim, mentioned 1 Sam. ix. 4, remarkable, as that name implies, for its springs.

(2) The Jews.] Very many versions have the reading "a Jew," which is adopted by almost all the editors. It has not, however, been thought necessary to disturb the common reading, as the main purport of the passage is not affected.

*popularity of Jesus, came unto John for satisfaction in this matter, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan to be baptized, to whom thou bearest witness as the Son of God, behold, the same now baptizeth, even taking upon Himself thy peculiar office; and all men (great multitudes) come to Him.—John answered and said, A man can receive nothing of power and authority except it be given him,—as my commission was,—from heaven.<sup>b</sup> Ye yourselves can bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am only sent before Him to prepare men for His coming, and direct them to Him: I pretend not to equality with One, whose servant I am unworthy to be. He that hath peculiar right in the bride, is the Bridegroom<sup>c</sup> (3); but the friend of the Bridegroom (the brideman) which standeth near and heareth him expressing his delight in her, so far from entertaining feelings of envy, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy, therefore, is in like manner fulfilled in hearing Messiah speak graciously to His Church and invite her to come to Him. He must increase more and more in authority and influence; but I must decrease,—even as the morning-star waneth away before the Rising Sun. He that cometh from above, as Messiah hath come, is transcendently above all<sup>d</sup> the children of men. He that is of the earth only, as I am,—partaking of a corrupt origin, and full of imperfection,—is earthly, and speaketh of the earth (of earthly things), so that the character of his teaching must needs be of an inferior order: but He that cometh from above, although condescending to dwell for a time on earth, is above all<sup>e</sup> in the heavenly nature of His doctrine, as much as He is in the unapproachable dignity of His person. And what He hath seen and heard with His Father, that He plainly testifieth;<sup>f</sup> and yet no man (scarcely any one) receiveth His testimony.<sup>g</sup> He that hath from the heart received His testimony, hath declared his conviction and set his seal (his attestation) to this; that God is true,<sup>g</sup> and is now doing by Christ what He promised from the beginning of the world. For He, whom God*

<sup>b</sup> Who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? 1 Cor. iv. 7.

No man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God. Heb. v. 4.

Every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. Jas. i. 17.

<sup>c</sup> Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them. Matt. ix. 15.

<sup>d</sup> Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. Eph. i. 21.

Christ who is over all, God blessed for ever. Rom. ix. 5.

<sup>e</sup> The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second Man is the Lord from heaven. 1 Cor. xv. 47.

<sup>f</sup> All things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you. John xv. 15.

<sup>g</sup> He that sent Me is true. John viii. 26.

He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. 1 John v. 10.

(3) *He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom.* ] The marriage-union is a figure frequently employed in the Psalms and Prophets to represent the intimate union which subsists between Jehovah and His people; and it is also made use of in the New Testament to describe the same connexion betwixt Christ and His Church (see Matt. xxii. 2; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Eph. v. 27; Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 9). Thus the title of *Bridegroom* here applied to Christ, and which He afterwards assumed (Matt. ix. 15), identifies Him with *Jehovah*.—The Baptist represents himself as the Paronymph or Brideman (as the friend was called), who presented the husband to the bride, and continued with them during the first days of

the feast. The Baptist's ministry is supposed to have lasted only six months, being the excess of his age over that of Jesus.

(\*) *No man receiveth His testimony.* ] This is one of those occasional phrases which must not be too rigidly interpreted. That such has always been a figurative way of speaking, appears from the purest classical writers of antiquity. Thus we have the phrase "*Nemo, hercule, nemo; vel duo, vel nemo.*"—So again, those who here came to ask an explanation of John, complain that "*all men*" were going over to Jesus,—an hyperbole common to those who speak under the influence of passion or prejudice.

hath *thus* sent, speaketh the words of God *as none ever did before,—making known His will and revealing to us heavenly things*: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure (*sparingly or with limitation*) unto Him,<sup>h</sup> *as He did to all former prophets and messengers; but the Spirit, by a perpetual energy, ever dwelleth in and operateth by Him.* The Father *pre-eminently* loveth the Son, and hath given the government of all things into His hand.<sup>i</sup>—He then that truly believeth on the Son, hath *that principle which will issue in everlasting life*; and he that believeth not<sup>(\*)</sup> (*that is disobedient to, Gr.*) the Son, shall not see *eternal life*, but the wrath of God,—*even the original curse laid upon Adam,—still abideth on him*:<sup>k</sup> *he has refused the only means by which that wrath could be removed.*

<sup>h</sup> And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Isa. xi. 2.

<sup>i</sup> In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. ii. 9.

<sup>j</sup> All things are delivered unto Me of My Father. Luke x. 22.

<sup>k</sup> —unto them who do not obey the Truth, indignation and wrath. Rom. ii. 8.

## SECTION XXV.

## THE BAPTIST IS IMPRISONED BY HEROD ANTIPAS.

*Matt. xiv. 3—5. Mark vi. 17—20. Luke iii. 19, 20.*

**B**UT Herod *Antipas*, the tetrarch of *Galilee*, being reproved by him (*John*) for *adultery and incest with Herodias*,<sup>(1)</sup> his brother Philip's<sup>(2)</sup> wife, and *also* for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all (*in addition to his other crimes*) that he sent forth and laid hold upon (*apprehended*) *John*, and bound him *with chains*, and shut him up in prison for *Herodias' sake*; for *indeed* he had *wickedly and unlawfully* married her, *though his brother was still living*.—For *John* had said *plainly* unto Herod, *It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife*.<sup>a</sup> Therefore *Herodias* had a quarrel (*bore deep resentment*) against him, and would have killed him, but she could not

<sup>a</sup> If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing. Lev. xx. 21.

(\*) *That believeth not.*] The original of this phrase plainly shows that the faith to which the promise of life is annexed, is an effectual principle of sincere and unreserved *Obedience*: and to make one part of Scripture consistent with the other, this must *always* be annexed to our idea of *saving faith*. To believe in Jesus Christ, is to receive as infallibly true the substance of all the divine communications, inclusive of its *precepts* as well as its *doctrines*. In fact, Scripture will be found to use the words *Faith* and *Obedience* indiscriminately; sometimes declaring that we shall be accepted and saved by believing; sometimes, by doing our duty: it interchanges these two conditions of God's favour, and so quickly passes from the one view to the other, as to show that they do not differ except in idea. To sum up both in one word, the one doctrine of the Scriptures may be described as a *surrender* of ourselves to God in all things (see Section XLL, Note 45).

(1) *Herodias.*] As a grand-daughter of Herod the Great, Herodias was a near relative of Herod Antipas, and so incest was added to their open adultery. He had taken her by force from her husband, who had a daughter by her,—probably the same who afterwards danced before Herod, and aided the accomplishment of the mother's design against the Baptist's life.—Herod's deserting his former wife was avenged by her father Aretas, king of *Petrea*; and the Jews considered the defeat of Herod on that occasion as a judgment for the murder of the Baptist.

(2) *His brother Philip.*] This was only a *half* brother of Herod Antipas, for they had different mothers. The name by which he seems to have been generally called was simply Herod, which Philip probably assumed as a title to distinguish his family and descent.—His proper name of Philip is considered to be an interpolation here.



*succeed as yet in effecting that:* for Herod feared (reverenced) John, knowing that he was a just and an holy man, and *had* observed him<sup>(a)</sup> (saved him, MARG.); and when he heard him, he did many things *that were suggested by him*, and heard him *teach* gladly. And when, *overcome at length by the importunity of Herodias*, he would have consented to put him to death, he *still* feared *the Baptist's influence with the multitude*, because they counted him as (*for*) a prophet.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>b</sup> We fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet. Matt. xxi. 26.

The people be persuaded that John was a prophet. Luke xx. 6.

## SECTION XXVI.

JESUS RETURNS INTO GALILEE TO AVOID THE GROWING MALICE OF THE RULERS: ON HIS WAY THROUGH SAMARIA, HE REVEALS HIMSELF TO A WOMAN OF THE COUNTRY, AND AFTERWARDS DISCOURSES WITH HIS DISCIPLES ON SPIRITUAL FOOD.

*John iv. 1—42.*

WHEN therefore the Lord Jesus knew how that the chief Pharisees, *who were ever jealous of other influence with the people*, had heard that Jesus made and baptized *even more disciples than John*,<sup>a</sup>—though *indeed* Jesus Himself baptized not<sup>b</sup> *in person*, but His disciples *in His name*,—He left Judea, *where the power of the Pharisees was greatest*, and departed again into Galilee; *that so He might follow up the efforts of the Baptist, whose ministry had now closed, in that safer and more retired quarter.*

<sup>a</sup> And His disciples came unto John and said, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him. John iii. 26.

<sup>b</sup> Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel. 1 Cor. i. 17.

And He must needs go through Samaria, *that being the nearest route from Judea into Galilee.* Then cometh He *on His road* to a city of Samaria, which is called *by the Jews* Sychar,<sup>(1)</sup> *and which stood near to the parcel of ground that Jacob at his last benediction gave to his son*

(<sup>a</sup>) *Observed him.*] The sense given in the margin of the Common version, "saved (or preserved) him" from the malice of Herodias, is supported by Matt. ix. 17, where the original word is so translated.—But at Luke ii. 19, the word has the sense of "keeping" in mind, and so might also be understood here of Herod's carefully regarding the admonitions of John, previously at least to this last reproof of his besetting sin.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Jesus Himself baptized not.*] It did not seem fit that the Saviour should baptize in His own name, and the subsequent baptism of the Holy Ghost was more peculiarly His. Also it was more important that He should preach than baptize (see 1 Cor. i. 17); and it might have led to jealous schisms, for He could not baptize all, and we find that the early Christians actually valued themselves according to the eminence of the person who baptized them (1 Cor. i. 10—15).

(<sup>2</sup>) *Sychar.*] This was formerly called

Shechem or Sichem, one of the oldest cities of Palestine (Gen. xii. 6), and was situated between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xxi. 21). The ancient name was that of the person of whose descendants Jacob bought the land, which descended to his son Joseph (Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19; Acts vii. 16). *Sichem* is supposed to have been corrupted by the Jews to *Sychar*, which means "drunkenness," as an appellation of contempt. So Isaiah speaks of persons of that tribe as "the drunkards of Ephraim" (Isa. xxviii. 1). This place is now called Nablous (a corruption of Neapolis, or New-Town). It is described by modern travellers as beautifully placed in a narrow valley between the two mountains above-named, which rise (to the height of about 600 feet each) on its north and south. A few Samaritans still dwell there, who retain the faith of their fathers, and repair at stated times to the site of the Temple on Mount Gerizim to perform their acts of worship.

Joseph.<sup>c</sup> Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus (*just as a tired person would do*) on the edge of the well which stood without the city. And it was now about the sixth hour (*twelve o'clock, or mid-day*).

<sup>c</sup> And Israel said unto Joseph, I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite. Gen. xlviii. 21, 22.

There cometh soon after to the well a woman of Samaria from the city to draw water. Jesus, intending to improve this opportunity of conversing with the woman, notwithstanding that she had been a great sinner,—saith unto her, Give Me, I beg of thee, a little water to drink: for His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat (*some food*), and could not assist Him. Then saith the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?—and indeed she had some reason to wonder at so familiar a request, for the Jews have no dealings in the way of social intercourse with the Samaritans.<sup>(\*)</sup>

Jesus, without taking notice of the exciting feud which existed between the two countries, answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the inestimable Gift of God,<sup>d</sup>—a Gift which He alone can bestow, and which is to be vouchsafed to all who will truly seek for it; and, if thou knewest, moreover, who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have been glad to comply at once with so small a request, and have rather asked of Him, and He would have given thee Living Water.<sup>e</sup> (<sup>(\*)</sup> "This spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive" (John vii. 39).

<sup>d</sup> — who have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Heb. vi. 4.

<sup>e</sup> With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation. Isa. xii. 3.

My people have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters. Jer. ii. 18. In that day there shall be a Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Zech. xiii. 1.

The woman,—supposing Him to be speaking of purer water from some running spring in that part of the country,

(\*) *The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.* The Samaritans had been a remnant of the ten tribes, with a mixture of foreigners from Chaldaea. They occupied that central part of Palestine which was allotted to the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh. After the return from Babylon, they offered their aid in rebuilding the Temple, but meeting with a refusal, they then did all in their power to obstruct the work; and when, by favour of Alexander the Great, they obtained leave to build a temple for themselves on Mount Gerizim, they strenuously contended that that mountain was the site designated by Moses, whose writings they chiefly valued. Their leader, Sanballat, constituted his son High-Priest: thus their religion, which was a strange mixture of idolatry with true religion, became perpetuated; and by receiving Jewish traitors in their territory, and by other hostile proceedings on both sides, an irreconcilable hatred at last sprung up. A Jew connected drunkenness, apostasy, and indeed every vice, with the idea of a Samaritan, regarding him as the vilest of the human race: thus, when instigated by rage against Jesus, the words which their fury dictated were, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil" (John viii. 48). Nor did the Samaritans in our Lord's time much yield to the Jews in virulence; and they refused

to receive even Jesus on one occasion, because He was going up to Jerusalem to receive the Passover (Luke ix. 53).—Although the Jews and Samaritans received no gifts from one another, or exchanged acts of kindness, they might buy and sell (as we see done on this occasion); they might lodge in the towns (Luke ix. 52); employ labour; and an Amen was allowed to passing benedictions.—The present gracious example of our Lord in visiting them was afterwards imitated by the Apostles, whom we early find preaching the Gospel in Samaria (Acts viii. 25).

(\*) *Living Water.* This is a common figure with the Prophets. In Scripture-phrase generally, it means the Gospel, or doctrine of Christ: but "the Gift of God" being properly "the Holy Spirit" (see Acts viii. 20; xi. 17), is here aptly represented by "Living Water." The temporary benefit which water confers on the body, is contrasted with the lasting service which the Holy Spirit renders to the soul in strengthening and refreshing it. The metaphor is a just and striking one, and our Lord proceeds to set it forth still more forcibly, when He proceeds to represent this water as not only "living," but "ever springing," affording a never-failing supply of spiritual nourishment, whereas water drawn in a vessel must be exhausted.

—saith unto Him, Sir, thou hast nothing (*no pitcher*) to draw with, and the well is deep; *neither is there any other place to get water in this neighbourhood*: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater, or *better able to discover good water*, than our father Jacob, which *distinguished patriarch* gave us the well, and drank thereof, himself, and his children (*his whole family*), and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water, *good though it be*, shall soon thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst<sup>f</sup> (*shall never feel the want of true nourishment here or hereafter*); but the Water that I shall give him shall be in him as a well of water,<sup>g</sup> springing and ever bubbling up into everlasting life. The woman, *still misapprehending the nature of this Gift*, saith unto Him, Sir, *I do gladly ask of thee so great a favour*; give me this *most desirable* water, that I thirst not again, neither come hither to draw.

*So little impression had the conversation yet made upon the ignorant mind of this woman, that Jesus determined to awaken her conscience by convincing her of sin,—at the same time giving a striking proof of His Omniscience; and saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither with him again. Upon this startling allusion to her private life, the woman, anxious to conceal her former history and shame, answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well (correctly) said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, from all of whom thou hast been divorced for thy repeated adulteries; and he, whom thou now hast cohabiting with thee, is not really and lawfully thy husband: in that thou saidst truly enough. The woman, amazed at this proof of His knowledge, and alarmed at such a home-reproof from a stranger, became anxious to divert the conversation; and, returning to the subject of the national feud, she introduced the disputed question concerning the proper place for Divine worship, and saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a Prophet,<sup>h</sup> and would learn thy opinion on a matter of considerable importance: Our fathers worshipped of old in this neighbouring mountain<sup>i</sup> of Gerizim, whence the Blessings were promised; here our Temple stands, and here we still continue to worship God; and ye Jews say on the contrary that the place where men ought to worship is in Jerusalem.<sup>k</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Woman, this controversy is one of comparatively little moment: believe Me, the hour shortly cometh, when ye shall worship the Father, neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem only;<sup>l</sup> for the peculiar rites of all the descendants of Israel are to cease, and the worship of God shall no*

<sup>f</sup> He that believeth on Me shall never thirst. John vi. 35.

<sup>g</sup> If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive. John vii. 37—39.

<sup>h</sup> The secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will report that God is in you of a truth. 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

<sup>i</sup> And Moses charged the people saying, These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people. Deut. xxvii. 12.

<sup>j</sup> Unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither shalt thou come. Deut. xii. 5.

And the Lord said unto Solomon, I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, to put My name there. 1 Kings ix. 3.

<sup>k</sup> From the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering, Mal. i. 11.

I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

longer be limited to exclusive ordinances or sanctuaries. But with regard to the immediate question which you would have Me solve, I must tell you, that ye Samaritans are clearly in a state of schism, and worship ye know not what divinity: but we Jews know with certainty, since we have the express Word of God as our surety, what Divinity we worship; for Salvation, together with its Author, is of the Jews,<sup>m</sup> (9) and through them it is to be derived to other men. But the hour cometh, and is now instant, when the true worshippers shall no longer worship the Father in particular places only, or by typical observances, but in spirit<sup>n</sup> (with heart and soul), and in truth<sup>o</sup> (possessing the reality of those spiritual blessings of which the types were a shadow); for the Father especially seeketh such to worship Him. God is Himself a Spirit,—incorporeal, invisible, pure and holy,—and they that would really and acceptably worship Him, must worship Him accordingly, in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto Him, I know from what Moses wrote that Messiah (which is called Christ<sup>(6)</sup>) cometh about this time: when He is come, He will tell us (will bring us word) of these and of all things which we are to believe and do.—Then Jesus saith plainly unto her, I that speak unto thee am He.<sup>(7)</sup>

And upon His saying this, His disciples came up, and, having taken notice from a distance, marvelled that He talked in so familiar a manner with the woman; for they perceived that she was a Samaritan, and it was not usual with Jews to converse in public with women. Yet such was their habitual reverence for their Master, that no man among them said, What seekest Thou<sup>(8)</sup> (what business can you have with her)? or, Why talkest Thou with her?

Then, upon their coming up, the woman,—struck with awe at the words which Jesus had uttered, and convinced, through divine grace imparted to her, of their truth,—left her water-pot (her pitcher) behind her, quite forgetful, in

<sup>m</sup> Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Isa. ii. 3.

<sup>n</sup> In mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve Me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, with all your holy things. Ezek. xx. 40.

<sup>o</sup> Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came. Rom. ix. 5.

<sup>n</sup> We worship God in the spirit. Phil. iii. 3.

<sup>o</sup> Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. John i. 17.

(5) *Salvation is of the Jews.*] Our Lord took another opportunity of declaring this, and of deciding in effect the dispute against the Samaritans; namely, when He sent the Samaritan leper whom He had cleansed, not to Mount Gerizim, but to the priests at Jerusalem, to make offerings to God in the Temple there (Luke xvii. 14).

(6) *Which is called Christ.*] This is added by the Evangelist, who having introduced the term Messiah, as spoken by the woman, proceeds to explain it for the sake of readers in general.

(7) *I that speak unto thee am He.*] Our Lord declares Himself with more freedom in Samaria, where there was no fear of sedition or attempts to make Him king. The Samaritans showed themselves also more deserving of this favour, and from the Pentateuch alone had obtained clearer notions of the Messiah than their boasting neigh-

bours, who, corrupted by their vain traditions, fancied themselves possessed of the key of knowledge. The whole narrative suggests this obvious reflection, that the knowledge of Divine things is most readily communicated to those humble minds which are least possessed by prejudice, and an opinion of their own superior wisdom. It was probably the humility of this woman, which recommended her to the favourable regard of Jesus; for it is observable that she was found alone at the well, and, as though conscious of her guilt, had chosen the most unusual time of day to draw water (see Gen. xxiv. 11).

(8) *Yet no man said, What seekest Thou?*] A lesson, not unimportant, is here conveyed; that we ought not to be curious about the proceedings of those, concerning whose prudence and integrity we have already had sufficient proof.

*her confusion, of the errand on which she had first come, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men of the place whom she first met, Come and see a most extraordinary man, which told me all things that ever I did,<sup>(9)</sup> even the most secret actions of my life! Is not this the expected Christ?\* Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him.*

‡ All things are opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Heb. iv. 13.

In the meanwhile, *before the men arrived*, His disciples, *who had brought back some provisions with them*, prayed (*entreated*) Him, saying, Master, eat. But He, *knowing that the townspeople were already on their way, and that they would gladly hear him, deferred the refreshment of the body; and said unto them, I have meat to eat (I have spiritual food) that ye know not of. The disciples, therefore, not understanding Him, said one to another, Hath any man brought Him aught to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My most refreshing meat,—the great object and design of My life,—is to do the will of Him that sent Me,<sup>9</sup> and to finish His great work of Salvation. Say ye not, in one of your proverbs, There are yet after seed-time about four months, and then cometh harvest? My spiritual fruits are as certain, and the time of gathering is not so distant: I say unto you, behold the multitude which even now approaches! lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white (changing to a paler colour) already to harvest.<sup>†</sup> And you shall reap in due season if you faint not: for he that reapeth in this harvest of the Gospel receiveth wages (his reward), though he had not the labour of sowing, and gathereth fruit, not merely a temporary harvest, but that which shall endure unto life eternal;<sup>‡</sup> so that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together <sup>‡</sup> in the fruit of their labours. And herein is that common saying true, One soweth and another reapeth.<sup>‡</sup> I sent you to reap that whereon ye at first bestowed no labour; for ye neither prepared the soil nor sowed the seed of the Gospel: other men, as the Prophets of old and John the Baptist, laboured in that respect, and ye are entered into the field of their labours, perfecting what they began.*

‡ I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food. Job xxiii. 12.

‡ The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest. Luke x. 2.

‡ They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. Dan. xii. 3.

‡ He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Ps. cxxvi. 6.

‡ Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap. Mic. vi. 15.

‡ I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them *in the city, and vouchsafe them the benefit of His instructions. And He, gratified by the willing mind they had shown, abode there two days.*

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on

(9) Which told me all things that ever I did.] This is another of those hyperboles which are met with in the Gospels, but which at the same time are examples of the extreme naturalness of many things they contain.—The woman alluded

to what she considered the most important events of her life; and her exaggeration may have arisen from her hurried state of spirits, into which she was evidently thrown, for she forgot even to take back her pitcher with her.

Him for the saying (*the report*) of the woman which testified, He told me all that ever I did. And many more believed because of His own Word, and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying *alone*, for we ourselves have heard Him <sup>v</sup> *teach*, and know *from conviction* that this is indeed the Christ, the *promised* Saviour of the world.

<sup>v</sup> If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. 1 John v. 9.

## SECTION XXVII.

JESUS COMMENCES THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL IN GALILEE; AND AT CANA CURES WITH HIS WORD A YOUTH LYING SICK AT CAPERNAUM.

*Matt.* iv. 12, 17. *Mark* i. 14, 15. *Luke* iv. 14, 15. *John* iv. 43, 45—54.

**N**OW after the two days which He passed at Sychar, when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed thence and returned [went, JOHN] in the power (*under the guidance*) of the Holy Spirit into Galilee. Then, when He was come into Galilee, the Galileans received Him *gladly*, having seen all the things that He did at Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover; for they also, *in common with other Israelites*, went unto the Feast.

And from that time Jesus began to preach *openly*; and He came preaching the Gospel (*the Good Tidings*) of the Kingdom of God, and saying, The *predicted* time is fulfilled,<sup>a</sup> (1) and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand: repent ye *therefore*, and believe the Gospel,—*placing all your hopes and confidence therein*.

So, *in the course of His progress, it happened that* Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water into wine. And there was *then* a certain nobleman, of the court or household of Herod Antipas, whose son was *dangerously* sick at Capernaum,—*distant from thence about a day's journey*. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went *from Capernaum* unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down <sup>(2)</sup> *without delay* and heal his son, for he was *to all appearance* at the point of death.

Then said Jesus unto him, *and to those who stood by*, Except ye *Galileans continually* see signs and wonders wrought before your eyes, ye will not (*ye are unwilling to*) believe:<sup>b</sup> *Ye are not like the honest-hearted Samaritans*,

<sup>a</sup> Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks. Dan. ix. 25.

When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son. Gal. iv. 4.

—that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ. Eph. i. 10.

<sup>b</sup> The Jews require a sign. 1 Cor. i. 22.

(1) *The time is fulfilled.*] The time, as well as the place and other circumstances of our Lord's birth, coincided with the interpretations of the prophecies then commonly received by the Jews themselves. "The fulness of time" was now accomplished, for Daniel's seventy weeks had expired. A week in prophetic language is

seven years, and it was now 490 years, reckoning from the order issued to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem.

(2) *That He would come down.*] This is illustrated by the present features of the country, for the whole route, from the place still called Cana towards Capernaum, is one continued *descent*.

who believed, some of them only upon testimony, and many more when they had heard the doctrine of the Gospel. The nobleman—*here anxiously interrupting*—saith unto Him, Sir, come down immediately ere my child die. Jesus saith unto Him, *It needeth not that I go thither: go thy way back in peace; thy son liveth* <sup>c</sup> (*is even now well*). And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way *homeward*.

<sup>c</sup> He sent His word, and healed them. Ps. cvii. 20.

And as he was now going down to *Capernaum*, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday, at the seventh hour (*one in the afternoon*) the fever *suddenly and entirely* left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour (*the very moment of time*) in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth. And, *confirmed in his faith by this astonishing proof of Omnipotence*, himself believed, and his whole house (*his entire family*).

This is the second miracle that Jesus did *at Cana, and, as before*, when He was come again (*had returned*) out of Judea into Galilee.—And there went out a fame (*a favourable report*) of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified, *as the object of admiration and reverence*, of all who heard Him.

## SECTION XXVIII.

JESUS TEACHES AT NAZARETH, AND APPLIES TO HIMSELF ISAIAH'S PREDICTION OF THE MESSIAH.

*Luke iv. 16—30. John iv. 44.*

<sup>a</sup> Paul and his company went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets,

AND He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. And, as His *regular* custom was, He went into the synagogue <sup>(1)</sup> on the Sabbath-day; and, *having obtained the customary permission*, He stood up for to read.<sup>a</sup>

(1) *He went into the synagogue.*] Synagogues, or Jewish places of worship, are supposed to have existed before the Captivity (see Ps. lxxiv. 8). After the Captivity, and in our Lord's time, there were synagogues in every city, and even in the villages (Matt. ix. 35). In Jerusalem there were, it is said, as many as four hundred and eighty; and the attendance in them was very regular on the second, fifth, and seventh days of the week. The principal officer was "the ruler of the synagogue," who was also a judge,—sometimes holding a court of justice in his synagogue, and having the power to inflict the minor punishment of scourging (see Matt. x. 17). The other officers were the regularly appointed minister and ten or more elders. Portions of the Law and

of the Prophets were read every Sabbath. The reader (who was also the expounder) was not, however, required to be of the sacerdotal tribe; for that office might be performed by any fitting person, with leave of the ruler of the synagogue (Acts xiii. 15). An interpreter attended, translating each verse after the reader, so that the people might understand it (Neh. viii. 8); for the Hebrew language had become degenerate from the large admixture of foreign words, and was now divided into two branches; the Chaldee being most spoken in Judea, and the Syriac in Galilee.—Our Lord's regular attendance at the established place of worship, both at His own town and elsewhere, is a strong argument against all separatists.

And there was delivered unto Him the Book of the prophet Esaias (*the scroll of Isaiah's prophecy*). And when He had opened the book <sup>(\*)</sup> (*unrolled the scroll*), He searched for and found the place where it was written concerning Himself, THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME <sup>b</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> (*solemnly set Me apart*) TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR: HE HATH SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKEN-HEARTED; TO PREACH DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERING OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND <sup>(4)</sup>; TO SET AT LIBERTY THEM THAT ARE BRUISED—TO PREACH THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD <sup>c</sup> (*See Isaiah lxi. 1, 2.*)

And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister (*the Chazan or attendant*) who had charge of the Sacred writings; and sat down, <sup>d</sup> as was then the custom of Jewish teachers, to preach. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened (*intently fixed*) on Him in expectation of what He would deliver. And He began to say unto them, This day is this portion of Holy Scripture just read fulfilled in your ears. And He went on to prove that the fulness of time had at length arrived; that His works and the doctrine which He preached manifested him to be the Messiah of whom the Prophet spake.

And all in the congregation, struck for the moment with irresistible admiration, bare Him witness <sup>e</sup> (*gave Him their favourable testimony*), and wondered at the gracious words, so full of power and graceful dignity, which proceeded out of His mouth. <sup>f</sup> And, nevertheless, they said presently after,—for they stumbled at His application of the prophecy,—Is not this Joseph's son? <sup>g</sup> Can it be possible that so obscure a person should be the Messiah?

the rulers of the Synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. Acts xiii. 14, 15.

<sup>b</sup> God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. Acts x. 38.

<sup>c</sup> He saith, I have heard thee in a Time Accepted, and in the Day of Salvation have I succoured thee: behold now is the Time Accepted; behold now is the Day of Salvation. 2 Cor. vi. 2.

<sup>d</sup> I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple. Matt. xxvi. 55.

The people came unto Him, and He sat down and taught them. John viii. 2.

<sup>e</sup> When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Job xxix. 11.

<sup>f</sup> Thou art fairer than the children of men: Grace is poured into Thy lips. Ps. xlv. 2.

<sup>g</sup> And when He was come into His own country, He taught in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom? Is not this the carpenter's son? And they were offended in Him. Matt. xiii. 54—57.

We know this man whence he is; but when Christ cometh no man knoweth whence He is. John vii. 27.

(\*) *Had opened the book.*] Ancient writings were upon parchment, in the form of long scrolls upon two sticks or handles, which the reader unrolled and rolled as he proceeded (see Isa. xxxiv. 4; Heb. x. 7). Such copies of the Old Testament are still used in Jewish synagogues.

(2) *He hath anointed Me.*] The three great offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, were each conferred under the Law by the ceremony of anointing the person. But the expression here rather signifies to be inaugurated, or introduced into an office. Jesus is our Prophet, Priest, and King; and though it does not appear that He was literally anointed to these offices, the descent of the Holy Spirit was analogous to that ceremony, and (as Peter declared to Cornelius and others at Cæsarea) was a mark, publicly exhibited, that God had anointed Him. The name of Messiah in the Hebrew,—like that of Christ in the Greek,—signifies "the Anointed."

(4) *Recovering of sight to the blind.*] Instead of this clause, the Hebrew text (which was no doubt read by our Lord) has, "freedom to those bound in prison:" but Luke, writing for the Greek Jews, followed the Septuagint version;

and the two renderings are explained by the Eastern custom of putting out the eyes of prisoners, as in the case of Samson and Zedekiah.—This, with the clauses which precede and follow, may all be interpreted in a spiritual sense: thus the poor may be understood of the poor in spirit (see Matt. v. 3), and indeed the word "meek" is employed in the Hebrew; the broken-hearted are the penitent (Ps. xxxiv. 18); the captives, those bound with the chain of their sins (Rom. vii. 23); the blind, those made so by Satan (Matt. xiii. 13); the bruised, those who are worn down by the galling fetters of a ceremonial Religion.—The "acceptable year of the Lord" plainly refers to the year of Jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9, 10), when debts were remitted, inheritances restored to their rightful owners, and freedom given to Hebrew slaves. The Jews themselves considered this a type of the redemption by the Messiah; to whom the whole of this noble prophecy evidently refers in the highest sense, although primarily applicable to the prophet. (Compare similar applications: Ps. xvi. 10 with Acts xiii. 36, 37; and Zech. xi. 12, 13, with Matt. xxvii. 9, 10.)



And He, *in reply to their whisperings and thoughts, and knowing that with narrow mind they were but looking for some favourable marks of His power, said further unto them, Ye will surely say unto Me (remind Me of) this proverb,*<sup>(5)</sup> *Physician, heal thyself (heal the diseased of thine own city); whatsoever we have heard that Thou hast done in Capernaum,*<sup>h</sup> *do also here in Thy country, that we may see and believe in Thee. And He said also, Verily I say unto you, No Prophet is accepted [a Prophet hath no honour, JOHN] in his own country (he must not expect to be acknowledged there as such, wherever else His claims may be received). But I tell you of a truth (truly), Many widows were in the land of Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up, so that there was no rain for three years and six months*<sup>i (6)</sup>—*when in consequence of such long-continued drouth great famine was throughout all the land;*<sup>k</sup> *but unto none of them was Elias sent to relieve their wants, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a Gentile woman there that was a widow.*<sup>l</sup> *And so again, many lepers were in the land of Israel in the time of Eliseus (Elisha) the prophet, and none of them was cleansed of his leprosy saving Naaman the Syrian.*<sup>m</sup>

*Thus did Jesus in effect tell them, that their doubts and ingratitude merited the like treatment which God's prophets of old had dealt to their forefathers; and that He should thenceforth offer the evidences of His divine mission rather to others than to them. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath at the application made to their own case, and at the disgrace of being pronounced less worthy than Samaritans or Gentiles. And, with a sudden burst of popular caprice, they rose up tumultuously against Him; and notwithstanding that it was the Sabbath, thrust Him out of both their synagogue and the city; and not content with this violence, they led Him next unto the brow (a projecting eminence on the side) of the hill whereon their city was built—so that, as the most summary mode of vengeance, they might cast Him down headlong thence. But He,—having permitted their malice thus far,—passing along unperceived through the midst of them, quietly went His way.*

<sup>h</sup> Thou Capernaum, if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. Matt. xi. 23.

<sup>i</sup> Elias prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. Jas. v. 17.

<sup>k</sup> And there was a sore famine in Samaria. 1 Kings xviii. 2.

<sup>l</sup> The word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. . . . And she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. 1 Kings xvii. 9, 16.

<sup>m</sup> Then went Naaman down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. 2 Kings v. 14.

(5) *This proverb.*] Similar proverbs are found in the Jewish and other writers. So Virgil says, *Hanc primum tutare domum.*

(6) *Three years and six months.*] It does not appear from the passage here referred to that the

heavens were shut up for more than three years; but the six other months of dry weather had preceded: there was only rain in Judea at two seasons of the year, Spring and Autumn, called "the early and the latter rain" (Jer. v. 24).

## SECTION XXIX.

## JESUS DWELLS AT CAPERNAUM.

*Matt.* iv. 13—16. *Mark* i. 21, 22. *Luke* iv. 31, 32.

AND leaving Nazareth, He came down and dwelt in Capernaum,<sup>(1)</sup> a city of Galilee, which is upon the sea-coast or north-west shore of the Lake of Gennesaret, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: that it might be fulfilled (*whereby that was fulfilled*) which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, saying, THE LAND OF ZABULON AND THE LAND OF NEPTHALIM, BY THE WAY OF (*towards*) THE SEA, BEYOND (*about, or by the side of*) JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES: THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS SAW GREAT LIGHT, AND TO THEM WHICH SAT IN THE REGION AND SHADOW OF DEATH, LIGHT IS SPRUNG UP<sup>(2)</sup> (*see Isa.* ix. 1, 2).

And straightway on the Sabbath-day He entered into the synagogue; and He taught them on the Sabbath-days. And they were astonished at His doctrine (*His manner of teaching*), for His Word was with power<sup>a</sup>: He taught them as One that had authority, and not as the Scribes.

<sup>a</sup> The Word of God is quick and powerful. Heb. iv. 12.

## SECTION XXX.

THE DISCIPLES, SIMON AND ANDREW, JAMES AND JOHN, ARE CALLED TO A MORE REGULAR ATTENDANCE; AND WITNESS THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

*Matt.* iv. 18—22. *Mark* i. 16—20. *Luke* v. 1—11.

AND it came to pass that as the people pressed upon Him, *hoping* to hear the Word of God,<sup>a</sup> He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret;<sup>(1)</sup> and *there* He saw two ships

<sup>a</sup> The common people heard Him gladly. Mark xii. 37.

(1) *And dwelt in Capernaum.*] See Section XXII., Note 1. This place is subsequently termed our Lord's "*own city*" (*Matt.* ix. 1),—an expression which denoted residence, as well as a place of birth. What little rest He had, was here; and several reasons might have determined the choice of it. It was populous, affording an opportunity of doing much good: Peter lived there; and the nobleman whose son had been cured, whose influence might prove useful. It was a safe distance from Jerusalem; while the Lake afforded a quick retreat, if needed, as well as an easy passage to the neighbourhood.—The very site of Capernaum is now doubtful, there being many extensive ruins on the shores of the Lake, overgrown to the height of some feet with grass and bushes.

(2) *The people which sat in darkness, &c.]*

These are not the exact words in our translation of Isaiah; and the most correct version of the Hebrew is given as follows:—"According as at the first time He debased the land of Zabulon and Naphthali, so in the latter time He shall make them glorious;" which is a plain prediction, that as that land had the first share in the calamity by Assyria, so they had the glorious prerogative of enjoying the frequent presence of the Messiah.

(1) *The Lake of Gennesaret.*] This extensive water, called also 'the Sea of Galilee' and 'Sea of Tiberias,' lies towards the head of the river Jordan. Collections of water are in Scripture called *seas*, and we find this described in the Old Testament as the Sea of Chinnereth (*Numb.* xxxiv. 11; *Josh.* xii. 2): that name became

(*fishing-boats*) standing *hauled up by the shore of the Lake*, but the fishermen were gone out of them. And as He walked *on farther* by the sea, He saw *the owners of the boats,—who were the two brethren, Simon, now called Peter, and Andrew his brother,—casting a net into the sea to cleanse it* [washing their nets, LUKE], for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men,<sup>b</sup> <sup>(a)</sup>—*bringing the nobler part of creation within the net of the Gospel*. And they straightway left their nets and followed Him.

<sup>b</sup> The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. Matt. xiii. 47, 48.

<sup>c</sup> He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me. Matt. x. 37.

And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw two other brethren, James the *elder* son of Zebedee,<sup>(a)</sup> and John<sup>(4)</sup> his brother, who also were in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. And straightway He called them: and they immediately left their father<sup>c</sup> Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after [followed, MATT.] Him.

And He entered into one of the ships *which He had*

subsequently changed to *Genasar*, to which the Greeks added the termination, *et or eth*. Thus, in like manner we have Nazareth from the Hebrew Netzer.—Pliny describes the Lake as sixteen miles long, and six broad: Josephus, as a hundred furlongs long and forty broad: the former measurement is the one which is more confirmed by modern travellers. The Jewish historian also mentions that there were, in his time, two hundred and thirty vessels employed on the Lake, chiefly fishing-boats, many of them attended by four or five men each. Travellers describe this lake as finer than the English, but inferior to some of the Scotch lakes. Its broad surface covers the bottom of a profound valley, environed by a range of mountains; which rise, not precipitately, but rolling backward from the shore, verdant to the eye, but destitute of trees. A dead calm commonly reigns upon its well-protected waters; and though still abounding with fish, a boat is seldom to be seen; while an unbroken silence, added to the impression of a certain reverential awe under which every Christian pilgrim must approach it, gives it a character of dignity unparalleled by any similar scenery.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Fishers of men*.] There could not be a more apt and lively metaphor than this; for the fisherman's, like the missionary's calling, requires *skill*, much *patience*, and a readiness to bear hardships. The same emblem occurs at Ezek. xlvii. 10; and men in their corrupt and natural state are compared by Habakkuk to the fishes of the sea, having no ruler over them (Hab. i. 14).—Plato, in his *Sophista*, compares the teacher of wisdom to a fisher; and the like allusions may be found in other classics.—The miraculous draught permitted on this occasion, appears to be symbolical of the future success of the Apostles in gaining men over to the Gospel; for we find it repeated for their encouragement just before their labours commenced (John xxi. 6—11).—"The fish" soon became a favourite symbol; and it may be still frequently observed in ancient buildings as an architectural ornament.

<sup>(3)</sup> *James, the son of Zebedee*.] This was most probably the elder son, being named first; and for the same reason, or because first called, this James is called "the great" to distinguish him from "James the less," the son of Alphaeus. He was one of the favoured three who accompanied our Lord on the most memorable occasions of His life.—He was slain by Herod in a persecution (Acts xii. 2).

<sup>(4)</sup> *John*.] This eminent Apostle, generally supposed to have been the youngest of them all, was the peculiar object of our Lord's regard and confidence: he was not only admitted to witness the most memorable scenes of the Saviour's life, but is expressly styled "the disciple whom Jesus loved."—He subsequently became, with Peter, a leader in the affairs of the Church; and St. Paul states that, fourteen years after his first visit to Jerusalem, he found them there, and that they were looked upon "as pillars" (Gal. ii. 9).—After the death of the Virgin Mary (who had been so especially consigned to the care of this disciple), and when the Roman hostilities commenced, he would remember his Master's prediction of the destruction of the city; and we find that he withdrew to Asia Minor. There he presided over seven cities, residing chiefly at Ephesus. He was banished from thence to Patmos, a small and desolate island in the Egean Sea, on account of his religion; but died at last at Ephesus, A. D. 101, having long survived all the rest of the Apostles. His Gospel was most probably written A. D. 97 or 98. It is more polemical than the other Gospels; being designed, partly to establish against heretics (more particularly the Gnostics) the Divinity and Incarnation of Jesus, and partly to be supplementary to the other three (as, indeed, those last written seem to be in each instance to those which preceded). The other Evangelists have chiefly recorded miracles, and give us external evidence of the divine mission of their Master; but the Gospel of St. John (which has been well termed the *Spiritual Gospel*) shows us, from the Saviour's sublime discourses, what He Himself was.

seen standing by the Lake, which was Simon's, and prayed (*requested*) him that he would thrust *it* out a little from the land, so that the people, who were still waiting eager to hear Him preach, might not throng Him. And when this was done, He sat down, according to the custom of Jewish teachers, and taught the people out of the ship.

Now when He had left off speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep water, and let down your nets for a draught of fish. And Simon, answering, said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing; nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake in some places. And they beckoned unto their partners, James and John, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came; and all together drawing up the net, they filled both the ships,—so full indeed, that they began to sink with the weight of fishes.

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, unworthy as I am of Thy notice or of remaining in Thy Sacred Presence; for I am a sinful man, O Lord!<sup>d</sup>—for he was astonished (*struck with awe*), and so were all that were with him in the boat, at the miraculous draught of fishes which they had taken; and so was also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men—not putting an end to them, as with the fish you take, but preserving them alive eternally.

And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all<sup>(5)</sup> for the present, and followed Him as His avowed disciples.

<sup>d</sup> The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof. Matt. viii. 8.

(<sup>5</sup>) They forsook all.] The Apostles are sometimes represented as indigent men, but we need not consider them as poorer than they really were. Peter, who was married, had a house; and his declaration, "Lord, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee" (Matt. xix. 27), indicates that he had property.—Even in this part of the narrative, it is expressly mentioned that James and John (who, with their father, were in partnership with Andrew and Simon) had "hired servants" under them.—They seem after this to

have passed their time between their occupations and an occasional attendance on Jesus, until He chose the Twelve to be with Him constantly. After His death, they are described as returning to their former pursuit for a livelihood; but on the re-appearance of their Master, they abandon it for ever. Peter is reinstated in his Apostleship, with a charge thenceforth to feed the flock, and all receive a similar injunction to go forth and make disciples in all nations.

## SECTION XXXI.

JESUS CURES A DEMONIAC IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT CAPERNAUM; AND HEALS PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER AND OTHERS.

*Matt. viii. 14—17. Mark i. 23—34. Luke iv. 33—41.*

AND there was in their synagogue at *Capernaum* a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil,<sup>(1)</sup> and, *being seized when there with a fit, the evil spirit within him* cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone: what have we to do (*what have we in common*) with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us,<sup>(2)</sup>—*to take away our power by expelling us from earth?* I know Thee who Thou art; *even the Holy One of God,<sup>a</sup>—the Messiah.*

<sup>a</sup> Thine Holy One. Pa. xvi. 10.

— that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Luke i. 35. Thy Holy Child Jesus. Acts iv. 27.

And Jesus *scorning the unholy praise of this evil spirit*, rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace (*Cease thine unavailing complaints*), and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him *down on the ground* in the midst of them, and *by a last exertion of his malice* had torn (*violently convulsed*) him,—*which was permitted to shew the reality of the demon's power*,—he came out of him, and cried with a loud voice, and hurt him not (*did him no serious injury*).

And they were all amazed (*awe-struck*), insomuch that they questioned among themselves, and spake saying, *What extraordinary thing is this! What new doctrine (What new manner of teaching) is this, which is confirmed with such power! And what a word of majesty is this; for with authority and power He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him<sup>b</sup> and come out!—And immediately the fame of Him spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee [went out into every place of the country, LUKE].*

<sup>b</sup> The devils also believe and tremble. Jas. ii. 19.

—angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

And He arose *to go out of the synagogue with His disciples*: and when they were come out, they forthwith

(1) *A spirit of an unclean devil.*] The reality of Demoniacal Possession has been the uniform doctrine of the Church from the earliest times. Our Lord and His Apostles spoke to evil spirits, and of them, *as such*; and they plainly acknowledged Him—an act of submission never done in so marked a manner by those who merely laboured under bodily disorders. The actions of these demons are expressly distinguished from those of the individuals possessed; they ask questions and give replies,—actions which could not be spoken of diseases. They are represented as *going out* of the persons possessed, and *entering into* the bodies of others: in some cases their exact number is specified, for Mary of Magdala was tormented with seven. The Gadarene demoniacs were possessed by a multitude, as a Roman *Legion* of horse and foot them

numbered about six thousand. The Evangelists take care also to discriminate between these possessions and diseases, even enumerating lunacy separately from both, as in the next Section (*Matt. iv. 24*). Even in this Section we presently read of those who were "sick with divers diseases," and of others "possessed with devils," the two classes of sufferers being kept distinct; and further on in the narrative (*Luke vii. 21*), we have the same distinction studiously preserved by St. Luke, who was a physician. That Evangelist more prominently brings forward the miracle on this occasion; because it displayed to the Gentiles, for whom he wrote, the power of Christ over those demons to whom they ignorantly sacrificed.

(2) *Art thou come to destroy us?*] See Section LIV., Note 3.

entered into the house of *the brothers* Simon and Andrew, together with James and John *their partners*; who, as on other remarkable occasions, witnessed the event which followed.—But Simon's wife's<sup>c</sup> mother was taken with a great fever, and lay sick, *being confined to her bed*. And anon they of the house tell Him of her, and besought Him to use His power for her recovery. And when Jesus saw her laid, He stood over her, and rebuked the fever: and He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up [touched her hand, *MATT.*]; and immediately the fever left her, and she arose; and so complete was the recovery that she ministered unto them (*waited upon Him, GR.*).

Now when the even was come, and after the sun did set,<sup>d</sup>—for not until then had the Sabbath closed, nor were burdens of any kind permitted to be carried,<sup>e</sup>—all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto Him, and also many were brought that were possessed with devils. And all the city (*a great multitude of the inhabitants*) was gathered together at the door. And He laid His hands on every one of them that were sick, and entirely healed them. Also He cast out the evil spirits with His word (*by a word*); and the devils came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art *the Christ*, the Son of God. And He, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak; for they indeed knew Him that He was the Christ<sup>f</sup>: He would not be so proclaimed, lest cause of suspicion might arise of compact between Himself and them; and the time had not arrived to make this great truth generally known among the Jews. And all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND BARE OUR SICKNESSES<sup>g</sup> (*see Isa. liii. 4.*).

<sup>c</sup> Have we not power to lead about a wife, as Cephas? 1 Cor. ix. 5.

<sup>d</sup> From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath. Lev. xxiii. 32.

<sup>e</sup> It is the Sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. John v. 10.

<sup>f</sup> And unclean spirits when they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried saying, Thou art the Son of God: and He straitly charged them that they should not make Him known. Mark iii. 11, 12.

<sup>g</sup> *Simon's wife.*] Clement of Alexandria states (*Strom. vii.*) that Peter lived to see his wife led to suffer death, and that he cheered her with an exhortation to "remember the Lord." The Martyrologies do not agree as to her name.

<sup>h</sup> *Himself took our infirmities, &c.*] Our translation of the passage in Isaiah runs thus, "Surely He hath borne our *griefs* and carried our *sorrows*;" but the Prophet and the Evangelist do not differ: The word rendered *griefs* there, and *infirmities* here, properly means *diseases of the body*; while the other expression rendered *sorrows* there, and *sicknesses* here, means *afflictions of the mind*. The prophecy had

its double fulfilment, first in our Lord's cure of bodily diseases, as on this and other occasions; and secondly in the remission of Sin (the cause of all sorrow) by His sacrifice on the Cross, as St. Peter applies it (1 Pet. ii. 24). The Jews themselves so connected the ideas of sin and disease, that an allusion to one would suggest the other (see John ix. 2); and our Lord Himself sometimes connects them together (see Matt. ix. 2; John v. 14). What Mark renders from Isaiah as "*forgiving sins*," Matthew gives as "*healing them*:" (compare Mark iv. 12, and Matt. xiii. 15.)

## SECTION XXXII.

JESUS RETIRES INTO THE DESERT; AND AFTERWARDS MOVES ABOUT GALILEE, TEACHING AND HEALING.

*Matt.* iv. 23—25. *Mark* i. 35—39. *Luke* iv. 42—44.

AND in the morning,<sup>(1)</sup> rising up when it was *break of day* [a great while before it was *fully day*, MARK], He departed, and went out into a desert place, and there prayed.<sup>a</sup> And Simon, and they that were with Him *on the preceding Sabbath at Capernaum*, followed after Him. And when they had found Him, they said unto Him, All men (*great multitudes*) seek for Thee. And He said unto them, Let us go unto the next towns, that I may preach there also, *and make known the Gospel*; for therefore came I forth *from My Father*.—And the people sought for Him, and came unto Him *in the desert*, and *would have stayed Him that He should not depart from them*. And He said *in like manner* unto them, I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> He went up into a mountain apart to pray, and was there alone. *Matt.* xiv. 23.

<sup>b</sup> The Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings. *Isa.* lxi. 1.

And Jesus went about all Galilee, *both Upper and Lower*, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel (*the Good Tidings*) of the kingdom; casting out devils, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease (*bodily complaints both of a temporary and chronic kind*) among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto Him, *even from that distance*, all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments (*painful maladies of any kind*), and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy: and He healed them *all*. And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis,<sup>(2)</sup> and from Jerusalem and from *other parts of Judæa*, and from *the country beyond Jordan*.

(1) *In the morning, &c.*] One obvious reason for our Saviour's departure from the town at so early an hour, was to avoid the sensation produced by His cures the day before; indeed His fame was spreading so fast, that He was now compelled to move about Galilee, never making any long stay in one place.—But our Lord's habits of life are also here mentioned for our *example*: it was His *habit* to rise early, and, holy as He was, to employ, as David had done (see Ps. v. 3), *that very appropriate portion of the day in prayer*. The Christian should give God his first thoughts before the world gets possession of them.—It has been remarked, that although these notices occur of our Lord's habitually observing *private*, and also *public* Prayer (see Section XXVIII.), it is not recorded that he practised social Prayer with His immediate followers. They are soon taught

*how to pray* [St. Luke adds, xi. 1, that it was on an occasion similar to the above]: yet we still find our Lord, on subsequent occasions, *withdrawing Himself* from them to pray (see *Matt.* xiv. 23; *Luke* vi. 12, 13). When, however, from constant intercourse with their Divine Master, they had become fitted to partake more largely of the Spirit of Grace, we find Him offering up His parting and most memorable Prayer in their immediate presence and hearing (*John* xvi. 32, 33; xvii. 1).—There might be other mysterious reasons for reserve. Consult Section XLI. Note 29.

(2) *Decapolis.*] This region is so called from its *ten cities*; among which we may certainly reckon Gadara (where our Saviour afterwards worked miracles), and probably Damascus and Hippo. The territory lay east of the Jordan.

## SECTION XXXIII.

## THE MIRACULOUS CURE OF A LEPER.

*Matt.* viii. 2—4. *Mark* i. 40—45. *Luke* v. 12—16.

AND it came to pass, when He was in a certain city, behold *there was* a man full of leprosy;<sup>(1)</sup> who, seeing Jesus, came to Him, beseeching Him; and kneeling down to Him, fell on his face and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will *do so*: henceforth be thou clean. And as soon as He had spoken *the words*, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was *thoroughly* cleansed. And He straitly (*strictly*) charged him *that he should not make the miracle known*; and forthwith sent him away, and saith unto him, See that thou say nothing *concerning this* to any man, but go thy way<sup>(2)</sup> *at once*; shew thyself to the *officiating* priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things [the gift, *MATT.*] which Moses commanded<sup>3</sup>, for a testimony unto them<sup>(3)</sup> *of thy cleansing, and as a sign that the Messiah is come.*

But so much the more there went a fame abroad of Him: *for he who had been healed* went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, *being too much transported with joy to conceal it.* And great multitudes came together to hear *the Lord preach*, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities; insomuch that Jesus could no more, *without inconvenience and a risk of tumult,*

<sup>3</sup> The priest shall look, and behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds, alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet and hyssop. . . . And on the eighth day he shall take two lambs without blemish, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth-deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil. *Lev.* xiv. 3, 4, 10.

(1) *Full of leprosy.*] This disease, so frequently mentioned in the Bible, was the most dreadful which it is possible to conceive. It was both infectious and hereditary; slow in its progress, exhibiting itself at first in spots on the surface of the skin, but it became at length deeply seated in the bones and joints, which gradually lost their power, and caused the body to collapse in an awful manner. It was considered incurable. Thus we find a king of Israel exclaiming; "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" (2 Kings v. 7.) —The disease was most loathsome and offensive in its character, and the Law considered lepers as unclean or impure, excluding them, whatever might be their rank (see Numb. xii. 14; 2 Kings xv. 5), from all intercourse with society: they were forbidden to enter any walled town; were obliged to make themselves known by a peculiar dress; and if any person heedlessly approached, to cry out "Unclean, Unclean" (*Lev.* xiii. 45). Leprosy was an emblem of the pollution of sin, and was particularly regarded by the Jews as a divine judgment, probably because it had been inflicted as such in the cases of Miriam, Uzziah,

and Gehazi.—The disease, though now of less frequent occurrence, still exists in Palestine, and lepers are obliged to live together, apart from their fellow-men. That it was not uncommon in England during the intercourse with Palestine, through the Crusades, we may infer from the hospitals founded for lepers.

(2) *Say nothing to any man, &c.*] This remarkable transaction could not long be concealed, but there were urgent reasons why it should be kept secret at the time. If the report of the cure had gone before, the priest (who was to pronounce the man clean before he could be restored to society) might, out of malice to Jesus, have pronounced it an imposition. Also, our Lord did not wish needlessly to exasperate His enemies, or urge them to any premature designs against Him.

(3) *For a testimony unto them.*] The cleansing of lepers is declared to be a sign of the Advent of the Messiah (*Matt.* xi. 5). It was an undeniable proof of *divine power*, and by such a sign their forefathers had been convinced that Moses was sent by God as their temporal deliverer (*Exod.* iv. 6—8, 31).



enter openly into the city, but was *compelled to be without* in desert places; and *accordingly* He *again* withdrew Himself and prayed. And they came to Him *even there* from every quarter.

## SECTION XXXIV.

IN CURING A PARALYTIC MAN, JESUS DECLARES HIS POWER OF FORGIVING SINS.

*Matt.* ix. 2—8. *Mark* ii. 1—12. *Luke* v. 17—26.

AND again, after some days *had intervened*, He entered *privately* into Capernaum. And it was noised (*reported about*) that He was *at home*, in the house *where He usually lodged*. And straightway many were gathered together *in the street*, insomuch that there was no room to receive them—no, not so much as about the door. And He preached the Word of God unto *as many of them as could be admitted within the court-yard of the house*.

And it came to pass on a certain day, as He was *thus teaching the people*, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the Law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and *even from Judea and Jerusalem*. And the power of the Lord was present, *as on other occasions*, to heal them *who came unto Him to be cured of their infirmities*.

And behold they come unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, lying on a bed (*a litter or pallet*), which was borne of four men. And they sought means to bring him *in through the door-way*, and to lay him before Him *in the court-yard where He stood*. And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press *about the entrance*, and could not find by what way they might bring him (*the sick man*) in because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and uncovered the roof <sup>(1)</sup> (*unrolled the awning which covered the court*) where He was; and *as the breast-work or railing of the parapet-wall was still in the way*, when they had broken it up, they let him down through

(1) *Uncovered the roof.*] Houses throughout the East were, as they still are, built low, generally only with a ground-floor, and flat-roofed. The building within which our Saviour was now teaching, appears to have been a square, with a paved court, the walls of which were frequently ornamented up to the roof with glazed or painted tiling. The entrance from the street into the court was through a gate-way or passage-room, at which point the staircase leading to the roof was generally placed. The roof was used as a terrace for walking or for retirement (see 1 Sam. ix. 25; 2 Sam. xi. 2; Acts x. 9). From the

balustrade or parapet-wall of the roof it was customary to fix cords, and upon them to expand an awning, as a shelter from the heat or rain.—Our Saviour now stood with the people in the court. The paralytic was carried up to the roof, either by gaining the staircase in the gateway, or by conveying him over an adjoining roof; and it seems that, when there, they found it necessary to remove a small portion of the railing or parapet, after which they could easily let him down along the wall by cords "into the midst,"—that is, into the middle of the *et woost*, as the court is now called in Arabic.

(by) the glazed tiling of the side-wall,<sup>a</sup> with the bed wherein he lay, into the midst before Jesus.

And when Jesus saw their faith<sup>(1)</sup> in His power to heal,—so strikingly shewn in these efforts to approach Him,—He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins, which brought on this disease, be (hereby are) forgiven thee.<sup>b (2)</sup>

And behold certain of the Scribes and the Pharisees sitting there, began to reason in their hearts, and said within themselves, This man blasphemeth and impiously invadeth the prerogative of God: why doth this man thus audaciously speak blasphemies? Who is this presumptuous person, and who can forgive sins but God only?<sup>c</sup>

And immediately, when Jesus, knowing all their thoughts, perceived in His spirit (within His own mind) that they so reasoned within themselves,<sup>d</sup> He answering said unto them,<sup>(4)</sup> Wherefore think ye evil concerning Me, and reason these things in your hearts? For whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee—of which pardon no outward proof would appear; or to say with effect, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk—showing by the result that the temporal punishment of sin is indeed forgiven?<sup>e</sup> But this undeniable proof of forgiveness ye shall now witness, that ye may know that the Son of Man, even while on earth, hath complete power—as being Himself God—to forgive sins.—Then saith He to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise and take up thy bed, and go thy way home unto thine house. And immediately he arose, and took up that whereon he lay,—thereby showing that his perfect strength was restored,—and went forth out of the court before them all, and departed to his own house, glorifying God as he went: insomuch that when the multitudes saw it, they were all amazed, and they too glorified God, which had given such extraordinary power unto any among men; and they were filled with reverential fear, saying, We have seen strange (unexpected and wonderful) things<sup>(5)</sup> to-day; we never before saw it on this fashion (we never witnessed anything which at all resembled it)!

<sup>a</sup> Then the disciples took Paul by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. Acts ix. xxv.

<sup>b</sup> Jesus findeth him (that was healed) in the Temple, and said unto him, Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. John v. 14.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you. 1 Cor. xi. 30.

If he (the sick) have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Jas. v. 16.

<sup>c</sup> The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,....forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions. Isa. xliiii. 26.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth the imaginations of the thoughts. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me;...Thou understandest my thought afar off. Ps. cxxxix. 1, 2.

<sup>e</sup> The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity. Isa. xxxiii. 24.

(1) When Jesus saw their faith]. From this and some other miracles (see Matt. viii. 13; Mark ix. 22, 23; Luke viii. 50), it is evident that the faith of others may prevail for obtaining temporal blessings (see also Jas. v. 15.)

(2) Thy sins be forgiven thee.] See Section XXXVI., Note 4.

(4) He answering, said unto them.] This phrase is occasionally used in the Greek when no question has been put, nor even anything pre-

viously said. It is then a reply,—either divine (as here), or inspired,—to the thoughts and reasonings of others. At Luke xiv. 3, we find it used by our Lord, in reply to the act of watching him.

(5) Strange things.] This is rather a weak, if not also unfortunate, sense of the original expression. Latin Versions have *mirabilia*. So Pliny writes (Ep. ix. 26) "Sunt maxime mirabilia, utque Græci magis exprimunt *ῥαράβοχα*."

## SECTION XXXV.

## ST. MATTHEW IS CALLED.

*Matt. ix. 9. Mark ii. 13, 14. Luke v. 27, 28.*

\* Matthew, the publican. *Matt. x. 3.*

AND after these things Jesus went forth again by the sea-side (*the shore of Lake Gennesaret*); and all the multitude resorted unto Him, and He taught them. And as He passed by from thence, He saw a man, *who was a Publican, named Matthew,*<sup>a</sup> *otherwise Levi,*<sup>(1)</sup> *the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the receipt of custom*<sup>(2)</sup> (*attending his duties at the custom-house*) *to receive dues from such as trafficked on the Lake.* And He said unto him, *Follow Me (Become My disciple).* And he *immediately left all (renounced his profitable occupation),* rose up, and followed Him.

## SECTION XXXVI.

JESUS AGAIN ATTENDS THE PASSOVER AT JERUSALEM, WHERE HE CURES THE CRIPPLE AT BETHESDA, AND MAKES A SUBLIME DEFENCE OF HIS CHARACTER AND MISSION BEFORE THE JEWISH RULERS.

*John v. 1—47.*

AFTER this there was a Feast of the Jews,<sup>(1)</sup> *which was their great annual Feast of the Passover;* and

(<sup>1</sup>) *Matthew, otherwise Levi.*] It was common with the Jews to have more than one name. Levi was clearly a Hebrew name; Matthew probably a Gentile one assumed in the exercise of his profession, which was to collect the customs upon the imports and exports of Capernaum. By this name he invariably styles himself,—to show, perhaps, the condescension of Christ to a man of such a calling; whereas St. Mark and St. Luke always mention him by his more honourable name of Levi. Humility seems to have been a prominent feature of his character, for he omits the incident, here recorded by Luke, that he “left all” to follow Christ: he also places himself after Thomas (*Matt. x. 3*), before whom he is ranked by St. Mark and St. Luke, in the enumeration of the Twelve; and he makes no mention of the great feast at his house, which our Lord honoured with his presence (*Luke v. 29*). We may conclude that St. Matthew was converted in heart before this call; for he must have had frequent opportunities, as a resident at Capernaum, of witnessing the miracles of Christ, and of hearing His doctrine,—and possibly he was one of those publicans who came to John for baptism.

St. Mark here calls Matthew “the son of Alphaeus,” and Church history confirms the fact. Of his history after our Lord’s death we are entirely ignorant, except that he died a natural

death. He was an eye-witness of every fact which he records except two, which he gives on the authority of the more favoured disciples. There is no doubt that he wrote first, and for the use of the original converts; probably in or about the year 61, though some opinions have placed the date considerably earlier. As his object was not a circumstantial biography, he writes, not in the order of events but of things, in the manner that Xenophon wrote his *Memorabilia*. With regard to the language in which he wrote, the consent of antiquity pleads strongly for a *Hebrew* original, which must have been corrupted, and afterwards lost; but there is very strong internal evidence for the *Greek*, and he quotes from the Septuagint, rather than the Hebrew version. On the whole, it is not improbable that he wrote in *both* languages, as Josephus wrote his *History*.

(<sup>2</sup>) *The receipt of custom.*] The dues received for the government seem to have been chiefly for the *precious balm*, which was collected at Jericho, and was a main article of Jewish export. The transit commenced at Capernaum, at which place collectors of the duty were regularly stationed. Justin and Strabo mention that this trade was extensively carried on in their time.

(<sup>1</sup>) *There was a Feast of the Jews.*] Upon our understanding a *Passover* to be here meant,

Jesus went up to Jerusalem *to attend it*. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-market (the sheep-gate, MARG.) a pool<sup>(\*)</sup> or *public bath*, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda (*and, being interpreted, signifies the House of Mercy*), having five porches or cloisters which served as receptacles for the bathers. In these lay a great multitude of impotent (*infirm*) folk,—of blind, halt, and withered (*those wasted with lingering sickness*),—waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain *periodical* season into the pool, and troubled (*agitated*) the water: whosoever then, after the troubling of the water, first stepped in *before its medicinal properties had subsided*, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

And a certain man was there which had *laboured under an incurable* infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie *thus helpless*, and knew that he had been now a long time in that *distressing case*<sup>a</sup>, He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole (*Is not such thy object in being here*)? The impotent man answered Him, Sir, I have no man,—*for I can neither hire nor persuade any one*,—when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming *slowly towards it*, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately, *as He spake*, the man was made *perfectly whole*, and, *in proof that he was so*, took up his bed and walked *homewards*.

And on the same day *when this took place*, it was the Sabbath. *Some of the rulers of the Jews* therefore said unto him that was cured, *as they met him on*

<sup>a</sup> When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path. Pa. cxlii. 3.

must depend the received opinion that our Lord's ministry extended to *more* than three years, so as to include *four* Passovers; for three only are distinctly mentioned—namely, at John ii. 13; vi. 4; xi. 55. The Evangelist here omits the Greek Article, which he, with St. Matthew, elsewhere uniformly employs when speaking of the Passover; but this circumstance is not decisive, as both St. Mark and St. Luke have omitted it.—The ancients considered that our Lord's ministry extended only over *one* year, an opinion now almost entirely exploded. A good deal of learning has been lately expended to show that two years and a-half was the correct period; but that from six to twelve months must be added, is the opinion now generally admitted.

(\*) *There is at Jerusalem by the sheep-market, a pool.* That one of the city gates was called "the Sheep-gate" we know from Neh. iii. 1. The name is supposed to have been standing when St. John wrote this passage. It was very likely to have been saved from the general devastation, for the convenience of the Roman garrison, by Titus; who particularly approved the public convenience of baths, and afterwards, at great cost, built some of a magnificent kind at Rome. To this day there are, it is said, at Jeru-

salem remains of this pool, which, being sunk in the rock, may remain for ages. "It is (writes the traveller Sandys) a great square profundity, into which a barren spring doth trill between the stones of the northward wall, and stealth away almost undiscovered." The word here rendered "pool," denotes also the buildings connected therewith in our Saviour's time for the accommodation of bathers, which were porticoes or piazzas fronting the bath, and forming a pentagon. The water of the pool had powerful medicinal properties when agitated, which took place at periodical intervals. This agitation the Jews ascribed, as they did all operations of Providence, to the agency of Angels; and, undoubtedly, we must conclude, from the narrative in this place, that the properties of the water were *supernatural*. It is not unreasonable to suppose that God, who never altogether deserted His ancient people, was pleased to confer healing powers upon this fountain, as typical of the Messiah, some time before He was to appear. Their prophets, more particularly Zechariah, had declared that a *True Fountain* was to be opened for sin and moral uncleanness (Zech. xiii. 1).

<sup>b</sup> I saw in Judah some bringing in sheaves, as also all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day; and I testified against them. Neh. xiii. 16.

Take heed to yourselves and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day. Jer. xvii. 21.

<sup>c</sup> The last state of that man is worse than the first. Matt. xii. 46.

<sup>d</sup> I and My Father are one. John x. 30.  
Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Phil. ii. 6, 8.

<sup>e</sup> And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath-day.... And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death. Numb. xv. 32, 35.

*his way, It is the Sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.*<sup>b</sup> (<sup>a</sup>) He answered them, He that made me whole, the same *person* said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk: *how could I disobey such a command? for surely he is a prophet, and spoke with the authority of one.* Then they, *overlooking the evident miracle which had been wrought*, asked him, What man is that,—*for he could be no prophet*,—which so *unlawfully* said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? And he that was healed wist not (*knew not*) who it was; for Jesus, *after effecting the cure*, had conveyed Himself away *privately*, to prevent tumult—a multitude being in that place.

Afterward Jesus findeth him in the Temple, *returning thanks to God there for his recovery*; and said unto him, Behold, *by the mercy of God thou art now made whole: sin no more*, (<sup>c</sup>) lest a worse thing,<sup>c</sup>—*either a more grievous affliction here, or certain and eternal punishment hereafter*,—come unto thee. The man, *having ascertained from some that stood by who his benefactor was*, departed; and, *anxious to do Him honour, as well as to justify himself*, went and told the rulers of the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath-day.

But Jesus, *being at length brought before the Sanhedrim, or great Jewish Council of state, on this charge*, answered them *thus*:—My Father worketh hitherto *without the intervention of rest*; for down to this day and on every day He sustaineth all things by His continual Providence; and, *when I will, I in like manner work<sup>d</sup> in doing good on the seventh day*.—Therefore the Jews sought yet the more to kill Him, because He not only had, *as they pretended*, broken the Sabbath,<sup>e</sup> but now *blasphemously* said also that God was His own Father,<sup>(2)</sup> making Himself equal

(<sup>a</sup>) *It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.*] The letter of the law forbade carrying the lightest weight on the Sabbath: but the Rabbinical writers recognised cases in which it was allowed and they admitted that the observance of the Sabbath might be dispensed with at the command of a *Prophet*. Such a character even the poor cripple could perceive our Lord to be; and if exceptions to their rule were allowed, how much more in the case of Him, to whom "*all the prophets gave witness*," and who was "*Lord also of the Sabbath*."

(<sup>b</sup>) *Sin no more.*] As in the case of the Paralytic (the last miracle recorded), the infirmity of this man is declared to be the punishment of his *sins*. So St. Paul tells the Corinthians that a sickness, which at the time he wrote was prevalent among them, was a judgment upon their sin in irreverently approaching the Lord's Table (1 Cor. xi. 30).—We are not, indeed, to assume that all violent disorders are punishments of the

individual on whom they are visited; for the same Apostle tells us that they are often proofs of God's fatherly love and regard (Heb. xii. 6); but still Sin is the *original* cause of disease and of death itself. While, then, we carefully refrain from judging others, it is always good in *our own case* to regard bodily (as well as all other) afflictions in the light of a summons from God to examine our lives and conduct with more than usual care and exactness.—God is the Great Physician of the soul, Sickness being one of His principal methods of cure; and we learn from the narrative before us, that if we neglect such warnings, "*worse things*" may come.

(<sup>c</sup>) *Said also that God was His Father.*] This passage is enfeebled in our translation by the omission of "*own*," which is plainly given in the original.—The Jews, who were the best interpreters of the meaning of their language, evidently considered that the name, assumed by our Lord, of *Son of God*, and calling

in nature with God.<sup>l</sup>—Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son, as Mediator, can do nothing of Himself alone, or in opposition to the Father, but only what He seeth the Father also do: for what things soever He (*the Father*) doeth in the course of His government, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son<sup>g</sup>, and sheweth Him by the Spirit all things without concealment that Himself doeth. And He will shew and manifest by Him greater works than these of healing infirm and sick people, that ye may at least marvel, if not believe. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth (*reanimates*) them,<sup>h</sup> even so,—by the same authority and Almighty power inherent in Himself,—the Son quickeneth whom He will; both raising the dead,<sup>i</sup> and conferring spiritual and eternal life.<sup>k</sup> And the great gift of Eternal Life will ultimately depend on the Son; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment, final and irreversible, unto the Son,<sup>l</sup>—thus resigning authority to Him even in that last divine work: and this He hath done that all men should give divine honour to the Son by their spiritual worship and obedience, even as (to the same extent and in the same manner as) they honour the Father.<sup>(6)</sup> He that honoureth not the Son to this extent, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him.<sup>m</sup>—Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that effectually heareth My Word (*My doctrine*), and so believeth on Him that sent Me,<sup>(7)</sup> hath the promise of ever-power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. John xvii. 2.—The last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 1 Cor. xv. 45.

<sup>l</sup> He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. Acts xvii. 31.—We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. 2 Cor. v. 10.  
<sup>m</sup> Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father. 1 John ii. 23.

God His own Father, implied an equality with God. It is clear that our Saviour meant to be understood as claiming Divinity, for on a subsequent occasion He did not deny the correctness of their interpretation (John x. 29—38).—Throughout this sublime Defence, we have an instance of the profound and masterly manner in which He could meet and silence His enemies; while it is scarcely possible to conceive more distinct declarations, or more conclusive proofs, that He was equal with God, and that the same will, plan, and power existed in both. He styles Himself, indeed, the Son of man, but He applies that designation of Daniel (ch. vii. 13) to Himself on this occasion, as on others, purposely to show how He had divested Himself of glory (see Section XX., Note 9).

(<sup>6</sup>) That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.] A man of common understanding, with no preconceived opinions on disputed points of theology, could not put any other interpretation on these words than that which lies on the surface—namely, that the Son is to be believed in, and loved, and worshipped equally with the Father. We only then honour the Son, when we esteem Him to be, as He is, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the

<sup>l</sup> He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord he shall surely be put to death. Lev. xxiv. 16.

<sup>g</sup> There came a Voice from heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Mark i. 11.

<sup>h</sup> And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. 1 Kings xvii. 22.

And Eliaha prayed unto the Lord... And the child opened his eyes. 2 Kings iv. 33, 36.

<sup>i</sup> And Jesus said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. Luke vii. 14, 16.

And He took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again. Luke viii. 54, 55.

And He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth. John xi. 43, 44.

<sup>k</sup> Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. John xi. 25, 26.

Thou hast given Him. John xvii. 2.—The

express image of His Person (Heb. i. 3); assigning to Him perfect Goodness, Wisdom, and Omnipresence, with every other divine attribute.—When the Apostle tells us, that every tongue is to confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, he expressly adds, that it is “to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 11). To deny the Divinity of Christ, involves the crime of Atheism, for it makes out God to be a liar (as the beloved Apostle elsewhere shows), by disbelieving the testimony which He has so abundantly given of His Son (1 John v. 10).—The heathen Pliny, in his letter to the Emperor Trajan, has described the primitive Christians as “meeting together to sing hymns to Christ, as God.”

(<sup>7</sup>) Believeth on Him that sent Me.] Here faith in God, as sending His Son, is plainly connected with eternal life. Indeed, the Father holds, as it were, no intercourse with man otherwise than by the agency of the Son, who by His immediate action upon the external world, gives effect to the original purposes of the Divine mind. The appointment of Christ to His office as Mediator, which has given rise to so many cavils, can no more imply inferiority of nature, than could be argued from a man performing a particular work in his relation of a son.

▪ He that believeth not is condemned already. John iii. 18.

• We know that we have passed from death unto life. 1 John iii. 14.

‡ Thy dead men shall live: together with My dead body shall they arise. Isa. xxvii. 19. The dead shall be raised incorruptible. 1 Cor. xv. 52.

‡ Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Luke xiv. 14.

‡ And many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. xii. 2.

▪ I delight to do Thy will, O God. Ps. xl. 8.

• O My Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Matt. xxvi. 39.

‡ It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. John viii. 17.

▪ The Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask John, Who art thou? John i. 19.

‡ John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. John i. 29.

lasting life; and *if he continueth faithful in well-doing, shall not come into that condemnation<sup>a</sup> in which he was by nature, but is already passed over from spiritual death unto Christian life.<sup>o</sup>* Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour (*the time*) is coming, *under the more complete development of the Gospel, and even now is commenced,* when the dead in *trespasses and sins* shall hear the voice of the Son of God; <sup>(<sup>o</sup>)</sup> and they that hear shall live (*shall have spiritual life*). For as the Father, *the Source of all life, hath the power of conferring life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son, as Mediator, to have power over life, both natural and spiritual, in Himself; (<sup>o</sup>)* and hath also given Him *that other high authority to execute (to hold) final Judgment over the world in completion of His Mediatorial office, because He is the Son of man and has fully known what human infirmities are:*

Marvel not at this *as an incredible thing; for the hour is assuredly coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His (the Messiah's) voice, and shall come forth with their bodies;*<sup>p</sup> they that have done good unto the resurrection of life,<sup>q</sup> and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.<sup>r</sup> <sup>(<sup>10</sup>)</sup> *But I tell you again, I can of Mine own self,—considered merely as man, and without the concurrence of the Father,—do nothing: As I hear, I judge (I am to judge and pass sentence), and therefore My judgment is just; and it is also just, because I seek not Mine own separate will, or any of those private ends which human judges sometimes seek, but the perfect and concurrent will of the Father which hath sent Me.—If I alone bear witness of Myself, you might reasonably urge that My witness is not to be at once received as true, and demanding implicit credit: there is however another,<sup>t</sup> even John the Baptist, that beareth witness of Me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of Me is true, and must be received as such by every honest mind, for he was unquestionably a Prophet sent from God. Ye sent of your own accord unto John,<sup>u</sup> and he distinctly and repeatedly bare witness unto the Truth,<sup>v</sup> proclaiming Me to be the Messiah: now, according to your own principles, He to whom a prophet gives witness, is to be accounted at least as a*

(<sup>o</sup>) *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.*] This may also literally refer to the raising of Lazarus and others from the dead, and to the bodies of those saints who appeared after our Lord's resurrection (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53).

(<sup>o</sup>) *To have life in Himself.*] No other messenger from God is represented in Scripture with such inherent power as this. Under the Old Covenant the propheta perform all their miracles in the name of God, while the Apostles invariably call upon the name of Jesus of Nazareth (see Acts

iii. 6; xvi. 18). But when the Saviour Himself calls back the soul to its deserted clay, He speaks in His own name, in right of power essentially inherent in Himself (see Mark v. 41; Luke vii. 14; John xi. 43).

(<sup>10</sup>) *And they that have done evil, &c.*] The Pharisees held that the just alone were to rise, the wicked being excluded from any resurrection. Our Lord fearlessly declares the whole truth, in opposition to their doctrine.

*Prophet.* But I receive not testimony from man *only*, and would not rest the chief evidence of My mission upon human, and therefore fallible witness; but these undeniable things I say respecting John, that, remembering his warning and for your own sakes receiving Me as he enjoined, ye might still be saved. He was a burning and a shining light,<sup>(11)</sup>—that predicted light which, like the bright morning star, was to precede the coming Sun of Righteousness;—and for a short season, until he so sharply reprov'd your vices, ye were yourselves willing to rejoice in his light: but I have far greater and more decisive witness of My mission than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear evident witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me.<sup>w</sup> And moreover the Father Himself, which hath sent Me, hath expressly and in the most direct manner borne witness of Me<sup>x</sup> at My baptism, although ye have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His shape,<sup>y</sup> for no man could see the Father and live.—In the Scriptures also are His testimonies of Me plainly declared: and ye have not that, His revealed Word, fully and cordially abiding in you, or producing a corresponding effect upon your conduct; for whom He hath now sent, according to the plain predictions of that Word, Him ye believe not. Ye search the Scriptures it is true, for in them ye rightly think<sup>(12)</sup> (judge) that ye have the words of Eternal Life, to be attained by observance of what they teach; and they are they (those are the very Scriptures) which plainly and repeatedly testify of Me.<sup>z</sup> And notwithstanding this,—so great is your wilful obstinacy,—ye will not come to Me<sup>a</sup> as the Saviour, that ye might have the Life there freely offered for your acceptance.

Although I invite you to come to Me, I receive not honour from men;<sup>b</sup> and you have no pretence for rejecting Me on that ground. As a true Prophet, seeking only God's glory, I desire neither human sanction nor applause: but I know you well, and the true reason of your unbelief is this; that ye have not really the love of God in you, though affecting to be so jealous of His honour. I am come to you in My Father's name, bringing undeniable proofs of My high authority, and yet ye receive Me not: if another and

<sup>w</sup> If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. 1 John v. 9.

<sup>x</sup> There came a Voice from Heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Mark i. 11.

The Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me. John viii. 18.

<sup>y</sup> No man hath seen God at any time. 1 John iv. 12.

<sup>z</sup> Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke xxiv. 27.

We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God. John i. 45.

<sup>a</sup> Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil. John iii. 19.

<sup>b</sup> Nor of men sought we glory. 1 Thess. ii. 6.

(11) *He was a burning and a shining light.*] That this was a metaphor for a zealous and enlightened teacher, appears from Scripture (see Rom. ii. 19); and also from Jewish writings in general, in which such persons are called "a lamp," "the candle of the law," &c.—Our Lord speaks here of John in the *past tense*, because he was now in prison, and his ministry had closed. That the Baptist's popularity was, as He goes on to state, short-lived, appears from their so soon after declaring that he had a devil (Luke vii. 33).

(12) *Ye think.*] The verb in the original sometimes, as here, expresses not an uncertain opinion, but conviction and knowledge. It is so used by Xenophon (Cyropaed., at the end of the Proem). St. Paul employs it to express certainty, 1 Cor. iv. 9; vii. 40, and elsewhere. It occurs also in the Greek at Mark x. 42, where those "who are accounted to rule," are those who actually rule; and at Luke viii. 18, where what a man "*seemeth* to have," is that which he hath,—as is evident from the parallel place (Mark iv. 25).



\* They (the chief rulers) loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John xii. 43.

God will render honour to every man that worketh good. Rom. ii. 6, 10.

† As many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law. Rom. i. 12.

‡ The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. Gen. xlix. 10.

§ The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto Him shall ye hearken. Deut. xviii. 15.

¶ If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Luke xvi. 31.

a false Messiah shall come in his own name,—proposing some scheme of temporal grandeur, without exhibiting any proofs of a divine commission,—him ye will gladly receive, <sup>(12)</sup> following his teaching and slavishly obeying his commands. But truly, how can ye believe in Me and become spiritual-minded, which, in worldly spirit and with a prevailing bias the other way, receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from the approbation of God only?—Do not judge of Me by yourselves, and think that I am your enemy, or will accuse you to the Father: it is your welfare and salvation that I desire: nor is it needful even for the ends of justice that I should become your accuser; there is already one that accuseth you,—even Moses, <sup>d</sup>—your own Lawgiver, in whom ye profess to trust; for had ye really believed and confided in the authority of Moses, ye would also have believed Me, for he wrote plainly of Me. <sup>e</sup> But if ye believe not his writings, for which ye pretend such reverence, how, with your obstinate prejudices against Me, shall ye believe My words? <sup>f</sup>

## SECTION XXXVII.

THE DISCIPLES PLUCK EARS OF CORN ON A SABBATH-DAY: JESUS JUSTIFIES THEM, AND DECLARES HIMSELF LORD OF THE SABBATH.

*Matt. xii. 1—8. Mark ii. 23—28. Luke vi. 1—5.*

AND it came to pass at that time, on the second Sabbath after the first <sup>(1)</sup> (on what was called the second prime Sabbath), that Jesus went through the corn-fields. And His disciples were an hundred; and, as they went, began to pluck the ears of corn, which the Law generally permitted, and rubbing them in their hands, did eat of the grain. <sup>a</sup>

\* When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn. Deut. xxiii. 26.

But when certain of the Pharisees saw it, they said unto Him, Behold (See), Thy disciples do [the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye? LUKE] that which it is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-days. <sup>(2)</sup> And Jesus

<sup>(12)</sup> If another shall come in his own name, &c.] Subsequent to this, as Josephus records, the Jews followed several false Messiahs, who artfully accommodated themselves to the carnal expectations of the Jews. Such was Barchocheba, who was at last put to death, when they discovered that he had not that essential token of the true Messiah, which our Lord so often manifested, the power to read the thoughts.

<sup>(1)</sup> On the second Sabbath after the first.] This Sabbath, which was the day immediately succeeding that on which the Passover was eaten, was called *Deuteroprote*—a somewhat obscure expression; but it appears that on this great

festival a sheaf of barley, called the *Wave-sheaf*, was offered up as the first fruits of the harvest; and from this day, instead of from the first of the Passover, the seven weeks or Sabbaths were reckoned to the day of Pentecost (see Lev. xxiii. 10, 11, 15, 16).

<sup>(2)</sup> Which it is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-days.] Moses himself, in granting the permission to pluck ears of corn, had made no distinction of days, but rather, at Exod. xii. 16, shews the spirit of his legislation by making an exception in cases of necessity like the present: "In the seventh day no manner of work shall be done, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you."

answering said unto them, Have ye never read so much as this,—*which is a case parallel to the present*,—what David *with his followers* did, when, *in the flight from Saul*, he had need and was an hungred, he and *also* they which were with him?—how he entered into *the Priest's tent* by the House of God, in the days of Abiathar, *afterwards* the High-Priest, and did take and eat the shew-bread,<sup>b</sup> (1) and gave also to them which were with him; which *bread*, according to the strict letter of the Law, it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them, but for the priests alone.<sup>c</sup> Or have ye not read in the Law, how that on the Sabbath-days the *very* priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath (4) according to your notions of profanation; for they violate the strict Sabbatical rest by slaying and preparing the sacrifices, as well as by personally attending to other servile offices; and yet, as serving God, are justly accounted blameless. You will perhaps tell Me that neither I nor my disciples are priests, and that the act which you have condemned was not needful for the honour of God: but I say unto you, That in this place is One greater than the Temple,<sup>d</sup> and of more importance than all its services; even One who can dispense, when He will, with ritual observances, and whose servants, engaged in a necessary work of the highest mercy, may have at least equal liberty with the priests under the Law. But if ye had known what this scripture meaneth, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE only (See Hos. vi. 6), ye would not thus harshly have condemned the guiltless.

And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for the welfare and happiness of man;<sup>(5)</sup> and not man, who was created first, for the Sabbath.<sup>e</sup> Therefore also the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day: He gave it its original sanctity, and can dispense with its strict rest when He may judge it needful for the good of mankind.

<sup>b</sup> So the priest gave David hallowed bread, for there was no bread but the shew-bread, that was taken from before the Lord. <sup>1</sup> Sam. xxi. 6.

<sup>c</sup> And the bread shall be Aaron's and his sons'; they shall eat it in the holy place. Lev. xxiv. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this House which I have built! 2 Chron. vi. 18.

<sup>e</sup> Let no man therefore judge you in respect of the Sabbath-days. Col. ii. 16.

(1) *The shew-bread.*] This "Bread of the Presence," as it was also called, consisted of twelve loaves, according to the twelve tribes. The Law commanded that it should be placed before the Lord on the golden Table in the Sanctuary: this was done every Sabbath-day; the loaves which had remained during the week being then changed, and eaten by the priests alone (see Lev. xxiv. 5—9). It was probably on the Sabbath-day that David ate of the shew-bread, since he ate of what had been taken away.

(4) *The priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath.*] The argument here is, that the rigid observance of the Sabbath (for which the Pharisees would contend) was impracticable; for even the Temple-service must have ceased on that day, unless the priests were allowed to kill and dress the two lambs, then additionally required for sacrifice (Numb. xxviii. 9). To do this, they must kindle a fire; an act which, according to the letter of the Law, was forbidden on the Sabbath

(Exod. xxxv. 3). The Jews also did not hesitate to circumcise on the eighth day, if it fell upon a Sabbath (John vii. 22).

(5) *The Sabbath was made for man.*] Thus, according to the highest authority, the plain principle which ought to regulate observance of the Sabbath, is the benefit—the real good—of mankind. It was made—it was a positive institution. Instituted religion was never intended to undermine Natural; and as this appointment of the Sabbath was a merciful one, it must clearly be subordinate to its purposes, and is not to be interpreted as making requirements that set aside considerations of mercy. There were some enlightened Jews, who could perceive that the Sabbath was not to be observed with slavish minuteness, as appears from the following maxim, so closely resembling our Saviour's:—"Servate Sabbatum, quia sanctum vobis: vobis Sabbatum traditum est, et non vos traditi estis Sabbato."

## SECTION XXXVIII.

THE CURE OF A MAN WITH A WITHERED HAND ON ANOTHER  
SABBATH-DAY.

*Matt. xii. 9—15. Mark iii. 1—6. Luke vi. 6—11.*

AND when He was departed thence (*from the town near to which the disciples had plucked the ears of corn*), it came to pass also on another Sabbath that He entered again into their synagogue at *Capernaum* and taught. And behold there was a man there whose right hand was withered—the *sineus* being so shrunk that it was rendered entirely useless.

\* The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. Ps. xxxvii. 32.

And the Scribes and Pharisees *insidiously* watched Him \* to see whether He would again heal on the Sabbath-day. *But their malice rendering them impatient, and hoping that they might at once find an accusation against Him, they asked Him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-days?*

But He *well* knew their thoughts and *malicious intent*, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up *from thy seat*, and stand forth in the midst of the congregation. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing *by way of answer to your question*: Is it lawful on the Sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? <sup>(1)</sup> to save life,—as I should do by enabling this man to obtain a livelihood; or to destroy it [to kill, MARK],—as you are even now plotting against Me to do?

But they, *unable or unwilling to give Him any answer*, held their peace. And He said again unto them, What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep (*a sheep*), and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not at once lay hold on it, and lift it out? Consider then how much is a man better than a sheep: *of how much greater moment is the welfare of a rational creature, made in the image of God, for whom the Messiah is to die, and fitted to live through all eternity!* Wherefore it evidently is lawful and agreeable to the will of God to do well on the Sabbath-days.<sup>(2)</sup>

(1) *To do good or to do evil?* From this question of our Lord in reference to the case before Him, it may justly be deduced as a standing principle of Christian morals, that *omitting to do the good which we have opportunity and power to do, is in a certain degree doing evil. The ability to do good imposes the obligation.* Accordingly, the wicked will be condemned in the Day of Judgment because they omitted acts of mercy and charity (*Matt. xxv. 45*).

(2) *It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days.* Our Lord here decides in opposition to one of their great Schools (that of *Shammai*), which laid

down the rule, "that no one should console the sick or visit the mourner on the Sabbath-day." The case put in this Section, taken with that in the preceding, sums up what may lawfully be done on the Sabbath: that was a case of necessity, this is a case of mercy; and whenever the peculiar and appropriate duties of the day really interfere with such works, we need not scruple to give our attention to the latter. The Sabbath is also a *feast*, not a *fast*; yet we must bear in mind that nothing will justify *luxury*, either in our own case, or as it interferes with others. Our Lord's example, when He was

And when He had looked round about upon them all with anger (*with holy indignation*), being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand.<sup>(9)</sup> And he, *endeavouring to do so in faith, immediately obtained the power, and stretched forth his hand*; and his *right hand* was restored whole (*sound and strong*) like as the other.

And the Pharisees were filled with madness *at the complete defeat which they had sustained*, and went forth and communed one with another what *injury* they might *next do with success* to Jesus. And straightway *they took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him*,<sup>(1)</sup>—*notwithstanding the differences which they had with that party both in their civil and religious views.*

But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself from thence.

### SECTION XXXIX.

JESUS RETIRES TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE, WHITHER MULTITUDES FOLLOW HIM, AND HE HEALS MANY.

*Matt. xii. 15—21. Mark iii. 7—12. Luke vi. 17—19.*

JESUS, *together with the company of His disciples, now withdrew Himself from the reach of the Pharisees to the other side of the sea of Galilee—thus quitting the dominions of Herod Antipas on the west coast for those of Philip on the east.* And great multitudes of people from Galilee followed Him; and *also from the south, out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from Idumea*; <sup>(1)</sup> and from beyond (*from the eastern side of*) Jordan; and they of the

pleased to dispense with a strict observance of the Sabbath, cannot be pleaded by us, who are not, like Him, *Lord of the Sabbath*. We must want spiritual discernment very much not to perceive that this holy day is a blessed institution to the *soul*, as well as for our temporal good,—that it is an important means of *grace*; and if men would but try to follow the Prophet's direction of not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words on God's Day, however irksome they might find it for a time, they would be sure in the end to find it "*a delight*," and they would rejoice in its return (see Isa. lviii. 13, 14).

<sup>(9)</sup> *Stretch forth thine hand.*] They could scarcely, with all their malice, construe so simple an act as the one here directed by Jesus, into an infraction of the Sabbath. We may observe, that as the ability to put forth his contracted limb was the very power this poor man wanted, and in *endeavouring* to obey the command he obtained it; so in the *moral* world, God will give strength to those who have the *disposition* to do His will, and who in earnest set about it. Whatever He has commanded us to do, He has likewise promised to help us in the perfor-

mance of it, and has promised success. Compare Ezek. xviii. 31 with Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

<sup>(4)</sup> *The Herodians.*] The Herodians are mentioned three times by St. Mark, and only once by another Evangelist (St. Matthew). They appear to have been a *political* party; either being advocates for keeping the country in subjection to the Romans according to the policy of Herod the Great, or else partisans of his son Herod Antipas, with the view of preserving the succession in that family.—The Herodians consisted chiefly of Sadducees, and contended against the Pharisees for payment of the tribute. What Matthew calls the "*leaven of the Sadducees*," Mark, in the parallel place, describes as the "*leaven of Herod*" (compare Matt. xvi. 6, and Mark viii. 15).

<sup>(1)</sup> *Idumea.*] This country, which lay below Judea, was formerly inhabited by the Edomites, descendants of Esau who settled there (Gen. xxv. 30). During the Captivity they spread themselves into Judea, and became occupiers of a considerable part of it; and being afterwards conquered by the Maccabees, they became yet more incorporated with the Jews. Herod the Great sprang from this people.

*Jewish faith who lived further north about the sea-coast (the maritime country) of Tyre and Sidon,*<sup>(\*)</sup>—all which, when they heard what great things He did, came to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they too came that were vexed (*tormented*) with unclean spirits; and they were, *all of them*, healed.

And He spake to (*directed*) His disciples that a small ship (*a boat*) should wait on Him, because of the *vast* multitude *assembled*,—lest they should throng Him: for He had *already* healed many, insomuch that the whole multitude *of* as many as had plagues (*distempers either of mind or body*), pressed upon Him and sought to touch Him; for there went virtue (*healing power*) out of Him,<sup>(†)</sup> and healed them all *who were able to touch Him*. And *those possessed with* unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him; and *the spirits* cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God—*the Messiah*.

And He straitly (*strictly*) charged them that they should not make Him known; *for He was not desirous of popular applause, and knew that if the Pharisees should hear of these extraordinary cures, they would be further instigated to premature designs against Him*.

And *all this was done* that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of Him by Esaias the prophet, saying, BEHOLD MY SERVANT<sup>(‡)</sup> (*Him who is come to execute the Divine Will in the form of a servant*) WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN to redeem My people; MY BELOVED IN WHOM MY SOUL IS WELL PLEASSED:<sup>§</sup> I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM, AND HE SHALL SHEW JUDGMENT (*He shall publish the Truth and Law of the Gospel*) TO THE GENTILES. HE SHALL NOT STRIVE NOR CRY (*He will neither be contentious nor utter the clamour that attends strife*); NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN HEAR HIS VOICE *ostentatiously seeking publicity IN THE STREETS. Even A*

\* He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Phil. ii. 7.

† Then said He, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. Heb. x. 9.

‡ There came a Voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Mark i. 11.

(\*) *Tyre and Sidon.*] These were cities of Phœnicia, a country adjoining Galilee, and lying along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The inhabitants were notorious for their pride and contempt of religion, as well as famed for their splendour and extensive commerce. They are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament (see Isa. xxiii. and Ezek. xxviii).—Those who followed our Lord on this occasion were *Jews* who dwelt on the confines of these cities.

(†) *There went virtue out of Him.*] It is evident that the extraordinary power which wrought these cures resided *essentially and inherently* in Jesus, for He declares that the Father dwelt in Him and He in the Father (John xiv. 10). This is never said of any of the Prophets, or even of the Apostles; for though the sick were cured by handkerchiefs brought from Paul's body, the miracle on that occasion is specially ascribed to God (Acts xix. 11).

(‡) *Behold My Servant, &c.*] The words here

cited do not exactly agree with our version of Isaiah, but the *sense* is throughout the same.—The Jews had expected a conqueror in their Messiah, but St. Matthew here shews how Jesus had fulfilled this and other prophecies under a totally different character: He was to be peaceful and retiring; not resorting to violence or oppressing the feeble, but rather employing the mildest means of establishing His kingdom. The images of the "bruised reed" and "smoking flax" were proverbial, importing great weakness and almost-expiring debility; or, spiritually understood, profound humility and contrition.—In Isaiah the concluding words are, "And the isles shall wait for Thy Law," which convey precisely the same idea as those employed by the Evangelist; for by "the isles," those countries west of Judea were particularly meant, and in an extended sense, the most distant and barbarous nations were to seek for Salvation through Christ.

BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK, AND SMOKING FLAX (*the lamp's expiring wick*) SHALL HE NOT QUENCH, TILL HE SEND FORTH JUDGMENT UNTO VICTORY—*not oppressing but rather cherishing the feeble until He make the Gospel victorious over all its enemies.* AND IN HIS NAME (*in Him*) SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST *for Salvation* (see *Isa. xlii. 1—4*).

## SECTION XL.

## THE TWELVE APOSTLES ARE APPOINTED.

*Matt. x. 2—4. Mark iii. 13—19. Luke vi. 12—17.*

AND it came to pass in those days that He goeth up [He went out, LUKE] into a mountain to pray; and continued all night in a house of prayer (*an Oratory, Gr.*) devoted to God,<sup>(1)</sup> engaged there in holy meditation; for He desired His Father's special blessing and concurrence in the choice of fit persons to aid and succeed Him in the work of the Gospel.

And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples, whom He would (*whom He chose*), and they came unto Him. And from the mass of them He chose and ordained<sup>a</sup> twelve, whom also He named Apostles,<sup>(2)</sup> that they should thenceforth be regularly with Him; so as more fully to receive His doctrine and contemplate His example, and that they might become His competent witnesses hereafter: And He appointed them at once to the Apostolic office, that He might send them forth, as occasion might require, to preach, and to have power through Him to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils.

Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these: the first in order, Simon,<sup>(3)</sup> whom He had surnamed [who is

<sup>a</sup> Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. John xv. 16.

<sup>b</sup> They ordained them elders in every church. Acts xiv. 23

(1) *In prayer to God.* The original here refers to one of those small houses of prayer, called *Proseuchas*, which stood without the walls of cities, and usually on the banks of rivers: they were open at the top, and planted around with trees. The main sense however of this passage, referring to our Lord seeking by Prayer the concurrence of the Father on this important occasion, is not altered. At John xvii. 6, 9, 12, the Apostles are said to have been given; and St. Peter says they were "chosen of God" (Acts x. 41).

(2) *Whom also He named Apostles.* This expression properly signifies one sent by another; and accordingly, the Saviour as sent by the Father (John xx. 21) is also called,—though of course in a much higher sense,—an Apostle (Heb. iii. 1). The number of the Apostles seems to have reference to God's design of gathering into the fold His ancient people, and it was promised that they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28).—They were all Galileans, several being natives of the

same town, Bethsaida; and some of them were relations. They are arranged in pairs in this catalogue, probably because they were afterwards sent out "two and two:" some of the brethren, Andrew and Simon, James and John, were called in that order.

(3) *The first, Simon.* St. Peter, together with Andrew his younger brother, may be named first, because they were the first who acknowledged Christ. It does not appear that Peter is placed first in dignity. The Evangelists observe a different order in their lists; St. John and St. Matthew being preceded by less eminent Apostles, perhaps for the very purpose that we may not assign pre-eminence to any. Three of them, namely the brothers James and John, with Simon, were especially confided in by our Lord on marked occasions; but still their equality with one another and with the rest, was plainly declared by Him when He had occasion to reprove them, and when He so pointedly declared them all to be brethren (see Matt. xx., 26, 27; xxiii. 8).

called, **MATT.**] also Peter, and Andrew <sup>(4)</sup> his brother; and James the *elder* son of Zebedee, and John his brother, <sup>(5)</sup> and He surnamed them Boanerges,—which is, *being interpreted*, the sons of Thunder; <sup>(6)</sup> Philip <sup>(6)</sup> and Bartholomew; <sup>(7)</sup> Thomas <sup>(8)</sup> and Matthew <sup>(9)</sup> the publican; James, the son of Alphaeus <sup>(10)</sup> or *Cleophas*, and Lebbæus, <sup>(11)</sup> whose surname was Thaddeus, *otherwise called* Judas or *Jude*, the brother of James; <sup>(12)</sup> Simon the Canaanite, <sup>(12)</sup> *being a third brother, who was called also Zelotes* <sup>(12)</sup> (*the Zealot*), and Judas Iscariot <sup>(13)</sup> (*of Carioth*), who also was the traitor and betrayed Him (*delivered Him up*). And He came down *from the mountain* with them, and stood in the plain.

<sup>b</sup> Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come. Hag. ii. 6, 7.

<sup>c</sup> Jude, the brother of James. Jude 1.

<sup>d</sup> Simon Zelotes. Acts i. 13.

It appears from the subsequent history of their proceedings, that James, the son of Alphaeus, presided at the Council held at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 13, 19), and not Peter; while on a subsequent occasion, Paul "withstood him to the face" (Gal. ii. 11).—Yet Peter was a truly remarkable and highly distinguished Apostle. His character need not now be particularized, as it will be gradually developed in the course of the Gospel narrative. For his history subsequent to the Ascension of Christ, see Section CXXXVIII., Note 6.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Andrew.*] This Apostle, like his brother Simon, was a fisherman; and probably the younger, being named after him, although the first-called. He seems to have been characterized by deep *thoughtfulness* and for presence of mind on several important occasions—as when the miracle of the Loaves was performed, when the Greeks were desirous to see Jesus, and in drawing from our Lord the description of the last Judgment, on which occasion he was admitted into confidence with the other favoured three. He is said to have preached the Gospel in Scythia, and to have suffered martyrdom by crucifixion in Achaia.

(<sup>5</sup>) *James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother.*] For an account of these distinguished Apostles, see Section XXX., Notes 3 & 4.—The name here given them of *Boanerges*, prophetically represented the resolution and courage with which they would preach the Gospel; a character which they both nobly answered, their Evangelical voices shaking, as it were like thunder, the earth. St. Paul applies the words of the prophet Haggai (see in the Margin above),—a prophecy to which our Lord probably alluded,—to the great alteration made by the publication of the Gospel (Heb. xii. 25, 26). Basil describes St. John as "sounding forth, as a son of thunder, things higher than any intellect can fully comprehend, and by a certain peculiar majesty of speech bringing, as it were out of the clouds and enigmas of wisdom, a devout knowledge of the Son of God."—The zealous temper of both these brothers is strikingly exhibited in the Gospels (see Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 54). It may be worth while adding, that the title "Sons of thunder" cannot be thought strained, since it has some precedent in classical writers: thus Virgil (*Æn.* vi. 842) by a like figure calls the two Scipios "the *thunderbolts of war*" (*duo fulmina belli*).

(<sup>6</sup>) *Philip.*] Little is known of St. Philip, and he left no writings. He was a native of Bethsaida, the town of Simon and Andrew, and

was originally a disciple of the Baptist. History shows that he was a married man, leaving behind him three daughters: also that he preached the Gospel in Upper Asia; and suffered martyrdom in Phrygia.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Bartholomew.*] This Apostle was, doubtless, the same as Nathanael, of whom an account is given Section XX., Note 6.

(<sup>8</sup>) *Thomas.*] No mention is made of St. Thomas before his conversion, but he was probably a fisherman, as we find him engaged in that occupation after the Resurrection of Christ: he then made himself remarkable by doubting the identity of his Master longer than his brethren. His surname of Didymus marks him as a twin.

(<sup>9</sup>) *Matthew.*] See Section XXXV., Note 1.

(<sup>10</sup>) *James the son of Alphaeus.*] This son of Alphaeus (or *Cleophas*, for they are the same names differently pronounced) was, by his mother's side, a first cousin of our Lord (Gal. i. 19). This relationship may have been the cause of his being afterwards stationed at Jerusalem, and having the honour of presiding over the Church there (Acts xv. 13).—He was called "the Less" (Mark xv. 40), to distinguish him from the son of Zebedee, being probably the younger; and like his namesake, he suffered martyrdom, being thrown headlong from the battlements of the Temple, and afterwards stoned; the injustice of which act is condemned even by the Jewish historian. This James is the author of the Epistle which bears his name.

(<sup>11</sup>) *Lebbæus.*] This was St. Jude, another son of Alphaeus, and so a relation of our Lord. Thaddeus, the corresponding surname, is only a different inflexion of Judas or Jude, and is used by St. Luke to distinguish this Apostle from the traitor Judas. It has been remarked, that the proper name and surname of this Apostle are both of the same import and character; Thaddeus or Jude signifying the breast, and Lebbæus signifying the heart. St. Jude is the writer of the Epistle bearing his name.

(<sup>12</sup>) *Simon the Canaanite.*] This was another brother of James the Less; and that he may not be confused with Simon Peter, he bears the epithet Canaanite,—probably from *Cana*, his native place. St. Luke, for the same purpose of distinction, calls him Zelotes, or "the Zealot;" a word which was then used in a good sense, though afterwards, from the conduct of a small sect who bore it, it came to mean a bigot.

(<sup>13</sup>) *Judas Iscariot.*] The epithet here applied to Judas the traitor probably originated from what is supposed to have been his native place,

## SECTION XLI.

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

*Matt. v.—vii.**Luke vi. 20—49; xi. 1—13, 33—36; xii. 22—34, 58, 59.*

**A**ND seeing the multitudes *assembled to hear Him preach*, He went up *again* into a mountain:<sup>(1)</sup> and when He was set *down according to the custom of Jewish teachers*, His disciples came unto Him.—And He lifted up His eyes on them, and opened His mouth, and taught them, saying—

BLESSINGS ON THE POOR AND ON DISCIPLES SUFFERING PERSECUTION,  
CONTRASTED WITH FOUR WOES.

Blessed be ye poor<sup>a</sup> (*Happy ye who are poor*) in this world's goods: thus shall your temptations and responsibilities be lessened; for if ye have the virtues of honest poverty and be but rich in faith, yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that *patiently bear earthly privations, and hunger*<sup>b</sup> now, —*more especially ye who hunger after righteousness*,—for ye shall be filled, and your souls shall be abundantly satisfied with good things in the life to come. Blessed are ye that weep now<sup>c</sup> for your sins, with that godly sorrow which worketh repentance; for hereafter ye shall laugh: God will give you joy for mourning, and wipe away all tears from your eyes. —Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall persecute and separate you from their company, as unworthy of communion with them, and shall reproach

<sup>a</sup> Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him Jas. ii. 6.

<sup>b</sup> He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Ps. cvii. 9.

<sup>c</sup> The Lord hath anointed Me to bind up the broken-hearted,—to comfort all that mourn. Isa. lxi. 1, 2.

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. Rev. xxi. 4.

*Carioth* or *Kerioth*, a small town in the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 25). There was also a small place named *Isharioth*, of the tribe of Ephraim, which might have led to the appellation. But if it be not significant either of birth or residence, then it may be derived from the Syriac word *sicariot*, "a purse," and intended to be descriptive of *this Judas*, as having been the bearer of it (John xiii. 29). Respecting the character and death of the traitor see Section CXV., Note 2, and Section CXXVII., Notes 1 & 3.

(1) *He went up into a mountain.*] The Law had been given upon a mountain, but it was with terror, and the people were commanded to remain at a distance: now they are invited to draw near. An eminence, called the Mount of the Beatitudes, two or three hundred feet in height, north of Mount Tabor, is supposed to have been the place where this inimitable Discourse was

delivered. It is said that it was the custom of the primitive Christians to make their children commit it to memory.

(2) *Blessed be ye poor.*] There are sufficient grounds for believing that St. Matthew and St. Luke here record the same discourse. The expressions are often identical: both commence with beatitudes and conclude with the same simile. The omissions of Luke (respecting the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and other like matters) are explained from his writing for the Gentiles, and there is scarcely any additional matter in his copy of the discourse. He seems to commence, however, with more exclusive blessings on those of the actual poor who patiently endure poverty, hunger, and grief, for Christ's sake, and on the disciples who trustingly undergo persecution; and these blessings he contrasts with four woes not recorded by Matthew.

G



<sup>d</sup> If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye. 1 Pet. iii. 14.

This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 1 Pet. ii. 19.

<sup>e</sup> If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

<sup>f</sup> Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? Acts vii. 52.

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword,—being destitute, afflicted, tormented. Heb. xi. 37.

<sup>g</sup> Woe to them that are at ease. Amos vi. 1.

Thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things,—but now thou art tormented. Luke xvi. 25.

Go to now, ye rich men, howl and weep for your miseries that shall come upon you. Jas v. 1.

<sup>h</sup> They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way: they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. Isa. xxviii. 7.

<sup>i</sup> If ye were of the world the world would love his own. John xv. 19.

If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. Gal. i. 10.

They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 1 John iv. 5.

<sup>k</sup> A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Ps. li. 17.

To this man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word. Isa. lxvi. 2.

<sup>l</sup> As ye are partakers of the sufferings, so be ye also of the consolation. 2 Cor. i. 7.

<sup>m</sup> Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Isa. lv. 1.—Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Matt. vi. 33.

you<sup>d</sup>, and *scornfully* cast out your name as *that of evil doers*, for the Son of man's sake:<sup>e</sup> rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy (*exult*) that ye are counted worthy to suffer such shame; for behold, your reward is great in Heaven; for in the like manner did their fathers (*the ancestors of these men*) unto the Prophets.<sup>f</sup>

But woe unto you (*Alas! for you*) that are rich *only in this world's goods*, for ye have *already* received *all* your consolation. Woe unto you that are full,<sup>h</sup>—*who feel no hunger after righteousness, and from excess have erred out of the way*,—for ye shall hunger (*shall know what real want is*) in the life to come. Woe unto you that laugh now *with a thoughtless levity*; for the hour of trial must arrive at last, and then, when your fear cometh, ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you,—*more especially such of you as are appointed to preach the Gospel*,—when all men shall speak well of you:<sup>i</sup> for *human nature is ever opposed to the Truth, applauding that doctrine which encourages it in sin; and so did their fathers to the false prophets* (<sup>g</sup>) *of old, as to those of Baal, and in the days of Jeremiah*.

#### BLESSINGS ON HUMILITY AND OTHER SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENTS.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,<sup>k</sup> (<sup>4</sup>) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,—*a kingdom commenced upon earth and to be consummated above*. Blessed are they that mourn for sin, with that sorrow which leadeth to repentance, for they shall at last be comforted.<sup>l</sup> Blessed are the meek, who serve God with a quiet mind, and patiently endure injuries; for, as the Psalmist declared, they “SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH” (Ps. xxxvii. 11), enjoying contentment, the greatest of all blessings here, and succeeding to the true land of promise at last. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after (*who ardently desire the attainment of*) righteousness, for they shall be filled<sup>m</sup> with every spiritual blessing in this life, and shall be eternally satisfied in the next. Blessed are the merciful, who compassionately regard the wants and sufferings of others; for they shall

(<sup>g</sup>) *So did their fathers unto the false prophets.*] In the Old Testament history we have frequent and melancholy proofs of the evil here pointed at—one more than ever prevalent in our day: namely, unauthorized teachers delivering their own vague dogmas as the Truth of God; often seeking only their own glory, and making their popularity minister to this world by accommodating themselves to the passions or whims of their hearers. (See some striking examples: Isa. xxx. 10; Jer. vi. 14; Ezek. xiii. 10; Zech. x. 2.)

(<sup>4</sup>) *Blessed are the poor in spirit.*] These Beatitudes have been termed the *Christian paradoxes*, because they place happiness in such dispositions of mind as no man naturally longs for, but which, on examination, will be found most effectual in procuring it. The blessings are pronounced as detached aphorisms, but we are not to conceive that the qualities exist apart; for they may all meet in different proportions in the same individual, and, taken together, they form the Christian character.

*themselves* obtain mercy<sup>n</sup> and acceptance with God. Blessed are the pure in (at) heart, *who do not rest in outward purity alone*; for they shall enjoy that perfection of the soul's happiness to see God,<sup>o</sup>—*living in favour with Him here, and dwelling with Him for ever in His eternal kingdom.* Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called (*they shall be*) the children of God,<sup>p</sup>—*resembling in that heavenly quality the Father above, who is the God of all peace.* Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>q</sup> Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you,<sup>r</sup> and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake<sup>s</sup> and because ye are Christians: rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward laid up in heaven, for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.<sup>t</sup>

CHRISTIANS ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Ye, *My disciples*, are to be the salt of the earth,<sup>u</sup> seasoning and preserving it from moral corruption. But if the salt have lost his savour<sup>v</sup> and become insipid, wherewith shall it afterwards be salted (*how can its saltness ever be restored*)? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

Again, as the Sun enlightens the natural creation, so ye are to be the spiritual light<sup>w</sup> of the world. *The eyes of men will be fixed upon you, and your course cannot remain unobserved*: a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.—*And remember, it is not for your own sakes alone that ye will be enlightened*: neither do men light a candle (a lamp) and put it in a secret place, neither under a bushel (under a measure), for that would overlay and conceal it; but they place it on a candlestick (on a lamp-stand), that they which

<sup>n</sup> With the merciful Thou wilt shew Thyself merciful. 2 Sam. xxii. 26.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. Pa. xli. 1.

He shall have judgment without mercy that shewed no mercy. Jas. ii. 13.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place? he that hath clean hands and a pure heart. Pa. xxiv. 3, 4.

Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure. 1 John iii. 3.

Live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you. 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

If we suffer we shall also reign with Him. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

If ye suffer, for righteousness' sake, happy are ye. 1 Pet. iii. 14.

They departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. Acts v. 41.

Who both killed their own prophets, and have persecuted us. 1 Thess. ii. 15.

Have salt in yourselves. Mark ix. 50.

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt. Col. iv. 6.

The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Prov. iv. 18.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Ye are the salt of the earth.*] Under the Law, salt was to be offered with all offerings to God (Lev. ii. 13). Under the New Covenant we have, instead, "the savour of the knowledge of Christ;" compared with which all other learning may well be termed insipid, and which is truly purifying, penetrating, and powerful (see 2 Cor. ii. 14; Heb. iv. 12).—This remarkable metaphor (a similar one to which occurs in Livy, who has termed Greece the *sal gentium*) is addressed, with all that follows, not only to our Lord's disciples at that time, but to Christians at large, and especially to all future pastors of His flock. All are bound by their baptismal vows to show forth the Gospel in the example of a Christian life. Like the Jews of old, the disciples of the Saviour are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." St. Peter, who was present at this Sermon, does not take it exclusively to himself as an Apostle; but in the same spirit in which it is said, "Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect," he thus addresses all Christians in the first of his

Epistles: "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye also holy" (1 Pet. i. 15). The other Apostles reproduce similar maxims: St. James, in his General Epistle, writes, as strongly as His Master had spoken, against swearing, and almost in the same words (see Jas. v. 12); and St. Paul reproaches the Corinthians for not suffering wrong rather than go to law (1 Cor. vi. 7).

(<sup>6</sup>) *If the salt have lost his savour, &c.*] The salt used by the ancients was what we term rock salt; and the Jews made use also of that procured by evaporation from the lake Asphaltites or Dead Sea. Both these salts were impure, and a considerable quantity of the earth and vegetable substances mixed with them would remain after the saltiness was gone. This was useless, except that it was sometimes used instead of gravel for pathways, especially those about the Temple to prevent the priests from slipping. To this there seems an allusion in its being "trodden under foot of men." Maundrel found salt near Gebul which exposure had rendered quite insipid.

<sup>w</sup> Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit: so shall ye be My disciples. John xv. 8.

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak evil against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1 Pet. ii. 12.

come in may see the light; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. So let your *spiritual* light shine before men, *in purity of doctrine and a blameless life*, that they may *effectually see and profit by your good works*; <sup>(7)</sup> and *let this be your motive of action, that they too may become Christians, and perceiving that such works are the evident fruits of faith, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.*<sup>w</sup>

THE PERPETUAL AND SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THE MORAL LAW; AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIANS ONE TOWARDS ANOTHER.

<sup>x</sup> Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law. Rom. iii. 31.

Christ is the end of the Law. Rom. x. 4.

The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Gal. iii. 24.

<sup>y</sup> Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. Jas. ii. 10.

<sup>z</sup> They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Rom. x. 8.

I do count all things but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in Him; not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ,—the righteousness which is of God by faith. Phil. iii. 8, 9.

Think not that I am come to destroy (*to annul*) the Law, or the Prophets *who attest it*: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil<sup>x</sup>—*to ratify the moral obligation of the Law and to accomplish all which has been predicted*. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth (*the whole universe*) pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled.<sup>(8)</sup>

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least (*one of the least of these, Gr.*) Commandments,<sup>y</sup> <sup>(9)</sup> and shall teach men so *to do*, he shall be called the least in (*he shall be farthest of all from attaining*) the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall *obediently do and faithfully teach them all*, the same shall *meet with his reward, and be called great in the kingdom of heaven*. *Trifle then no more as to which are weightier, and which are lighter precepts*; for I say unto you, that except your righteousness<sup>z</sup> *become comprehensive and spiritual, and shall far exceed the law and often merely external* righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,<sup>(10)</sup> ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

(7) *That they may see your good works.*] In carrying out this precept, of course nothing like ostentation must be allowed; but still it is, on fitting occasions, important that Example should be set; and that good actions should be so manifestly done *on the principle of religious duty*, that all who witness them may be sure it is *to that they owe their real excellence*: then men cannot fail to perceive that the *glory* is due to God.

(8) *One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, &c.*] Our Lord fulfilled the Law in every sense. Although He abrogated the ceremonial part of it, yet it was first fully completed in Him as the great Subject of its prophecies, the Substance of all its types and shadows, and the *real Victim* which its sacrifices prefigured. Its *moral precepts He alone* perfectly obeyed; while, as a Legislator, He re-enacted them in all their purity, and freed them from the many corrupt interpretations of the Jewish teachers.—The word *jot* here denotes the letter *Jod*, the smallest in the Hebrew Alphabet, and thus, figuratively, it had come to signify anything small. The word *tittle*, in like manner, denotes one of those minute joints or *apices* which were used at the

angles of letters much resembling each other, in order to distinguish them; and so it expressed the minutest part of other things.

(9) *Whosoever shall break one of these least Commandments.*] In consequence of the close connexion between the Commandments, he who breaks one may be said, in the sense of St. James (*see in the MARGIN*), to be guilty of all. They are a *rule*, and are therefore *one*, as a rule should be. One authority runs through all, which is "the golden thread they are strung on; break it anywhere, and all the pearls drop off."

(10) *The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.*] In order to favour their lax notions of morality, the Pharisees had divided the injunctions of the Law into the *weightier and lighter*, reckoning the transgression of the latter to be very venial. Among these they reckoned anger and calumny, which did not, they thought, incur the wrath of God, provided that sacrifices and other external rites in expiation of such faults were accurately observed. To this gross fallacy our Lord proceeds to reply. From causeless anger and reproachful words, He makes a gradation to the censorious judging even of a man's

Ye have heard that it was said (*Exod. xx. 13*) by them (*to them, Gr.*) of old time, Thou shalt not kill;<sup>(11)</sup> and upon this the gloss of the Scribes is, Whosoever shall in his anger unlawfully kill another shall be in danger of the judgment (*of punishment by the inferior Court*): but I say unto you,<sup>(12)</sup> that the Sixth Commandment has a much wider signification, and extends to the heart itself, the very seat of the evil: whosoever is angry with his brother (*with any one of his fellow-creatures*) without a sufficient and justifiable cause, shall be in danger of the judgment<sup>a</sup> (*of such punishment as is inflicted by the lower tribunals*); for "he that hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John iii. 15) already in his heart, and has violated the spirit of that Commandment: and whosoever shall contemptuously and without just cause say to his brother, Raca (*Thou worthless fellow!*), shall be in danger of such punishment as is inflicted by the Council or Sanhedrim: but whosoever shall impiously say, Thou fool (*Thou wretch, or child of hell!*), presuming to pronounce on the eternal state of another, shall be in danger of hell-fire<sup>(13)</sup> (*of punishment answering to that in the dreadful valley of Hinnom*).

Therefore think not that external service will be accepted as a substitute for the moral duties: if thou bring thy gift<sup>b</sup> (*thy offering*) to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee (*is on any account justly offended with, or holds himself injured by thee*), leave there

<sup>a</sup> Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Deut. xvi. 18.

<sup>b</sup> They shall not appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee. Deut. xvi. 16, 17.

eternal state—condemning each fault in turn; and He ends with declaring that it is in vain for a man to approach God's altar who is at variance with his brother—that devotion cannot be accepted unless it proceeds from a meek and charitable spirit.

(<sup>11</sup>) *Thou shalt not kill.*] Our Lord's words in this place may be profitably used in modern times as a solemn warning against the wicked practice of duelling,—a practice almost recognised as honourable in many Christian countries! Anger, though it be reasonably excited, can no more justify this act, than it justifies secret homicide or murder. We find, under the Old Covenant, a remarkable curse pronounced by the dying patriarch Jacob upon two of his sons who had slain a man "in their anger" (Gen. xlix. 5—7).—With the military profession, in particular, this barbarous custom has been considered as allowable, if not necessary; and unhappily, in civilized society and in courts, it is the military character which is so much affected. Yet at the outset of the Gospel narrative, we find soldiers emphatically warned to "do violence to no man" (Luke iii. 14); while, to the honour of that profession, and in days of peculiar trial, the praise of more than one soldier is recorded in the sacred page.

(<sup>12</sup>) *But I say unto you, &c.*] Here our Lord emphatically speaks in His own name as a Legislator.—We may take notice, in this place, of the beautiful variety of the original language (the Greek) in which the Gospels are written; a variety which can never be communicated to our

poorer tongue, and which is remarkably shown at this part of our Lord's Discourse. There are no less than eight Greek verbs answering to the English word "say." Thus, at the commencement of the paragraph in the text, "Ye have heard that it was said," a verb is used to express whatever stands on the authority of tradition: "but I say unto you;" here there is a verb to signify what our Lord delivered authoritatively from Himself: and the clause, "whosoever shall say to his brother" &c., has another verb conveying what is said incidentally.

(<sup>13</sup>) *Hell-fire.*] The word *Gehenna*, thus translated, is made up of two Hebrew words, and signifies the valley of Hinnom. In this valley, which adjoined the city, the idolatrous Israelites formerly worshipped an idol of brass which they called Moioch, and sacrificed their children by fire (2 Chron. xxxiii. 6). After the Captivity, this place was held in such abomination that it became the receptacle for carcases of animals and other offal, which, in so hot a climate, soon polluted the air, and made it necessary to keep fires continually burning there. To a Jew, who abominated everything unclean, no punishment could be more degrading or offensive than this office. The valley was, not unfrequently, the place of executions; and with reference both to its former and present use, it was no unfit emblem of the place of torment destined for the wicked.—Our Saviour's expressions used on this occasion seem to point to the different degrees of punishment hereafter, proportionate to crime.

\* — lifting up holy hands without wrath. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

† Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame: debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself. Prov. xxv. 8, 9.

‡ There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. 1 Cor. vi. 7.

§ Lust not after beauty in thine heart. Prov. vi. 25.

¶ — eyes full of adultery, that cannot cease from sin. 2 Pet. ii. 14.

‡ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence. Col. iii. 5.

thy gift *with those who minister* before the Altar, and go thy way; first *do all in thy power* to be reconciled<sup>c</sup> to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

When thou goest with thine adversary<sup>(14)</sup> (*thy creditor*) to the magistrate, agree quickly (*amicably compound the matter in time*) whiles thou art in the way *to the Court* with him:† give diligence *and make every effort* that thou mayest *quietly* be delivered *and have thine acquittance* from him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee [*hale thee, LUKE*] to the judge, and the judge deliver thee *over* to the officer *who has to execute sentence*, and so the officer cast thee into prison. Verily I say unto thee, *if sentence be once passed, and the fault be thine that matters have arrived at such extremity*, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing,<sup>(15)</sup>—*even* the very last mite.

#### OF ADULTERY.

Ye have heard that it was said by them (*to them*) of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery (*Exod. xx. 14*); *and your teachers have limited this Commandment to the outward act*. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman (*on another man's wife, GR.*) to lust *wilfully* after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart<sup>e</sup>, *and in the sight of God*. And if thy right eye<sup>f</sup> offend thee *by causing thee to lust*, pluck it out and cast it from thee<sup>(16)</sup> (*mortify that evil passion which it feeds, however difficult the trial may be*); for it is profitable for thee *and far better* that one of thy members § (*thy darling vice*) should perish, and not that thy whole body should *at last* be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee *by ministering to sin*, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should

(14) *When thou goest with thine adversary, &c.*] Our Lord having told us, in the previous sentence, that we must strive to regain the favour of one with whom we are on unfriendly terms, here counsels us what to do when we actually lie at the mercy of another for debt. He further shows what is a violation of the Sixth Commandment, by condemning a litigious spirit. Employing the language of human judicature, He represents how strictly and justly God will punish those who make no efforts for peace, or *refuse* to be reconciled.

(15) *The uttermost farthing.*] The farthing, or *quadrans*, was a small coin equal in value to two *mites*, which word St. Luke employs instead. The *sense* simply is, that the return of the *whole* of what was due would be insisted on.

(16) *Pluck it out, and cast it from thee.*] Our Lord, knowing that unchecked desire will, when opportunity favours, break forth into sin, here declares, in highly-*figurative* language (for of course we are not called upon to mutilate our

bodies), that we must eradicate the eye of concupiscence, and cut off the right hand that would commit wrong,—so as effectually to turn aside the one and restrain the other. The Hebrews were accustomed thus to compare evil desires and the affections of the *mind* with members of the *body*: so “an evil eye” denoted *Envy*, and “bowels,” *Compassion*. St. Paul more than once bids us watch over our *members* as “the instruments of sin” (Rom. vi. 13).—Our Lord's declaration, in this place, that desire is sin, has been thought rigorous, but all strict moralists have decided the same. Cicero records the observation, that even the *eyes* of a grave magistrate ought to be restrained (Prætorum decet, non solum manus, sed etiam oculos, abstinentes habere); and Juvenal attaches the guilt of a wrong action to the man who meditates the commission of it—

... Scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,  
Facti crimen habet.

perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.<sup>h</sup>

It hath been said of *old time*,—*but only by permission, and in particular cases, on account of the perversity of your hearts*,<sup>i</sup>—Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement (*Deut. xxiv. 1*): but I say now unto you, that, *according to the primitive institution of marriage*, whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the *discovered cause of fornication before marriage or of adultery since*, causeth her, *if she contract a second marriage*, to commit adultery<sup>k</sup>; and whosoever shall marry her that is *so unjustly divorced*, committeth adultery.

## OF OATHS.

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them (*to them*) of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself (*Thou shalt not violate thy solemn vows*), but shalt *exactly and religiously* perform unto the Lord thine oaths (*Numb. xxx. 2*): but I say unto you, Swear not at all<sup>(17)</sup> *in your ordinary conversation, as you are so much accustomed to do, —not even indirectly by any created thing, for every thing acquires a sacred character from its connection with the Great Creator; neither by Heaven, for it is God's throne,<sup>m</sup> —and to swear by that is the same as swearing by Him that sitteth thereon; nor by the earth, for it is under His dominion and is as His footstool,<sup>n</sup> neither by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the Great King<sup>o</sup>, who condescendeth to dwell within its Temple.* Neither shalt thou swear by thy own head, because thou canst not *so much as make one hair change its colour, whether it be white or black; and the preservation of thy head concerns thy life,—to swear by which is still to swear in effect by Him who has the power of life and death.*

But let your *ordinary communication* be Yea, yea; Nay, nay;<sup>p</sup> <sup>(18)</sup> *simply affirming or denying as the truth may*

<sup>h</sup> If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. viii. 13.

<sup>i</sup> I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. 1 Cor. ix. 27.

<sup>j</sup> He said unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so. Matt. xix. 8.

<sup>k</sup> If while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. Rom. vii. 3.

<sup>l</sup> Unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband; but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried. 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

<sup>m</sup> Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath. Jas. v. 12.

<sup>n</sup> Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne. Isa. lxvi. 1.

<sup>o</sup> He that shall swear by heaven sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon. Matt. xxiii. 22.

<sup>p</sup> Thus saith the Lord, The earth is My footstool. Isa. lxvi. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Mount Zion,—the city of the Great King. Ps. xlviii. 2.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Ps. lxxxvii. 3.

<sup>r</sup> Swear not, but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation. Jas. v. 12.

(17) *Swear not at all.*] The Pharisees distributed oaths into the serious and slighter; not scrupling to use the latter on the most ordinary occasions, and only condemning perjury when the name of God was expressly contained in the oath. Our Lord prohibits all vain oaths; yet that there is no reference here to *judicial oaths* is evident, not only from "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," but from the fact that, in their judicial oaths God alone was invoked by the Jews. That part of the Law of Moses, which our Lord had not come to repeal, *prescribed* such oaths (Exod. xxii. 11; Numb. v. 19; Deut. xxix. 12). St. Paul's Epistles plainly justify appeals to the Deity on occasions of sufficient solemnity; and the Apostle often calls God to witness his own sincerity (see Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Gal. i. 20): he also directly approves of the affirmatory oaths of courts of justice as "the

end of strife" (Heb. vi. 16). Our Lord Himself sanctioned, by His obedience, the adjuration of the High-Priest at his trial (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64).

(18) *Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay.*] We need not suppose that the *precise* terms of affirmation or denial are here prescribed, but only such an *habitual regard to truth* as would render all *swearing unnecessary*.—This degrading and wicked habit, which, to the disgrace of countries professing Christianity, is still so common, is disgusting to the refined, abominable to the good, insulting to those with whom we associate, and, above all, *awful in the sight of God*. He who wantonly and wilfully breaks the *third* commandment, will not hesitate to break the *ninth* also. The man who is always believed, is he whose character is *above suspicion*.

require, and at the most with a repetition to impress what thou wouldest say: for whatsoever is more than (*exceedeth*) these cometh of evil (*is evil, and springs from the Author of Evil*); it is irreverent to God, the Maker of the world and of all things without exception that are in it.

¶ Say not thou, I will recompense evil: but wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee. Prov. xx. 22.

¶ Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me. Prov. xxiv. 20.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. xii. 17—19.

Be patient toward all men. 1 Thess. v. 14.

Not rendering evil for evil. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

¶ I gave My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. Isa. l. 6.

He giveth His cheek to him that smiteth Him. Lam. iii. 30.

¶ There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? 1 Cor. vi. 7.

OF NOT REPAYING EVIL, AND OF BEARING GOOD WILL TOWARDS ENEMIES.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, *as a rule of public justice, that he who maimeth another shall suffer retribution of the like kind—as for instance, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (Exod. xxi. 24); and by the gloss of the Scribes, this has been further construed as an encouragement to revenge private injuries.* But I say unto you, *That, in matters which neither affect life nor conscience, ye resist not evil:*<sup>(19)</sup> *but rather take wrong than enter into strife; so that whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also*<sup>r</sup>—*rather enduring a repetition of small aggressions, than returning a blow.* And if any man will sue (*is determined to sue*) thee at the Law, and take away thy coat; *rather than publicly contend with him about a small and reparable wrong, venture another loss and let him have [forbid him not to take, LUKE] thy cloak also:*<sup>(20)</sup> *And whosoever shall compel (impress) thee to go a mile*<sup>(21)</sup> *for the public convenience, rather than violently resist such authority, go peaceably with him twain (twice the required distance).*

(19) *Resist not evil.*] This precept, and the particular expressions which follow, are not to be too rigorously interpreted, and would not have been used at all, if the danger were not manifestly the other way.—The first case, that of striking on the face, was regarded by the ancients as an affront of the worst sort, and was severely punished both by the Jewish and Roman laws. When our Lord Himself was thus struck, in the presence of the High-Priest,—and, subsequently, St. Paul under similar circumstances,—they expostulated for the injury committed (see John xviii. 22, 23; Acts xxiii. 2, 3); though the difference between the replies of our always-perfect Saviour and the frail, though inspired, teacher, cannot fail to attract our notice. The command “not to resist evil” is intended to inculcate a general spirit of forbearance under injuries; and teaches, that we are to endure them as long as we can, rather than retaliate, or have recourse to law from resentful motives.—“To give the cheek to the smiter” was, even among the Jews, a proverbial expression for a forbearing temper, and similar passages are found in other writers: so Livy (lib. iv. cap. 35) “*præbere ad contumeliam os.*”—It is urged that there are affronts which *flesh and blood* cannot pass by, but then we must remember that “*flesh and blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven.”—A right reason, under the guidance of Religion, will point out what limitations to our Lord’s general rule particular cases may require: but every

candid and reflecting person must allow, that if these precepts be impracticable in their full extent, it is only on account of the wickedness of mankind; that in proportion as the Christian spirit prevails, they become easier, and that if that spirit were universal, there would be no incapability of performing *the hardest*.—It was in points like these that the most accomplished of the heathen, and even their great moralists, entirely failed. What a simple and beautiful rule their great Tully spoiled by the addition of a few words: “It is (he writes) the first office of justice to *hurt no man*,—except first provoked by an injury.”

(20) *Thy cloak also.*] The Jews wore two principal garments. The interior, called the *coat* or *tunic*, which was made commonly of linen, encircled the whole body, reaching down to the knees. Over this was commonly worn an upper and more valuable garment,—the same which is here called the *cloak* or *mantle*.

(21) *Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile.*] This alludes to what had been originally a Persian custom, and was adopted by the Romans in this and their other provinces. Couriers, and some other public officers, were authorised to compel any person they met to act as a guide, and they could employ horses, or put any other private convenience in requisition, for the public service. So our Lord’s executioners compelled a traveller they met on their way to bear His Cross.

After providing for your own family, and as a general rule, give according to thine ability to every man, that seemeth to be in need or who cannot work, that asketh alms of thee;<sup>t(22)</sup> and from him that would borrow of thee, if he be deserving of thy aid, turn not thou away<sup>u</sup> when able to lend.—Carry the like Christian spirit into the other transactions of life: Of him that taketh away thy goods which he has borrowed, ask them not hastily again, if it be out of his immediate power to restore them, or if the demanding them at Law would bring him to ruin: and therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also in the like circumstances even so to them; for this is the sum and substance of what is contained in the Law and the Prophets.<sup>v</sup>

Ye have heard that it hath been said of old, Thou shalt love thy neighbour (*Lev. xix. 18*): this commandment has been since illiberally restricted to those of your own nation, and the corrupt inference has been added, Thou shalt hate thine enemy. But the Law itself commands you to “love the stranger” and “bring back the strayed beast of thine enemy” (see *Exod. xxiii. 4*; *Lev. xix. 34*), and I say unto you which hear Me this day, Love your enemies,<sup>(23)</sup> bearing good will towards them in all things: bless them that curse you, returning good words and kind wishes for their revilings, and, in so far as truth will allow, speaking favourably of them: do good when it lies in your power to them that hate you,<sup>w</sup> and pray for the Divine forgiveness and better disposition of them which despitefully use you and persecute you:<sup>x</sup> that in the observance of these things ye may be the worthy children of your Father<sup>y</sup> which is in Heaven, and bear some faint resemblance to the Great Author of all good; for He is ever kind unto the most unthankful of His creatures. He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good,<sup>z</sup> and sendeth rain on the just and

Bless them which persecute you. *Rom. xii. 14*.—Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it. *1 Cor. iv. 12*.—Christ, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not. *1 Pet. ii. 23*.

<sup>y</sup> In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. *1 John iii. 10*.

<sup>z</sup> Upon whom doth not His light arise? *Job xxv. 3*.—He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness. *Acts xiv. 17*.

(22) Give to every one that asketh of thee.] It is better to relieve those whose pretensions we are unable to decide, than to send one member of Christ empty away. There is a kind of prudential charity which refuses its aid until convinced of the impossibility of deception. Such charity may come too late. We cannot know the heart, but we can always form some judgment from outward circumstances, and if these are at all in favour of our petitioner, it is better to listen to the voice of humanity—for the Christian to surrender himself to his natural feelings, than to pass such cases by.

(23) Love your enemies.] Perhaps this is the

<sup>t</sup> The poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy land. *Deut. xv. 11*.

The righteous giveth and spareth not. *Prov. xxi. 26*.

I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality, that your abundance may be a supply for their want; that their abundance also may be a supply for your want—that there may be equality. *2 Cor. viii. 13, 14*.

<sup>u</sup> Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. *Deut. xv. 7, 8*.

The righteous is ever merciful and lendeth. *Pa. xxxvii. 26*.

<sup>v</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. *Lev. xix. 18*.

Love is the fulfilling of the law. *Rom. xiii. 10*.

The end of the commandment is charity. *1 Tim. i. 5*.

<sup>w</sup> If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: overcome evil with good. *Rom. xii. 20, 21*.

<sup>x</sup> Then said Jesus, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. *Luke xxiii. 34*.

And Stephen kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. *Acts vii. 60*.

most difficult of all our duties, yet the Christian must aim at the attainment of it; for it is the great characteristic mark of the religion which has come from God. We are to separate a man's person from his conduct, and though we may not approve of the latter, there is always room left for benevolence towards him as he is a fellow-creature. The case put in the text of a kind Providence watching over the most worthless, plainly shews that it is not the love of affection which is required of us in such cases, but the doing good offices whenever we can, especially those of common humanity.



on the unjust,—*all alike sharing His ordinary providential bounties, and being monuments of His daily care. As My disciples ye must strive to attain some measure of this perfect spirit*: for if ye love them *only* which love you, what reward have ye *reasonably to expect*? *Such feelings of sympathy are common to the worst of men*: do not even the *very publicans, whom ye so despise*, the same? sinners also of *every description* love those that love them: and if ye, *who pretend to a much higher standard of morals*, do good to them *only* which do good to you, what thank have ye—for sinners also, *as ye find*, do even the *very same*?—And *again, in the ordinary intercourse of life*, if ye salute your *Jewish brethren only with marks of civility and kindness*, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?—*In all things* be ye therefore perfect,<sup>a</sup> even as (*in the same manner as*) your Father which is in Heaven is perfect—*making Heavenly Perfection the standard of your conduct, and aiming at the same by daily acts of love and expressions of good-will towards the whole body of your fellow-creatures.*

<sup>a</sup> I am the Almighty God: walk before Me, and be thou perfect. Gen. xvii. 1.

Ye shall be holy, for I am holy. Lev. xi. 44.

Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children. Eph. v. 1.

—always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Col. iv. 12.

Be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Jas. i. 4.

And if ye lend to them of whom ye *confidently* hope to receive *back again*,—*perhaps with the usual interest for your money*,—what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much *as is due* again: But do good; and *when it is in your power, lend without interest to such as have claims on your regard, or who may be otherwise deserving of your support*: if they should be able to return the *principal, it is well*; yet lend to such persons, though hoping for nothing *from them* again. And so your reward shall be great,<sup>b</sup> and ye shall be the children of the Highest, *who is surety for the poor man, and will requite every such benevolent deed as though it were done unto Himself.*

Be ye therefore *in these several respects* merciful, as your Father also *in all things* is merciful.

#### OSTENTATION TO BE AVOIDED IN ALMSGIVING, IN PRAYER, AND IN FASTING.

Take heed that ye do not your alms (*your various works of charity*) before men *in order* to be seen of them. otherwise, *if such be your guiding motive*, ye have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, *let all be done with simplicity*: do not sound, *as it were*, a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites<sup>(24)</sup> *in a manner do by their ostentation* in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men: verily I say unto you, they have their reward, *for*

(24) *Hypocrites.*] This word properly denoted an actor, and, as it was the unnatural custom of ancient times to wear masks upon the stage, it thus came to signify a dissembler. The

original of the expression in the sentence preceding, rendered “to be seen” of men, is of the same class, signifying to be beheld and applauded as in a theatre by the spectators.

*the worldly applause they aim at is all the return they shall ever have.* But when thou doest alms, *take care that thy motive be pure, and let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;*<sup>(65)</sup> that *so in all ordinary cases* thine alms may be *done* in secret, and thy Father, which seeth *every action* in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly.<sup>c</sup>

And one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples. And He said, When thou prayest, thou shalt not be (*must not be*) *ostentatious* as the hypocrites are *also in this respect*: for they love to pray standing<sup>(66)</sup> in the synagogues *whither large multitudes resort*, and in the corners of the streets *where several ways meet*, in order that they may be seen of *many men at once*. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward—all that they shall ever have. But thou, when thou prayest *at home*, enter into thy closet (*thy retired chamber*), and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret (*who is invisible*), and thy Father which seeth *all* in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain and needless repetitions,<sup>d(67)</sup> as the heathen do<sup>e</sup> *when invoking their false deities*, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking: be ye not therefore like unto them *in this respect, neither minutely prescribe your wants*, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. After this manner and according to this model therefore pray ye<sup>(68)</sup> [When ye pray, say, LUKE]:—

<sup>c</sup> Nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither any thing hid that shall not be known and come abroad. Luke viii. 17.

<sup>d</sup> Be not rash with thy mouth: God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few. Eccles. v. 2.

<sup>e</sup> They called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. 1 Kings xviii. 26.

All with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians Acts xix. 34.

(<sup>65</sup>) *Let not thy left hand know, &c.*] This is evidently a proverbial expression. That public charity is not here forbidden, and that the Apostles understood our Lord to be speaking chiefly of the *motive* in almsgiving, appears from their own subsequent practice; for they, with St. Paul, frequently encouraged and promoted public collections (see Acts vi. 1; xi. 29; 1 Cor. xvi. 1) Our Lord, in an earlier part of this Discourse, had also said that His disciples might on fit occasions allow their good deeds to be known (see Note 7).

(<sup>66</sup>) *To pray standing.*] The Jews were accustomed to pray in this posture, except on remarkable occasions of penitence or mourning (see Luke xviii. 11, 13). Sometimes "standing" implies prayer (see Job xxx. 20; Jer. xv. 1).

(<sup>67</sup>) *Use not vain repetitions.*] The original of this expression is supposed to be derived from the name of *Battus*, an inferior Greek poet, who wrote weary hymns full of tautologies. There are but few heathen prayers on record, but these (as may be strikingly seen in the Orphic Hymns) are full of repetitions and invocations of their gods. Our Lord's meaning simply is, that Christians must not expect to be heard *merely* for their much speaking; nor will it avail to say, "Lord, Lord, and do not the things" that He says. His own example (Matt. xxvi. 44) shows, that He did not object to the devout repetition of appropriate prayers; and accordingly our Church repeats more than once in

her services the excellent Prayer which presently follows (see Section CXXI., Note 3).

(<sup>68</sup>) *After this manner therefore pray ye.*] The context and expressions with which this Prayer is introduced shew that we have in it a precedent as well as a pattern for *Forms* of Prayer. A *form* is plainly enjoined, as we are not only taught what things we should ask of God, but in *what words* we should ask them. It appears to be laid down that men are not always able of themselves to express their spiritual wants; for St. Paul says, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought" (Rom. viii. 26). *Forms* of Prayer are prescribed at Deut. xxi. 7; xxvi. 13; Joel ii. 17; while the Book of Psalms was composed for the service of the Temple. Our Lord was in the regular habit of frequenting the synagogues, where forms of Prayer were used; and the Baptist had taught his disciples "*how to pray*."—[It should be noticed here that St. Luke speaks of our Lord's having so taught His disciples on an occasion immediately after He had been Himself engaged in Prayer. This merely-circumstantial discrepancy has been omitted above (in accordance with the plan of combining the two narratives of the Sermon on the Mount), lest its introduction into the text might confuse the reader.]—It is said that the outline of this beautiful Prayer (with the exception of the clause on Forgiveness) existed in substance in the nineteen

† Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father. Rom. viii. 16.

‡ The Lord's throne is in heaven. Ps. xi. 4.

§ Our God is in the heavens. Ps. cxv. 3.

¶ Thus saith the Lord, Heaven is My throne. Isa. lxvi. 1.

‡ O My Father, Thy will be done. Matt. xxvi. 42.

§ The will of the Lord be done. Acts xxi. 14.

¶ Ye, His angels, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Ps. ciii. 20.

‡ Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Matt. xxvi. 41.

¶ I pray that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. John xvii. 15.

§ God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. x. 13.

¶ The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation. 2 Pet. ii. 9.

‡ Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all. 1 Chron. xxix. 11.—Blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory: Amen, and Amen. Ps. lxxii. 19.—Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Rev. v. 13.

‡ Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Col. iii. 13.

° He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy. Jas. ii. 13.

Our Father<sup>(20)</sup> which art *more especially* in Heaven,<sup>5</sup> *Thine eternal dwelling-place*; hallowed *everywhere* and by all be Thy *holy* name: Thy kingdom come (*may the reign of the Gospel advance till the whole earth is filled with Thy glory*). Thy will be done in (*on*, GR.) earth<sup>h</sup> as it is in heaven<sup>i</sup> (*may all acknowledge the dispensations of Thy providence and fulfil Thy revealed will,—copying in this the obedience of the holy angels who constantly do Thy pleasure*). Give us this day [day by day, LUKE] our daily bread<sup>(21)</sup> (*feed us with food convenient for us, and supply us with whatever Thou seest to be needful for our wants*); and forgive us our debts, as we [our sins, for we also, LUKE] forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation<sup>k</sup> (*let us not be so irretrievably led into the snares of the world, the flesh, or the devil, as to be overcome by them*); but deliver us from evil<sup>l</sup> (*from the evil of Sin and all the assaults of the Evil One*). For Thine is the kingdom<sup>(22)</sup> (*the dominion over all things*), and the Almighty power, and the glory (*the honour and praise*), for ever.<sup>m</sup> Amen (*So be it!*):

For if ye, *My disciples, from your hearts freely* forgive men their trespasses *against you*, your heavenly Father will also forgive you<sup>n</sup> *your sins,—which are as so many debts contracted against God*; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.<sup>o</sup>

And to teach perseverance and even importunity in Prayer, He said also unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set

prayers of the Jewish Liturgy. Whatever be its antiquity, it is unquestionably the most perfect of all prayers. It implies, without positively expressing, the desire for everything which a Christian can wish, or ought to ask. The object of its three primary petitions is the glory of God; the three next concern ourselves,—our wants temporal and spiritual; the remainder form a noble and suitable doxology. For a succession of solemn thoughts, for fixing the attention on a few great points, for suitableness to every condition, for simplicity of expression, for conciseness and comprehensiveness without obscurity, for the weight and real importance of its petitions, this Prayer is indeed without an equal or a rival.

(<sup>20</sup>) *Our Father.*] It is remarkable that our Lord never for Himself uses this expression. He frequently says "*My Father*," and, in addressing His disciples, speaks of God as *their* heavenly Father. Sometimes he says, "*Your Father*"

and "*the Father*;" but He never makes such a conjunction of *us to Himself*, as not to make a distinction. A similar renunciation of earthly connection may be observed on other occasions. Thus He says, "*It is written in your Law*" (John viii. 17).

(<sup>21</sup>) *Our daily bread.*] According to the Hebrew this would be "*to-morrow's* (or future) bread;" but the sense is the same,—meaning *whatever may be needed for our wants*. A spiritual sense may also be understood here, since man lives "*not by bread alone*."

(<sup>22</sup>) *For Thine is the kingdom.*] This clause is given by St. Matthew alone, but its genuineness is strongly supported by the Syriac version, and by other ancient copies. The Greek liturgies have it, and it is very unlikely that the ancient writers of that Church would have ventured to add their own inventions to a form of our Lord's own composing.

before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut *for the night*, and my children are with me (*are as well as myself*) in bed: I cannot *now* rise and give thee *the loaves*. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his *earnest and persevering importunity*<sup>(32)</sup> he will *at length* rise and give him *even as many loaves* as he needeth. And I say *also* unto you, Ask of God, *not only in humility and faith, but with earnest perseverance,—even as a beggar asks an alms,—*and it shall be given you;<sup>q</sup> seek *diligently, as for a thing of great value*, and ye shall find;<sup>r</sup> knock *loudly and patiently, as one that is eager to gain admittance*, and it shall *at length* be opened unto you. For every one that *so* asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.—Or, what man is there of any of you that is a father, of whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for (*instead of*) a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?<sup>(33)</sup> If ye then, being evil (*although frail and imperfect, as the best earthly parents are*), know how, and are inclined, to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things,—*even the best of all gifts*,—the Holy Spirit, to them that ask Him.

Moreover when ye fast,<sup>s</sup> (34) be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad (*a morose or dismal*) countenance; for they disfigure their faces,—*leaving them unwashed, and allowing the hair to grow to an unsightly length*,—that so they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they

<sup>p</sup> Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. Luke xviii. 5.

<sup>q</sup> If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John xv. 7.

<sup>r</sup> Ask in faith, nothing wavering. Jas. i. 6.

Whatever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments. 1 John iii. 22.

If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us. 1 John v. 14.

<sup>s</sup> Those that seek Me early shall find Me. Prov. viii. 17.

Seek ye the Lord while He may be found. Isa. lv. 6.

Ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. Jer. xxix. 13.

<sup>t</sup> They ministered unto the Lord and fasted. Acts xiii. 2.

Give yourselves to fasting and prayer. 1 Cor. vii. 5.

— in fastings often. 2 Cor. xi. 27.

(32) *Because of his importunity.*] All that we should apply in this comparison is the *persevering earnestness in prayer*; the happy effects of which our Saviour takes occasion to illustrate by a case very likely to occur in an eastern country, where journeys were commonly made in the night to avoid heat, and hospitality was deemed a sacred duty incumbent on all. For if determined entreaty can thus gain its object from men, what will not fervent and assiduous Prayer obtain from a heavenly Benefactor, "who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth," and to whom, as the hearer and answerer of prayer, all flesh may come.

(33) *If he ask an egg will he offer him a scorpion?*] The similitude is still carried on between the thing asked and the thing given: the scorpion rolls itself into the form of an egg; in particular, the *white scorpion* (the first species mentioned by ancient naturalists) has a body with that appearance, and also about the same size, its head being scarcely distinguishable.

(34) *When ye fast.*] Although our Lord left no positive precept about Fasting, He assumes that His disciples *would fast*. We find precisely the same course adopted concerning *this duty* as with reference to Prayer: in this Sermon, which is so perfect a summary of the principal duties of a

Christian life, we have directions *how to pray and how to fast*; and a reward is promised to both duties rightly performed. Elsewhere the two duties are closely joined together in Scripture.—The foundation of Fasting, applied to Religion as a sacred rite, is plainly this; that it is the natural expression of grief: there is a mysterious union and reaction between our souls and bodies, and when the soul is absorbed and overburdened, the natural habits of the body decline. Fasting puts an edge on Prayer, and is an evidence and instance of that humiliation which is indispensable to successful prayer. The primitive Christians seem to have regularly fasted twice in the week, on Wednesdays and Fridays. The Council of Chalcedon (A. D. 451) gave directions as to the observance of Fasts; and although,—since the Reformation, and in consequence of the great misuse of this Christian duty,—the practice has fallen into much neglect, our own Church has always approved it: she lays down no positive rules, but bids us *add outward humiliation to real sorrow*, and recommends that we "use *such abstinence*, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit," we may successfully obey the motions of Divine Grace. Fasting is a good medicine, though it must, like other medicines, be skilfully used.

have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, *according to daily custom*; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but *only* unto thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth *all things* in secret, shall reward thee openly.

OF COVETOUSNESS AND SOLICITUDE.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures<sup>(85)</sup> upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but sell that ye have and give alms<sup>t</sup> (*rather sell part of what ye have than neglect the important duty of alms-giving*). Provide yourselves bags (*purses*) which wax not old, and be rich in good works. *That your happiness may rest on a sure foundation*, lay up for yourselves a treasure in the heavens that faileth not;<sup>u</sup> where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt,<sup>v</sup> and where thieves do not approach nor break through nor steal. For where your treasure,—*the real object of your attachment*,—is, there will your heart be also. The eye is the light (*the lamp*) of the body: if therefore thine eye, *the guide of all thy other members*, be single (*be clear and perfect*), thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil<sup>(86)</sup> (*be in any way distempered*), thy whole body also, *having no other means of light*, shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, *in like manner*, the *spiritual* light that is (*that should be*) in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness, and how much more to be dreaded than any natural blindness! Take heed, therefore, that the light which *by God's grace* is in thee, be not darkness. If therefore thy whole body be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light (*the illumination shall be complete*), even as in a room when the bright shining of a candle (*a lamp*) doth give thee light.

No man can *at the same time* serve two masters of *contrary dispositions and giving contradictory orders*: for either he will hate (*have diminished regard for*) the one, and love the other, *proving his attachment by his obedience*, or else he will hold to the one,—*looking to the commands and interests of that one alone*,—and will comparatively despise the other. *The supreme affections can only be devoted to one object*: ye cannot serve both God and

<sup>t</sup> Jesus said, If thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Matt. xix. 21.

<sup>u</sup> Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

<sup>v</sup> An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that faileth not away, reserved in heaven for you. 1 Pet. i. 4.

(<sup>85</sup>) *Treasures.*] In the East, where fashions did not alter as with us, riches or "treasure" chiefly consisted in abundance of costly vestments, as well as in articles of gold and silver; the former being generally selected by princes and great men as the most valuable presents (see Gen. xlv. 22; Judg. xiv. 12; Jas. v. 2).

(<sup>86</sup>) *If thine eye be evil.*] The *single* and *evil*

*eye* were common expressions among the Jews to denote good or bad qualities of the mind. It appears, from the context, that *covetousness* and its opposite are here particularly denoted; for the preceding words are a dissuasive from laying up earthly treasure, and those which follow are a caution against the love of Mammon, and the "lust of the eyes."

Mammon<sup>(87)</sup> at the same time; for any other master would rival God and at last eject Him from your thoughts.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no *anxious* thought,<sup>(88)</sup> and be not distracted with fluctuating hopes and fears for that which is needful to support your life; either as to what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life which God has already given you more than meat, and a blessing far greater than the food which sustains it? and is not the body of more consequence than the raiment which covers it? Will not He, therefore, who has conferred the greater blessings, impart too the lesser means of sustaining them?—Behold and attentively consider how it is with the ravens,<sup>z</sup>—driven, when young, from the nest by the parent-birds,—and with the other fowls of the air; for they neither sow nor reap,—neither have storehouse nor gather into barns,—yet your heavenly Father regularly feedeth them. How much more are ye better, because of a nobler order, and destined for a higher end, than the fowls.<sup>(89)</sup>

And again reflect upon your insufficiency to yourselves, and your extreme helplessness as mortal creatures: which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit<sup>(90)</sup> (can with the utmost solicitude add the smallest span to his age, or prolong his life an hour)? If then ye be not able to do for yourselves that thing which is least, why take ye needless thought for the rest—for things which ye are still less able to compass? And why take ye thought for your raiment? Consider even the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That the wealthiest and most magnificent king of Israel, even Solomon himself in all his glory<sup>y</sup> (at the very height of his splendour), was not arrayed in a robe of perfectly-spotless white like one of these.<sup>(91)</sup>—Wherefore if

<sup>w</sup> Do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. Gal. i. 10.

The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Jas. iv. 4.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John ii. 16.

<sup>x</sup> Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God? Job xxxviii. 41.

He giveth food to the young ravens which cry. Ps. cxlvii. 9.

<sup>y</sup> So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches. 1 Kings x. 23.

(87) *Mammon.*] This word in Syriac and Chaldee signifies riches. Like the Greek *Plutus*, it is here personified, showing that the love of money is a kind of idolatry, as the Apostle terms it (Eph. v. 5).

(88) *Take no thought.*] At the date of our English translation, this phrase came nearer to the original (which is very expressive) than the sense which it now conveys. At that period the verb to "take thought" implied *anxious thought* and *solicitude*, as a proof of which it has been noticed that a Hebrew verb undoubtedly denoting anxiety is rendered, at 1 Sam. ix. 5, by "to take thought for;" and again the same is rendered, in the second verse of the chapter next following by "to sorrow for." In the life of Fox (prefixed to his Book of Martyrs) an early biographer observes, that he did not suffer his mind to be distracted "by taking thought for his household affairs."

(89) *How much more are ye better than the fowls.*] It is observable that God is nowhere spoken of as the Father of the brute creation,

but throughout this Discourse He is called our Father. This, no doubt, is intended to make us sensible in how much nearer a relation we stand to Him than they, and consequently how we may justly expect greater expressions of His love, if we try to deserve it.

(90) *Can add to his stature one cubit.*] The word here rendered stature is more correctly rendered *age* at John ix. 21. The word *cubit* is used metaphorically, analogous to which it is common to compare life to a race or a journey. David says, "My days are as it were a span long." Our Lord, having divided human cares into those which regard *life* and *raiment*, continues here to treat of the first, recurring to the second in the sentence which immediately follows.

(91) *Was not arrayed like one of these.*] Eastern princes were usually clothed in white robes, which were accounted the most magnificent (see Esther viii. 15; Dan. vii. 9).—The white lily is not now found in Palestine, but

God so clothe *and deck with more than royal splendour* the grass (*the flower*) of the field, which to day is (*exists*) thus lovely, and to-morrow is cast, *dried up and withered*, into the oven; shall He not much more clothe you *His children by adoption and heirs of immortality*, O ye of little faith, *distrustful as ye are of an ever-watchful and overruling Providence?*

Therefore take no *undue and anxious* thought; seek ye not nor be of doubtful mind, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? for after all these things do the *unenlightened* Gentiles [the nations of the world, LUKE] *eagerly seek as their chief good, having no hope as yet of any better things. Surely it does not become you to be thus anxious:* for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;<sup>a</sup> *and if you ask but aright, He will give you whatever He deems to be best and most needful for you.* But rather, *guiding your thoughts and anxieties into a nobler channel*, seek ye, *first of all*, the Kingdom of God, and His Righteousness (*even that perfect mode of Justification through Christ which His Gospel reveals, see Rom. x. 3*), and all these *necessary* things shall be added unto you.<sup>a</sup> Fear not, *My poor little flock, the want of any such transitory things as these*, for it is your Father's good pleasure *freely* to give you the Kingdom,—*the possession of never-failing happiness and eternal glory.* Take therefore no *anxious* thought for the morrow<sup>b</sup> (*for the passing wants of a future day*), which *would only be increasing your present anxieties*; for the morrow shall *make you take thought for the things of itself; it will have its own requirements and will also, with God's blessing, bring with it the needful provision for them.* Sufficient unto the *passing day* is the evil (*the trouble*) thereof.

#### OF CHARITABLE JUDGMENT, AND CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

Judge not<sup>c</sup> (<sup>42</sup>) *ensoriously or uncharitably of other men, and so, when your time of trial comes, ye shall not be judged with severity:* for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged *of God.* Condemn not *others*, and ye shall not be condemned: *but rather forgive, judging in all things for the best*, and ye shall be forgiven.—*And to your candour in judging others add the kindred virtue of liberality: give freely according to your ability, and then it shall be*

<sup>z</sup> Be careful for no thing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Phil. iv. 6.

Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. 1 Pet. v. 7.

<sup>a</sup> I have been young and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. Ps. xxxvii. 25.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Ps. lv. 22.

Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

<sup>b</sup> To-morrow we die. 1 Cor. xv. 32.

<sup>c</sup> Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself. Rom. ii. 1.

Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. . . . Why dost thou judge thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Rom. xiv. 4, 10.

There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another? Jas. iv. 12.

there is a species called the *Amaryllis lutea*, remarkable for its beauty and profusion, which in autumn covers the entire face of the country. These flowers are described as *grass*, because the Hebrews divided the whole vegetable world into trees and herbs, the latter of course including grass and flowers. The two expressions are used as synonymous at Isa. xl. 6.—The

withered stalks of flowers were used to heat ovens, on account of a scarcity of fuel in Eastern countries.

(<sup>42</sup>) *Judge not.*] This clearly cannot have any reference to the *public* administration of Justice, because on several occasions our Lord acknowledged that to be both lawful and necessary.

given unto you; good (*full and fair*) measure,—pressed down, and shaken together, and running over (*full even to overflow*),—shall men *through God's disposal* give into your bosom<sup>(45)</sup> (*your lap*).—For with the same measure that ye mete withal (*by the same rule which ye apply to others*), it shall be measured to you again<sup>d</sup> *by the even-handed justice of God*.

And He spake a parable (*a proverb or similitude*) unto them, *urging them to adorn this doctrine by their practice, and warning them against the prevailing errors of the Jewish teachers*: Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not *certainly* both fall into the ditch? The disciple is not *usually* above his master (*his teacher*), and cannot be expected to surpass him in attainments—so that if the watchman who leads be blind, the follower will be likely to participate in the effects of that blindness: but every one that is perfect and has been thoroughly instructed, shall resemble and perchance be fully advanced as his master.—You must not then expect that your rebuke of a neighbour will have any weight or effect if you be deficient yourself: And, therefore, I say to such a person, Why beholdest thou the mote (*How is it that thou art so quick to discover the little splinter*) that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam (*the much larger object*) that is in thine own eye? Either how, *with any appearance of justice*, canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite!<sup>e</sup> cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly *how* to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. *Discover, then, and amend your own glaring faults first; and when this is done, experience will render you better able, and you will also be disposed with more tenderness and charity, to correct the infirmities of other men.*

#### CIRCUMSPECTION NEEDFUL IN TEACHING THE GOSPEL.

*In your teaching bear in mind this proverb*: Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, lest they turn again and rend you; *exercise due caution in your religious admonition of the profane, who may only spurn advice, and be the more exasperated to persecute you*. Neither cast ye your pearls before swine,<sup>f</sup> lest they trample them under their feet: *press not holy mysteries upon those who are*

<sup>d</sup> As I have done, so God hath required me. Judg. i. 7.

<sup>e</sup> He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 2 Cor. ix. 6.

<sup>f</sup> Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Rom. ii. 21, 22.

<sup>g</sup> It is happened unto them according to the proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. 1 Pet. ii. 22.

(45) *Into your bosom.*] This is an allusion to the long mantles which the Jews and other Orientals wore. Their mantles were girded with a girdle, and had large outer folds, the bosom or front part being so capacious as to admit of receiving a measure of corn or any other dry

article. The common people were accustomed so to use them (see 2 Kings iv. 39; Ruth iii. 15; Ps. lxxix. 12; Prov. vi. 27).—Thus also Livy (xxi. 18), *sinus ex togâ factus*; and Horace (Sat. ii. 3, 71), *nucæ que ferrè sinu laxo*. The same allusion occurs in Greek writers, as at Herodot. vi. 125.



*obstinately and blindly immersed in sensual indulgences; upon such men holy things would only be thrown away, and their intrinsic value neither regarded nor perceived.*

THE WAY OF LIFE IS NARROW.

Enter ye in (*Strive ye to enter in*) at the strait (*the narrow*) gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait (*how strait, MARG.*) is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto Life *Eternal*, and *how few* there be that *are able to find it!* *My disciples should regard this life as a journey: the road to death and the soul's perdition is that great highway frequented by the wicked and worldly-minded; while the path heavenwards is narrow, steep, and retired—along which a few solitary pilgrims are seen threading their way with difficulty, and only after renewed exertions, aided by a strength not their own, attaining the termination of it at last.*

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN KNOWN BY HIS OBEDIENCE.

\* Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. Rom. xvi. 17.

Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 1 John iv. 1.

† I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Acts xx. 29.

Beware of false prophets<sup>s</sup> (*false teachers*), which come to you, *as the good old prophets were accustomed to appear, in sheep's clothing; having an outward form of godliness, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*<sup>h</sup> Ye shall be able to know them by their fruits; *determining their professions by their practice—just as every tree is known, not by leaves, nor bark, nor blossom, but by his own fruit.* Do men gather grapes of (*from*) thorns, or figs of (*from*) thistles? [For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes, LUKE]. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree (*a tree worn out, or of an inferior quality*) bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree, *so long as its quality lasts*, cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.<sup>(44)</sup> Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for *out* of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Not every one that *with his lips only*

(44) *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, &c.*] It is generally admitted that these words of the Baptist (occurring Matt. iii. 10) are an interpolation from the earlier chapter of that Evangelist. Yet they present an appro-

priate and awful admonition, well connected here with the subject; and our Lord has twice introduced the same sentiment in another of His discourses (John xv. 2, 6).

saith unto Me, Lord, Lord,<sup>(45)</sup> shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, *attaining to that future state of happiness and glory which shall succeed the Messiah's reign on earth,—but he alone shall have this reward that by his obedience proves his faith to be genuine, and habitually doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.*<sup>1</sup> Many will say to Me in that *Last Day, when all must be either received or rejected*, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied and preached the Gospel in Thy name <sup>(46)</sup> and by Thy authority, and in

<sup>1</sup> Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. Rom. ii. 13.

Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Jas. i. 22.

(<sup>45</sup>) *Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord.* Men have been ever prone to entertain the dangerous dogma, that if they do but believe, it is of no great consequence how they live; and, in some schemes of theology, Obedience is so placed, as though it were merely the unavoidable consequence of Faith (omitting to define that *such* Faith must be "true and lively"),—as something altogether subordinate to, rather than connatural and contemporaneous with it.—It must be allowed that, in some parts of St. Paul's Epistles, a certain stress appears to be laid upon Faith, (over and above the other parts of a religious character), in our Justification; and this seems to be, because the Gospel is pre-eminently a Covenant of *Grace*: Faith is so far of the higher character as peculiarly confessing to this; it is the frame of mind especially befitting sinners, and is said in a special way to justify us, because it glorifies God—witnessing that He accepts those, and those only, who feel their unworthiness of acceptance. But although Faith may seem to have, in St. Paul's writings, a certain prerogative of dignity, we must not forget that the more usual mode of doctrine, both with respect to our Lord (as shown throughout this Sermon on the Mount) and to His Apostles, is, to refer our acceptance to Obedience to the Commandments; and this manifestly, lest, in contemplating God's grace, we should forget our own duties. St. Paul himself, in frequent passages, corrects any misapprehension of his doctrine: at Heb. iii. 12, he uses unbelief and disobedience equivalently; at Rom. i. 5, he calls the belief of the Gospel "*obedience to the faith*" (see also Rom. x. 4); and by comparing 1 Tim. iv. 10 with Heb. v. 9, we find, that, while Christ is represented in the former as "the Saviour of them that believe," He is said, in the latter, to be "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey* Him."—It is certain that, from a misapprehension of this Apostle's doctrine of Justification, flowed an extreme corruption of manners among certain sects of Christians in the first ages; and it was in order to guard the faithful against such pernicious errors, that the Seven Epistles called "*Catholic*" or *General* were afterwards written. St. Jude closes them with an earnest exhortation to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, especially marking out, as ordained for condemnation, those who wrested the doctrines of the Gospel as an apology for ungodliness (Jude 2, 4).—When, therefore, St. Paul says, that man is "justified by faith without the works of the Law," we are to understand him to mean *gratuitously* on account of Christ's merits,—and *not meritoriously* by obedience to any law whatever. We are to apply that pardon to ourselves *through* faith. Faith is clearly the foundation,

because "Works done before the grace of God, and the inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasant to God, as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ" (Art. 13). Yet though Works are plainly not the meritorious cause, nor a meritorious cause of our Justification, we must take care not to attribute it to some efficacy in Faith which is not in Works, since both are excluded from any meritorious efficiency in the matter. Faith is itself but a work: so St. Paul speaks of "*the work of faith*," and St. John calls it "*the work* which God hath commanded."—It is urged that Faith alone is necessary to Justification, because thereby we lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, and receive it by imputation: but no such operation of Faith is taught in Scripture, neither is it anywhere said that Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers. What the Scripture does say is this, that the believer's faith is imputed or counted to him for righteousness. In the passage which is so often put forward from St. Paul, Rom. iv. 22, the Apostle does not say that Abraham was saved by a righteousness not his own being imputed to him; but that the true and lively faith of that patriarch was reckoned to him instead of perfect obedience to the Law. And again, at Phil. iii. 9, the righteousness which the Apostle so emphatically renounces is a legal and pharisaical righteousness, not "that righteousness which is through the faith of Christ:" he opposes an outward, natural righteousness to that which is inward, and wrought by the Spirit of God.—The doctrine of "Faith alone" should be guarded with circumspection, and again and again explained to be ineffectual without the fruits of Holiness. It is lamentable that by many it should be inculcated so exclusively, as to disparage, if not to condemn, the Christian virtues—in utter disregard of St. Paul's solemn instruction to all Ministers of Christ: "This I will that thou affirm *constantly*, that they which have believed be careful to maintain Good Works" Chillingworth, in his *Religion of Protestants* (vii. 32), writes to the same effect:—"For my part, I do heartily wish, that by Public Authority it were so ordered, that no man should ever preach, or print, this doctrine, 'That Faith alone justifies,' unless he joins *this* together with it, 'That Universal Obedience is necessary to Salvation.'" (<sup>46</sup>) *Have we not prophesied in Thy name?* That had men may be employed in the work of Christ, we know from the case of *Balaam*, who uttered true prophecies under the Old Covenant; and by that of *Judas*, who had equal power with the twelve to heal diseases under the New (see Section CIII., Note 4). There is no necessary connection between great powers and moral character, and God may employ whatever agency He may choose to carry forward his purposes.

*the power of Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful (miraculous) works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you (I will declare unto them plainly, I never acknowledged you as Mine); depart from Me, ye that work (that practise) iniquity!*<sup>1k</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. Pa. vi. 8.

The Lord knoweth them that are His. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Therefore, *hear the conclusion of the whole matter*: Whosoever cometh to Me, and heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like. He is like a wise man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid his foundation on a rock: and the rain descended and the floods came<sup>(47)</sup> and the winds blew, and the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and yet could not shake it; it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.—And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the *shifting* sand,—without a foundation, on the earth: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat vehemently upon that house; and immediately it fell, and great was the fall of it, and the ruin *that ensued* was great.

And it came to pass when Jesus had ended all these sayings, *that* the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as One having *Divine authority*<sup>1(48)</sup>—*rather as the enacter than an interpreter of God's Law*—and not as the Scribes, *who, in support of their vain disputes and their unscriptural traditions, appealed only to human authority.*

<sup>1</sup> And they were astonished at His doctrine, for His word was with power. Luke iv. 32.

Never man spake like this Man. John vii. 46.

<sup>(47)</sup> *The rain descended and the floods came.*] In Judea the rains were very violent, and, in the hilly country, formed into torrents which resembled rivers. Even houses could not resist their impetuous course on their way to the plains, unless very securely built.—The application of this instructive story is easy: *We must build for Eternity*: amidst the storms of life we must have a secure foundation upon which to rest. None will be accepted on account of their zeal, or their rare and wonderful gifts, or even their faith, if they are “workers of iniquity.” We must first *come to Christ*; next we must attentively *hear His sayings*; and then we must *do them*.

<sup>(48)</sup> *He taught them as One having authority.*] We find our Saviour's teaching often introduced with the announcement, “I say unto you;” and some of His solemn admonitions with words yet more impressive: “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; heaven and earth shall pass away, but *My words shall not pass away.*” Such expressions (never employed before, or since,) show a consciousness of His dignity and high office.—But our Lord's Teaching was remarkable in *many* respects:—It was *eminently spiritual*, opposed to merely-formal righteousness, as we see throughout this Sermon.—His beautiful illustrations are commonly taken from such natural objects, or simple occasions, as chanced to present themselves:—Thus, He summons His first converts, engaged in their fishing trade, to the nobler task of drawing men within the net

of the Gospel; at Jacob's well, and again with allusion to the pool at Siloam, He describes the Gift of the Spirit as Living Water; to the multitude who came to Him for bread He makes known the True Bread of Life; upon meeting with a blind man, He proclaims the spiritual Light of the world; and after partaking of the fruit of the vine for the last time, He declares that He is the True Vine.—*Gradual progression* is another striking characteristic:—The higher mysteries of the Faith are preceded by elementary truths; first, repentance, and correction of errors; then, union with God, the Priesthood of Christ, with the Promise of the Holy Spirit; while not until after the Resurrection are other mysteries plainly declared, such as the abrogation of the ceremonial law, the rejection of the Jews, and call of the Gentiles.—Some *omissions* have been noticed in our Lord's teaching:—Little, indeed, is said against idolatry, profanation of the Sabbath, or usury; but we are to bear in mind that the wickedness of *those* times did not take any one of those directions.—There could not be a more happy method than has been actually preserved. Throughout the whole course of the Divine Teaching, we find (what men most wanted) *principles of action* furnished, rather than precise and definite rules: it is very far removed from the formality of burdensome directions for the minute details of daily conduct, and yet it stands equally distant from the vague and inapplicable generalities of abstract theory.

## SECTION XLII.

## THE CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED AT CAPERNAUM.

*Matt.* viii. 1, 5—13. *Luke* vii. 1—10.

NOW when Jesus had ended all His sayings in the audience (*the hearing*) of the people, and when He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him; and He entered *again* into Capernaum. And a certain Centurion's servant,<sup>(1)</sup> who was dear (*a valuable servant*) unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he (*the Centurion*) heard of Jesus,—*who had at a distance cured a nobleman's son of this same town*,—he sent unto Him the elders of the Jews [he came unto Him,<sup>(2)</sup> *MATT*,—*or, approached Him by petition through the elders*], beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant; and saying, Lord, my servant lieth *quite disabled* at home, sick of the palsy, and grievously tormented. And when they came to Jesus *and had delivered this message*, they besought Him instantly (*earnestly*), saying, that he was worthy *of the favour* for whom He should do this: for, *added they*, he loveth our nation, and he hath, *at his own charge*, built us a synagogue. And Jesus saith unto him (*or, sent him word*), I will come and heal him.—Then Jesus went with them.

And when He was now not far from the house, the Centurion sent *forward* friends to *meet* Him; and *at length coming up* answered *for himself* and said, Lord, trouble not Thyself to *come further*, for I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself *at first* worthy to come unto Thee; but speak the word only [say in a word, *LUKE*], and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set (*placed*) under *the authority of a Tribune, my superior officer*, having *in like manner* soldiers under me, *obedient to my command*: And I say to

(1) *A certain Centurion's servant.*] The Centurions were Roman military officers, having (as the name implies) the command of a company consisting of a *hundred* men. They were stationed in the different towns of the provinces to preserve order. This centurion was no doubt a Pagan by birth, and had become a proselyte. That he should promote the erection of a synagogue was not strange, as Augustus published a decree in favour of these places of worship, praising them highly as schools of wisdom and virtue.—It is remarkable that this is not the only Centurion whose praise is in the Gospel. The just and devout Cornelius was selected to be the first-fruits of the Gentile harvest; a Centurion preserved the life of Paul; and a Centurion declared of the dying Jesus, when deserted

by His friends, and rejected by His nation, that He was the Son of God.

(2) *He came unto Him.*] The Jews have a saying, "The messenger of a man is as himself;" and the Greeks and Romans were accustomed to represent that which was done by any one for another as done by the person himself: "*Quod facit per alium, facit per se.*" This accounts for the *seeming* difference in this place between the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Luke. In Scripture this mode of speaking is frequent: thus Solomon speaks by his servants (1 Kings v. 2, 7); and John the Baptist by his messengers (Matt. xi. 2, 3); Christ preached to the Ephesians by the Apostles (Eph. ii. 17), and to the old world by Noah (1 Pet. iii. 19). He is also said to baptize by His disciples (John iv. 1, 2)

this man [unto one, LUKE], Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it: *much more canst Thou, who art subject to no authority present or absent, require implicit obedience, commanding Disease itself to come and go at Thy word.*—When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled (*was struck with admiration*) at him; and turned Him about, and said unto the people that *had followed Him from Capernaum*, Verily I say unto you, I have not yet found so great faith (*such confidence in My Divine power*) as is manifested by *this Gentile*—no, not in Israel! And I say unto you, That *very many of the Gentiles* shall come from the east and west,<sup>a</sup>—*even from the most distant parts of the earth*,—and shall sit down<sup>(2)</sup> with Abraham,<sup>b</sup> and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven, *becoming the adopted of God through Faith.* But *the Jews*, the children of the Kingdom, shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be *among them* weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me. Isa. xlv. 6.

<sup>b</sup> Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. Gal. iii. 7.

<sup>c</sup> There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see yourselves thrust out: and they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. Luke xiii. 28, 29.

And Jesus said unto the Centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee *on behalf of thy servant.* And his servant was healed in the self-same hour (*at that very instant*). And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant that had been sick, *perfectly whole.*

### SECTION XLIII.

#### A WIDOW'S SON RESTORED TO LIFE AT NAIN.

*Mark iii. 19—21. Luke vii. 11—17.*

AND, *after the healing of the Centurion's servant*, they went into an house *at Capernaum*, in which He usually resided. And the multitude cometh together again *round about it*, so that they (*Jesus and His disciples*) could not so much as eat bread *at leisure.* And when His friends (*His kinsmen, MARG.*) heard of it, they went out *after Him* to lay hold on Him, and to urge His keeping more in private; for they said, He is beside Himself,<sup>(1)</sup> and His anxiety to teach will impair His health.

(2) *Shall sit down.*] This is an allusion to a banquet. The sacred writers frequently describe the enjoyments of heaven under the similitude of a feast (see Matt. xxii. 2—4; Luke xiv. 15; xxii. 30; Rev. xix. 9).—The entertainments of the Jews were usually at night, and hence the “outer darkness” represents a place the furthest removed from the brilliant light of the banquetting room. The children of Abraham after the flesh would mourn, and, as it were, gnash their teeth from vexation and envy at their exclusion

from the heavenly banquet, which they imagined had been provided only for themselves.

(1) *He is beside Himself.*] These words in our translation would seem to imply the sense “He is mad;” but the Greek may fairly be rendered “He is faint by spending His spirits.” If the former sense is preferred, the observation must be restricted to those of His kinsmen who did not yet believe in Him, according to John vii. 5.

And it came to pass, the day after, that He went into a city of Galilee, called Nain; <sup>(1)</sup> and many of His disciples and much people went with Him. Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city,—*which was commonly with the Jews a place of much public resort*,—behold, there was a dead man carried out, <sup>(2)</sup> *who was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow—now left utterly destitute. And, in consequence of so severe a stroke of affliction, much people of the city was with her, following the corpse with sympathy and respect.* And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her; and *without any solicitation on her behalf*, said unto her, Weep not, for I bring you consolation and relief. And then He came near, and, *that He might stop the bearers, touched with dignity the bier (the coffin, MARG.) upon which the body lay*: and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And *immediately at the word of the Lord of Life, he that was dead sat up; and, awakened to the full use of his faculties, began to speak* <sup>(3)</sup>—*an undeniable evidence to the by-standers that he was really alive.*

And He *graciously* delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear (*religious awe*) on them all: and they glorified God, saying, That a Great Prophet is risen up among us; <sup>a</sup> and they added, *in the language of Prophecy, That God hath visited His ancient people,* <sup>b</sup>—*showing to them, first, this peculiar honour.* And this rumour of Him,—*that He was the Prophet promised through Moses,*—went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

<sup>a</sup> Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. Luke xxiv. 19.

<sup>b</sup> Then those men, when they saw the miracle which Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world. John vi. 14.

<sup>c</sup> The Lord of hosts hath visited His flock, the house of Judah. Zech. x. 3.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people. Luke i. 68.

<sup>(1)</sup> *A city called Nain.*] This place, now called Nein, situated near Mount Tabor, has dwindled to a small hamlet, occupied at most by a few families.

<sup>(2)</sup> *A dead man carried out.*] The custom of interring the dead beyond the walls of cities or towns was common among the ancients. With the Gentiles, the practice was adopted in order to prevent infection; with the Jews, because they considered dead bodies as unclean; and as the latter were unwilling to molest graves already made, their cemeteries could not be contained within the walls. This rule appears, however, to have been set aside in the case of kings and distinguished persons (see 1 Sam. xxviii. 3; 2 Kings xxi. 18).

<sup>(3)</sup> *And he that was dead sat up and began to speak.*] This is the first instance in which our Saviour raised the dead: it is one of the greatest proofs of Divinity, for the keys of life and death can only be in the hands of the Almighty Creator of the world. The Pagan Pliny imagined it a thing impossible for any of his gods to effect; and the infidel Porphyry declared that if he could credit *one* instance of it in the life of Jesus, he would renounce his unbelief. It is observable that the authoritative formula adopted by our Lord, "*I say unto thee, Arise.*" was never before or afterwards used by any prophet or messenger of God.

## SECTION XLIV.

THE BAPTIST'S DISCIPLES VISIT JESUS; WHO AFTERWARDS BEARS HONOURABLE TESTIMONY TO JOHN, AND AT THE SAME TIME REPROVES THAT GENERATION.

*Matt. xi. 2—19. Luke vii. 18—35.*

And they (John's disciples) came unto him and said, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him. John iii. 26.

<sup>b</sup> The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come. Gen. xlix. 10.

I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came. Dan. vii. 13.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come. Hab. ii. 3.

This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world. John vi. 14.

<sup>c</sup> In that day shall the deaf hear, and the eyes of the blind shall see. Isa. xxix. 18.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

<sup>d</sup> The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. Isa. xxix. 19.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach the Good Tidings unto the meek. Isa. lxi. 1.—Thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor: the Lord gave the word: great was the company of the preachers. Ps. lxxviii. 10, 11.

<sup>e</sup> He shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence . . . and many among them shall stumble and fall. Isa. viii. 14, 15.—And when He was come into His own country, they said, Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? . . . And they were offended in Him. Matt. xiii. 54—57.—And Simeon said, This Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Luke ii. 34.—From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. John vi. 66.—We preach Christ crucified; unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. 1 Cor. i. 23.—A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

AND the disciples of John, *influenced either by jealousy, or by their doubts as to the authority of Jesus*, shewed him (*their master*) of all these wonderful things<sup>a</sup>—for they were allowed access to the prison where he had been confined by Herod. Now when John had heard from them in the prison of the works of Christ, *he*, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them, for their own satisfaction and conviction, to Jesus; saying (*to say*) unto Him, in their *Master's name*, Art Thou 'He that should come,'<sup>b</sup> or do we look for another in that character?

Accordingly, when the men were come unto Him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto Thee, saying, Art Thou 'He that should come,' or look we for another?—And in the same hour it happened that He cured in their presence many—some of their infirmities and plagues, and others of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind He gave sight. Then, when He had cured all, Jesus answered and said unto them, Go your way, and shew John again [tell John, LUKE] those things which ye do hear and see: <sup>(1)</sup> *he will teach you the application of such events, and prove to you, from the declarations of Prophecy, who and what I am: as you have heard, even the lepers are cleansed and the dead are raised up; while, as you now see, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear; and the poor,—even the meanest of the people,—have the Gospel preached unto them.*<sup>d</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> And carry back with you for your edification this solemn assurance: Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me<sup>e</sup>—whom no pre-

(1) *Those things which ye do hear and see.*] The circumstance that "John wrought no miracle" would render the evidence derived from our Lord's astonishing works more decisive—especially since such miracles as the disciples of John witnessed, had been predicted by the same Prophet who had described their master's preparatory ministry (*see in the Margin*; also Isa. xl. 3).

(2) *The poor have the Gospel preached to them.*]

The particular passage of Isaiah here referred to, according to our translation, represents the Saviour as "preaching Good Tidings to the meek;" but the Hebrew word rendered *meek*, more properly signifies *one in a low and afflicted condition*. The preaching to the poor was a peculiar feature of Christianity, as distinguished both from Judaism and Heathenism, whose priests and philosophers courted the rich, and despised the poor (*see John vii. 49*).

*judices of any kind cause to stumble in receiving Me as his Saviour.*

And when the messengers of John were departed [as they departed, **MATT.**], Jesus began to speak unto the people concerning John,—*lest the Baptist's former testimony of Him should be prejudiced by the inquiry which had been directed: When ye went to be baptized of John, what went ye out into the wilderness for to see? Was it to see a preacher wavering in his testimony, turning this way and that, like a reed shaken with the wind?*<sup>f</sup> But, *if it was not this, what went ye out for to see? Was it to see a man effeminately clothed in soft raiment,—a courtier and flatterer, delivering a self-indulgent doctrine rather than the plain truth?* Behold they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately (*luxuriously*), are in kings' courts [kings' houses, **MATT.**], *and are not to be looked for in deserts.* But what *then* went ye out for to see? *Was it to see a Prophet? You will reply that it was; and in that your apprehensions of the Baptist's character were correct: yea I say unto you, and one that is much more than (very superior to) a Prophet; for the doctrine of John was more Evangelical than that of any Prophet who preceded him, while his office has been transcendently more honourable in foretelling the immediate approach of the Messiah and preparing His way.* For this is he of whom it is written, **BEHOLD I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE THY FACE, WHICH SHALL PREPARE THY WAY BEFORE THEE**<sup>(g)</sup> (see *Mal.* iii. 1). Verily, I say unto you, among those *holy men* that are born of women there hath not risen a greater<sup>h</sup> prophet than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven (*the least prophet or preacher under the Gospel dispensation*) is greater than he;—*future ministers will be greater in respect to the objects of their ministry, though not in individual character: their doctrine will be more complete; they shall for a time possess the power of working miracles; and hereafter the gift of the Holy Spirit is to be bestowed in fuller measure.* And all the common people that heard him<sup>(i)</sup> (*John*) while he executed his ministry, and even the publicans, justified God (*acknowledged the Almighty justice and wisdom in so calling them*

<sup>f</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Eph. iv. 14.

He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. Jas. i. 6.

<sup>h</sup> He (John) shall be great in the sight of the Lord. Luke i. 16.

*A reed shaken with the wind.*] The simple sense of this passage, which is preferred by a few good Commentators, would run thus:—“Surely you did not go into the Wilderness to behold any trifling object—such as a *reed shaken by the wind?* which you would no doubt see in such a place, but would scarcely go so far to see.” An antithesis then follows:—“Or went you out to see a *rich man, clothed in soft and sumptuous apparel?* a sight which you would indeed go to see, but which you were not likely to find in a wilderness.”

(<sup>g</sup>) *Which shall prepare Thy way before Thee.*]

In Malachi it is “before *Me*,” from which it appears that Christ is One with the Father, and His coming into the world is, in fact, the coming of God Himself.—In the words that follow, “Among them born of women, there hath not risen a *greater* than John the Baptist,” a word is employed in the original which leaves an exception in favour of our Lord, as being born of a Virgin.

(<sup>i</sup>) *And all the people that heard Him, &c.*] These are clearly our Lord's (not the Evangelist's) words respecting the Baptist, who was now in prison, and could not baptize the people.



to repentance), being baptized with the baptism of John: but many of the Pharisees and lawyers<sup>(5)</sup> rejected (*frustrated and made of no effect*) the Counsel of God<sup>(6)</sup> against (in regard to) themselves, not being baptized of him; for, *offended at the Baptist's plain-dealing, they still "trusted in themselves that they were righteous" and needed no repentance.* And from the days of the ministry of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven as it were suffereth violence,<sup>h</sup> and the violent,—those intruders, as the publicans and sinners were deemed to be,—take it by force from the learned and the worldly-great. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied of the Messiah, and were the objects most worthy of faith and acceptance; until John, plainly announcing the Lamb of God, disclosed a more sublime and perfect system of Revelation, admitting all alike within its pale; "since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Luke xvi. 16). And if ye will receive it (will credit what I say), instead of adhering to your vain tradition that Elias shall come in person, this special Messenger is that very Elias which was for to come<sup>i</sup> as the Messiah's forerunner,—even to restore all things in the spirit and power of that Prophet. He that hath ears to hear this important declaration, let him attentively hear and embrace it as a certain truth.

And the Lord said also to them on this occasion, Whereunto then shall I liken<sup>(7)</sup> the men of this perverse generation, and to what are they like? They are like unto (their conduct may be illustrated by that of) children, sitting at play in the market-place, and calling one to another (unto their fellows), and querulously saying, We have piped unto you<sup>(8)</sup> as at a feast, and ye have not danced; we have mourned (we have sung mournful songs) to you as at a funeral, and ye have not wept nor lamented: you will neither join us in mirth, nor in sadness. The like perverseness is yours: for John came, as a Prophet preaching repentance, neither eating bread nor drinking wine<sup>k</sup> like other men, and ye say he hath a devil (is possessed

<sup>h</sup> We wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Eph. vi. 12.

<sup>i</sup> Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Mal. iv. 6.

His disciples asked Him, Why say the Scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things: but I say unto you that Elias is come already; and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed.—Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist. Matt. xvii. 10—13.

<sup>k</sup> And his (the Baptist's) meat was locusts and wild honey. Matt. iii. 4.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Lawyers.*] These interpreters of the Law appear to have been the same order of men as the scribes, though there was some difference in their teaching. It is supposed they adhered more closely to the traditions, and perhaps taught in private, or in the schools, instead of speaking in public.

(<sup>6</sup>) *The Counsel of God.*] This description of the Gospel gives us the grandest idea of it possible; and since the Gospel is nothing less than the result of the deep consideration and deliberation of God, the crime of men's rejecting it cannot but be very great.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Whereunto then shall I liken?*] This was a customary phrase among the Jews when introducing a parable.

(<sup>8</sup>) *We have piped unto you, &c.*] It was usual at feasts to have music of a lively kind, accompanied with dancing (see Matt. xiv. 6; Luke xv. 25). At their funerals persons were hired to make lamentations (see Matt. ix. 23); so Josephus mentions that, upon a report of his own death, his friends hired "minstrels" to lead the lamentations.—These customs were imitated by the children in their diversions; and if any of the party refused to join in the game chosen, neither liking what was lively nor grave, the rest would naturally complain, and probably were in the habit of using some such proverbial expressions as occur here in the text.

with some evil spirit and acts like one who is mad): The Son of Man, on the other hand, is come, without any of this austerity, eating and drinking in the usual manner, conversing familiarly with all, and even cheerfully joining in your innocent entertainments; and ye say of Him, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!<sup>1</sup> But Wisdom is justified of all her children;<sup>m</sup> the methods of Divine Providence, however offensive to perverse and wicked men, will fully approve themselves as wise to all who have any love of truth and goodness: Although the Baptist's manner of living and Mine be different, yet, as the result of different circumstances and better suiting our respective appearances, they are both adapted to promote God's glory and man's salvation; and so, being alike conformable to the Divine Wisdom, all who are enlightened by that Wisdom will justify the propriety of them both.

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with Publicans and sinners? Matt. ix. 10, 11.

And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This Man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. Luke xv. 2.

They all murmured, saying, That He was gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner. Luke xix. 7.

<sup>m</sup> Doth not Wisdom cry? . . . . Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Prov. viii. 1, 32.

## SECTION XLV.

HE UPBRAIDS THE IMPENITENT CITIES, CHORAZIN, BETHSAIDA, AND CAPERNAUM.

Matt. xi. 20—24. Luke x. 13—15.

THEN began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because, notwithstanding such powerful confirmations of His doctrine, and His having first preached among them, they repented not:<sup>a</sup>—Woe unto thee (*Alas! for thee*), Chorazin!<sup>(1)</sup> woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon<sup>b</sup>; notorious as those luxurious cities were for their ungodliness, they would not have despised such confirmations of Prophetic warnings, but would have deeply repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes!<sup>c</sup><sup>(2)</sup> But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable even for Tyre and Sidon at the day of Judgment than for you; for they sinned not against such light as is now vouchsafed to you. And thou Capernaum, which art as it were exalted unto heaven,—so highly distinguished above other cities by My Presence and the miracles wrought

<sup>a</sup> Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the Gospel. Mark i. 14, 15.

<sup>b</sup>—The day that cometh to cut off from Tyrus and Sidon every helper that remaineth. Jer. xlvii. 4.

Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God . . . Behold I will bring strangers upon thee . . . They shall bring thee down to the pit. And say, Behold I am against thee, O Zidon, and I will be glorified in the midst of thee. Ezek. xxviii. 2, 7, 8, 22.

<sup>c</sup> O daughter of My people, gird thee with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes. Jer. vi. 26.—So the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth . . . And the king of Nineveh covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Jonah iii. 5, 6.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Chorazin.*] This place was about two miles from Capernaum, and like Bethsaida, was the frequent scene of our Saviour's preaching and miracles.—The danger of impenitence when the Gospel is preached, is here forcibly shown. The woe denounced on these places was strictly fulfilled; for they were so completely desolated in the wars with the Romans, that it has been difficult to determine their former situation.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Sitting in sackcloth and ashes.*] Sackcloth was a coarse kind of cloth worn by the poor, and also used as a sign of mourning or humiliation. To sprinkle ashes upon the head in token of sorrow was another very ancient Jewish custom (Lam. ii. 10). The posture of sitting, as one of repentance, was in use not only among the Eastern, but the Western, nations of antiquity.

<sup>d</sup> For thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven. . . . Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell! *Ias.* xiv. 13, 16.  
Though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. *Amos* ix. 2.

*in thee,—shalt be brought down [thrust down, LUKE] into hell; <sup>d</sup> (2) thou shalt sink into a state of the extremest depression, and fall as low in thy humiliation as thou art now lifted up and proud in imagined security!* For if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom *itself, infamous and licentious as that abandoned city was*, it would have repented and remained until this day *unconsumed by God's vengeance*. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of Judgment than for thee.

## SECTION XLVI.

A WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN A SINNER, ANOINTS THE FEET OF JESUS AT AN ENTERTAINMENT.

*Luke* vii. 36—50.

AND one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And He, *not omitting the opportunity of benefiting others by social intercourse*, went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat (*took His place at the table*).

And, behold, a woman in the city, which *before was a great sinner*, <sup>(1)</sup> *though now a penitent*, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box (*or vase*) of *precious ointment*; and stood *by the couch on which the Lord reclined*, at His feet behind Him, <sup>(2)</sup> weeping; and began to wash (*to water or bathe*) His feet with tears—*so profusely did those streams of repentance flow*. And then, *perceiving what she had done*, she did wipe them with the hairs (*the long tresses*) of her head, and *reverently kissed His feet*, and anointed them with the ointment,—*for she did not feel herself worthy to pour it, according to the custom, upon His*

(2) *Thou Capernaum.....shalt be brought down into hell.*] See Section XXII., Note 1.

(1) *A woman in the city which was a sinner, &c.*] This probably occurred at Capernaum, where our Lord usually resided. A somewhat similar incident is related by the three other Evangelists later in the history, but it is evidently not the same. Mary, the sister of Lazarus, there anoints the feet of Jesus at the house of Simon the leper; but Mary lived at the village of Bethany, and so could not be said to belong to a city: her unction was also made for Christ's interment, and at a time when he "walked no more openly;" whereas, after *this* entertainment, He "went through the cities and villages preaching." All the affinity is in the box (*or vase*) of alabaster, which was commonly used for anointing at feasts; and in the name of Simon, which

was one of those most frequently met with. This woman, who had probably been a harlot and a Gentile, has also wrongly been confounded with Mary Magdalene.

(2) *Stood at His feet behind Him.*] It appears that at this period the Jews had adopted the Roman custom of *reclining* on couches, instead of sitting at their entertainments. The face of the guest was of course turned towards the table; the head was a little raised, the back being supported by cushions; while the lower part of the body was extended at full length, inclining outward at the back of the person who sat next below. So completely had they adopted this luxurious and most composed of all postures, that they used it also at the Passover (see *John* xiii. 23), though originally commanded in the Law to partake of that Feast like travellers and men in haste (see *Exod.* xii. 11).

*head.* Now when the Pharisee, which had bidden (*invited*) Him, saw it, he spake within himself, saying (*he thought thus*): This man, if he were really, *what he assumes to be*, a Prophet, *possessed of supernatural knowledge*, would have known who, and what manner (*what kind*) of woman this is, that toucheth *and defleth* him, for she is *notoriously* a sinner; and he would immediately have rebuked and driven her from his presence.

And Jesus, answering *in reply to these uncharitable thoughts of His host, but wishing at the same time to reprove without giving offence*, said unto him *apart from the other guests*, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. *Then said Jesus*; There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: <sup>(\*)</sup> the one owed him five hundred pence (*nearly sixteen pounds*), and the other fifty pence (*less than two pounds*); and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly (*freely*) forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon, *not perceiving the point and application of the parable*, readily answered and said, I suppose that he loved the merciful creditor most, who felt the deepest sense of obligation to him, and to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged, *but herein hast condemned thyself*. And He turned (*inclined Himself*) to the woman *as He spake*, and, *in continuation*, said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? (*See what this woman has done!*) When I entered into thine house, *an invited guest*, thou gavest Me no water,—*common and needful as that refreshment is*,—for My feet;<sup>a</sup> <sup>(4)</sup> but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss<sup>b</sup> of salutation as a welcome, but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head *even with common oil* thou didst not anoint;<sup>c</sup> but this woman hath anointed My feet with *fragrant ointment*. *Her devotedness proves her to be a penitent indeed*: Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are *all freely* forgiven;<sup>(5)</sup> for (*therefore*) she *hath* loved much:<sup>d</sup> but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

And again *formally renewing this assurance of pardon*,

<sup>a</sup> Let a little water I pray you be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts. Gen. xviii. 4, 5.

And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet. Gen. xliiii. 24.

<sup>b</sup> And Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Gen. xxxiii. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Thou preparast a table for me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil. Ps. xxiii. 6.

<sup>d</sup> Faith worketh by love. Gal. v. 6.

(\*) *There was a certain creditor which had two debtors.*] The creditor represents our Lord: the two debtors are different descriptions of sinners; both guilty, though not in the same degree, and both without any power to atone for their sins. Probably the woman and Simon are here respectively intended.

(\*) *Thou gavest me no water for My feet.*] Simon had not treated Jesus with ordinary respect. The ancients wore sandals; and as these covered only the soles of the feet, frequent washings became necessary. The sandals were taken

off on entering a house, and to provide water was one of the common rites of hospitality. Oil, of a common sort at least, was also offered for the head, to which was added the usual welcome of a kiss.

(5) *Her sins which are many are forgiven, &c.*] The gratuitous forgiveness of her sins would be the cause of her love, and not love the cause of her being forgiven. Our Saviour afterwards plainly says that Faith was the means of her being saved.

\* There were certain of the scribes, sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? Mark ii. 6, 7.

<sup>f</sup> The just shall live by his faith. Hab. ii. 4.

He said unto her *before them all*, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this *presumptuous person*, that he forgiveth sins also?<sup>e</sup>—And He said to the woman *as He dismissed her*, Thy faith hath saved thee<sup>f</sup> *from the punishment of thy past sins*: go thy way in peace.

## SECTION XLVII.

**JESUS DURING A CIRCUIT CURES A DEMONIAK; AND, UPON THE PHARISEES HAVING ACCUSED HIM OF CONFEDERACY WITH SATAN, HE WARNS THEM OF THE UNPARDONABLE SIN, AND REPROVES THEM IN APPROPRIATE PARABLES.**

*Matt. xii. 22—37, 43—45. Mark iii. 22—30. Luke viii. 1—3; xi. 14, 15, 17—28; xii. 10.*

**A**ND it came to pass afterward that He went throughout every city and village *of the neighbourhood*, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God. And the twelve *Apostles* were with Him, and *also* certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities; *namely*, Mary called Magdalene,<sup>(1)</sup> out of whom went (*had been expelled*) seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others,<sup>a</sup> which ministered *the necessaries of life* unto Him out of their substance.<sup>(2)</sup>

<sup>a</sup> And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him. *Matt. xxvii. 55.*

Then was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, *who had cast him into a disease that rendered him blind and dumb*. And He healed him, insomuch that it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, *that the man, who the moment before was blind and dumb, at once both spake and saw*. And all the people were *greatly amazed, plainly evincing their admiration of what was done*; and they said, Is not this the Son (*the promised and long-expected descendant*) of David—*the Messiah*? But when some of the Pharisees *of the place* heard it,—and *particularly* the Scribes, which, *jealous of His influence with the people*, came down from Jerusalem *to watch Him*,—they said, This fellow, *who so audaciously violates the Sabbath, and rejects the traditions*, hath Beelzebub<sup>b</sup> <sup>(3)</sup> (*is*

<sup>b</sup> Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go on to enquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? *2 Kings i. 3.*

(1) *Mary called Magdalene.*] So called probably from Magdala, the place of her residence, a town in Galilee (mentioned *Matt. xv. 39*). The common notion that she was a courtesan is without the least proof. It appears that she was a person of some wealth and consequence, as, when allusions are made to women, she is nearly always named first by the Evangelists—even before the wife of Herod's steward, one of her associates.

(2) *Which ministered unto Him of their sub-*

*stance.*] This was not an unusual practice among the Jews on behalf of their teachers, when in need of assistance. Our Lord declared to one who had offered to become His disciple, that He had no home of His own; and He was unable to pay the small sum demanded as tribute money without a miracle. So poor did it please Him to become for our sakes!

(3) *Beelzebub.*] This name, which properly signifies 'the lord of flies,' was given to a god of

evidently possessed of a devil), and doth not cast out devils but by the aid of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

But Jesus, knowing their malicious thoughts, called them unto Him, and said unto them in Parables :<sup>(4)</sup>—How can Satan cast out Satan?—Every kingdom divided against itself (which is torn by opposing factions) is brought to certain desolation; that kingdom cannot possibly stand. And, so in smaller societies, every city or house divided against itself shall not stand, but falleth into decay. And if then Satan cast out Satan (if he cast his own subjects out of his dominions by destroying their power over men)—if Satan in effect rise up against himself and be divided, he cannot any longer stand, but hath an end—how shall his kingdom be enabled to stand? surely it carries within itself the pledge of its dissolution. And is it at all likely that Satan would aid Me in a work directly opposed to his authority? Such a proceeding would be as if a king conspired against himself!—Now the like absurdity is yours in arguing as ye do; because ye so blasphemously say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I, by Beelzebub cast out devils, tell Me by whom do your children, who practise frequent exorcisms, cast them out?<sup>(5)</sup> You think that they do so with real effect, and are ready to applaud the act when practised by them; but your censure is applicable in both cases, and they too, according to such reasoning, must be in league with Satan: therefore shall they be your judges in this matter, that you speak of Me only from the malice of your hearts, and you stand condemned of the grossest partiality and injustice. But,—to take the other and the true view of the question,—if I, professing Myself to be the Messiah, cast out devils by the Spirit of God [with the finger of God,<sup>c</sup> LUKE; i. e., by Divine power and co-operation], then no doubt the Kingdom of God<sup>d</sup> is come upon you; the Messiah, predicted as coming to erect that kingdom, and shewing such sure signs of authority over Satan, is already among you.

And He said to them in another parable: No man can

<sup>c</sup> Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh. This is the finger of God. Exod. viii. 19.

<sup>d</sup> The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed . . . it shall break in pieces and consume all kingdoms, and it shall stand fast for ever. Dan. ii. 44.

the Philistines, because their country was much infested with insects. The Jews, who abominated idolatry, seem to have corrupted the name of this idol, so as to make it signify 'the lord of filth,' or 'of a dung-hill.' To express the detestation in which they held him, they also appropriated his name to the most hateful being in the universe,—the Devil, or the chief of the evil angels; for they believed in the subordination of these, as well as in an hierarchy of good angels. Our Lord, in His answer, shows that He takes the expression "Beelzebub" in the same sense as the word Satan.

(<sup>4</sup>) In parables.] The word "Parable" (taken from a Greek verb signifying to compare together) is, properly, a similitude taken from

natural things in order to instruct us in things spiritual. It is so used generally in the Gospels. St. Luke, however, employs it in one passage of the original to denote a proverb or short saying (iv. 23), and again, as a special instruction (xiv. 7).—Probably many of the parables spoken by our Lord are not recorded, and we have a few only as a specimen (see Mark iv. 33). On their peculiar fitness as a mode of teaching, see Section L. Note 2.

(<sup>5</sup>) By whom do your children cast them out? Whether these Jewish exorcists were successful or not, the argument is the same: the Pharisees thought that it was done, but did not choose to impute it in their case to the power or assistance of Satan.

enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods (*plunder his effects*), unless he will first bind *and overpower* the strong man, and then he will *be able to* spoil his house. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are *preserved in peace<sup>e</sup> and safety*: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.<sup>f</sup> *Even so, Satan is like a strong man; and those who are afflicted with evil spirits are in his possession: Who can deliver such out of his power unless he first conquer Satan? I therefore, "having spoiled principalities and powers" by these My Miracles, must be stronger than Satan. I tell you that in the Christian warfare there can be no compromise nor neutrality: he that is not with Me, opposing Satan, is against Me, and must be deemed unwilling that Satan's kingdom should be destroyed; and he that gathereth not with Me, as a good Shepherd collects his sheep into the fold, scattereth abroad, like the wolf, many from it.*

Wherefore, verily I say unto you *who have thus wickedly calumniated Me*, All manner of sins, and all blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme, shall be forgiven unto the sons of men *upon their sincere repentance*; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,—*the sin of attributing the miraculous operations of the Divinity working in Me to the agency of Satan*,—shall not be forgiven unto men: *such offenders have shut themselves out from repentance; for in the commission of this impious crime they have reviled the Holy Trinity; they have denied the Atonement, shutting themselves out from its benefit; and when that last evidence of conviction has been given, nothing further can be done to call men to repentance: the declaration of their own lips has sealed their eternal doom!* And whosoever, taking offence at *My mean condition*, speaketh a *contemptuous or impious* word against the Son of man, *considered merely as a man*, it may be repented of, and shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh [blasphemeth, MARK & LUKE] against the Holy Ghost, it shall never be forgiven him,<sup>(g)</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? Isa. xlix. 24.

<sup>f</sup> He shall divide the spoil with the strong. Isa. liii. 12.

And the Great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. . . . And his angels were cast out with him. Rev. xii. 9.

(<sup>g</sup>) *Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall never be forgiven him.*] This sin, besides being a reviling of the *Holy Spirit*, through whom Miracles were wrought, was a denial of the *Son*, one particular proof of whose Messiahship was the casting out devils; and it was also a wilful rejection of the gracious message of God the *Father* to fallen man. The case of such a sinner is extreme, because it is one which will not submit to Repentance; and because Faith, the indispensable condition of Forgiveness, will probably always be wanting. Not that such a case is *absolutely* hopeless, for that would be contrary to what is taught elsewhere: "The blood of Christ cleanseth from *all* sin." Our Lord de-

clared that He would deny those in Heaven who denied Him on earth, but notwithstanding He forgave St. Peter; and as He prayed for His bitterest enemies, we must suppose that even *they* could be forgiven. Yet the case of the blasphemer who rejects the Atonement, may fitly be compared to that of a sick man obstinately refusing the *only* remedy for his disorder: and who must therefore be pronounced *incurable*.—Although this precise sin cannot be committed now, we may contract a guilt parallel with, and coming up very nearly to it. Miracles remain one great evidence of Christianity, and though we cannot be eye-witnesses of such proofs of Divine power, we have the full evidence of his-

neither in this world, neither in the world to come; but he is in danger of eternal damnation.‡—*The Lord spake thus strongly because they accused Him of being in league with the Devil, having plainly said, He hath an unclean spirit. He enforced His admonition by adding these words:—Either take care to make the tree good, and then his (its) fruit will be good; or else you will make the tree corrupt, and so his fruit will be corrupt; for the quality of the tree is to be known by his fruit. Even so, while the goodness of My life and doctrine speak for themselves, your open blasphemy and hypocrisy convict you. O you that are a generation of vipers, how can ye, being thus evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: A bad heart which harbours evil thoughts, betrays itself in evil words, and these will lead on to sinful actions. Thus on the one hand, a good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, freely bringeth forth good things; and on the other, an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, as naturally bringeth forth evil things. But, however lightly you may account such offences, I say unto you who give unbridled license to the tongue, that every idle word (every single wicked or injurious word) that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: for, not by thy actions only, but also by thy words, which evince the true disposition of the heart, thou shalt, if they be good, be justified; and by thy words thou shalt, if they be evil, be condemned.*<sup>h</sup>

*Hear yet another parable, ye who hesitate to take part at once with Me against Satan: When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry (barren or desert) places,<sup>(7)</sup> seeking rest (a place of abode), and findeth none.<sup>i</sup> Then he saith, I will return into my house (namely, his former dwelling-place in the man's heart) from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it empty, so as freely to admit its former guest,—swept and cleared of every incumbrance that might prevent occupation,—and garnished (set in the most desirable order for his reception). Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other*

‡ Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, . . . and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace. Heb. x. 29.

There is a sin unto death. 1 John v. 16.

<sup>h</sup> He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life; but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction. Prov. xiii. 3.

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. Eccles. xii. 14.

Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient . . . Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Eph. v. 4, 6.

—to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. Jude 15.

<sup>i</sup> And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. Job i. 7.

The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. v. 8.

tory in their favour; and in both cases it is Reason which is to draw the conclusion: if we will not hear Moses and the Prophets, if we are unconvinced by Christ and His Apostles, then the greatest miracle done before our eyes would not convince us, not even the raising a man from the dead.—There are some desponding persons, and also believers with over-tender consciences, who are rendered miserable from thinking themselves guilty of the Sin against the Holy Ghost; but the first often require the aid of the physician more than of the divine; and persons of the second class should clearly understand that no believing Christian can commit this particular

sin; it can be committed only by those who are not Christians at all.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Walketh through dry places.*] The circumstances of this parable are accommodated to the notions of the Jews respecting the haunts and habits of demons, whose common abode was supposed to be in the deserts. The chief purpose of the parable is to represent clearly and in a strong light the danger of an *imperfect repentance*—of an alteration of conduct not followed by the establishment of such principles as will fortify the heart against the future invasion of evil.



<sup>k</sup> For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost . . . if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. Heb. vi. 4, 6.

If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 2 Pet. ii. 20.

<sup>l</sup> Blessed are they that keep His testimonies. Ps. cxix. 2.

Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Matt. vii. 21. — not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James i. 25.

spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse even than the first.<sup>k</sup> Even so also shall it be unto this wicked generation, *which obstinately resists My miracles and My doctrine: it will become in the end even more abandoned than before.*

And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and *blessed are the paps which Thou hast sucked!* But He said, *Yea, blessed indeed is Mary, as the Angel of the Lord announced; but the essential blessedness of Eternal Life, which shall be her reward, is not placed in this circumstance, nor is it restricted to her alone: rather, blessed are all they that hear the Word of God and keep it.*<sup>l</sup>

## SECTION XLVIII.

THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES ARE REPROVED FOR REQUIRING A FURTHER SIGN FROM HEAVEN. THE SIGN OF JONAS IS PROMISED.

*Matt. xii. 38—42. Luke xi. 16, 29—32.*

THEN certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, tempting (*spake, trying*) Him, and sought of Him a sign from Heaven, saying, Master, *we have indeed witnessed some wonderful proofs of thy power, but we would see a further sign from thee*<sup>(1)</sup>—*some such celestial appearance*<sup>b</sup> *as our ancient Prophets speak of.*

<sup>a</sup> For the Jews require a sign. 1 Cor. i. 22.

<sup>b</sup> I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. Dan. vii. 13.

But when the people were gathered thick together *in a crowd about Him*, He answered and began to say to them, This is an evil and adulterous generation<sup>(2)</sup>—*a people quite degenerated from the faith of their fathers.* An evil generation seeketh after a sign *which shall be irresistible for their conviction: but signs and wonders are daily exhibited before their eyes*, and there shall no other sign be given to it but the sign of the Prophet Jonas. *The great proof of My Divine Mission shall be a miraculous event similar to what was then prefigured; for as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, and gave them undeniable proof of his Mission*

(<sup>1</sup>) *We would see a sign from thee.*] The sign they no doubt wished to see was a *Temporal Messiah*, "coming," as Daniel had described, "in the clouds of heaven," to deliver them from the Roman yoke. Josephus, describing the state of affairs in Judea under Felix, tells us (B. J. lib. ii. cap. 13) that several impostors drew the people into the wilderness, pretending that they would shew them "signs of liberty" from heaven.

(<sup>2</sup>) *This is an evil and adulterous generation.*] This was equally true of adultery in the proper sense of the word; and there was no age when polygamy and divorces were so common among the Jews. The *spiritual* sense seems to be intended in respect of their practical infidelity, and the preference of their Traditions to the Word of God.

from God, so shall also the Son of man, by a Divine interposition in His favour yet more surprising, be a sign to this generation. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly<sup>c</sup> (<sup>3</sup>) *(in the cavity of a great fish, GR.)*, and was miraculously delivered from it alive; so shall the Son of man be part of three days and three nights (<sup>4</sup>) buried in the heart of (*within the bowels of*) the earth.<sup>d</sup>

The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it as *inexcusable*; because, *idolaters as they were*, they repented at the preaching of Jonas,<sup>e</sup> *who was a poor stranger cast among them for a few days only, and did no miracle to convince them he was a Prophet*; and behold a greater than Jonas is now here,—*One who has preached daily among professing worshippers of the true God, and has wrought for them a succession of the most astonishing miracles in vain!* The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth (<sup>5</sup>) to hear the wisdom of Solomon;<sup>f</sup> and behold a *King far greater than Solomon both in dignity and wisdom* is here,—*even at your very doors!* *You refuse to hear Him, and come but to cavil, not to learn; yet I tell you, that since, among mere men, none like unto Solomon ever lived before, nor was to arise after, He who is greater than that distinguished prince must needs be Divine.*

<sup>c</sup> Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Jon. i. 17.

<sup>d</sup> Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. Eph. iv. 9.

<sup>e</sup> So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. Jonah iii. 5.

<sup>f</sup> And when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove him. 1 Kings x. 1.

And God said unto Solomon . . . Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. 1 Kings iii. 11, 12.

(<sup>3</sup>) *In the whale's belly.*] The fish in the book of Jonah is merely described as "a great fish;" and it is well known that the Greek word, translated *whale* in our version, denotes any large fish. The throat of a whale is small in proportion to its bulk, but notwithstanding this fact, it is still possible that Jonas was preserved even within the body of a whale: for an eminent naturalist observes, that "at the bottom of the throat of this fish is an intestine, so large and so wide that a man might pass into it; it is an air vessel in which are two vents, serving for inspiration and expiration, and enabling the animal to rise or sink at pleasure." This testimony carries the more weight as the writer had not the case of Jonas in view.—Sharks have also been known to swallow a man entire, and a fish of that species (called for its voracity *Lamia*) has been seen twenty feet in length, through the throat of which a man might easily have passed.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Three days and three nights.*] Our Lord continued in the grave only one entire day; but the Jews reckoned a whole day if any part of one was included in the transaction. That they understood our Lord to predict He would rise "on the third day" appears from what His enemies said to Pilate, "That deceiver said, After three days I will rise again: command therefore that the Sepulchre be made sure until the third day" (Matt. xxvii. 63, 64). The expression among them for a natural day of twenty-four hours was

"a day and a night," and both were mentioned when only a few hours of any particular day were taken up. Thus Esther says to the Jews (ch. iv. ver. 16), "Fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my Maidens will fast likewise, and so will I go in unto the King;" yet it is expressly said (ch. v. ver. 1), that she went to the King on the third day. Again; Rehoboam says to the people (2 Chron. x. 5), "Come unto me after three days; yet they came on the third day as the King bade" (ver. 12). See also Luke ii. 21, where "eight days" are said to have been accomplished at the circumcision of Jesus, but the Law required Circumcision "on the eighth day;" and the day of our Lord's birth being one of the days, and that of His Circumcision another, there were only six complete. St. Luke, in another place, speaks of our Lord taking Peter and others into the mount eight days after He had spoken certain words; but from Matt. xvii. 1, and Mark ix. 2, it appears, that He spoke the words on the first day, and went up into the mount on the eighth, leaving but six entire days.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Came from the uttermost parts of the earth.*] Arabia and Saba, lying south of Jerusalem, are the countries here alluded to. Ideas of Geography among the ancients being limited, countries at this distance were described and understood as in the text.

## SECTION XLIX.

JESUS DECLARES WHOM HE ESTEEMS AS HIS MOTHER AND HIS BRETHREN. HE DINES WITH A PHARISEE; AND DENOUNCES WOES AGAINST THE HYPOCRITES OF THAT SECT, WITH OTHERS.

*Matt.* xii. 46—50; xxiii. 23—36. *Mark* iii. 31—35. *Luke* viii. 19—21; xi. 37—54.

WHILE He yet talked to the people, behold, there came then unto Him His mother<sup>(1)</sup> and His brethren (*His kinsmen*\*) to see Him. And the multitude sat close round about Him, and they (*His relatives*) could not come at Him for the press: And, standing without *the crowd*, they sent a message unto Him, calling Him to come to them, and desiring to speak with Him.—Then one of the people said unto Him, Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren seek for Thee, and now stand without desiring to see and to speak with Thee. But He answered him that told Him, and said aloud unto them all, Who, think ye, is My mother? And who are those, do ye suppose, that I consider as My brethren? And He looked round about on them which sat about Him, and stretched forth His hand towards His disciples, and said, Behold here My mother and My brethren,—those whom I spiritually esteem as such: for My mother and My brethren are these My faithful disciples, which hear the Word of God and do it.<sup>a</sup> And not these only, but whosoever shall do the will of God, My Father, which is in Heaven, the same is as dear to Me as My brother and sister and mother.<sup>(2)</sup>

\* A certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee and the paps which Thou hast sucked: but He said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it. *Luke* xi. 27, 28.

Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. *John* xv. 14.

Both He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. *Heb.* ii. 11.

And as He spake these words, a certain Pharisee, who had assembled some friends with a view to ensnare Him, besought Him to dine with him: and He went in to his house, and as soon as He entered, sat down to meat (took His place at the table). And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not, according to the traditional

(1) *There came unto Him His mother.*] This may have been merely a common occurrence of daily life; but it is remarkable that our Lord, who might have taken opportunity to refer to His mother in terms of exaltation, rather gives a caution against superstitious feelings towards those nearly allied to Him by the ties of His human nature. Some have supposed (though, it may be, without sufficient foundation) that His relatives, moved by a dread of the Pharisees, wished to prevent His preaching; and several of the Fathers tax Mary herself on this occasion with infirmity—a charge, which, however harsh, serves to show that they did not regard her with the excessive veneration of the Romanists.

(2) *The same is My brother and sister and mother.*] The short but noble sentiment con-

tained in the sentence of which these words are a part, will never be forgotten while there are memories to retain or tongues to repeat it. It is recorded with the utmost simplicity by the Evangelists; but the most elaborate panegyric could not have done so much honour to, or so forcibly have illustrated that Religion, which requires us to forsake father and mother and friends to follow Christ. The Saviour's spiritual regard for His disciples exceeded even His natural affection, which He proved, even in the last trying moment, that He deeply entertained for His mother. So high did He place Obedience to the will of Heaven, that He preferred the relation which that principle constituted, and the union which it begot, to the strongest earthly tie that can exist.

*custom, first washed before dinner<sup>b</sup>—more especially as He had just quitted a mixed multitude.*

And the Lord, *who knew that they practised such ablu- tion from superstitious motives, took the opportunity of reproving their hypocrisy, and said unto him and those who were assembled: Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! now do ye make clean only the outside of the cup and of the platter,<sup>c</sup> (<sup>a</sup>) hoping to appear undefiled in the eye of men; but your inward part is full of extortion and excéss [wickedness, LUKE]. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and the platter, that the outside of them may be clean also: first, let the inclinations of the heart be pure, and then the outward conduct will be pure also. Ye fools,<sup>d</sup> (<sup>e</sup>) did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also? is it not of at least as much importance to cleanse the soul, as to keep the body from ceremonial defilements? Therefore put not outward observances in the place of true religion; but rather give alms (<sup>f</sup>) according to your ability of such things as ye have;<sup>g</sup> and, if that important duty be done from a right principle, it will be an evidence that other Christian qualifications are present also, and then behold all things are clean unto you.<sup>f</sup> Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye scrupulously pay for the Temple-service your tithe of mint and rue, of anise and cummin,<sup>h</sup> and all manner of trifling herbs; and ye silently pass over and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law—the lasting and infinitely more important duties of morality and religion, such as judgment and mercy (justice and charity to your neighbour) and faith, which are the true foundation of the love of God.<sup>k</sup> These duties of the ceremonial kind ought ye indeed to have done, since your customs require them; and at the same time not to leave the other undone, which God more especially requires at your hands. Ye blind guides, which, from your dread of outward pollution, strain at (strain out) a gnat<sup>l</sup> from the wine you drink, and yet, in*

<sup>b</sup> Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked Him, saying, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands? Mark vii. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do. Mark vii. 8.

<sup>d</sup> Ye fools, when will ye be wise? Pa. xciv. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Is not this the fast that I have chosen? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? Isa. lviii. 6, 7.

<sup>f</sup> Break off thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor. Dan. iv. 27.

<sup>g</sup> Unto the pure all things are pure. Tit. i. 16.

<sup>h</sup> Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offering and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Mic. vi. 8.

(<sup>a</sup>) *Ye make clean the outside of the cup.* See Section LXIV., Notes 2—4.

(<sup>b</sup>) *Ye fools.* This was a mode of expression not so harsh as with us, and commonly made use of in argument among the Jews. So St. Paul employs it (1 Cor. xv. 36).—There are in Scripture severer epithets than the one applied here by our Lord; but the circumstance does not at all justify our censorious judgment of others, or the use of opprobrious names. Jesus knew the heart, which we do not; and it was undeniably true that these men were the fools and wicked hypocrites He portrayed them.

(<sup>c</sup>) *Rather give alms.* Almsgiving may be an outward act as well as ablu- tion, and a man may, as St. Paul says (1 Cor. xiii. 3), “give all his goods to feed the poor,” without having charity in his heart: still this kind of benevolence is an

evidence of the spirit which ought to prevail within, and as such it is instanced here. As the fruit of Love to God and man, it will do more to sanctify our possessions than any outward ceremony. See Section XLI., Note 22.

(<sup>d</sup>) *Rue, anise, and cummin.* Rue was a bitter plant used as a medicine. Anise, otherwise known as dill (and mentioned by Virgil), had a fine aromatic smell, and was used by confectioners. Cummin was a plant less esteemed, resembling fennel. Those herbs only, which could be used for culinary or medicinal purposes, were liable to tithe.

(<sup>e</sup>) *Which strain at a gnat, &c.* In Archbishop Parker's Bible, 1668, this is correctly rendered “strain out a gnat,” which was no doubt intended to be preserved in the next Version under King James; but, “at,” having occurred

*cases of morality, would, if it were possible, without scruple swallow a camel: ye are superstitious in the lesser matters of the Law, but profane and grossly sinful in the greater! Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for in the pride of your hearts ye dearly love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and respectful greetings in the markets,<sup>h</sup> which you value much more than that true honour which cometh from God only. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are as those graves which appear not,<sup>(e)</sup> and the men that walk over them are not aware of them: ye deceive men to their downfal and destruction, and defile all who hold any communication with you. Ye are like also unto those other whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness; all appears smooth and fair, but the corruption of death lies below: even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.<sup>l</sup>*

<sup>h</sup> Which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only. John v. 44.

For they (the chief rulers) loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John xii. 43.

<sup>l</sup> Then said Paul unto the high-priest, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall! Acts xxiii. 8.

Their inward part is very wickedness: their throat is an open sepulchre. Ps. v. 9.

<sup>\*</sup> Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? Acts xv. 10.

<sup>l</sup> Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Acts vii. 51.

Then answered one of the lawyers (or interpreters of the traditional law) and said unto Him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also, for we are teachers as the Scribes are. And He said unto them, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for *law as ye are in enforcing the moral precepts of the Law, ye lade men with traditions and burthens grievous to be borne;*<sup>k</sup> and *though tenaciously exacting them all from other men, ye yourselves set no example, and touch not the burthens to lighten them in the least—not even with one of your fingers.*

Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye build up the decayed tombs of the prophets,<sup>(e)</sup> and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, *pretending a veneration for their memory which you do not feel, and your fathers killed them. And ye sanctimoniously say, If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers (accomplices) with them in shedding the blood of the prophets. Wherefore truly, ye be witnesses unto (against) yourselves, that ye are the children of them!*<sup>l</sup>

through an obvious typographical error in their first edition, has ever since been preserved. There was an Eastern proverb, "He eats an elephant and is suffocated with a gnat." The Jews had been forbidden to eat whatever had not fins or scales in the water (Lev. xi. 10), and in after-times disputed whether this did not apply to the *animalcula* in liquor as unclean: so they strained their wine, which frequently contained small insects. Camels were certainly unclean (Lev. xi. 4).—The Scribes and Pharisees soon verified the character here given of them. They would not admit the wages of Judas into the treasury, though they had hired him with that very money to assist in murdering Jesus; and though they scrupled not to shed innocent

blood, they declined to enter the judgment-hall for fear of defilement.

(<sup>e</sup>) *As graves which appear not.*] At a particular time of the year the Jews had all their grave-stones washed with lime-water, to prevent legal defilement (see Num. xix. 16). But some graves, having no stones or other mark, might be overlooked, and would soon be overgrown with weeds. To this description of graves the Pharisees are here first compared; and presently to the more modern or remarkable Sepulchres which were whitened over.

(<sup>l</sup>) *Ye build the tombs of the prophets, &c.*] It is particularly mentioned in Josephus (Antiq. xvi. 7) that Herod repaired in a very splendid manner the sepulchre of David.

which killed the prophets; *ye are their genuine offspring, and prove the resemblance to them in your persecuting spirit. The construction would be one justly merited, that ye allow and approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and ye as accessories build their sepulchres: your conduct shews that these monuments have been raised less out of respect to the prophets, than to their murderers.* Wherefore, fill ye up then, *as I know ye will continue to do, the measure<sup>m</sup> of the iniquity of your fathers,<sup>(10)</sup> until the national guilt shall become complete.* Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye possibly escape the damnation of hell? Behold, said the Wisdom of God (*the Most Wise God*), I will yet send unto you prophets and apostles, wise men and scribes, *the true interpreters of My will, that so no means may be left untried for your conversion.* And some of them ye shall (*will*) kill<sup>n</sup> and crucify;<sup>o</sup> <sup>(11)</sup> and some of them shall ye scourge<sup>p</sup> in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: so that upon you, *exceeding even your fathers in wickedness, may come the punishment of all the righteous blood shed upon the earth—from the blood of righteous Abel, the first preacher of righteousness, unto the blood of Zacharias,<sup>q</sup> <sup>(12)</sup> son of Barachias (or Jehoiada), whom ye impiously slew [which perished by stoning, LUKE] even as he was ministering between the sacred Altar of burnt-sacrifice and the Temple (the sanctuary).* Verily I say unto you, It shall all be required; and all these predicted things shall come upon this generation.<sup>r</sup>

Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge<sup>(13)</sup> by which the sacred storehouse of Scripture ought to be kept open, and by your traditions and false interpretations have shut up the kingdom of heaven

<sup>m</sup> — to fill up their sins away: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. 1 Thes. ii. 16.

<sup>n</sup> And they stoned Stephen. Acts vii. 59.

And Herod killed James the brother of John with the sword. Acts xii. 2.

<sup>o</sup> Who killed the Lord Jesus. 1 Thes. ii. 15.

<sup>p</sup> And when they had called the Apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus. Acts v. 40.

Of the Jews five times received 1 forty stripes save one. Thrice was 1 beaten with rods. 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

<sup>q</sup> And the Spirit of God came upon Zachariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, He hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the House of the Lord. 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

<sup>r</sup> I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me. Exod. xx. 5.

The Lord God of recompences shall surely requite. Jer. li. 56.

<sup>(10)</sup> *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.* ] It was the observation of their own wise men, from Gen. xv. 16, "that God does not take vengeance of a nation until they have filled up the measure of their sins." The Jews of our Lord's time had the history of their fathers to warn them: yet it is remarkable that Josephus says "there never was so wicked a race;" and that "if the Romans had delayed coming, God would have interfered to destroy them, since they were worse than the people of Sodom!" (see B. J. v. 13).

<sup>(11)</sup> *Some of them ye shall crucify.* ] There is no evidence of the crucifixion of any Christian teacher before the destruction of Jerusalem, but the silence of that portion of history which has come down to us, and that briefly written, is no proof that there were none such. The term "crucifixion" may be taken to signify only "a cruel death."

<sup>(12)</sup> *Zacharias.* ] This could scarcely be the author of one of the Minor Books of Prophecy, standing in the Sacred Canon, though he also was the son of Barachias; for that writer lived

when the Temple was in ruins. It must therefore be the Zacharias whose death is recorded in the Second Book of Chronicles. He is mentioned, as the son "of Jehoiada;" but it was common with the Jews to have two names, especially when, as in the present case, the names had a similar meaning. He was the last prophet slain by the people; for the death of Isaiah was not a popular act. At his death he said, "The Lord look upon it and requite it!" making his case remarkably similar to that of Abel, the first martyr, whose blood cried for judgment from the ground.—The place where Zacharias was murdered was considered a place of refuge even for criminals.

<sup>(13)</sup> *Ye have taken away the key of knowledge.* ] The Christian doctrine is here compared to an edifice, which, when the key is taken away, becomes inaccessible. "The Key" is the *Interpretation of Scripture*, and the Hebrews delivered a Key as an emblem or badge of office to those who were appointed to teach. Heathen priests were also called "Key-bearers."

*against men* : Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

And as He said these things unto them, the Scribes and the Pharisees began to urge Him vehemently, and to provoke Him, *by frequent and ensnaring questions*, to speak *unadvisedly* of many things ; laying wait for Him, and seeking to catch something out of His mouth, that *by it* they might accuse Him.

## SECTION L.

## THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER ; WITH A DISCOURSE ON PARABLES.

*Matt.* xiii. 1—23. *Mark* iv. 1—25. *Luke* viii. 4—18.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, *in which He had been dining with the Pharisee*, and sat by the seaside, and began again to teach. And great multitudes were gathered together, and much people were come to Him out of every *surrounding city*, so that, *to avoid the pressure of the croud and teach with more facility*, He went into a ship, and sat in *it on the sea* ; and the whole multitude stood by the sea on the shore [was by the sea on the land, MARK].

And He taught them many things by Parables [spake by a Parable, LUKE], and said unto them in His doctrine (*in the course of His teaching*),—Hearken : behold there went out a sower to sow his seed. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the way-side, *into which, as the soil was hard-beaten, it could not enter* ; and, *lying there uncovered*, it was trodden down *by passers-by*, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground,—upon a *layer of rock which lay beneath the surface of the soil*,—where it had not much earth *to cover and nourish the root* ; and *almost* immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth *through which to make its way* : but when the sun was up, it was scorched ;<sup>a</sup> and *so*, as soon as it was sprung up, it *had already outgrown its strength, and withered away* because it had no *depth of root* and lacked moisture. And some of the *seed* fell among thorns :<sup>b</sup> and the thorns sprang up with it ; *but growing faster than the seed, took away the nourishment of the ground, and obscuring the seed from the influence of the sun and dews, choked it, and it yielded no fruit*. And other *seed* fell on good ground,<sup>c</sup> and did yield fruit that sprang up *in due time* and increased *to its full proportion* ; and, *according to the goodness of the particular soil where the grains had fallen, the ears brought forth for each grain, some of them thirty, and some sixty, and some even an*

<sup>a</sup> For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth. So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. James i. 11.

<sup>b</sup> Thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Jer. iv. 3.

<sup>c</sup> For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. Heb. vi. 7

hundred-fold.<sup>d</sup> (1) And when He had said these things, He cried aloud and said unto them, He that hath ears to hear the truth, let him hear and embrace it.

And when the assembly had dispersed, and He was alone (retired apart from the multitude), they (the disciples) that were about Him with the twelve, came and asked of Him an explanation of the parable which He had delivered, saying, What might the spiritual meaning of this parable be? and why speakest Thou unto them in parables,<sup>(2)</sup> which they do not understand? He answered and said unto them, Reserve is uncalled-for in your case, because ye prize and improve what is imparted for your instruction, and it is given (granted by Divine grace) unto such as you to know the mysteries<sup>e</sup> of the Kingdom of God, and the effect and progress that Kingdom shall have among men: but to them who slight and neglect what has been plainly taught them, it is not further given to know such things: to others therefore,—to them that are without,<sup>f</sup> (3)—all these things are done (are delivered) in parables. For whosoever profitably hath,—duly using and improving the talent vouchsafed to him,—to him more shall be given,<sup>(4)</sup> and he shall have

<sup>d</sup> Then Isaac sowed in that land and received in the same year an hundred fold: And the Lord blessed him. Gen. xxvi. 12.

<sup>e</sup> At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Matt. xi. 25.

But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. 1 Cor. ii. 10.

Having made known unto us the Mystery of His Will. Eph. i. 9.

The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints. Col. i. 26.

<sup>f</sup> Walk in wisdom toward them that are without. Col. iv. 5.

Walk honestly toward them that are without. 1 Thess. iv. 12.

(1) *Some sixty and some an hundred fold.*] This is doubtless spoken in harmony with the then existing condition of the soil of Palestine, and we know that the largest return here mentioned repaid the labour and faith of the patriarch Isaac. This remarkable fertility of the land is confirmed by the testimony of Josephus (B. J. iii. 3), and by Tacitus (Hist. v. 6). Such produce is not unexampled elsewhere. Thus the land of Babylonia is said to have generally produced two-hundred fold—sometimes three-hundred (Herod. Clio. 193); and Pliny, in his Natural History (lib. xviii. c. 10), relates, that in the superior soils of Africa, Egypt, and Sicily, wheat will produce by the bushel an hundred and fifty fold.

(2) *Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?* On the meaning of the word "Parable," see Section XLVII., Note 4.—Our Lord's frequent use of Parables was necessarily imposed upon Him by the character of His hearers, and by the peculiar circumstances in which their conduct placed Him: their blindness and wickedness was the reason of His so teaching them, and not His mode of teaching them the reason of their blindness. The fundamental doctrines and precepts of the Gospel were always clearly delivered to the people; but many of the Parables embrace the mysteries relating to its progress, and the issue of it. Our Lord's enemies would have turned any positive declaration on such subjects to His premature destruction; and so Parables, which could not be laid hold of (however obvious their bearing), became a necessary precaution. Our Lord's example, under circumstances which can never occur again, cannot be now pleaded as a justification for Reserve in teaching Religion. The "Discipline of the Secret" (so termed by the Latins) may have been needful during the heat of persecution at the close of the second Century, but was very different from what is now practised by Romanists. It

is the object of Revelation (as the word implies) to communicate, not to conceal, knowledge; and this especially appears from what our Lord said after explaining this Parable of the Sower, Luke viii. 16, 17.

Nothing could be better adapted than this peculiar mode of teaching to awaken the attention of hearers, and, at the same time, to convey, without their immediately perceiving it, moral and spiritual truths; by their improvement of which it might be judged whether they would bear more explicit declarations of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Again, to the great majority who feel strongly, but cannot reason accurately, argumentative instruction is dry and forbidding, while that conveyed through the imagination pleases and attaches itself to the memory. The obscurity in which a parable is involved excites curiosity, and the trouble it costs to elicit its meaning enhances its value: it gains the easiest admission into both head and heart, striking the deepest and remaining the longest. Parables also insinuate reproof with less offence and greater efficacy than open rebuke; and truths, imperfectly seen through this veil, will be endured, which, without any covering, would be offensive to the hearer, and dangerous perhaps, to the speaker. This is strikingly illustrated in the Old Testament by the parable applied by Nathan to David.

(3) *Them that are without.*] This was an appellation given by the Jews to the heathen. Our Saviour intimates that the Kingdom of God would shortly be taken from them, and that then they would be "without."

(4) *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, &c.*] This adage is to be applied to spiritual riches; and under it is couched the lesson, that he who enjoys proper opportunities of religious knowledge, and takes anxious care to improve them, will find his knowledge gradually increase. On



abundance; but whosoever hath not,—*making no use of his talent, and being as though he had it not*,—from him shall be taken away even that he *so unprofitably* hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables, because *they will not properly employ the faculties bestowed on them*; they, seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.<sup>ε</sup> *Their criminal folly will prove their punishment, so that, although seeing My Miracles, they may see the outward act only and not perceive its object*; and hearing *My doctrine, they may hear the words alone and not understand their import*; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. And *thus, by shutting their eyes against the light and stopping their ears against instruction, in them is fulfilled (is made good)*

ε — a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not. Ezek. xii. 2.

— their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. 2 Cor. iii. 14.

the prophecy of Esaias,<sup>(1)</sup> which saith, BY HEARING YE SHALL HEAR, AND SHALL (*will*) NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YE SHALL SEE, AND SHALL (*will*) NOT PERCEIVE: FOR THIS PEOPLE'S HEART IS WAXED GROSS *that the Word cannot pierce it, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart and be converted, and I should heal them (see Isa. vi. 9, 10).* But blessed are your eyes, for they *see and own the Messiah in My miracles*; and *blessed are your ears, for they attentively hear My doctrine.* For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.<sup>η</sup> And He said *also* unto them, Know ye not this Parable *which is so plain*? And how then will ye know all *those other parables which are less so*? Hear ye therefore *the explanation of the parable of the Sower*:—

η — the mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. Eph. iii. 4, 5.

— these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them. Heb. xi. 13.

ι — born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God. 1 Pet. i. 23.

Now *the meaning of the parable is this*: The seed *which the Sower soweth (disperseth) is the Word of God*:<sup>ι</sup> And these are they *represented as receiving the seed by the way-side, where the Word is sown*; but when any one *carelessly* heareth the Word of the Kingdom of God, and

the other hand, those who negligently manage what little opportunity they have, will find it come to nothing: the little which they have learned will slip out of their memory; they will *lose* it, and so in that sense it will "be taken from them."—The phrase of "losing what a man hath not" was formerly proverbial for the loss of that little on which no value was set. So Juvenal says (Sat. iii. 106):

"Nil habuit Codrus ..... et tamen illud  
Perdidit infelix totum nil."

(<sup>ι</sup>) *The prophecy of Esaias.*] The imperative (or Prophetic) form is used in our present Version of Isaiah.—Our Lord's own words, immediately preceding His citation of the prophecy, are well rendered in another Version:—"They overlook what they see and are inattentive to what they hear." So Æschylus:—

..... Ἐλείποντες ἔβλεπον μάτην,  
Κλύοντες οὐκ ἤκουον.

Prom. Vinc. 446—47.

understandeth (*considereth*) it not, then Satan, the wicked one,<sup>k</sup> cometh immediately, and taketh away *from such hearers* the Word that was sown in their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved: this is he (*the person signified in the Parable*) which received seed by the way-side.—And likewise (*in like manner*) these are they which received the seed on stony ground<sup>l</sup>—on the rock *just beneath the soil*; who, when they have heard the Word, immediately receive it with joy<sup>m</sup>—*their desires of happiness being naturally excited by such glad tidings*; and yet these have no root in themselves,—*neither firmness of purpose nor deep conviction in their hearts*,—and so believe and endure but for a time:<sup>n</sup> afterward, in time of temptation, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the Word's sake, immediately they are offended (*they take offence*) *at the Gospel*, and fall away<sup>o</sup> *from it*.—And these are they which received seed among the thorns: *namely*, such as hear the Word, *apparently with attention*, and yet, when they have heard, go forth *into life from the sound of the Word*; and the cares of this world,<sup>p</sup> and the deceitfulness of riches,<sup>q</sup> and the lusts (*desire*) of other things<sup>r</sup>, entering in *to the heart*, choke (*stifle*) the Word, and so it becometh unfruitful: *they make indeed some slight and partial efforts towards reformation*, but they are *at length* choked with pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.—And these are they which received seed into good ground; *namely*, such as *attentively* hear the Word, and understand *what is spoken*, and receive it *without prejudice*, and *effectually* keep it in (*with*) an honest and good heart, and with patience<sup>s</sup> bring forth *the real and abiding fruit*<sup>t</sup> *of holiness*—some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred-fold.

And He further said to them, Is a candle brought into a room to be put under a bushel (*a measure*), or under a bed<sup>(\*)</sup> (*a couch or sofa*), and not rather to be set on a candlestick? Surely no man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it in *this senseless manner* with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in *to the room* may see the light and be guided in their movements by it. Even so I do not impart light and instruction that it may be kept concealed: for all that I do being designed for the universal good,

many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 1 Tim. vi. 9.

<sup>k</sup> For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 1 John ii. 16.

<sup>l</sup> But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James i. 4.

<sup>m</sup> He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. John xv. 5.—Walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. Col. i. 10.—For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. i. 8.

<sup>n</sup> Ye have overcome the wicked one. 1 John ii. 13.

Cain, who was of that wicked one. 1 John iii. 12.

Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. v. 8.

<sup>o</sup> A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

<sup>p</sup> And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words but they do them not. Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

<sup>q</sup> Ye were willing for a season to rejoice in His light. John v. 36.

<sup>r</sup> Then believed they His words; they sang His praise: they soon forgot His works, they waited not for His counsel. Ps. cvi. 12, 13.

Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake, and then shall many be offended. Matt. xxiv. 9, 10.

<sup>s</sup> And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. Luke xiv. 18.

<sup>t</sup> Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. Prov. xxiii. 5.

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God. Mark x. 23.

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into

(\*) A bed.] Here is meant the couch on which they reclined at meals. This piece of furniture had a cavity, where any article could be placed. The allusion is equivalent to saying that "a candle should be put on the table, and not under it."

<sup>u</sup> There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known. What I tell ye in darkness that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. Matt. x. 26, 27.

<sup>v</sup> Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Heb. ii. 1.

nothing is said in secret by Me now, that shall not be made manifest (revealed) in due time; neither is anything hid, that shall not afterwards be known and come publicly abroad.<sup>u</sup> I say more especially unto you who are appointed to teach others, If any man among you have ears to hear, let him be anxious to hear aright, so as to understand and do these things.—And He said yet again unto them, Take heed therefore what and how you hear:<sup>v</sup> for, in proportion to your fidelity will be your reward: with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you; and unto you that attentively hear, shall more be given,—each man according to the proficiency he makes. For, as I have told you already, he that improveth what he hath, to him shall be given abundantly; and he that hath not improved his means of information or any other grace which may be vouchsafed to him, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath [which he seemeth to have, LUKE].

## SECTION LI.

## THE PARABLE OF THE TARES OF THE FIELD.

Matt. xiii. 24—30, 36—43.

<sup>a</sup> For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little. Isa. xxxviii. 10.

<sup>b</sup> Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. 1 Tim. v. 24.

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

ANOTHER parable<sup>a</sup> put He forth unto them (*the people at large*), saying, The Kingdom of Heaven (*the Gospel Dispensation*) is to be likened (*is like*) unto the case of a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept (*during the night*) his enemy came, and sowed tares (*cockle or darnel*) among the wheat, and went his way. For a time this stratagem was not perceived, as the tares resembled the wheat during their early growth; but when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, which was the best evidence of the quality of what had been sown, then plainly appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder (*they who lived in the farm-house with the owner of the property*) came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He, answering, said unto them, An enemy of mine hath evidently done this. Then the servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, do not so now, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye hastily root up also the wheat which grows with them: let both grow together until the harvest:<sup>b</sup> and in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.<sup>c</sup>

Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house in which he lodged at Capernaum: and His

disciples came unto Him, saying, Declare (*explain*) unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them: He that soweth the good seed in the parable is (*represents*) the Son of man, the Great Preacher of the Gospel: the field is the world,<sup>d</sup> throughout which the Gospel is to be preached: the good seed are the children of the Kingdom, which bring forth fruits of holiness in their season; but the tares are the children of Satan the wicked one,<sup>e</sup> whose works they do; yet God does not root out such offenders in this world, lest the righteous should suffer with them: the enemy that sowed them is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world, when the great day of Judgment shall take place: and the reapers are the Angels,<sup>f</sup> who will be employed in the services of that day. As therefore the tares in the parable are, by command of the owner of the field, to be gathered together at the time of harvest, and burned in the fire, so likewise shall it be in the end of this world: for then the Son of man shall send forth His Angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend,<sup>g</sup>—all hypocrites, and teachers of corrupt doctrine,—and them which do iniquity;<sup>h</sup> and those executioners of divine vengeance shall cast them into hell, which is as a furnace of unquenchable fire:<sup>i</sup> there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then, at last, shall the righteous shine forth publicly acknowledged, and glorious as the sun,<sup>k</sup> in the kingdom of God their Father.<sup>(1)</sup> And this misery, or this happiness, must be the lot of every living soul—a truth the most solemn which can be proclaimed: Who therefore hath ears to hear, let him hear!

leave them neither root nor branch. Mal. iv. 1.—And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet . . . these both were cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone. Rev. xix. 20.

<sup>k</sup> And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. Dan. xii. 3.—And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Pet. v. 4.

<sup>d</sup> Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. Rom. x. 18.

<sup>e</sup> Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. John viii. 44.

<sup>f</sup> O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness. Acts xiii. 10.

<sup>g</sup> And another Angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for Thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. Rev. xiv. 16.

<sup>h</sup> It must needs be that offences come, but, Wo to that man by whom the offence cometh. Matt. xviii. 7.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. Rom. xvi. 17.

<sup>i</sup> Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. Luke xiii. 27.

<sup>k</sup> For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall

(1) *A furnace of fire.*] This is an allusion to the Oriental custom of burning alive, as mentioned by Daniel (iii. 11), where those who would not worship the image were "cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." At Matt. v. 22, the expression is used as equivalent to "hell-fire."

(2) *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, &c.*] It is in such general images that Divine Wisdom has seen fit to shadow forth to us the Happiness of the blessed. Yet quite enough is revealed to confirm our faith in its reality, and encourage the last glorious hope of the Christian. First the Church plainly collects from both covenants that the righteous are to rise again with their own glorified bodies reunited to their own souls (see Section CVIII. 6).—There are also Scriptural grounds for believing that there will be Degrees of Bliss assigned according to the attainments of each in holiness (see Section CII. 9).—In those heavenly mansions sorrow and pain will be known no more; for there remaineth at last that rest for the people of God which here they are destined always to seek, never to enjoy

(Rev. vii. 14; xiv. 13; xxi. 4).—Among the positive sources of enjoyment will be the increase of knowledge, so little of which can be arrived at here, though the soul, as an active and reflecting essence, experiences a real pleasure in the pursuit and possession of it (1 Cor. xiii. 12). Faith itself (as the evidence of things not seen) will at last give place to certainty.—Then the good shall be fully acquainted with God Himself, beholding the All-Perfect Being as He is, no longer enshrouded in mystery and terror.—The good will further be made happy in the society of one another. Then (let us indulge so pleasing a hope) we shall be reunited to those with whom nature or friendship has intimately bound our hearts: for it is quite agreeable to right Reason (which Revelation will never be found to contradict) to suppose that the relations in which a wise and paternal Providence has placed us here, are in connection with our destination through all eternity.—Lastly, the recompense which God will bestow on His faithful servants is to be Everlasting. It is the perpetuity of Bliss,—the certainty of never losing it,—which makes it truly Bliss.

## SECTION LII.

VARIOUS PARABLES ARE SPOKEN, HAVING REFERENCE TO THE EFFECTS AND ASTONISHING PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

*Matt. xiii. 31—35, 44—53. Mark iv. 26—34. Luke xiii. 18—21.*

AND He said *also to the multitude*, So is it with the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, when faithfully received into a good heart, as if a man should cast good seed into the ground; and having done so, should sleep and rise, as usual, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up imperceptibly—he knoweth not how: for the earth, by God's providence, bringeth forth fruit of herself<sup>a</sup> (spontaneously as it were, and without the continued aid of man); first the tender blade, then the stalk with the ear in its green state, after that the full corn (the ripe and perfect grain) in the ear.<sup>b(1)</sup> But when the fruit is thus brought forth to maturity, immediately he (the husbandman) putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.<sup>c</sup> Thus will it be with the Christian Church: the seed of the Gospel shall be disclosed by a gradual development, "to the Jew first and afterward to the Gentile;" it shall be transmitted slowly from town to city, and from province to country. In like manner is it with individual members of the Church: they increase in heavenly wisdom day by day, and bring forth fruit with patience, although their growth in grace be imperceptible to others, and often to themselves. At length, when the fulness of time arrives, the Heavenly Husbandman will "put in His sickle" to reap the great harvest of the world, and will "gather the wheat into His garner."

Another parable put He forth unto them, and said; Whereunto shall we liken the doctrine of the Kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it [whereunto shall I resemble it? LUKE], that you may

<sup>a</sup> And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. Gen. i. 12.

<sup>b</sup> A shock of corn cometh in his season. Job v. 26.

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time. Eccles. iii. 11.

<sup>c</sup> And another Angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat in the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for Thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. Rev. xiv 15.

(1) *First the blade, then the ear, &c.*] The growth of seed aptly illustrates the progress of the Gospel in the world, and particularly the growth of grace in the heart of man. As the seed springs up, "the husbandman knoweth not how," "so is every one that is born of the Spirit:" human means are employed, but it is God alone who giveth the gradual increase (1 Cor. iii. 6): the Christian principle progresses until the full corn is produced in the ear, and in its due season the shock is gathered into the Garner of God.—Unhappily, no doctrine has been more unobserved or forgotten by enthusiasts than this. Conversion has been represented as an operation always completed suddenly, and sometimes instantaneously, while the triumph of such supposed conversions has been attended by alternations of ecstatic joy and the most gloomy despair.

Such special conversions, though not impossible, are certainly not the ordinary way of God's dealing with Christians. There are some who, having been once regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, have so improved the sanctifying graces, and preserved the even tenour of their way, that it cannot be supposed they stand in need of an entire change of heart, or thorough conversion from their ways. According to the notions of the Church, the conversion of sinners may be said to consist of a rational conviction of sin and sense of danger, of a heart-felt sorrow at having offended God, with steadfast purpose of amendment under the blessing of divine grace: after a regular employment of all the means of grace, such a course will be sure to be followed by resolute perseverance in well doing.

*apprehend it best?* The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and cast into his garden [sowed in his field, **MATT.**]; which indeed is one of the least of all seeds <sup>(2)</sup> that be cast in to the earth: but when it is sown *its due time*, it groweth up in a wonderful manner, and becometh greater than all other herbs, and waxeth, *as it were*, a great tree, <sup>(3)</sup> so that the fowls of the air may come and lodge (*find shelter*) in the branches, under the shadow of it.<sup>4</sup> *Even so the Kingdom of the Messiah, previous to His death and burial,—or the sowing of His body in the earth,—will have but a small and insensible increase; but afterwards it will become as a magnificent tree, stretching forth its branches into all lands, and yielding its refuge and shelter to multitudes: for “when He is lifted up, He will draw all men after Him.”*

Another parable to the same purpose spake He unto them. The doctrine of the kingdom of heaven is like, in its powerful effect, unto leaven (*or sour dough*), which a woman took and hid (*covered up*) in three measures of meal, <sup>(4)</sup> till by insensible fermentation the whole mass was leavened. *So shall the doctrine of the Kingdom spread over and season the whole earth: that which is now hid in a remote province of the Roman empire, shall gradually penetrate and pervade the entire heathen world.*

<sup>(2)</sup> *The least of all seeds.*] This, and the seed becoming “a great tree,” are expressions not literally but *proverbially* spoken. The mustard-seed was the smallest object possessed of life and expansive force, though not comparatively smaller than that which, in its infancy, it is here designed to represent, for Christianity was, as it were, raised almost out of nothing, and against everything.—The Jews frequently used the smallness of the seed as a comparison (see **Matt. xvii. 20**); and several of their writers speak of this arborescent (or tree-like) vegetable as being, in that soil and climate, large enough to admit a man to climb into, like a fig-tree. In parts of our own country it has been seen larger than most shrubs; and a late traveller in the East tells us, that he found it sometimes growing to the height of fifteen feet.—It has been thought by some that our Lord might here intend a species of *phytolacca*, of the same natural order and having the same properties as the mustard: this shrub is common in Palestine, and has the minutest seed of any tree there.

<sup>(3)</sup> *A great tree.*] Our Lord here seems to have had particularly in view the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (referred to above in the **Margin**), where the nature and advantages of *Civil Government* are represented by a great tree with spreading branches, and which contained “*meat for all*.” Time has expounded this parable of the Gospel Kingdom in a remarkable manner. We need only refer for proofs to *heathen* authors, indisputably genuine, and who only incidentally allude to the fact. The Apostles began to disperse themselves among the Gentiles about the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Claudius, and before the end of that reign,

<sup>4</sup> In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it (the Gospel), and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. **Ezek. xvii. 23.**

\* I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: the leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. **Dan. iv. 10—12.**

Christians became so numerous at Rome, as to give umbrage to the government; for Suetonius, who mistook Christianity for a sect of Judaism, records, that “the Emperor banished from Rome the Jews, who being excited by Christ (*Christo impulsore*) made continual tumults.” Not long after, Tacitus, speaking of the persecution of the Christians under Nero, describes them as “a vast multitude.” Under Trajan, Pliny (one of the provincial governors) observes, that the Emperor thought it evident that Christians ought to be put to death, but was perplexed by the great numbers on whom that extreme punishment seemed to have no influence: “The persons accused” (he says, in his celebrated letter to the Emperor) “are of all ages, of each sex, of every rank,—slaves and Roman citizens; the contagion has spread itself not only in the cities and towns, but through the whole country; the temples are desolate, the religious solemnities long intermitted, and few purchasers of the victims are to be found.” In the succeeding reign, Adrian himself thus writes from Egypt: “Nobody here is unemployed, all are industrious: they have only one God: Him the Christians, Him the Jews, Him all the Gentiles worship.” Such astonishing progress did the Gospel make within a century after our Lord’s Resurrection: and in Tertullian’s time, A. D. 200, we find that the Gospel had spread to the utmost bounds of Spain; throughout Gaul and Britain; also over Germany, Scythia, and many other nations, provinces, and islands unknown to the Roman empire (see **Section CXII.**, Note 11).

<sup>(4)</sup> *Three measures of meal.*] This quantity is mentioned as being the usual quantity for baking (see **Gen. xviii. 6**).

<sup>f</sup> I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. John xvi. 12.

<sup>g</sup>—the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest. Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

<sup>h</sup> Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. ii. 2, 3.

<sup>i</sup> I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ. Phil. iii. 8.

<sup>k</sup> Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Isa. lv. 1.

<sup>l</sup> I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich. Rev. iii. 18.

<sup>m</sup> Wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. Prov. viii. 11.

<sup>n</sup> So those servants went out unto the highways and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with guests. Matt. xxii. 10

All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and with many such parables spake He the Word unto them, as they were able to hear it *without offence, or had the capacity to profit by it*: and without a parable spake He not unto them *at that time and in that place—knowing that they would not then appreciate what He said, and that His enemies were still lying in wait to catch Him in His words*: that it might be fulfilled also in Him which was spoken by the Prophet saying, I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES;<sup>(5)</sup> I WILL UTTER THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN KEPT SECRET FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD<sup>g</sup> (see Ps. lxxviii. 2).—And He *freely* expounded all these things to His disciples, when they were alone *with Him*.

Again, *that He might promote the zeal and diligence of His disciples in searching into and teaching these great truths, He said*: The kingdom of heaven (*the Gospel dispensation*) is like unto a *great treasure hid<sup>h</sup> in a field*; the which when a man hath found, he hideth (*covereth it up,—or concealeth his good fortune*), and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath,<sup>i</sup> and buyeth <sup>k</sup> that field,<sup>(6)</sup> *that he may secure a legal right to the treasure it contains. So there are cases in which the Gospel graciously offers itself to individuals; and God is sometimes “found of them that seek Him not.”*

Or again, The kingdom of heaven is like unto *the conduct of a merchantman (a travelling jeweller), seeking to purchase goodly pearls*; <sup>l</sup> <sup>(7)</sup> who, when he had found one pearl of great price (*of exceeding value*), he went and sold all that he had, and bought it. *The Gospel is as a rare pearl, exceeding precious and beautiful; and those who desire its blessings, must be prepared to part, if it be needful, with every earthly advantage to secure them.*

Again—to take another illustration from objects familiar to many of you—*The success of the kingdom of heaven (of the Gospel doctrine and dispensation) is like unto a drag net that was cast into the sea; and which, sweeping all within its reach, gathered fish of every kind,<sup>m</sup> good and*

<sup>(5)</sup> *I will open my mouth in parables.*] The words do not exactly agree either with the Hebrew text or the Greek version; but they are not quoted by the Evangelists as a prophecy, being merely adopted as an accommodation to our Lord's case. The words may possibly be written by Asaph, and not David. The term “foundation” is properly used of the founding of buildings, but has been classically applied to the beginning of anything: it was especially used of the *world*, because, according to the common notions of ancient times, the world was thought to be an immense plain surface resting on foundations.

<sup>(6)</sup> *And buyeth that field.*] The man's con-

duct is not vindicated; for on strict principles he ought to have informed the owner of the field of his discovery: the point of the parable lies in his *earnestness* to obtain the treasure.

<sup>(7)</sup> *Seeking goodly pearls.*] As the preceding parable describes men as sometimes *sought* by the Gospel, so here their receiving it is shown to be the effect of their diligently *seeking* for truth. And this is the *ordinary* course. Men are not to sit with their arms folded, and to try the patience of God. They are not to rest till “the treasure” is obtained.—Some treat religion as *nothing*; others make it a *little thing*; but it deserves to be accounted *everything*, and is always to be made the *chief thing*.

bad; which, when it was full, they (*the fishermen*) drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.<sup>(\*)</sup> So likewise shall it be at the end of the world. *The Gospel is sent into the world, as a net is cast into the sea: it reaches unto multitudes, and, for the present, the bad and the good are mixed together; but when the net is quite full, and in God's appointed time is drawn in, many will be found not deserving of being saved: then the Angels shall come forth at the command of Christ, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the unquenchable furnace of hell-fire; there shall be the extremity of misery,—wailing and gnashing of teeth.*<sup>2</sup>

Then Jesus,—*willing to have taught them further if it had been needful,—graciously saith unto them, Have ye now understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord. Then said He unto them; Therefore (Since that is the case) see that ye use your knowledge aright; for every scribe (every teacher) which is thoroughly instructed unto the doctrines and mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure (his storehouse of provisions) things new and old,<sup>o</sup> as occasion may require, to feed his family. So must you learn to produce from the Law and the Prophets, and especially from this New Dispensation of the Gospel, whatever you shall find needful to feed the family and household of God.*

And it came to pass that when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence.

<sup>2</sup> When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left.... then shall He say unto them on His left hand, Depart from Me ye cursed, into everlasting fire. Matt. xxv. 31—38, 41.

<sup>o</sup> At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O My beloved. Song of Sol. vii. 18.

The lips of the righteous feed many. Prov. x. 21.

### SECTION LIII.

JESUS EXHORTS SOME WHO HAD FOLLOWED HIM TO THE WATER-SIDE NOT TO TURN BACK FROM THE GOSPEL; AND, IN CROSSING THE LAKE WITH HIS DISCIPLES, CALMS A HURRICANE.

*Matt. viii. 18—27. Mark iv. 35—41. Luke viii. 22—25; ix. 57—62.*

AND the same day,—when the even was come,—when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him; *being unwilling to keep them long together for fear of sedition, and needing for Himself some repose, He gave commandment to depart, and said unto His disciples, Let us go over unto the other side of the Lake.*

*And they set out:* and it came to pass that, as they went in the way *to the water-side, a certain Scribe, loth to*

(\*) *But cast the bad away.*] The law directed, "Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you" (Lev. xi. 12). Thus the Hebrew fishermen must have been obliged to throw away, as useless, some portion of the fish which they took in their nets.



lose his share in the advantages of the Messiah's temporal kingdom, came and said unto Him, Lord [Master, MATT.], I am ready to become one of Thy disciples, and will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. And Jesus, knowing the motives of this Scribe, saith unto him, *If worldly prospects have urged thee to this, thou wilt be disappointed; for the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His own head,—much less to provide accommodation for His followers.*

And He said unto another of His disciples,—*an occasional attendant only upon His ministry*,—Follow Me with more regularity, as these My appointed servants do. But he, to whom this was addressed, said unto Him, Lord, suffer me first to go home and bury my father:<sup>(1)</sup> then I will attend thee gladly. But Jesus, wishing to make an extraordinary trial of his faith, or perceiving his want of firmness, said unto him, Follow me<sup>a</sup> now, and let the dead<sup>b</sup> bury their dead—*leave those who are spiritually "dead in trespasses and sins" to attend to those who are naturally dead: the state of the latter cannot now be changed, and as the former will not serve God, they may do such offices as well as others: but go thou forthwith, when the Lord of life and death commands, and preach the kingdom of God.*

And another wavering disciple also said, Lord, I will follow thee henceforth with constancy, but let me first go to make known my intention, and bid them farewell which are at home at my house.<sup>c</sup> And Jesus, knowing that this was but an excuse,—or, that he would be persuaded by his friends not to return,—said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough<sup>(2)</sup> and looking back (*having once undertaken My service, and preferring to it any worldly business*), is fit for the kingdom of God.<sup>d</sup>

And when they (*the Apostles*) had sent away the multitude, they took Him, even tired as He was,—*without stopping for rest or refreshment*,—into the ship. And when He was entered in, His disciples followed Him; and they then launched forth. And there were also with Him

<sup>a</sup> He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.... he cannot be My disciple. Matt. x. 37. Luke xiv. 26.

<sup>b</sup> The dead that hear the voice of the Son of man shall live. John v. 25.

Dead in your sins. Col. ii. 13.

She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 1 Tim. v. 6.

I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Rev. iii. 1.

<sup>c</sup> And Elisha ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. 1 Kings xix. 20.

<sup>d</sup> I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. iii. 14.

(1) *Suffer me first to go and bury my father.*] His father, if not dead, must have been at the point of death. Similar conduct could not be justified under different circumstances. It was regarded as a solemn duty among the Jews to cherish their parents, and especially to pay them the last rites: but here was a direct and explicit command from God; and it was one of those cases where even father and mother are to be left for the sake of the Gospel. No man can imagine that our blessed Lord was indifferent to filial duties, when, from the Cross itself, He provided for the comfort of His earthly parent's declining years.

(2) *No man having put his hand to the plough, &c.*] This may be applied generally to all Christians, though particularly urgent on ministers of the Gospel. "To put the hand to the plough," was a common adage of the Greeks for undertaking any work; and there is a saying by Hesiod (lib. ii. v. 61), that "the man who ploughs must not look off his work to his associates." The ancient plough was little more than a crooked piece of wood: without attention to the business, the share would glide over the surface without making any furrows; and if the workman looked back, he could not make them regular, nor could he cast his seed evenly before him.

(*accompanying the vessel in which He was*) other little ships. And as they sailed, He, *being wearied with the labours of the day*, fell asleep; and behold, there came down a great storm of wind <sup>(<sup>1</sup>)</sup> (*a hurricane*) on the lake, *which was subject to sudden squalls of this kind*. And there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was *at times* covered with the waves; and *at length* the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full of *water*, and they were in *extreme* jeopardy.—And He was in the hinder part (*the stern*) of the ship, asleep on a pillow (*on the cushion usually placed there*).

And His disciples came to Him and awoke Him saying, Master, Master, carest Thou not that we perish *and are exposed to so imminent danger!* Save us, Lord, *for we are even now about to perish!*<sup>e</sup> And He saith unto them, Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith? Where is your faith? How is it that ye have no faith,<sup>g</sup> *after such frequent experience of My power and love for you?* Then He arose and *majestically* rebuked the winds and the raging of the water; and said unto the sea, Peace, be still! And *He had no sooner spoken the words, than* the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.<sup>(4)</sup>

But the men (*the mariners and disciples*) marvelled: and, *overcome with awe at what they had seen*, they feared exceedingly,<sup>(2)</sup> and said one to another, What manner of man is this—*how vast his power*—that commandeth *not diseases only, but raging elements*,—even the winds and the sea,—and they *at once* obey him!<sup>h</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off for ever. Ps. xliv. 23.

<sup>f</sup> But when Peter saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? Matt. xiv. 30, 31.

<sup>g</sup> God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Ps. xlvi. 1, 2.

<sup>h</sup> When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee. Isa. xliii. 2.

<sup>i</sup> Who abut up the sea with doors when it brake forth, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Job xxxviii. 8, 11.

<sup>j</sup> Thou reulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them. Ps. lxxxix. 9.

<sup>k</sup> He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Ps. cvii. 29.

## SECTION LIV.

THE DEMONIACS OF GADARA ARE HEALED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE; BUT, AT THE REQUEST OF THE INHABITANTS, JESUS QUITS THEIR TERRITORY, AND SAILS BACK AGAIN.

*Matt. viii. 28—34; ix. 1. Mark v. 1—21. Luke viii. 26—40.*

AND they came over unto the other side of the sea of *Tiberias* (*or Lake of Gennesaret*), and arrived at the country of the Gadarenes <sup>(<sup>1</sup>)</sup> *or Gergesenes*, which is over

(<sup>1</sup>) *A great storm of wind.*] Modern travellers describe the Lake as still subject to these violent squalls, although apparently well protected. The passage of the Jordan through it is marked at all times by a strong current, and when this is opposed by contrary winds, which blow with the force of a hurricane from the south-east, and sweep down into the lake from the hollow of the mountains, a boisterous sea is quickly raised.

(<sup>2</sup>) *And there was a great calm.*] An undeniable proof of the reality of the miracle; for after

a storm, the sea never becomes perfectly smooth until some time has elapsed.

(<sup>3</sup>) *They feared exceedingly.*] They were particularly confounded with *this* miracle, because it was the first proof our Lord had given of His dominion *over the elements*, which were naturally considered to be less subject to human power than bodily distempers.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Country of the Gadarenes.*] This territory was attached to that of the Gergesenes, or ancient

<sup>a</sup> A people that provoketh Me to anger continually to My face . . . . which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, — which eat swines' flesh. Isa. lxxv. 3, 4.

<sup>b</sup> They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust. Ps. lxxii. 9.

The devils also believe and tremble. James ii. 19.

<sup>c</sup> What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance? 1 Kings xvii. 18.

<sup>d</sup> God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. 2 Pet. ii. 4.

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever. Rev. xx. 10.

against Galilee. And when He was come out of the ship *in order* to land, there met Him *immediately* two men possessed with devils,—coming out of the tombs<sup>a</sup> (*the excavated vaults*) of the cemetery attached to a neighbouring city; exceeding fierce (*savage and mischievous*), so that no man might *safely* pass by that way. *One of these was a certain man with an unclean spirit, out of (formerly belonging to) the city, which it was known had been possessed with devils a long time; who wore no clothes, neither abode in any house, but had his dwelling among the tombs, constructed there out of the sides of the rocks. And no man could effectually bind him—no, not with chains: because that he had been often bound with fetters (ropes) and chains, and the chains on his hands had been plucked (torn violently) asunder by him, and the fetters on his feet broken (rubbed and crushed) in pieces. Neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying aloud, and cutting himself with stones, because he could not vent his rage upon others. But, furious as this unfortunate creature usually was, when he saw Jesus yet afar off, he immediately ran up to the spot where He was landing, and fell down reverentially before Him, and worshipped Him,—doing Him obeisance.*<sup>b</sup> And the unclean spirit within him cried out with a loud voice and said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God?<sup>c</sup> *I am no follower of Thine, for Thou art Light and I am darkness!* I beseech Thee,—I adjure Thee by God,—that Thou torment me not: art Thou come hither to torment me before the day of Judgment, the time<sup>d</sup> appointed for punishment?—For He (*Jesus*) had commanded the unclean spirit, and said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. *And the demon was now in dread of punishment for what he had done; for oftentimes it had caught him, seizing him in the most violent manner; and though he was kept bound with chains and in fetters, he broke loose; and at length he brake all the bands that were fastened upon him, and was driven of the devil (the raging demon within him) into the wilderness, or waste places about the city.*

And Jesus asked *the unclean spirit* in him, saying, What is thy name? <sup>(\*)</sup> And he answered, saying, My name

Girgasites (Gen. x. 16). Gadara is enumerated by Pliny and Josephus as amongst the cities of Decapolis. A great part of its inhabitants were neathens, and hence the large herds of swine which the Jews ventured to keep on the eastern shores of the Lake. Through the righteous judgment of God, visited upon this people for their ungrateful treatment of His Son, Gadara was the first city which fell into the hands of the

Romans, in the fatal war under Vespasian. It suffered on that occasion the greatest extremities.

(\*) *What is thy name?*] Spirits, both good and evil, are always represented in Scripture as having names. These appear to have been given by men, or assumed by the spirits in accommodation to human customs. Our Lord did not ask the name through ignorance, but to elicit an

is Legion (*Multitude*), for we are many<sup>e</sup>—because *indeed* many devils were entered into him. And they besought Him much, that He would not send them away out of the country, and *yet more earnestly*, that He would not command them to go out into the deep,—*the bottomless pit or abyss where the souls of the wicked are confined.*<sup>f</sup> Now there was, a good way off from them,—*but within view, and nigh unto the mountains which lined the shore,*—a great herd of many swine, feeding on the mountain. And all the devils,—*still intent on mischief, and hoping to make Jesus appear the cause of it,*—besought Him,<sup>(1)</sup> saying, *If Thou art resolved to cast us out, suffer us to go away [send us, MARK] into the herd of swine,*<sup>(2)</sup>—that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave,<sup>g</sup>—*the loss of their property being a not unfit punishment for the owners of these forbidden and unclean animals,*—and said unto them, *Go, since you desire it.* And the unclean spirits went out of the man, and entered into the herd of swine; and behold, the whole herd, *immediately becoming mad*, ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choked (*suffocated and drowned*) in the sea, and perished in the waters. And they were *in number* about two thousand.

And they that fed the swine, when they saw what was done, fled *from the place in every direction*, and told everything to those in the city, and in the country or villages adjoining, and particularly what was befallen to the man possessed of the devils. And they went out *in crowds* to see what it was that was done, and to examine into the

<sup>e</sup> Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. Matt. xii. 46.

<sup>f</sup> And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace. Rev. ix. 2.

<sup>g</sup> And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold all he hath is in thy power. Job i. 12.

Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

answer for the purposes of the miracle. The word "Legion" (from the name of a body of Roman troops) was often used by the Jews to denote a great number, which is the sense it bears here.—This moral application may be made of the circumstance of so many demons combining together: if sin is in every man what the devil is in a demoniac, then the same man may be under the dominion of a legion of vices and evil passions at once. "Few men (it has been said) have one devil only; most men have many devils."

(\*) *The devils besought Him.*] This miracle throughout confutes those who pretend that demoniacs were only personal diseases. We find here a number of them, in one man, addressing our Lord: they knew Him to be the Christ; they even refer to the final sentence which He will pronounce on evil spirits at the end of the world: all which could not be dictated by lunacy. Christ also addresses them, and we cannot conceive that He would speak to a disease. Evil spirits were supposed by the ancients to be the departed souls of wicked men which seized upon the living. That they actually existed among the heathen is proved from the testimonies of Plutarch and Lucian, while Josephus and others show that they were known among the Jews before our Saviour's time (see Section XXXI., Note 1).

(1) *Suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.*] Our Lord only permitted this. This miracle may seem an exception to the many others of a directly beneficent nature wrought by Him, but there were important, and even merciful reasons, why it should be done. It would strike terror into those who could not be moved in any other manner, and tested whether their love to their swine was greater than that for their souls; it convinced those who were heathens of the sacredness of the Jewish laws, which prohibited the eating of swine's flesh (Lev. xi. 7, 8), while it punished those Jews who, for the sake of gain, dealt in that commodity; it manifested our Lord's dominion over the spiritual world; it completely evinced the reality of demoniacal possessions, for it was evident the swine could not be confederates in fraud; and it showed the power and virulency of these demons, if not restrained. We are to reflect further, that God has an original right to that and every other property; "the cattle upon a thousand hills are His" (Ps. l. 10); and had He destroyed them by pestilence or lightning, neither the owners, nor any one else, would have had room to complain. Thus, too, was the greatest good of mankind promoted, not in that period and corner of the world only, but in every succeeding age throughout all countries.

*truth of what they had heard.* And they come to Jesus, and see the man that was possessed with the devil and had the Legion,—out of whom the devils were *now* departed,—*calmly* sitting at the feet of Jesus; and *now*, *through the charity of some of the disciples who had parted with their upper garments*, clothed, and in his right mind. And they were afraid. And also they that saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed, and also concerning the swine, *how they had been destroyed by the devils.*

And behold, *when these things became generally known, the inhabitants of the whole city, and with them the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about, came out to meet Jesus, as He was proceeding onwards to preach the Gospel among them.* And when they saw Him, they began *submissively* to pray Him that He would depart from them out of their coasts;<sup>h</sup> for they were taken with great fear—*being not only overcome with awe at what had occurred, but grieved at their loss, and apprehensive of some further judgment for their sins from the Hand of a Being so powerful.*

And accordingly, *quitting this ungrateful people*, He returned back again, and went up into the ship.

And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devils,—and out of whom the devils were *now quite* departed,—*having followed Him*, prayed Him *earnestly* that he might be with *and accompany Him*;<sup>i</sup> *for gratitude to his deliverer urged him to request this, and he dreaded a relapse into the power of the demons.* Howbeit, Jesus, *who could with equal effect protect him when absent*, suffered him not;<sup>(j)</sup> but sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house; go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord God hath done for thee, and *how He* hath had compassion on thee. And *so* he departed; and throughout the whole city, and in *all that region of Decapolis*, began to publish, *as he had been directed*, how great things JESUS, “*the Lord God*,” had done for him.<sup>k</sup> <sup>(l)</sup> And all men *who heard it* did marvel.

And He (*Jesus*) entered *again* into a (*the*) ship, and passed over *the lake*. And it came to pass, when Jesus was passed over again unto the other side, that much people *were*

<sup>h</sup> The wicked say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. Job xxi. 14.

<sup>i</sup> What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? O Lord, truly I am Thy servant. Ps. cxvi. 12, 16.

<sup>k</sup> Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul. Ps. lxvi. 16.

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Ps. cxxvi. 3.

<sup>(j)</sup> *Suffered him not.* This is the second request made of our Lord in the same narrative, and may be profitably considered in connection with the previous request made by the demons: the prayer of the believer is *denied in wisdom*, while that of the ungodly was *granted in judgment*. Our Lord wished this man to remain in his own country as a monument of Divine power and goodness: he became a preacher of the Gospel, and

was probably the means of procuring to his benefactor, on His next visit to that country, a more favourable reception (see Mark vii. 31—37).

<sup>(l)</sup> *How great things Jesus had done for him.* This is a remarkable passage, for the man was expressly told to publish “how great things the Lord God had done” for him. It shows that Lord does not stand here, as in some instances, for a term of respect, but for JEHOVAH.

gathered unto Him; and the people gladly received Him, for they were all waiting for Him: and He was nigh unto the sea, *where He continued awhile preaching to them.* And He came afterwards into Capernaum, His own city.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> And leaving Nazareth He came and dwelt in Capernaum. Matt. iv. 18.

SECTION LV.

JESUS, BEING ENTERTAINED BY MATTHEW, JUSTIFIES HIS EATING WITH PUBLICANS AND SINNERS; AND VINDICATES HIS DISCIPLES FOR NOT FASTING DURING HIS CONTINUANCE WITH THEM.

Matt. ix. 10—17. Mark ii. 15—22. Luke v. 29—39.

AND Levi<sup>(1)</sup> or Matthew, being desirous to shew respect to his divine Master, made Him a great feast in his own house. And it came pass, that as Jesus sat there at meat, behold a great company of publicans (*former associates of Matthew*) and sinners came, and sat also together with Jesus and His disciples, and others; for there were many of them, and they followed Him into the house.

But when their Scribes and Pharisees of that place [the Scribes and Pharisees, MARK] saw Him eat openly with publicans and sinners, they murmured against His disciples, saying, Why do ye,—*who pretend to teach and set an example to other men,*—eat and drink with publicans and sinners? and how is it that your Master Himself, whom you esteem to be so holy a prophet, is careless of all defilement, and eateth and drinketh also with publicans and sinners?<sup>a</sup>

When Jesus heard it, He answering said unto them; *Such as these more especially need My aid, for they that are whole (in perfect health) need not a physician, but they that are sick. I am the physician of the soul, and came, purposely, not to call the righteous,—for before God there are none righteous,<sup>b</sup>—but sinners, as all are, to repentance.<sup>c</sup> (2)* But go ye, who so arrogantly imagine yourselves to be better than other men, and learn what that portion of Scripture meaneth, and how it agrees with what I have done; I WILL HAVE MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE<sup>d</sup> only (see Hosea vi. 6): Good Will towards all men is required, and not merely a strict observance of the Ritual Law,—which however much it discountenances unnecessary communication with the profane, can never preclude acts of mercy to any.

<sup>a</sup> The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. Matt. xi. 19.

<sup>b</sup> How should man be just with God? Job ix. 2.

God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God: every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Ps. liii. 2, 3.

<sup>c</sup> There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not. Eccles. vii. 20.

In many things we offend all. James iii. 2.

If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John i. 8.

<sup>e</sup> The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke xix. 10.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 16.

The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

To do justice and judg-

(1) Levi.] See Section XXXV., Note 1.  
(2) I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.] These are remarkable words, and they are recorded in this place without the variation of a word by three Evangelists.

A Redeemer was manifestly needed, and God manifested Himself in the flesh, not to save a righteous, but a sinful world. The encouragement of sinners to repent and be saved is the distinguishing character of the Gospel.

ment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Prov. xxi. 3.

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Mic. vi. 8.

But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. Matt. xii. 7.

\* I fast twice in the week. Luke xviii. 12.

† Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer. Matt. xxiii. 14.

‡ The friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. John iii. 29.

§ They ministered to the Lord and fasted. Acts xiii. 2.

¶ Give yourselves to fasting and prayer. 1 Cor. vii. 5.

— in fastings often. 2 Cor. xi. 27.

‡ Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together. Deut. xxii. 11.

¶ Wine bottles, old and rent, and bound up. Josh. ix. 4.

And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast<sup>(\*)</sup> (*were then fasting*, GR.). And the disciples of John come and say unto Him, Why do we, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees, fast often<sup>e</sup> (*regularly twice in the week*), and make many prayers,<sup>f</sup> but Thy disciples fast not, but eat and drink *at their pleasure*? And Jesus, —*adopting the remarkable image by which their master had described Him*,—said unto them: Can ye make the children of the bedchamber (*the guests of a marriage feast*) mourn and fast while the Bridegroom<sup>g</sup> is yet with them? *Is this usual or fitting during the days which are given to festivity?* As long as they have the Bridegroom with them, they cannot *decently fast, or be reasonably expected to do so*. There is a season for joy as well as for sorrow: you now mourn the loss of your master who has been torn from you, and you fast, as the natural expression of unfeigned grief. My disciples rejoice because I am present with them; but the days will shortly come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them by a cruel death, and then shall they have occasion to fast in those days:<sup>h</sup> *their day of trouble will have come, and Abstinence will be an exercise both useful and seasonable for them*.—And He spake also a parable unto them in illustration of what He had just said. Common sense teaches a fitness and propriety in all things: thus, no man, who is mending clothes, putteth a piece of new (*undressed and unfulled*) cloth on an old garment;<sup>i</sup> if otherwise (*else*), then both the new, being less yielding, and tearing away the edges to which it is sewed, maketh a rent; and the piece that was taken out of the new sort, and put in to fill up, agreeth not with the old, but taketh away from the old *more than it adds to it*; and so in the end the rent is made worse than before. *Even so the minds of My new converts, like cloth rough from the weaver's hands, are as yet undisciplined; and trials should be accommodated according to the ability which there is to bear them*.

And again: no experienced man putteth new wine into old bottles (*flasks of skin*); else the new wine will ferment and burst the bottles,<sup>k</sup> which, being thin and worn out, are incapable of any further distension; and so the wine will be spilled, and the bottles perish [be marred, MARK]. But new wine must be put into new bottles, and then both are preserved. *Even so, My disciples, taken from their fishing trades, not from the academies and schools of the Pharisees, are unprepared for such rigid*

(\*) *Used to fast.*] A public fast-day is not here spoken of, but one of those privately observed by the Pharisees and others.—On the duty of Fasting see Section XLI., Note 34.

*discipline, and they might only be discouraged by premature austerities. No man also having drank old wine,—which, being mellowed with age, is both more agreeable and more wholesome,—straightway desireth new, which is commonly harsh and unpalatable: for he naturally saith, The old is better: So it is not easy to alter those ways of living to which men have been accustomed; nor can My disciples be suddenly initiated into acts of discipline, to which their practice has hitherto been opposed.*

## SECTION LVI.

**JESUS RAISES THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS FROM THE DEAD; AND, ON HIS WAY TO THE RULER'S HOUSE, A WOMAN WITH AN ISSUE OF BLOOD IS HEALED BY TOUCHING HIS GARMENT.**

*Matt. ix. 18—26. Mark v. 22—43. Luke viii. 41—56.*

**W**HILE He spake these things unto them in *Matthew's house*, behold there came a certain ruler (or rector) of the synagogue at *Capernaum*,<sup>a</sup> Jairus by name; and when he saw Him (as soon as he was in His presence), he fell down reverentially at His feet, and worshipped Him before them all, and besought Him that He would come immediately into his house: for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a-dying. And he besought Him greatly (with importunity), saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death (in the last stage of disease), and is even now perhaps dead;<sup>b</sup> I pray Thee, come and lay Thine hands<sup>c</sup> on her that she may be healed, and I am persuaded that she shall live.<sup>d</sup>

And Jesus,—ever ready to succour the distressed,—arose from table and followed him; and so did His disciples. But as He went towards the ruler's house, it happened that much people followed Him to see the event, and thronged about Him. And behold a certain woman, which was diseased with an incurable issue of blood (an hemorrhage) twelve years, and had suffered many things (had long been a patient under and endured a variety of painful remedies) of many physicians, and had spent all her living that she had (the whole of her substance) upon them,—neither could be healed of any, and was nothing bettered (not at all benefited) by their advice, but rather grew worse,<sup>e</sup>—when she had heard (having heard of the fame) of Jesus, she came in the press (in the crowd) clandestinely behind Him, for she was legally impure, and touched the hem

<sup>a</sup> These things said He as He taught in the synagogue at Capernaum. John vi. 59.

<sup>b</sup> And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold I die. Gen. xlviii. 21.

<sup>c</sup> And Naaman said, Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand and call upon the name of the Lord his God, and stretch out his hand over the place, and recover the leper. 2 Kings v. 11.

Stretching forth Thine hand to heal. Acts iv. 30.

<sup>d</sup> Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died: but I know that even now whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give it Thee. John xi. 21, 22.

<sup>e</sup> Ye are all physicians of no value. Job xiii. 4. Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. Ps. cviii. 12.



† Speak unto the children of Israel that they make them fringes on the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringes of the borders a ribband of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them. Numb. xv. 38, 39.

‡ And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for there went virtue out of Him and healed them all. Luke vi. 19.

‡ To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word. Isa. lxvi. 2.

(or tassel) of His garment:<sup>f</sup> (1) for she had heard that others had been healed in the like manner, and said within herself, If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway, upon her touching the tassel of His garment, the fountain of her blood which issued from her was stanch'd, and dried up; and she felt in her body,—she was fully convinced from the sensations she experienced,—that she was healed (2) of that plague (disorder).

And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtues had gone out of Him (3) (that His healing power had been exerted), turned Himself about in the press; and,—that the woman's faith might be made manifest before the people assembled,—said, Who touched My clothes? When all who stood near denied it, Peter, and His other disciples that were with Him, said unto Him, Master, Thou seest that the multitude throng and press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched Me, not accidentally but by design; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me. And He turned again, and looked round about to see her that had done this thing; and immediately saw (fixed his eye on) her. And when the woman saw that she was not hid from Him, she, knowing what a marvellous work was done in her, came fearing and trembling<sup>h</sup> lest she should be rebuked for her boldness; and falling down before Him, she told Him all the truth of the matter, and declared unto Him, before all the people, for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately. But Jesus, at once quieting her fears, said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith, as the instrument of thy cure, hath made thee whole: (4) go home in peace, and be (henceforth continue) whole of thy plague. And the woman was made perfectly whole from that hour.

While He yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain of the neighbours which said to him, Thy daughter is dead, and now beyond the reach of

(1) Touched the hem (or tassel) of his garment.] The Jewish garment had four corners, from each of which was suspended (according to the direction of the Law, Deut. xxii. 12) a tassel of threads. There was supposed to be an especial sacredness in these, which may have led the woman to touch this part of our Lord's garment, but also it was esteemed a mark of profound respect to touch the two lower ones. The Scribes and Pharisees wore theirs remarkably large, as badges of extraordinary piety (see Matt. xxiii. 5).

(2) She felt in her body that she was healed.] This forcibly shows the stupendous nature of the miracle; for no one can naturally all at once recover from an inveterate malady, and vestiges of the disorder, upon its gradual retreat,

will long remain.—Eusebius, the Ecclesiastical historian, informs us (Hist. vii. 18), that this woman was a person of rank of Paneas, and that he had himself seen a statue which she had erected there to the Saviour. The apostate Emperor Julian afterwards (as appears from other authors) substituted his own statue in the place of this, and then the Christians of Paneas placed it in their own church. Sozomen, who wrote in the sixth Century, states (v. 21) that it remained there to his day.

(3) That virtue had gone out of Him.] See Section XXXIX., Note 3.

(4) Thy faith hath made thee whole.] Her Faith in coming to the Saviour had led to her recovery, but it was His Divine Power which actually healed her.

*prayer or human aid; why troublest thou the Master any further? [Trouble not the Master to come further, LUKE]. As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid as though there was no hope: only believe,<sup>i</sup> and she shall be made whole (again restored): confide in My power to save, and it shall be employed in thy favour.*

And when He came into the ruler's house, He suffered no man to follow Him *into the chamber where the damsel lay, save His three favoured disciples, Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And all the relations and friends assembled wept and bewailed her, for she was an only child; and He seeth the tumult, and the people, whom it was customary to hire on such occasions, that wept and wailed greatly,<sup>k</sup> and the minstrels (flute-players) making a mournful noise.<sup>(2)</sup> And He saith unto them, as they were preparing for her burial, Give place (Withdraw), that I may see her; weep not any more; why make ye all this ado, and weep—wherefore these needless preparations? The damsel is not so dead, but that she shall awake again, and only as it were sleepeth.<sup>l</sup> And they laughed Him to scorn<sup>m</sup> (contemptuously derided Him), knowing, by the symptoms which were upon her, that she was certainly dead. But when He had put (removed) them all out of the way, He taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them (those three disciples) that were with Him, and, with these only as the necessary witnesses, entereth in to the chamber where the damsel was lying. And approaching the couch, He took her by the hand,—an action emblematical of recovery,—and called, saying unto her in the Syriac tongue, as it was then spoken, Talitha cumi (which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise).<sup>(3)</sup> And straightway, as the words were uttered, her spirit came again;<sup>n</sup> and she arose from the couch on which she lay, as one awaking from a refreshing sleep, and walked—for she was of the age of twelve years. And He commanded that something should be given her to eat,—thus at once convincing them that she was really alive and well. And her parents, and they who accompanied Him, were astonished with a great astonishment; but He charged them straitly (strictly) that for a time they should tell no man what was*

<sup>i</sup> Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, he hath been dead four days. Jesus said unto her, Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? John xi. 39, 40.

<sup>k</sup> Call for the mourning women that they may come. Jer. ix. 17.

Neither shall men tear themselves for them in mourning to comfort them for the dead. Jer. xvi. 7.

<sup>l</sup> They shall call such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing. Amos v. 16.

<sup>m</sup> And all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations. 2 Chron. xxxv. 26.

<sup>n</sup> Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. John xi. 11.

And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Acts vii. 60.

The greater part remain unto this day, but some are fallen asleep. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

<sup>o</sup> They that see Me laugh Me to scorn. Ps. xxii. 7.

<sup>p</sup> O Lord my God, I pray Thee, let this child's soul come into him again. 1 Kings xvii. 21.

(2) *The minstrels making a noise.*] See Section XLIV., Note 8.

(3) *Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.*] It appears from the Talmud, that the Hebrew physicians were accustomed to salute the sick by saying, "Arise from your disease," and it was naturally considered they were recovering when they took their usual food. Thus, in this miracle, our Lord assumed the character of the Great Physician. The words "her spirit came

again" are added by St. Luke to the account of the other Evangelists, because he was writing for Gentile converts, and therefore was more solicitous to instil just notions concerning the soul. He shows that the human spirit is somewhat subsisting by itself; that it does not die with the body, nor remain in the same place with it when death takes place. The text Matt. x. 28, is quite conclusive on this doctrine.

done<sup>(7)</sup>—lest it should lead to excitement and create a suspicion of His seeking popularity. And notwithstanding this caution, the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

## SECTION LVII.

## JESUS RESTORES SIGHT TO TWO BLIND MEN, AND SPEECH TO A DUMB DEMONIAK.

Matt. ix. 27—34.

AND when Jesus departed thence (*from the ruler's house*), two blind men followed Him, crying and earnestly saying, Thou Son of David,<sup>a</sup> have mercy on us and restore our sight: for they believed that Jesus was He whom the prophet Isaiah had predicted as coming to open the eyes of the blind (see Isa. xxxv. 5; xlii. 6, 7). But He, not wishing to grant their request in the public street, appeared as though He had not noticed them in passing: and when He was come into the house where He lodged, the blind men came to Him; and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto Him without hesitation, Yea, Lord—which was a remarkable proof of their faith, for their infirmity had precluded their witnessing any of His miracles. Then touched He their eyes, saying, According to the sincerity of your faith, so be it unto you. And their faith being genuine, immediately their eyes were opened and they saw plain. And, as on the performance of His last miracle, Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, were so transported with joy that they spread abroad His fame in all that country.

After this, as they went out of the house, behold they brought to Him a dumb man, who had lost his powers of speech from being possessed with a devil. And when, at the command of Jesus, the devil was cast out, the dumb spake plain.<sup>b</sup> And the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never before so seen—not even in Israel,<sup>c</sup> although among

<sup>a</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David. Isa. ix. 7.

Jesus Christ the son of David. Matt. i. 1.

The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. Luke i. 32.

I am the root and the offspring of David. Rev. xxii. 16.

<sup>b</sup> The tongue of the dumb shall sing. Isa. xxxv. 6.

<sup>c</sup> They were all amazed and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion. Mark ii. 12.

(7) That they should tell no man what was done.] There might be another reason, than the obvious one of avoiding publicity, why, on this occasion our Lord might desire secrecy. He would not excite the expectation of raising the dead generally, nor alter the course of nature on every request made to Him. Enough was done to prove His authority over death; but His power was to be shown habitually rather in healing the infirmities of the living.

(1) It was never so seen in Israel.] It was the distinguishing character of our Lord's miracles

that they were miracles of mercy, while those of the Old Covenant had been chiefly miracles of vengeance. In number the former exceeded all those wrought through the old prophets, and they are distinguished from them in having been foretold. Variety is another characteristic of the Gospel miracles: for not merely one disease, but all yield to the Saviour's power; and not only diseases, but natural defects—even the elements and inanimate objects obeyed Him; and, as on the present occasion, where the popular astonishment is so excited, evil spirits of the most malignant kind submit to His command.

them God wrought many extraordinary works. But the Pharisees, not being able to deny the fact of the cure, accused Him again as a magician, and said; He casteth out the devils it is true, but then it is through confederacy with the prince of the devils.

SECTION LVIII.

JESUS REVISITS NAZARETH, BUT BEING AGAIN REJECTED BY HIS COUNTRYMEN, MAKES A CIRCUIT TO TEACH IN THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRY.

*Matt. xiii. 54—58; ix. 35—38. Mark vi. 1—6.*

AND He went out from thence (*from Capernaum*), and came again into His own country,<sup>a</sup> to Nazareth. And His disciples follow Him there.

<sup>a</sup> And He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. Luke iv. 16.

And when the Sabbath-day was come, He began, as on a former occasion, to teach in the synagogue. And many, hearing Him, were astonished at what they deemed his presumption, saying contemptuously, From whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works of which we hear so much? And what kind of wisdom is this which is given unto him, that not only does he venture to point out the way of salvation, but that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter?<sup>(1)</sup> even the carpenter's (*Joseph's*) son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brethren<sup>(2)</sup> (*his kinsmen*) called James,<sup>b</sup> and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all here with us? they are like their neighbours, and shew no remarkable signs of ability of any kind. Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in Him<sup>c</sup>—*stumbling at His mean origin and humble circumstances*. But Jesus said unto them, as He had said at a former visit, *It is a true proverb, that a Prophet is not without honour save in his own country, and is no where less esteemed than among his own kin, and in his own house*. And He could do there no mighty work<sup>d (3)</sup> (*no miracle*), save that He laid

<sup>b</sup> James, the Lord's brother. Gal. i. 19.

<sup>c</sup> He is despised and rejected of men. Isa. liii. 3.

<sup>d</sup> Haste thee, escape thither, for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Gen. xix. 22.

Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind could not be towards this people Jer. xv. 1.

(1) *Is not this the carpenter?* Justin Martyr says that our Lord was "reckoned as a carpenter" (Dial. cum Tryph., p. 316), and that "being among men, He made rakes and yokes which were the works of carpenters" (Contr. Celsum, lib. vi. p. 299). By the Jewish canons, all fathers, even those of wealth and learning, were bound to teach their children some trade or manual occupation. Thus St. Paul, though free-born, and brought up under a learned doctor, was a tent-maker (Acts xviii. 3).

(2) *His brethren.*] This word had a wider sense among the Jews than with us. It is disputed what was the exact relationship which James and the rest bore to our Lord; but the

best authorities are agreed that they were the sons of Joseph by a former wife.

(3) *He could do there no mighty work, &c.*] Thus He, whose unrestricted will called the whole universe into existence, finds an impediment to the working of Omnipotence in the wretched prejudices of corrupt human beings. And here we have a remarkable instance of God's moral government over His creatures; for the passage leads us to this undoubted truth, that the *Divine Decrees* are in some measure directed and modified by *man's conduct*. Although God's infinite benevolence would have all men to be saved, the abuse on our part of that *freedom of action* which He has entrusted to us, appears, in

\* His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel. Judg. x. 16.

† I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd. 1 Kings xxii. 17.

‡ And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd. Ezek. xxxiv. 6.

§ Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Matt. x. 6.

¶ Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. John iv. 35.

‡ Thou, O God, hast of Thy goodness prepared for the poor. The Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those that published it. Ps. lxxiii. 10, 11.

¶ They being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed unto Seleucia. Acts xiii. 4.

Finally, brethren, pray for us that the Word of the Lord may have free course. 2 Thes. iii. 1.

His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them, *but did not many mighty works because of their unbelief: that condition was wanting, which alone could make it fit that miracles should be wrought there; their obstinate incredulity prevented their asking such favours, while He did not judge it expedient to obtrude them.* And He marvelled because of their unbelief.

And, *leaving them*, Jesus went round about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes *that had gathered around Him*, He was moved with compassion on them,<sup>e</sup> because they fainted (*were worn out and harassed with fatigue*), and were scattered abroad *and neglected* as sheep having no shepherd.<sup>f</sup> Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous,<sup>g</sup> but the labourers *to gather it in* are few (*Many souls wait for instruction, but few are willing or able to give it them*): pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will *direct men's hearts to undertake this work of mercy, and send forth fitting labourers into His harvest.*<sup>h</sup>

## SECTION LIX.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES ARE COMMISSIONED TO PREACH THE GOSPEL IN JUDEA: THEY RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS AND DEPART.

*Matt. x. 1, 5—42; xi. 1. Mark vi. 7—13. Luke ix. 1—6; xii. 2—9, 11, 12, 49—53.*

AND when He had called together unto Him His twelve disciples,—*those whom He had before ordained as Apostles*,—He gave them power and authority<sup>(1)</sup> over all devils (unclean spirits) to cast them out *in His name*; and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease: *for as they were poor and illiterate men, this gift of working miracles was indispensable as an evidence of their mission.*

\* Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour: for if they fall the one will lift up his fellow. Eccles. iv. 9, 10.

These twelve Jesus sent forth by two and two,<sup>a</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> *that*

a variety of ways, to limit the operation of His mercy.—It is added in the narrative, that our Lord *marvelled* at the *unbelief* of His countrymen, as He had marvelled before (Matt. viii. 10) at the *faith* of the Centurion; so that it is in the power of man to *believe, or to disbelieve*: if faith were produced by an omnipotent act of God, our Lord would not have had in either case any ground for expressing His astonishment.

(1) *He gave them power and authority, &c.* Our Lord's authorizing His disciples to work miracles is justly brought forward as an evidence

of His Divinity, and of the truth of Christianity. God, indeed, put His Spirit upon those whom Moses appointed (Deut. xxxiv. 9), but Moses conferred not that Spirit as Jesus directly did; and though the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha (2 Kings ii. 9, 10), it was in answer to the prayers of the latter, and Elijah bestowed no power.—Christ alone wrought miracles at will, and *authorized others* to perform them.

(2) *By two and two.*] In this manner the Seventy were afterwards sent forth. So also Moses and Aaron; the two disciples by the Baptist to visit Christ; and Paul and Barnabas by the Church.

so they might render mutual assistance, and be witnesses one to another. And He commanded them to preach the Kingdom of God (to proclaim the Messiah's approaching reign); and, in the exercise of the powers He had delegated to them, to heal the sick: saying also unto them, Go not at present into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not when ye pass through that country. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,<sup>b</sup>—those children of the Kingdom who received the promises, and to whom, as this Salvation was first sent, so it is first to be preached. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand (is now to be set up); in confirmation of which announcement, heal the sick and cast out devils in the course of this your first mission; hereafter ye shall also cleanse the lepers and raise the dead. Freely ye have received this power from Me; freely and gratuitously give the benefit of it to others: for the gift of God must not be purchased with money.<sup>c</sup>

And He commanded them that they should take nothing superfluous for their journey,—save a staff only, if there happened to be one in their hands. And He said unto them, Go even as you are; provide no bread, no money to buy it with—neither gold, nor silver, nor even brass in your purses;<sup>(\*)</sup> nor scrip for provisions; neither two coats apiece; neither shoes,<sup>d</sup> but be shod as you are with sandals; nor yet staves,—keeping only the one you walk with: for the workman is worthy of his meat,<sup>e</sup> and you may reasonably look for maintenance among those for whose spiritual welfare you labour.

And He said also unto them, Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy<sup>f</sup> and piously disposed: they will entertain you gladly and assist you in your work. And whatsoever house ye so enter into, there abide till ye depart from that place: "go not from house to house," for I would not have you wander about as vagrants, seeming to be fond of change, or oversolicitous as to your comforts.—And when ye come into an house (into any family), salute it in the accustomed friendly manner, saying, Peace be upon this house: <sup>g</sup> and if the house (the family) be worthy, let the benefit of your peace come upon it; for there your blessing shall effectually rest, and its members shall prosper according to your prayers; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you,<sup>h</sup> as

<sup>b</sup> So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My Mouth; it shall not return unto My prayer returned into mine own bosom. Ps. xxxv. 13.

<sup>b</sup> My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray.... Israel is a scattered sheep. Jer. l. 6, 17.

Unto you first God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you. Acts iii. 26.

It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you. Acts xiii. 46.

—who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Rom. ix. 4, 6.

<sup>c</sup> And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money; but Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Acts viii. 18, 20.

<sup>d</sup> And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Luke xxii. 35.

<sup>e</sup> If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. 1 Cor. ix. 11, 13, 14.

The labourer is worthy of his reward. 1 Tim. v. 18.

<sup>f</sup> And when she was baptized and her household, she besought us saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. Acts xvi. 15.

<sup>g</sup> Peace on earth and good will towards men. Luke ii. 14.

Me void. Isa. lv. 11.—

(\*) Nor brass in your purses, &c., &c.] The hollow of the girdle was often used as a purse. The scrip was a leathern wallet or bag. It was common to take two coats on a long journey, and in a rocky country a staff was so necessary to the

traveller that a spare one was often carried. The prohibition to wear no shoes (unless they happened to have them on) does not contradict the permission of using sandals: the former were a kind of short boots of a softer leather.

<sup>l</sup> But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. Acts xiii. 50, 51.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Rev. xviii. 4.

<sup>k</sup> Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. Prov. i. 24—26.

And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee. Matt. xi. 23, 24.

<sup>l</sup> Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. Gen. iii. 1.

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. Eph. v. 15.

<sup>m</sup> I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. Rom. xvi. 19.

Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights of the world. Phil. ii. 15.

<sup>n</sup> Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers. Phil. iii. 2.

<sup>o</sup> Behold I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. Matt. xxiii. 34.—Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 2 Cor. xi. 24.

*it shall in blessings upon your own heads—but to them it shall be of none effect.* And whosoever shall not receive you, nor obediently hear your words, *openly exhibit this sign, that you abandon such persons as obnoxious to God's wrath*: when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the very dust<sup>l</sup> of your feet<sup>(4)</sup> for a testimony (*a protestation*) against them; *thus will you declare in the plainest manner your sense of the guilt and peril of their unbelief, and that you are constrained to renounce all intercourse with them.* Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah,—*which sinned not against light so strong*,—in the Day of Judgment, than for the inhabitants of that city;<sup>k</sup> *for they will have rejected the Word of life, confirmed unto them by miracles of mercy from heaven.*

*Expect not to receive honour and acceptance in your work*: behold I send you forth upon a mission of peril—*weak and defenceless among a cruel and wicked generation, even as though defenceless sheep were sent in the midst of ravening wolves*: be ye therefore wise as serpents<sup>l (5)</sup>—*as prudent and circumspect as those active creatures are in keeping yourselves from needless dangers*; and be ye harmless towards others, even as inoffensive as doves.<sup>m</sup> But beware of worldly-minded men,<sup>n</sup> many of whom it will be your lot to encounter: give them not the opportunity to injure and persecute you; for they will deliver you up to the councils (*the various judicial tribunals*), and they will scourge you in their synagogues<sup>o</sup> for preaching in My name: And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony, against (to) them and the unbelieving Gentiles, of the truth of the Gospel, by the persecutions which ye cheerfully endure on its behalf. But when they deliver you up, and bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates and heathen powers, take ye no thought (*be not anxiously solicitous*) how or what thing ye shall answer to their accusations, or what ye shall say to their enquiries: for it is not ye that are to

(<sup>4</sup>) Shake off the very dust of your feet.] This is one of those symbolical or figurative actions then common amongst the Jews, by which they enforced their words and illustrated them (see similar examples, Neh. v. 13, and Acts xxi. 11).—So holy did they esteem the land of Israel, that they thought it would contract pollution from the least particle of dust collected in travelling through any heathen country: they

stopped, therefore, at its borders on their return, and wiped the dust from off their shoes.

(<sup>5</sup>) Wise as serpents.] This proverbial saying was in allusion to the common superstition, that when magicians failed in charming serpents (as they pretended they were generally able to do), these cunning creatures closed their ears to the enchantments. Hence the proverb cited by the Psalmist to this effect (Ps. lviii. 4, 5).

speak from your own wisdom, but it is the Spirit<sup>(6)</sup> of your Father which speaketh in you: P the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

Nevertheless all your wisdom and caution shall not disarm malice; the malignity of the human heart will still exhibit itself against you and the religion you teach. And the brother who believeth not shall deliver up the Christian brother to death, and the unbelieving father shall betray the believing child; and so, on the other hand, the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death for their steadfast adherence to the faith. And ye in particular, My chosen followers, shall be hated of all worldly-minded men for My name's sake;<sup>7</sup> but he that endureth faithfully to the end of the days of persecution, shall be saved<sup>r</sup> from the dreadful destruction which is to follow. But when they persecute you in this city (in any one city), flee ye into another where ye may find an asylum; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over all the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come, with the Roman army as His instrument of vengeance, to destroy this perverse and ungrateful people.

To arm you against your approaching trials, I would have you consider that the disciple is not above his teacher, nor the servant above his lord;<sup>8</sup> such cannot therefore reasonably expect better treatment than their superiors meet with: it is surely enough for the disciple that he be as well treated as his master, and the servant as his lord. They have calumniated, traduced, and persecuted Me; and if they have called the Master of the house (the Great Master of the human family) Beelzebub,<sup>t</sup> (7)—even styling Him the chief of demons,—how much more shall they call and proportionably revile them of His household!

Fear them not, therefore, nor despair in the least of the success of the Gospel; for there is nothing now obscured and covered that shall not be revealed, and nothing hid (concealed) that shall not be made known<sup>u</sup> throughout the world. What I tell you in darkness now, and by way of parable, that speak ye in the light; and what ye hear from Me privately in the ear,<sup>(8)</sup>—those mysterious points

<sup>p</sup> Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. Exod. iv. 12.

<sup>r</sup> For I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. Luke xxi. 15.

<sup>t</sup> Then there arose certain of the synagogue disputing with Stephen: and they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Acts vi. 9, 10.

<sup>u</sup> Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 2 Tim. iv. 17.

<sup>v</sup> The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John xvii. 14.

<sup>w</sup> Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. ii. 10.

<sup>x</sup> Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. John xv. 20.

<sup>y</sup> But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. Luke xi. 16.

<sup>z</sup> For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested, neither was anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad. Mark iv. 22.

(6) It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit.] Other texts show that the Divinity which speaks through men is the Holy Trinity. Thus St. Paul represents the Father as speaking, "God spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. i. 1); and the Son, "Christ speaking in me" (2 Cor. xiii. 3). See also Section XI., Note 5.—It may be noticed in this place, that although holy men of old were thus taught, the age of inspiration and miraculous gifts has long since ceased; and that it is vain and presumptuous to expect (as certain modern sectarians appear to do) the like extraordinary aid

in preaching, which was vouchsafed to the Apostles.

(7) Beelzebub.] See Section XLVII., Note 3.

(8) What ye hear in the ear, &c.] These are allusions to Jewish customs. When the original Hebrew ceased to be the mother-tongue, their doctors explained the Law softly in the ear of an interpreter, who repeated what he said aloud in the Syriac or Chaldee.—Proclamations were made to the people from the roofs of houses, which were flat in construction, with balustrades around them.



▼ The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

▼ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John xv. 14.

\* The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. John xvi. 2.

▼ Harken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, and in whose heart is My law: fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. Isa. li. 7.

Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15.

\* And should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle? Jonah iv. 11.

\* And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground. 1 Sam. xiv. 45.

Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake, but there shall not one hair of your head perish. Luke xxi. 17, 18.

There shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. Acts xxvii. 34.

† If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rom. x. 9, 10.

*which are not at once to be openly declared, such as the calling of the Gentiles and the abolition of the Law,—that preach ye in due time publicly, and as it were upon the house-tops. Remember also, as a caution for yourselves, that whatsoever ye have spoken secretly and in darkness, shall in like manner be heard in the light, and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops:† though you may be able to conceal your motives and actions from men, they will all be laid open before the assembled universe at the great Day of account.*

And I say unto you, my friends,‡ *although the boldness of your testimony to the Truth cost you your lives, be not afraid of them that can only kill the body,‡ and after that have no more that they can do—for they are not able to kill the soul: but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear; rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body; which after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say unto you, fear Him.† But indeed, you have no cause for anxiety even concerning your bodily safety, since no one can set on to hurt you without the Divine permission: Are not two sparrows (⁹) sold for a farthing [sometimes at the still lower rate of five sparrows for two farthings, LUKE]? and yet, though they are creatures of such trifling value, not one of them is forgotten before God; for a single one of them shall not fall on the ground or die without the knowledge or permission of your Father.‡ But as for you, rest assured that the same gracious Providence, which watches over the smallest objects, is more peculiarly concerned for the welfare of men honoured with so distinguished a charge; and even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.‡ Fear not therefore for any thing: ye are of unspeakably more value in the sight of God than many sparrows (than the whole species of such inferior creatures). Also I say unto you, in addition to these high considerations for preserving your fidelity, Whosoever shall fearlessly confess Me<sup>b</sup> (¹⁰) and profess the Gospel before men, him will I, the Son of man, confess also,—owning him as My faithful servant, and assigning him his sure reward,—not only before the assembled world, but before the angels of God—even before (in the immediate Presence of) My Father which is in Heaven. But he that, to avoid persecution, denieth Me before men, shall be disowned by Me at*

(⁹) Sparrows.] These birds are supposed to have been used in the Temple for cleansing lepers (Lev. xiv. 4), and were consequently sold there, as well as doves for purifying females (John ii. 14). The farthing was equal to a half-penny farthing of our money.—There was a saying very similar to the one here employed by

our Saviour: "Avicula sine caelo non perit, quantum minus homo" (A bird perisheth not without the providence of God, much less a man).

(¹⁰) Whosoever shall confess Me.] The original word here rendered "confess," is, in our translation of 1 Tim. vi. 12, rendered "profess."

*the Last Great Day*—denied both before the angels of God, and before My Father which is in Heaven.<sup>c</sup>

And let me warn you that I am come to send, in effect, fire on the earth—not alone the glowing and cheering warmth of zeal, and love, and piety: the unhalloed and raging flame of hatred and jealousy will also be lighted up; for My doctrine will incense a wicked world against Me and My followers, and so become a cause of heats and strong contentions. And yet, since the Salvation of man cannot otherwise be accomplished, what will I if it be (*what do I desire so much as that it were*) already kindled,—that it may be extinguished the sooner! But I Myself have, also, a baptism of sorrow to be baptized with:<sup>d</sup> and how am I straitened, as one in durance, till it be accomplished, and the time of My sufferings has arrived to complete the great work of Redemption! Suppose ye, because the Prophets have foretold My peaceful reign, that there will be no such persecutions as I describe to you; and that I am come to give at once peace on earth?<sup>(11)</sup> I tell you, Nay, but rather division. For although the undoubted purpose and general tendency of the Gospel is to promote the most endearing love and lasting peace; yet, through the ignorance and wickedness of men, it will rather seem as if I came, not to send peace, but a sword.<sup>(12)</sup> Even the bands of nature and friendship will be broken; for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. I am come to preach a doctrine, which will set a man at variance against his father, and the father shall be divided against the son; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law (*against her son's wife,*) and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (*against her husband's mother*). And thus it shall happen that a man's foes shall be they of his own household.<sup>e</sup> Yet this result shall discover who are worthy to be My disciples; for he that loveth father or mother more than Me—preferring

<sup>c</sup> Them that honour Me, I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. 1 Sam. ii. 80.

If we deny Him, He also will deny us. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. Rev. iii. 5.

<sup>d</sup> Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? Matt. xx. 22.

<sup>e</sup> Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. Ps. xli. 9.

For the son dishonour-eth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies are the men of his own house. Mic. vii. 6.

(11) *To give peace on earth?*] It should be remembered that the word here rendered "earth" often signifies the Land of Judea (see Matt. xxiii. 35). Our Lord's words have, indeed, their general application, but there was no part of the world where Christianity led to so much dissension as in Judea. Josephus tells us that "there arose in every city tumults and civil wars, and no sooner had they any respite from the Romans, but they turned their hands against one another."

(12) *I came, not to send peace, but a sword.*] This is a forcible, but not unusual idiom—a mode of expression by which the foreseen consequences of any measure is represented as the purpose for which that measure was adopted. The

words announce a result, and not the design of the introduction of Christianity. We must search elsewhere than in the nature of so pure and perfect a Dispensation, why the sword rather than the olive-branch should at any time be ascendant upon earth: the cause is the inveterate enmity of the human heart itself, which refuses the terms of reconciliation descending from above, and puts the weapons of its own warfare into the hands of the herald of peace.—During the first ages of the Christian Church, our Lord's words on this occasion were painfully verified; but the natural and general effect of Christianity, as we now happily see with nations,—if not always in families,—is Peace.

*their wishes to My precepts, or disowning Me for their sake,—is not worthy of Me; and so he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me.*<sup>(13)</sup> And he that, *consulting his own ease and safety,* taketh not up his cross,<sup>(14)</sup> and followeth after Me,—*ready, if needful, to suffer all for My sake,—is not worthy of Me, and cannot be My disciple. And this I tell you for your warning and encouragement:* He that findeth his life,—*that preserveth it for a little while by a desertion of My cause,—shall lose it hereafter;* and he that loseth his life,—*laying it down if called on to do so for My sake,—shall find it happily improved into Life Eternal.*

*As for you, My chosen servants,* he that receiveth you, *shall be esteemed as one that receiveth Me,*<sup>f</sup> *whose ministers ye are; he shall be recompensed as though he had received Myself in person:* and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me; *for My Father in Heaven will regard it as done unto Himself. Let no base fears of sharing your afflictions, withhold men from those acts of kindness on your behalf which they ought to esteem a privilege, as well as their duty:* He that receiveth a prophet (*any teacher of My Religion*) in the name of a prophet, *and as one sent from God,* shall *himself* receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man (*any sincere professor of My Religion*) in the name of a righteous man, *and because he is such,* shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple (*rendering the most inconsiderable service to the meanest of My disciples, simply because he is a Christian*), verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.<sup>g</sup>

And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding (*giving these directions to*) His twelve Disciples, He departed thence to teach and preach in their cities. And they *also* departed, and went out through the towns, and preached the Gospel, that men should repent.<sup>h</sup> And, *in the exercise of the miraculous powers conferred on them,* they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil<sup>i(15)</sup> many that were sick, and *thoroughly* healed them everywhere *they went.*

<sup>f</sup> And the King shall answer and say unto them, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Matt. xxv. 40.

Ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Gal. iv. 14.

<sup>g</sup> For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Heb. vi. 10.

<sup>h</sup> —and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 47.

<sup>i</sup> Is any sick among you? Let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord. Jas. v. 14.

(13) *He that loveth father or mother more than Me, &c.*] Our Lord here, as in other places, demands that *supreme* love with which the Law requires us to love God; a claim which is as strong an evidence of his Divinity as a direct affirmation of it. No mere man can make such a demand without becoming the rival of his Creator, who is a jealous God, and will not give His glory to another (see Exod. xx. 5; Isa. xlii. 8). Yet the Apostles felt the claim of Jesus to be just; and love to Him, which is the pre-eminent and distinguishing feature of Christianity, becomes,

upon the orthodox scheme of His divinity, both natural and reasonable.

(14) *Taketh not his cross.*] The Jews and Romans used this phrase to signify any extraordinary sufferings. A malefactor, going to crucifixion, was compelled to bear his cross.

(15) *Anointed with oil.*] Things in their own nature useless or ineffectual can cure in the hand of God. The Apostles, after their Lord's example (John ix. 6), only applied the oil as a *significant action*, and in accommodation to human weakness. It was usual, indeed, with the Jews

## SECTION LX.

JOHN THE BAPTIST IS BEHEADED BY HEROD; WHO, AFTERWARDS HEARING OF JESUS, IMAGINES HIM TO BE THE BAPTIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

*Matt.* xiv. 1, 2, 6—12. *Mark* vi. 14—16, 21—29. *Luke* ix. 7—9.

**B**UT when a day convenient for the designs of Herodias against the Baptist was come [when Herod's birthday was kept, *MATT.*], and it happened that Herod made a great supper<sup>a</sup> to (for) his lords, with the high captains (the officers of rank in his army) and chief estates (the leading men) of Galilee; and when Salome, the young daughter of the said Herodias by her husband Philip, came in, and danced before them,<sup>(1)</sup> and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king, transported with the grace and condescension she had shewn before his guests, said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt and I will give it thee. And he promised her with an oath, and sware unto her, saying, with the inconsiderate prodigality of Eastern princes, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom<sup>b</sup> (though it cost the worth of half my kingdom).

And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, Ask the head of John the Baptist. And she, being thus before-hand instructed of her mother, came in straightway with haste (with alacrity) unto the king, and asked (made her demand), saying, I will (I desire) that thou give me here by and by (presently), in a charger (a trencher, or broad flat dish), the head of John the Baptist.

And the king was exceeding sorry<sup>c</sup> (that so extraordinary a request should be made; for it was, in itself, inauspicious on such a day, and to grant it would render him

<sup>a</sup> And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants. Gen. xl. 20.

<sup>b</sup> Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? And what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom. Esth. v. 3.

<sup>c</sup> Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased.... Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. Dan. vi. 14, 16.

to anoint the sick with oil as an alleviation of disease and with a view to recovery, but here the cures were constant and certain. The soothing effect of oil was looked upon, among the ancients, as symbolical of aid and comfort from God.—This practice undoubtedly continued for some time in the Christian Church as a token of miraculous cure, but it was obvious that it should have been discontinued when miracles ceased. Yet the Popish ceremony (the Sacrament, as Romanists term it) of extreme unction appears to have this origin; and it is strangely employed by them,—not in order to an ordinary, nor even a miraculous cure, but when all hopes of recovery is past.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Danced before them.*] It was unusual in the East for modest women and ladies of rank to

appear at all on such public occasions. Queen Vashti thought it so dishonourable, that rather than submit to it, even when commanded by Ahasuerus, she forfeited her crown (Esth. i. 12, 19); but Esther afterwards presented herself in open court when she had an important request to make (Esth. v. 1, &c.). It is evident that the scene before us was skillfully contrived by Herodias to take vengeance upon John.

(<sup>d</sup>) *And the king was exceeding sorry.*] The heathens were solicitous on their birth-days to avoid ill omens and contentions, especially shedding of blood. So Martial, "*Natalem colimus; tacete lites.*" They were scrupulous also about refusing requests made at their entertainments: so Herodotus relates, that "Xerxes thought the petition of his wife Amytas could not be denied, on account of those at the banquet."

*unpopular with his poorer subjects: nevertheless, for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him at meat and witnessed it, he would not reject her—he commanded it to be given her. And immediately the king sent one of his body-guards to act as an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought<sup>(3)</sup> where they were sitting. And he (the soldier) went immediately, and beheaded John in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and, by command of the king, gave it to the damsel; and the damsel brought it and gave it to her mother.<sup>(4)</sup>*

And when his disciples heard of it, they came, and having obtained permission, took up his corpse, and respectfully laid it, mutilated as it was, in a tomb; and then they went and told Jesus.

Now at that time, while the Apostles were preaching and working miracles in their Master's name, Herod the tetrarch [king Herod, LUKE] heard of the fame of Jesus,<sup>d(5)</sup>—of all that was done by Him and His Apostles; for His name was now spread abroad in all that part of the country. And he was perplexed with doubts and fears, because that it was said of some that John was risen from the dead; and of some it was suggested that Elias,<sup>e</sup> so long expected, had appeared; and of others that one of the old prophets who preceded Elijah was risen again: and others also said, that it surely is a prophet come to life again, or at least a person equal in power and as (like) one of the prophets.

But when Herod had enquired and heard more particularly thereof, he said, John I have certainly beheaded; but who then is this of whom I hear such wonderful things? And at length,—his guilty conscience disclosing his fears to those about him,—he said unto his servants (his

<sup>d</sup> And His fame went throughout all Syria. Matt. iv. 24.

\* Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Mal. iv. 5.

And they asked Him, saying, Why say the Scribes that Elias must first come? Mark ix. 11.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Commanded his head to be brought.*] It was (and is said to be still) the custom with Eastern princes to require the heads of those whom they had ordered to be executed, to be brought into their presence, that so they might be assured of their death. Roman history relates a like instance: Agrippina, the mother of Nero, sent an officer to put to death Lollia Paulina, who had been her rival for the imperial dignity, and the head was brought for her examination. John had been confined (as Josephus states) at the fort of Machærus, in Peræa; but the execution seems to have taken place at once in Galilee, where the guests were assembled.

(<sup>4</sup>) *And the damsel gave it to her mother.*] Upon all the three parties here concerned was the murder of John remarkably avenged. Herod was defeated in the war with the king of Petæa, occasioned by his marrying Herodias; and the Jews looked upon it as a judgment,—“God being angry with him (writes Josephus) for the death of John the Baptist.” Both he, and Herodias,

whose ambition caused his ruin, were banished from their kingdom, and died at Lyons; which (observes the same writer) was “done in punishment of her malice, and of his readiness to hearken to her solicitations.” Lastly, History records concerning the daughter, that she fell into the ice as she was crossing it in winter time, which closing suddenly, severed her head from her body.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Herod heard of the fame of Jesus.*] It may seem strange that Herod had not heard of these things before. But there is good reason for supposing that he was at Rome at the commencement of our Lord's ministry, and he was afterwards much engaged with his Arabian war. At all times, however, he was a dissolute man, paying little attention to any of the affairs of the people; and though he might have heard of Christ, he probably did not think the matter worthy his notice, until now that such astonishing miracles were wrought, both by Christ, and by others in His name.

ministers or courtiers who were in attendance), *What is said is no doubt the case*: this is John the Baptist whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works <sup>(1)</sup> do now show forth themselves in him.—And he desired much to see Him, <sup>f</sup> that he might ascertain whether He were the Baptist or not.

<sup>f</sup> And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad; for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him. Luke xxiii. 8.

## SECTION LXI.

THE APOSTLES RETURN FROM THEIR MISSION, AND JESUS RETIRES WITH THEM FROM CAPERNAUM TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE. THE MULTITUDE FOLLOW, AND ABOVE FIVE THOUSAND ARE MIRACULOUSLY FED.

*Matt.* xiv. 13—23. *Mark* vi. 30—46. *Luke* ix. 10—17. *John* vi. 1—15.

AND the Apostles, when they were returned, gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told Him all things—both what *miracles* they had done *in His name*, and what *doctrines* they had taught, *in pursuance of the commission He had given them*. And when Jesus heard of it <sup>(1)</sup> (*heard their statement*), He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile—for there were many persons continually coming and going to and fro where they were; and the interruption was so great that they had no leisure so much as to eat <sup>a</sup> their meals.

And, accordingly, after these things, He took them, and went aside; and they departed thence by ship, privately, into a desert place belonging to the city, and which lay apart from public view, called Bethsaida.<sup>(2)</sup> And as this spot lay upon the north-eastern shore, Jesus went thither over the sea of Galilee, which is also called the sea of Tiberias.<sup>(3)</sup> And when the people had by some means heard thereof, and saw them departing, and many of them knew Him <sup>(4)</sup> (*distinguished Him in the boat*), a great mul-

<sup>a</sup> And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. Mark iii. 20.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Mighty works.*] The original may also be rendered, as at 1 Pet. iii. 22, *heavenly "powers."* Although John "did no miracle" (which Herod might have known), it was a natural supposition that, after his resurrection, power would be given him to establish the truth of it, as well as to clear his innocence and overawe his enemies. Herod's wild alarm and inconsistency on this occasion, appears in his supposing John to be risen at all, when, as a Sadducee, all his own previous notions would be opposed to such a fact.

<sup>(1)</sup> *When Jesus heard of it.*] The words "of it," given in our translation of St. Matthew, do not occur in the original. As placed in that Gospel, they would seem to refer rather to the death of John; but that was no reason why our Lord should fly from the dominions of Herod,

who was desirous to see and hear Him (Luke ix. 9). From the accounts of Mark and Luke, it seems clear that He retired with His disciples, after hearing their statement, in order to give them rest, and to secure greater privacy.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Bethsaida.*] See Section XX., Note 5.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Which is the Sea of Tiberias.*] Thus was the Lake of Genesaret (or Sea of Galilee) afterwards designated, because Tiberias became the most considerable place on its shore. This explanation is added by St. John, proving that this Evangelist wrote later than the others.

<sup>(4)</sup> *And many knew Him.*] So our translation renders: but unless explained of the people discerning Him at a distance, it would seem unlikely that the Evangelist should state that many of them knew Him. The Greek relative pronoun in this passage may also, with equal correctness, be understood of the place to which they

titude followed Him, because they saw His miracles which He *lately* did on them that were diseased. And, *noticing the direction of the boat*, they followed,—*their numbers increasing* out of all the cities *through which they passed*; and ran thither a-foot (*by the foot-way*); and, *the wind not favouring the party in the boat*, the people outwent them, and came together *first* unto Him *where He was to land*.

And when Jesus came out of the boat, and lifted up His eyes, and saw much people [a great company, JOHN] come unto Him, He saith unto Philip,<sup>b</sup> Whence shall ye buy bread, that *all* these may eat? And this He said to Philip in particular, *not only because that Apostle was a native of Bethsaida, but, as he was slow of faith, in order to prove him*;<sup>c</sup> for He Himself knew *well* what He would do. Philip, *surprised at the question*, answered Him, Two hundred penny-worth (*more than six English pounds' worth*) of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take *even* a little. One of His disciples, *namely Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, overhearing this, and, with more thought, reflecting that Jesus would not unmeaningly ask the question*, saith unto Him, There is a lad *waiting* here,<sup>(1)</sup> which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?

And Jesus, *as He beheld the multitude*, was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd<sup>d</sup> to lead them forth into wholesome pastures, being left to stray as they would, neglected by their spiritual guides. And, notwithstanding that He had sought this retired spot for privacy, He received them *graciously*: and He healed their sick,—*all* them that had need of healing; and began to teach many things, and spake unto them of the Kingdom of God.

And, *that He might more conveniently address so large a multitude*, Jesus afterwards went up, *as on previous like occasions*, into a mountain; and there He sat to teach, with His disciples around Him. And the Passover, which was a feast of the Jews, was now nigh.

And when the day, now far spent, began to wear away, and it was the first evening,<sup>f(2)</sup> then His twelve disciples (*the Apostles*) came unto Him, and said, This is a desert place *where no provisions can be had*, and now the time of dining is far passed: send the multitude away that they may go into the towns and the country (*or scattered*

<sup>b</sup> Now Philip was of Bethsaida. John i. 44.

<sup>c</sup> Jesus saith unto him Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? John xiv. 9.

<sup>d</sup> I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills as sheep that have not a shepherd. 1 Kings xxii. 17.

<sup>e</sup> My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Ezek. xxxiv. 6.

<sup>f</sup> I am the good Shepherd. . . . My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. John x. 11, 27.

<sup>(1)</sup> And they were hanging on the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun that Joshua commanded and they took them down. Josh. x. 26, 27.

were going, and which is also mentioned just before: "they knew it (*the spot*), and followed thither."

<sup>(2)</sup> There is a lad here.] This youth seems to have been in attendance on the Apostles to carry their provisions. They afterwards speak of the loaves and the fish as belonging to themselves.

<sup>(3)</sup> And it was evening.] It was about three o'clock, the sun having left the meridian. The Jews had two evenings, between which the Passover was to be eaten. The Evangelist (St. Matthew), who is here speaking of the first evening, is the same who afterwards describes the latter evening as "now come." Thus a sufficient interval was allowed for the miracle.

*hamlets*) round about, and lodge, and buy themselves bread and get victuals; for they have *here* nothing to eat.—But Jesus, *having learned already from Andrew what provision there was at hand*, said unto them, They need not depart for that purpose; give ye them *something* to eat. And they say unto Him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread <sup>(7)</sup> [*meat or provision*, LUKE] for all this people, and give *it* them to eat? <sup>8</sup> He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two *small* fishes. He said, Bring them hither to Me.

Now there was much grass in the place, and He commanded the multitude to sit down upon the green grass; and He said to His disciples, Make them all sit down by companies. And they did so, and made them all sit down. So the men sat down (*reclined for the meal*) in ranks, <sup>(9)</sup> by hundreds and by fifties (*in fifty rows containing a hundred each*)—*being altogether* in number about five thousand.

Then Jesus took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up *reverentially* to heaven, He blessed <sup>h</sup> God over them: and when He had given thanks, He brake the loaves, <sup>(10)</sup> and distributed *portions* to His disciples to set before the multitude; and the disciples gave them to the multitude that were set down: and the two fishes likewise divided He among them all, as much as they would. And *so miraculously were the provisions increased as they passed through the hands of Jesus, that they did all eat, and were filled* <sup>i</sup> (*were fully satisfied*).

When they were filled, He said unto His *twelve* disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing of God's good gifts be lost. <sup>k</sup> <sup>(11)</sup> Therefore they gathered them together; and, *each bearing a basket, they filled twelve baskets* <sup>(11)</sup> with the fragments of the five barley

<sup>7</sup> Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? . . . Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them? Numb. xi. 13, 22.

And he said, Give unto the people that they may eat. And his servant said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people that they may eat; for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat and shall leave thereof. 2 Kings iv. 42, 43.

— Yes, they spake against God and said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed: can He give bread also? can He provide flesh for His people? Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20.

<sup>h</sup> — nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks. John vi. 23.

<sup>i</sup> So he set it before them, and they did eat and left thereof. 2 Kings iv. 44.

So they did eat and were filled. Neh. ix. 25.

<sup>k</sup> Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared. Neh. viii. 10.

(7) *Two hundred pennyworth of bread.*] It has been supposed that this might be the whole pecuniary stock of the Apostles; but such a sum was proverbial for what we commonly call "a good round sum," and, from Philip's previous reply, this would appear to be the import.

(8) *In ranks.*] The original expression is derived from the *seed-beds* of a garden. In computing the number of persons present, the eyewitnesses would not speak by guess, for the disposition of the people in exact divisions enabled them to calculate with certainty.

(9) *Brake the loaves.*] The Jewish loaves were broad, thin, and brittle, resembling cakes or biscuits, and would be likely to leave many fragments in the distribution to so vast a multitude.

(10) *Gather up the fragments that remain, &c.*] By this further proceeding, the truth and greatness of the miracle would be more fully

proved, convincing those present that there could be no magical deception. The reason assigned for the act by our Lord is also eminently deserving of our attention; for it shows that He, to whom "the earth and the fulness thereof" belongs, is no friend to a *lavish* waste of His gifts: and as, by feeding these thousands, He set us an example of *liberality*, so, by taking care of the fragments, He teaches us that *frugality* and charity must go hand in hand.

(11) *Twelve baskets.*] The Jews made use of portable bag-baskets for their provisions (see Deut. xxviii. 5), in order to avoid the pollution of heathen countries where they travelled. Probably each of the Apostles had one of these in the boat. Juvenal mentions (Sat. iii. 14 and vi. 512) a kind of basket under the same name, in which the Roman poor, or some of the Jews at Rome, carried about their provisions, with hay also for a bed. Martial, in an Epigram, terms a Jew, *cistifer*, "a basket bearer."



loaves and of the fishes, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. And beside women and children, *who sat apart by themselves*, they that had eaten were about five thousand men.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did,<sup>(12)</sup>—*reminding them so forcibly of the feeding of their fathers in the wilderness, and of the prediction of Moses that a Prophet like unto himself would appear*,—they said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.<sup>(13)</sup> *And under the then-popular notion that the reign of the Messiah was to be of a temporal kind, and believing that all obstacles must give way to the power of One who could feed an army in a desert, the people were anxious that He should forthwith declare Himself.*—When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He straightway constrained His disciples,—*who would have readily joined with the people in such a movement*,—to get into the ship, and to go before Him, *across a small creek which intervened*, to the other side unto the city of Bethsaida; while He, *with less difficulty in their absence*, sent away (*bade farewell to*) the people:<sup>(14)</sup> *all of whom at His urgent desire quitted the place, intending to return in the morning.* And when He had sent them away, and the latter evening was now come,<sup>m</sup> He departed again Himself [He went up, MATT.] into a mountain to pray: and He was there alone.

<sup>l</sup> The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto Him shall ye hearken. Deut. xviii. 16.

Many of the people said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. John vii. 40.

<sup>m</sup> At even,—at the going down of the sun. Deut. xvi. 6.

(12) *When they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, &c.*] This, which is the most astonishing and most extensively convincing of our Lord's miracles, is recorded by all the Evangelists; indeed, it is the *only* one found in each of their narratives. St. John has added the incidental circumstance that "there was much grass in the place," showing that he was an *eye-witness* of the event which he considered sufficiently important to be recorded in each separate Gospel. It has been supposed that he only repeats it as introductory to our Lord's sublime discourse of eating His flesh, which so soon succeeds; but the important addition of the *effect* of this miracle is given by St. John alone.

(13) *That Prophet that should come into the world.*] The speakers here evidently allude to the famous prediction delivered by Moses, that a Prophet like unto himself was to appear. The resemblance between our Lord and this most distinguished of His types was very remarkable. They were both Lawgivers, as well as Prophet, Priest, and King. Moses had been wonderfully preserved in his infancy from the destruction of all the male children; had quitted his country to escape the hands of the king; and was directed to return home in nearly the same words that were used by the Angel to Joseph. He soon became distinguished for his wisdom, was very meek above all men then on the earth, and refused the temporal distinctions of royalty, choosing rather to suffer affliction. He confirmed his religion by miracles, supplying the

people with bread in the Wilderness, commanding the sea, and forcing similar acknowledgments of Divine power from the magicians, as Christ received from evil spirits. He observed a miraculous fast for forty days. When he descended from the Mount, after the giving of the Law, his face shone in a remarkable manner, and our Lord's countenance did "shine as the sun" at His Transfiguration. Moses interceded for transgressors, desiring to die for the people: yet all his toils and affection for them were repaid with ingratitude and murmuring,—even his own kindred rebelling against him,—and their conduct becoming at last the occasion of his death. They could not enter into that Land of Promise which he had so often pointed out to them, until his death had taken place. At length, after promising "another Prophet," as Christ promised "another Comforter," he ascended a mountain, and expired in the presence of the people, while he was yet in his perfect vigour. He was afterwards buried, but his dead body could never be found.—If we cannot find, in all the records of history, one so like to Christ as was Moses, or so like to Moses as was Christ, then "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law did write, Jesus of Nazareth," the Son of God (John i. 45).

(14) *Sent away the people.*] This rendering is somewhat harsh. Our Version more elegantly translates the same word as "bidding farewell" at Luke ix. 61, and as "taking leave" at Acts xviii. 18 and 2 Cor. ii. 13.

## SECTION LXII.

JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES, DURING A TEMPEST, WALKING ON THE SEA.

*Matt.* xiv. 24—36. *Mark* vi. 47—56. *John* vi. 16—21.

AND when even was now come, His disciples went down, as He had commanded them, unto the sea, and entered into a ship; and, *the wind being contrary, they could not reach Bethsaida, but went directly over the sea towards Capernaum: and it was now dark, and the ship was nearly half-way, in the midst of the sea; and Jesus was not as yet come unto them, but was still alone on the land.*

And the sea arose,—*running very high* by reason of a great wind that blew,—and the ship was *violently* tossed with the waves; for the wind was *still* contrary unto them. So when they had rowed about five-and-twenty or thirty furlongs (*between three and four miles*), Jesus saw them *from the mountain* toiling in rowing;<sup>a</sup> and cometh unto them in the fourth watch of the night<sup>b</sup> (*just as it began to dawn, after three in the morning*), walking on the sea,<sup>c</sup> and *made as though He would have passed by them.*<sup>d</sup> And when the disciples saw Him walking *thus on the sea* (<sup>e</sup>) and drawing nigh unto the ship, they, *not discerning that it was He*, were afraid, saying, It is a spirit<sup>e</sup> (*an apparition*)! and they cried out for fear; for they all saw Him, and were *much* troubled. And immediately He talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer, (*Take courage*), It is I, be not afraid.

And Peter, *with his accustomed eagerness*, answered Him; and,—*confident that he should be able to join his Master if permitted to do so*,—said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.<sup>f</sup> And He said unto him, Come;<sup>g</sup> (<sup>h</sup>) *for He purposed both to test Peter's faith and to convince him of his weakness.*

<sup>a</sup> Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to land, but they could not, for the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them. *Jon.* i. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh,—at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning. *Mark* xiii. 35.

<sup>c</sup> Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. *Job* ix. 8.

<sup>d</sup> He made as though He would have gone further. *Luke* xxiv. 28.

<sup>e</sup> But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. *Luke* xxiv. 37.

<sup>f</sup> I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. *Phil.* iv. 13.

<sup>g</sup> When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. *Isa.* xliii. 2.

(<sup>1</sup>) *In the fourth watch of the night.*] The Jewish Scriptures notice only three watches (see *Exod.* xiv. 24; *Judg.* vii. 19; *Lam.* ii. 19); but it is certain that, after the time of Pompey, the Roman custom of four divisions was adopted. Each contained about three of our hours: the first began at six, which was the evening watch; the second at nine, called midnight; the third at twelve, called cock-crowing; the fourth at three, which was the morning watch.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Walking on the sea.*] This is described by *Job* (see in the MARGIN) as one of the peculiar prerogatives of the Deity. *Feet walking on the sea* was the Egyptian hieroglyphic for impossibility.

(<sup>3</sup>) *It is a spirit.*] The Pharisees fully be-

lieved in the existence of spirits, and in their power to appear in human form. That such a belief was prevalent among the Jews is evident from their Greek version of the Psalms, where they render the Hebrew text "the pestilence that walketh in darkness" (*Pa.* xci. 6) as follows: "the fear of the spirits that walk in the night."

(<sup>4</sup>) *And He said unto him, Come.*] When the malicious Pharisees asked a sign, they were repulsed; but it was granted to Peter, because he made the request with a good intention: he was permitted, however, to come, not only that he might walk on the water and know his Lord's power, but that he might sink and know his own weakness.

And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked, *at first steadily*, on the water to go to Jesus. But *soon*, when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; <sup>(5)</sup> *his faith in his Master's power began to stagger, and at length utterly failed him*; and beginning to sink, he cried out to Jesus, saying, Lord, save me.<sup>b</sup> And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith; *when I was near at hand and had promised to be with thee*, wherefore didst thou doubt?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. Pa. lxxix. 1, 2.

<sup>1</sup> He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. James i. 6.

<sup>k</sup> Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivereth them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet, and so He bringeth them unto their desired haven. Pa. cvii. 28—30.

<sup>l</sup> Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your heart yet hardened? Mark viii. 17.

<sup>m</sup> And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. John vi. 69.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. John xi. 27.

<sup>n</sup> And the whole multitude sought to touch Him; for there went virtue out of Him and healed them all. Luke vi. 19.

And He went up *with Peter* unto them into the ship. And when they were come into the ship, they *on board* willingly (*cordially*) received Him; and the wind *now lulled* and ceased, and immediately (*soon*, Gr.) the ship was at the point of the land <sup>(6)</sup> whither they went<sup>k</sup> (*were bound for*). And they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered: for they considered not the *still greater* miracle of the loaves—that the same *Almighty power which created bread in the wilderness, could enable the possessor of that power to tread upon the waves of the sea*; for their heart was *as it were* hardened,<sup>l</sup> *so slow were they of understanding*. Then they that were in the ship (*the boatmen*) came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art *what Thou claimest to be*, the Son of God!<sup>m</sup>

And when they were *thus miraculously* gone over the lake, they came into the land of Gennesaret, *within which district Capernaum stood*; and *finding a landing-place*, they drew the ship to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they *who were standing upon the shore* knew Him. And when the men of that place (*the inhabitants generally*) had knowledge of Him (*of His arrival*), they sent out *messengers*, and ran through that whole region round about *looking for Him*; and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, and brought unto Him all that were diseased, where they heard He was. And whithersoever He entered,—into cities, or villages, or country,—they laid the sick in the streets *through which He passed*, and besought Him that they might touch<sup>n</sup> if it were but the border of His garment; and as many as touched Him, *or any part of His dress, and had faith in His power to heal their disorders*, were made perfectly whole.

(5) *He was afraid.*] Peter's natural character appears to have been a mixture of boldness and weakness, of sincerity and irresolution. The earnest zeal and courageous confidence, which afterwards fitted him to be so main a pillar of the infant Church, were not required on this occasion, and the display of them was followed by a check and a reproof.

(6) *Immediately the ship was at the land.*] It would seem that the circumstance of the passage terminating so soon was equally miraculous with the cessation of the storm and the walking on the sea; for when Jesus appeared, they were only half way (or about four miles from the desert), and the lake in that part of it must have been at least eight miles across.

## SECTION LXIII.

JESUS DELIVERS THE SUBLIME DISCOURSE OF EATING HIS FLESH AND DRINKING HIS BLOOD; AFTER WHICH MANY OF HIS DISCIPLES LEAVE HIM, BUT IT ELICITS A CONFESSION OF ADHERENCE FROM THE TWELVE.

*John vi. 22—71; vii. 1.*

THE day following *that on which the multitude had been miraculously fed*, when the people, which stood (*yet remained*) on the other side of the sea, saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto His disciples *on the previous night* were entered, and *knew* that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples were gone away alone; (Howbeit there came other boats *afterwards*, from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread after that the Lord had given thanks): When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither His disciples, they also took shipping, *as many of them as could be conveyed in the boats*, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus *at His accustomed abode there*. And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, *teaching in the synagogue of that place*,<sup>a</sup> they said unto Him, *with much astonishment*, Rabbi, when camest Thou hither,—*for Thou wentest not back last night with Thy disciples, nor could we find Thee this morning in the desert?*

*But without noticing a question of mere curiosity which would tend nothing to their edification*, Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles *and were so convinced of My power as to desire the greater welfare of your souls*; but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. *Your thoughts and wishes continue carnal; but I declare unto you that true happiness consists not in any earthly things: Labour not chiefly for the meat which perisheth, and which can only for a time support your mortal part; but labour rather for that true meat,<sup>b</sup> that provision for the soul, which can invigorate indeed and endureth unto everlasting life—which upon your faith and allegiance the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed<sup>c</sup> (1) (commissioned) for this purpose.* Then said they unto Him, *We have the Law of Moses as our guide; what*

<sup>a</sup> These things said He in the Synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. John vi. 59.

<sup>b</sup> I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food. Job xxiii. 12.

Come eat of my bread, and go in the way of understanding. Prov. ix. 5, 6.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live. Isa. lv. 2, 3.

Thy words were found, and I did eat them. Jer. xv. 16.

Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Col. iii. 2.

Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. Heb. v. 12.

<sup>c</sup> He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. John iii. 33.

The Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me. John viii. 18.

—A Man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you. Acts ii. 22.

The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

(1) *Him hath God the Father sealed.*] “To seal” is a general phrase for *authorizing by proper credentials*, whatever be the purpose for which they are given. We seal the deed which we ratify and accredit as our own, and by which we mean to stand. So a person is marked out as wholly

devoted to the service of him whose seal he bears. By supernatural works, and also by the Voice which repeatedly bore Him testimony (see Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5), and by the anointing with the Spirit above measure (see John iii. 34), God had set His seal to Jesus as His Son.

Further shall we do that we might work the works of God, and execute what He requires and approves? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work, above all others most pleasing in the sight of God, that ye believe from the heart on Him whom He hath sent,<sup>d</sup> proving the sincerity of your faith by your holy lives.

<sup>d</sup> And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. 1 John i. 23.

<sup>e</sup> Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Master, We would see a sign from thee. Matt. xii. 38.

For the Jews require a sign. 1 Cor. i. 22.

<sup>f</sup> And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. Exod. xvi. 15.

<sup>g</sup> Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

<sup>h</sup> What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? John vi. 62.

<sup>i</sup> Jesus saith, I am the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me. John xiv. 6.

They among the company assembled who had not witnessed the recent miracle of the loaves, said therefore unto Him,<sup>(a)</sup> What sign<sup>e</sup> showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work more than others? Thou dost not even give a sign of thy commission equal to that displayed by Moses. It is said, indeed, that thou hast fed some thousands for a single day with ordinary food; but our fathers,—in number more than two millions, and while in the Great Desert for the space of forty years,—did eat manna, which was heavenly food; as it is written, HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN<sup>(1)</sup> TO EAT (see Ps. lxxviii. 24). Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven,<sup>f</sup>—for God was the true Giver of it, from whose firmament it fell, that it might nourish the body for a little time; but My Father now giveth you, from the highest Heaven, the True Bread,<sup>g</sup> of which that manna was but a type. For the Bread of God, which may indeed be denominated such in the most sublime sense, is He which cometh down from Heaven,<sup>h</sup>—from the place where He was before; and giveth, not temporal benefit to one particular nation, but everlasting life unto the whole world. Then said they unto Him,—still misapprehending His words,—Lord, evermore give us this bread, that our lives may be preserved continually. And Jesus then said plainly unto them, I am the Bread of Life,<sup>i</sup> <sup>(b)</sup> of which you must spiritually eat in order

(<sup>a</sup>) They said therefore unto Him.] This was a mixed company; and those who here demand a sign, can hardly be the same parties who had witnessed the miracle of the loaves, and had already declared their belief in Him—unless we suppose that their admiration had died away, and suspicions had arisen, because He now said nothing congenial with their carnal expectations. There were evidently others present, and the Evangelist subsequently states that they differed, and “strove amongst themselves.” The whole of this highly figurative discourse is expressed with extreme brevity, and the substance only appears to be given.

(<sup>b</sup>) From heaven.] The original word often denotes only that region in which the clouds are, and so it is translated in the Common Version at Matt. iii. 16; xvi. 3, and elsewhere.

(<sup>c</sup>) He which cometh down from Heaven.] The Unitarians and others say that Christ descended from above only like every good and perfect gift (James i. 17). But it is evident that the Jews here understood Him to speak in a real sense, for they are presently described as mur-

muring at His words, and objecting His earthly parentage. This they could not have done, if they had understood Him only in the sense in which all their prophets must be allowed to have been commissioned from heaven. He who was “more than a prophet” is spoken of by our Lord as having his authority from heaven (see Matt. xxi. 25); yet the Baptist makes this express distinction between Christ and himself, that he was “of the earth,” while Christ had come “from heaven,” and was “above all” (see John iii. 31).

(<sup>d</sup>) I am the Bread of Life.] Eating and Drinking were figures commonly used among the Jews for receiving and imbibing doctrine. Upon a former occasion Jesus had employed the metaphor of water to describe the refreshment with which, through the Spirit, He would invigorate the soul (see Section XXVI., Note 4). The preceding miracle of the Loaves, with the allusion made to the Manna in this discourse, furnishes Him with another illustration leading to a like purpose. He is the Water of Life, and He is the Bread of Life; and as those chief sources of nutriment are needful to the body, so Christ is

to be saved: I am the Author of that heavenly doctrine which nourishes the soul, and can alone preserve it from destruction: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst<sup>k</sup>—for every desire of his soul shall be amply satisfied.

But I said unto you *before*, that ye also have seen Me—ye have witnessed My miracles confirming the truth of what I say; ye have actually beheld that Bread of Life—and yet ye believe not! But though such be the case with you, My labour will not be entirely in vain: all that the Father giveth to Me, shall come to Me;<sup>l</sup> <sup>(6)</sup> all that are convinced by My miracles, and are honestly disposed to receive the Truth, shall be endued with strength to place their confidence in Me: and him that so cometh to Me, I will in no wise (by no means) cast out.<sup>m</sup> How indeed should I reject such suppliants? for I came down from Heaven for this express purpose of Salvation: not to further any views of My own, or to do Mine own will merely,<sup>n</sup> but also to do the will and seek the glory of Him that sent Me.<sup>o</sup> And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, That of all

laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. xi. 28.—And he said unto Jesus, Lord remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise. Luke xxiii. 42, 43.—This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 16.—Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17.

<sup>k</sup> There came a leper and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. Matt. viii. 2.

<sup>l</sup> Then said I, Lo I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God. Ps. xl. 7, 8.—O My Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Matt. xxvi. 39.—Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me. John iv. 34.—I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me. John v. 30.

as water and as bread to the soul—but with this important difference, that water and bread furnish but a temporary supply, which is soon exhausted, while He furnishes that strength to the soul which shall never fail it, whether in time or in eternity. It is this spiritual food which gives vigour to man for the appointed time of his earthly journey; it feeds him when earthly food can no longer sustain his body,—in the hour of sickness and of death; it will be life to the disembodied spirit when it leaves its earthly tenement; and it will be life to that body which shall be raised incorruptible at the last day.

<sup>(6)</sup> All that the Father giveth to Me shall come to Me.] The import of these words seems, from other parts of Scripture, to be plainly this:—Those that are disposed to become Christ's disciples, and close with the offer of a Redeemer, upon His being proposed and revealed to them, are those whom God "gives to Christ;" and none will be rejected by the Saviour who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe in Him. These are the honest hearts of whom He declares, that they are "not far from the kingdom of God," and that "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

That to be "given of the Father," cannot here signify to be absolutely chosen to eternal life (as the Calvinist argues), appears evident. It would be preposterous to suppose that such a doctrine, even if true, would be promulgated at such a time, and under such circumstances. And can we suppose that our Lord would thus impute to

<sup>k</sup> Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John iv. 14.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. Rev. vii. 16.

<sup>l</sup> I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me. . . . They have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. John xvii. 6, 8.

<sup>m</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy on him, and to our God for He will abundantly pardon. Isa. lv. 7.—Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy

the Jews, as their great sin, what it was impossible for them to do, unless they were absolutely chosen to eternal life? The reason of their "not coming to Him" is plainly enough given elsewhere by this Evangelist: they "hated the light, and would not come to it because their deeds were evil" (John iii. 19, 20); they would not learn even of Moses, and "had not the Word of God abiding in them" (v. 38, 46); because they had no love of God in them (v. 42); because they preferred the praise of men (v. 44), and were of their father the devil (viii. 44); because Jesus told them the truth (viii. 45), and lastly, for the reason alluded to in the text, because they were not docile, or sheep at all disposed to hear His voice (x. 26).

That "coming to Christ" here simply means "believing in Him," appears from the sense in which the Evangelist elsewhere uses these expressions. In the chapter preceding this they are identified (John v. compare ver. 40 with 38), and a parallelism has already occurred in this discourse, in which the second member of the sentence explains the first: "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."—It may be added, as to the nature of the believer's faith, that it is not an exclusively intellectual, nor an exclusively moral perception, but it is a compound of both: it is neither wholly passive, nor wholly operative, but acts in some degree both as cause and effect.

¶ Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. *Matt. xviii. 14.*

Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition. *John xvii. 12.*

¶ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. *John x. 28.*

¶ Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary. *Matt. xiii. 55.*

¶ Draw me: we will run after Thee. *Song of Sol. i. 4.*

I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. *Jer. xxxi. 3.*

I drew them with cords of a man,—with bands of love. *Hos. xi. 4.*

I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. *John xii. 32.*

¶ After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them. *Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.*

He will teach us of His ways. *Mic. iv. 2.*

Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. *1 Thess. iv. 9.*

Ye need not that any man teach you. *1 John ii. 27.*

¶ As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. *John viii. 28.*—Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak. *John xii. 50.*

¶ Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape. *John v. 37.*

which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing,<sup>p</sup>—not suffering even the meanest of My disciples to perish,—but should raise it (*him*) up again to glory and happiness at the Last Day. And this is also the will of Him that sent Me, That every one which seeth (*attentively contemplates*, Gr.) the Son,—discerning that He is divinely commissioned for the salvation of man,—and in consequence effectually believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and for that end I will raise him up at the Last Day.<sup>q</sup> <sup>(7)</sup>

The Jews then murmured indignantly at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from Heaven. And they said one to another, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that, being born into the world just as other men are, he saith so presumptuously, I came down from Heaven? Jesus therefore, who knew their thoughts and cavillings, answered and said unto them, Murmur not thus among yourselves at My words: rather study to overcome your own blind prejudices. No man indeed can come to Me by a saving faith, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him;<sup>s</sup> <sup>(8)</sup> the mind being Spiritually influenced to believe, partly by the miraculous proofs afforded of My mission, and partly by its sense of the Love of God to man, as shown in His many benefits, and especially in His precious promises. And when a man thus follows where God leads, I will raise him up at the Last Day.—This is no new doctrine; for so it is repeatedly written in the Prophets, AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD <sup>t</sup> <sup>(9)</sup> (*see Isa. liv. 13*). Now, under the Dispensation of the Messiah, to which those words refer, they are to be made good in a far more eminent manner. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath effectually learned of the Father speaking by Me, cometh unto Me,<sup>u</sup> and believeth in Me. Not that any man can be immediately taught by, or hath ever seen the Father,<sup>v</sup> in Person, as a

(7) *I will raise him up at the Last Day.*] This being said of all who are to have everlasting life, (which life is only to be enjoyed in Heaven), it follows that none are to be raised till that day, and that they are not, as some have supposed, to reign with Christ on earth a thousand years.

(8) *Except the Father which hath sent Me, draw him.*] This is a somewhat similar truth to that commented on in Note 6. It may be added, that God draws men by moral means, and by fit motives. An obscure intimation is here made of the future gift of the Holy Spirit, by whose preventing grace, and predisposing agency on the mind, the natural disposition is first gradually subdued, then the understanding is indirectly influenced to discern the truth, and at length the will obeys. But there are no irresistible impressions, nor is such superintendence

at all compulsory. From God all holy desires and all good counsels do proceed, but they proceed from Him in such a manner as still to be our desires and our counsels: we are drawn by the "cords of a man," and the admonitions and checks of conscience—in a manner suitable to our rational nature and faculties, and requiring our own co-operation and consent. Thus the man who is not drawn by God is still left "without excuse."

(9) *Taught of God.*] This divine teaching is the work of the Trinity. It is ascribed to the Second and Third Persons by St. Paul, who says (*Gal. i. 12*) he was "taught by Christ," and (*1 Cor. ii. 13*) "by the Holy Ghost." St. John says, in another place, "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, He shall teach you all things" (*ch. xiv. 26*). See Section LIX., Note 6.

*scholar sees his teacher, or a man would converse with his friend: such a privilege none can claim save He which is the only begotten Son of God; He alone hath seen and intimately known the will of the Father.*<sup>w</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you again, and declare it in virtue of that union and My complete knowledge of the Father's will, He that believeth on Me hath the promise of everlasting life. I am that Bread of Life upon which you must spiritually feed: I come to you, not only in the capacity of a Messenger from God, teaching Eternal Truth to men, but as your Great Redeemer. Your fathers did indeed, as you say, eat manna in the wilderness; and yet they are dead,<sup>x</sup>—many of them spiritually dead, as unbelievers, and perishing in their sins, and all of them naturally dead, because the carnal food of manna could neither permanently preserve nor restore life: but this, of which I speak, is the True Bread which cometh down from Heaven, and which is of such a nature that a man may spiritually eat thereof and not die eternally. Therefore I plainly tell you again,—and it is the Truth, incredible as you may deem it,—I, Jesus of Nazareth, am the Living (Life-giving) Bread which came down from Heaven itself: if any man eat of (feed upon) this bread, he shall by virtue of such heavenly nourishment, although he die in the body, live again for ever; and the Bread that I will give is My flesh,<sup>y</sup>(<sup>10</sup>) which, by dying in My human nature, I will give as an Atoning Sacrifice for the life of the whole world.<sup>z</sup>

The Jews, therefore, who would not understand the doctrine of Jesus, now strove (had an altercation) among themselves,<sup>a</sup> saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus, perceiving that they needed candour rather than the power of comprehension, entered into no further explanations, but solemnly repeated His words with still stronger asseveration, and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood<sup>b</sup> (<sup>11</sup>)—except ye spiritually feed upon the Saviour,

<sup>w</sup> Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Matt. xi. 27.

No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. John i. 18.

<sup>x</sup> Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? Zech. i. 5.

<sup>y</sup> Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me. Heb. x. 6.

—a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. Heb. x. 20.

<sup>z</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 2.

<sup>a</sup> So there was a division among the people because of Him. John vii. 43.

<sup>b</sup> Being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Rom. v. 9.

In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Eph. i. 7.

(<sup>10</sup>) *And the Bread that I will give is My flesh.*] Although this is the third time of our Lord's calling Himself the Bread of Life in this discourse, it is not mere repetition, though that would have the desired effect of impressing His hearers. A beautiful gradation may be observed: the first time He assigns the reason of the expression more obscurely,—that it shall prevent the hunger and thirst of the soul; the second time more plainly, that His doctrine shall be the cause of everlasting life, since He is the only Teacher that had seen and known the Father; and on this, the third occasion, He calls Himself the Living Bread, because He would, by His death, obtain the power of bestowing life. In the mention of His flesh, we have a plain reference to the Great Sacrifice upon the Cross, and the Atonement through His Blood. In the ori-

ginal language employed by our Lord, the transition from bread to flesh would be less harsh than in ours,—the word *laham*, like the English *meat*, being used for both.

(<sup>11</sup>) *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, &c.*] The universality of the language in this discourse prevents our positively interpreting it of Sacramental feeding. The Lord's Supper, not being as yet instituted, could not then be received by our Lord's hearers, and at least some few of those present would not be alive at its institution. It is also said that he who eats the flesh, and drinks the blood of Christ, "abides in Christ, and Christ in Him," thus becoming a true and living member of Christ's body: but this cannot apply to all; for recipients of the Holy Communion have fallen into such heinous sin that they are (we must conclude)



*believing in the efficacy of His death as the Great Atoning Sacrifice, hereafter to be solemnly shown forth by a perpetual commemoration until His coming again, ye have no life at all in you; ye have no spiritual life at present, nor can you have any right to Life Eternal. But whoso thus eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, assuredly hath an interest in Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the Last Day to enjoy it. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed—they are truly nourishment, and they alone deserve the name. For he that thus eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth (abideth) in Me, and I in him: there is thenceforward an intimate union betwixt us; the believer becoming a member of My body by receiving Me, and partaking with Me of life and immortality, and I communicating blessings to him through the Holy Spirit. As the Living Father (the Father who liveth for ever, and the great Source of all life) hath sent Me into the world, and I live in it as Mediator, by (through the care of) the Father; so he that eateth Me, and by faith dwelleth in Me, even he shall live eternally by (through) Me. If then, in conclusion, you value the welfare of your souls, never forget this solemn truth, which I once more repeat for your consideration:—This is that Bread which came down from Heaven<sup>(12)</sup> for your spiritual nourishment; not as*

\* Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in Me. John xv. 4.

That they all may be one: as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us. John xvii. 21.

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God. 1 John iv. 16.

lost, and it is still eaten by many wicked persons. Our Lord Himself also declares His speech to be only metaphorical; "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." And Peter, instead of now promising that he would faithfully participate in the solemn Rite afterwards so expressly enjoined, simply makes the confession, "We believe that Thou art the Christ."—It appears that, for the first four Centuries, both in the Greek and Latin Churches, this chapter was not generally interpreted of the Eucharist. Clemens of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, St. Austin, and Jerome, all concur that our Lord is, *by way of allegory*, to those that believe in Him, meat and flesh, and nourishment and bread, and blood.

But though we cannot interpret these words directly of the Holy Communion, every candid thinker must allow that our Lord may be supposed to allude to the future commemoration of His death, and prophetically to intimate the great and blessed advantages to be derived from this the most solemn participation of His passion. Unquestionably our own Church has applied the words to explain the nature of the Eucharist, and to excite to a reception of it; for in no other part of Scripture than this chapter of St. John can we find those words which she has incorporated into her Service.—"Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that . . . we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us" (see John vi. 56). Hooker has expressly quoted St. John's words as applicable to this Sacrament. A further argument for supposing the Lord's Supper to be here alluded to, is the fact

that St. John supplies what the rest omit (more especially as to doctrine), and generally omits what they contain. Thus Matthew and Mark give an account of the institution of the other Sacrament of Baptism; but as their Gospels do not record any explanation by our Lord of the meaning and value of that Sacrament, St. John, (though omitting all mention of its institution), evidently lays before us its doctrinal meaning in a very early discourse with Nicodemus on the subject. In like manner, it is urged that, as the rest give an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, St. John omits it, but enlarges, which they omit to do, upon its saving efficacy. The similarity of form in our Lord's emphatic and summary words on each occasion is also worthy notice. (Compare John iii. 5, with John vi. 53.)

(<sup>12</sup>) *This is that Bread which came down from Heaven.*] Thus, with a confident repetition of the same vital truth, our Lord concludes one of the sublimest of His discourses. Though, as recorded, it is remarkable for brevity and figurative expression, a dependance and coherence may be observed throughout. The multitude follow Him for loaves, and He bids them rather seek that food which will endure (namely, His doctrine). They ask Him the way to do this, and He replies, by believing in Him. Some who are present then call for a sign to justify such belief, and remind Him of the manna their Lawgiver had brought from heaven. He then compares Himself with manna or bread, showing that that was only a temporary support of the body, while He would bestow on the soul what would prevent hunger or thirst any more. Upon the Jews murmuring at this, He again and again repeats the same truth

your fathers did eat manna, and yet are dead, for it profited them nothing beyond the term of this life; but he that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever.<sup>d</sup>

These things said He *openly* in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying<sup>(13)</sup> (an offensive doctrine); who can hear it *patiently*?—When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, *Doth this discourse of the Bread of Life coming down from Heaven, and of the necessity of being nourished by it, offend you? What and if (What would ye say if) ye shall see,—as some here present will be permitted to see,—the Son of man ascend up to His original dwelling-place in the bosom of the Father, where He was before?† You would then see how gross your error now is; for you could not feed upon Him in that carnal sense in which you have chosen to understand My words. Know that it is the spirit that quickeneth<sup>(14)</sup> (giveth life); the flesh profiteth nothing ‡ to the real wants of man: the words and doctrines that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life (they are truly spiritual and life-giving). But there are some of you, professing to be My disciples, that in your hearts believe not.—This He said, for Jesus knew from the beginning of His Ministry who they were that believed not,<sup>h</sup> and who he was that at last should betray Him.<sup>1</sup> And He said further, Therefore,—because the prejudices of the natural man are so strong,—it was that I said unto you, That no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father, and Divine Grace co-operating with an honest and good heart lead him to close with the offer of his salvation.*

From that time many of His disciples went back<sup>k</sup> (forsook Him), and walked (continued) no more with Him. Then said Jesus,—as intimating unto the Twelve that He wished for no reluctant followers,—Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter, with his accustomed forwardness and

(varying it with some additional explanation, as shown at Note 10). Upon their continued obstinacy and cavilling, He does not condescend to explain further, once more only confidently summing up in reply.

The whole teaches us, that the despised Jesus of Nazareth is the food of our souls—that Faith is the feeding on this spiritual food, and the turning it into nourishment. This it is to eat His flesh and drink His blood, without which we have no life in us. And whatever be the differences on collateral points, all must concur in this: that whether before Christ or since, whether in covenant or out of covenant, whether in the Sacraments or out of the Sacraments, no man ever was, or ever will be accepted, but in and through the great Propitiation made by the blood of Christ. His Passion is our redemption, and by His Death we live.

(\*) An hard saying.] Our Lord's hearers

<sup>d</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Cor. xv. 22.

\* The cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto Me, and I will hear it. Deut. i. 17.

† No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. John iii. 13.

And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. John xvii. 5.

And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Acts i. 9.

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens. Eph. iv. 10.

‡ The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. 2 Cor. iii. 6.

<sup>h</sup> He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. John ii. 24, 25.

The Lord knoweth them that are His. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

<sup>1</sup> For He knew who should betray Him: therefore said He, Ye are not all clean. John xiii. 11.

<sup>k</sup> They have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger; they are gone away backward. Isa. i. 4.

If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. Heb. x. 38.

understood him *literally*; and to eat flesh, or drink blood, was not only forbidden by the Law of Moses, but repugnant to the customs of all civilized nations. But it may be observed, that also in its true and *spiritual* sense this has ever been "an hard saying." The natural man is offended at being told of his own wickedness, and the absolute necessity of a Saviour; and like these weak disciples who fell away, multitudes in every age and country have "gone back" on the very first proposal of the doctrine of the Cross.

(14) It is the spirit that quickeneth.] Much has been urged for interpreting this of *The Holy Spirit*, and the text Rom. viii. 11 carries considerable weight; but the explanation of "spirit," as opposed to flesh, or to the letter, is more agreeable to the context; it is also more supported by parallel passages, and is now generally allowed by the best authorities.

<sup>l</sup> She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. John xi. 27.

<sup>m</sup> And when He had dipped the sop, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. John xiii. 26, 27.

None of them is lost but the son of perdition. John xvii. 12.

*ardour*, answered Him *for them all*, and said, Lord, to whom shall we go *if we repose not our trust in Thee?* Thou *alone* hast the words of Eternal Life; and, *whoever else may forsake Thee*, we *firmly* believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, *even the expected Messiah*, the Son of the Living God.<sup>l</sup>—*This confession of His faithful followers was noble and dutiful in the extreme; but, in order to check any presumptuous self-confidence*, Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you (*appointed you to the dignity of Apostles*), twelve *only in number?* and yet one of you *out of so few* is a devil <sup>m</sup> (*one who, under the influence of the malignant spirit, will prove an adversary and apostate*).—He spake (*meant*) *this* of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; for he it was that should (*would*) betray Him, being one of the twelve.

After these things Jesus walked (*sojourned*) in Galilee: for He would not walk in Jewry (*Judea*), because *the chief priests and others* of the Jews *there* sought to kill Him.

#### SECTION LXIV.

#### JESUS CONDEMNS THE PHARISEES FOR KEEPING THEIR OWN TRADITIONS TO THE NEGLECT OF THE DIVINE LAW.

*Matt. xv. 1—20. Mark vii. 1—23.*

**T**HEN came together unto Jesus *at Capernaum*, in order to watch Him, the Pharisees and certain of the Scribes which were of Jerusalem <sup>(1)</sup> [which came from Jerusalem, MARK]. And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with *what they considered* defiled (that is to say, unwashed) hands, they found fault *with them for so doing*. For the Pharisees and all the Jews,—*saving only the Sadducees and a few others*,—except they wash their hands oft <sup>a</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> (*use the most diligent care in cleansing them*), eat not, holding the tradition of the Elders <sup>(3)</sup> (*those oral precepts*

<sup>a</sup> And whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, and hath not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even. Lev. xv. 11.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Which were of Jerusalem.*] These must have been the learned men of that city, as we should commonly say, for distinction, “of Oxford,” or any other seat of learning. They do not appear to have been deputed by the Sanhedrim, but were probably heads of the schools among the Pharisees.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Except they wash their hands oft.*] This explanation is added by St. Mark, his Gospel being intended for many who were strangers to Jewish customs. The original word here rendered *oft* is a free translation, and merely notes the fact that the Pharisees had some rule about washing which they observed strictly: the *literal* signification particularly shows that they used the *fist*, or the hand contracted, and thus took up a *handful* of water, with which they

rinsed the hands, in order to comply with the ceremony of ablution (see Lev. xv. 11).

<sup>(3)</sup> *The tradition of the Elders.*] It was the business of the teachers of the people (the more aged and eminent of whom were called Elders), to explain what was doubtful in the Law; but after time and long reverence had confirmed their authority, they raised their traditions *above* the Written Law. At length they formed the idle figment, that their traditions were delivered by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, *together with* the Written Law; that they came down through the Prophets to Ezra, and so to them; and that their “Talmud” is a faithful collection of these very precepts. The following is selected out of many ancient sayings, showing to what a height this new authority was carried:—“The words of the

which were insisted on as divine by their doctors and public teachers). And when they come from the market, except they wash by dipping their hands, or by more complete ablution, they eat not. And many other things of this kind there be, which they have received from their ancestors to hold fast and observe—such as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables <sup>b</sup> (or couches) on which they reclined at meals.

Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked Him, Why walk not Thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but transgress that which is so strictly enjoined, for they wash not their hands when they eat bread? But He answered with some degree of holy indignation, and said unto them, Notwithstanding your pretended regard to the duties of Religion, there is much greater reason to call you to an account: Tell Me, Why do ye also transgress, what is infinitely more sacred, the commandment of God, as ye so completely do, by your earthly tradition? Full well ye reject (ye fairly frustrate and utterly make void) the plain commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.<sup>c</sup> For,—to take a case of common occurrence among you,—Moses commanded [God commanded by Moses, saying, MATT.], HONOUR (reverence and support) THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER;<sup>d</sup> (Exod. xx. 12); and again (Exod. xxi. 17), He that curseth (or contemneth) father or mother, let him die the death<sup>e</sup> (receive capital punishment) for so unnatural a crime. But ye teach a doctrine contrary to these Divine commands: ye say, according to your vain and sinful tradition, Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, when they appeal to him for aid, It is Corban,<sup>f</sup> (1)

<sup>b</sup> Every bed whereon he lieth that hath the issue is unclean; and every thing whereon he sitteth shall be unclean. Lev. xv. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Col. ii. 8.

<sup>d</sup> Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh. Col. ii. 23.

<sup>e</sup> Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth. Tit. i. 14.

<sup>f</sup> Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise. Eph. vi. 2.

<sup>g</sup> Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen. Deut. xxvii. 16.

<sup>h</sup> Whoso curseth his father or mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness. Prov. xx. 20.

<sup>i</sup> When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. Deut. xxiii. 21.

<sup>j</sup> Vow and pay unto the

Scribes are lovely above the words of the Law, for the words of the Law are weighty and light, but the words of the Scribes are all weighty."—The Jerusalem Talmud has a similar passage: "The words of the Elders are more desirable than the words of the Prophets." The same authority declares, that "to eat bread with unwashed hands is as bad as fornication;" to which their canon adds, "whosoever despiseth the washing of hands is worthy to be excommunicated."—That the modern Jews, as a body, continue to hold the divine authority of the Talmud (or Mishnah), and that they recognise it as a guide in matters of religion,—even preferring it to the Written Word,—plainly appears from their latest authorized Catechisms.

(<sup>1</sup>) *The washing of cups and pots, &c.*] These vessels were of wood, for no earthen ones are here mentioned; the latter were at once broken, if supposed to be polluted. The brazen vessels were for cooking. The tables (properly couches, resembling our sofas) were cleansed lest any unclean person had sat on them.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Honour thy father and thy mother.*] The Hebrew word plainly implies maintenance, as well as other duties (see 1 Tim. v. 3, 4, 17, 18).

And this interpretation the Jewish canonists allowed—at least in theory.

(<sup>3</sup>) *It is Corban, &c., &c.*] It does not follow that he who said this had in all cases actually consecrated his goods to sacred uses, or obliged himself to do so; but only that he had (according to the doctrine of the Scribes) obliged himself by his vow not to give anything to the person to whom he spake. If he had once, though but in haste or anger, said *Corban*, the property was as solemnly to be kept from that person, as if it were devoted to God. *Corban* is a Syriac word, signifying "it is devoted to the treasury," and in practice the Pharisees made it a greater offence to forego the gift to the treasury, than to deny support to parents. With all this casuistry, it may well be supposed that there was frequent collusion with the priests; and Josephus tells us that these corrupt teachers were in the habit of granting or selling dispensations from the vow of *Corban*, the common fee for absolution being fifty shekels. The usage was afterwards imitated and profitably adopted by the Church of Rome in her dispensations and indulgences.

Lord your God. Pa. lxxvi. 11.

Whosoever shall swear by the altar it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Matt. xxiii. 18.

¶ Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Matt. xxiii. 25.

¶ They sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them. Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

¶ O ye simple, understand wisdom, and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart: Hear, for I will speak of excellent things. Prov. viii. 5, 6.

¶ If I wash myself in snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. Job ix. 30, 31.

I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. Rom. xiv. 14.

Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled. Tit. i. 15.

¶ I am the Vine; ye are the branches. . . . If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned. John xv. 5, 6.

I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

—that is to say, *Be it as a gift devoted to God*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me (*That property is already consecrated to holy uses, by which otherwise I might have contributed to your support*); and so, *whosoever, having once said this, shall not honour his father or his mother by supporting them, you say*, he shall be free from the command and the penalty of the Law, as being bound by his former vow; and ye suffer him no more to do aught (*ye permit him to forbear doing anything*) for his father or his mother. Thus have ye plainly made the Commandment [the Word, MARK] of God of none effect, through your tradition which ye have so profanely delivered to the people. And many such like things do ye. Ye hypocrites, ¶ well did Esaias, when speaking reproachfully of the Jews in his day, prophesy as it were of such as you,—for in all ages hypocrites are alike,—saying, as it is written (see Isa. xxix. 13): THIS PEOPLE DRAWETH NIGH UNTO ME WITH THEIR MOUTH AND HONoureth ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME: ¶ HOWBEIT IN VAIN (to no purpose) DO THEY WORSHIP ME outwardly, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (*imposing merely human injunctions on the conscience, as essential and necessary for obtaining the Divine acceptance*). For, laying aside the commandment of God,—the duty of obedience to which is so plain, ye hold to the tradition of men, as in the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do, the performance of which has been required at your hands by no sufficient authority.

And when, after His rebuke of the Pharisees, He had called all the people unto Him, He said unto them, Harken unto Me every one of you, and seek to understand.¶ There is nothing from without a man, that by entering into him, can defile him: ¶ not that which goeth into the mouth, but that which being in the heart cometh out of the mouth—the things which come out of him—those are they that really defile the man. If any man have ears to hear these truths, let him attentively hear and seriously consider them.

And when He was entered into the house, and was withdrawn from the people, His disciples came and asked Him concerning the parable, and said unto Him, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying? But He answered and said, I know it, but fear ye not what they can do: Every plant (plantation) which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up: ¶ so shall it be with these usurpers of God's Authority; they and their vain precepts shall perish together, and they shall be cast out of the Vineyard. Let them

alone therefore for judgment, and regard not their revilings: their understandings are darkened; they be blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind be allowed to lead the blind, both shall (will) at last fall into the ditch.

Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Declare (Explain) unto us this parable. And Jesus said unto them, Are ye also yet so without understanding <sup>(7)</sup> as to need further instruction in so plain a matter? Do ye not yet perceive that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him inwardly? Because whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, entereth not into (doth not affect) his heart, so as to raise evil affections there; but it goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught, purging all meats (purifying all food by removing the dregs and whatever is unfitted for nutriment). And He said also, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man: those things which proceed out of the mouth must first come forth from the heart, and they defile the man<sup>m</sup> in the sight of God, who regardeth inward purity alone. For from within,—out of the heart of men,—proceed evil thoughts,<sup>(8)</sup> adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness (insatiable desires), wickedness, false-witness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil (envious) eye, blasphemy (evil-speaking and calumny), pride, foolishness (levity of demeanour): all these evil things come from within, and so these are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashen hands has in it no moral impurity, and so defileth not a man. It is the disposition of the mind, and not any external circumstance whatever, which is of estimation in the sight of God.

<sup>m</sup> An evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil, for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Luke vi. 45.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body. James iii. 6.

(7) Are ye also yet so without understanding? What our Lord had said appears plain enough, and to us it has been familiar from our childhood, but it was new to the disciples, and, before the descent of the Holy Spirit, their prejudices rendered them dull and slow of understanding. They could scarcely credit what they heard, that a distinction of meats availed nothing, and they were unable to reconcile it with the customs in which they had so studiously been brought up (see Acts xxi. 21; Gal. i. 14).

(8) Out of the heart of men proceed evil

thoughts, &c.] In the enumeration of things which are here exemplified as defiling a man, St. Matthew mentions only seven; St. Mark nearly twice the number, because Gentiles would be among his hearers, and it was proper to point to such other vices as were prevalent among them. St. Paul, writing to the Romans, has a similar, and still lengthier, list of the sins of the Gentiles (see Rom. i. 29—31).—Some consider that the expression of St. Mark in this list, rendered “lasciviousness,” rather means “a love of injury,” or “injustice.”

## SECTION LXV.

JESUS RETIRES TO THE BORDER-LAND OF TYRE AND SIDON, WHERE, AFTER PROVING THE FAITH OF A WOMAN OF CANAAN, HE EXPELS A DEMON FROM HER DAUGHTER.

*Matt. xv. 21—28. Mark vii. 24—30.*

AND Jesus arose and departed from thence (*from Capernaum*), into (*towards*) the borders of Tyre and Sidon, *wishing for the present to avoid the malice of the Pharisees, whom He had so publicly rebuked.* And He entered *privately* into an house, and would have no man know it, *lest in resorting to the heathen He should seem to neglect the Jews.* But He could not be hid, *so extensively had His fame spread abroad.* For behold, a certain woman of Canaan, out of the same coasts, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, *soon heard of Him, and immediately came, and cried earnestly unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.* (The woman was a Greek<sup>a</sup> or Gentile by religion, a Syrophœnician by nation);<sup>(1)</sup> and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But He, *intending to try and exhibit her faith to those who were present,* answered her not a word.

<sup>a</sup> It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Rom. i. 16.

<sup>b</sup> Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Matt. x. 5, 6.

It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you. Acts xiii. 46.

<sup>c</sup> —who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the Law, and the service of God and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen. Rom. ix. 4, 5.

And His disciples, *wearied with her importunity,* came and besought Him, saying, *Grant her request and send her away, for she crieth incessantly after us, and it may cause us to be followed hither by our enemies.* But, *that they, as Jews, might be excited to fitting gratitude, and to a jealousy of their birthright,* He answered *them,* and said *in the hearing of the woman,* I am not now sent to work miracles for the heathen, or to preach among them, but first of all, I am sent unto the Jewish nation, the lost sheep of the house of Israel.<sup>b</sup>

Then came she *nearer,* and fell on her knees at His feet, and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, I entreat Thee, help me. But Jesus said unto her, Let the children<sup>c</sup> of

(1) *A Syrophœnician by nation.*] This woman is previously called by St. Matthew a woman of Canaan, and here by Mark, (who writing for others than the Jews, made his matter as intelligible as possible) a Syrophœnician. Phœnicia, within which territory Tyre and Sidon stood, was comprehended in Syria, being one of its provinces, as Pliny tells us (Lib. v. cap. 12). Canaan and Phœnicia were plainly the same, for "the Canaanites dwell by the sea" (Numb. xiii. 29), and the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon were a remnant of the ancient Canaanites, and are so

named (see Judg. i. 31, 32; Isa. xxiii. 8, 11, with the Marginal reference to the latter verse). —We must not conclude that this woman was a proselyte, for although she calls our Lord the Son of David, she might have learned that appellation, as a title of respect, from Jews. Neither are we to suppose her an idolatress, for there were many Gentiles (such as Cornelius and Lydia) who believed in one true God, and probably expected a Messiah, though not professing Judaism.

*the Kingdom* first be filled; for it is not meet (*it is unseemly*) to take the children's bread, and to cast it *without* unto the dogs,<sup>(\*)</sup> *as the Jews are apt to designate you Gentiles*. And to this she meekly answered and said unto Him, Truth, Lord, *the best food is not for such as we are*; yet even the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs which fall from their master's table: *permit us then to become members of Thy household, in a station however inferior; and after Thy transcendent mercies have been vouchsafed to others, graciously reserve some small portion of favour for us*. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith—*greater indeed than I have yet seen in Israel: in reward for this saying, bespeaking such true humility and trustful confidence, go thy way in peace, and be it unto thee even as thou wilt<sup>d</sup> (as thou desirest): the devil is already gone out of thy daughter*.

And accordingly her daughter was made *perfectly* whole from that very hour. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out of her: and her daughter was laid upon the bed *tranquil and composed*.

<sup>d</sup> He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them. Ps. cxlv. 19.

## SECTION LXVI.

UPON HIS RETURN THROUGH DECAPOLIS, JESUS CURES A DEAF MAN,  
WHO HAD ALSO AN IMPEDIMENT IN HIS SPEECH.

*Matt. xv. 29. Mark vii. 31—37*

AND Jesus soon afterwards departed back again from thence (from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon), both on account of His increasing fame in that quarter, and that He might continue His ministry among the Jews. And He came nigh unto the more retired regions lying along the sea of Galilee on the east; and, passing through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis,<sup>(1)</sup> He went up into a mountain, and sat down there.—*It was in this same region that the Gadarene, formerly dispossessed of the Legion, had made known what great things the Lord Jesus had done for him; and on the present occasion the inhabitants received Him gladly*.

And they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had also an impediment in his speech (*being a stammerer, or tongue-tied*); and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him, *as the prophets of old had been accustomed to do, that so he might be cured of these defects*.

(\*) *Unto the dogs.*] Our Lord by no means lends His sanction to the propriety of an abusive term adopted by the Jews; who, calling themselves God's sons and daughters, likened all the other nations of the world to dogs. The event showed that our Lord regarded the woman

with a very different feeling. The reminding her that He, of whom she asked this favour, was one of those who vilified her race, was useful as a trial of her faith.

(1) *The coasts of Decapolis.*] See Section LIV., Note 1.



And, *to avoid interruption*, He took him aside from the multitude; and, *making use of symbolical actions,—since the deaf man could not comprehend His intention by words,—* He first put His fingers into his ears,<sup>(1)</sup> and then He spit (*moistened His finger*), and touched his tongue: and, looking up to heaven, *that He might direct the man's attention towards the Great Giver of speech and hearing*, He sighed *in sympathy with such calamities of life*, and saith unto him, Ephphatha—that is, *Let thine ears be opened and perform their proper functions.* And straightway (*immediately upon the uttering of the word*) his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue, *which before had hindered his speaking in an articulate manner*, was loosed, and he spake plain.

\* And when He was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it. Luke xix. 41.

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. John xi. 33.

We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Heb. iv. 16.

<sup>b</sup> The ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb or deaf? Have not I the Lord? Exod. iv. 11.

And He charged them *who had witnessed the miracle*, that they should tell no man *what had been done*: but the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it, and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well—*in the manner we expected that they would be done by the promised Messiah; for, according to the prediction concerning Him*, He maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.<sup>b</sup>

## SECTION LXVII.

JESUS HEALS MANY, AND THE MULTITUDE ARE FED MIRACULOUSLY A SECOND TIME.

*Matt. xv. 30—39. Mark viii. 1—10.*

AND great multitudes *who had followed from the borders of Tyre and Sidon* came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed<sup>(1)</sup> (*or mutilated*), and many others; and cast (*laid*) them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them *all*: insomuch that the multitude wondered *greatly* when they *thus* saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see;<sup>a</sup> and, *notwithstanding that the*

\* Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

(<sup>a</sup>) *Put His fingers into his ears.*] Our Lord often used visible signs to represent that divine invisible virtue which resided in Him. His adoption of any action alone shows its fitness, and we are not to expect in all cases to find reasons. Sometimes, however, as on this occasion, the external actions employed appear significant of the cure to be performed. Thus, as deaf persons seem to have their ears closed, our Lord applies His finger to this man's ears, to intimate He would *open* them; and because the tongue seems to be tied, or through drought to

cleave to the palate, he touches and moistens it, to intimate He would *loose* and give it free motion.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Maimed.*] On the authority of Hippocrates the original of this word should be rendered "*distorted*," but the usual sense of the word in pure Greek is "*mutilated*," as it must also be understood at Mark ix. 43. This explanation is the more satisfactory, because the restoration of limbs is an instance of the *creative* power of our Saviour.

*greater part of them were heathen*, they glorified the God of Israel.

In those days, *while He still continued on the eastern shore of the lake*, the multitude *that were attending Him there* being very great, and having nothing left to eat of the provisions they had brought, Jesus called His disciples unto Him and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude because they have now been with Me three days,<sup>(\*)</sup> and have nothing to eat; and I will not send them away fasting to their own houses, lest they faint (*fail in their strength*) by the way—for divers of them came from far. And His disciples, *not reflecting on the miraculous feeding of the five thousand*, answered Him *with astonishment*, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness as to fill so great a multitude?<sup>b</sup> [From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? MARK]. And He asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

And He commanded the multitude to sit down *in order* on the ground. And He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks *to God for them*, and brake them, and gave to His disciples *for the people*, to set before them: and they did set them before the people. And *as they had a few small fishes*, He blessed *God over them*, and commanded *His disciples* to set them also before them. So they did all eat and were filled.<sup>c</sup> And they *who were with Him* took up, of the broken meat (*the provision*) that was left, seven *large* baskets full.<sup>d</sup> <sup>(\*)</sup> And they that had eaten were about four thousand men, beside women and children.

And *when all were fully satisfied*, He sent away (*bade farewell to*) the multitude, *as He had done on the previous occasion*, lest they should attempt to make Him King. And straightway He entered into a ship with His disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha,—or coasts of Magdala, —*within which territory the city of Dalmanutha stood.*

<sup>b</sup> Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? Numb. xi. 13.

<sup>c</sup> So they did eat and were filled. Neh. ix. 26.

<sup>d</sup> So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof. 2 Kings iv. 44.

(\*) *Have now been with Me three days.*] According to the Jewish mode of reckoning, these three days might be only two nights and one day. See Section XLVIII., Note 4.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Seven baskets full.*] Our translators have used the term "basket" here, as in the former case when the multitude was fed; but a different word occurs in the original on this occasion,

signifying a larger basket, which (as appears from classical writers) was able to contain a man. See also Acts ix. 26, where the same word occurs. Thus, although the number of persons fed and of the baskets filled was smaller on this occasion, the fragments saved may have been as much in quantity. See Section LXI., Note 11.

## SECTION LXVIII.

THE PHARISEES AGAIN REQUEST A SIGN; AND JESUS WARNS HIS DISCIPLES AGAINST THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

*Matt.* xvi. 1—12. *Mark* viii. 11—21. *Luke* xii. 1.

**WHILE** Jesus continued at Dalmanutha, the Pharisees, with the Sadducees also, came where He was; and, although mutually opposed in their principles and conduct, they began with one accord to question (to dispute) with Him. And tempting Him to some extraordinary trial of His power, they desired that He would shew them a sign from Heaven<sup>a</sup> in confirmation of His mission.

<sup>a</sup> I saw in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. Dan. vii. 13.

And others, tempting Him, sought of Him a sign from heaven. Luke xi. 16.

They said therefore unto Him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? What dost thou work? John vi. 30.

<sup>b</sup> At the time appointed the end shall be. Dan. viii. 19.

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Mark i. 15.

Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near. Luke xxi. 8.

—that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ. Eph. i. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Paul's spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Acts xvii. 16.

<sup>d</sup> For the Jews require a sign. 1 Cor. i. 22.

<sup>e</sup> As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matt. xii. 40.

He answered and said unto them, Ye say, when it is evening, It will be fair weather to-morrow, for the sky is a bright red. And in the morning ye say, It will be foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can readily discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the yet more evident signs of the times<sup>b</sup> (of this appointed season)? For the Sceptre has already departed from Judah; the seventy weeks of the prophet Daniel draw towards their close; the predicted herald of the Messiah has appeared; and in Me and in My miracles are your other prophecies receiving their fulfilment: no further evidence can be needed, and you have the capacity, if you would use it, to judge of that which has been already vouchsafed.—And He sighed deeply in His spirit<sup>c</sup> (in His inmost soul), being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, and saith, Why doth this generation so perversely seek after a sign?<sup>d</sup> Verily I say unto you once again, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no such sign as is demanded be given unto it, but only the sign of the prophet Jonas:<sup>e</sup> (1) My mission shall be confirmed by a like miraculous event; yet even that they will not receive, for “if they believe not Moses and the prophets” who spoke of Me, “neither will they be persuaded though One rose from the dead.” And after this He left them as incorrigible; and, entering into the ship again, departed to the other side of the lake.

And when His disciples were come with Him to the other side, they perceived that they had forgotten to take sufficient bread with them; neither indeed had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. In the meanwhile, when there were gathered together an innumerable multi-

(1) The sign of the prophet Jonas.] For the explanation of the entire passage, see Section XLVIII., with Notes 1—3.

tude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, Jesus then charged them, and began to say unto His disciples first of all, Take heed to yourselves and beware ye of the leaven<sup>f</sup> of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy—a mere pretence to deceive by the outward appearance of sanctity; and beware also of the joint leaven of the Sadducees and of Herod,—men who audaciously deny the existence of a Divine Providence and a Future State: For as leaven completely, yet imperceptibly, sours the whole of the bread with which it is mixed, so do the unsound doctrines of such guides corrupt and puff up the unwary minds of their followers.

And they, receiving the literal meaning of His words, reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have been negligent and have taken no bread<sup>g</sup> with us, that He reproves us. Which when Jesus perceived, He said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye thus among yourselves, as if ye were like to famish because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet perceive, neither understand? Have ye your hearts yet hardened<sup>h</sup> and unconvinced? I have plainly appealed to your senses: having eyes, see ye not the miracles performed? and having ears, hear ye not the doctrine which has been delivered? And do ye not remember the miracle which was twice exhibited before your eyes? When I brake the five loaves for distribution among five thousand<sup>i</sup> persons, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto Him, We took up twelve.<sup>h</sup> And again, when the seven were divided among four thousand persons, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Lord, we took up seven.—And He said unto them, How is it then that you do not understand that I spake it not to you now concerning bread for the body, but that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. I have cautioned you before that ye be not anxious about the meat that perisheth,—which you have seen that I can so easily provide for My faithful followers,—and I have also told you that none of those outward things which ye suffer to engross your thoughts can defile a man.

Then understood they plainly how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the corrupt doctrine<sup>i</sup> of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

<sup>f</sup> Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? . . . Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. v. 6, 8.

<sup>g</sup> He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him aught to eat? John iv. 32, 33.

<sup>h</sup> And they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. Matt. xiv. 20.

<sup>i</sup> In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Matt. xv 9.

(\*) It is because we have taken no bread.] The Jewish doctors prohibited using the leaven of the heathen or of Samaritans, and the disciples supposed that Jesus here reproved their carelessness in not being provided with bread, as though He disapproved of their obtaining it from dealers either of the sect of the Pharisees or the Sadducees. A similar error of mistaking our Lord's words, when He was in Sa-

maria, is related by St. John, as shown above in the Margin.

(\*) Have ye your hearts yet hardened? ] Though this slowness of comprehension was perverseness with the Jews in general, it was a sin of infirmity only with the Apostles. See Section LXIV., Note 7.

(\*) When I brake the five loaves among five thousand.] See Section LXI.

## SECTION LXIX.

## THE SIGHT OF A MAN BORN BLIND IS GRADUALLY RESTORED AT BETHSAIDA.

*Mark viii. 22—26.*

AND He cometh to Bethsaida, and they bring unto Him a blind man—one who had been so from his birth; and they besought Him to touch him that he might recover his sight. And He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town,<sup>a</sup>—for He deemed the inhabitants, who had already beheld so many miracles in vain, unworthy to be witnesses of more. And when He had spit on (*moistened*) his eyes,<sup>(1)</sup> and put His hands upon him, He asked him if he saw aught (*anything*)? And he looked up to try his powers, and said, I see men as trees, walking (*I can only distinguish them from trees by their motion*). After that He put His hands again upon his eyes,<sup>(2)</sup> and made him look up; and he was then restored to perfect sight, and saw every man clearly. And He sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go back into the town, nor tell it elsewhere to any who dwell in the town, for they are not worthy.

<sup>a</sup> Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Matt. xi. 21.

(1) *Spit on his eyes.*] The symbolical action here employed seems to us extraordinary, but the Jews believed that fasting spittle had a medicinal effect on diseased eyes, and it was used by them with invocation of God. The same notion prevailed among the heathen; and a blind man, who sought a cure from Vespasian, declared his persuasion that the emperor could in this manner restore his sight. The pretended miracle, said to be wrought on that occasion, is recorded by Tacitus (*Hist. iv.*), and by Suetonius (*Vespas. 7*).

(2) *He put His hands again upon his eyes, &c.*] This progressive cure affords a remarkable and decisive proof of the Omniscience as well as Omnipotence of Christ; for it shows that He knew, almost seventeen centuries before it was suspected by the most sagacious and enquiring philosophers,

that the mere perfection of the organs of sight is not sufficient to render vision perfect: and thus we see an instance in the Bible, in which a fact, unintelligible at the time, lies useless as it were, till a scientific age supplies the key to open the hidden treasure. It appears to have been the belief, until the time of Locke, that a man born blind would immediately see as well as other men if the organs of vision were suddenly rendered perfect; but the contrary conclusion, to which Locke was led by theory, was established by discoveries in the removal of cataract. In the case of a patient who had been born blind, the man was obliged to spend some time in learning to see like other men.—In the miracle before us, our Lord's first application rendered the organs perfect; the second conferred the advantages of experience.

## SECTION LXX.

## PETER'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE MESSIAHSHIP AND DIVINITY OF JESUS.

*Matt. xvi. 13—20. Mark viii. 27—30. Luke ix. 18—21.*

AND Jesus and His disciples went out *from Bethsaida* into the towns of Cesarea Philippi.<sup>(1)</sup> And it came to pass by the way, when Jesus came into the coasts of it, *that as He was alone (apart from any multitude), praying, and His disciples were retired with Him, as soon as their devotions were ended He asked His disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? what are the opinions commonly entertained regarding Me?* They answering said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist "*risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.*" But some say, Elias,<sup>b</sup> —*expecting that particular prophet to come in person as the forerunner of the Messiah:* and others say, Jeremias, *the weeping prophet, who was sanctified from the womb and was to be set over the nations:*<sup>c</sup> and again, others, *esteeming no one of the present generation holy enough to be sent from God,* say that one of the old Prophets,—*though they cannot determine which,—is certainly risen again.*

And He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answereth and saith unto Him, *We believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*<sup>d</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona (*son of Jonus*); for flesh and blood (*man, or human testimony*) hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven:<sup>e</sup> (<sup>(2)</sup> *He hath removed the veil of prejudice from thine heart, and given thee grace to believe this saving Truth.* And I say *this* also unto thee, *as a personal tribute to thy faith and heroic zeal in this Confession, That thou art truly named Peter*<sup>f</sup> ("*which is by interpretation a stone*"): *suitable to thy name shall be thy work and office;* and upon this *self-same Rock* I will with flesh and blood. Gal. i. 15, 16.

<sup>f</sup> Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone. John i. 42.

(1) *Cesarea Philippi.*] This was formerly the city Dan (Judg. xviii. 29), situated at the foot of Mount Paneas, whence flow the springs or source of the Jordan. The situation so much pleased Philip the Tetrarch, that he made it the seat of his court, and, after enlarging and adorning it, named it Cesarea in honour of the emperor Tiberius Caesar. Philippi was added either from his own vanity, or to distinguish it from another Cesarea, a seaport of the Mediterranean, mentioned Acts xxi. 8.

(2) *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, &c.*] We cannot suppose Peter to be instructed as to this great truth by a particular

<sup>a</sup> Whom makest thou thyself? John viii. 53.

<sup>b</sup> It was said of some that John was risen from the dead; and of some that Elias had appeared; and of others that one of the old prophets was risen again. Luke ix. 7, 8.

<sup>c</sup> Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Mal. iv. 5.

<sup>e</sup> Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. . . . See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant. Jer. i. 5, 10.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ps. ii. 7.

And lo a Voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matt. iii. 17.

And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. John vi. 69.

<sup>e</sup> Born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John i. 13.

When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not

revelation, for then Nathanael would have been similarly intructed, contrary to Christ's words (John i. 50); also the Centurion (Matt. xxvii. 54), and all other believers. This also would absolve the Jews, who might plead that it was not in their power to believe; whereas Christ always appeals to His works as sufficient testimonies for belief. Peter received the truth with that ready and faithful heart, which is the gift of the Spirit to all who duly ask for it: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually* discerned."

ε That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Eph. v. 27.

Whoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die. John xi. 26.

h And the key of the house of David will I lay

build My Church <sup>(c)</sup>—*laying its first foundation upon thy preaching both to Jews and Gentiles*; and the gates of hell (*of Hades, or Death itself*) shall not prevail against it: ε <sup>(d)</sup> *it shall flourish in the face of all its enemies, and the body of the faithful composing it shall endure for ever.* And I will give unto thee the keys <sup>h</sup> of the kingdom of heaven; <sup>(e)</sup> *that thou first mayest open the door of My Church, and together with thy brethren make laws for its government—*

(b) *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church.*] "The Rock" in this passage has been ably interpreted of the *Confession* of Peter, which yields a good sense; also of *Christ* Himself as the object of it; and certainly it is some support of these views that the Original employs a *feminine* noun for the word "Rock," while that for "Peter" is masculine. But the whole force and particularity of this striking passage seems destroyed, unless we interpret it of Peter's person. (Consult Gen. xvii. 5 and xxxii. 23, where reasons are given for the names of Abraham and Israel). So Tertullian and Ambrose among the ancients, and the greater number of the ablest moderns, have understood our Lord's words. Unquestionably it was Peter's preaching that laid the first foundations of the faith both among Jews and Gentiles (see Acts ii. 41; x. 44, 48; xv. 7).—Romanists have laid hold of and lamentably misused this interpretation; yet so far from supporting the pretence of the Roman pontiff to be the successor of St. Peter, it effectually overthrows such pretence. In being the *first* missionary to Jew and Gentile, that Apostle *cannot* have a Successor: the foundations of the Church cannot again be laid, and certainly that great work of Providence cannot be repeated by one who remains *stationed* at Rome, claiming to be ruler over God's heritage, instead of going in person among the heathen. The words of St. Paul, that he had "the care of all the Churches," would rather conclude for *that distinguished* Apostle, if for any one, an Universal Pastorship; and all the other Apostles are expressly called "pillars" and "*foundation-stones*" (see Gal. ii. 9; Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14). Indeed the same Confession of their Master's Divinity had before this been made in the *name of all*, although Peter was, as usual, the spokesman (John vi. 69;—Sect. LXIII). James and John converted those of the Circumcision as well as Peter; and Paul preached to more Gentiles than ever Peter did,—being called by way of eminence *their* Apostle.—Perhaps (as Cyprian thought) a commencement was made from *Unity* in the person of Peter, that the Church might be set before us as *One*.

(c) *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*] We have here an assurance that the Spiritual Society founded by our Lord shall ever subsist for its Divine purposes—that neither persecution from without nor corruption within should utterly overthrow it. Accordingly, while subject to the fiercest assaults of the heathen, the Church was wonderfully preserved, and even strengthened. It suffered more in the Middle Ages from ignorance and superstition, but still there was always a remnant (as in the Alpine valleys) to be found faithful. The religion of Mohammed has now nearly banished the Gospel from the lesser Asia, and even from its native

land; and the candlestick of Northern Africa, the land of Cyprian, Tertullian, and Augustine, the scene of so many martyrdoms and triumphs of the faith, has been long removed: but the Saviour's promise was not to any particular community; it was to the Universal Church, and when the light has been extinguished in one country, it has been kindled in another.

(e) *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, &c.*] These words are a continuation of the image by which the Church is compared to an edifice founded on a rock. Peter was to be the person by whose instrumentality the door was to be opened; and as a *key* was anciently a symbol of authority, there seems also a plain reference to the power and authority conferred for the work. The keys are said to be given to the Apostle that he might "bind and loose." These expressions have been interpreted (from John xx. 23) of remitting and retaining sins, a power undoubtedly possessed by the Apostles, who had the *extraordinary assistance of the Holy Spirit*, and Peter showed that he had a knowledge of the human heart in his condemnation of Ananias and Sapphira: but "to bind" and "to loose" *here* seem chiefly to refer to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of things—to the *government* of the Church. Whatever these remarkable expressions may be understood to import, one thing is clear, that such power belonged equally to *all* the rest of the Apostles: "Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 18); and again, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained" (John xx. 23). It is further evident that the privilege of "the keys" gave Peter no higher authority than the rest, for, subsequent to this, we find them disputing who should be the chief. Neither did Peter himself ever advance any such claim, for he describes himself with the rest as simply an Apostle (2 Pet. iii. 2), and exhorts the elders as being *himself an elder* (1 Pet. v. 1). That our Lord's words on this occasion did not give Peter even an *honorary* precedence, appears from the fact, that although he was present at the council of Jerusalem, James the Less presided (Acts xv. 13, 19); and we know that upon one occasion Paul publicly withstood him (see Gal. ii. 11). Thus, a power and precedence which Peter *himself* never possessed, could not, it is evident, be transmitted to any *successor*, whether at Rome or elsewhere. An additional circumstance, worthy of remark in this part of the sacred narrative, is, that immediately after the honour now conferred upon Peter, our Lord, in the hearing of all the disciples, calls him *Satan* (See in the next Section).

declaring what is allowed, and forbidden, and required of Christians. And whatsoever thou, thus assisted by My Spirit, shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven: *I will ratify thy decisions, both whatsoever thou shalt forbid, and whatsoever thou shalt declare lawful to be done.*

And He straitly charged His disciples, and commanded them to tell no man that thing of Him—that He was Jesus the Christ<sup>(e)</sup>—until after His resurrection; <sup>1</sup> for to have done so might have precipitated events, and offered an opportunity to the people of proclaiming Him King.

upon his shoulder: so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open. Isa. xxiii. 22.

I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Rev. i. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. Matt. xvii. 9.

## SECTION LXXI.

JESUS PLAINLY FORETELLS HIS SUFFERINGS AND DEATH; WHEN PETER, TAKING OFFENCE, IS REBUKED; AND ALL ARE EXHORTED TO SELF-DENIAL.

*Matt. xvi. 21—28. Mark viii. 31—38; ix. 1. Luke ix. 22—27*

**A**ND now, lest they should be shaken in their faith by what was soon to befall Him, Jesus began from that time forth to teach plainly and to show unto His disciples how that He, the Son of man, must needs go unto Jerusalem,<sup>a</sup> because out of that blood-thirsty city no prophet could suffer, and there all Israel might be witnesses; and that instead of assuming human sovereignty, He must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and the chief priests and scribes<sup>b</sup> of the Sanhedrim; and at last be killed in a violent manner; and that, notwithstanding, He should, after remaining a part of three days under the power of death, be raised again on the third day.<sup>c</sup> And He spake that saying, no longer in figurative language, but openly. And then Peter, elated by the commendation he had recently received, tenderly took Him by the hand, and began to rebuke (to remonstrate with and chide) Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord;<sup>d</sup> this violence shall not be done unto Thee. But when He had turned about, and looked<sup>e</sup> reproachfully on His other disciples,—for He perceived that they entertained the like sentiments,—He rebuked Peter in their presence with some severity, and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan—evil counsellor as thou art to thy Master, and an adversary to the best welfare of thy fellow-men: thou art an offence (a stumbling-block) unto

<sup>a</sup> It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. Luke xiii. 33.

<sup>b</sup> The elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the Scribes came together, and led Him into their council. Luke xxii. 66.

<sup>c</sup> Remember how He spake unto you while He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. Luke xxiv. 6, 7.

<sup>d</sup> That be far from Thee to do after this manner. Gen. xviii. 26.

<sup>e</sup> And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. Luke xxii. 61.

(<sup>e</sup>) That He was Jesus the Christ.] The word "Jesus" is evidently superfluous here, and the most eminent critics agree that it should be cancelled. The omission has the authority of fifty-four MSS. and several Versions and Fathers.



<sup>f</sup> They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. Rom. viii. 5.

<sup>g</sup> Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. Luke xiv. 27.

We must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22.

All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

<sup>h</sup> He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. John xii. 25.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying he shall never see death. John viii. 51.

<sup>i</sup> None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of their soul is precious. Pa. xlix. 7, 8.

<sup>k</sup> I saw in the night visions and behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. Dan. vii. 13.

<sup>l</sup> Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto. 1 Tim. vi. 14, 16.

<sup>m</sup> Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed. Jude 14.

And behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. Rev. xxii. 12.

<sup>n</sup> If we deny Him, He will also deny us. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

<sup>o</sup> The unbelieving and the abominable, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Rev. xxi. 8.

Me, *tempting Me to decline My Cross*; for in this thou savourest not (*thou regardest not*) the things that be of God and pleasing to Him, but the vain things and weak imaginations that be of men.<sup>f</sup>

And then, when He had called the people unto Him, with His disciples also,—since the practice of self-denial which He would inculcate was an universal duty,—He said unto them all, Whosoever will freely come after Me (*for none are under compulsion to come*), let him learn to deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me<sup>g</sup> even unto death if he be called to such a trial: for whosoever will choose rather to save his life in this world, when duty calls him to surrender it, shall lose it in life eternal; but whosoever shall be content to lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall find it—graciously preserved it may be even here, and assuredly shall save it<sup>h</sup> in the world to come. And how truly wise will such conduct be: for what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul<sup>(1)</sup>—if he lose himself and be cast away for ever? Or, tell me, what earthly thing shall a man give in exchange (as a ransom) for his eternal soul,<sup>i</sup> which is a treasure beyond all price?

To reconcile you to the various privations incident to this life, reflect upon the rewards and punishments of the world to come: For assuredly, the Son of man shall come,<sup>k</sup> as the prophet Daniel describes, not in His present form of a despised servant, but in all the glory of His Father,<sup>l</sup> surrounded with His holy angels: and then, before the assembled universe, He shall reward every man according to his works.<sup>m</sup> Those who have believed My doctrine and copied My example, shall receive the recompense destined for the just, but whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed,<sup>n</sup> when He cometh in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels.

And He further said to them, Verily I tell you of a truth, That there be some of them that now stand here, which shall not really taste of the bitterness of death<sup>o</sup> (of that Second death which awaits the impenitent), till they see the kingdom of God come with power<sup>(2)</sup>—even the Son of man coming in His kingdom to judge the world.

(1) *What shall it profit, &c.*] Cicero has a parallel thought,—that “if Virtue were put into one scale, and the whole world into the other, the former would outweigh the latter” (*Audebo virtutis amplitudinem quasi in altera libra lance ponere: terram mihi crede, ea lans et maria deprimet.* — De Finibus). But how much more

just, as well as rationally noble and beautiful, does the sentiment stand in the Gospel, where a Future State is held out as a reward to the virtuous.

(2) *Which shall not taste of death till, &c.*] Many interpret this passage as referring to the Transfiguration, but this event took place only

## SECTION LXXII.

## THE TRANSFIGURATION.

*Matt.* xvii. 1—13. *Mark* ix. 2—13. *Luke* ix. 28—36.

AND it came to pass after six *entire* days (or about an eight days<sup>(1)</sup>) after these sayings *respecting His Passion*, Jesus taketh with Him *those three disciples who on various occasions received especial marks of His favour,—namely Peter, and James, and John* <sup>(2)</sup> his brother,—and leadeth them up by themselves into a high mountain apart<sup>(3)</sup> (*called Mount Tabor*), to pray.

And as He prayed, He was transfigured<sup>a</sup> (*changed in His external appearance*) before them;<sup>(4)</sup> and the fashion (*appearance*) of His countenance was altered, and His face

<sup>a</sup> We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John i. 14.

—who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. Phil. iii. 21.

a few days after. Others explain it of the Ascension, with which event our Lord's kingdom did properly commence; but we can hardly imagine Him telling a numerous assembly that *some* of them were destined to live half a year—for within that period the Ascension took place. A reference to the destruction of Jerusalem would yield a better sense, for the "Coming of the Son of man" sometimes has that signification, and to "taste of death" sometimes signifies (as at Heb. ii. 9) simply to die; but the interpretation of this passage, as referring to the *second* death at the day of Judgment, seems to clear every difficulty: it is implied that then the impenitent shall taste the bitterness of death, whereas the following promise to the saints is without any limitation of time: "If a man keep My saying, he shall *never* taste of death" (John viii. 52).

(<sup>1</sup>) *About an eight days.*] This would include the evening of the day on which the previous discourse with the disciples took place and the day on which He now ascended the Holy Mount. Any portion of a day was counted as a day (see Note 4 of Section XLVIII). The expression "about" (here taken from St. Luke) always signifies that a sum is not complete: thus, Jesus "began to be about thirty" (Luke iii. 23), and "about the sixth hour" (Luke xxiii. 44).

(<sup>2</sup>) *Peter, and James, and John.*] Three only of the disciples accompanied, because that formed the number of witnesses necessary for legal proof. The three selected were confidential disciples: Peter the most zealous, James the most active, and John the most beloved among them. These were afterwards the great pillars of the infant church (Gal. ii. 9). The names of all three were changed by Christ (Mark iii. 16, 17). As on this occasion, He took them with Him as witnesses when He raised to life the ruler of the synagogue's daughter (Mark v. 37), and again as the chosen witnesses of His Agony in the Garden (Matt. xxvi. 37).

(<sup>3</sup>) *A high mountain apart.*] There seem sufficient grounds for assigning to Mount Tabor the honour of being the scene of our Lord's Transfiguration. That it was so, is mentioned in one of Jerome's Epistles as a tradition of that time; and the early Christians dedicated there a church to

Jesus, Moses, and Elias. This Mount had before been celebrated on account of the victory gained there by Deborah and Barak (Judg. iv. 14). It is now described as a calcareous mountain of a conical form, standing entirely detached in the great plain of Esdraclon, and covered entirely with trees, grass, and wild flowers. The height has been computed at three thousand feet. Viewed from below, the Mount appears to terminate in a point, but the summit is an oval plain of about a quarter of a mile in length, which Josephus, when he was governor of Galilee, encompassed with a wall.

(<sup>4</sup>) *He was transfigured before them.*] As to the particular nature of this change, it is quite incomprehensible to us with our present faculties; and although much might be said on the subject, it is more fitting, on so awful an event, to restrain our speculations. The principal purpose, for which it was permitted to take place, appears to be (as Peter himself tells us in his Epistle) to demonstrate the certainty of Christ's Second Coming (2 Pet. i. 16—18); it is also a shadowing forth to us of the glory of the saints after the Resurrection (Phil. iii. 21). We may reasonably suppose that as every other important truth,—such as our Temptation, Death, and Resurrection,—was represented in the Saviour's personal history, so the *most* interesting truth of all, relating to the Judgment and Future World, would be represented likewise.—This is one of the three instances of God's personally interposing and bearing testimony in favour of His Divine Son (see Matt. iii. 16, 17; John xii. 28). The circumstance of Moses and Elias appearing on this occasion prefigures the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. The immortality of the human soul was also here proved to the Apostles in opposition to the influential opinions of the Sadducees, and they were fortified against dependency. Another important purpose was to denote figuratively the expiration of the Jewish, and the commencement of the Christian dispensation. Moses, the *giver* of the Law, and Elias, its great *restorer* at a period of universal defection, both render up their authority into the hands of Christ, and leave *Him alone* as the Person thenceforward to be obeyed.

<sup>b</sup> His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Rev. i. 16.

<sup>c</sup> His raiment was white as snow. Matt. xxviii. 3.

The Ancient of days, whose garment was white as snow. Dan. vii. 9.

I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment. Rev. iv. 4.

did shine as the sun<sup>b</sup> *in its meridian glory*, and His raiment was white and glistening as the light *which clothes the inhabitants of heaven*—shining exceeding white, as snow,<sup>c</sup> *far beyond human art to equal* and so no fuller on earth can white them. And behold, there appeared unto them two men talking with Jesus, which were Moses and Elias,<sup>(5)</sup> *the two great representatives of the Law and the Prophets*; who appeared in glory, and spake (*conversed*) of His decease which He should accomplish *at the ensuing Passover* at Jerusalem.

But Peter, and they (*James and John*) that were with him, were heavy with sleep; and when they were *now* awake, they saw His glory and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass, as they departed (*just before Moses and Elias had departed*) from Him, Peter, *referring to what he had heard*, answered and said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be (*to remain*) here; and if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles,<sup>(6)</sup> one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: for *although the forwardness of Peter's disposition prompted him to say something*, he wist not (*scarcely knew*) what he said <sup>(7)</sup> [what to say, MARK]; for *he and the other disciples were so overwhelmed by the glory of the spectacle which they had witnessed, that they were sore afraid*.

<sup>d</sup> For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a Voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this Voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with Him in the holy mount. 2 Pet. i. 16—18.

<sup>e</sup> The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken. Deut. xviii. 16.

While he thus spake, behold there came a bright cloud<sup>(8)</sup>, and overshadowed them (*the Lord, with Moses and Elias*), and as they (*the Apostles*) entered into (*were enveloped by*) the cloud, they feared. And behold, *as on the occasion of the baptism of Jesus*, there came a Voice out of the cloud which said, This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:<sup>d</sup> *and then in confirmation of the ancient prediction of Moses, the Voice added, Hear ye Him<sup>e</sup>—thus declaring that the Old Dispensation was at an end, and that Jesus was thenceforth the proper object of man's spiritual contemplation and the sole proclaimer of the Divine will.*

<sup>(5)</sup> *Which were Moses, and Elias.*] They would be known from the discourse which took place, and from Jesus addressing them as such, for the Apostles awoke towards the conclusion of the conference: or the witnesses might know this fact by revelation. It may be asked, "*How were these dead raised up, and with what body did they come?*" We know that Elias was translated (2 Kings ii. 11), and he may have put on glory at once; and though we only know from tradition that the body of Moses could never be found, it is enough to answer, "God gave to them a body as it pleased Him, and to each *his own body*." "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

<sup>(6)</sup> *Tabernacles.*] These booths were composed of branches of trees (with which Mount Tabor still abounds). Such were often raised hastily by travellers, and they were reared in great numbers at the feast of Tabernacles.

<sup>(7)</sup> *Wist not what he said.*] It may be supposed that Peter meant, How much better it was to abide there than to descend into the world again, or to encounter those sufferings which they had been told of; but he manifestly forgot that the Great Sacrifice *must* be offered up, and also he did not consider, in making such a proposal, that neither Moses nor Elias were equal to His Master in dignity or authority.

<sup>(8)</sup> *There came a bright cloud.*] This "Excellent Glory" (as St. Peter calls it in his Epistle), accompanied as it was by the Divine Voice, must have been the *Shechinah*, or visible symbol of Deity. On Mount Sinai the cloud was dark and thick, appearing with thunder: here the cloud was bright, and nothing was heard save the mild Paternal voice of the Almighty, expressing His delight in His beloved Son. These circumstances are thought to point out the different characters of the two Dispensations.

And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face *with lowly reverence*, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.<sup>f</sup> And suddenly, when the Voice was past, *Moses and Elias had disappeared*, and Jesus was found alone: and when they had lifted up their eyes and looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them that they should tell no man, *not even their fellow-disciples*, what things they had seen,<sup>(g)</sup> till the Son of man were risen from the dead; *because, previous to that decisive event, it would appear but as a dream and be discredited.*<sup>g</sup> And they kept that saying *carefully*, questioning with themselves (one with another) what the rising of the Messiah from the dead should mean<sup>h</sup>—*for they were unable to reconcile such an event with the tradition that the promised Seed of David should not die.* And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

And His disciples asked Him, saying, *If then this appearance of Elias is to be kept secret until Thy departure, and if all will soon be accomplished*, why say the Scribes, that Elias must first come *and make Messiah known*? And Jesus answered and said unto them, *Truly has the Scripture announced that Elias shall first come and restore all things<sup>i</sup> into a better order than before: and remember how it is also written with equal truth of the Son of man, that He must suffer many things and be set at nought.*<sup>k</sup> But I say unto you that the Elias of whom the prophet spake is indeed come already, as it is written of him; and they knew (acknowledged) him not,<sup>l</sup> but have done unto him whatsoever they listed (as they pleased), *rejecting his baptism, maligning him, and at last putting him to death with an utter disregard of justice: but let not this surprise you, for likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.*

Then the disciples, *when they reflected on the various predictions concerning the person who was to come in the spirit and power of Elias*, understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist.<sup>m</sup>

And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him. Luke xxiii. 11.—And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him. Matt. xxvii. 29.

<sup>f</sup> But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John. Luke vii. 30.—For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and ye say, He hath a devil. Luke vii. 33.

<sup>g</sup> For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John: and if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come. Matt. xi. 13, 14.

<sup>f</sup> And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the first and the last. Rev. i. 17.

<sup>g</sup> A time to keep silence and a time to speak. Eccles. iii. 7.

<sup>h</sup> For He taught His disciples and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day: but they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him. Mark ix. 31, 32.

The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? John xii. 34.

<sup>i</sup> The times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts iii. 21.

Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers. Mal. iv. 5, 6.

And thou shalt call his name John. . . . And many of the children shall be turned to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Luke i. 13, 16, 17.

<sup>k</sup> I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people: all they that see Me laugh Me to scorn. Ps. xxii. 6, 7.

He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Isa. liii. 2.

(<sup>g</sup>) *What things they had seen.*] The sense both of St. Mark and St. Luke is here correctly given. In our translation of St. Matthew's Gospel the word "Vision" is used instead, but it would

perhaps have been better omitted as being liable to be misunderstood. The corresponding noun in the original of that Evangelist, implies a *re-presentation to the eyes of waking men.*

## SECTION LXXIII.

A DEMONIC, WHOM THE DISCIPLES WERE UNABLE TO DISPOSSESS, IS CURED BY JESUS.

*Matt.* xvii. 14—21. *Mark* ix. 14—29. *Luke* ix. 37—43.

AND it came to pass, on the next day when they were come down from the hill of *Tabor*, that much people met Him. And when He came to His *other nine* disciples, He saw a great multitude about them, and the Scribes, *taking advantage of His absence*, were questioning with them and *taunting them upon their inability to cast out devils*.—And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed <sup>a</sup> *and struck with veneration and awe; for as the face of Moses shone when he descended from Mount Sinai, so were rays of glory still beaming from the countenance of Jesus*: and, running to Him, they saluted Him *with more than ordinary testimonies of their respect*.

<sup>a</sup> And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh him. *Exod.* xxxiv. 30.

The children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance. *2 Cor.* iii. 7.

<sup>b</sup> And He was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. *Luke* xi. 14.

<sup>c</sup> They shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. *Zech.* xii. 10.

And He asked the Scribes, *About what question ye with them?* And behold, *while He enquired as to the cause of the dispute*, a certain man *out of the multitude which was collected there*, kneeling down to Him, answered and *eagerly* cried out, saying, Master [Lord, MATT.], I have *here* brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit <sup>b</sup> (*a demon that deprives him of his speech upon each attack*). I earnestly beseech Thee, look *compassionately* upon my son, for he is mine only child: <sup>c</sup> have *Thou* mercy on him, for he is *an unhappy lunatic*,<sup>(1)</sup> and sore vexed *with fits of epilepsy*; for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And lo, wheresoever *and whensoever* this tormenting spirit taketh (*attacks*) him, he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him,—*dashing him to the ground and causing him to beat himself*,—so that *in his paroxysms* he foameth again *at the mouth*, and gnasheth with his teeth, and *gradually* pineth away: and *the demon, thus* bruising and convulsing him, hardly (*with difficulty*) departeth for a time from him. And I brought him *in Thy absence* to Thy disciples, and spake to them *concerning him*, and besought them to cast him (*the demon*) out, and they could not cure him: *this it is, Lord, which has caused the present discussion, for the Scribes say that here is a distemper which cannot be cured in Thy name*.

Then Jesus answered him, and said *before all the people, who were eager to witness some fresh signs of His power,*

(1) *For he is lunatic.*] This distemper appears to have been epilepsy; called lunacy by ancient medical writers, because it was supposed to be under the influence of the moon. All the symptoms, however, are reconcilable with demoniacal influence.

O faithless and perverse generation!<sup>d</sup> How long shall I be with you *offering the means of grace and proofs of My mission in vain?* How long shall I suffer you *and bear with your incredulity?* Yet I will not deny you *this further opportunity of grace:* bring then thyson hither to Me. And, *accordingly,* they brought him unto Him: and when he (*the spirit*) saw Him, as he (*the child*) was yet a-coming, straightway the spirit, *becoming violent,* threw him down, and tare (*convulsed*) him; and he fell on the ground, and *there wallowed, rolling from side to side and foaming at the mouth.* And this Jesus permitted for a time, in order that the greatness of the cure might be the more impressed on those who stood by; and, for the same reason, He asked his father, How long is it ago since this affliction came unto him? And he said, Of a child (*from his infancy*): and oft-times it hath cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him; but if Thou, Lord, canst do anything to free him from this malicious demon, have compassion on us both, and help us. Thus did the afflicted parent, already dispirited by the failure of the disciples, betray some fear lest the obstinacy of his child's distemper should surpass even the Master's power: Jesus said therefore unto him, If thou canst but believe and confide in My power to do this, then it shall be exerted on thy behalf; for all things are possible to be done to (for) him that believeth.<sup>e</sup> And straightway, on hearing this, the father of the child cried out and said, with tears, Lord, I do believe; help Thou mine unbelief: supply whatever Thou seest to be wanting in my faith, for I am ready to believe that Thou canst influence the inmost hearts of men.

When Jesus saw that the people came running together,—for they were attracted to the spot by the vehemence of the afflicted parent,—and that their numbers were increasing every moment, He without further delay, lest a tumult should arise, rebuked the unclean spirit,<sup>f</sup> saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I, the Lord of the universe, to whom thy Chief and all thy tribe are subject, charge thee to come this moment out of him, and enter no more into him. And as soon as these words were uttered, the spirit cried out, and by a last desperate struggle once more rent<sup>g</sup> (*convulsed*) him sore, and came out of him; and he (*the child*) was left as one dead, insomuch that many who looked on said, He is actually dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he, being strengthened, at once arose. And so He perfectly healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. And the child was cured of his epilepsy from that very hour. And they who witnessed the cure were all amazed at the mighty power of God,<sup>h</sup> which had been thus effectually manifested in Jesus.

<sup>d</sup> They are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith. Deut. xxxii. 20.

— a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their heart aright. Ps. lxxviii 8.

<sup>e</sup> Believe in the Lord your God: so shall ye be established. 2 Chron. xx. 20.

Without faith it is impossible to please Him. Heb. xi. 6.

Ask in faith, nothing wavering. James i. 6.

<sup>f</sup> Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Col. ii. 15.

<sup>g</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? John xi. 40.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. i. 16.

<sup>a</sup> And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out. Matt. x. 1.

And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name. Luke x. 17.

<sup>1</sup> For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. Mark xi. 23.

<sup>\*</sup> Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Eph. vi. 18.

And when He was come into the house *in which He was at that time staying*, His disciples, *surprised and mortified at their own failure*, came to Jesus apart, and asked Him privately, Why could not we cast him out,<sup>b</sup> *having before performed in Thy name many cures resembling this?* And Jesus said unto them, *It was because of your unbelief (your doubts as to the efficacy of your miraculous power); and the least measure of such doubt is inexcusable in the favoured attendants of My person:* for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith in the powers conferred on you, *though comparatively but as a grain of mustard-seed,*<sup>(\*)</sup> ye shall say unto this mountain *from which we have lately descended*, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove: and *thus, firm in your belief and doubting not of your success, there is nothing relating to your Great Work which shall be impossible unto you.*<sup>1</sup> Howbeit (He further said unto them), *as to what ye have now witnessed, this malignant kind of demons can come forth (can be dislodged) by nothing but by that earnest faith which is acquired by prayer<sup>k</sup> and fasting.*

#### SECTION LXXIV.

JESUS AGAIN REMINDS HIS DISCIPLES OF HIS APPROACHING SUFFERINGS; AND BY A MIRACLE PROVIDES THE TRIBUTE MONEY.

*Matt. xvii. 22—27. Mark ix. 30—33. Luke ix. 43—45.*

AND while they (*the people*) wondered, every one of *them*, at all *these* things which Jesus did, they (*Himself and His disciples*) departed thence, and passed through *the remaining districts of Galilee*: and He would not that any man should know it, *lest any further calls for the exercise of His power might draw Him off from the more important instruction of His followers.* For while they abode yet in Galilee, Jesus *again* taught His disciples, and said unto them *with still greater solemnity on this third occasion*, Let these sayings sink down into your ears, *so that hereafter you may remember I told you of them*: for, *notwithstanding the temporary applause of these multitudes, the Son of man is never to be exalted in this world, but*

(\*) *If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, &c.*] This is proverbially spoken, contrasting the smallness of the principle with the greatness of the effect. The grain of mustard-seed (here so forcibly opposed to the hugeness of the mountain it was to remove) was commonly spoken of among the Jews as the least of things (see Section LII., Note 2); and one of their sayings to express any difficult thing, was, "He is a rooter up of mountains" (see Zech. iv. 7).

Faith is not here used in its ordinary sense, but for a strong persuasion of *the power of working miracles*, as it also is by St. Paul, when he classes it with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit and separates it from Charity (which cannot be said of *that justifying faith which worketh by love*): "Though I have all *faith*, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 2).

shall *shortly* be delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day.—But *still* they understood not this saying,<sup>a</sup> (1) and it was hid from them (*obscured by their prejudices*) that they perceived it not; *for they could in no way reconcile what was told them with the received opinion that the Messiah should not die: and yet, remembering that He had so repeatedly declared it to them, and had rebuked Peter for dissuading Him from it, they feared to ask Him of the import of that saying; and they were exceeding sorry at the very thought of their beloved Master suffering a violent death and being parted from them.*

And He came back to Capernaum; and when they were come to Capernaum, they that received the tribute money<sup>b</sup> (2) for the service of the Temple, came to Peter and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute? *is it not His custom to do so?* He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus, *who knew what had occurred, prevented (anticipated) him, saying first, What thinkest thou, Simon, that it is fitting for Me to do? Of whom do the kings of the earth (earthly monarchs) take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers who own not their paternal sway?* Peter saith unto Him, *Surely, Lord, they receive it of strangers.* Jesus said unto him, *Then are the children free from the obligation to make such payments: and the tribute, now demanded for the service of God's Temple, need not be paid by Me, who am His Son and greater than the Temple.*<sup>c</sup> Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them,<sup>d</sup> and give a handle for saying that we undervalue the Temple or its sacred services, go thou down to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth thou shalt find there a piece of money<sup>e</sup> (3) sufficient for the purpose (a stater or shekel): that take, and give it unto them for Me and thee, *as inhabitants of this place.*

<sup>a</sup> We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? John xii. 34.

<sup>b</sup> This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord. Exod. xxx. 13, 14.

Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God Neh. x. 32.

<sup>c</sup> But I say unto you that in this place is One greater than the temple. Matt. xii. 6.

<sup>d</sup> Giving no offence in anything, that the Ministry be not blamed. 2 Cor. vi. 3.

(1) *They understood not this saying.*] The Apostles could not but be acquainted with the prophecies, some of which plainly foretell a suffering Messiah; but to meet these the Scribes had invented the distinction of Messiah Ben Joseph who should die, and of Messiah Ben David who was to triumph and live for ever.

(2) *The tribute money.*] All Israelites above twenty years of age, throughout the world, were expected to pay half a shekel or didrachmon (value 1s. 3d.) as an annual contribution towards the expenses of the Temple Service. In the time of Nehemiah the payment was something less. Though only established by custom, Josephus mentions that the payment of this tribute was regular in his time; and it was one of

their national mortifications that, on the destruction of Jerusalem, Vespasian transferred the tax to the Capitol, so that the worshipper of Jehovah was taxed for the support of idolatry.

(3) *Thou shalt find a piece of money.*] This would be the stater or shekel, value two shillings and sixpence of our money. We may suppose that the coin had fallen into the sea, and had been swallowed by the fish. Many instances are on record of jewels, coins, &c., being found in the bellies of fish, which are apt to be soon attracted by anything glittering. By whatever means the coin was lodged in the mouth of this fish, Omniscience alone could discover it there, and Omnipotence alone secure its being brought to Peter's hook.



## SECTION LXXV.

JESUS REPROVES THE APOSTLES FOR THEIR WORLDLY SPIRIT; WARNING THEM ALSO AGAINST OFFENCES TOWARDS THEIR BRETHREN, AND TEACHING FORGIVENESS BY THE PARABLES OF THE LOST SHEEP AND THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT.

*Matt. xviii. 1—35. Mark ix. 33—50. Luke ix. 46—50.*

AND being in the house, He asked them (*His disciples*), *About what was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they,—ashamed to confess that neither the improvement of themselves nor of others had been the subject of consideration,—held their peace; for by the way there arose a reasoning among them, and they had disputed among themselves which of them should be the greatest.<sup>a</sup> The preference shown to Peter, James, and John, on several late occasions, had excited feelings of pride in the bosoms of those Apostles, and of envy and emulation among the rest; while all of them supposed, that when the rule of the Jews over other nations commenced under their Master's reign, they should be advanced to posts of distinction and honour.* And Jesus, perceiving the carnal thought of their heart, sat down, and called the twelve *around Him*, and saith unto them, *If any man desire to be first in My kingdom, the same shall be (must be as) the last of all, and servant of all.*

At the same time the disciples came (*were coming of their own accord*) unto Jesus, saying unto Him, *without any concealment of their ambitious views, Who is to be the greatest and to have the chief dignity in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto Him—the fittest emblem that could be chosen of humility and simplicity of mind; for, though it be evil in its nature, Childhood knows not and cares not for worldly honours or precedence.* And when He had *first* taken him up in His arms to caress him, He took and set him by Him in the midst of them, and said<sup>(1)</sup> unto them, *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted (changed from what you are), and become as free from such carnal thoughts as little children are,<sup>b</sup> ye shall not enter at all into the kingdom of heaven.<sup>c</sup> Whosoever therefore shall humble himself (shall become as confiding and simple-minded) as this little child, the same is as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>d</sup> And whosoever shall cordially receive this child, or one of such little children (the weakest*

<sup>a</sup> They said unto Him, Grant that we may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand in Thy glory. Mark x. 37.

And there was also a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest. Luke xxii. 24.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? Acts i. 6.

<sup>b</sup> I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother; my soul is even as a weaned child. Pa. cxxxi. 2.

In malice be ye children. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John iii. 3.

<sup>d</sup> He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Luke xiv. 11.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. James iv. 10.

(1) *He set him in the midst of them, and said.]* This method of instructing by emblems and symbolical actions was prevalent in the East (see also John xiii. 4, 14; xx. 22; xxi. 18, 19). Ecclesiastical tradition has noticed that this

child was Ignatius, the afterwards-distinguished martyr and Bishop of Antioch: but it should be observed that the first writer who mentions this is Anastasius, at the close of the ninth century.

or meanest of My disciples) in My name, in effect receiveth Me; and, as I have told you on a former occasion, Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me alone, but likewise Him that sent Me.<sup>e</sup> For he that is least among you all in his own esteem, the same shall be great in Mine, and shall become at last an honoured member of My kingdom.

And John, here interrupting, answered Him by putting the case of such as used His name without authority; and enquiring as to the necessity of receiving or acknowledging these, said, Master, we lately saw one casting out devils in Thy name,<sup>(4)</sup> and (but) he followeth not us as one of Thy regular disciples; and we forbad him to cast out any more demons, because he followeth not Thy ministry with us. But Jesus immediately repressed this officious and mistaken zeal of John, and said unto him, Forbid him not now; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, thereby discerning its efficacious power, that can lightly speak (be easily induced to speak) evil of Me. For he that is not against us, is on our part:<sup>(5)</sup> he aids our work in destroying Satan's kingdom, and, although he has not My express commission, is to be esteemed as one that doeth God service. For whosoever shall do you the smallest service, and give you only a cup of water to drink, in My name and because ye belong to Christ,<sup>(4)</sup> verily I say unto you,

<sup>e</sup> He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. Matt. x. 40.

<sup>f</sup> And there ran a young man and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them. Numb. xi. 27—29.

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, but the other of love. What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. Phil. i. 16—18.

(<sup>4</sup>) *We saw one casting out devils in Thy name, &c.*] This was probably one of the Baptist's disciples. Though he did not follow Jesus, his success in invoking the name of the expected Saviour shows how extensive was its power. God might see reasons, upon the ushering in of the Gospel, for granting such success, though it was denied when the evidences were more fully and distinctly proposed, after the descent of the Holy Spirit. See the unsuccessful case of the sons of Sceva, Acts xix. 13—16.

(<sup>5</sup>) *For he that is not against us is on our part.*] Our Lord, on a former occasion, had used a different and seemingly-opposite proverb: "He that is not with Me, is against Me" (Matt. xii. 30; see Sect. XLVII.): but both are consistent. In the former admonition He warns His hearers that the contest between Himself and Satan admitted of no neutrality, and that for their own safety believers must profess and act up to the Gospel, since indifference would class them among His enemies. The proverb on this occasion reminds us, that many who are ignorant of the truth of the Gospel do not oppose it, and may hereafter wish well to and promote it; that therefore we are always to judge with candour and charity of the characters and actions of our fellow-creatures.

From this passage we also gather, that as any teaching of religion is better than none at all, so it is better for the duly-ordained Minister to be content with carrying out the pure and Catholic principles of the Church, without making any extraordinary or violent efforts to silence unauthorised teachers. Yet still, what was allowed

in the infancy of the Gospel, and is to be allowed now in extreme cases, is no argument against a general rule. St. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached "even through envy and strife" (see Phil. i. 15, 16), but no man should chuse to be found in the list of St. Paul's *envious and contentious* preachers.—Perhaps there never was a time when men were so blind, as now, to the guilt of *schism*, and so little recognised the existence of the Church as a regular and visible society. We see the fences of the Spiritual sheep-fold scaled on every side by a crowd of ill-informed, however well-meaning volunteers, who intrude themselves with unfortunate rashness into an office, even the proper *duties* of which are only to be learned by experience. On no subject are the Scriptures more express than in condemning such rashness. Under the *Old Covenant* we read the fate of Korah and his followers (who were what would now be called *laymen*, and had accused Moses and Aaron of a sort of *priestcraft*): they were confident they were in the right, but their indiscreet forwardness met with its awful chastisement. Then in the *New Testament*, how strong is the warning, "Be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (Jas. iii. 1). Again, those are described to be perilous times, when men "having itching ears shall heap to themselves teachers" (2 Tim. iv. 3); and no man is to presume to take *this* honour to himself, but he that is regularly called thereto as Aaron was.—See Section XLI., Note 3.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Because ye belong to Christ.*] In the Original we nearly always find it written, "the Christ," but here the Article is omitted in the

¶ And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. Matt. x. 42.

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Matt. xxv. 40.

¶ For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. 1 Cor. xi. 19.

¶ And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. Isa. lxvi. 24.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. Luke xvi. 24.

—suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Jude 7.

And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night. Rev. xiv. 11.

He shall not lose his reward: *how much more highly then is that man to be esteemed, who, under peculiar circumstances and when labourers are few, aids in My work, and promulgates the honour of My name.* But on the other hand, Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me,—*tempting the humblest of My disciples to sin, and occasioning their fall, either by bad example, or sophistry, or persecution,*—it were better for him that the surest destruction now befel him; even that a millstone were hanged about his neck,<sup>(5)</sup> and that he were cast into and drowned in the depth of the sea. Wo unto the world because of *such offences and obstructions to the Gospel:* for it must needs be—*through the wickedness of man and the abuse of his free agency it is quite unavoidable*—that offences come;<sup>h</sup> but wo to that man by whom (*through whose agency*) the offence cometh.

Wherefore call to mind what I said upon the Mount: *You must be prepared to give up whatever is most useful or most dear rather than commit sin:* if thy right hand offend thee *by ministering to evil,* cut it off, and cast it from thee;<sup>(6)</sup> it is better for thee to enter into Life maimed (*mutilated*), rather than having two hands to go into hell,—into the fire that never shall be quenched; where, *according to the language of the prophet,* their worm dieth not *as it does with frail and perishable bodies now,* and where the fire, *not needing fuel like that of Hinnom,* is not quenched<sup>i (7)</sup> *through all eternity.* And if thy foot offend thee, *carrying thee into evil company or among forbidden pleasures,* cut it off; it is better for thee to enter halt (*lame*) into Life, than having two feet to be cast into

most accurate Versions, giving rise to the probable supposition that even during our Saviour's lifetime the word had become a proper name, although its appellative use as designating office and dignity was both more correct and more frequent. At the commencement of their Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and John simply say "Jesus Christ;" but they do it in that place merely for the sake of distinction, to identify Him whose history they were writing; for at that time the name of Jesus (though now, out of respect to our Lord, never given as a baptismal name) was common among the Jews. Our Version, being taken chiefly from the Latin which has no Article, often omits it before the word Christ, though it is remarkable that it almost invariably says "the Baptist."

(5) *That a millstone were hanged about his neck, &c.*] This was an ancient punishment, especially among the Syrians. Among the Jews the phrase became proverbial for *inevitable destruction,* and according to one authority, they sometimes punished sacrilegious persons in this mode, viz.: "in mare Sodomæ dejicere lapide aeneo." To make a body sink in the upbearing waters of the Dead Sea, it would be absolutely necessary to fasten a weight to it: this

has been proved by very recent experiments there. The millstone spoken of in the text was of a large size, the original expression conveying the sense of a mill wrought, not by hand, but by an ass.

(6) *Cut it off, and cast it from thee.*] See Section XLI., Note 16.

(7) *Where their worm dieth not, &c.*] In the valley of Hinnom, where children had been formerly sacrificed in the fire to Moloch, the Jews kept fires continually burning to consume dead carcases (see Section XLI., Note 13). Thus it was emblematical of Gehenna, or hell, in the eternal punishments of which we know, from Josephus and others, that the Jews believed. Thus our Lord, by this reference to their method of disposing of the dead, spoke of what they perfectly understood.—A figurative allusion to the worm of a *corroding conscience,* as tormenting the wicked hereafter, is not excluded by a literal interpretation of this passage; and one of the ancients strongly expresses this thought, by saying that "the marrow of the backbone of a wicked man turned into a fierce serpent."—On the Eternity of Future Punishments, see Section CXIV., Note 10.

hell,—into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and *where* the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, *inciting thee to lust or envy*, pluck it out and cast it from thee; it is better for thee to enter into Life [into the Kingdom of God, MARK] with one eye, rather than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire, where their worm dieth not, and *where* the fire (*their fire*) is not quenched. For every one of those offenders shall be salted with fire;<sup>(9)</sup> and, *as the Law requires that every sacrifice (the flesh of every animal sacrificed) shall be salted with salt<sup>k</sup>, to preserve it as a sacred offering from corruption, so shall they be preserved entire that they may endure for ever in torment.* Salt is a good thing, but if the salt have lost his saltness and become insipid, wherewith will ye season it?<sup>l</sup> *And so what can renew you, if, by retaining your offending members and corrupt affections, your Christianity shall lose its savour? you will be like a sacrifice without salt, and can never become acceptable to God.* Have, therefore, this excellent salt,—the preserving and purifying principle of Christian piety and self-denial,—in yourselves;<sup>m</sup> and, *as an evidence of it, cease henceforth from these worldly disputings, and have peace, which is the great bond of unity, one with another.<sup>n</sup>*

Take heed therefore that ye despise not one of these little ones, *regardless whether ye place stumbling-blocks in their way*: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels<sup>o</sup> (*those holy spirits who minister unto them*) do always behold the face of My Father<sup>(9)</sup> which is in heaven, *waiting to receive His gracious commands on their behalf.* And you have a greater instance still of the divine condescension and love manifested towards them; for the Son of man is come to save even that which was lost<sup>p</sup>—*much more to watch over and preserve the least of His redeemed from evil.* How think ye? *consider how it is in the ordinary occurrences* condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John iii. 17.—This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 16.

(9) *For every one shall be salted with fire.*] The literal interpretation of this difficult passage (as given above) carries with it the greatest weight of authority. Yet there is a good figurative sense, which the illative particle, *For*, (referring it, as in the case of the words following the Lord's Prayer, to something further back in the discourse,) does not exclude. On this supposition, "every one," in the passage, would mean every disciple of Christ. St. Paul says, that "the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is" (1 Cor. iii. 13); and St. Peter, that faith shall be "tried with fire," as gold is purged in the furnace (1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 12). The text therefore may teach us, figuratively, that in the same manner as Salt was indispensable to the typical sacrifices, to render them pure and incorrupt for God's table, so, to the Spiritual Sacrifice, that of the Christian heart, the "fiery

<sup>k</sup> And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering; with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt. Lev. ii. 13.

<sup>l</sup> — it is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord unto thee and to thy seed with thee. Numb. xviii. 19.

And thou shalt offer them before the Lord, and the priests shall cast salt upon them. Ezek. xliii. 24.

<sup>m</sup> If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is therefore good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Matt. v. 13.

<sup>n</sup> Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt. Col. iv. 6.

<sup>o</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. xii. 18.

Be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Heb. xii. 14.

<sup>p</sup> The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. Pa. xxxiv. 7.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb. i. 14.

<sup>q</sup> For God sent not His Son into the world to

trials" and mortifications of life (though not invariably producing their effect, for Salt can lose its efficacy) are the seasoning which eat the principle of corruption out of it, and make it, as St. Paul describes, "a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God" (Phil. iv. 18).—Whether the literal, or the figurative, sense be preferred, the same momentous inference may be drawn: both alike teach the imperative necessity of a conduct answerable to our Christian calling.

(9) *Their angels do always behold the face of My Father.*] That every good man had a particular guardian angel to watch over him was a common notion among the Jews, and it has been supposed, from Acts xii. 15, that the disciples believed it. Several of the Fathers and some eminent Moderns have retained the doctrine, but it is not now generally supported.—See Section X, Note 2, on the general Ministry of Angels.

¶ Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Lev. xix. 17.

Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself, and discover not a secret to another. Prov. xxv. 9.

If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him. Luke xvii. 3.

¶ He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue. Prov. xviii. 23.

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more. 1 Cor. ix. 19.

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins. James v. 19, 20.

¶ One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses shall the matter be established. Deut. xix. 16.

¶ Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many: so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow. 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7.—Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 1 Tim. v. 20.

*of life*: If a man have a *flock* of an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine *safe in their pastures*, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more, *for the moment, at the recovery of that one sheep, than at the security of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Like unto this is the regard of God towards all His children; and even so it is not the will of your Father*<sup>(10)</sup> which is in heaven (*it is His highest displeasure*), that any one of these little ones should perish *through the wickedness or neglect of others. In your solicitude, then, for the best interests of your fellow creatures, learn to imitate your great common Benefactor.*

Moreover, *in order to avoid offences as much as possible, and to retrieve the weak*, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go *first and mildly* tell him his fault between thee and him alone: ¶ if he shall *so* hear thee *as to confess his error, and promise amendment for the future*, thou hast gained thy brother<sup>r</sup>—*securing his friendship to thyself as well as conferring a lasting advantage on him.* But if he will not hear thee, then, *without hastily despairing of him*, take with thee one or two more *discreet persons*, that, *as the Law directs*, in (at) the mouth of two or three witnesses every word and matter which affects his condemnation may be *fairly and perfectly* established.<sup>s</sup> And if, *after this*, he shall *continue incorrigible* and neglect to hear them, tell it *in public* unto the Church;<sup>(11)</sup> but if he neglect to hear *even the whole Church*,<sup>t</sup> then let him be unto thee

(10) *It is not the will of your Father, &c.*] From hence it appears, in contradiction to any supposed decrees of God, that even those who truly believe in Christ, and are of the number of those whom God would save from perishing, may still be so "offended" as to fall from the faith, and be lost at last. We cannot suppose that such dreadful woes would be denounced against men for doing what it was impossible they could accomplish.

(11) *Tell it unto the Church.*] While Christians formed a small body, taken out of the rest of a city or nation, the superior ministers of the Church solemnly admonished offending members in the Lord's name, and corrected those among whom differences or scandals had arisen. If the offending party refused to regard their censure, they could exclude him from their community: so in the Corinthian Church, when a member of it was living with a person who had been his father's wife, St. Paul directs them to cast out the man who had done this deed; and he was to be given up to the malice of Satan, that peradven-

ture the day of adversity might yet lead him to repentance (see 1 Cor. v. 1—5). But when at length congregations increased in number in any particular place, presiding elders or bishops were set over them by the Apostles. Thus distinct churches became named after their localities; but though distinct, they still constituted united Churches of the *One Catholic and Apostolic Church*: they were One in every other respect. So it is said (Acts ii. 47), "the Lord added to the Church such as should be saved." From some ambiguity in the term "Church," modern Separatists have hastily imagined that each separate congregation formed in itself an independent Church.—There is a similar ambiguity in the term *bishop* or overseer, and a similar misuse is made of it. That Greek term is also applied to presbyters or elders, but this does not prove that it is not used *also* in a more exclusive sense. The presbyters are overseers of their own flock, and there are overseers over the presbyters themselves. Such were Timothy (1 Tim. i. 3); and Titus (Tit. i. 5).

as the Jews esteem an heathen man and a publican: " *hold no more communion with him, for such must be avoided by all who have any love of goodness.* Verily I say unto all of you, *My disciples, as I said unto Peter, Whatsoever ye shall thus bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall thus loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven:*<sup>(12)</sup> *your solemn determinations, whether as to ex-communication of incorrigible offenders or re-admission of the penitent, I will ratify.* Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask in *My name for their guidance in any such determinations,* it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.<sup>v</sup> For where two or three (*even a few*) are gathered together in My name, *requesting any good gift or blessing for My sake,* there am I *invisibly present* in the midst of them<sup>w(13)</sup> *to aid their petitions and to intercede with the Father on their behalf.*

Then Peter,—*struck with the novelty of the command that universal forbearance must be shewn to offenders, or thinking it might be abused by wicked men,*—came to Him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I *continue* to forgive him? *must I do so till seven times?*<sup>x(14)</sup> Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times, but, *Until seventy times seven—even as often as he offends and truly repents; for he must sooner be wearied with offending than thou with pardoning.*

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven to be likened, in this respect, unto a certain king which would take account of (*settle accounts with*) those of his servants who were appointed to collect his revenue. And when he had begun to reckon with them, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents<sup>(15)</sup> of silver: but forasmuch

And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day I repent, thou shalt forgive him. Luke xvii. 4.

<sup>u</sup> Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. Rom. xvi. 17.

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly... And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed. 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14.

If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. 2 John 10.

<sup>v</sup> And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My name I will do it. John xiv. 13, 14.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. John xvi. 24.

<sup>w</sup> Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. John xx. 19.

<sup>x</sup> Many a time turned He His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath. Ps. lxxviii. 38, turn again to thee, saying,

(12) *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, &c.]* See Section LXX., Note 5.

(13) *Where two or three are gathered together in My name, &c.]* These words, with the promise they contain, have reference, in their strict and primary sense, to the Apostles as such, and to the execution of their important office. But, like other passages in this discourse and elsewhere, they may in a qualified sense be applied to Christians—such, at least, as are really united in the faith—in every age. They seem to contain a general promise in encouragement of Social Prayer, more especially under trying and peculiar circumstances. It was said by the Rabbinical writers, that "Wherever two sat conversing on the Law, there the Shechinah was among them."

This passage has been quoted as countenancing meetings apart from the Church, and even as justifying street-preaching; but it by no means follows that men meet in the name of Christ, be-

cause they say or even think they do so. Our Lord Himself warns us that "many shall come in His name, and shall deceive many."

(14) *Till seven times?] A number commonly used to denote frequency (see Ps. cxix. 164; Prov. xxiv. 16). From a kindred passage at Luke xvii. 3, 4, it seems clear that Forgiveness of an offending brother (one with whom we are particularly connected) is conditional on his repentance: for such Forgiveness implies restoration to former friendship and affection. And the duty of shewing 'Love to Enemies' is not thereby contradicted; for with mankind in general this is practicable, even while they persist in their enmity. Different persons and duties are spoken of.*

(15) *Ten thousand talents.] The talent was the highest denomination of money, and, on the lowest computation, this sum would amount to 1,875,000l.: to more than double, by the Jewish talent. The hundred pence due to the implacable servant would only amount to 3l. 2s. 6d.*

† — he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold. Exod. xxii. 3.

The creditor is come to take my two sons to be bondmen. 2 Kings iv. 1.

— which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Isa. l. 1.

as he had not *wherewithal* to pay, his lord commanded him, *according to the custom of the East*, to be sold as a *slave*, and also his wife and children and all that he had, and *some payment of the debt* to be made *with the price of them*. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him (*prostrated himself at his feet*, Gr.), saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will *do my utmost endeavour* to pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion *towards him*, and loosed (*discharged*) him, and *freely forgave him the whole debt*. But the same servant, *who had been thus nobly dealt with by a gracious master*, went out and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands *fiercely* on him, and took him by the throat *to drag him to the magistrate*, saying, Pay me *without further delay* that *which thou owest me*. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and *in like manner earnestly* besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and *in time* I will pay thee all. And he would not *wait nor show the least forbearance*, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay *the last farthing* of the debt.

So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were *very sorry for the unhappy debtor*, and *shocked at such inhuman cruelty*; and they came and *faithfully* told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called (*summoned*) him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I *freely* forgave thee all that *great debt*, because thou *so piteously* desiredst me *so to do*. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy *poor* fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was *very wroth with him*, and, *revoking his former release from the debt*, delivered him *over* to the tormentors (*gaolers*), till he should pay all that was due unto him.—So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.\*<sup>(16)</sup>

\* Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard. Prov. xxi. 13.

For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy. James ii. 13.

(16) *So likewise shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you, &c.*] In this Parable three things are set in opposition: namely, the lord to his servant, an immense sum to a trifle, and the most extraordinary clemency to the greatest cruelty.—Thus, what are men compared with God? how vast a debt of sin we owe Him, which we are totally unable to pay (see Pa. xlix. 7, 8); how trifling, comparatively speaking, are the offences which our brethren commit against us! The debt of the unmerciful servant, for which he received a *full* and free discharge, was *six hundred thousand times as much* as what he re-

fused to remit. Nothing can more strongly contrast the never-failing mercy of God with the frequent severity of man; it silences whatever justification or palliation of revenge ingenuity may draw, either from the nature or number of the offences committed or the dignity of the injured parties. We also learn from this Parable, that God's pardons in this life are not absolute; but (according to the petition of the Lord's prayer) are in some measure conditional upon our dealings with others. We may, by not performing the condition, forfeit our pardon and so our sins again become charged upon us.

## SECTION LXXVI.

THE SEVENTY DISCIPLES RECEIVE A CHARGE AND ARE SENT FORTH.

Luke x. 1—12, 16.

**A**FTER these things the Lord appointed, *in addition to the twelve Apostles*, other Seventy<sup>(1)</sup> (*Seventy others*) also of His disciples; and sent them before His face, by two and two,<sup>a</sup>—*that so they might give mutual assistance and be witnesses one to another*,—into every city and place whither He Himself, *when on His way to Jerusalem*, would afterwards come.

Therefore,—*because they were entering on so large a field of service*,—He said unto them, The harvest truly is great and plenteous, but the labourers to gather it in are few (*Many souls wait for instruction, but few are able to give it them*): pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will direct men's hearts to undertake this work of mercy, and that He would send forth more labourers into His harvest.<sup>b</sup> Go your ways, and be steadfast and zealous in your work: behold, I send you forth on an employment full of peril, even as inoffensive lambs sent among crafty wolves. Yet, as you are under the care of Divine Providence, carry neither purse for money, nor scrip for provisions, nor shoes<sup>c</sup> (2) save those which you wear; and, as your allotted time is short, salute no man ceremoniously by the way,<sup>d</sup> (3) for such needless forms will only detain you from your main business. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, according to the usual form of salutation, Peace be to this house.<sup>e</sup> And if the son of Peace<sup>(4)</sup> (*a worthy person*) be there, the benefit of your peace shall rest upon it; if he be not worthy, your peace shall not be lost, but it shall turn to you again<sup>f</sup> in blessings on your own heads. And in the same house remain till ye depart from that place, eating and drinking such things as they have to give; and this you may do without scruple, for you bestow

<sup>a</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour: for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow. Eccles. iv. 9, 10.

<sup>b</sup> Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course. 2 Thess. iii. 1.

<sup>c</sup> And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Luke xxii. 36.

<sup>d</sup> Go thy way: if thou meet any man salute him not, and if any salute thee, answer him not again. 2 Kings iv. 29.

<sup>e</sup> Peace on earth, and good will towards men. Luke ii. 14.

<sup>f</sup> So shall My word be that goeth forth of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void. Isa. lv. 11.

My prayer returned into mine own bosom. Ps. xxxv. 13.

(1) *The Lord appointed other Seventy.*] Moses selected Seventy Elders as his coadjutors in the government (Numb. xi. 16), which may account for the number of disciples here appointed; and upon those Elders the Jewish Lawgiver was permitted to confer in some degree the spirit of Prophecy, as our Lord here confers Miraculous power on the Seventy disciples. So the number of the Apostles "sent to visit all nations" may correspond with the twelve messengers sent by Moses to visit the promised Land; or else, as some think, with the twelve patriarchs.—This mission of the Seventy was on the same errand with the previous one of the Twelve, and their powers were the same: but the power, afterwards exercised, of conferring the Holy Ghost for the

edification of the Ministry by laying on of hands, belonged only to the Apostles, as it now belongs to their successors, the Bishops of the Catholic Church.

(2) *Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes.*] See Section LIX., Note 3.

(3) *Salute no man by the way.*] The salutations in the East were somewhat prolix and ceremonious, extending on some occasions even to prostrations of the body, and consisting of long wishes of happiness to the person saluted, with particular inquiries concerning his welfare.

(4) *The son of Peace.*] This was a common Hebraism, by which a man is styled the son of any good or bad quality which he possesses. So Judas is called "the son of perdition."



<sup>s</sup> Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. 1 Cor. ix. 14.

The workman is worthy of his meat. Matt. x. 10.

The labourer is worthy of his reward. 1 Tim. v. 18.

<sup>b</sup> Whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake. 1 Cor. x. 27.

<sup>i</sup> But they shook off the dust of their feet against them. Acts xiii. 61.

And I heard another Voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Rev. xviii. 4.

<sup>k</sup> And thou Capernaum which art exalted unto heaven shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. Matt. xi. 23, 24.

<sup>l</sup> That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him. John v. 23.—He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit. 1 Thess. iv. 8.

*spiritual nourishment in return, and the labourer is well worthy of his hire.<sup>s</sup> Go not from house to house, as though you were fond of change and solicitous about your comforts. And into whatever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you,<sup>b</sup> and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not and hear not your words, openly exhibit this sign that you abandon them as obnoxious to God's wrath: go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off,<sup>i</sup> (<sup>2</sup>) as a testimony against you that we decline all further intercourse with you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this (know this assuredly), that the kingdom of God, although ye refuse to accept it, is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you My disciples, That in that last and terrible Day, when all shall be brought to their account, it shall be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom, who sinned not against light so strong, than for that ungrateful city.<sup>k</sup> And that you may be encouraged in your work of love, I make this declaration, He that heareth you as My messengers, in effect heareth Me, and shall receive proportionate reward for his obedience; and, in like manner, he that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me—<sup>l</sup>even the blessed Father in heaven whose credentials I bear, and which I now delegate unto you.*

## SECTION LXXVII.

JESUS GOES UP TO THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES, AND TEACHES IN THE TEMPLE.

John vii. 2—53.

<sup>a</sup> Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles unto the Lord. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days, all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths that

**N**OW the Jews' feast of Tabernacles <sup>a</sup> (<sup>1</sup>) (a feast kept chiefly in memory of their forefathers abiding in tents in the Wilderness) was at hand. And it was now some time since Jesus had visited Jerusalem: therefore His brethren (His kinsmen) taunted Him with His continued absence, and said unto Him, Depart hence from Galilee,

(<sup>2</sup>) *Even the very dust, &c.*] See Section LIX., Note 4.

(<sup>1</sup>) *The Jews' Feast of Tabernacles.*] This feast was so called because, while it lasted, the Jews dwelt in booths (made of the boughs of trees) upon the flat roofs of their houses, in imi-

tation of the temporary tabernacles of their ancestors in the wilderness. It was called also the feast of In-Gathering, because one of its objects was to return thanks for the vintage, as well as for other fruits which at this time (about the beginning of October) were gathered in.

*if thou art wise and wilt hearken to our counsel; and go into Judea to the approaching feast, that thy disciples in that quarter also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth anything worthy of note in secret, and (but) he himself seeketh to be known openly (to come into public notice and act with authority): if therefore thou canst do these things at all times and in any place, shew thyself to the world, and convert the rulers and chief Pharisees.*—For neither did these his brethren yet believe in Him,<sup>b</sup> seeing in Him none of that grandeur which they had looked for in the Messiah, and that He made no attempt to raise Himself or His family in the world.

your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. Lev. xxiii. 34, 42, 43.

Then said Jesus unto them, My time for going up to Jerusalem and manifesting Myself thus publicly, as you suggest, is not yet come:<sup>c</sup> but there is no hindrance in your case, and your time is always fit and ready. The world cannot hate you,<sup>d</sup> for you take part with it, and do nothing to offend it; but Me it hateth, because I plainly testify of it (bear witness concerning it) that the works thereof are evil.<sup>e</sup> Go ye up therefore, without waiting for Me, unto this feast: I go not up yet to this feast, for My most suitable time of doing so is not yet full come.—And when He had said these words unto them, He abode a few days more still in Galilee.

<sup>b</sup> Jesus said, A prophet is not without honour, but among his own kin, and in his own house. Mark vi. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee, Mine hour is not yet come. John ii. 4.

<sup>d</sup> The world would love his own. John xv. 19.

<sup>e</sup> And this is the condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light because their deeds were evil. John iii. 19.

But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up unto the feast; not openly however, but privately and as it were in secret, that He might avoid tumult among the people, and frustrate any premature designs of His enemies against Him.

Then the Jews sought for Him at the feast, and said one to another, Where is He? And there was much murmuring (private talking) among the people concerning Him: for some said, He is certainly a good man:<sup>f</sup> others said, Nay, but that can hardly be, for he deceiveth (misleadeth) the people, keeping only among the poor and ignorant, and not venturing himself or his doctrines among the wise and great.—Howbeit no man among His own followers and well-wishers spake openly, or with freedom, their good opinion of Him, for fear of the rulers of the Jews,<sup>g</sup> who had decreed that if any should confess that He were the Christ, they should be excluded from the synagogues.

<sup>f</sup> The multitude took Him for a prophet. Matt. xxi. 46.

And there came a fear on all, and they glorified God, saying, That a Great Prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited His people. Luke vii. 16.

<sup>g</sup> They feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. John ix. 22.

Now about the midst of the feast,<sup>(\*)</sup> when the appointed sacrifices were less numerous and the attention of the people had become less engaged, Jesus went up into the Temple and taught. And the Jews, who before had been prejudiced

(\*) About the midst of the feast. Thirteen young bullocks with other animals (see Numb. xxix. 13) were sacrificed on the first day of this feast, and the victims gradually decreased in

number down to the last. This lessening of the sacrifices would give the people more leisure to attend to Jesus.

<sup>b</sup> And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom? Matt. xiii. 54.

<sup>i</sup> I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. John viii. 28.

For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. John xii. 49.

<sup>k</sup> Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word. John viii. 43.

<sup>l</sup> For men to search their own glory, is not glory. Prov. xxv. 27.

Jesus answered, If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing. John viii. 54.

<sup>m</sup> The innocent and righteous slay those not. Exod. xxiii. 7.

<sup>n</sup> Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him. Matt. xii. 14.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath-day. John v. 16.

<sup>o</sup> And many of them said, He hath a devil and is mad: Why hear ye him? John x. 20.

<sup>p</sup> Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked. And on the same day was the Sabbath. John v. 8, 9.

<sup>q</sup> Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This

against Him, when they now heard Him, marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters<sup>(1)</sup> (*How hath he obtained such complete knowledge of the Scriptures*), having never learned<sup>h</sup> of the Scribes or in the schools? Jesus answered them and said, *I derive My teaching from no human masters: My doctrine is not Mine<sup>(2)</sup> (invented by Me), but it is also His that sent Me,<sup>i</sup> from whom I immediately received it. And if any man will honestly resolve to do His Will, laying aside his carnal prejudices, he shall then be enabled to form a just opinion of My claims; he shall know of the doctrine<sup>k</sup> I teach, whether it be of God, or whether I speak only of Myself. There is, however, a very simple test to ascertain this: he that speaketh of himself in such a manner as to offend no one, is commonly one that seeketh his own glory;<sup>l</sup> but he that seeketh only His glory that sent him, the same is a true prophet, and no unrighteousness (no deceit or imposture) is in him.—But see how great is your own insincerity and hypocrisy! Did not Moses give you the Law, more especially warning you not to injure the innocent? and yet none (not one) of you, with all your pretended zeal for the Law, truly keepeth the Law.<sup>m</sup> Even now you are meditating a flagrant breach of the sixth commandment: I put the question plainly to your consciences, Why go ye about to kill Me?<sup>n</sup>*

The people, who were not generally privy to the designs of the Pharisees, answered to this and said, Thou hast a devil<sup>o</sup> (*Thou art surely possessed and out of thy senses*): who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto some of them, who He knew entertained these designs; *Ye persecute Me, because, when I was last among you, I cured the poor cripple at Bethesda on the Sabbath-day: I have done among you one work<sup>p</sup> only on that day, and therefore, notwithstanding it was a work of mercy and one quickly performed,—ye all marvel at My boldness, and at once condemn me as a Sabbath-breaker.<sup>q</sup>—You do not judge with common equity; and I will give a proof of your inconsistency: Moses gave unto you the precept of Circumcision—(not, it should be observed, because it is originally of Moses,<sup>(2)</sup> but*

(<sup>1</sup>) *How knoweth this man letters?*] The learning or Science chiefly cultivated in Judea was the knowledge and interpretation of the Scriptures. The original word is literally so rendered in our Version at 2 Tim. iii. 15.

(<sup>2</sup>) *My doctrine is not Mine.*] Christ is here speaking of Himself as He is a Prophet, sent by His Father into the world. The very office of a prophet requires that he should not deliver his own mind and doctrine, nor seek his own glory, but speak all things in the name, and do all things for the glory, of Him that sent him. So Balaam declares, that if Balak would give him his house full of silver and gold, he could not do anything of himself (see Numb. xxiv. 13).

When, therefore, Christ says "My doctrine is not Mine," He speaks not in respect of Knowledge, for "in Christ," says St. Paul, "are hid all the treasures of Wisdom" (Col. ii. 3); nor in respect of Authority, for He elsewhere styles it "His Word," and "His Commandment;" nor in respect of His Will, which was always one with that of the Father: He only denies, therefore, that He spake as a false prophet.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Not because it is of Moses.*] This remark that Circumcision was older than the time of Moses (see Gen. xvii. 10), may have been introduced here to show, that had Moses instituted it, he would probably have ordered it so that it should not interfere with his law of the Sabbath;

of the more ancient fathers,—being continued only by him from the days of Abraham): that precept commands you to circumcise on the eighth day; and ye on the Sabbath-day, if it should happen to fall on the eighth day, circumcise a man-child.<sup>(\*)</sup> If a man, then, on the Sabbath-day may receive Circumcision, in order that the ritual law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at Me with any shew of reason or justice, because I have made a man every whit whole (sound throughout) on the Sabbath-day? I considered rather the superior law of Charity, which is coeval with the human race, and is the great end of all the Divine Laws.—Judge not then superficially and according to the outward appearance of things, but consider the principle and inherent goodness of an action, that so ye may judge righteous judgment.

Then said some of them of Jerusalem, who were better acquainted with the designs of the Pharisees, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But lo, he speaketh boldly and openly in the Temple itself, and they say nothing unto him! Do the rulers know indeed (are they at last convinced) that this is the very Christ, and have they now abandoned their hostility to him? Howbeit there is this to be said in opposition to his pretensions: we know this man whence he is,<sup>†</sup> and that he is the son of Joseph by his wife Mary, but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth His parentage or whence He is.<sup>‡</sup>

Then Jesus, who knew all their thoughts and cavils, cried (spoke aloud) in the Temple as He taught, saying, Ye do indeed, according to your earthly notions, both know Me, and ye know whence I am—for ye are acquainted with My person and are aware of My earthly parentage: and yet, notwithstanding this, My mission is divine. I am not come, pretending of Myself to be a prophet; but He that sent Me is true to all His predictions and promises, whom ye, with all your boasted zeal, know not, for ye venture to deny His testimony of Me: but I perfectly know Him,<sup>§</sup> for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me as His Ambassador unto men. Thus have I a much higher original than you suppose.

Then they who were his enemies, enraged that the people should listen to such claims, sought to take (to apprehend) Him; but yet no man laid hands on Him, because Divine Power restrained them, and His appointed hour of being delivered up to their malice was not yet come. And many of the people, who now heard

man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day. John ix. 16.

<sup>†</sup> Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Matt. xiii. 55.

<sup>‡</sup> Who shall declare His generation? Isa. liii. 8.

<sup>§</sup> Ye say that He is your God; yet ye have not known Him: but I know Him, and if I should say I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know Him and keep His saying. John viii. 54, 55.

but he left it on its original footing, because "the Covenant that was confirmed before of God, the Law could not disannul" (see Gal. iii. 17).

(\*) Ye on the Sabbath-day circumcise.] The

reason which the Jews gave for this custom was, that Circumcision was an affirmative precept, the Sabbath a negative one, and that so the former made void the latter.

¶ Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come. John viii. 21.

The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. Luke xvii. 22.

¶ And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. Isa. xi. 12.

James, a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. James i. 1.

¶ When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days. On the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath. Lev. xxiii. 39.

On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work therein. Numb. xxix. 36.

¶ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. . . . Incline your ear unto Me, and your soul shall live. Isa. lv. 1, 3.

¶ And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. Isa. lviii. 11.

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John iv. 14.

(7) *In the last day, that great day of the feast.* ] On the seven preceding days the Jews offered sacrifices for all the nations of the world, but the eighth was a separate solemnity for Israel alone. They had a saying that "He who had not seen *that* day, had seen no rejoicing." Then was observed the custom of fetching water, with great pomp, from the spring called Siloam, which issued from a rock under the Temple: this they drank with joyful acclamations in memory of the miracle by which the thirst of their fathers was relieved in the desert; while, with the sound of the trumpet, a portion was brought as a drink-offering to the priest to mix with the wine of the Sacrifice, and to supplicate rain against the approaching seed-time. During this cere-

*Him, and had before seen His miracles, believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, if He be still to come, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done in proof of a divine mission?*

The chief Pharisees soon heard that the people murmured (*said privately*) such things concerning Him: and therefore the Pharisees, and with them the chief priests, alarmed at His increasing popularity, sent officers at once to take Him.—Then, when these were come, Jesus said unto them, *I well know your purpose, but for the present all machinations of man against Me are in vain: Yet a little while longer am I with you, and then I go (I ascend up) unto Him that sent Me hither from Our abode in heaven. In your day of calamity ye shall seek Me, not for persecution, but for protection, and shall not find Me; for ye "shall die in your sins," and where I then am, thither ye cannot come.*"

Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not be able to find him? Will he go unto the *unenlightened Hellenist Jews, now dispersed* among the Gentiles (*the Greeks*), to make proselytes of them; and will he teach even the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles themselves? What other meaning than this can he have? what manner (*what sort*) of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek Me and shall not find Me, and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

In the last day, that great day of the feast, (7) as the people were fetching water for the sacrifices with great joy and pomp from the fountain of Siloam, Jesus stood where He could be readily seen of all, and cried, saying, If any man *spiritually* thirst, let him come unto Me by faith, and drink <sup>z</sup> freely. He that believeth on Me, it shall be with him as the Scripture hath in effect said; Out of his belly (*from within him—even out of his inmost heart*) shall flow rivers of living water, "springing up into everlasting life."

mony the people sang, from Isaiah xii. 3, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation."—The Jews allowed (from Isa. lv. 1; Zech. xiii. 1), that this water was emblematical of the Holy Spirit, who (they expected) would fall upon them—as they allege that the Spirit did on the prophet Jonas while engaged in this very action. As it was always our Lord's custom to draw spiritual instruction from sensible occurrences, He takes occasion of the circumstance of water being thus brought from Siloam, to remind them of Isaiah's prophecy (in the 55th Chap.), and summons them to come to Himself as the "True Fountain of Living Water," in opposition to the broken cisterns provided by men.

But (*And*) this spake He of the *Holy Spirit*,<sup>a</sup> which all they that believe on Him should *hereafter* receive, and some in a *miraculous manner*; for the Holy Ghost was not yet *fully given*,<sup>(\*)</sup> because that Jesus, *who was to send Him from the Father*, was not yet glorified (*ascended up to heaven*).—Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this *remarkable* saying, said, Of a truth this is The Prophet<sup>a</sup> of whom *Moses spake*, and in whose days *greater effusion of the Spirit is promised*. Others also said *plainly*, This is the Christ.<sup>b</sup> But some *still raised objections* and said, Shall the Christ come out of *so obscure a place as Galilee*?<sup>c</sup> Hath not the Scripture *expressly* said, That the Christ cometh of the seed of David,<sup>d</sup> and out of the town of Bethlehem,<sup>e</sup> where David was<sup>f</sup> in his youth?—So there was a division (*a difference of opinion*) among the people because of Him. And some of them, *who were least favourably disposed*, would *now* have taken Him and *delivered Him up*; but the officers themselves *hesitated*, being much moved with the *dignity of His demeanour and the discourse which they had heard*, and no man laid hands on Him.

Then came the officers *back* to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man!<sup>g</sup> He at once declared to us with what object we had come, and taught with such truth and majesty that we were held *irresistibly back and overawed from our purpose*. Then the Pharisees answered them *upbraidingly*, Are ye also,—fools that ye are!—deceived by this man? Tell us, Have any of the rulers, or of the distinguished Pharisees who are set over you,—who must be the best judges of what is right,—yet believed on him?<sup>h</sup> But this

<sup>a</sup> Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. Jer. xxiii. 5.

<sup>b</sup> But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Mic. v. 2.

<sup>c</sup> And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite. 1 Sam. xvii. 58.

<sup>d</sup> For He taught them as One having authority, and not as the Scribes. Matt. vii. 29.—And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. Luke iv. 22.

<sup>e</sup> Therefore I said, Surely these are poor, they are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them. Jer. v. 4, 5.

(\*) For the Holy Ghost was not yet given.] The extraordinary operation of the Holy Spirit had ceased with the prophets Zechariah and Malachi: hence the ignorance of the Ephesians (Acts xix. 2). There was some manifestation of this influence to Zacharias and Elizabeth on the approach of the Messiah, but the full effusion, promised by the prophets under the metaphor of water, did not take place till after the Ascension.

(\*) Never man spake like this man.] It is recorded by Plutarch (in Maro, 431), that when Marus sent soldiers to kill Mark Antony, they were so overcome by his extraordinary elo-

<sup>a</sup> For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed. Isa. xlv. 8.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. . . . And I will put My Spirit within you. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Acts ii. 16, 17.

<sup>a</sup> The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto Him ye shall hearken. Deut. xviii. 15.

<sup>b</sup> Behold My Servant whom I uphold, Mine elect in whom My soul delighteth: I have put My Spirit upon Him. Isa. xlii. 1.

<sup>c</sup> And Nathaniel said unto Him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? John i. 46.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David: He will not turn from it. Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. Ps. cxxxii. 11.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. Isa. xi. 1.

quence, that they were affected to tears, and exclaimed, "Who could speak as he does?" But the case of our Lord was different in its circumstances, and afforded less scope for effect. He did not plead for His life; He addressed a capricious multitude, and His theme was purely a spiritual one. The great power with which our Lord must have spoken, can hardly fail to have struck every reader of His wonderful discourses, but we must take care not to understand merely human eloquence. We are to go far beyond this: He spake by the unerring Spirit of God, and His Word demands, not our praise, but our adoration.

people,—*this contemptible rabble*,—who knoweth not the real declarations and intention of the Law, are cursed with blindness, and, poor weak creatures that they are, are quickly led astray!

<sup>l</sup> There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night. John iii. 1, 2.

<sup>k</sup> Thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the Judge that shall be in those days, and enquire: and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment. Deut. xvii. 9.

At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses shall the matter be established. Deut. xix. 15.

He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. Prov. xviii. 13.

Nicodemus (he that came to Jesus by night<sup>l</sup>), being a counsellor and one of them, saith unto them, Doth our Law permit us to judge (to condemn) any man, before it hear him in his defence, and know, by regular course of evidence, what he doeth<sup>k</sup> worthy of condemnation? They, without replying to this argument of Nicodemus, answered contemptuously and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee, and an abettor of this factious band? Such would seem to be the case from the part thou art taking. Search and look, for thou wilt find that out of Galilee ariseth no such Prophet<sup>(10)</sup> as Messiah is to be.—And upon this the assembly broke up abruptly, without coming to any resolution about Jesus: and every man went unto his own house.

## SECTION LXXVIII.

AN ADULTERESS IS BROUGHT BEFORE JESUS, WHO DECLINES THE OFFICE OF A JUDGE, BUT ADMONISHES HER AS A TEACHER.

John viii. 1—11.

<sup>a</sup> And His (Messiah's) feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. Zech. xiv. 4.

JESUS went for retirement unto the Mount of Olives,<sup>a(11)</sup> which stood about a mile eastward of Jerusalem. And early in the morning He came again into the Temple: and all the people, who had resorted thither to worship previous to their return home from the feast, came unto Him; and He sat down, and taught them. And as He was teaching, the Scribes and Pharisees, who had been seeking a fit opportunity to ensnare Him, brought unto Him a woman taken in the very act of adultery;<sup>(12)</sup> for well knowing His

<sup>(10)</sup> *Out of Galilee ariseth no Prophet.*] This must have been the language of prejudice, and it shows us what power Prejudice has to close the eyes against the clearest truth; for at least the chief priests and Pharisees knew, (if the ignorance of the people could be excused,) that Jesus was born at Bethlehem (see Matt. ii. 4, 5). They must have meant, that the "Great Prophet" who was to come should not rise out of Galilee; for, wicked as they were, they were not ignorant of what their Scriptures contained: the prophet Jonah was certainly of that country (2 Kings xiv. 25), if not also Nathan, Habakkuk, and Amos.

<sup>(11)</sup> *The Mount of Olives.*] To this celebrated Mount our Lord often retired for meditation, as the prophet Zechariah had predicted. It was so named from the Olive trees which abounded there, and which still maintain their place on

their native mountain, growing spontaneously upon its sides and summit. Although shoots from the original trees may yet remain, those of our Lord's time were no doubt cut down by the Romans to construct warlike machines for besieging the city, as well as to make some of the numerous Crosses required for the prisoners they had taken.

<sup>(12)</sup> *A woman taken in adultery.*] It should be observed that the authenticity of this narrative has been questioned; but the arguments (both internal and external) for retaining it, greatly preponderate. Much the greater number of manuscripts contain it. Nearly all the authorities admit that it is founded on fact, but some suppose that, being preserved by Tradition, it was added to this Gospel by St. John's disciples with the approbation of Papias, and at length was received by the Church. The reader can consult Mill and also Scholz for full statements of the controversy.

unbounded mercy and benevolence to all, they expected that He would at once pardon her crime. And when they had set her in the midst of the people assembled, they say unto Him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery—in the very act. Now Moses in the Law commanded us that such criminals should be stoned;<sup>b</sup> but what sayest thou? This they said, not that they desired further authority how to act, but tempting Him to a decision, that they might have opportunity to accuse Him: for if He set aside the Law, that would lessen Him with the people; and if He adhered to the letter of the Law, then He would be rendered obnoxious to the Romans, who had of late assumed to themselves the supreme power of capital punishment. But Jesus never claimed for Himself the power of the magistrate, and well knowing the malice of the woman's accusers, He considered them to be unworthy of an answer; wherefore He merely stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground,<sup>c</sup> as though He heard or regarded them not. So when they continued asking Him (pressing for a decision), He lifted up Himself, and said unto them, He that is without the like sin among you who now accuse this woman, let him first cast a stone (the stone, Gr.) at her.<sup>c</sup> And leaving them to their own reflections, He again stooped down and wrote on the ground—thus giving them an opportunity of withdrawing. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went abashed out of the Temple one by one, beginning at the eldest (or chief men) who had been the speakers, even unto the last. And Jesus was left alone

<sup>b</sup> If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city and lie with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die. Deut. xxii. 23, 24.

<sup>c</sup> The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him [or her] to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. Deut. xvii. 7.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.... Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Rom. ii. 1, 23.

(<sup>a</sup>) That such should be stoned.] The punishment of a virgin betrothed was *lapidation*, but in the case of a married woman, it was (for some time at least) death by strangling. Afterwards Custom appears to have introduced stoning in both cases (see Ezek. xvi. 38, 40).

(<sup>c</sup>) With His finger wrote on the ground.] It was not unusual with the Jews thus to write some sentence worthy of memory. We must be content to remain ignorant of what was written on this occasion; but, according to the rule in the trial of a woman suspected of this offence, it appears that the priest was to take up some of the dust of the floor of the tabernacle, and write in it the curses denounced (see Numb. v. 17, &c.). Jesus, by conforming as nearly as possible to this, might show His unwillingness to take cognizance of this cause unless the guilty accusers would abide the consequence of being involved in the same curse.—Another suggestion is, that our Lord wrote the sentence from Jer. xvii. 13, which would record the wickedness of these Pharisees, together with the judgment in the case, viz., that they should “be written in the earth:” this citation would be in harmony with our Lord’s late invitation to all to come unto Him and drink of the “living waters,”—the words which immediately follow in that prophet. The expression “as though He heard them not”

does not occur in the original, being added as explanatory by our translators.

(<sup>b</sup>) Let him first cast a stone.] The first stone was cast in form by the principal accuser as a signal to the other witnesses and bystanders, but, being of great bulk and weight, it was often fatal. St. Paul (as shown in the Margin) addresses the Jewish doctors themselves, and shows the natural equity of not condemning, when he who judges doeth the same things. Our Lord elsewhere describes them as an “adulterous generation.” To the fact of an extreme corruption of morals among his countrymen, Josephus bears ample testimony; and that the priests and scribes deeply participated in the general corruption, there is no reason to doubt, for even the Rabbinical writers supply abundant proof of the licentiousness of the most eminent of their Rabbis. So common was adultery in our Lord’s time, that the practice of trying suspected women by the waters of jealousy had been abolished, because, according to the Rabbinical comment, the trial was only effectual when the husband was innocent! Their partiality appears on the present occasion, for they brought forward only the woman, and not the man who had been guilty, whereas the law condemned both (see Deut. xxii. 24).



(without any of the accusers), and the woman remained standing in the midst of His disciples and the people.

When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none of the Pharisees left, but the woman only whom they had brought, He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned (sentenced, or attempted to punish) thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee<sup>a</sup> to death: great has been thy sin, but repent, and for the time to come stand in awe of the Divine judgment; go thy way now in peace, and sin no more.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> And Jesus said . . . Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? Luke xii. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. John v. 14.

### SECTION LXXIX.

JESUS SPEAKS MORE PLAINLY OF HIMSELF, AND DECLARES HIS EXISTENCE BEFORE ABRAHAM; UPON WHICH HIS ENEMIES ATTEMPT TO STONE HIM.

John viii. 12—59.

<sup>a</sup> I will also give Thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth. Isa. xlix. 6.

Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings. Mal. iv. 2.

In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men: and the Light shineth in darkness. John i. 4, 5.

I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. John xii. 46.

<sup>b</sup> And if any man hear My words and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. John xii. 47.

<sup>c</sup> Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

The sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre:

Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness. Ps. xlv. 6, 7.—My judgment is just, because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me. John v. 30.

<sup>d</sup> I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. John xvi. 33.

THEN again spake Jesus unto them on another occasion, saying, I am the true Light of the world: <sup>(1)</sup> he that followeth Me shall not walk in the ways of darkness, but shall have the light of Life.<sup>a</sup> The Pharisees therefore said unto Him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record therefore wants evidence to support it, and is not to be received as true merely upon thine own shewing.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I do bear record of Myself, yet My record is most true; for I know assuredly whence I came (even from the Father), and whither I go (unto Him again); but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go, for ye are blinded by your prejudices. Ye judge after the flesh—testing Me by external appearances, which alone your grovelling apprehensions can reach: I as yet judge no man,<sup>b</sup> for I am among you now as a Teacher and Saviour. And yet if I were to judge, My judgment is true<sup>c</sup> and supreme; for I am not alone<sup>d</sup> in what I determine, but I and the Father that sent Me unite in counsel. Also consider this, when you object that I bear record of Myself: It is written in your own Law <sup>(2)</sup> that

(1) *The Light of the world.*] The Jews said this of the first Adam. Christ applies it to Himself, the second Adam. Light is used as a metaphor of Happiness in the Old Testament (see Eccl. viii. 16; Ps. xcvi. 11), and especially of Knowledge (see Ps. cxix. 105, 130). It is an old and a just observation that Religion and Learning have ever flourished or fallen together.

(2) *It is written in your Law.*] Our Saviour here takes the lowest, but what was in fact undeniable, ground. It was also written that, in the case of a Prophet, his testimony of himself, when confirmed by miracles, was sufficient. Moses, after predicting "the Prophet like unto himself," supposes this very question: "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know thee

the testimony of two men is true<sup>e</sup> (*worthy of credit*), and sufficient to establish cases of the highest moment. I, then, that bear witness of Myself am one, and the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me<sup>f</sup> likewise, and therefore is another. His testimony ye cannot refuse, which is plainly given in your prophecies; and ye have lately heard it in the Voice which acknowledged Me at My baptism, as well as seen it in the many proofs of Omnipotence displayed through Me.

<sup>e</sup> At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. Deut. xvii. 6.

<sup>f</sup> If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of Me. . . . And the Father Himself, which hath sent Me, hath borne witness of Me. John v. 31, 32, 37.

Then said they unto Him, *But where is he whom thou callest thy Father, that we may see and interrogate him as a witness on thy behalf?* Jesus answered, *Ye neither truly know Me, nor My Father: if ye had known Me and valued Me as ye ought, ye should (would) have known My Father also, for We are One: ye would have recognized in My doctrine and works the proofs of Wisdom and Omnipotence; and ye would gratefully receive this most perfect manifestation of His will ever vouchsafed unto man.*

<sup>g</sup> If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also, and from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him. . . . He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. John xiv. 7, 9.

These words spake Jesus openly in the Treasury,<sup>(\*)</sup> as He taught in the Temple; and, although the Pharisees were greatly incensed, no man laid hands on Him; for His hour (the appointed time of His being delivered into their hands) was not yet come.

Then said Jesus again (on an occasion soon after) unto them, *I go My way shortly from among you, and, when Divine vengeance cometh to destroy you and your city, ye shall seek Me<sup>h</sup> in vain, and shall die in your sins; for whither I go, ye cannot come.<sup>i</sup> Then said the Jews among themselves, Will he kill himself<sup>(\*)</sup> that we cannot find him? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And He, in reply to this malicious insinuation of His committing suicide, said mildly unto them, *Ye know not what ye say: ye are from beneath, so that ye speak earthly things and cannot appreciate what I teach; I am from above, and have therefore spoken of the things of heaven, whither I go: ye are of this world, and are wholly wrapped up in its concerns; but I am not of this world.<sup>k</sup> I said therefore unto you—to warn you, if it were yet possible—that, unless ye be converted, ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not from your hearts that I am He (even the Great Prophet that was to come, the promised Messiah),**

<sup>h</sup> The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it. Luke xvii. 22.

<sup>i</sup> And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. Luke xvi. 26.

<sup>k</sup> He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all. John iii. 31.

word which the Lord hath not spoken?" and he replies, that every true Prophet may be known by his fruits, and by the accomplishment of that which he pretends to do (see Deut. xviii. 16, 21, 22).

(\*) *In the Treasury.*] The Treasury was that part of the Women's Court where the chests were placed for receiving the offerings of those who came to worship. It was conse-

quently a place of great and general concourse (see Mark xii. 41).

(\*) *Will he kill himself?*] This imputation of intended suicide was a wilful perversion of our Lord's meaning. Such an act, even according to the opinion of the Jews, involved high criminality; for, as appears from Josephus, the Pharisees taught that the lowest pit of hell was reserved for self-murderers.

<sup>1</sup> He that believeth not, shall be damned. Mark xvi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true. John vii. 28.

<sup>3</sup> As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. John iii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. John xii. 32.

<sup>5</sup> —declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the Resurrection from the dead. Rom. i. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Before his translation, Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God. Heb. xi. 5.

<sup>7</sup> And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done? John vii. 31.

<sup>8</sup> Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal life. Rom. ii. 6, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel. Col. i. 23.

<sup>10</sup> If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. Heb. x. 38.

<sup>11</sup> Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, —as the Truth is in Jesus. Eph. iv. 20, 21.

<sup>12</sup> I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts. Ps. cxix. 46.

Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. Rom. vi. 18.

Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James i. 25.

*then ye shall die in your sins,<sup>1</sup> and your destruction be on your own heads!*

Then said they *contemptuously* unto Him, Who, *then, forsooth* art thou—*whom dost thou pretend to be, speaking so highly of thyself?* And Jesus saith unto them, *I am even the same that I said unto you from the beginning (at the first), the Light of the World, the Bread of Life, and the Son of God,—sent by Him to reveal His will to man.* I have many things to say and to judge of (*reprove in*) you *for your perverseness, but for the present I shall simply repeat what I declared unto some of you before:* He that sent Me is true;<sup>2</sup> and I speak to the world those things *only* which I have heard of Him.—*But, notwithstanding this plain declaration, they understood not yet that He spake to them of the Father as the Person who had sent Him.*

Then said Jesus *emphatically* unto them,—*that so His words might be remembered afterwards,*—When ye *have filled up the measure of your sins, and have lifted up the Son of man<sup>3</sup> upon the Cross, then shall ye know by undeniable signs and wonders that I am indeed He,<sup>4</sup> and that I do nothing of Myself alone; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things.* And He that sent Me is *even now* with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone, *but continually aids and supports Me; for I do always those things that please Him.<sup>5</sup>*

As He spake these *sublime and impressive* words, many of those who had already witnessed His miracles believed on Him.<sup>6</sup> Then said Jesus, *by way of exhortation, to those Jews which believed on Him,—for He well knew the vacillation of the human heart, and how different profession is from practice,*—If ye continue<sup>7</sup> *steadfast in obedience to My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall be acknowledged as such; and ye shall know the Truth<sup>8</sup> of a Saviour in its full compass and extent, and the Truth shall make you free<sup>9</sup>—completely emancipating you from the yoke and the thralldom of sin.—But some of those present were indignant at the insinuation that they were not already free, and they answered Him, We be Abraham's seed—no servile race, but a people ever tenacious of liberty; and we were never in bondage<sup>10</sup> (personal*

(<sup>1</sup>) *Then shall ye know, &c.]* Our Lord refers particularly to the wonderful events connected with His Resurrection and Ascension, to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and to the miracles afterwards wrought by the Apostles in His name.

(<sup>10</sup>) *We were never in bondage.]* We must suppose the speakers to be alluding to *personal* slavery, unless that gross inconsistency be admis-

sible here, which persons sometimes fall into who speak with heat and prejudice. The Jews had been in *public* bondage to the Egyptians, and Nehemiah confesses "We are servants this day" (Neh. ix. 36). They were *now* under the Romans as tributaries, and Josephus tells us (*Antiq.* xviii. 1), that they themselves regarded the payment of tribute as a *sign of servitude.*

slavery) to any man: how then sayest thou, Ye shall be made free in becoming My disciples? Jesus answered them, I spake it of spiritual freedom, and teach that doctrine which can alone secure the true and best liberties of all mankind: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever habitually committeth sin is the servant and bondsman of sin,<sup>v</sup> and must at last receive the wages of sin, which is death: such a servitude is baser, and in its end more dreadful, than the yoke of any earthly tyrant. And as the servant (the slave) abideth not in the same house (family) for ever, but may be sold at his lord's pleasure unto another, so is it with the slaves of sin, who shall be utterly rejected at last. But the son and heir abideth ever<sup>w</sup> in the family: in some cases he may, as you know, adopt others as his brethren, and without his concurrence a slave cannot be manumitted. If I, therefore, the Only-begotten Son, shall, conjointly with the Father, make you free,<sup>(7)</sup> ye shall be free indeed<sup>x</sup>—becoming first “children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. viii. 17).—I know well that ye are Abraham's seed, but it is according to the flesh only, and ye seek now to kill Me, because ye are degenerate from Abraham; and My Word hath no place in you, because it is opposed to your lusts and prejudices. There is indeed a wide difference between Me and you: I speak that which I have seen and known with My Father<sup>(8)</sup> who is in Heaven: and ye do that which ye have seen with and learned of your father (even of Satan).

They answered and said unto Him, Abraham, “the friend of God,” is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children in spirit, and resembled that good old patriarch in the nobler qualities of his mind, ye would do the works of Abraham.<sup>y</sup> But now ye seek to kill Me,—a Man that hath told you the Truth, which I have heard of God and have received commission from Him to declare. The like to this did not Abraham, who ever honoured God's messengers, and in the full assurance of faith received His Word, however mysterious the command might be, and however trying its complete observance.—Ye show plainly enough whose progeny ye are, for ye do the deeds of him who is really your father. Then said they to Him,—for they perceived at last that He did not speak

<sup>v</sup> For they are My servants which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Lev. xxv. 42.

<sup>w</sup> Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Rom. vi. 16.

<sup>x</sup> I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. Rom. vii. 23.

<sup>y</sup> They themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 2 Pet. ii. 19.

<sup>z</sup> What saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. Gal. iv. 30.

<sup>a</sup> The Lord hath anointed Me . . . to proclaim liberty to the captives. Isa. lxi. 1.

<sup>b</sup> The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Rom. viii. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Gal. v. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Bring forth fruits therefore worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father. Luke iii. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Rom. ix. 7, 8.

<sup>f</sup> So then they which be

(7) If the Son shall make you free.] Our Saviour evidently alludes here to some custom. In Greece, and probably elsewhere, the eldest son could adopt brethren, so as to give them the privileges of the family. Among the Romans, the son, upon the father's death, gave freedom to such as were born slaves in his house. Instances occur in all times and countries in which a proprietor cannot act without the consent of the son and heir.—The case of

Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, who was cast out, beautifully illustrates the context of this passage.

(8) I speak what I have seen with My Father.] Our Lord presently adds, that He declared to them what He had heard of His Father. It is evident, therefore, that what He had learned of His Father is the simple sense,—for we learn by hearing and seeing.

of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 9, 29.

<sup>a</sup> How is the faithful city become an harlot. Isa. i. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him. 1 John v. 1.

<sup>c</sup> The same was in the beginning with God. John i. 2.

— the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person. Heb. i. 3.

<sup>d</sup> If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. John vii. 17.

<sup>e</sup> The tares are the children of the wicked one. Matt. xiii. 38.

He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. 1 John iii. 8.

<sup>f</sup> Death entered into the world by sin; and so death passed upon all men. Rom. v. 12.

<sup>g</sup> Am I therefore your enemy because I tell you the truth? Gal. iv. 16.

<sup>h</sup> — in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. iv. 15.

<sup>i</sup> We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. 1 John iv. 6.

<sup>j</sup> I receive not honour from men. John v. 41.

<sup>k</sup> Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life. John v. 24.

Whoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. John xi. 26.

of parentage in a natural way,—We claim the highest spiritual descent; we be not born of fornication,<sup>a</sup> for we neither worship idols ourselves, nor are we sprung of idolatrous ancestors: we have all one Father, even the true God. Jesus said unto them, If God were indeed your Father, ye would love Me:<sup>b</sup> for I proceeded originally forth from Him, and came from God<sup>b</sup> into the world as His immediate Representative; neither, as I told you, came I of Myself, but I act here by His authority, and He it was who sent Me.—And why do ye not understand My speech so plainly delivered? It is even because ye cannot hear My Word:<sup>c</sup> ye are so prejudiced and sunk in sin that ye are not capable of appreciating pure and sound doctrine. Ye are the genuine children of your father the devil,<sup>d</sup> and the lusts of your father ye will do (ye are desirous to do, and determined to do). At this very time ye are proving your resemblance to him in his two leading characteristics: he was a murderer and an enemy of mankind from the beginning<sup>e</sup> of the world, for he brought death into it; and he abode not in the truth, nor “kept his first estate” of innocence, because there is no love of truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own—that which properly belongs to him; for he is a liar and the father of it (the author of all falsehood), having been the first and the greatest of liars. And so because I tell you the truth,<sup>f</sup> and will not accommodate My doctrine to your corrupt inclinations, ye believe Me not. Which of you, I ask, convinceth Me of sin<sup>g</sup> (convicteth Me of error)? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me? He that is really a child of God, heareth and giveth heed to God's words, by whomsoever they may be delivered: ye therefore hear them not, and regard not what I say, because ye are not the children of God.<sup>h</sup>

Then answered the Jews by taunts, and said unto Him, Say we not well (with good reason) that thou art a Samaritan (a heretic and an enemy), rather than a child of Abraham, and that thou hast a devil? for thou must be mad to denounce the privileged children as the offspring of Satan. Jesus meekly answered, I have not a devil, but I honour My Father by executing His will,—which no one under the direction of a malignant spirit would do; and ye on the contrary do dishonour Me by your insults and revilings. It is not, however, for Me to vindicate My honour, and I seek not in any respect Mine own glory:<sup>i</sup> there is One above that seeketh and will secure it, and who judgeth all things. Verily, verily, I say this unto you, and I would have you lay it as a certain truth to your hearts, If a man keep My saying, guiding his life in obedience to My Word, he shall never see eternal death,<sup>k</sup> “but is passed from death unto

life." Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know *certainly* that thou hast a devil *by thy speaking in this presumptuous manner: for Abraham is dead, and the prophets<sup>1</sup> are dead; and yet thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death! To be able to confer immortality on others, thou must first possess it thyself: art thou then greater, or higher in the favour of God, than our venerable and holy father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets also are all dead: they could not procure so much as immunity for themselves from the common lot,—much less for their followers. Whom therefore makest thou thyself to be? Jesus answered, If I honour Myself, by assuming to be greater than I am, My honour is worth nothing:<sup>m</sup> it is My Father,—even He of whom ye say that He is your God,—that honoureth Me. Yet, although ye so confidently style Him your God, your practice contradicts your professions, for ye have not truly known Him; but I know Him<sup>n</sup> perfectly, and if I should ever say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you; but I know Him, and, as a proof of it, I faithfully keep His saying. Your father, Abraham, to whom the glad tidings were announced that "in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed," rejoiced to see My day,<sup>o</sup>—the glorious advent of the Messiah; and by the eye of faith he saw it,<sup>p</sup> though afar off, and was glad—exulting even in that distant and imperfect view of the glory which should at this time be revealed.*

Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old: thou didst not exist half a century back, and hast thou, forsooth, seen Abraham, who has been dead more than two thousand years? Jesus then said plainly unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I AM<sup>q</sup> (<sup>10</sup>).

Then took they up stones to cast at Him<sup>r</sup>—judging Him to be unworthy of any other answer, and regarding Him

stone him. Lev. xxiv. 16.—Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. John v. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? Zech. i. 5.

<sup>m</sup> If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. John v. 31.

<sup>n</sup> O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee. John xvii. 25.

<sup>o</sup> I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them. Luke x. 24.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Heb. xi. 13.

<sup>p</sup> The Scripture preached before the Gospel unto Abraham. Gal. iii. 8.

<sup>q</sup> And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. Exod. iii. 14.

I, even I, am the Lord, and beside Me there is no Saviour. Isa. xliii. 11.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John i. 1.

And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. Col. i. 17.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. Rev. i. 8.

<sup>r</sup> He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly

(<sup>9</sup>) And he saw it.] If it be asked on what particular occasion Abraham saw the day of Christ by faith, the answer is, In that illustrious trial of offering up his only son, whom he received back again, as St. Paul says (Heb. xi. 19), "in a figure;" that is to say, the great and future Sacrifice for Sin was thus visibly represented to his senses, and not only the death, but the resurrection of the victim.

(<sup>10</sup>) Before Abraham was, I AM.] Anti-Trinitarians tell us that this means, "Jesus was designated to His office before the existence of Abraham;" but surely such a proposition was not worth announcing with such solemnity, and it is one which would have given no offence to our Lord's hearers. Their attempt to stone Him as

a blasphemer for this speech (which, as we should particularly observe, He did not seek to explain away), sufficiently proves that they understood Him,—as He meant them to understand Him,—to speak of His existence before Abraham, and consequently of His Divinity; that He was the same with that Jehovah, of whom Moses had told the Israelites, I AM hath sent me unto you. His Divine Nature is clearly implied in this expression; for if His existence was to be measured by time, as is that of all created beings, He must have said "I was," but His existence is "one eternal Now."—The distinction of short and long in the duration of time is lost in Eternity, and with the Almighty a thousand years are but as yesterday.

as one fully amenable, on the spot, to the penalty which the Law inflicted on blasphemers. But Jesus hid Himself (rendered His person invisible to them), and went out of the Temple, going through the midst of them; and so passed by unharmed.

## SECTION LXXX.

**JESUS RESTORES SIGHT TO A MAN BORN BLIND, AT WHICH THE PHARISEES TAKE OFFENCE: THEY ARE FURTHER EXASPERATED BY HIS DECLARING HIMSELF TO BE "THE GOOD SHEPHERD," AND "ONE WITH THE FATHER."**

*John ix. 1—41; x. 1—21.*

**A**ND as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, *If disease be the consequence of sin*, who did sin, this man *in a pre-existent state*,<sup>a</sup> or his parents<sup>(1)</sup> *through legal uncleanness at the time of his conception*, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, *so as to cause this blindness*; but *the Divine Wisdom permitted it*, that by the gift of sight the miraculous works of God should now be made manifest in him.<sup>b</sup> And I, *having the power*, must work the works of Him that sent Me *to fulfil them*, while it is day *and while My time yet lasts*; for the night cometh, when no man can work.<sup>c</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the Light (*the Enlightener*) of the world—*not alone giving sight to the blind, but a knowledge of the Truth to a world sunk in spiritual darkness and sin.*

When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay<sup>(3)</sup>—*spreading it over them*; and, *before effecting the cure*, He said unto him, *so as to test his faith and obedience*, Go, wash<sup>d</sup> (*bathe*) *thine*

<sup>a</sup> This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead. Matt. xiv. 2.

<sup>b</sup> This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. John xi. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest. Eccles. ix. 10.

If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not. John xi. 9.

Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. John xii. 36.

<sup>d</sup> Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee. 2 Kings v. 10.

(1) *Did this man sin, or his parents?* This question refers to the opinion held by the Platonists and Pythagoreans concerning the *transmigration of souls* from one body to another. It appears from Josephus (B. J. ii. 8), that the Jews believed in this dogma, having probably received the notion from their brethren settled at Alexandria. It is clearly referred to by the author of the Apocryphal Book of *Wisdom* (viii. 20), where we find the words, "Being good, I came into a body undefiled."—The disciples evidently wished for confirmation on this curious question, if they did not actually believe it; but our Lord altogether refuses to entertain it.

(2) *The night cometh when no man can work.* Day-time is the time for business: the night is

"*tempus inopportunitum*"—a general adage which our Lord applies to His own case; intimating that His continuance with men would be short, and that He should not be much longer there to enlighten and give them the benefit of His example.

(3) *Anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.* This was a sign connecting the miracle with its end. Our Saviour's adoption of any action shows at once its fitness, and He was not confined to any particular mode (see Section LXVI., Note 2). We see, however, in this case, the wonderful doings of God, and that with Christ all things are possible: the application of clay, which would blind one man, can be rendered instrumental to open the eyes of another.

eyes in the pool (*fountain*) of Siloam,<sup>(4)</sup> (which is, by interpretation, "Sent"—*being typical of the Shiloh, or the Sent of God*). He went his way therefore *thither*, and washed, and came *back* seeing. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that *formerly* sat and begged?<sup>(5)</sup> Some said, *Certainly* this is he; others said, He is like him:<sup>(6)</sup> but he *himself* said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and *therefore* I went and washed, and I received *my* sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he *now*? He said, I know not.

They *then* brought to the ruling Pharisees<sup>†</sup>—*for the Council was chiefly composed of members of that sect*—him that aforesaid was blind. And it was the Sabbath-day when Jesus made (*prepared*) the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He *simply* put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed (*bathed*) *them*, and I *now* do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not a *prophet sent of God*, because he keepeth not *the sacred law of the Sabbath-day*.<sup>(7)</sup> Others said,—*Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Gamaliel being probably of the number*,—*But how can a man that is a sinner be able to do such miracles?*<sup>‡</sup>—And there was a division among them *respecting Him*.

They say unto the blind man again,<sup>(8)</sup> What sayest thou (*What is thine own opinion*) of him, *in* that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is *evidently* a prophet.<sup>‡</sup>—*But the rulers of the Jews did not believe the fact which*

\* The pool of Siloah by the King's garden. Neh. iii. 15.  
—the waters of Shiloah that go softly. Isa. viii. 6.

† But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. John xi. 46.

‡ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest except God be with him. John iii. 1, 2.

‡ The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a Prophet. John iv. 19.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world. John vi. 14.

(4) *Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.*] The waters which are here spoken of issued from a spring in the rocks of Mount Zion, and were gathered into two basins. The upper was called *Shiloah*, because its waters were *sent by the goodness of God* from the bowels of the earth; and springs of water in Judea, being very rare, were esteemed peculiar blessings. These waters were represented by the prophet Isaiah as a type of David's descendants, and more particularly of the Messiah. The blind man was directed to bathe his eyes therein, that so his *obedience* might be tested, as in the case of Naaman in the Jordan.—The pool of Siloam is still shown to travellers; it is a deep stone reservoir containing a spring, and is approached by a subterraneous flight of steps.

(5) *Sat and begged.*] The form of begging common among the Jews, viz., "Deserve, or do thyself good by me," is observable; intimating that by acts of charity we *do good to ourselves*, as well as to others.

(6) *Others said, He is like him.*] The acqui-

sition of Sight would give an air of spirit and cheerfulness to the man's countenance, and might occasion a sufficient alteration to render him something unlike what he was before.

(7) *Because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day.*] One of the Jewish traditions forbade the anointing of the eyes with any medicine on the Sabbath; but it was only their own corrupt tradition which was violated, not the Scriptural rest of the Sabbath itself. They themselves confessed that a *Prophet* might do and command things contrary to the rest which their traditions prescribed. Thus Joshua commanded that the Ark should be carried round Jericho, the armed men going before and after it, *seven days* (Josh. vi. 15).

(8) *They say unto the blind man again.*] He is still so termed after he had received his sight, agreeably to the usual Scripture phraseology. Thus Matthew is called the *publican* after he had quitted that employment (Matt. x. 3), and Simon is spoken of as *the leper* subsequently to his cure (Matt. xxvi. 6).



was *alleged* concerning him, *namely*, that he had been *born* blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? *if so*, how then doth he now see? His parents answered them *cautiously* and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what *strange* means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not; *but* he is of *sufficient* age <sup>(9)</sup> to be heard in *evidence*; ask him: he shall speak for (*will speak concerning*) himself.—These words spake his parents, because they feared *the rulers of the Jews*,<sup>1</sup> *forgetful that gratitude to Jesus of itself demanded the truth at their hands*: for the Jews had agreed already that if any man did confess that He was *the Christ*, *by attributing to Him such miracles as this*, he should be put out of the Synagogue <sup>k</sup> <sup>(10)</sup> (*excommunicated*). Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

<sup>1</sup> Howbeit no man spake openly of Him for fear of the Jews. John vii. 13.

<sup>k</sup> Because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue. John xii. 42.

They shall put you out of the Synagogues. John xvi. 2.

<sup>l</sup> And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the God of Israel, and make confession unto Him: and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. Josh. vii. 19.

<sup>m</sup> He made known His ways unto Moses. Pa. ciii. 7.

Then again called they *in* the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise<sup>1</sup> <sup>(11)</sup> (*Seek His glory by a confession of the truth*): we know that this man is a sinner, *for so open a profaner of the Sabbath can be no other than a worthless impostor*.—He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not (*If he is, I know nothing of it*): *but* one thing I *certainly* know, that, whereas I was *once* blind, now *through his means* I see *perfectly*.—Then said they to him again,—*hoping to make him contradict his previous statement*,—*Tell us once more what did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?*—He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear (*attend to, or believe*) me; wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples, *since ye like to hear so much of his works?*—Then they reviled him, and said, Thou, *with thy credulous and partial testimony*, art his disciple,—*one well worthy indeed of such a master, ignorant and presumptuous as thou art*: but we are Moses' disciples, *and fully recognize the authority of that Divine Law which this man has wantonly broken*. We know, *as a certain truth*, that God spake unto *and commissioned* Moses <sup>n</sup> *to declare His will to man*; *but* as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is, *and if he has any power at all, it can spring only from the co-operation of Satan*.—The man answered and said

<sup>(9)</sup> *He is of age.*] The Jews received statements in evidence when the parties had reached the age of thirteen years.

<sup>(10)</sup> *Should be put out of the Synagogue.*] There were two, if not more, degrees of Excommunication. One sentence left the offender free to hear or expound traditions, but not to join in prayer. A more severe course was entire exclusion from the Synagogue, with other civil re-

strictions; and this seems, from the result, to have been the one acted upon here.

<sup>(11)</sup> *Give God the praise.*] A phrase solemnly urging him to *confess* the whole as an imposture. The idea of collusion was absurd: the miracle was performed in the open street; the man did not ask, as some other sufferers did, to be restored, nor did he return to Jesus after the cure was effected.

unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye, *who can so easily discern a false from a true prophet*, know not from whence he is, and yet *it is undeniable that he hath opened mine eyes, which is a good work and a remarkable proof that his power must be from God: your ignorance and the Miracle are quite irreconcilable.* Now we all know that God heareth not *impenitent sinners*<sup>a</sup>—*much less doth He aid impostors in working miracles in His name*; but if any man be a *sincere* worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth.<sup>o</sup> Since the world began was it not heard that any man *by his own immediate power* opened the eyes of one that was born blind.<sup>p(12)</sup> If this man were not of God, he could do nothing of *this extraordinary kind*.—They answered and said unto him, *It is evident thou wast altogether, body and soul, born in sins,—for thou camest into the world bearing upon thee a token of God's wrath,—and dost thou, contemptible as thou art, presume to teach us?* And they cast him *ignominiously out of court, and forthwith excommunicated him.*

Jesus soon heard that they had cast him out *in this violent and summary manner*: and when He had found him, He said unto him *in private*, Dost thou believe on the Son of God,—*the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world?* He answered and said, Who (*Which*) is He, Lord<sup>(13)</sup> (*Sir*), and where shall I look for Him, that I might know and believe on Him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that *now* talketh with thee.<sup>q</sup> And he said *immediately*, Lord, I believe that *Thou art He*.—And, *falling down at His feet, he did Him homage and worshipped Him.*

And *after this*, Jesus, *taking advantage of the occasion*, said, *in the hearing of others who had now drawn near*: For judgment<sup>r</sup> (*discrimination of the good from the bad*) I am come into this world; that they, which *have hitherto sat in spiritual darkness and see not*, might come to the *Light and see*;<sup>s</sup> and that they which *presumptuously think they see*, might be made blind<sup>t</sup>—*wilfully closing their eyes to the Light which they do not deserve to have vouchsafed to them: There will be made henceforth a distinction between the two.*

And some of the Pharisees, which were *there* with Him,

<sup>a</sup> For what is the hope of the hypocrite?... Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Job xxvii. 8, 9.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Pa. lvi. 18.

When ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Isa. i. 15.

Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but He will not hear them: He will even hide His face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings. Mic. iii. 4.

<sup>o</sup> The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. Pa. xxxiv. 15.

The Lord is far from the wicked, but He heareth the prayer of the righteous. Prov. xv. 29.

<sup>p</sup> The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind. Pa. cxlvi. 8.

I the Lord have called Thee in righteousness, and will give Thee for a Covenant of the people, for a Light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes. Isa. xlii. 6, 7.

<sup>q</sup> Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He. John iv. 26.

<sup>r</sup> For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. John v. 22.

<sup>s</sup> Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

<sup>t</sup> Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not. Matt. xiii. 13.

(12) *Since the world began was it not heard, &c.*] Such a miracle had certainly never been attempted before by others. Cataracts have been in some cases removed through the improvements of modern surgical art (the first successful case occurring in England in 1728); but this fact does not affect the present miracle. A total blindness, inveterate and from the birth, is still admitted to be incurable. This cure also was at once effected, without any of those appliances of

consummate human skill and labour which are required in the most successful operations.

(13) *Who is He, Lord?*] The man did not yet know that it was the Lord Jesus who addressed him; and therefore the word translated "Lord" should have been rendered "Sir," as our Translation correctly gives it at John iv. 11; xii. 21; xx. 15. This was the usual language of respect, and at Matt. xxvii. 63 we find it applied to Pilate.

▪ If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. John xv. 22.

∇—and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness. Rom. ii. 19.

∇ Ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins. John viii. 24.

\* Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let them (the Pharisees) alone, they be blind leaders of the blind. Matt. xv. 13, 14.

They (the children of Levi) shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel Thy law. Deut. xxxiii. 10.

The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth. Mal. ii. 7.

∇ Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My Voice and open the door, I will come in to him. Rev. iii. 20.

▪ He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Isa. xl. 11.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock. Ps. lxxx. 1.

▪ How shall they preach except they be sent? Rom. x. 15.

No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Heb. v. 4.

heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we *then* blind also *in thy estimation*? Jesus said unto them, If ye were *really* blind—if your fault were merely ignorance, and ye could not understand the Law and the Prophets so plainly pointing out who I am—then indeed, like the Gentiles and the poorer sort of people, ye should have no sin <sup>a</sup> imputed to you: but now, arrogating all knowledge to yourselves, ye say, We see.<sup>v(14)</sup> Therefore your sin of Infidelity remaineth *inexcusable*.<sup>w</sup>

Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Scribes and Pharisees,—blind guides as ye are, and usurping the office of the Priests,\* for ye have never been appointed at all to teach the people,—*He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold,<sup>(15)</sup> but climbeth up some other way to get in, the same is *no better than* a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the (*is a true*) shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter (*the gate-keeper, or under-shepherd*) openeth; and the sheep hear and obey his voice:∇ and he calleth his own sheep,—*for he hath exact knowledge of them all,—*by name, and leadeth them out.<sup>z</sup> And when he putteth forth his own sheep *from the fold*, he goeth before them,<sup>(16)</sup> *that he may find them good pastures and watch against the approach of danger*, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not and regard not the voice of strangers.

This Parable (*this similitude*) spake Jesus unto them, *as a reproof for their rejection of Him: but they were so blind that they understood not what things they were (what was the true import of the words)* which He spake unto them.

Then said Jesus unto them again *more plainly*, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the Door of the sheep, and of the shepherds also: All the teachers of Religion that ever came before Me—*neither having the Divine commission, nor teaching the way of Salvation through Me*—are thieves and robbers: <sup>a(17)</sup> but the faithful sheep did not

(14) *We see.*] A common title of the wise men were *Videntes*,—"Those who see."

(15) *He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, &c.*] As Eastern countries were much infested by wild beasts, it was common to secure sheepfolds by a substantial door, and a servant or porter kept watch at night. In the morning the head-shepherd came to lead the sheep out to pasture. It was usual to name each sheep.

(16) *Goeth before them.*] The Greek word for *sheep* would rather imply the custom (as practised among us) of the flock going before the shepherd; but the expression may also be referred to the obedient, tractable nature of these animals, and it was certainly the custom, as it still is with Eastern shepherds, to precede their flocks.

(17) *All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers.*] It was here our Lord's purpose

to show that He was *not* the impostor and seducer of the people, which they had represented Him to be upon the healing of the blind man; but that He was in fact their *Chief Shepherd*, the benevolent Saviour of all mankind. All, therefore, who had not been divinely appointed, (neither teaching His doctrine nor pointing to Him,) were as wolves among sheep.—The words "before Me" in this passage are wanting in some of the most ancient, as well as in a great number of succeeding manuscripts; yet, allowing them to be retained (and there are some powerful arguments for keeping them), it is certain that many of the Teachers of Religion under the *Second Temple* were very rapacious persons. An allusion may also be here made to such impostors as Dositheus the Samaritan, Theudas and Judas of Galilee (mentioned by Gamaliel, Acts v. 36, 37),

hear, nor obey them. I am the Door,<sup>b</sup> *the only Way of entrance into heaven*: if any man, by a true and lively faith in Me, will enter into the spiritual fold, he shall be saved from all his enemies, and shall go in and out in peace, and find wholesome pasture. The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill (to butcher) the sheep, and maliciously to destroy<sup>c</sup> what he cannot carry off: I, on the contrary, am come that they who are My sheep might have Life<sup>(10)</sup> with fitting nourishment to sustain it, and that they might have it more abundantly than they did before—even for ever and ever. I am here, not, as you assert, to deceive the people, but I come as their Saviour: I am, pre-eminently, the Good Shepherd;<sup>d</sup> (11) and I shall be found acting as such. The good shepherd not only hazardeth, but freely giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling<sup>(12)</sup> (a mere covetous servant), and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth that he may save himself: and thus the wolf easily catcheth some of them, and scattereth the rest of the sheep.<sup>e</sup> The hireling fleeth at the moment of danger, because he is an hireling, and careth only for his wages, not for the safety of the sheep.<sup>f</sup> So shall I never be found to do. As I said, I am the Good Shepherd, and I know and love My sheep,<sup>g</sup> and am known and beloved of those that are Mine;<sup>h</sup> as the Father knoweth Me, even so I (and I also, Gr.) know the Father.<sup>i</sup> And so great is the love I bear them, that I lay down My life for the sheep.<sup>(11)</sup> And other sheep I have which are not of this fold,<sup>k</sup> even the poor and despised Gentiles: them also I must bring, through the ministers of My Gospel, into the true fold; and they shall (will) gladly hear My Voice. And so at last, of Jew and

neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son. Matt. xi. 27.

<sup>b</sup> The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others unto Him, beside those that are gathered unto Him. Isa. lvi. 8.

<sup>b</sup> Jesus saith, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me. John xiv. 6.

Through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Eph. ii. 18.

<sup>c</sup> Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture, saith the Lord. Jer. xxiii. 1.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord is my Shepherd. Ps. xxiii. 1.

—our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep. Heb. xiii. 20.

When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Pet. v. 4.

<sup>e</sup> They were scattered because there is no shepherd. Ezek. xxxiv. 6.

<sup>f</sup> Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ezek. xxxiv. 2.

Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock. Zech. xi. 17.

<sup>g</sup> The Lord knoweth them that are His. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

If any man love God, the same is known of Him. 1 Cor. viii. 3.

<sup>h</sup> And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him. 1 John v. 20.

<sup>i</sup> No man knoweth the Son but the Father; nei-

all of whom used the authority they had gained for their own benefit, not to feed and protect the sheep: they were also at last the occasion of destruction to their followers.

(10) *I am come that they might have Life.*] That the expression "Life" may also here include the proper nourishment of life, appears from Deut. xxiv. 6; where, to take the means of subsistence from a man, is said to be "taking a man's life;" and at Mark xii. 44, the poor widow is said to have cast into the treasury "all her living."

(11) *I am the Good Shepherd.*] This image from Pastoral life was the most familiar which our Saviour could have used in describing Himself, for it was constantly employed in the writings of the Old Testament (see Ps. xxiii. as an instance). In the East the Shepherd is a character of higher moral dignity than with us.—With the early Christians the Good Shepherd became a very favourite emblem, as appears from its frequent occurrence on their sepulchral monuments in the Roman catacombs.

(12) *He that is an hireling.* There will always be unworthy Ministers of Christ, who serve Him for the sake of gain. It is clear, however, that the maintenance of teachers is not here condemned: such maintenance had already been expressly ordained by our Lord (see Matt. x. 10; Luke x. 7; also 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14).

(11) *I lay down My life for the sheep.*] The use of this expression by our Lord, and some similar ones,—such as that He died "for his friends" (John xv. 13) and "for the Church" (Eph. v. 25),—have been commented upon as though Christ did not die for all; but it is not said that He died only for them, and the general extent of Redemption is plainly declared in many other passages. He died also "for the lost sheep" (Matt. x. 6); "for us when we were enemies" (Rom. v. 10); "for the unjust" (1 Pet. iii. 18); and He "tasted death for every man" (Heb. ii. 9). See also 1 John ii. 2.

<sup>l</sup> Thus saith the Lord God. Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen: . . . . and one King shall be King to them all, and they shall be no more two nations. Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22.

There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. Rom. x. 12.

He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Eph. ii. 14.

<sup>m</sup> He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. ii. 8.

<sup>n</sup> Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up. John ii. 19.

<sup>o</sup> Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, Say we not well, That thou art a Samaritan and a devil? John viii. 48.

<sup>p</sup> Who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Exod. iv. 11.

The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind. Ps. cxlvi. 8.

*Gentile, there shall be but one fold (a Visible Church—one only and the same), and one common Shepherd,<sup>l</sup> presiding as the Head and Guardian of His Church and people. Therefore, —for this reason more especially, —doth My Father love Me, because I am content to lay down My life for the sheep; not indeed to remain under the power of death, but so that I might take it again by rising from the dead. No man taketh it away from Me, either by compulsion or before the appointed time, but I lay it down freely of Myself.<sup>m</sup> I have the right to dispose of it as I will: I have power to lay it down, and I have the same power to take it back again.<sup>n</sup> Nor will the event happen from any fate or necessity, but it will take place through the determinate Counsel of Heaven; for this commandment (this commission to offer My life for the sheep) have I received of My Father.*

There was a division (*a difference of opinion*) therefore again among the Jews for these sayings, *which were more than ever offensive to His enemies, because they pointed to the conversion of the Gentiles. And many of them said, as they had done before, He hath a devil<sup>o</sup> (is possessed with an evil spirit) and is mad: why hear ye him, or attend to what he says? But others, who were not so malicious, and had more discrimination, said, These are not like the words of him that hath a devil; nor are his works of that character, for can a devil open the eyes of the blind? <sup>p</sup>*

## SECTION LXXXI.

### THE SEVENTY DISCIPLES RETURN, AND JESUS GIVES THANKS TO THE FATHER FOR THEIR SUCCESS.

*Matt. xi. 25—30. Luke x. 17—24.*

**A**ND while Jesus was yet in Galilee, the Seventy disciples returned again to Him with joy, saying, Lord, we have not only healed diseases according to Thy commission, but even the devils themselves are subject unto us through the power of Thy name.

And He said unto them, *Wonder not at this subjection of the evil spirits: When I first sent you forth to preach the Gospel, I beheld Satan, their prince, fall as quick as lightning from heaven,<sup>a</sup> (1) and foresaw his downfall from the eminence he had attained among men. But you shall*

<sup>a</sup> How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer. Isa. xiv. 12.

—Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Col. i. 13.

(1) *I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven.*] This is a bold and figurative expression, anticipating the triumph of the Gospel over the powers of darkness. The phrase is common in profane as well as in the sacred writers: Cicero

says of Pompey, upon his overthrow, that he "had fallen from the stars" (*ex astris decidisse*); and of Antony, that he "had pulled down his colleague from heaven" (*Collegam tuum de caelo detraxisti*).

*accomplish greater victories than these. Behold—according to the promise made of old to God's faithful servants—* I give unto you *miraculous* power to tread on serpents and scorpions,<sup>b</sup> and *to triumph* over all the power of the *great spiritual Enemy*; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, rejoice not *chiefly* in this *circumstance*, that the *evil spirits* are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because, *as heirs of glory*, your names are written in heaven:<sup>c</sup> *for, as I have told you before,<sup>d</sup> there will be many, who have cast out devils in My name, who shall be rejected in the Last Day.*

In that hour [At that time, **MATT.**] Jesus rejoiced in spirit at this *successful commencement of the Gospel Dispensation*, and answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things *(the mysteries of the Gospel)* from the *men who are wise and prudent* <sup>e</sup> *in their own eyes*, and hast revealed them unto *such as are in their own esteem but babes<sup>f</sup> in knowledge*. Even so, Father—I *cheerfully acquiesce*—for so it seemed good in Thy sight.

*And turning to His disciples He said*, All things in Heaven and earth, *with full power to direct and control them*, are delivered unto Me of My Father;<sup>g</sup> and no man knoweth who the Son is, *as to His true nature and dignity*, but the Father; and no man *fully* knoweth who the Father is, save the Son,<sup>h</sup> and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal *the knowledge of Him*.—*Come therefore in faith unto Me,<sup>i</sup> all ye that labour* <sup>(4)</sup> *under the distresses of life*,

—I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. I Cor. i. 19.

<sup>f</sup> Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength. Ps. viii. 2.—But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Jer. i. 7.

<sup>g</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Matt. xxviii. 18.—The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand. John iii. 35.—He hath put all things under His feet. I Cor. xv. 27.

<sup>h</sup> No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. John i. 18.—As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father. John x. 16.

<sup>i</sup> Come to Me, that you might have life. John v. 40.

(9) *Rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*] This is one of those figurative expressions borrowed from human customs. It is usual to record in a book the names of those who have certain privileges, or whom the writer designs to favour or reward. Speaking after the manner of men, God is said to do the same with reference to *eternal life*.

(9) *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent.*] It is not meant that God really wished to hide these things from the wise and prudent, but that such was the *result* through their own blind prejudices. Neither does our Saviour thank the Father that they were hidden from them, but that, such being the result, He had revealed them unto the simple and humble-minded.

(4) *Come unto Me, all ye that labour, &c.*] A distinguishing characteristic has long been disco-

<sup>b</sup> Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Ps. xci. 13.

They shall take up serpents. Mark xvi. 18.

And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand. And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm. Acts xxviii. 3, 6.

<sup>c</sup>—whose names are in the Book of Life. Phil. iv. 8.

—the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven. Heb. xii. 23.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life. Rev. iii. 5.

<sup>d</sup> Many will say to Me in that Day, Have we not in Thy name cast out devils? . . . And then will I profess unto them. I never knew you, depart from Me ye that work iniquity. Matt. vii. 22, 23.

<sup>e</sup>—and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,—an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes. Rom. ii. 19, 20.

I will destroy the wisdom of the prudent. I Cor. i. 19.

vered in the Hebrew poetry, consisting in what is termed "Parallelism"—that is, a certain equality or resemblance between the members of each period, so that in two lines (or members of the same line) things, for the most part, shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other. The same principle may distinctly be traced in various parts of the *New Testament*; and of such passages the present is one of the most remarkable. The lines are so arranged below as to point the parallelism:

Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; And I will give you rest:

Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; For I am meek and lowly in heart; And ye shall find rest unto your souls; For My yoke is easy and My burthen is light.

The parallelisms here marked will appear both unquestionable and intentional when the

<sup>k</sup> He made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Phil. ii. 7.

<sup>l</sup> Walk in the good way, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jer. vi. 16.

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1.

<sup>m</sup> Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Gal. v. 1.

<sup>n</sup> His commandments are not grievous. 1 John v. 8.

<sup>o</sup> Blessed are your eyes, for they see. Matt. xiii. 16.

<sup>p</sup> Of which Salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently. 1 Pet. i. 10.

and are heavy laden *with the burden of your sins*, and I will give you *inward peace and rest from them all*. Take My yoke (*the yoke of the Gospel*) upon you, and learn as *teachable disciples* of Me; for, *unlike your haughty teachers*, I am meek and lowly in heart:<sup>k</sup> and, *doing so*, ye shall find rest—not from the unavoidable afflictions of the body, but assuredly unto your souls.<sup>l</sup> For My yoke<sup>m</sup> is not like your present yoke of bondage, but easy; and, *with the help of the Spirit here, and the hope of ultimate reward*, My burthen is light.<sup>n</sup>

And He turned Him unto His disciples, and said to them privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the *glorious* things that ye *now* see:<sup>o</sup> for I tell you, that many prophets and kings of *old* have desired to see<sup>p</sup> those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

## SECTION LXXXII.

### THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN—SHEWING THE EXTENT OF THE DUTY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR.

Luke x. 25—37.

AND behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Him—*either to make a trial of his skill, or to lead Him into the expression of sentiments varying from the Law*—saying unto Him, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?<sup>a</sup> He said unto him, *Surely thou art able to answer such a question thyself*: What is written in the Law *which thou professest to teach*? how readest thou? And he (*the lawyer*) answering, said: *This is given as the sum of all the Commandments*, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with thine entire faculties, even with all thy heart*,<sup>(1)</sup> and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind (*Deut. vi. 5*); and thy neighbour *in the same manner as thou lovest thyself*<sup>(2)</sup> (*Lev. xix. 18*). And He (*Jesus*)

<sup>a</sup> Then one of them which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the Law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Matt. xxii. 36—39.

related lines are brought into contact with each other:—

Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden;  
For My yoke is easy and My burthen is light;  
And I will give you rest;  
And ye shall find rest unto your souls;  
Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me,  
For I am meek and lowly in heart.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart &c.*] The complex of Human Nature is altogether described here, in the integrity, yet the severality of its component parts:—*Kardia* (heart) denotes the seat of the moral and nobler

affections; *Ψυχή* (soul) the animal or sensual; *Ισχύς* (strength) the bodily powers and faculties; *Διαβολία* (mind) the intellectual.—Besides gratitude for God's benefits, there must be attachment to His Service, resignation, hope, fear, joy, &c.; not because Love consists in any one of these singly, but in all of them together. The Love of God is the principle of all Obedience, and is to be made the regulating movement of our hearts and lives.

(<sup>2</sup>) *And thy neighbour as thyself.*] “As thyself” (not *quantum*, but *siout*); not as much as ourselves, for that would be inconsistent with the principle of self-love, so wisely implanted in

said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do—if indeed it be possible for any man to fulfil the Divine Law—and thou shalt live <sup>b</sup> for ever: thou mightest in that case have a legal claim to Life, and ask a recompense of thy Maker, instead of coming to Him as a suppliant for mercy. But thou little knowest the spirituality of the Law, and the extensive character of its demands.

<sup>b</sup> Ye shall keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man do he shall live in them. Lev. xviii. 5.

But he,—though he could not pretend that he had done his duty towards God,—willing (*wishing*) to justify himself in the enquiry he had made, and to vindicate in some measure his consistency as having practised what he taught, said unto Jesus, And tell me, Who, in thy estimation, is my neighbour <sup>(1)</sup>; for I have ever esteemed and befriended as I ought those of my own nation?

And Jesus, answering by a parable, said:—A certain man from Jerusalem (*one of your own countrymen*) went down to Jericho, <sup>(2)</sup> and in his way along the dangerous road to that city fell among the thieves there, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him cruelly, and departed with their spoil, leaving him half dead. And by chance (*by coincidence of time and circumstance*) there came down a certain priest that way, returning from his weekly course at Jerusalem: and when he saw him lying thus insensible, he thought not of the peculiar and sacred obligation incumbent on him, as a teacher of religion, to practise universal charity, but inhumanly passed by on the other side of the road—fearful, it may be, of legal pollution from the dead, or disliking the trouble and expense which he might incur.—And likewise, after this, a Levite, <sup>(3)</sup> on his return home from the service of the Temple, when he was arrived at the place, came up and merely looked on him, and then passed by, like the priest, on the other side without stretching forth a hand to help him. But a certain Samaritan, <sup>(4)</sup> as he journeyed, came at length to the spot where he was; and when he saw him lie in this dreadful condition, notwithstanding the national antipathy he would feel

<sup>c</sup> And they (the Samaritans) did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. Luke ix. 53.

<sup>d</sup> The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. John iv. 9.

us for our preservation. The affection we bear to ourselves must be the rule of our love to others; and evidently it is similarity in kind, not equality in degree, which is intended.

<sup>(1)</sup> Who is my neighbour? The light of nature alone taught the Roman poet that "no human being ought to be indifferent to man;" but the Jew, with Revelation before him, had narrowed the definition of "neighbour" to those of his own country, or at least of his own religion. The plain command to love also "the stranger" as themselves (Lev. xix. 34), they interpreted as being meant of proselytes.

<sup>(2)</sup> Jericho.] This was a considerable city in our Lord's time, being reckoned the second in Palestine. It had a royal palace (within the walls of which Herod died), an amphitheatre, and an hippodrome. Compared with Jerusalem

(which stood on a hill) its situation was somewhat low, as we find intimated in the text. It might be about fifteen miles distant, and nearly due east, from the Capital. The road between the cities, passing over Jordan to Perea, was much frequented by robbers: Jerome calls it "the Bloody Way," and Josephus mentions that a large proportion of the 40,000 men employed by Herod in building the Temple, became highwaymen on their dismissal. It appears from several Jewish records that a very great number of priests resided at Jericho; and thus (should this narrative not be founded on fact, though it probably was) we see the propriety of supposing a Priest and Levite to be passing that way, without any reflection on their sacred offices.

<sup>(3)</sup> A Levite.] See Section XIX., Note 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> Samaritan.] See Section XXVI., Note 3.



to a Jew, he immediately had compassion on him; and went up to him, and, with remnants torn from his own garments, bound up his bleeding wounds, pouring into them the customary application of oil and wine,<sup>(7)</sup> which he had with him as provision for his journey; and then he set and supported him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn,<sup>(8)</sup> and there took the necessary care of him for the night. And on the morrow, when he departed on the business of his journey, he took out all that he could spare from his purse, which was two Roman pence<sup>d (9)</sup> (or the value of two days' labour); and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take all needful care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more for him, when I come back again, I will repay it thee.

<sup>d</sup> And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. Matt. xx. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother far off. Prov. xxvii. 10.

Which now of these three, said the Lord to His enquirer, thinkest thou, was a real neighbour,<sup>e</sup> and evinced the kind sympathy of a fellow-creature, unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, Unquestionably the only one who deserved the title of a neighbour, was he that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Thou hast answered right; go, and do thou likewise: be in like manner kind to all—even to a Samaritan and an enemy in distress; for not till then wilt thou be acting up to the precept of loving thy neighbour.

(7) *Oil and wine.*] It was a constant eastern custom to carry provisions on a journey (see Joah. ix. 12, 13; Judg. xix. 19). The antiquity of the practice of carrying oil is evident from Jacob having it with him on the road (Gen. xxviii. 18); and that it was used with wine for medicinal purposes, appears from the most ancient medical writers.—The dangerous custom of pouring heated

oil into gun-shot wounds, prevailed even in European armies previous to the sixteenth century.

(8) *An inn.*] This was merely a place of reception for travellers who carried their own stores, though provender could sometimes be procured for cattle.

(9) *Two-pence.*] This would amount to 1s. 3d. of our money. See Section C., Note 8.

## SECTION LXXXIII.

THE PEOPLE ARE TAUGHT—A WARNING GIVEN AGAINST COVETOUSNESS; WHO IS A FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT; THE DANGER OF FORMING RASH JUDGMENTS.

*Matt. xxiv. 43—51. Luke xii. 13—21, 35—48, 54—57; xiii. 1—9.*

AND one of the company *who were assembled to hear Him teach*, said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother and arbitrate between us, that he may divide the inheritance with me and no longer keep me out of my proper and legal portion. And He said unto him, Man, who made Me either a public judge or a divider (a private arbitrator) over you?<sup>a (1)</sup> Make your appeal to the appointed civil authorities: it belongs not to My prophetic office, and consists not with the spiritual nature of My kingdom, to interfere in matters of merely-temporal concernment.

And, as this applicant had betrayed so much concern for his worldly interests, and one at least of the contending parties was in a fault, He took so opportune an occasion of improvement, and said unto them *who were standing by*: Take heed, and beware of covetousness,<sup>b</sup> which in its pernicious effect is nothing less than idolatry, and closes the heart against spiritual things; for the true happiness of a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And to illustrate this, He spake a parable unto them, saying:—The ground (*The farm*) of a certain rich man being very fertile brought forth plentifully. And at length his increasing wealth begat anxiety; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do,<sup>c</sup> because I have no room left where to bestow my fruits (*to lay up the produce of my land*)? And, coming at length to a determination, he said, This is what I will do: I will pull down my present incommodious barns and build greater; and there will I bestow in safety all my fruits of this year and my goods which are already laid by in store. When this is done, my toils may cease, and then I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods (*an abundance of good things*) laid up for many years yet to come: now take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.<sup>d</sup> Thus did this foolish man resolve within himself; but mark

<sup>a</sup> Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Exod. ii. 14.

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. John xviii. 36.

<sup>b</sup> Covetousness, which is idolatry. Col. iii. 5.  
— the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith. 1 Tim. vi. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. James iv. 15.

<sup>d</sup> Walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but, know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Eccles. xi. 9.

Let us eat and drink. 1 Cor. xv. 32.

(1) *Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?* An elder brother among the Jews had two shares, or twice as much as any other child (Deut. xxi. 17). In cases of dispute, adjudication was either by "the Consistory of three," or by arbitrators chosen by the contending parties. Our Lord here declines a decision, not only to avoid the envy and calumny of the Jewish

rulers, but because He had a higher office to fulfil, and but little time now left in which to discharge it. The ministers of the Gospel are thus admonished to attend chiefly to spiritual concerns, although, if they can persuade men to be reconciled, it is right not to neglect such opportunity,—agreeably to the advice afterwards given by St. Paul (1 Cor. vi. 3—6).

\* What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Job xxvii. 8.

Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away. James iv. 13, 14.

† He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. Ps. xxxix. 6.

When he (the rich man) dieth, he shall carry nothing away. Ps. xlix. 17.

He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool. Jer. xvii. 11.

‡ Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Matt. vi. 20.

Give alms: provide yourselves a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. Luke xii. 33.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

‡ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with Truth. Eph. vi. 14.

No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life. 2 Tim. ii. 4.

Gird up the loins of your mind. 1 Pet. i. 13.

<sup>1</sup> They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Matt. xxv. 3, 4.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Let your loins be girded about.* The dress of the ancients being loose and flowing, it was necessary to gird themselves with a girdle before they could engage in any active employment (see Luke xvii. 8; John xiii. 4). The phrase came to signify men's applying themselves actively to any sort of work, and the voluptuous were proverbially called "*discincti*." In time it came also to be applied to the *soldiers of Christ*, because being girded was eminently the military habit (see Eph. vi. 14).

(<sup>3</sup>) *From the wedding.* The original, being in the plural, denotes a feast generally. All great entertainments in the East were given in

the event: *In the awful course of Divine Providence*, God said unto him (*decided respecting him*), Thou fool, this very night thy soul shall be required of thee<sup>e</sup> by Him who gave it: suddenly thou shalt be removed from thy place, and then whose shall all those fleeting things be, which thou hast so carefully provided<sup>f</sup> and vainly thinkest to enjoy? —Take ye warning, then, by the fate of this worldling: so utterly foolish is he that layeth up earthly treasure for himself, and is not rich toward (with respect to) God<sup>g</sup>—for to be truly rich is to give alms of such things as ye have, and, first of all, to seek those heavenly attainments which alone can procure favour in heaven.

And that they might effectually prepare for eternity, He said also to them: Let your loins be girded about<sup>h</sup> (<sup>2</sup>) for activity, and your lights always burning,<sup>i</sup> and ye yourselves like unto faithful men-servants that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding<sup>(3)</sup> (the feast which he has been attending); that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed (Truly happy) are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching! Verily, I say unto you, that there is no kindness or condescension which he will not shew them—as great as though he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.<sup>(4)</sup> And if he shall come in the second watch (before twelve at night), or come in the third watch (between midnight and three in the morning), and find them, early or late, so prepared, blessed are those servants!

And this you know—to take another example of worldly vigilance and caution—that if the good man of the house (a housekeeper) had known at what hour, or in what watch of the night, the thief would come, he would have diligently watched, and would not, for want of due precaution, have suffered his house to be broken through. The like watchfulness is demanded of Christians in spiritual things: Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man,

the evening, and it was often late before the guests separated.

(<sup>4</sup>) *And will come forth and serve them.* It appears that it was the custom of masters to wait on their slaves during the Roman *Satur-nalia*, and similar condescensions were practised among the Cretans and Babylonians at their feasts: but the image here only imports that our Heavenly Master (who came, as He said of Himself, "not to be ministered unto but to minister" to others; and who, on one occasion, actually girded Himself to wash His disciples' feet) will amply reward the diligence and fidelity of His servants.

your Divine Lord and Master, cometh, "as a thief in the night," to summon you to death and judgment at an hour when ye think not of it.<sup>k</sup>

Then Peter said unto Him, Lord, speakest Thou this parable unto us, *Thine Apostles and the ministers of thy Gospel*, or even to all? And the Lord said; "*What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch*" (Mark xiii. 37). *But I put this question more particularly to you, the appointed Guides of My Church: Who then, with a more sacred obligation, is that faithful and wise steward [servant, MATT.], whom his lord shall make ruler over all his household,<sup>l</sup> to give them their portion of meat (their allowance of provision) in due season?<sup>m</sup> Blessed (Truly happy) is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing! Of a truth I say unto you, that he will advance him to yet greater favour and honour, and will make him ruler over his goods and all that he hath.<sup>n</sup> But and if, on the contrary, that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming home; and shall audaciously begin to smite his fellow-servants<sup>(o)</sup> (the men-servants and maidens), and to eat and drink to excess and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will be sure to come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware, and, commanding that he be severely scourged for such perfidiousness, will cut him as it were asunder;<sup>(p)</sup> and will appoint him his portion with the hypocrites and unbelievers (those incorrigible slaves who dissemble and are unfaithful): there,—in that miserable place of punishment,—shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth! And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself for his coming, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes:<sup>(q)</sup> but he that knew it not, and yet, as not having ascertained his lord's will, did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten only with few stripes.<sup>(r)</sup> For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

(<sup>o</sup>) *Begin to smite his fellow-servants.*] This is an allusion to those disciples who would afterwards apostatize (see 2 Pet. ii. 2, 22), and who persecuted such of their brethren as continued faithful (see Matt. x. 21, and xxiv. 10).

(<sup>p</sup>) *Will cut him asunder.*] That this punishment was literally inflicted on rebels and others, appears from the Old Testament. According to tradition the prophet Isaiah suffered in this manner, to which circumstance St. Paul is thought to allude (Heb. xi. 37). It appears from classical writers to have been practised by certain noted tyrants: thus Suetonius says (in vitâ Calig.) *Multos honesti ordinis medios serra dissectit.* Tertullian also speaks (A pol. cap. iii.) of this punishment as having been inflicted on some who had been false to their creditors; and

<sup>k</sup> Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Matt. xxv. 13.

Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is. Mark xiii. 33.

The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 1 Thess. v. 2.

If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Rev. iii. 3.

<sup>l</sup> His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Matt. xxv. 21.

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

<sup>m</sup> The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Ps. cxlv. 15.

Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. Matt. xiii. 52.

<sup>n</sup> And Joseph found grace in his master's sight, and he served him. And he made him overseer over his house; and all that he had he put into his hand. Gen. xxxix. 4.

<sup>o</sup> And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the command-

it is said to be still sometimes practised by the western Moors in Barbary. The expression must be here understood of a very severe flagellation (a figure common to most languages, ancient and modern), for the servant is represented as surviving the punishment.

(<sup>q</sup>) *Shall be beaten with many stripes.*] For a heavy offence the Jews inflicted forty stripes (Deut. xxv. 3). Our Lord does not make, according to His usual custom, any application of this parable, but it is sufficiently plain. The practice of religion is required of us in proportion to our knowledge; and the punishment of those who sin against fuller light and greater opportunities (as especially in the case of unfaithful ministers) will be proportionably great.

ment of the Lord; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity. Lev. v. 17.

Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance. But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously—the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Numb. xv. 29, 30.

I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief. 1 Tim. i. 13.

Behold there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. . . . And it came to pass, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45.

O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? Matt. xvi. 3.

And He said also to the people: When ye see a cloud (*the well-known cloud*) rise out of the west,<sup>(9)</sup> straightway ye say, There cometh a heavy shower: and commonly so it is. And when ye see (*find*) the south wind blow, ye say, There will be much heat; and so it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, and, from the signs they give, can foresee the coming changes of the weather; but how is it that, with still clearer signs and even miraculous tokens to guide you, ye do not discern this as the time of the Messiah's coming?<sup>9</sup> Yea, and why even of yourselves, without My aid, judge ye not, as ye so easily might, what is reasonable and right?<sup>(9)</sup>

There were present at that season (*on the same occasion*) some that told Him of the Galileans, whose blood the Roman governor Pilate, having come upon them in the Temple at the time of the Passover, had mingled with their sacrifices<sup>(10)</sup> (*with the blood of the victims which were at*

(9) *When ye see a cloud rise out of the west.*] This was a well-known phenomenon in Judea, betokening rain. The Great Sea lay westward of Palestine, and the cloud appeared to rise from it, as in the case of Elijah's prediction of rain being fulfilled (see in the MARGIN).

(9) *Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?*] The right of unlimited liberty in matters of faith has been deduced from the words which are here incidentally spoken. But although our Reformation, so glorious in many respects, clearly brought out the important principle of *Private Judgment*, it did not empower each individual Christian,—in abuse of the right conferred upon him,—to carry (as Luther said) "a Pope within." Those who speak most of the absolute sufficiency of Scripture, will sometimes be found to be those, who make some favourite dogma of their own the corner-stone of Protestantism, and are zealous for their religion only in so far as they have made it for themselves: they profess to worship the sincere Word, but they consecrate by that name their own interpretation; they talk of taking the pure ore from the mine, but they must have it stamped with their own image and superscription.

It must be clear that we can no more renounce *Private Judgment* than we can cease to be men. Reason becomes the ultimate appeal; and so far only can we take the highest human authority for our guide, as, "in manifesting the Truth, it commends itself to our Conscience in the sight of God" (see 2 Cor. iv. 2). It is equally clear that Holy Scripture is sufficient, without any foreign aid, to teach all things requisite to salvation; but then this is on the supposition that it offers itself to a rightly-informed understanding, guided by an honest heart, and aided by the Holy Spirit. In itself it is perfect and complete as a standard or written record of Truth: yet surely with the generality of men,—ignorant and evil-disposed as we see them,—a Written Record (abounding with confessedly difficult passages) requires an interpreter; and that it may be safely and thoroughly understood, a duly-

constituted interpreter must be, at the least, useful to all (consult Acts viii. 30, 31).—*Private Judgment* has proved no security against the most pernicious errors of doctrine, and even in fundamental points it has not sufficed to produce agreement of opinion. Accordingly our wise Reformers were careful to guard against an abuse of this right by preserving due authority in their own branch of the Church: they quote the ancient writers with great respect, and appeal to them largely in controversy: in the 6th Article they call attention not only to what is read in Scripture, but also to what "may be proved thereby"—particularly specifying the Creeds of the Church in the 8th Article: and by the Canons of 1571, the Clergy are required to "teach nothing save what is agreeable to the doctrine of Scripture, and what in the way of interpretation the Catholic bishops collected from it." A writer of some celebrity, who furnished the well-known axiom, "The Bible only is the religion of Protestants," thus states what he considered to be the leading principle of the Reformation: "Malice alone can deny that the intent was, to reduce Religion to that original purity from which it was fallen:" and, after comparing some differences among the Reformers, he says, "They did best who followed Scripture interpreted by Catholic written Tradition, which rule the Reformers of the Church of England proposed to follow?" (see Chillingworth's Works).

(10) *Whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*] The Galileans were reckoned among the most seditious people in Judea. The sufferers on this occasion may have been either followers of Judas of Galilee (mentioned Acts v. 37), or some of Herod's native subjects, who, being at Jerusalem to offer sacrifices, had suffered there during the sedition of Barabbas. This act of violence would account for the anger of Herod towards Pilate, and his appearing with an armed force to protect his subjects during the Passover when our Lord suffered (Luke xxiii. 11, 12).—Josephus has not alluded to the slaughter by Pilate here spoken of, but he

the moment being offered up on their behalf). And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these *slaughtered Galileans* were *notorious sinners* above all the *other Galileans*, and marked out as *especial objects of God's wrath*, because they suffered such *dreadful things*? I tell you, Nay; to his own Master each standeth or falleth, and none must presume to judge in this manner of the dispensations of Providence: but except ye repent, ye likewise (after as violent and sudden a manner) shall all perish: <sup>(11)</sup> Such judgments are intended as a warning for all, and therefore, instead of drawing conclusions against others, be careful of your own conduct.—Or again: those eighteen upon whom the tower in (at) Siloam fell <sup>(12)</sup> and slew them, think ye that they were *notorious sinners* above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

He spake also this parable in further illustration of the warning He had given them:—A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came at each successive season and sought fruit thereon,† and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years <sup>(13)</sup> I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: Cut it down<sup>a</sup> forthwith; why cumbereth it any longer the ground, for it only consumes the moisture of the land, and renders it unproductive for other plants? And he answering said unto him, Lord, I beseech thee to let it alone this one year also, till I shall dig about it and lay dung to

<sup>a</sup> I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit; and that your fruit should remain. John xv. 16.

I desire fruit that may abound to your account. Phil. iv. 17.

<sup>a</sup> And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiffnecked people: Now, therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them. Exod. xxxii. 9, 10.

records a similar severity of that governor towards the Samaritans, as well as several great tumults at the principal Festivals,—some of which were accompanied with conflicts in the Temple itself. It was within the sacred precincts that Archelaus slaughtered three thousand Galileans in an act of sedition.

<sup>(11)</sup> *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*] This is plainly written also “for our learning.” It teaches, that we must not presume to pry into the secrets of Divine Providence. From a certain line of intemperate or profligate conduct, certain results may indeed be expected to follow; and the sufferings or ultimate ruin of such persons should not surprise us, for they are the general symptoms of God's providential government: but whatever is signal or unusual, is, by the very definition, not sufficiently within the scope of our daily experience to furnish materials of safe induction. The lesson of such remarkable events is, that we be “not high-minded, but fear;” we learn a plain lesson of gratitude that we are yet spared for repentance, and of awe, lest even now our repentance should be too late.

Considering our Lord's words in this place as a prediction on those to whom they were immediately addressed, their literal accomplishment remarkably appears from their own historian. Under the president Cumanus twenty thousand perished in the Temple at one of their great

feasts (Joseph. Antiq. xx. 5). During their last internal dissensions the blood stood in pools within the sacred precincts, “many falling before their sacrifices, and sprinkling the altar with their blood;” and at length the flower of the nation perished, multitudes of them within the Temple, while assembled to celebrate the Passover (De Bell. Jud. v. 1, and vi. 9).

<sup>(12)</sup> *Upon whom the tower in Siloam fell.*] The Fountain of Siloam was just without the walls of Jerusalem, and the persons here referred to (who were no doubt frequenting it, according to custom, for Purification) must have been killed by the fall of one of the towers of the city wall, probably called “the Siloam tower” as being in the immediate vicinity of the Fountain. We know no more of the occurrence itself than what St. Luke here records: but the prediction of a similar fate awaiting the unrepentant Jews was (as in the preceding case) fully accomplished in the last fatal war with the Romans. Multitudes (as Josephus relates) were crushed by the falling of the towers as well as destroyed by the enemy, and some were found literally buried in the ruins.

<sup>(13)</sup> *Three years.*] This was the period after planting at which fig-trees, if they bore at all, generally began to do so. There may be (as some think) an allusion here to the period of our Lord's Ministry among the Jews, after which they were justly considered as irreclaimable.

<sup>†</sup> Therefore He said, that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath, lest He should destroy them. Pa. cvi. 23.

The Lord is long suffering to us-ward; not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. iii. 9.—Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away. John xv. 2.—That which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. Heb. vi. 8.

it: and if it bear fruit, *it will be well spared*; and if it bear not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.<sup>†</sup>—*Such is God's forbearance towards all His people: He listens to My intercessions on your behalf; but if, after repeated mercies and warnings, you remain unfruitful under the means of Grace vouchsafed, then you in like manner must be cut off.*

## SECTION LXXXIV.

**A WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN BOWED TOGETHER FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS, IS RESTORED BY JESUS ON A SABBATH-DAY.**

*Luke xiii. 10—17.*

<sup>†</sup> But an evil spirit troubled Saul. 1 Sam. xvi. 14.

**A**ND He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath: and behold, there was a woman *in the congregation* which had a spirit of infirmity<sup>a</sup> (*was possessed by an evil spirit that had inflicted extreme weakness upon her*) for eighteen years; and *she* was bowed together by this infirmity, and could in no wise lift herself up so as to stand upright.

And when Jesus saw her, *knowing her to be one well deserving of His favour*, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.<sup>(1)</sup> And, *as He uttered these words*, He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified the Lord God, *from whom she had received such mercy.*

<sup>b</sup> Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. Exod. xx. 9.

<sup>c</sup> And He said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days. Matt. xii. 11, 12.

And the ruler of the synagogue answered, *in reference to this cure*, with pretended indignation because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath-day, and said unto the people: There are six days *allowed by the Law* in which men ought to work;<sup>b</sup> in *some of* them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day. The Lord then answered him *by appealing*, as He had before done on a like occasion, *to their own practice*, and said: Thou hypocrite,—*excited as thou art by envy against Me, and not by zeal for the Law*,—Doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?<sup>c</sup> *You do this for a beast that you may free it*

(1) *Thou art loosed from thine infirmity.*] The loosing or releasing from the disease, as described here and at the close of the next paragraph, corresponds with the loosing of beasts taken to water. But it was also customary with the Greek and Hebrew writers to compare disorders to chains and ropes, by which men are, as it were, held bound.

(2) *Lead him away to watering.*] The Jews permitted work to be done on the Sabbath which required more labour than this. Thus, water might be drawn for the use of beasts, and poured into troughs, as we find expressly mentioned in Rabbinical writers.

*from the uneasiness of thirst, and you consider yourselves justified by the mercy of the work, servile though it be: And ought not this woman,—who came not here, as you would insinuate, to be healed, but to attend God's service, being a true daughter of Abraham<sup>d</sup> in her faith as well as by descent, and whom Satan hath by God's permission bound,<sup>e</sup>(<sup>f</sup>) lo, these eighteen years,—to be loosed from this afflicting bond on the Sabbath-day? This, surely, is a far more important work; and it is one which has required no labour, being effected only by a word.*

And when He had said these things, all His adversaries, —for there were some present who had taken part with the ruler,—were ashamed<sup>f</sup> and completely silenced. And all the common people then present rejoiced at this triumph, and for all the other glorious things that were done by Him.

<sup>d</sup> And Jesus said unto him, This day is Salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. Luke xix. 9.

<sup>e</sup> And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand, but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown. Job ii. 6, 7.

—to deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. v. 5.

<sup>f</sup> All that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. Isa. xiv. 24.

### SECTION LXXXV.

JESUS, ON HIS WAY TO JERUSALEM, DECLINES MAKING A DIRECT REPLY TO THE QUESTION, "ARE THERE BUT FEW THAT BE SAVED?" HE DECLARES THAT HE SHALL BE PUT TO DEATH IN THAT CITY.

*Matt. xxiii. 37—39. Luke xiii. 22—35.*

**A**ND He went through the cities and villages of Galilee, teaching the Gospel wherever He came, and journeying by short stages toward Jerusalem, to attend there the approaching feast of the Dedication.

Then said one unto Him, Lord, are there few only that shall be saved? But Jesus declined to reply to a merely-curious, if not captious question, which could tend to no profit: And He said to the inquirer, and unto them who stood by, Learn rather how Salvation is to be attained; for it is the proper business of man, not to pry into what God has hidden, but to attend to what He has revealed. Therefore strive (struggle with every nerve) while the opportunity is offered, to enter in at the strait (through the narrow) gate<sup>a</sup> (1) that leadeth to eternal life: for many, I say unto

<sup>a</sup> Enter ye in at the strait gate. Matt. vii. 13. Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling. Phil. ii. 12.

(<sup>2</sup>) Whom Satan hath bound.] That sometimes diseases were, by the Divine permission, brought on men by the agency of evil spirits, would appear from the histories of Job and Saul; and such a dispensation is no more improbable, than that wicked men should be allowed to injure their fellow-creatures. The Jews believed that all remarkable disorders proceeded from the operation of some malignant demon: their writers quote Ps. xci. 6; and from Heb. ii. 14, it would

seem they considered that Satan had the power of death itself.

(1) Strive to enter in at the strait gate.] The original word here rendered "strive" is a very significant and forcible metaphor, borrowed from those who wrestled or contended in the Olympic games. It implies strictly "to strive as in an agony," and shews that the Christian conflict is a severe one, requiring courage, and, above all,

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<sup>b</sup> Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me. John vii. 34.

Ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins. John viii. 21.

<sup>c</sup> And the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Matt. xxv. 10—12.

<sup>d</sup> And I say unto you That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. viii. 11, 12.

I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. Rev. vii. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn. Exod. iv. 22.

Unto you first—God having raised up His Son Jesus—sent Him to bless you. Acts iii. 26.

It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Acts xiii. 46.

The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth;—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Rom. i. 16,

<sup>f</sup> So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called but few chosen. Matt. xx. 16.

you, will at last importunately seek to enter in, and shall (will) not be able,<sup>b</sup> because their efforts are made too late. When once the master of the house is risen up from his seat at table, and hath shut to (fastened) the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, as unto strangers, I know you not whence ye are:<sup>c</sup> then shall ye begin to say, Lord, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence<sup>(\*)</sup> and company, and thou hast taught in our streets, dwelling among us and holding familiar intercourse with us. But he shall finally say, I tell you again, I know not whence ye are; henceforth you are to me as strangers; for though ye have called me, Lord, Lord, ye have not done the things which I said. I say unto you, therefore, in the language of the Psalmist, Depart from Me all ye habitual workers of iniquity (Ps. vi. 8).

And so I say to all of you of the faith of Abraham, who continue faithless and disobedient, Ye must be rejected at last. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye, the once favoured seed, shall see your fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the holy prophets, rewarded in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. Even the despised Gentiles shall be preferred before you; and they shall come in multitudes from all parts of the world,—from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south,—and shall sit down with the patriarchs and prophets in the kingdom of God,<sup>d</sup> owned with them as His children, and associated together in bliss. And behold, thus it shall happen, that there are last (the Gentiles who are called the latest) which shall be first; and there are first<sup>e</sup> (God's first-born, the Jews, to whom the Gospel is now first preached) which shall be last.<sup>f</sup>

The same day, while Jesus was yet within the borders of Galilee, there came certain of the Pharisees, friends of the Tetrarch, Herod Antipas,—saying unto Him, with the hope of intimidating and getting rid of Him, Get thee out of

*Perseverance.* Several similar allusions are found in St. Paul's Epistles.—The necessity of continued Perseverance has ever been insisted on by the Church; and none but those who practise it can become holy in the sight of God (see Col. i. 22, 23; Heb. iii. 6, 14; x. 38, 39). As a consequence of this doctrine, our own Church also holds, in opposition to the "sensible experiences" contended for by Sectarians, that a positive Assurance of eternal salvation is not the privilege of the Christian. He may experience an inward testimony of his continuance in the state of Regeneration, and be filled with all joy and peace in believing; he may possess what the Scriptures plainly allow of, "a full assurance of faith" (Heb. x. 22), and "a full assurance of hope" (Heb. vi. 11), but not a full assurance of salva-

tion, which they nowhere promise.—The passage in the text is also opposed to the dogma of Calvin; for if men must, as it were, force a passage through the narrow gate of Life, then none can be excluded by God's absolute decree, fixing the number of the elect, and precluding the efforts of those who are willing to attain to it. See Section C., Note 10.

(\*) *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence.* ] This is merely a mode of address, denoting familiar intercourse—a popular way of exciting recollection of a person. No Sacramental allusion can be here intended, yet the lesson conveyed in the context may be profitably applied to those who eat and drink at the Lord's Table, and afterwards prove themselves unworthy participants of that holy mystery.

*this territory if thou art wise, and depart hence as quickly as thou canst; for else Herod will kill thee. And He said calmly unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox<sup>(\*)</sup> (that dissembling prince), that he is utterly without pretext in seeking to persecute Me: I am engaged in doing good and in works of charity: Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected—*I continue for some brief time longer to prosecute the duties of My office; after which I shall be consecrated to it by death, and shall finish My course: your master need not therefore be eager to destroy One who is shortly to be sacrificed. Nevertheless, I tell you that no malice or power of earthly princes can hinder either My stay or My journey hence: I must walk (go on in My appointed course) to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot well be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem: there is the supreme court of the Sanhedrim which can alone adjudge on such pretensions; and that unhappy city, which has been so often stained with sacred blood, must also be the scene of My sufferings, and will fill up the full measure of its iniquity! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent by God as His Ambassadors unto thee,<sup>h</sup> how often, by the voice of My Prophets, would I have gathered thy children together under My protection, as a hen doth gather her chickens [her brood, LUKE] under her wings,<sup>1</sup> and ye would not come nor hear My call. I have now in Mine own person besought you, and all entreaty has been in vain. Behold the Psalmist's prediction verified in your well-merited fate: Your house is to be abandoned and left unto you desolate<sup>k</sup> (see Ps. lxi. 25): no longer shall your Temple be honoured with My presence. And verily, I say unto you, Henceforth (After a while) ye shall not see Me till the time come when ye shall say, with David, where he predicts My sufferings and triumph,—“BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!” (Ps. cxviii. 26). Then you would be glad to hail Me as the Messiah coming for your deliverance, but I shall appear for vengeance!

<sup>g</sup> Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy. Acts xx. 24.

— not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. Phil. iii. 12.

— the Captain of their salvation, perfect through sufferings. Heb. ii. 10.

<sup>h</sup> And the husbandmen took His servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Matt. xxi. 36.

<sup>1</sup> As an eagle fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him. Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings. Ps. xvii. 8.

In the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge. Ps. lvi. 1.

He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust. Ps. xci. 4.

<sup>k</sup> Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. Isa. i. 7.

(\*) Go ye, and tell that fox.] The law of “not reviling rulers” (Exod. xxii. 28) was not considered to be infringed by prophets, whose power was superior to the Law as regarded reproof of offenders (Jer. i. 7—10). They do not hesitate to address bad princes as wolves or lions (see Ezek. xxii. 27; Zeph. iii. 3).—“That fox” was an expression not very vituperative among the ancients: it was chiefly employed by our Lord as suitable to Herod’s crafty disposition, and it showed His intimate knowledge of the secret policy of that prince on the present occasion. A proverb was then current, “Honour even the fox in the day of his power.”—Jesus had now become particularly obnoxious to Herod as bear-

ing constant testimony to the Baptist’s innocence; but he feared the people too much to take away His life, and sent these Pharisees instead to alarm and drive Him from Galilee.

(<sup>1</sup>) As a hen doth gather her chickens under her wings.] This beautiful image, which our Lord addresses to his malicious assailants in a spirit so far from the natural one of resentment, is quite inexplicable in the mouth of a merely human teacher. It is suitable to God alone, whom Moses had compared to an eagle fluttering over her young, and whom the Psalmist entreats to hide him under the shelter of His wings (see the References in the Margin).

## SECTION LXXXVI.

## JESUS, DINING WITH A PHARISEE ON THE SABBATH, HEALS A MAN WHO HAD THE DROPSY; AND DELIVERS THE PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE SUPPER.

Luke xiv. 1—24.

AND, while He was upon His journey, it came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath-day, that they of that sect, who had been also invited, watched Him whether he would heal on that day, that they might accuse Him as a transgressor of the Law.

And behold, there was a certain man present before Him <sup>(1)</sup> which had the dropsy. And Jesus, answering to their malicious thoughts, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?—do you look upon a benevolent deed as inconsistent with the spirit of the Law, or with the sacred rest which it requires? And they cautiously held their peace.—And He took him by the hand, and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, as he had done on former like occasions, saying:—Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen accidentally into a pit, and will not straightway, without a moment's scruple as to the propriety of the act, pull him out on the Sabbath-day? <sup>a</sup> And will you show a kindness to your beast in distress, which you refuse to one of your brethren?—And they, confounded by this appeal to common sense and to their own practice, could not answer Him again to these things.

And He put forth a parable by way of moral instruction to those which were bidden to the feast, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms <sup>(2)</sup> (the first places at table), as presuming on their reputed wisdom; saying unto them, Remember the good advice of Solomon: When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding (to a feast), sit not down in the highest room <sup>b</sup> (in the first place), lest a man more honourable and distinguished than thou be also bidden of him; and so he that bade

<sup>a</sup> Doth not each of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day? Luke ciii. 14, 16.

<sup>b</sup> Stand not in the place of great men; for better is it that it be said unto thee, Come up hither, than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen. Prov. xxv. 6, 7.

(1) *There was a certain man before Him.*] How this man came to be present cannot be determined. If he was dismissed from the house after the cure, he could scarcely be one of the Pharisee's household. He might have obtained admittance, and placed himself conspicuously before our Lord, though he would not venture to solicit a cure on the Sabbath-day. Or, he might have been maliciously brought in with the deliberate intention of ensnaring Jesus.

(2) *The chief rooms.*] At the time our translation of the Bible was made, "room" and "place" were synonymous terms. Thus, we find it said in Cavendish's Life of Wolsey, that the Cardinal "caused the guests to sit still, and kept their rooms."—The chief places, so much coveted by the Pharisees (see also Matt. xxiii. 6), were at the upper of three tables, arranged in the form of the Greek letter Π. Jewish meals were commonly more sumptuous on the Sabbath.

thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man *thy* place; and thou, to avoid any further disgrace, begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down *first* in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then, *having assumed nothing to thyself*, thou shalt have worship (*honour*) in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.<sup>c</sup> For *this will ever be found true*:—Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think of these things. Phil. iv. 8.

<sup>d</sup> A man's pride shall bring him low; but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. Prov. xxix. 23.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. James iv. 6.

Then said He also to him that bade Him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, *do it not from the expectation of being invited by others in return: therefore* call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours<sup>e</sup> *only*—lest they also bid thee again, and so a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, *consider the more pressing call of charity, as well as the duty of hospitality*: call also the poor,<sup>(\*)</sup> the maimed (*the disabled and helpless*), the lame, the blind,—*that they may partake of what is left, or have portions sent unto them at home.*<sup>f</sup> And, *doing this*, thou shalt be blessed; for they *indeed* cannot recompense thee; *but there is One above who careth for them*, for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the just.

<sup>e</sup> He that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want. Prov. xxii. 16.

<sup>f</sup> Eat the fat, and drink the sweet; and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared. Neh. viii. 10.

And when one of them that sat at meat with Him heard these things, he said unto Him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!<sup>g</sup> (<sup>4</sup>) Then said He unto him, *by way of parable—to show how few there were who really desired that blessing, and themselves, the favoured people, least of all*:—A certain man made a great supper and bade many guests; and sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.<sup>h</sup> And they all with one consent (*as if with one purpose, and with the same ungracious determination*) began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have

<sup>g</sup> Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Rev. xix. 9.

<sup>h</sup> Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Isa. lv. 1.

(\*) *Call the poor, &c.*] Our Lord takes occasion to reprove the Pharisaical custom of giving entertainments out of a spirit of worldliness and ostentation.—The precept in this place is best understood by us with limitation, and according to the well-known Hebrew idiom. Social hospitality among friends is plainly sanctioned in other parts of Scripture; but still so much cannot innocently be expended in this manner, as would deprive us of the means of relieving cases of distress. It is not required, in the *present* state of society, that the poor should actually be guests at the tables of the rich; but the latter can always observe the *spirit* of this precept, by doing on their behalf what is equivalent in respect of charge, and by sending portions to them for whom nothing is prepared at home.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.*] It is difficult to decide whether this was spiritually or carnally spoken, and our Lord's Parable would apply on either supposition. The speaker might be one of the better-disposed Pharisees, and have intended to follow up our Lord's comment on Christian entertainments by an allusion to spiritual nourishment in the Kingdom of Glory. The Jews had been accustomed to this language, which is not unfrequent in Prophecy: thus Jeremiah speaks of "eating God's words" (Jer. xv. 16); and Ezekiel is commanded to eat the roll of the book given to him (Ezek. iii. 1, 2). On the other hand, as most of the Jews at that time had carnal notions of the Messiah's reign on earth, the speaker might be only anticipating its pleasures and enjoyments.

<sup>1</sup> And that which fell among thorns, are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. Luke viii. 14.

<sup>k</sup> But he that is married, careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. 1 Cor. vii. 33.

<sup>l</sup> With her much fair speech, she caused him to yield. Prov. vii. 21.

But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Luke xxiv. 29.

<sup>m</sup> Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17.

<sup>n</sup> Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Matt. xxi. 43.

bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; <sup>(5)</sup> I pray thee have me excused<sup>l</sup> (*make my excuse to your lord*). And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove (*to examine and try*) them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.<sup>k</sup>—So that servant came and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry *at such a return for his kindness*, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room *for more guests*. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges (*bypaths or enclosures*), and *whatever wretched objects you may find*, compel<sup>l</sup> (*earnestly persuade*) them to come in,<sup>(6)</sup> that my house may be filled.<sup>m</sup> For I say unto you, that, *desirous as they may now be of a reception*, none of those men, which were bidden *and refused to come*, shall taste of my supper.<sup>n</sup> <sup>(7)</sup>—*In like manner God first invites His chosen people to the spiritual feast which He has provided; and they refuse to hear and neglect the gracious summons: but soon the outcast and despised Gentiles shall be pressed to come in, who will gladly welcome the Gospel-invitation, and shall at last share in the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom in heaven.*

<sup>(5)</sup> *I have bought a piece of ground, &c.*] It may be thought that a man would not ordinarily buy land or oxen without first seeing them; and an idiom in the Original will allow of the *Aorist* being taken in the *present* sense,—giving the sense, “I have been purchasing,” i. e., “been in treaty for.” But allowing the common translation to stand, there is a beauty in supposing that these bargains were already made, and that therefore there was *no such urgency* in attending further to matters of business on the evening of the entertainment.

<sup>(6)</sup> *Compel them to come in.*] Anything like a *compulsory* meaning here would clearly be contrary to the spirit of the Gospel; and it is evident, from the use of the original expression by the New Testament writers, that earnest *entreaty* alone is meant—which, indeed, was all that *one servant could use towards a multitude of beggars.*

The best Attic writers have used the word in the same sense. So among the Latins, Horace says (1 Ep. ix. 2) “*Preces cogit* ;” and it is frequent with the early Christian writers: “*Gentiles coguntur ut credant*,” observes Cyprian (Lib. de Mortalitate).

<sup>(7)</sup> *None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my Supper.*] From this we must conclude that *Grace despised is Grace forfeited*. Worldly business cannot be pleaded any more than pleasure for neglecting the Gospel invitation. However lawful our occupations may be in themselves, they must not be pursued at improper seasons; and probably an undue attachment to things in themselves innocent, and even requiring attention, will be found at last, more than positive sin, to have been the ruin of the great majority of mankind.

## SECTION LXXXVII.

## JESUS SHOWS WHAT IS NEEDFUL TO BECOME HIS DISCIPLE.

Luke xiv. 25—35.

AND there went great multitudes with Him—some of them looking for the temporal advantages of His kingdom, and others thinking it an easy discipleship to follow Him about from place to place. And, that they might no longer thus deceive themselves, He turned and said unto them, If any man come to Me, and in comparison with Me hate not (have not less affection for) his father and mother,<sup>(1)</sup> and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life (himself) also, he cannot effectually be My disciple.<sup>a</sup> And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me,—ready and willing to suffer any hardship or persecution for My sake, and shewing obedience to Me in all things,—cannot be My disciple.<sup>b</sup>

Ere you enter upon the Christian life, use that deliberation which you would employ in any matter of ordinary importance: For which of you, intending to build a tower (a mansion for his private use, or any other considerable building), sitteth not down deliberately first, and counteth the cost (calculateth the expense), whether he have means sufficient to finish it?<sup>c</sup> Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation of the building, and is not able to finish it, all that pass by and behold it, begin to mock (deride) him, saying, This foolish man began to build, and was not able to finish. So ought you seriously to reflect what it will cost you to become Christians, and not imagine that you can build for yourselves an eternal habitation in the heavens, without an entireness of purpose and that perseverance which will endure unto the end.—Or again, What king going to make war against another king,<sup>(2)</sup> sitteth not down first, and consulteth<sup>d</sup> whether he can compensate for his want of numbers by other advantages of skill or position—whether he be able with ten thousand to meet (to contend successfully with) him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

(1) *Hate not his father and mother, &c.*] It is the height of infidel perverseness to interpret these words literally and strictly, when we find the direction given so plain, in a parallel passage at St. Matthew x. 37 (see Section LIX., Note 13), that we are to interpret them comparatively. In this, as in several other places, hatred signifies only an inferior degree of love. It is clearly impious, and contrary to the fifth Commandment, to hate father or mother; and, as the Apostle says (Eph. v. 29), we cannot hate ourselves. See Gen. xxix. 31, where Leah's being hated, was only being loved less than Rachel; also Deut.

xxi. 15, to the same purpose; and Rom. ix. 13, where Esau is hated of God in comparison with Jacob.—Our Lord might be here alluding to that public renunciation which proselytes to Judaism were required to make of all their Gentile relations.

(2) *What king going to make war, &c.*] Similar maxims of prudence frequently occur in the Classic writers. So *Sallust*, "Prisquam incipias, consulto; et postquam consuleris, mature facto opus est." And *Livy*, "Cum tuas vires, tum vim fortune martemque belli communem, propone animo."

<sup>a</sup> If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods. . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, neither hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him. Deut. xiii. 6, 8.

He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me. Matt. x. 37.

And they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Rev. xii. 11.

Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy. Acts xx. 24.

<sup>b</sup> We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22.

All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

<sup>c</sup> Prepare thy work without, . . . . and afterwards build thine house. Prov. xxiv. 27.

<sup>d</sup> Every purpose is established by counsel; and with good advice make war. Prov. xx. 18.

\* It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none, . . . and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away. 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.

I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. Phil. iii. 8.

† Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another. Mark ix. 50.

‡ Ye are the salt of the earth. Matt. v. 13.

§ It is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, . . . if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. Heb. vi. 4, 6.—If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment. Heb. x. 26, 27.

Or else, *if he find that he is not able*, while the other is yet a great way off, he *prudently* sendeth an ambassage (*an embassy*) and desireth conditions, *however unfavourable they may be*, of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath<sup>e</sup> (<sup>d</sup>) (*who is not willing, if it be needful, to renounce all that is thought valuable in this life*), he cannot be My disciple.

Salt is a good thing; but if the salt have lost his savour<sup>e</sup> (<sup>d</sup>) (*its saltness*), wherewith shall it be seasoned again?<sup>f</sup> It is, *then*, neither fit manure for the land, nor yet for the dunghill to be mixed with other manure; but men cast it out (*throw it away*) as utterly useless.—So are true Christians the salt of the earth;<sup>g</sup> and as salt is good, so is the Gospel of great price: but if the Christian professor utterly forfeit his principles, how can he be again renewed in the spirit of his mind?<sup>h</sup> he can no more benefit himself nor others.—He that hath ears to hear *this, which highly concerns the welfare of his immortal soul*, let him attentively hear, and learn to profit thereby.

## SECTION LXXXVIII.

### THE PHARISEES ARE REBUKED IN THE PARABLES OF THE LOST SHEEP, THE LOST PIECE OF MONEY, AND THE PRODIGAL SON.

Luke xv. 1—32.

\* And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? Matt. ix. 10, 11.

THEN drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners<sup>(1)</sup> of the neighbourhood in which He had lately dined with the Pharisee, for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and Scribes, finding Him thus engaged, murmured among themselves, saying, This man receiveth sinners with cordiality, and even eateth with them.<sup>a</sup>

And, taking the opportunity to rebuke their want of charity towards such outcast and ignorant creatures, whom

(\*) *Forsaketh not all that he hath.*] It would be absurd to press this precept beyond a readiness to give up what is most dear to us, in obedience to the Saviour's superior claims upon our love. A man may be a sincere Christian, without either parting with his worldly goods, or depriving himself of those highest earthly gratifications which arise from domestic ties. The Apostles are said to have forsaken all, yet they still retained the property of their goods. Express mention is made of John's house, into which Mary was received after the Crucifixion; also of Peter's, where our Lord so often lodged, and this latter Apostle paid taxes as an inhabitant of Capernaum. They were ready at any moment to quit their families and occupations when their Master summoned them to preach the Gospel; but their trade of fishing

was continued, together with the use of their own boats and nets, even after their Lord's resurrection.

(\*) *If the salt have lost his savour.*] See Section XLI., Note 6.

(1) *Publicans and sinners.*] The "sinners," who were assembled on this occasion with the Roman tax-gatherers, would be chiefly gross sinners of the lower class; but there might be some Gentiles of the neighbourhood present. The language employed does not exclude them; and St. Matthew says (xviii. 17), "If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." So also St. Paul (Gal. ii. 15), "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles."

*He never received as His associates, but only with a view to their amendment, He spake this Parable,—the same which He had before delivered privately to His Apostles,—saying unto them:—What man of you having a flock of an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine to feed in their pastures in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, not able to contain the good news he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost: “He rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.” This is a representation of the joy of God at the recovery of a lost soul,<sup>b</sup> for He willeth not the death of a single sinner:<sup>c</sup> I say unto you that, likewise, more joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth,<sup>(2)</sup> than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance<sup>d</sup> (who require no entire change or conversion from a life of sin unto holiness). I am come “to seek and to save that which was lost;” and why should I not do that for God’s nobler creatures, “the true sheep of His pasture,” which you would do for your dumb flocks?*

Either—to represent the Divine Mercy by another similitude—What poor woman having ten pieces of silver (*ten drachmas*), if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends (*her female acquaintance*, Gr.) and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God<sup>(3)</sup> over one sinner that repenteth.

And He said *moreover—as a yet further illustration, and to encourage every sincere penitent:—*A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them, *becoming impatient of the restraints of home*, said to his father, Father, give me

<sup>b</sup> I am gone astray like a lost sheep. Ps. cxix. 176.

<sup>c</sup> Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways and live? Ezek. xviii. 23.

It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish. Matt. xviii. 14.

<sup>d</sup> I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Luke v. 32.

(<sup>1</sup>) *More joy shall be in heaven over one sinner, &c.*] Various explanations have been given of this passage. The “one sinner” may be intended to represent the *Gentile world*: the recovery of the heathen to the fold would, as they were more numerous, occasion *greater* joy; and it is clear that, in some of our Lord’s other parables, the Gentiles, as well as sinners at large, are represented, not by the many, but as *one man*.—Again, it has been ingeniously suggested that as a hundred are more than ninety and nine, the security of the *whole* would naturally occasion greater joy than if the number was deficient.—But the whole passage, being spoken of God after the manner of men, may be best understood after the manner of men—that is, suitably to human passions and affections and the usual oc-

casions of moving them: the sudden recovery of what has been in great danger always affords more intense joy than the quiet possession of that which is safe.

(<sup>2</sup>) *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, &c.*] This may be simply understood of the joy of our Heavenly Father exhibited before the angels, as standing continually in His presence. The Romanists infer from the passage, that angels, and even departed saints, have a knowledge of the heart, and can distinguish when true repentance is wrought there. The utmost inference from the text is, that the Holy angels rejoice at the fact of the conversion of a sinner; and to this interpretation there can be no objection, as they might know it by immediate revelation.



the portion of goods that *lawfully falleth to me.*<sup>(4)</sup> And, *accordingly*, he divided unto them his living (*his property*) *in due proportions*. And, not many days after, the younger son gathered all together (*converted all he had into money*), and took his journey into a far country; and there, *among heathen and profligate associates*, he wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty (*severe*) famine in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined (*engaged*) himself *as a servant* to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine—an occupation which of all others was reckoned the lowest and most degrading to a Jew. But his wages could not supply him in a time of scarcity with a sufficiency even of the commonest kind of human food, and he would fain (if he could have reconciled himself to such necessity) have filled his belly with the husks from the Carob tree that the swine did eat: and no man gave so much as a morsel of food unto him.

\* I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord. Ps. xxxii. 5.

† Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight. Pa. li. 4.

‡ The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off. Acts ii. 39.

§ Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Eph. ii. 13.

¶ None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him. Ezek. xxxiii. 16.

He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy: He will turn again; He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. Mic. vii. 18, 19.

And when he came to himself and reflected on the miserable condition to which he had been brought, he bitterly repented of his folly, and said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I, his son, am ready to perish with hunger! I am resolved what to do: I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against the God of heaven,<sup>c</sup> and before thee my best of earthly friends, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me (*treat me*) henceforth as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came (*was coming*) to his father. But when he was yet a great way off<sup>(5)</sup> from the house—shame keeping him still at a distance—his father saw him, and had compassion on him,<sup>g</sup> and immediately ran, and, not able at first to speak, fell on his neck and kissed him as the token of his forgiveness. And the son said unto him, —beginning his confession as he had purposed,—Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no

(4) *The portion of goods that falleth to me.*] By the Jewish, as well as by the Roman law, all children shared alike, with the exception of the eldest, who received double (Deut. xxi. 17). An indulgent parent frequently made a division in his lifetime, allotting a portion to a son on his coming of age.

(5) *When he was yet a great way off, &c.*] The mercy of our Heavenly Father, which pervades the whole of this beautiful and exquisitely-tender parable, is strikingly displayed at this portion of it. There is no doubt that the whole is applicable to the case of the Jew and the Gentile. The former had been "ever with God" by the right of primogeniture; the latter had lived "afar off," in spiritual fornication, without the knowledge of

God, and "given over unto all uncleanness" (Eph. iv. 17–19). Yet the Divine promise was equally to the Gentiles, and they experienced at length that greatest of all famines, a craving for God's Word (see Amos viii. 11). The Almighty is ready to receive every penitent, even preventing him with His grace, if He sees but a willingness to return to Him.—Little inferior is the mercy which the parable afterwards sets forth in the treatment of the elder son (as representing the Jew), who boasted that he had served God many years, nor had ever transgressed His commandment. Notwithstanding his sullen coldness and perverseness, his father condescends to come out, and *entreats* him to do that which is right.

more worthy to be called thy son. But *before he could add the rest*, the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him *in place of these rags*,<sup>b</sup> and put a ring on his hand<sup>i</sup> and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry: for this my son was *as if were dead*,<sup>k</sup> and is alive again;<sup>l</sup> he was lost, and is found.—And they *of the household* began to be merry (*cheerful and happy*) together on this joyful occasion.

Now his elder son was *at work* in the field *when the brother arrived*; and as he *now* came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.<sup>m</sup> And, *much surprised at these unaccustomed sounds*, he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant, *and what was the cause of this sudden festivity*. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come *home*; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry *at this generous reception of his brother*, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he, answering, said to his father, Lo, these many years do I *continue* to serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment;<sup>n</sup> (°) and yet thou never gavest me *so much* as a kid that I might make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath *to the utmost of his power* devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me—*daily receiving some token of my affection and needing no such particular demonstration of it*; and, *as thou well knowest*, all that I have is *to be* thine. It was *but meet and right* that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother<sup>(?)</sup> was dead and is alive again; and was lost and is found.<sup>o</sup>

Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isa. xxxv. 10.

*The best robe.*] The robe, ring, and shoes could not be worn by a *servant*. Thus the son is shown to be reinstated—and completely so, for *the best* robe is ordered,—the Article in the Greek being emphatic.

(°) *Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.*] This phrase alone would fix the character of the elder brother upon the hypocritical and supercilious Pharisee. Yet the Parable has lost none of its force among the changes that more than eighteen centuries have produced; for under every modification of society we shall find the two characters here delineated,—the returning prodigal, and the self-righteous formalist who repines at the forgiveness of the other.

(?) *This thy brother.*] The elder son had angrily said, "This thy son." The father here makes an appeal to natural affection, changing the phrase to "This thy brother." It may be added that the whole Parable is remarkably

<sup>b</sup> Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee; and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. Zech. iii. 3, 4.

<sup>i</sup> And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand. Gen. xli. 42.

<sup>k</sup> Let the dead bury their dead. Matt. viii. 22.

<sup>l</sup> She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 1 Tim. v. 6.

<sup>m</sup> Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead. Rom. vi. 13.

<sup>n</sup> You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1.

<sup>o</sup> Then they said, Behold there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh. . . . And see, and behold if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances. Judg. xxi. 19, 21.

<sup>p</sup>—are rebellious people. . . which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. Isa. lrv. 2, 5.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. Luke xviii. 11.

° The ransomed of the

illustrative of St. Luke's peculiar beauty and greater purity of style. Many of this Evangelist's words and expressions are exactly parallel to those which are to be found in the best classic writers. Where he speaks of the "mighty famine," the same Greek is employed as occurs in Thucydides III. 85 (λιμός λυγρὸς ἐγένετο): and the striking phrase, "when he came to himself" (i.e. returned to his right mind again), corresponds with one in Lucretius IV. 995:—

"Donec discussis redeant erroribus in se." The fact of how degrading an occupation that of a *swineherd* was generally accounted in ancient times is confirmed by Herodotus (*Euterpe*, 47); who states, that in Egypt (where in all probability the Prodigal was, for that was reckoned 'a far country' by the Jews) swineherds were prohibited from marrying out of their vocation, and were rigidly excluded from the places of public worship.

## SECTION LXXXIX.

THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD IS DELIVERED AS A LESSON OF PRUDENCE; AND THAT OF THE RICH MAN AND THE BEGGAR LAZARUS AS A WARNING AGAINST SELFISHNESS.

Luke xvi. 1—31.

AND He said also unto His disciples *and others who were present*:—There was a certain rich man, which had a *confidential* steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship: for, *unless it prove satisfactory*, thou mayest be no longer *my* steward.\*

\* It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. 1 Cor. iv. 2.

Then the steward, *conscious of his guilt*, said within himself, What shall I *now* do to get a living? for my lord taketh (*is about to take*) away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig (*I have not been brought up to a life of labour, and have not the strength to bear it*); to beg I am ashamed.—*And at length, after reflecting on his position, he said, I am resolved what to do: I will secure the good will of my lord's tenants, by serving their interests jointly with my own; that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.*

So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much *rent* owest thou to my lord? And he said, An hundred measures (*a thousand gallons*) of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill<sup>(1)</sup> (*lease or contract*), and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures (*eight hundred bushels*) of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. *And in like manner said he to all the rest.*

And the lord (*his master*) commended *the dexterous policy* of the unjust steward,<sup>(2)</sup> because he had done *so wisely for himself: and not without reason*; for the children of this world are, in *their dealings with the men of their generation, wiser (more prudent) in providing for this life, than the children of*

(1) *Take thy bill.*] The tenants bound themselves, by an engagement in writing, to pay as rent a certain portion of the produce to the proprietor. These contracts would be countersigned by the Steward, and the alteration of them would be a lasting advantage to the tenants, placing them under the greatest obligations to him; while he provided against discovery by making them accomplices in the fraud.

(2) *The lord commended the unjust Steward.*] The Steward's master, here plainly intended, must not be confounded with the Lord of all.

The master could not help admiring his servant's cleverness, though he suffered so much from his dishonesty. A similar passage occurs in one of the plays of Terence (Heauton. iii. 2, 26). The object which the Steward had in view, was his maintenance; he employed iniquitous means, but they answered his purpose; and he is brought forward to show how much greater is the sagacity and perseverance of worldly men, than of professors of religion, in the pursuit of their respective aims.

light<sup>b</sup> are in providing for eternity. And I say unto you, *My followers, learn a lesson of prudence from the worldly-minded: As the steward made friends to himself, so do you, by acts of charity, make to yourselves friends<sup>c</sup> of the mammon of unrighteousness (of riches, which are so deceitful and transitory in themselves, as well as often acquired and employed wrongfully); that, when ye fail (when ye die) and your stewardship expires with you, they may receive you (may be a means of your being received) into everlasting habitations.<sup>d</sup> Let no man, however low his condition in the world, think himself unconcerned in this parable: he that is faithful in that trust which is least, is faithful also in much;<sup>e</sup> and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful stewards in dispensing the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the True Riches?<sup>f</sup> you can scarcely expect that a just and perfect God will do so. And if ye have not been faithful in that, which at your decease is to be another man's, and is given to you in trust only by God, who shall give you that which is your own,—that blessed inheritance which would be wholly and for ever yours? You will invariably find that an affection for the world obstructs the love of God: I have said before, and declare it to you again, That no man can serve two masters; for either he will hate (have a much diminished affection for) the one, and love the other; or else at least he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot at the same time serve God and mammon. g<sup>(\*)</sup>*

And the Pharisees also, who were extremely covetous, and whose condemnation was particularly implied in the parable just delivered, heard all these things; and they derided<sup>h</sup> (sneered at) Him and His doctrine—for they wished to represent Him as a visionary, or as one who only despised the enjoyments of life because they seemed beyond his reach.

And He said unto them, Ye are exactly they which justify yourselves before men<sup>i</sup>—arrogating a sanctity not really yours, and finding out plausible excuses for your irregular lives; but God knoweth the deceit of your hearts:<sup>k</sup> for that fair outside which is highly esteemed among men,—who are not able to look further,—is often but a cloak to vice, and is an abomination in the sight of an all-seeing God.<sup>l</sup> Under the New Dispensation which has commenced, all such hypocrites shall be put to shame; for it especially inculcates those higher precepts of charity at which ye mock: the Law and the Prophets were the only Revelation until John, serving to foreshew what was to

<sup>b</sup> Believe in the Light, that ye may be the children of Light. John xii. 86.

<sup>c</sup> Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days. Eccles. xi. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Matt. xix. 21.

Give alms: provide yourselves bags that wax not old,—a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. Luke xii. 33.

—rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.

<sup>e</sup> Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Matt. xxv. 21.

<sup>f</sup> Riches and honour are with Me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. Prov. viii. 18.

<sup>g</sup> Choose you this day whom ye will serve.... As for me and my house we will serve the Lord. Josh. xxiv. 16.

<sup>h</sup> The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

<sup>i</sup> Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Matt. xxiii. 27.

<sup>k</sup> I, the Lord, search the heart. Jer. xvii. 10.

<sup>l</sup> The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord. Prov. xvi. 6.

(\*) Mammon.] See Section XLI., Note 37.

■ From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. *Matt. xi. 12, 13.*

■ The grass withereth, the flower fadeeth, but the Word of our God shall stand for ever. *Isa. xl. 8.*

Verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled. *Matt. v. 18.*

The Word of the Lord endureth for ever. *1 Pet. i. 25.*

come: but since that time the Kingdom of God is preached (is proclaimed), and every man of earnest and zealous mind presseth (forceth as it were his way) into it,<sup>m</sup> learning to deny himself, and breaking through the engrossing love of temporal concerns. I do not say this to depreciate the First Revelation; its moral obligation remains fixed for ever: and it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the Law of God to fail.<sup>n</sup> I came to fulfil the Law; to exalt and purify it, and to assert its precepts in their utmost extent and spirituality. Thus, to point to one of your besetting sins—I again declare, notwithstanding all your traditions to the contrary, That whosoever putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, and marrieth another, committeth the sin of adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is so put away from her husband, also committeth adultery.

Having thus silenced the Pharisees, Jesus added another Parable, that He might dissuade His hearers the more from addicting themselves to carnal gratifications, and warn them of the danger of riches when not charitably employed: There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus,—for he was a poor helpless creature,—which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and in vain desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, so weak and helpless was he, that the dogs, obtruding on his miseries, came and licked his uncovered sores.<sup>o</sup> And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels<sup>p</sup> into Abraham's bosom<sup>q</sup> (4) in the region of Paradise. The rich man also died, and was buried with all the customary pomp of great wealth. And in hell (Gehenna), being there in torments, he lifted up his eyes, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham,<sup>(5)</sup> have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip though it be but the tip of his finger in

\* From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. *Isa. i. 6.*

† Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? *Heb. i. 14.*

‡ Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. *Matt. viii. 11.*

(4) Carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.] This is said agreeably to the tradition of the Jews respecting good men. In parabolical narrations, provided the doctrines inculcated be strictly true, the terms in which they are expressed, may be adapted to the prevailing notions of those to whom they are immediately addressed.—The general receptacle of departed spirits in the Intermediate State (a doctrine which the Church still receives) was called *Hades*. This consisted of two regions. The one was appropriated to good souls, and was called *Paradise*, where the beggar is now supposed to be: thither our Lord went after death (as declared in the Creed), admission being at the same time promised to the penitent thief (*Luke xxiii. 43*); and thither also St. Paul was caught up in a vision. The other region was called *Gehenna*: there the

rich man in the Parable is supposed to be. The expression, "Abraham's bosom" is a metaphor taken from the Oriental custom of reclining at meals, by which the head of the chief guest would be brought almost into the lap of him who sat at the head of the table (see *John xiii. 23*).

(5) Father Abraham.] John the Baptist had already warned them against their vain notion that this patriarch could protect them from Divine judgments (*Luke iii. 8*). Our Lord now shews the same, as it were from the mouth of Abraham.—This is the only instance in Scripture of anything that at all looks like a prayer to a glorified saint; and even here the application was in vain; for no relief was the saint capable of giving.

water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.<sup>f</sup>

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things—for *such thou didst esteem them*—and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now *Divine Justice is satisfied*; he is comforted, and thou art tormented.<sup>g</sup> And beside all this, between us and *those with you* there is a great gulph<sup>(6)</sup> fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for *there* I have five brethren, *young and thoughtless as I have been*, that he may testify unto them *of the happiness of the blessed and the misery of the wicked*, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the Prophets, *in whom as inspired teachers they profess to believe. The writings of those holy men are read every Sabbath in their synagogues,*<sup>h</sup> and they are sufficient with every well-disposed mind to teach these truths: let them hear and be warned by them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham, *I know that they will continue to slight the Written Word as I did*; but if one went unto them from the dead, surely they will repent. And he said finally unto him: *A departed spirit could tell them no more than is revealed already: if therefore they hear not Moses and the Prophets,*<sup>i</sup> *no miracle, however great, would convince them;* neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead to warn them!<sup>(7)</sup>

Thine Holy One to see corruption. Pa. xvi. 9, 10.—Many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. xii. 2.—There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. John v. 46.

(6) *A great gulph.*] The Jews believed that the two regions of Paradise and Gehenna were separated by an impassable chasm, yet so narrow that there was a prospect of the one from the other, and their respective inmates could converse together. A remarkable affinity may be observed between this part of the narrative and the descriptions of the Grecian poets, who suppose the seats of the blessed to be separated from those of the damned by a great impassable river, from the opposite banks of which they could converse. This portion of the Parable also shews us that the condition of every man is unalterably fixed at death, and consequently that Purgatory is "a fond thing vainly invented."

(7) *Neither will they be persuaded, &c.*] Want of testimony is not the cause why men are kept at a distance from God. This rich man was probably a Sadducee, and, together with his brethren, had disbelieved the truth of a Resurrection. His request that they might see and converse with a departed friend, is perfectly natural, and we might think it the best evidence that could be desired; but He who knew what was in man, has declared its inefficacy to change the heart. The raising of Lazarus, and His own Resurrection (the greatest proof of all), had no effect on the collective body of the Jewish nation, and, with men so utterly sunk in sin, proved insufficient to awaken them to repentance.

<sup>f</sup> Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. Isa. lxvi. 24.

<sup>g</sup> The ungodly prosper in the world, they increase in riches. When I thought to know this it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end: surely Thou didst set them in slippery places; Thou castest them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment; they are utterly consumed with terrors. Pa. lxxiii. 12, 16—18.

<sup>h</sup> Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation. Luke vi. 24.

<sup>i</sup> Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day. Acts xv. 31.

<sup>j</sup> And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake, saying, I am a stranger, and a sojourner. Gen. xxiii. 3, 4.

And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years. Gen. xlvii. 9.

Though, after my skin, worms destroy this body; yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job xix. 26.

My flesh also shall rest in hope: for Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer

## SECTION XC.

CHRISTIANS ARE REQUIRED TO BE INOFFENSIVE AND FORGIVING. THE POWER OF FAITH IS EXEMPLIFIED, AND THE MOST PERFECT OBE-DIENCE SHEWN TO BE NO MORE THAN OUR DUTY.

Luke xvii. 1—10.

**T**HEN said He unto the disciples *at large*, as He had said before in private to the Twelve:—*So great is the inherent wickedness and perverseness of man, that it is in the nature of things impossible but that offences (causes of offence) and stumbling blocks to the Gospel will come; but* woe unto him through whom they come!<sup>a</sup> It were better for him *that the surest earthly destruction now befel him—even that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck,*<sup>(1)</sup> and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones *who believe in Me.*

<sup>a</sup> Woe unto the world, because of offences; for it must needs be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh. Matt. xviii. 7.

<sup>b</sup> Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Lev. xix. 17.

A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool. Prov. xvii. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Then Peter came to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven. Matt. xviii. 21, 22.

Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any. Col. iii. 13.

<sup>d</sup> Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Heb. xii. 2.

Take heed *then* to yourselves *that ye be not guilty of any such sins. And when offences are done to any one of you, bear no malice in thy heart: if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; b go and mildly tell him his fault between thee and him alone: and if after this he repent, freely forgive him. And if he trespass against thee again and again—even seven times in a day—and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent of what I have done, thou shalt as often forgive him.*<sup>c</sup>

And the Apostles,—*perceiving the excellence, yet at the same time the difficulty of this precept, and conscious that a lively Faith was the only principle from which it could proceed,—*said unto the Lord, Increase our Faith.<sup>d(2)</sup> And the Lord said, If ye had Faith as a grain of mustard-seed,<sup>(3)</sup> ye might say unto this sycamine tree,<sup>(4)</sup> Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you: *and so the smallest measure of*

(1) *That a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, &c.]* See Section LXXV., Note 5.

(2) *Lord, increase our Faith.]* It appears from this request that the Apostles must then have had some notion, however indistinct, of their Master's Divinity; for Faith is wrought in the heart, which God alone can immediately work upon.

(3) *If ye had Faith as a grain of mustard-seed, &c.]* A similar remark had before been made with immediate reference to that Faith in the power of working miracles, which was required from the Apostles (see Section LXXIII., Note 2). Such extraordinary effects of Faith must of course be limited to the age and persons of the Apostles; but the context of the passage before us, even if its primary meaning were the same, will justify a secondary application to believers

in all ages. Miracles have ceased; but under the ordinary administration of Divine Providence, and in the experience of every age, the wonderful efficacy of Faith has been shown, whenever, with an implicit reliance on the Divine blessing, a true believer has steadily pursued some great end, with no other view than the promotion of God's glory. As the minute grain of mustard-seed became the greatest of herbs, so Faith, if it have but in it the principle of vitality so that it may gradually increase, will eradicate vices the most confirmed, and can effect moral wonders. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

(4) *Sycamine tree.]* This is the *Ficus Sycamorus* of Linnæus, the leaves of which tree resemble those of the mulberry, while its fruit is a species of fig. It is found in Egypt, as well as in Palestine.

*sincere and active faith shall enable you, and all succeeding Christians, to overcome the greatest moral difficulties.\**

But whatever degree of Christian excellence you may be enabled to attain, never forget to show forth the deepest humility, as in the sight of an all-perfect God: For reflect in what light you are accustomed to estimate your own dependents: Which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat, (*seat thyself at table*)? and will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup (*Prepare something for my supper*), and gird thyself, and serve (*wait upon*) me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant, *however attentive he may be to his orders*, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow (*I apprehend*) not: *he claims his obedience as a matter of common duty*. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you *by God*, say, We are unprofitable servants<sup>(5)</sup>—*ever unworthy in His sight and meritorious in nothing*: we have *only* done that which was our duty to do; and our reward, should it please God to bestow any, must be of grace, and not of debt.<sup>8</sup>

\* Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. Mark ix. 23.

† Can a man be profitable unto God?... Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to Him that thou makest thy ways perfect? Job xxii. 2, 3.

‡ O, my soul! thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord; my goodness extendeth not to Thee. Ps. xvi. 2.

§ All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Isa. lxiv. 6.

¶ They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Rom. iii. 12.

‡ For by Grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the Gift of God,—not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. ii. 8, 9.

Not by works of righteousness that we have done; but according to His mercy He saved us. Tit. iii. 5.

## SECTION XCI.

### THE TEN LEPERS ARE CLEANSED IN SAMARIA.

Luke xvii. 11—19.

AND it came to pass, as He went on His way to Jerusalem, that He passed through the midst (*along the borders*) of Samaria and Galilee. And as He entered into a certain village of Samaria, there met Him ten men that were lepers; which stood afar off—for the Law obliged them to do this when strangers approached, although they were allowed to consort together.

And as these unfortunate men had heard of the Lord's miraculous powers, they lifted up their voices, and said,

(5) *We are unprofitable servants.*] To perceive the force of this illustration, we must remember that the servants of that day were bondmen: the whole of their time, strength, and possessions were the property of their masters; they could have nothing, and could do nothing, to which their masters had not a claim. This figure, strong as it is, aptly illustrates the state of man, relatively with God. The Almighty has a property in us by the most indisputable of all titles, that of Creation; and, together with our being, He gave all that we

have,—all our faculties of soul and body. We are bound, therefore, first and foremost, to serve Him; but at the same time our services are manifestly unprofitable to Him, and cannot merit the smallest return. Thus the Romish doctrine of Supererogation,—or, in other words, the dogma that the merit of one man may make up for the deficiencies of another—is utterly deprived of all foundation. The “unprofitable servant” mentioned in the parable of the Talents, is there called also *wicked and slothful* (Matt. xxv. 26, 30), and so in some measure we all are.

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\* This shall be the law of the leper, in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest. . . . And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean. Lev. xiv. 2, 20.

And Elisha sent a messenger unto Naaman, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. 2 Kings v. 10.

And Jesus saith unto him (the leper), Go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. Matt. viii. 4.

† Then went Naaman down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. 2 Kings v. 14.

‡ I will extol Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast lifted me up. . . . O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me. Ps. xxx. 1, 2.

Jesus, Master, have mercy on us *and heal us*. And when He saw them, He said unto them,—*intending first to prove their faith in His power to heal*,—Go shew yourselves, *as the Law requires*, to the priests<sup>a</sup> at Jerusalem; *procure their certificate of health, and you shall again be restored to the society of your friends and the public worship of your Maker*.

And it came to pass, that, as they went (*were going*) in obedience to the command of Jesus, they were perfectly cleansed.<sup>b</sup> And one of them, when he saw (*perceived*) that he was healed, turned back (*returned*), and with a loud voice, *in the hearing of all who followed Jesus*, glorified God<sup>c</sup> *his Saviour*; and, *convinced from the sensations he experienced that he might now lawfully approach*, fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten (*Were not all the ten*) cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found *any of them* that returned to give glory to God,<sup>(1)</sup> save this stranger (*this alien*). And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith, *more perfect than that of thy associates*, hath made thee whole<sup>(2)</sup>—*restored in body, and also pardoned for thy sins*.

(1) *There are not found that returned to give glory to God.*] The ingratitude of the nine will appear great to many, and yet the ungrateful lepers may rise up against such persons in judgment. It is at present common, on recovering from some dangerous disorder, merely to request the minister to offer up thanks in the congregation: the cure of a Jewish leper could not be certified by the priest until after eight days' purification and service; and although this would cause some expense, as well as personal service, we have no reason to suppose that the nine in the case before us neglected to perform it. It is evident that our Lord required something *more*, namely, the offering of the *heart*.—As little as ever can be trusted to the effect of bodily illness: it often leads a man to sorrow, but sorrow is not penitence, and does not alone convert the soul. Of ten who rise from a bed of sickness, how often may we find nine who forget to "return and give glory to God!"

(2) *Thy faith hath made thee whole.*] This Samaritan was saved both from his leprosy, and from that Moral Malady of which it was such a

significant type; for Sin renders the soul unfit for communion with its Creator, as a contagious disease unfits a man for intercourse with his fellow creatures. All these lepers evidently believed in the miraculous powers of Jesus, or they would not have gone to the priests before they were healed; but the Samaritan alone believed in Him *as a Saviour*, and he alone received the spiritual blessing.—It may be here noticed that "Salvation" in Scripture is an ambiguous word, signifying "Deliverance;" and the context alone can shew when it refers to the body, and when to the soul—to this world or to the next. "He was saved" (or, as it is sometimes rendered, "was made whole"), is the common phrase of the Gospels, for "he was cured." In the case of Bartimeus (Mark x. 52) the restoration of his sight is the salvation intended; in the case of Zaccheus (Luke xix. 9) it is salvation from sin; while in the miracle of the cure of the lame man in the Book of the Acts (iv. 10—12), the two ideas are blended together as they are in the case of the leper before us.

## SECTION XCII.

JESUS REBUKES THE SONS OF ZEBEDEE FOR THEIR INTEMPERATE ZEAL  
AGAINST THE SAMARITANS.

Luke ix. 51—56.

AND it came to pass, when the time was *nearly come* that He should *die* and be received up<sup>a</sup> *into Heaven*, He stedfastly set His face (*He firmly purposed*) to go to Jerusalem,<sup>b</sup> *the place appointed for His sufferings*. And, *knowing the prejudices of the people of Samaria*, He sent messengers before His face, *that they might procure the necessary accommodation for the night*; and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him.—And they (*the Samaritans*) did not receive Him *with the welcome they had given on a former occasion*, because His face was *now* as though He would go to (*was turned towards*) Jerusalem,<sup>(1)</sup> *where the Passover was soon to be kept*.

And when His disciples, James and John, *who were journeying with Him*, saw this, they *were indignant and said*, Lord, wilt Thou that we command (*call for*) fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as *in this same country* Elias did<sup>c</sup> *upon those who came with hostile intent against him*? But He turned, and rebuked them,<sup>(2)</sup> and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit (*what temper of mind*) ye are called to be of:<sup>d</sup> *persecution and intolerance are utterly opposed to My Gospel,—the distinguishing message of which is “Peace on earth and good will towards all men;”* for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them<sup>e</sup>—*to promote their truest and best interests, temporal and eternal*.

And they went *thence* to another village.

<sup>a</sup>—from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us. Acts i. 22.

<sup>b</sup> God was manifest in the flesh, . . . . received up into glory. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>c</sup> And Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. 2 Kings xii. 17.

<sup>d</sup> And Elijah answered and said, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. 2 Kings i. 12.

<sup>e</sup> The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy. James iii. 17.

<sup>f</sup> For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John iii. 17.

(1) *And they did not receive Him, because, &c.]* The Samaritans, like the Jews, had their solemn feasts, and they seem to have thought that Jesus, whose fame had now spread abroad, was openly affronting and deciding against them by His attending the feast at Jerusalem.—Though their sectarian bigotry in many respects equalled that of the Jews, they were not always thus inhospitable. Our Lord met with a very different reception, when in the early period of His ministry He discoursed with the woman at Jacob’s well: then He was coming from Jerusalem, and accordingly He and His disciples were treated with civility and hospitality. Josephus has a passage in his Antiquities (xx. 6), which remarkably confirms the incident before us:—“It was the custom of the Galileans, when attending the feasts at the holy city, to travel through Samaria: as they were in their journey, some inhabitants of the village called Ginea (which lies on the borders of Samaria and the great

plain) falling upon them, killed a great many of them.”

(2) *But He turned and rebuked them.]* Our Lord’s rebuke of the fiery zeal of the two disciples, and His leaving the Samaritans without a remonstrance, is a decisive protest against propagating the Truth by force and the suppression of heresy by the secular power. Gainsayers are to be met, not with the legal severity of Elias, but with the meekness of Christ; and no difference of religion, no pretence of zeal for God, can justify a vindictive and exterminating spirit.—Unhappily the warning prophetic Voice, here given, has been little heeded amidst the turbulence of passion. Men professing to be followers of Jesus have kindled fires to burn, not only idolaters and infidels, but even those who worshipped the same Saviour: and it is a mortifying fact, that there are few Churches, which, when they have had the power, can plead *Not Guilty* to the charge of persecution even unto death.

## SECTION XCIII.

JESUS REPLIES TO THE PHARISEES CONCERNING THE COMING OF GOD'S KINGDOM; AND WARNS HIS FOLLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF REJECTING HIM.

Luke xvii. 20—37.

AND when He was demanded (*asked*) of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God,—*that reign of Heaven of which He so often spoke as approaching*,—should come, He answered them and said: The kingdom of God cometh not with *outward display, or with any of those signs which commonly attract observation*: neither shall they say, *in the way that men speak with admiration of the movements of an earthly power, Lo, it is here! or, lo there!* for behold, the kingdom of God is *to be found* within you.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rom. xiv. 17

And He said *afterwards* unto *some of the professing disciples, who were following Him merely for the temporal advantages of His kingdom*, The days will come,—*little as ye now value the spiritual opportunities vouchsafed to you*,—when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man (*the Messiah present among you for your reformation and deliverance*), and ye shall not see it.<sup>b</sup> *And in that time of difficulty and distress, deceivers will arise,—each in turn beguiling the people under the assumed character of the Messiah*: and they shall say to you, See, *He is here!* or, see there! *If in that extremity you would still be saved*, go not after them, nor follow them.<sup>c</sup> <sup>(1)</sup> *The Son of man will indeed come, but not in the manner which is expected*: for as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth (*flasheth*) unto the other part under heaven; so *visible throughout the world in its effects, and so swift and terrible in its vengeance on an ungrateful people*, shall also the *Coming of the Son of man* be in His day. But first must He suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation;<sup>d</sup> *and for awhile the glory of God's kingdom shall be eclipsed.*

<sup>b</sup> The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them. Matt. ix. 15.

<sup>c</sup> And He said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. Luke xxi. 8.

<sup>d</sup> The Stone which the builders refused—. Ps. cxviii. 22.

And they cried out all at once, Away with this man . . . crucify him crucify him. Luke xxiii. 18, 21.

Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. Acts iii. 14.

*When Divine Vengeance shall at length come, it will be, not only with the rapidity and force of lightning, but with the unexpectedness of the Deluge, and of the destruction of Sodom which followed it.* And as it was in the days of Noe (*Noah*), the preacher of righteousness to the old world, so shall it be also in the days of the *Coming of the Son of man*: men will not believe in the destruction threatened, but will remain sunk in the same carnal security as ever. For in that first great judgment when the Deluge overtook a world

<sup>(1)</sup> Go not after them, &c.] Josephus states (Antiq. xx. 8), that "about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, many false Christs appeared, leading the people out of the city, and promising to work miracles to deliver them."—See also Section CXII., Note 4.

of sinners, they were proceeding in their usual course,—fixing their hearts solely on earthly things: they did eat, they drank; they married wives, they were given in marriage; until the very day that Noe entered into the ark, and then the Flood came with irresistible fury, and destroyed them all.<sup>e</sup> Likewise also as it was after the Flood in the days of Lot: every admonition of approaching peril was despised by that guilty race; they too did eat, they drank; they bought, they sold; they planted, they builded;<sup>(\*)</sup> but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.<sup>f</sup> Even thus shall it be to this generation,—who are as reckless and incredulous as their fathers were,—in the day when the Son of man is revealed (when the Messiah's power is to be manifested): Punishment as exemplary shall overtake them, and overwhelm them with a sudden and fearful destruction!<sup>g</sup>

In that day, he which shall be engaged upon the household, and his stuff (his property) in the house, let him not be concerned for its security, or come down to take it away; but let him look to his own safety and escape by the outer steps without a moment's lingering: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife:<sup>h</sup> take warning, from that awful case, of the folly of delay, and of looking back irresolutely upon perishable things when the greatest and most lasting concerns are at stake. Therefore whosoever, after this timely notice of his danger, shall seek to save his life, by taking refuge within the walls of Jerusalem, shall lose it for his want of faith; and whosoever shall seem to others to lose his life, by neglecting to flee thither, shall most effectually preserve it. I tell you, in that dreadful night, the Providence of God shall interpose to preserve those of His faithful followers who cannot provide for their own safety: There shall be two men lying in one bed; the one shall be taken by the enemy, and the other shall be left<sup>(1)</sup> to make his escape. Two women shall be grinding at a mill together;<sup>(2)</sup> the one shall be in like manner taken, and the other left. Two men shall be at work together in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

<sup>e</sup> All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. Gen. vii. 22.

<sup>f</sup> Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven; and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities. Gen. xix. 24, 25.

<sup>g</sup> He sent forth His armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Matt. xxii. 7.

<sup>h</sup> But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. Gen. xix. 26.

(\*) They bought, they sold; they planted, they builded.] The fault was not in buying and building, any more than in the necessary acts of eating and drinking to sustain life, but in fixing the heart on these and other earthly things; in not seeking first of all the kingdom of God, while attending to the proper duties of their station—in buying no real truth, and building no eternal habitation.

(1) The one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.] Experience confirms the truth of this passage, and the case will be exemplified as long

as the world lasts. The same employments, the same circumstances, the same conditions of life, still send forth heirs of death and heirs of everlasting glory.

(2) Two women shall be grinding together.] Women alone were employed to grind corn at hand-mills, and when the uppermost mill-stone was large, or expedition was needed, a second woman was called in to assist. The custom is alluded to at Exod. xi. 5, and Isa. xlvi. 1, 2.—Among the Athenian women a similar practice existed.

And they answered and said unto Him, Where, Lord, *shall all this take place?* And He said unto them, *I will answer you according to the proverb of Job:—Wheresoever the dead body is, thither will the eagles<sup>(1)</sup> be gathered together to prey upon it: And as like causes will always produce the like effects, so, when the measure of a nation's iniquity is full, Divine Justice will overtake it; and wheresoever the Jews shall be collected in a body together, there will the swords of the Romans, who shall appear with their Eagle-standards, be ready to devour und destroy them.*

<sup>1</sup> The eagle seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is she Job xxxix. 29, 30.

The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle. Deut. xxviii. 49.

He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord. Hos. viii. 1.

## SECTION XCIV.

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER ENJOINED BY THE PARABLE OF THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW; AND HUMILITY IN THE WORSHIPPER BY THAT OF THE SELF-JUSTIFYING PHARISEE AND THE SELF-CONDEMNING PUBLICAN.

Luke xviii. 1—14.

AND He spake a parable to this end—that *however great the trials of life might be, men ought always (frequently and perseveringly) to pray,<sup>a</sup> and not to faint;<sup>(1)</sup> never for a moment desponding because their prayer is not immediately heard*—saying unto them: There was in a certain city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded *doing justice or shewing mercy to man.* And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, *Avenge me<sup>b</sup> of (Do me justice against) mine adversary.* And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, *Though I fear not God, nor regard man, for no such unprofitable motives influence me; yet because this widow*

<sup>a</sup> — continuing instant in prayer. Rom. xii. 12. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same. Col. iv. 2.

<sup>b</sup> And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him: that was oppressed. Acts vii. 24.

(<sup>1</sup>) *The eagles.*] Aristotle mentions a kind of eagle which, like the vulture, fed on carcases (Hist. Animal, ix. 32): indeed the vulture was commonly referred by the ancients to the eagle genus. The expression here may be no more (as some consider) than a proverb, signifying that God's judgments will fall on those who are ripe for them, as certainly as an eagle hastens to the carcase when the spirit has quitted it. Yet the probability of an allusion to the well-known Roman Standard is heightened by the circumstance of armies being sometimes compared to these birds in the language of Prophecy (see Jer. iv. 13: Lam. iv. 19). The prophecies of Moses and Hosea (see in the MARGIN) which contain this figure, are also supposed to refer to the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans. It would be here represented as lying a miserable prey to the foes who were tearing out its vitals.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.*] When we desire anything in this world, we are apt to seek it with perseverance:

we do not easily take a denial, and often gain by importunity what otherwise we might never have succeeded in obtaining. God invites us, in our applications to Him, to follow the same course. It is speciously asked by the infidel, "Do we hope, by our importunity, and by lifting up our feeble voice to heaven, to move the great Sovereign of the Universe and change His purposes? Do we propose by our prayers to furnish with information Him to whom the wants of all His creatures are known long before? Will He not Himself do what is right and fit, whether we ask it of Him or not?" Such objections, however plausible, rest upon an altogether-mistaken view of the nature and design of Prayer. Its efficacy lies, in working a change, not upon God, but upon ourselves; in turning our own disobedient hearts, and so becoming fit subjects of the Divine Mercy: for it is not merely on account of our asking that our requests are granted, but because our asking with proper disposition produces that frame of mind which qualifies us to receive.

troubleth me, I will avenge her (*do her justice*), lest by her continual coming *with her mournful tale* she weary<sup>(\*)</sup> me.<sup>c</sup>

And the Lord said, Hear ye, and profit by what the unjust judge, *overcome by this widow's importunity*, saith. And shall not *the righteous God much more* avenge His own elect (*vindicate His choice and approved servants*), which earnestly cry day and night unto Him<sup>d</sup> *under the assaults of their enemies*, though He bear long with them (*though He seem to linger in their cause*), and almost seem as though He heard them not? I tell you that *when He at length cometh*, He will avenge them<sup>e</sup> speedily (*suddenly*). Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh *to execute judgment on offenders*, shall He find faith on the earth? *shall He find men, even in this favoured land of Judea, believing and acting on the conviction, that God ever regards His faithful servants, and that a final difference will be made between them and others.*<sup>g</sup>

And He spake this parable unto (*concerning*) certain which trusted in (*relied on*) themselves that they were righteous;<sup>h</sup> and confident in *this self-righteousness* despised others<sup>i</sup> as sinners and unworthy of their notice or company:—Two men went up *at the hour of prayer* into the Temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican.<sup>(\*)</sup> The Pharisee stood in the court of the Israelites, and prayed thus with himself: <sup>(\*)</sup> God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, *either open and violent extortioners, or secretly unjust, adulterers, or even in any manner vile and contemptible* as this Publican! *I am so far from committing sin, that I do more than my duty and the Law require: I fast regularly twice in the week,*<sup>(\*)</sup> *I scrupulously give tithes of all that I possess,*<sup>k</sup>—*even of the most trifling herbs in my garden.*

<sup>c</sup> I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend; yet, because of his importunity, he will rise and give him. Luke xi. 8.

<sup>d</sup> And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Rev. vi. 10.

<sup>e</sup> Yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Heb. x. 37.

<sup>f</sup> Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Matt. xxiv. 12.

<sup>g</sup> Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. Mal. iii. 18.

<sup>h</sup> Behold thou art called a Jew, and restest in the Law, and makest thy boast of God, . . . and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind. Rom. ii. 17, 19.

<sup>i</sup>—which say, Stand by thyself, come not near me, for I am holier than thou. Isa. lxx. 6.

Then answered the Pharisees, . . . This people, who knoweth not the Law, are cursed. John vii. 47, 49.

<sup>k</sup> Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God. Luke xi. 42.

(\*) *Weary.*] The original of this word is properly a pugilistic term. It signifies, literally, to strike (or bruise) under the eye; hence figuratively, to mortify, as the Greek signifies at 1 Cor. ix. 27; and in this place it gives the sense of *stunning or wearying by continual importunity.*

(\*) *The one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican.*] See an account of these two classes of persons, Section XVI., Notes 1 and 3.

(\*) *Prayed thus with himself.*] The Pharisee may be rather said to have gone to the Temple to boast than to pray. We cannot call what he uttered, *Prayer*: he only thanks God that he is not wicked like others, and brings forward a reckoning of the performances of his hands—a way in which no man living can be justified; for “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” In his address, there is neither Confession nor Petition; nor even Praise, except of himself. Nor do we find him content with merely praising himself; he goes on to depreciate his fellow-worshipper: at the very mo-

ment he declares he is “not unjust,” he is guilty of judging his neighbour!—The Publican, on the other hand, prayed indeed: he prayed as a man awakened to a sense of his danger, and supplicating for his life; he accuses no man, save himself. Short as his prayer is, there is an acknowledgment of his unworthiness, a petition for pardon, profound reverence for the God whom he had offended, and, above all, *humility*.—It should be added, that the expression used in his supplication, “Be merciful,” seems in the Original to be *indicative* of his obtaining pardon through a *Propitiatory Sacrifice*.

(\*) *I fast twice in the week.*] The public (in addition to the private) fasts of the Jews were upon the second and fifth days of the week; and therefore (as we learn from Tertullian) the Christians, that they might not be outdone by them in any part of devotion, chose the fourth and sixth days of the week (i. e., Wednesday and Friday) for their fasting days.

<sup>1</sup> And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin. 2 Sam. xii. 13.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God Thou wilt not despise. Ps. li. 17.

<sup>m</sup> Bring no more vain oblations. . . . When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Isa. i. 13, 15.

I will shun thee out of My mouth; because thou sayest, I have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable. Rev. iii. 16, 17.

<sup>n</sup> When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up, and He shall save the humble person. Job xxii. 29.—God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. James iv. 6.—Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. 1 Pet. v. 6.

And the Publican, standing afar off in the outer court of the Gentiles, as not deeming himself worthy to be numbered among God's people, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven,—the sacred habitation of that great Being whom he had offended; but overcome with remorse, and agitated by emotion, he smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful (be reconciled) to me, a vile and miserable sinner!

I tell you, that this humble-minded man went down to his house justified<sup>1</sup> rather than the other<sup>m (e)</sup>—having obtained that pardon for his past sins, which he had so earnestly implored at the throne of mercy. For be assured, there is nothing more hateful to God, or more offensive in a creature, than pride,—and especially spiritual pride: every one, therefore, that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.<sup>n (7)</sup>

## SECTION XCV.

**JESUS PROCEEDS ON HIS JOURNEY; AND BY THE WAY REPLIES YET MORE PLAINLY TO THE PHARISEES RESPECTING DIVORCE.**

*Matt. xix. 1—12. Mark x. 1—12.*

AND it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He arose from thence, and departed from the confines of Galilee and Samaria; and, preferring a longer route to the road through the latter country, He came into the coasts (the adjoining territory) of Judea, and reached Bethabara, by the farther or Eastern side of Jordan.<sup>a</sup> And great multitudes followed Him; and the people of the country resort unto Him again: and, as He was wont, He taught them again, and also He healed such of them there as were sick.

<sup>a</sup> He went away again beyond Jordan, unto the place where John at first baptized. John x. 40.

The Pharisees also of the neighbourhood came unto Him, tempting Him;<sup>(1)</sup> and asked Him, saying unto Him,

(<sup>e</sup>) *Justified rather than the other.*] The Pharisee, though free from gross sins, remained under condemnation, because of his pride and boasting. The Publican, though his life had probably been a more than commonly sinful one, was accepted because of his humility and contrition. The nearer we are to Repentance, the nearer we are to Justification; because this is a state of mind which does not foreclose Faith, and will, in all probability, be followed by reformation and amendment of life.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Every one that exalteth himself, &c.*] It is worthy of observation that no one sentence of our Lord is so frequently repeated as this, which

occurs at least ten times in the narratives of the Evangelists. So important an element is *Humility* in the formation of the Christian character.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Tempting Him.*] This was a very insidious attempt. They knew His opinion already on the matter, for He had only lately decided it, when illustrating His assurance that the Moral Law should stand for ever (see Section LXXXIX.). By again bringing the subject prominently forward, the Pharisees hoped to incense the people against Him; for the Jews reckoned the liberty of divorcing their wives as one of their greatest privileges.

Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause (*for any cause whatever*) ? <sup>(\*)</sup> And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that God (He which made them from the beginning of the creation) made them a male and a female ?<sup>b</sup> *The Creator plainly shewed that He would have it otherwise than you suppose ; and expressly said by the mouth of Adam :—FOR THIS CAUSE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THEY TWAIN SHALL BE ONE FLESH,<sup>c</sup> (see Gen. ii. 24). Such was originally the Divine institution of marriage : wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man by any unjust divorce put asunder.<sup>d</sup>*

They say unto Him, *If this be so, why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement to the woman, and so to put her away ? And He answered and said unto them, Let Me hear what did Moses expressly command you in this matter. And they said, Moses, if he did not in terms command, at least suffered any man, in whose eyes his wife found not favour, to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.<sup>e</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto them, That was a temporary expedient, growing out of a peculiar state of things, and never designed for a continuance : Moses, acting as the civil magistrate, and not in this instance under the immediate direction of God, wrote you this precept because of the hardness of your hearts<sup>f</sup> (your untractable dispositions), and suffered you without penalty to put away your wives : he allowed a relaxation of the Law, whenever there might be any actual cause of complaint besides that of Adultery, because he well knew that otherwise you would ill-treat your wives, and that thus still worse consequences would ensue. But from the Beginning, and before sin entered into the world, it certainly was not so : no such departure from the original institution of Marriage was then allowed for trivial causes ; nor can it be tolerated now under the more perfect dispensation of the Gospel.*

And when they were alone in the house where they lodged, His disciples asked Him again of the same matter ; for, retaining still many of their Jewish prejudices,

<sup>b</sup> So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him : male and female created He them. Gen. i. 27.

<sup>c</sup> For two, saith He, shall be one flesh. 1 Cor. vi. 16.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously. Yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant . . . Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth : for the Lord, the God of Israel, saith, that He hateth putting away. Mal. ii. 14, 15, 16.

Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband : but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife. 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

<sup>e</sup> When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her ; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. Deut. xxiv. 1

<sup>f</sup> Thou art a stiffnecked people. Exod. xxxiii. 8. From the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord. Deut. ix. 7.

(\*) *Is it lawful, &c.*] A controversy on the subject of divorce took place between two celebrated Schools about the time of our Lord's appearance. The school of Schammah maintained that the words of Moses (at Deut. xxiv. 1), which we render "some uncleanness," signified *Adultery*; whereas the school of Hillel (the one most followed) explained them of any matter of dislike, —thus allowing a wife to be divorced for any trifling cause, and in fact at pleasure. Josephus thus interprets the law : "He that desires

to be divorced from his wife for any cause whatsoever,—and many such causes happen among men,—let him in writing give assurance that he will never use her as his wife any more ; for by these means she may be at liberty to marry another" (Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 8). In his "Life," written by himself, this historian says (76th par.) "About which time I divorced my wife, as not pleased with her manners, though not till she had been the mother of three children, two of which are now dead."



*they were surprised at the decision which He had given concerning it. And He saith unto them, I, who am in every respect before Moses, say, and confirm this unto you as a law:—Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery against her who was his first and true wife, for she is still protected by the original contract of marriage: and whoso marrieth her which is so unjustly put away, doth commit adultery. And if a woman shall put away her husband<sup>(2)</sup> and be married to another, which also has of late been shamefully and unlawfully practised among you, she too committeth adultery.<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> The woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. So then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. Rom. vii. 2, 3.

<sup>3</sup> I suppose, therefore, that this is good for the present distress; I say, That it is good for a man so to be. I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. 1 Cor. vii. 26, 32, 33.

<sup>1</sup> Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I: but if they cannot contain let them marry. . . . As God hath distributed to every man,—as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. 1 Cor. vii. 7—9, 17.

His disciples say unto Him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, *that he must needs be bound to her continually*, it is not good (*it is inexpedient*) to marry. But He said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying *and lead a pure single life*, save (*but only*) they to whom it is given of God to do so. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs *by the cruel policy* of men; and there be eunuchs which have made themselves as eunuchs, *by renouncing the desires of the flesh*, for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake.<sup>4</sup> Thus, *being free from the cares and incumbrances of married life, they have been able to serve God without impediment and with a more sublime devotion. Yet all are free to marry: he only that is able to receive it,*<sup>(4)</sup> *let him receive it: if he has the gift of continency, let him use his ability of preserving it.*

## SECTION XCVI.

**JESUS IS HOSPITABLY ENTERTAINED IN THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AT BETHANY; BUT HER SISTER MARY IS COMMENDED FOR CHOOSING THE BETTER PART.**

*Luke x. 38—42.*

**N**OW it came to pass, as they went *on their way to Jerusalem*, that He entered into a certain village, *which was named Bethany,*<sup>a</sup> *and which lay not far from the city.* And a certain woman, named Martha, *hospitably*

<sup>a</sup> Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. John xi. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> *If a woman shall put away her husband, &c.]* Though the Jewish law did not put it into a woman's power to divorce her husband, it is plain, from passages in Josephus, that this was done by ladies of distinguished rank. The husband of Herodias was living, at the time of her cohabitation with his brother Herod. Our Lord here places the guilt of either sex on the same level.

<sup>(4)</sup> *He that is able to receive it.]* Celibacy is

regarded by the Roman Church as a leading rule of perfection, and she *requires it* from her clergy. Matrimony was enjoined on the Jewish priests, and so far from being disparaged in Scripture, is plainly declared by St. Paul to be "honourable in all" (Heb. xiii. 4). As our Lord shows that Continency is only in the power of some, it would seem that none *but* those can *innocently choose* a single life. Of the Apostles, two at least (St. Peter and St. Philip) were married.

received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also, *with His other disciples*, sat at Jesus' feet<sup>b</sup> in the usual posture of humble and attentive learners among the Jews, and heard His Word; <sup>(1)</sup> for as soon as He entered the House, He commenced, according to His custom, some edifying discourse.

But Martha,—on whom, as being the elder sister, the care of the family devolved,—was cumbered (*distracted*) about much serving;<sup>c</sup> making great and unusual preparation for the refreshment of their honoured guest. And thinking that every other occupation ought to give way to one so pressing, she was displeased that her sister did not lend a helping hand in doing the honours of the house: and she came therefore appealing to Him, and said, Lord, dost Thou not care (*art Thou regardless*) that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her (*speak to her*) therefore that she come and help me.

And Jesus, who lightly regarded every pleasure of the senses, and whose meat and drink it ever was to benefit the souls of men, answered and said unto her reprovably, —yet with affectionate earnestness repeating her name, —Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things;<sup>d</sup> thy mind is immoderately anxious and disquieted with a multiplicity of cares, which are not worth so much solicitude, for they are all unsatisfying and transitory.<sup>e</sup> But One Thing is Needful,<sup>(2)</sup> in comparison of which all other things are of little importance. One Thing there is, altogether necessary and absolutely essential to the proper happiness of beings formed and destined for immor-

<sup>b</sup> — brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Acts xxii. 8.

<sup>c</sup> There they made Him a supper, and Martha served. John xii. 2.

<sup>d</sup> The cares of this world, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful. Mark iv. 19.

<sup>e</sup> I would have you without carefulness. 1 Cor. vii. 32.

<sup>f</sup> Touch not, taste not, handle not; which all are to perish with the using. Col. ii. 21, 22.

<sup>g</sup> One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His Temple. Ps. xxvii. 4.

Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewith shall we be clothed? But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Matt. vi. 31, 33.

(1) *Sat at His feet and heard His Word.*] The same distinction, at once of duty and character, in these sisters, may be observed in the two other passages (both in St. John's Gospel) where alone they are mentioned. Martha is incidentally represented as an eager busy person: Mary as quiet, and given to contemplation. After their brother's death, Martha hurries out to meet Jesus, but Mary sits still in the house (John xi. 20). On an occasion similar to the present, we find Martha serving at a supper which had been prepared for entertaining Jesus, while Mary anoints His feet and is again commended (John xii. 2, 3).

(2) *One Thing is Needful.*] Arguments have been drawn from this portion of Scripture in favour of a monastic and contemplative, instead of an active life of worldly duty; but such a course of life is not here prescribed. Two particular actions are compared; in which case to hear the Word of God is evidently preferable to the exercise of any other (especially when not really needful) occupation.—Perhaps these few simple words, "One Thing is Needful," may be pronounced to be the gravest and most important apophthegm ever uttered. If the immortality of the soul be true, it is indisputable that nothing can take precedence of those things which con-

cern our Faith and Duty here, and our happiness for ever.—It is observable that the words were spoken by our Lord incidentally, forming part of a private and familiar exhortation; and this should be a further lesson to all Christians to speak "a word in due season." It is a melancholy fact that the great and vital truths of Religion seem to be banished by common consent from our conversation, our fire-side, and our tables. Much general information is commonly struck out in the course of conversation; and a hint on any question of science or literature,—artlessly and naturally thrown out by those whose minds are deeply imbued with their subject,—has often led others into a course of successful study. Ought it not, then, to be expected that, in the language of the prophet Malachi, "They that fear the Lord should speak often one to another?" Of course such momentous topics are not to be thrust forward, or lightly and inconsiderately treated of; but they may be noticed from time to time without harshness or formality; and advantage may often be taken of a casual event to raise in the minds (more especially of young people) a train of religious thought, which, by the grace of God, may have the greatest influence on their future lives.

§ The earth shall wax old like a garment; but My salvation shall be for ever. Isa. li. 6.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never periah, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. John x. 27, 28.

*tality; and that is, the cultivation of true Piety and the improvement of the Soul in Divine things. And, I must plainly tell you, that Mary, in wisely seizing every such opportunity of knowing her duty, hath chosen that Good Part,—for so the portion of a religious life may eminently be called,—which shall not be taken away from her:§ after making her happy here, it shall abide with her to a blessed eternity.*

## SECTION XCVII.

**JESUS ATTENDS THE FEAST OF THE DEDICATION AT JERUSALEM: ON WHICH OCCASION THE JEWS ATTEMPT TO STONE HIM FOR IMPUTED BLASPHEMY; AND HE RETIRES AGAIN TO BETHABARA.**

*John x. 22—42.*

**A**ND it was the Feast of the Dedication<sup>(1)</sup> at Jerusalem, and it was winter; *at which season that Feast was always held.* And Jesus, *who attended the Feast there, walked in the colonnade of the Temple (in Solomon's porch,<sup>(2)</sup> as it was called), which was a place of common resort during inclement weather.*

Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost thou make us to doubt (hold us in suspense, MARG.)? If thou be *indeed* the Christ, tell us *so* plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you *in effect*, and ye believed not: *for I have already openly declared, that "if ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also; that if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins; that He that sent Me is with Me; that I proceeded forth and came from God, and was before Abraham" (John viii. 19, 24, 29, 42, 58): Again, I told you that I was the "Good Shepherd,"—the character under which your prophets have spoken of the Messiah,—who would give His life for the sheep (John x. 11). Therefore you have no excuse for your unbelief and pretended state of suspense. Yet, had I not spoken to you thus plainly, the works that I do in My Father's name*

(1) *The Feast of the Dedication.*] This Feast was instituted by Judas Maccabeus (164 years before Christ) in memory of the restoration of the Altar and Temple, which had been grossly profaned by heathen pollutions under Antiochus Epiphanes. We learn from Josephus, in whose time this Feast was observed with much pomp, that it was also named the "Feast of Lights," because the houses were illuminated during the eight days' ceremony of purification. It was always celebrated in December, and, unlike the other Feasts, was observed throughout the entire country.—From the fact of our Saviour's presence at this feast, the argument seems conclusive, that festival-days and memorials of special

national mercies may allowably be appointed by persons duly authorized, without any express and Divine command.

(2) *Solomon's porch.*] So called, because it was the only part of Solomon's Temple left undestroyed by the Babylonians. According to Josephus, it was in our Saviour's time still a noble structure, though somewhat dilapidated. It is again mentioned in the Book of Acts (iii. 11; v. 12). Such piazzas were common among the ancients, and from the circumstance of Teachers making use of them to communicate oral instruction to their followers, one celebrated sect of philosophers derived its name, *Peripatetics*. The *Stoics* also, directly, from *Stoa*, a Porch.

by the Divine power dwelling in Me, they bear sufficient witness of Me<sup>a</sup> that I am the Christ. But in reality you do not need evidence of the Truth: ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep,<sup>b</sup> and have not that docile and well-disposed mind which is required of My followers. As I said unto you,<sup>(2)</sup> My sheep,—those who are truly such,—hear (give heed to and obey) My voice; and I know, (I acknowledge) them as Mine, and they follow Me. And I give unto them that greatest of all blessings, Eternal Life:<sup>c</sup> And I guard them with such Almighty power and such constant care, that, if they be but faithful unto death, they shall never perish;<sup>d</sup> (4) neither shall any man be able to pluck them out of My hand.<sup>e</sup> My Father, which gave them to Me, is greater than all the enemies, earthly or spiritual, who rise up against them; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.<sup>f</sup> I declare this to you as a most solemn and certain truth, that I and My Father are One Being<sup>(5)</sup>—essentially One in nature, as well as in counsel and power.

Then the Jews, filled with rage, would have punished Him on the spot as a blasphemer, and again they took up stones to stone Him, as they did when He declared His existence before Abraham. But Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from My Father: I call you to witness that all My miracles have been of a beneficent kind; I have healed your sick, fed the hungry, given sight to the blind, and the dead have been restored again to their afflicted friends: for which then of those good works do ye seek to stone Me? The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for thy wicked blasphemy,<sup>(6)</sup> and because that thou,

<sup>a</sup> The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me. John v. 36.

<sup>b</sup> He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God John viii. 47.

<sup>c</sup> Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give Eternal Life to as many as Thou hast given Him. John xvii. 2.

<sup>d</sup> It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Matt. xviii. 14.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death. John viii. 51.

<sup>e</sup> He is able to save them to the uttermost: that come unto God by Him. Heb. vii. 25.

<sup>f</sup> I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii. 38, 39.

(<sup>2</sup>) As I said unto you.] The authorized Version uses a different punctuation in placing these words. They are there added at the close of the preceding sentence, but as our Saviour had no where before told the Jews "that they were not His sheep," such an arrangement of the passage creates a difficulty. At the same time, allowing them to remain, the difficulty is not an insuperable one: for St. John says, at the conclusion of his Gospel, that there were many other circumstances, in connection with the Saviour's history, which had not been recorded; and we might suppose that saying to be among the number. In effect, too, He had told them, in the Discourse of the Good Shepherd, that they were not His sheep; for He there, as here, describes it as the characteristic of His sheep that they "hear His voice" (John x. 3, 27).

(<sup>4</sup>) They shall never perish, &c.] This passage, rightly understood, gives no countenance to the dangerous notion that "the elect can never fall away and perish:" the words have no relation whatever either to personal election, or to final perseverance. We find, on the contrary, frequent exhortations to Christ's sheep, not to fail of the grace received (see Heb. xii. 15), and, not to lose what had been wrought in

them (see 2 John 8). This passage is chiefly remarkable as a strong attestation to the Divinity of Christ; He declares His own power to preserve His sheep in the same words (viz., "that none shall pluck them out of His hand") which He immediately after employs to declare His Father's power.

(<sup>5</sup>) I and My Father are One.] In the Original the neuter gender is employed, and signifies Unity of Essence. Those who interpret the words merely of Unity of Power, forget that Omnipotence is an attribute of God alone, and that, therefore, one and the same Divine Nature must be implied.

(<sup>6</sup>) For blasphemy.] The circumstance of the Jews preparing to stone our Lord is the best exposition of His words. It is plain that they understood Him to assert His own Divinity, and since they, addressed in their own language, received His words in that sense, it must be their most natural and obvious meaning. Nor did our Lord deny that He wished to be so understood: so far from correcting their mistake, or attempting to clear Himself from the charge of blasphemy, He sums up with another strong declaration implying the same thing, viz., that He was in the Father, and the Father in Him.

<sup>r</sup> Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath; but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. John v. 18.

<sup>h</sup> There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. . . . They are God's ministers. Rom. xiii. 1, 6.

<sup>i</sup> Him hath God the Father sealed. John vi. 27.

<sup>k</sup> That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Luke i. 35.

<sup>l</sup> If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin. John xv. 24.

<sup>m</sup> The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sakes. John xiv. 10, 11.

Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee. John xvii. 21.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. 2 Cor. v. 19.

<sup>n</sup> These things were done in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. John i. 28.

<sup>o</sup> He must increase, but I must decrease. John iii. 30.

being a mere man,—a poor weak mortal like ourselves,—makest thyself God;<sup>r</sup> daring to assume the majesty and divine perfections of the great Jehovah. Jesus,—not wishing to bring this mysterious truth into any further discussion,—answered them, Is it not written in your Law, I SAID, YE ARE GODS (*Ps. lxxxii. 6*)? If he (*the Psalmist*) called them gods,—such as prophets, judges, and magistrates,—unto whom the Word of God came,<sup>h</sup> assisting them as His agents and ministers in the performance of their several duties; if this honourable title of “gods” be given to men who have only a subordinate participation of the Divine authority; and since the Scripture cannot be broken (cannot possibly be taken exception to), how say ye with any consistency of Him, who hath done among you works such as no other ever did or can do,—whom moreover the Father by His Holy Spirit, imparted to Him without measure and abiding essentially in Him, hath sanctified<sup>i</sup> (set apart) for the work of Redemption, and hath now sent for so sublime a purpose into the world,—how, I ask, do ye venture to say of Him, Thou blasphemest, because I simply said, I am the Son of God?<sup>k</sup> I do not ask you to believe in that exalted character which I claim, merely upon My own testimony: If I do not the works of My Father,—even the like Omnipotent works that He doeth,—then believe Me not in what I said, that I and My Father are One; but if I unquestionably do such works, though ye believe Me not on the testimony of My own words, yet believe the plain testimony of the works.<sup>l</sup> Judge for yourselves whether they be not the works of Omnipotence, that ye may know and believe that there is a connection the most intimate, an union the most complete and perfect, between Us—that the Father is indeed in Me, and I in Him.<sup>m</sup>

Therefore, upon this reassertion of His Divinity, they became yet more vehemently enraged, and sought again to take (to apprehend) Him: but He escaped out of their hand, and went away again beyond Jordan, into the place called Bethabara within the country of Peræa, where John at first baptized;<sup>n</sup> and there He abode some time, vouchsafing to the people of that retired district the benefit of His doctrine and miracles. And many of them resorted unto Him, remembering the testimony which the Baptist had there given of Him, and they said:—John did no miracle to confirm His doctrine, but all things that John spake of this Man were true<sup>o</sup>—thus confirming the Divine authority of both: and truly, so great and varied are the miracles of this Extraordinary Person, so sublime is His doctrine, and with such authority does He speak, that He can be no other than the “*Mightier One*” who was to come.—And many of them believed on Him there.

## SECTION XCVIII.

JESUS DISPLAYS HIS ALMIGHTY POWER AS THE GIVER OF LIFE, IN RAISING LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD AFTER HE HAD BEEN BURIED FOUR DAYS.

*John xi. 1—54.*

NOW a certain man was *dangerously* sick,<sup>a</sup> named Lazarus, of Bethany,<sup>(1)</sup> the town of Mary and her sister Martha.—It was that Mary which *sat at the feet of Jesus to hear His word, and afterwards* anointed the Lord<sup>(2)</sup> with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

<sup>a</sup> — sick with divers diseases. Luke iv. 40).

Therefore his sisters, *full of concern for their suffering brother*, sent unto Him (*unto Jesus*), saying, Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick; *for they hoped that upon merely knowing the fact, He would come immediately and heal him.* When Jesus heard that *message*, He said *in reply*, This sickness is not unto a death which shall continue (*it is not irrecoverably fatal*), but it is intended for a remarkable manifestation of the glory of God, that the Son of God, who participates in that glory, might be glorified thereby.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>b</sup> This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory. John ii. 11.

Now Jesus had long loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When therefore He had thus heard that he was sick, He determined at once to raise him from the dead; but, as his death had only just taken place, and the case might be represented as one merely of suspended animation, He abode still in the same place (*Bethabara*) where He was—so as to give time for the interment of the body. Then, after that, He saith to His disciples, Let us go into Judea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again—*venturing into danger of Thine own accord?* Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day (*Is there not a certain time allotted for every one's duties?*)? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Sun which is the light of this world; but if a man foolishly delay his journey and walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him:<sup>c</sup> *his eye, which is the light of his body, serves as a guide no longer. So, as I have*

This man was born blind, that the works of God should be made manifest in Him. John ix. 2, 3.

<sup>c</sup> Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. John xii. 35.

(1) *Lazarus, of Bethany.*] This remarkable account of the Raising of Lazarus was omitted by the earlier Evangelists, on the principle which led them to omit the fact of St. Peter being the disciple who cut off the ear of Malchus—namely, lest it should subject the party immediately concerned to persecution. The account of this miracle would be needless during their time; for it would be well-known, and not only many witnesses, but Lazarus himself, would be alive to

testify it. He is supposed to have lived to the date of St. Luke's Gospel, though not to the age of St. John, who wrote so much later.

(2) *Which anointed the Lord.*] This happened subsequently. St. John speaks of it as done, because it was a circumstance well-known at the time he wrote. So Matthew (iv. 18) speaks of "Simon called Peter," previous to that Apostle being so named by our Lord.

<sup>d</sup> I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. John ix. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Thou shalt sleep with thy fathers. 2 Sam. vii. 12.

<sup>f</sup> O Lord my God, lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death. Pa. xiii. 3.

<sup>g</sup> Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. Dan. xii. 2.

—concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 1 Thess. iv. 13.

*before told you,<sup>d</sup> must I work while My day lasts; and all the malice of My enemies will be defeated until the night of My Passion cometh.*

These things said He, and after that He saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,<sup>e</sup> but I go that I may awake him out of *that* sleep. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he *is able* to sleep, he shall do well: *he may yet recover, and there is the less need of risking Thine own life in Judea.*—Howbeit Jesus spake of his *sleeping* in death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking of *ordinary* rest in sleep. Then Jesus, *who knew by virtue of His Omniscience that the decease had now taken place*, said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead: and, *as I might have yielded to the entreaties of friends and the bent of My own feelings*, I am glad for your sakes that I was not there *before his death*, to the intent *that when ye behold your Master's power*, ye may *more firmly* believe in Him. Nevertheless, *as he is now undoubtedly dead*, let us *without further delay* go unto him.

Then said Thomas (which is called Didymus, *or the Twin*) unto his fellow disciples: *If He go into Judea, especially so near to the city as Bethany, they will certainly stone Him: but* let us also go, that we may *share His lot and die with Him.*

Then when Jesus came *near the village*, He found that he had lain in the grave four days already.<sup>(\*)</sup> Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, *not more than about fifteen furlongs (scarcely two miles) off; so that friends and connections of the afflicted family resided in the city.* And accordingly many of the Jews came over to Martha and Mary to comfort them<sup>f</sup> concerning their *good* brother, *which it was customary among the Jews to do during the seven days which succeeded the burial.*

<sup>f</sup> And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him. 1 Chron. vii. 22.

Job's three friends made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. Job ii. 11.

Weep with them that weep. Rom. xii. 15.

<sup>g</sup> I sat down and wept. Neh. i. 4.

Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went forth to welcome her Lord, and met Him *on the way*: but Mary, *who knew not of His approach*, still sat<sup>g</sup> (*remained to mourn*) in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here *to intercede for us at the Throne of mercy*, my dear brother had not died. But I know that, even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee. Jesus saith unto her, *Weep not, Martha; thy brother shall rise again.* Martha, *igno-*

(\*) *He had lain in the grave four days already.* Bethany was about a day's journey from Bethabara. It would take one day for the messenger to reach the latter place: Jesus stayed two days before He set out; and on the fourth day He would arrive at Bethany. So that Lazarus died soon after the messenger left, and, according to the usual custom in those hot countries, would be buried without delay. After the fourth day a

great change would take place in the dead.—By this miracle Jesus had now completely manifested His power over the corruption of the grave in all its gradations. He raised the daughter of Jairus when but just dead; the widow's son, who had been some time longer dead; and now a body was raised when it was actually returning to its elements,—earth to earth, and dust to dust.

rant of the extent of His power, saith unto Him, Lord, I know well that he shall rise again,<sup>b</sup> but it will only be in the Resurrection common to all at the Last Day. Then Jesus said unto her,—plainly teaching her that all the fulness of power and the gift of eternal life resided in Himself—I am the Resurrection and the Life:<sup>c</sup> he that believeth in Me, though he were dead (*though he die*), yet shall he live again; and whosoever liveth (*every one that liveth*) and believeth in Me, shall never die<sup>k</sup> (*shall not die for ever*, Gr.). Believest thou this? *for if such be thy faith in Me as the Saviour, thou shouldest not doubt My power to raise thy brother.*—*Awed by the dignity of His manner, and convinced by the authority with which He spake*, she saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; I do believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God<sup>l</sup>—*even He, described to us under those glorious titles in Scripture*, which should come into the world: *whatever power and authority belong unto Messiah, I am sure that Thou, Lord, dost possess.*

And when she had so said, she went her way, and, at the bidding of Jesus, called Mary her sister secretly (*privately*), saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was still in that place where Martha met Him, and He continued to await there the arrival of Her sister. The Jews then, which were with her in the house and comforted her, *not being aware that Martha had returned to fetch her*, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there: *let us dissuade her from thus painfully aggravating her sorrow.*—*And so it providentially occurred that many of the Jews were present to witness the mighty miracle which followed.*

Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, *as her sister had done, and with the natural expression of regret that He had not come sooner*, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died—and overcome with her grief she could utter no more. Therefore when Jesus, who had already been much pained by the needful delay which had taken place, saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled (*His soul became deeply affected*). And, after a pause, He said to them who stood by, Where have ye laid him?—*which enquiry He first made that there might be no appearance of collusion or fraud.* They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.<sup>m(4)</sup> Then the Jews,

<sup>b</sup> Though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job xix. 28.

And many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. xii. 2.

<sup>l</sup> In Him was Life. John i. 4.

The Son quickeneth whom He will. . . . For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself. John v. 21, 26.

Jesus said, I am the Bread of Life. John vi. 35.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life. John xiv. 6.

<sup>k</sup> He that believeth on the Son hath Everlasting Life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life. John iii. 36.

God hath given unto us Eternal Life; and this Life is in His Son: he that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son hath not Life. 1 John v. 11, 12.

<sup>l</sup> We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. John vi. 69.

<sup>m</sup> He was their Saviour. In all their affliction He was afflicted. Isa. liiii. 8, 9.

When He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it. Luke xix. 41.

(4) *Jesus wept.*] Our Translators have made this the shortest verse in the Bible, and not without good reason. It is a touching incident, impressing on us the truth that our blessed Lord not



seeing Him in tears, said, Behold how He loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which lately opened the eyes of the beggar who was born blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

Jesus therefore, again groaning in Himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a large stone lay upon (against) the mouth of it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead—even she who just before had so nobly professed her belief—began to waver in her faith when she considered the great change that must have already taken place in her brother, and saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh (the smell is offensive, GR.), for he hath been dead four days. Jesus, gently rebuking her incredulity, saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest assuredly see the glory of God manifested in the restoration of thy brother?

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead body was laid. And Jesus,—appealing directly to God as His Father, that they might perceive from the result how false were the charges of blasphemy which had been brought against Him,—lifted up His eyes, and said in full assurance that the miracle would immediately be wrought, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me<sup>(\*)</sup> in My wish to confirm by this miracle the faith of My followers: And I knew well that Thou hearest Me always: but, because of the people<sup>†</sup> that stood by, I said it; that they, perceiving the Divine power manifest in this work, may believe that Thou hast indeed sent Me.

And when He had thus spoken, instead of the muttered whispering practised among their magicians<sup>‡</sup> He cried with a loud voice,—so that all might hear, and perceive how the very dead in their graves were subject to His call,—and said, Lazarus, Come forth! And immediately he that was dead (the very same man who had recently died) came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin.<sup>¶</sup> Jesus saith unto them, Loose (Unbind) him, and let him go.<sup>(\*)</sup>

\* Jesus answered and said, This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes John xii. 30.

† When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that mutter. Isa. viii. 19.

‡ Simon Peter seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about His head. John xx. 6 7.

only bore the form and fashion of a man, but experienced the tenderest feelings incident to human nature; that He was "like unto us in all things, sin only excepted." We perceive His humanity in the words "Jesus wept," as we recognise His Divinity in the voice of authority, "Lazarus, come forth." It need not, therefore, have been captiously asked, Why Jesus wept over the grave of one whom He could at a word have restored? He wept from sympathy with the grief of others, for it is the nature of Sympathy (as that word implies) "to weep with them who weep" (Rom. xii. 15): it was not until our Lord "saw Mary weeping, and the Jews also weeping with her," that He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

This incident teaches us, that as Jesus sanctified the tear of sorrow for the departed, human grief is never to be condemned as sinful, pro-

vided it be kept within its due bounds and be chastened by humble faith and pious resignation.

(\*) Father, I thank thee that Thou hast heard Me.] Although a formal address to the Father occurs here, which had not previously been our Lord's custom when He wrought miracles, it is important to observe that it is not a petition for power, but a thanksgiving on behalf of others. He implies His intimate union with the Father at the same time that a certain dependance on Him as Mediator is recognized. At the outset of the narrative it is declared (see ver. 4), that this miracle was expressly intended for the glory both of God and of the Son of God, their glory being one and the same.

(†) Loose him, and let him go.] Lazarus is allowed to depart, that Jesus might not seem to carry him about with Him in triumph. The

Then many of the Jews which came to comfort Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him. But some of them, *hardened in their prejudices against Him*, went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done—*thus verifying what He had said in His parable, that not even one rising from the dead would persuade them.*<sup>1</sup> Then the chief priests and Pharisees gathered a council, and said, What do we?—*what are we all about in suffering these things?* for this man, *by some means or other, undoubtedly doeth many miracles.*<sup>2</sup> If we let him thus alone, all men (*the whole people*) will believe on him,<sup>3</sup> *and will be proclaiming Him as the promised King of Israel;* and then the Romans shall come and take away both our place (*our Temple*) and nation<sup>(7)</sup>. *In vain did those who were friendly to Jesus, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea,—urge upon the assembly the unlawfulness of molesting an innocent person:* and at length one of them, named Caiaphas, being the High-priest that same year,<sup>(8)</sup> said unto them, *Ye evidently know nothing at all of what good policy is in a case like this, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man, even though he were innocent, should die for the good of the people, and that the whole nation perish not: we must get rid therefore of this man, making no scruple about the means.*

And this remarkable saying spake he not of himself, for it was neither his meaning nor his desire that Jesus should in any way become the Salvation of the people: but, being High-priest that memorable year, it pleased God to influence his words; and he in effect prophesied<sup>(9)</sup> that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but it was also true that He should gather together in one great family the future children of God, whether

<sup>1</sup> He said unto them, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Luke xvi. 31.

<sup>2</sup> They conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell at Jerusalem: and we cannot deny it. Acts iv. 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him. John xii. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Among the chief rulers also many believed on Him. John xii. 42.

spectators are desired to loose him from the bandages that swathed his body, because, although the Lord's word could at the same time have effected this, He would not needlessly multiply miracles. He did not at first remove the stone, by commanding it to roll away, because His power was not required in such cases.

(1) *The Romans shall come, &c.*] A danger is here imagined which could have no reality, for Jesus might still have taught His heavenly truths, and preached a "kingdom not of this world," without interruption from the Romans. The passage is an awful warning to all dishonest statesmen, and exhibits the just and usual effect of worldly policy exalting itself against Justice and the Counsel of God. The very people, whose resentment the Jewish rulers thought to escape by destroying Jesus, became the instruments of God's vengeance: their Temple was razed to the ground by the Romans, and they were themselves dispersed all over the world.—It may surprise us that the Pharisees were not at length convinced by this miracle: they did not deny it; it was impossible for them to do so; in fact they con-

demned Jesus as a dangerous innovator upon the very ground of the truth and notoriety of His miracles. The reason was, that their own Power was sweet to them, and they would not give it up. We see men acting so still: it is not that they do not believe in the Gospel; but present things have an influence over them which they cannot or will not resist.

(2) *Being the High-priest that same year.*] This office, though allowed to continue in the line of Aaron, was no longer held for life. When the government came into the hands of the Romans, they changed the High-priests at pleasure, and so these dignitaries came to be reckoned by years.

(3) *He prophesied.*] Though the High-priest did not intend to speak of our Lord's death as an atonement or sacrifice, that important truth was conveyed in his words. Caiaphas was a bad man, but (as in the case of Balaam and others) his office, rather than his person, must be regarded. In former times great importance had been attached to the opinion of the High-priest, by whom God frequently made known His will. See Numb. xxvii. 21.

And the Lord said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldst be My servant to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth. Isa. xlix. 6.

Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. John x. 16.

*Jews or Gentiles, that were scattered abroad all over the world.*<sup>a</sup>

Then, *the decision of the High-priest having silenced all further opposition*, from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death. Jesus, therefore, *well knowing the secret resolution they had formed*, walked no more openly among the Jews *until His time was fully come*; but went thence unto a *mountainous part of the country* near to the wilderness of *Judea*, into a *small city* called Ephraim, *which lay some miles north from Jerusalem*; and there *He continued about a month with His disciples*.

## SECTION XCIX.

JESUS BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN WHO ARE BROUGHT TO HIM.

*Matt. xix. 13—15. Mark x. 13—16. Luke xviii. 15—17.*

AND then they *who believed in Jesus*, brought unto Him *their infants and young children*, that He should touch [put His hands on, *MATT.*] them, and pray.<sup>(1)</sup> And when His disciples saw it, they rebuked those that brought them *for the intrusion—thinking it beneath their Master to notice such young creatures, who could not, they thought, profit by His teaching.*

I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child. Ps. cxxxii. 2.

Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. *Matt. xviii. 3.*

In malice be ye children. *1 Cor. xiv. 20.*

As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby. *1 Pet. ii. 2.*

But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say *again* unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child,<sup>a</sup>—*aiming at unalloyed humility, with that freedom from gross sins and a worldly spirit which characterizes little children*,—he shall in no wise enter therein.

(1) *That He should touch them, and pray.* These children were not brought to Jesus for any bodily cure, or they would scarcely be repulsed (any more than other sufferers had been) by His disciples. Wherever our Lord is desired to lay hands on the sick, it is either expressly declared, or sufficiently intimated, that He "healed" them: here it is added, instead, that "He blessed them." Being capable, as well as older persons, of His good wishes, these *infants* had been piously brought by their parents to receive His Spiritual Benediction. St. Matthew and St. Mark make use, in the Original, of a word which may also be applied to *grown children*; but that which is employed by St. Luke signifies *babes* in the strictest sense.—The imposition of hands had long been in use among the Jews, when invoking the aid of the Holy Spirit, by such as stood in any superior relation to children (see Gen. xlviii. 14), or by persons who were esteemed of peculiar sanctity (see Numb. xxvii. 18). Our

own Church has justly insisted on this incident as a strong indication of our Lord's will respecting Infants, and encourages parents "to bring their children to Christ," nothing doubting that they can receive benefit by Him. The passage is formally introduced into our Baptismal Service; and it seems to sanction,—as strongly as anything can, short of a positive command,—the custom (which has prevailed from the first introduction of Christianity) of admitting the children of believers into the Church by Baptism. The subsequent command to "baptize all nations" (*Matt. xxviii. 19*) under the New Dispensation,—a command given without any exception or limitation,—would naturally be regarded by the Apostles as applicable to all whom they had been accustomed to consider as the subjects of Circumcision under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensation. Accordingly we find them baptizing whole households. (*Acts xvi. 16, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16.*) See Section XXIII., Note 2.

And He called them unto Him, took them up in His arms, and put His hands upon them, and blessed them. And afterwards He departed thence, *as though sufficient had been done in that place when He had asserted the rights of the lambs of His flock.*

SECTION C.

JESUS REPLIES TO THE RICH YOUNG RULER, WHO ENQUIRES WHAT HE MUST DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE: HE TAKES THE SAME OCCASION TO WARN HIS DISCIPLES AGAINST COVETOUSNESS—ADDING THE PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.

*Matt. xix. 16—30; xx. 1—16. Mark x. 17—31. Luke xviii. 18—30.*

AND when He was gone forth into the way *on which He was travelling*, there came one,—a certain ruler of considerable wealth,—who came eagerly running, for he was anxious to see and to learn of Jesus; and he respectfully kneeled to salute Him, and asked Him, saying, Good Master (*Good Teacher*), what good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?

And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good, —giving Me a title not due to any mere man? dost thou indeed believe Me to be divine?—for remember there is none good but One, that is, God. But, in answer to thy question, if thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments<sup>a</sup>.<sup>(1)</sup> He saith unto Him, But which<sup>(2)</sup> of the Commandments is of the most importance for attaining Eternal Life? Jesus said, Thou knowest the Ten Commandments written in the Law, for the confirmation of which I am come: all of them are obligatory and essential, even those of the Second Table:—such as, THOU SHALT DO NO MUR-

<sup>a</sup> Ye shall therefore, keep My statutes and judgments, which if a man do he shall live in them. Lev. xviii. 5.

If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all My statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Ezek. xviii. 21.

(1) *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.*] This of course would be, by itself, a very incomplete statement, and would convey an incorrect description of Gospel truth. The Bible plainly teaches in other places that no man can be saved by the works of the Law. At the same time it is true that if a man could perfectly comply with the requirements of the Law, he would be saved. Perfect obedience is the indispensable condition, if Salvation is not to be bestowed as a gift, but claimed as a recompense of works. Our Lord saw fit to use this as the basis of His teaching on the present occasion; for "The Law is as a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. iii. 24). It is certain that, under the Old Testament, all pious persons obtained their claim to life eternal by the observance of the moral precepts of the Law.

(2) *He saith unto Him, Which?*] This question may have reference to the division which the Pharisees made of their precepts into weighty and light, moral and ceremonial. There was the

Law of Circumcision, of Sacrifices, and of the Sabbath: they preferred the Ceremonial; but the young man might be puzzled with such nice distinctions.—Our Lord directs him not to the rites of the Law, but to the great duties of life,—the moral precepts. Those of the Second Table only may be here instanced, because they are the test of a man's sincerity, and in them hypocrites mostly fail: also the sincere practice of our duty to our neighbour is a good sign of our love to God.—As to the order in which the Commandments are given in the text, the Jews were not accustomed to preserve the regular order, either in reciting or writing them, and sometimes other equivalent words were substituted. The tenth Commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," is here rendered by Matthew, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and by Mark, "Defraud not;" but the sum of the three phrases is, that a man should rest perfectly satisfied with his own lot, desiring also the good of others, and not wishing to gain anything to the injury of his neighbour.

DER; THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; THOU SHALT NOT STEAL; THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER; AND, DEFRAUD NOT, *for* THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF (see *Exod. xx. 12—17; Lev. xix. 18*). *Show that thy obedience is sincere, constant, and universal, by observing all these; and then thou shalt live.*

<sup>b</sup> We speak wisdom among them that are perfect. 1 Cor. ii. 6.

—teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Col. i. 28.

—perfect and complete in all the will of God. Col. iv. 12.

Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection. Heb. vi. 1.

<sup>c</sup> Sell that ye have and give alms; provide yourselves a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. Luke xii. 33.

Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Luke xvi. 9.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. Acts ii. 44, 45.

Charge them who are rich in this world, that they trust not in uncertain riches; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

<sup>d</sup> Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. John xiv. 1.

And the young man, *who had been brought up in an easy and formal righteousness, and was blinded by his self-love*, answered and said unto Him, Master, all these things have I *been taught already, and have observed them from my youth (from early years):* What lack I yet (*In what am I further wanting*)? *Dost Thou teach us any new commandment?* Then Jesus, beholding him, *and perceiving in him the seeds of virtue, loved (felt kindly disposed towards) him:* and when He heard these things, He *determined to put his character to the test, and said unto him, Yet one thing thou lackest even in thy practice, complete as thou thinkest it to be; and I now require that one thing in order to constitute thee My disciple: if thou wilt be a perfect<sup>b</sup> Christian, prove at once the universality of thy love to God and man, as well as thy devoted obedience to Me: go thy way home, sell whatsoever thou hast,<sup>(3)</sup>—for it is thy wealth which is really the impediment in thy road to Life,—and give to the poor;<sup>c</sup> and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and then come, take up the cross—make common cause with these My disciples in spreading abroad the Gospel, and follow Me.<sup>d</sup>*

But when the young man heard that saying,—*which proved the true touchstone to his besetting sin of Covetousness,—he was sad, being divided between two opinions; and at length went away very sorrowful,<sup>(4)</sup> for he was very rich, and had great possessions, which he could not bring himself to resign.*

And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, He looked round about, and saith to His disciples, How hardly

(<sup>1</sup>) *Sell whatsoever thou hast, &c.*] In that age of persecution a renunciation of the world would be necessary to a personal attendance on Christ—especially with such a man as this, who pretended to aim at acquiring the *highest* degree of goodness. Our Lord, therefore, is here speaking to the *particular case* before Him; and we are not to draw from His words the conclusion, that a renunciation of property, or the vow of poverty, is the duty of the Christian: this indeed would be to throw up our stewardship before the time. That there were rich men from the first in the Church, we learn from 1 Tim. vi. 17 and James i. 10; ii. 2. The apostles Matthew and John had homes of their own (Luke v. 29; John xix. 27), and St. Peter permits the Christian to retain what is his own (Acts v. 4). St. Paul “dwelt in his own hired house” at Rome (Acts xxviii. 30), and, instead of bidding the Corinthians sell all, he only

enjoins on them to give of their abundance (2 Cor. viii. 13, 14). Therefore we are only to carry out the injunction in the text on the *like occasions*, viz., in case we had an express command *from God* to do so, or when we find our possessions a real impediment to prosecuting our eternal interests.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Went away very sorrowful.*] He doubted, in fact, whether any thing future *could* replace the security he gave up by parting with his property. As he was evidently well disposed, he *might* on reflection be humbled and convinced by this conversation, so as afterwards to make the sacrifice of his great possessions; but his hesitation and scruples forcibly show how much an attachment to the world will set at variance our principles and our practice.

The Greek verb should not be rendered, “loved” him, in this passage. The Romans also made a distinction between *diligere* and *amare*.

shall they that have an attachment to riches enter into the kingdom of God? [Verily, I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly (*will with difficulty*) enter into the kingdom of heaven, MATT.] And the disciples were astonished at His words. But He answereth, and saith unto them again, Children, consider that Religion requires a heart abstracted from the world: this is at all times, but especially in this day of severe trial, difficult to accomplish; and it is difficult for all persons: how hard then is it for them that trust in riches<sup>f</sup> and so forget their dependance on their Creator, to enter into the kingdom of heaven! And again, I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle<sup>(5)</sup>, than for a rich man, so trusting in his riches, to enter into the kingdom of God.—And when His disciples heard it repeated and insisted upon so forcibly, they were exceedingly [out of measure, MARK] astonished; for they had thought that trials and temptations only befel the poor, and many of their company were expecting under the New Kingdom to become rich and great. They were saying therefore among themselves, Who then that ever happens to be rich can be saved? But Jesus, looking upon them stedfastly, said unto them, With men (*As far as regards the power of men*) this is impossible, but not with God; for all things, (*even the things which are impossible with men*), are possible with God:<sup>(6)</sup> *Human nature is corrupt and insufficient of itself, and no merely-human persuasions will ever draw off the heart from the world; but there is an Almighty energy in Divine Grace, which can enable a man to overcome every difficulty.*

Then Peter, with somewhat of self-complacency, answered as usual for the Twelve, and began to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all that we had, and have followed Thee:<sup>h</sup> What reward, therefore, shall we have?—And since the motives of Peter were substantially right, Jesus, overlooking their alloy, answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me, in the Regeneration<sup>(7)</sup> (*the final Restoration of all things in the future*

<sup>e</sup> Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Matt. vi. 24.

<sup>f</sup> If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence,—I should have denied the God that is above. Job xxxi. 24, 28.

He that trusteth in his riches shall fall. Prov. xi. 28.

But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted, they have erred from the faith. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

<sup>g</sup> Is anything too hard for the Lord? Gen. xviii. 14.

I know that Thou canst do everything. Job xlii. 2.

For with God nothing shall be impossible. Luke i. 37.

<sup>h</sup> They were fishers... and He saith unto them, Follow Me. And they straightway left their nets and followed Him. Matt. iv. 18—20.

They forsook all, and followed Him. Luke v. 11.

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Phil. iii. 7.

(<sup>5</sup>) *It is easier for a camel, &c.*] The original expression, in some Versions, signifies a cable-ropes, which yields a good sense; but the common interpretation "a camel," is quite agreeable to the figurative style of Oriental nations: it is also supported by a passage in the Talmud, which speaks of "driving an elephant through the eye of a needle."—In the East, as it appears, the doors are made extremely low,—often not more than four feet in height,—to prevent the plundering Arabs from riding into the inner court; yet the camels are trained to make a passage on their knees through these doorways. There may be an allusion in the text to this practice.

(<sup>6</sup>) *All things are possible with God.*] A Nicodemus, a Joseph of Arimathea, a Joanna, and

a Manaen, are proofs, that it was not impossible for the rich, even in an age of peculiar difficulty, to enter into the kingdom of heaven. But the experience of every age has abundantly shown that riches are a prolific root of evil; that they have been, with the majority of mankind, an irresistible temptation, and have sometimes led to a practical idolatry. The cares they bring with them have a tendency to draw off the affections from their proper object, the Creator; hoarded, they beget covetousness; enjoyed, they encourage that self-indulgence which is always fatal to spirituality.

(<sup>7</sup>) *In the Regeneration, &c, &c.*] No more seems to be intended here than a very distinguished pre-eminence to the Apostles in the

<sup>1</sup> She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom. *Matt. xx. 21.*

<sup>2</sup> And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give thee much more than this. *2 Chron. xxv. 9.*

The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. *Job xlii. 10.*

<sup>3</sup> As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. *2 Cor. i. 6.*

— exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. *2 Cor. vii. 4.*

<sup>4</sup> Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. *Rev. ii. 10.*

*world*) when the Son of man shall sit in (*upon*) the throne of His glory, ye also *shall be exalted next to Him in dignity and power, and shall sit as it were upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*<sup>1</sup> And *rewards are not destined for you alone:* there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands (*who hath undergone the loss of any temporal advantage, or renounced those enjoyments which possessions and kindred afford*), for My Name's sake and the Gospel's [for the kingdom of God's sake, *ΛΥΚΕ*], but he shall receive manifold more,—*even an hundred-fold,*—now in this present time:<sup>2</sup> *namely, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands (more and greater earthly blessings shall he gain, through the support of his Christian brethren, than he has parted with), but at the same time accompanied with persecutions, which shall yield him an increase of grace, the consolations of an upright conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost:*<sup>1</sup> and *finally, in the world to come, when all earthly relations shall cease, he shall inherit Eternal Life.*<sup>3</sup>

But *let not the prospect of reward beget presumption in any, since this is to be the issue of things under My Gospel:* many that are now first shall (*will*) notwithstanding all their *privileges* be last; and the last summoned shall (*will*) be *accepted* first.—For the kingdom (*the administration*) of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny (*about seven pence halfpenny*) a day,<sup>(6)</sup> he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour (*nine in the forenoon*), and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right (*the just and reasonable value of your labour*), I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour (*at noon and three in the afternoon*), and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour (*at five in the afternoon*) he went out, and

future world, and it is expressed in a manner suitable to their own prepossessions and the Judaical ideas then prevalent (see *Matt. xx. 21*; *Luke xiv. 16*).—Some would refer this confessedly-difficult passage to the Day of Judgment; but, clearly, there will then be no assessors, and St. Paul speaks of himself as expecting future judgment, *Rom. xiv. 10*; *1 Cor. iv. 4*.—The word "Regeneration," at the commencement of the passage, has also been ably interpreted of that New Age which was to commence with the establishment of the Christian Church, when Christ should ascend into heaven, and His Apostles should judge (or preside over) the twelve tribes, as the chief ministers in His kingdom. This view derives some support from St. Paul, who,

writing to the Corinthians, speaks of *all things as having become new* (*2 Cor. v. 17*), and says, "that the saints shall judge the world" (*1 Cor. vi. 2*). In whichever way this promise of distinction to the twelve Apostles be interpreted, it is no objection that *Judas* was then one of the persons addressed; for they were spoken to collectively, as a body, and Matthias, who filled the traitor's place, would succeed to the promise.

<sup>(6)</sup> *Agreed with the labourers for a penny a day.* It appears from Tacitus (*Annal. i. 17*), that the Roman *denarius* was the usual price of a day's labour among that people, as well as among the Jews. Provisions would, of course, be proportionably cheap.

found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

So when even (*six o'clock*) was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired *the last*—namely about the eleventh hour—they received every man, *without distinction*, a penny. But when the first came, *who had been hired early in the morning*, they, *hearing of what had been given to the rest*, supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they *were disposed to put it from them*, and murmured against the good man of the house (*the master of the establishment*), saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal *in their remuneration* unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of the *foremost among* them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny, *and has it not been tendered to thee in payment?* take that *which* is thine, and go thy way *quietly*: I will give unto this man *who entered the vineyard* last, even as *much* as unto thee. Is it not lawful *and reasonable* for me to do what I will with mine own? <sup>a</sup> <sup>(9)</sup> Is thine eye evil <sup>o</sup> (*dost thou look on with envy*), because I am good *and liberal* to these poor men, *thy fellow-labourers?*

So (*Even as in this case*) shall it happen under the Gospel dispensation; the last shall (*will*) be first, and the first last: <sup>p</sup> *the Gentiles, though last called, will at once accept the gracious offer of Salvation, and shall share the like privileges with the Jews who have so long borne the burden of the Ritual Law; while these, the first-born of God, murmuring and unbelieving, will be the last in God's esteem, and the last to accept of the blessings which He has vouchsafed.* For many be called (*invited to partake of the Gospel*), but few are approved and chosen. <sup>(10)</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? Rom. ix. 21.

<sup>o</sup> Beware that thine eye be not evil against thy poor brother. Deut. xv. 9.

<sup>p</sup> It was necessary the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Acts xiii. 46.

Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Rom. xi. 7.

<sup>(9)</sup> *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*] Christ, "whose we are, and whom we serve," can bestow where He will those blessings which He has Himself purchased; and in every case they are bestowed of Free Grace, without anything in men to merit it. None can have a right to complain, though some may have more reason to magnify Divine Bounty. It should be noticed here, that the Gentiles came not in before, *because not called before*; and the labourers standing idle, who represent them, offer an ample excuse, "Because no man hath hired us." After their conversion, the

Gentiles had *their* full share of hardships (see 1 Thess. ii. 14), and they embraced the Gospel at their utmost peril.

<sup>(10)</sup> *Many be called, but few chosen.*] From this text, and some of the same class, has been drawn the dogma of the Election of a peculiar number of men to Eternal Life, without any regard to qualification. The Rejection of others, deduced from the same, seems to follow as a necessary consequence. "Many persons (writes Calvin, the well-known author of this system) acknowledge Election in such a way as to deny that any one is reprobated, but with extreme absurdity."



## SECTION CI.

JESUS, ON HIS LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM WITH THE TWELVE, AGAIN PREDICTS HIS SUFFERINGS AND DEATH; AND, HAVING OCCASION TO REBUKE THE AMBITION OF JAMES AND JOHN, INCULCATES HUMILITY ON ALL.

*Matt. xx. 17—28. Mark x. 32—45. Luke xviii. 31—34.*

AND they were in the way going up to Jerusalem to attend the approaching Passover: and Jesus went before (*preceded*) them; and they were amazed at His thus voluntarily incurring danger, and, as they followed, they were afraid of what might happen to themselves. And He took unto Him the twelve disciples apart in the way (*aside from others who followed*), and began again to tell them what things should happen unto Him, and said unto them: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem for the last time, and then all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; and He shall be betrayed by one of His own followers, and delivered up unto the chief priests and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall then deliver Him to the Gentiles (*the Romans*)<sup>a</sup> for execution. And they shall mock and spitefully entreat Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall contemptuously spit upon Him,<sup>b</sup> and at last shall crucify<sup>(1)</sup> and kill Him<sup>c</sup> as a common malefactor and slave: and, notwithstanding all the malice of His enemies, on the third day He shall rise again triumphant from the grave.

<sup>a</sup> They delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the Governor. *Matt. xxvii. 2.*

<sup>b</sup> — a reproach of men and despised of the people: All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn. *Ps. xxii. 6, 7.*

I gave My back to the smiters.... I hid not My face from shame and spitting. *Isa. l. 6.*

<sup>c</sup> They pierced My hands and My feet. *Psalm xxii. 16.*

He hath poured out His soul unto death; and He was numbered with the transgressors. *Isa. liii. 12.*

Messiah shall be cut off. *Dan. ix. 26.*

dity and childish weakness; seeing that Election itself could not stand, unless it were opposed to Reprobation: whom God passes by, He reprobates." Such views appear to annul, as it were, the conditions of the Gospel-Covenant—to divest God of His attributes, and man of his faculties. They impose terms of Salvation even easier than those of the Church of Rome: for, to many, the seal of Election has proved as favourite a sanction of unrepented sins as ever did Indulgences. Scripture plainly declares, that God is "no respecter of persons;" and all those passages which are cited, relative to Predestination and Election, are, when fairly taken with their context, applicable only to the situation of nations: they relate, as in this Parable, to God's design of calling the Gentile world to the knowledge of the Messiah. As the Jews were called "the Elect" under the Old Covenant, so are Christians under the New. With this key a plain coherent sense may be found to all the controverted passages, without asserting antecedent and special decrees as to particular persons. We are all "called" by God, whether the call be obeyed or not; but it is our part, and ours alone, to be "chosen." The subject should make all seriously consider, that it is not enough to be within

the Visible Church of God, resting content with the possession of Church privileges; but we must individually "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure" (*see 2 Peter i. 5—10*).

(<sup>1</sup>) *And shall crucify Him.*] It seemed far more probable, humanly speaking, that instead of our Lord's death becoming a public and a national act, His enemies would have privately got rid of Him; and such we learn was their intention (*Matt. xxvi. 4, 5*). It was also not unlikely that He would be stoned in a tumult, and when He was delivered back to the Jews by Pilate, with permission given them to judge Him according to their law, it is wonderful He did not actually meet this death. But it had been expressly foretold that He was to be mocked as a fool, scourged as an offender, spit upon as a blasphemer, and crucified as a criminal (*see in the Margin*).—The foreknowledge of His own sufferings was peculiar to our Lord, for we find the view of futurity concealed even from His most favoured servants and martyrs. This appears from the case of Paul, who says, "I go unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there" (*Acts xx. 22*).

But the disciples were unwilling to believe that their Master could suffer such things, however plainly they had been foretold; for they could not reconcile them with their lingering notions of His temporal kingdom, and with the tradition they had received that the Messiah should not die.<sup>d</sup> And so they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Then an incident occurred, which evinced their frame of mind at this time: Salome,<sup>e</sup> the mother of Zebedee's children,<sup>f</sup> (<sup>g</sup>) who was in constant attendance on the Lord, bearing in mind the promise which had been made that His Apostles should sit on twelve thrones, came to Him, with her sons James and John, worshipping (*kneeling to*) Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him, saying, Master, we would that Thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons [He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we, MARK] may sit, as Thy chief ministers of state, the one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom<sup>g</sup> [Thy glory, MARK].

But Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye know not what is the nature of the distinction that ye ask: the Gospel summons you to the sufferings of your Master, rather than to any temporal honours; and the highest glory is to be the reward of the greatest endurance in My cause. Are ye able to drink of the cup<sup>h</sup> (<sup>i</sup>) of affliction that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am to be baptized with<sup>i</sup> (to be overwhelmed in the same sea of sufferings with Myself)? They, not understanding His words, or full of confidence in their own strength, say unto Him, We are able. And Jesus saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup,<sup>(j)</sup> the like bitter cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism of sorrow that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My

<sup>d</sup> We have heard out of the Law that Christ abideth ever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? John xii. 34.

<sup>e</sup> Salome, who when He was in Galilee, followed and ministered unto Him. Mark xv. 40, 41.

<sup>f</sup> James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother. Matt. iv. 21.

<sup>g</sup> They thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. Luke xix. 11.

<sup>h</sup> In the hand of the Lord there is a cup; and He poureth out of the same. Ps. lxxv. 8.

I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of My fury: thou shalt no more drink it again. Isa. li. 22.

O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Matt. xxvi. 39.

The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? John xviii. 11.

<sup>i</sup> Thou hast afflicted Me with all Thy waves. Ps. lxxxviii. 7.

Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas: and the floods compassed me about: all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me. Jon. ii. 3.

I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished. Luke xii. 50.

(<sup>d</sup>) *The mother of Zebedee's children.*] The husband of Salome was now probably dead: and, since he is previously described as having a boat of his own with hired servants (Mark i. 20), he may have left Salome in those competent circumstances, which enabled her to give that faithful attendance on our Lord, elsewhere spoken of (see in the *Margin*). Her two sons were allied to Christ, and had repeatedly received marks of distinction from Him, which may have led to the present request. Though preferred through the medium of their mother, it came from themselves, as St. Mark represents; and, indeed, that they were the principals is clear, for in *both* Evangelists our Lord's answer is addressed to them.

(<sup>e</sup>) *To drink of the cup, &c.*] The word "cup," both in sacred and profane authors, sig-

nifies the portion (whether of good or evil) which befalls men in this world. It was a frequent image with the Hebrews.—The metaphor of a similar kind which immediately follows this, *viz.* "to be baptized," &c., is not an allusion to Christian baptism, but is taken from a word signifying to be plunged or immersed in troubled waters (see in the *Margin*: also Ps. xlii. 7; lxix. 2; cxiv. 4; Jer. xlvii. 2; Ezek. xxvi. 19).

(<sup>f</sup>) *Ye shall drink indeed of My cup.*] In accordance with this prediction, James was the first Apostle who suffered martyrdom (Acts xii. 2); and though his brother died a natural death at an advanced age, he had his share of those persecutions from which none of Christ's followers were exempt. He was imprisoned and scourged by order of the Council of Jerusalem

<sup>k</sup> Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34.

God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city. Heb. xi. 16.

<sup>l</sup>—neither as being lords over God's heritage. 1 Pet. v. 3.

<sup>m</sup> If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. Mark ix. 35.

<sup>n</sup> I am among you, as He that serveth. Luke xxii. 27.

If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. John xiii. 14.

He took upon Him the form of a servant. Phil. ii. 7.

<sup>o</sup> My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Isa. liii. 11.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. Rom. v. 19.

left in the realms of glory, is not Mine to give, as Mediator only, or arbitrarily and by favour, but [it shall be given] to them for whom, in reward of their faith and obedience, it is prepared in conformity with the will of My Father.<sup>k</sup> (<sup>5</sup>)

And when the ten other Apostles heard it, they were [began to be, MARK] much displeased with the two brethren, James and John: they thought it unreasonable that these should press for the grant of a precedency to which all of them aspired, and all considered they had an equal claim. But Jesus, perceiving this, and desirous to root out such an ambitious and envious spirit from among His followers, called them unto Him, and said unto them, Ye know that the Princes which [are accounted to] rule over the Gentiles, exercise dominion and lord it over them; and their great ones, who govern under the princes, also exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you (<sup>6</sup>) in My spiritual kingdom;<sup>l</sup> but whosoever will be truly great among you, let him be your minister (your servant); and whosoever will be chief and the most distinguished among you, let him be the servant (as the bond-slave) of all;<sup>m</sup> for those who are first in My Kingdom are to consider themselves ministers of universal good for their fellow-men, and the true dignity of the Christian is to arise more from the service he does to others than the power which he may possess over them. For even the Son of man, who is above all, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister<sup>n</sup> to others, and freely to give His life a ransom for many.<sup>o</sup> (<sup>7</sup>)

(Acts v. 18—40,) and was afterwards banished to the Isle of Patmos. He says of himself, that he was "a companion in the tribulation of Jesus Christ" (Rev. i. 9).

(<sup>5</sup>) *Is not Mine to give, &c.* That no defect in the power of Christ is here implied, any more than in the Father, is plain from Rev. iii. 21.—Neither is any interference with man's moral freedom to be argued from the preparation of Rewards said to be made; for as God knows each man's character, He cannot but foreknow what will be the issue as to his future state. It is only a want of fitness in the individual to receive, which precludes the giving of such rewards. It is clear that God cannot be false to His Word. In the Gospel Covenant, Eternal Life is promised to such only as shall possess a certain character, or answer a certain description: it is not assigned to particular persons, but to a particular description of persona. So St. Paul says:—"God will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and immortality, Eternal Life" (Rom. ii. 6, 7). And so the 17th Article of our Church:—"They are called by His Spirit working in due season; they through Grace obey the calling; they are made like the image of His Son; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity."—The words "it shall be given" do not occur in the Original

of this passage, and they somewhat injure the sense.

(<sup>6</sup>) *But it shall not be so among you.* There cannot here be any condemnation of Ecclesiastical Government, which is as needful to the welfare of the Church, as civil government is to a civil society. Among the gifts distributed for the use of the Church, we read of "governments" (1 Cor. xii. 28). The Apostles had their "rod" (1 Cor. iv. 21), and "authority given of the Lord" (2 Cor. x. 8), "to revenge (or punish) all disobedience" (2 Cor. x. 6). Also we have mention of those who are "over us in the Lord" (1 Thess. v. 12), and who are governors to whom we must yield obedience and "submit ourselves" (Heb. xiii. 7, 17).

The plain-lesson inculcated on this occasion is Christian humility, which is yet more incumbent on those who receive special marks of Divine favour. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles never forgot this great Christian virtue. St. Paul was an eminent example; for though "in labours more abundant," and though he might have gloried "in visions and revelations of the Lord," he only "gloried in the things which concerned his infirmities," and esteemed himself "the least of all the Apostles, and not meet to be called an Apostle" (see 1 Cor. xv. 9; 2 Cor. xi. 30; xii. 1).

(<sup>7</sup>) *To give His life a ransom for many.* Our Lord here speaks of His own death in the same

## SECTION CII.

JESUS RESTORES THE SIGHT OF BAR-TIMEUS AND ANOTHER BLIND MENDICANT, ON THE FURTHER SIDE OF JERICO; AND RESTS AT THE HOUSE OF THE CONVERTED PUBLICAN ZACCHEUS, WHEN HE RELATES THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.

*Matt. xx. 29—34. Mark x. 46—52. Luke xviii. 35—43; xix. 1—28.*

AND they came to the city of Jericho,<sup>(1)</sup> which lay fifteen miles east from Jerusalem. And Jesus entered and passed through. And as He went out with His disciples, a great multitude followed Him. And behold, it came to pass, that, before He had gone far on His road to Jerusalem, and as He was yet nigh unto Jericho,<sup>(2)</sup> two blind men,—one of them well known there, named Bar-timeus (or the son of Timeus),—sat by the highway-side, begging. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth, the Great Prophet who has done so many miracles, passeth by. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, in whose presence he had probably never before been, he began to cry out loudly, and say, Jesus, Thou Son of David,<sup>a</sup> whose office, as Messiah, it is to give sight to the blind,<sup>b</sup> have mercy on me!—And then they (both of the blind men together) cried out, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David!

And the multitude [many which went before, MARK & LUKE] strictly charged them that they should hold their peace; but still they persevered, and cried the more a great

<sup>a</sup> The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. Ps. cxxxii. 11.

God had sworn with an oath unto him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. Acts ii. 30.

<sup>b</sup> Your God will come and save you.... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened. Isa. xxxv. 4, 5.

Sacrificial terms that had been applied to the Sin Offerings of old. The force of the expression "ransom," as conveying the idea of vicarious substitution, is fully established when applied in the New Testament to Christ; whose death is expressly said to be a sacrifice for the sins of men, and is that true and substantial Sacrifice which the Law did but faintly and imperfectly shadow forth.—"A ransom for many" should here be understood (with proper limitation of the sense) "a ransom for all," for so St. Paul literally writes (1 Tim. ii. 6). Compare also Dan. xii. 2, with John v. 28, 29; Rom. v. 16, with 1 Cor. xv. 22; and Rom. v. 19, with v. 12. The prejudices of the Apostles, who before the Resurrection of their Master did not understand the universality of Redemption, might not as yet allow the use of the more extended term.

(1) *Jericho.*] See Section LXXXII., Note 4.

(2) *Nigh unto Jericho.*] A liberty has been taken in this place with the Common Version, which makes St. Luke state that our Lord performed this miracle "as He was come nigh unto Jericho;" but, in the opinion of the best critics, the original may be simply read "while He was

nigh unto Jericho." If the common English reading of that Evangelist is retained, it need not shake our faith in either of the narratives. These trifling discrepancies are common to all historians, and rather establish their honesty and agreement on important matters, for the character of genuine testimony is, *substantial truth under circumstantial variety*. So again, one blind beggar is here spoken of by two of the Evangelists, but they do not say that there was only one. St. Mark's account (which is rather the fullest) alone names Bar-timeus, probably because this blind beggar was better known, either on his own account, or that of his father whose name is here also given; indeed, it is not unlikely that Timeus had been a person of note in that neighbourhood, whose son, by a complication of misfortune, had fallen both into poverty and blindness. That St. Mark's account was written under the immediate direction of a principal eye-witness, namely, the Apostle Peter, (and therefore more likely to be accurate in whatever it precisely states, than that of St. Luke,) appears from its mentioning the minute circumstance of Bar-timeus casting away his garment in his anxiety to reach Jesus.

\* And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. Matt. xv. 22, 23.

deal, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David!<sup>c</sup> And Jesus, *after intentionally passing by them*, stood still, and commanded them to be called, and brought unto Him; *which He did, that all might perceive, from their manner of walking up to Him, that they were really blind.* And they call the blind man, *Bar-timeus*, saying unto him, *as they did also afterwards to the other*, Be of good comfort, rise up, He calleth thee. And he, *hastily* casting away his *mantle or outer garment, that it might not impede his progress*, rose up immediately and came to Jesus,—*the other following soon after.* And when he was come near, Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, I pray that I might receive my sight. *And the other being now come up, they say together*, Lord, we entreat Thee, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes; and, *addressing each of them in turn*, said unto him: Receive thy sight, and go on thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately their eyes received sight, and, *no longer needing a guide*, they followed Jesus in the way to Jerusalem, glorifying God *for the mercy they had received.* And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise also unto God.

And as He proceeded on His journey, with the people from the city still following, behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans (*the principal tax-gatherer*) of that neighbourhood: and he was rich.<sup>(\*)</sup> *And he had often heard of Jesus, the report of whose miracles and doctrine had made some considerable impression on him:* and he sought to see Jesus who He was (*what sort of a person He was*), and could not for the press of people about him, because he was little of stature. And he ran on before the rest, and climbed up into a sycamore (*an Egyptian fig*) tree to see Him; for He was to pass that way.—And when Jesus came to the place where the tree stood, He looked up, and saw him,<sup>d</sup> and, *knowing what his wishes were, He called him by name and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide (lodge) at thy house.* And he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully *at a villa which he had there, standing a little further on apart from the city.*

And when they of the Pharisees who had followed Him,

<sup>d</sup> O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Ps. cxxxix. 1—8.

(\*) *And he was rich.*] Perhaps this circumstance is particularly mentioned in contrast to the case which had so recently occurred of the rich young ruler (see Section C.)—to give a proof that “what is impossible with man” can be effected by Him who speaks to the well-disposed heart, and can turn it as He will.—The occupa-

tion of Zaccheus of course gave great opportunities of oppression and dishonesty; and a chief publican had the power of arbitrarily dividing the assessment levied by the Romans among the inhabitants of his particular district, the revenues of which he farmed himself.

saw it, they all murmured, *that, since He was willing to accept of hospitality, He should have selected the roof of the publican, saying, That He would defile Himself, and was gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner.*<sup>a</sup> And Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, *I repent the misdeeds of my past life: if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, or in any way oppressed a fellow-creature, I restore him<sup>f</sup> beyond the utmost demand of the Law,—even fourfold:<sup>(4)</sup> and as I cannot make restitution in every case, I will make what further amends I can to society; the half therefore of my goods (of my whole income) I give henceforth to the poor.*

And Jesus,—*well knowing the hearts of all men, and perceiving that Zaccheus was sincere in this voluntary and public declaration which he had made,—*said unto him<sup>(5)</sup> (or, concerning him to them that stood by), *This day is Salvation come to this house<sup>(6)</sup> (to the master of this family and all his household),<sup>g</sup> forso much as he also, though he has been a sinner and is by his calling deemed unworthy, is now a true son of Abraham.<sup>h</sup> And gladly have I come here to see and to converse with him; for the Son of man is purposely come to seek after and to save that which was lost, and first of all “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. x. 6; xv. 24).*

And as they heard these things, and drew wrong conclusions from this authoritative promise which He had made of Salvation, He added and spake a Parable unto them. *Indeed, it was necessary that He should at once remove all erroneous impressions from their minds, and rather warn them of their impending danger, because He was now drawing nigh to Jerusalem, the place of His sufferings, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear—expecting that He would at once assume the sovereignty and declare Himself to be the Messiah.*

<sup>a</sup> And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? Matt. ix. 11.

<sup>f</sup> Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed. Numb. v. 7.

<sup>g</sup>—and himself believed, and his whole house. John iv. 68.

And Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house. Acts xviii. 8.

<sup>h</sup> — to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. Rom. iv. 16.

(<sup>4</sup>) *I restore him fourfold.*] The Mosaic Law required no more than *restitution*, with the addition of a fifth (Lev. vi. 5) in case that which had been taken by fraud or violence were voluntarily restored. When stolen property was found on the person, the trespasser was to restore double (Exod. xxii. 4); but if a sheep or ox were killed after being stolen, thus rendering discovery more difficult, the rigour of the Law demanded fourfold restitution (Exod. xxii. 1; 2 Sam. xii. 6). By the Roman law an oppressive publican was obliged to restore fourfold, but that was only after conviction. And whereas offenders were only required to spend a fifth part of their income in charity, Zaccheus bequeaths half his estate to charitable uses.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Said unto him.*] The Greek preposition here rendered “unto” also signifies “concerning;” but if the common rendering is preferred, the reader must understand our Lord to have

turned to the by-standers, when in the act of finishing the sentence.

(<sup>6</sup>) *This day is Salvation come to this house.*] It was the duty, and usually the practice, of the master of a family to convert his whole house to the faith he himself embraced. See other instances, Acts x. 2; xvi. 14, 15, 33, 34. The case of Zaccheus is a memorable one, showing us that a desire to be acquainted with the Gospel, and to observe its precepts, is a disposition not far from the Kingdom of God. When that kingdom was brought within his reach, he advanced to meet it, and became an example of the consolatory truth that such a disposition will never be left unnoticed or unsatisfied. Antinomians, who quote the case of Zaccheus, forget that we have the highest possible proof of this publican's *genuine Repentance* in the Omniscience of Jesus; and that he gave the most genuine *proof* he could of true Conversion, in the two great articles of *Justice* and *Mercy*.

He said therefore :—A certain nobleman<sup>(7)</sup> went into a far country, *on a visit to a more powerful potentate*, to receive for himself a kingdom (*a sovereignty*), and *when he had obtained the necessary confirmation of his title*, to return. And *before he departed*, he called his ten servants, and delivered *unto them ten pounds*,<sup>(8)</sup>—*one pound to each servant*,—and said unto them, *Occupy (Use this money in trading) till I come back and reckon with you*. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message (*an embassy*) after him, saying *to the emperor who had the disposal of their kingdom*, We will not have this man to reign over us.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. John i. 11.

And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to whom he had given the money to be called unto him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first (*he who had made the largest profit*) saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, *Well done, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little matter, thy reward shall be proportionate to the improvement which thou hast made; have thou authority under me over ten cities*.<sup>k</sup>—And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, *Be thou also ruler over five cities*.<sup>(9)</sup>

<sup>k</sup> He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much. Luke xvi. 10.

And another came, *impudently* saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I *have not risked in trade, but have kept safe* laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere (*a severe and hard-dealing*) man: thou takest up that *which thou findest, and layedst not down; and thou reapest the field that thou didst not sow: I feared, therefore, that I should never be able to improve thy pound to the extent thou wouldst expect: and that if I unfortunately lost the money in trading, thou*

(7) *A certain nobleman.*] This may be a fictitious narrative, founded on the circumstance that the tributary kings of that age received their crowns from the Roman emperor; but it bears a strong resemblance to the case of the late king Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, during whose reign Joseph and Mary had fled with the infant Jesus into Egypt. When the kingdom of Judea was left to him under his father's will, he proceeded to Rome to obtain a confirmation of his title; and the Jews sent their complaints after him without success. Upon his return, he tyrannized over them and took severe vengeance for a period of ten years: but upon a further complaint to Cæsar they prevailed, and procured his banishment to Vienne, in Gaul.

(8) *Pounds.*] The *mina*, which is here translated "pound," was equal to sixty shekels. Its value fluctuated (see Ezek. xlv. 12); but, according to the two common methods of calculating the shekel, the value of a pound would be either 74. 10s., or 94.

(9) *Be thou also over five cities.*] This gradation of rewards is no doubt intended for our instruction, and it tends to confirm the doctrine of Different Degrees of bliss in another life. The same is considered to be conveyed in the following texts: Matt. x. 15; xx. 23. Luke xii. 47, 48. 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. 2 Cor. ix. 6.—As a parable somewhat similar to this was afterwards delivered by our Lord on the Mount of Olives (Matt. xxv. 14—30), the distinction between the two may here be noticed. In that the sums entrusted to the servants were *unequal* (signifying the several gifts of Intellectual capacity, Property, &c.): but the improvement is the same, and the reward the same. Here the sums are the *same* (signifying the equal gifts of the Holy Spirit, and of God's general government): but the improvement is different, and there is a proportionate difference in the reward. In both parables the Divine Justice is alike preserved.

wouldst severely exact it of me again, by taking from me all that I have.

And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge and condemn thee,<sup>1</sup> thou wicked (malignant) servant: thou knewest,—for so thou hast audaciously presumed to say,—that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: on thine own showing thou shouldst have made some effort to satisfy so strict a master, and not have deprived me of even the common profit which is my due: Wherefore then, for thine own safety and credit, gavest thou not my money into the bank, that at my coming home I might have required mine own from the public fund with usury (with interest)?<sup>(10)</sup>—And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath already ten pounds. But he answered them, It is my will and pleasure that it be so: for I say unto you, That unto every one which improveth what he hath, shall more be given; and from him that hath not, so as to improve what has been bestowed already, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.<sup>(11)</sup> This is the principle on which I intend to govern those who are subject to my rule: but those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me;<sup>m</sup> that all may learn henceforth the duty of obedience and subjection to those powers which are set over them by the ordinance of God.

Even so is Messiah to ascend to His Mediatorial Kingdom in heaven; and, having vouchsafed the equal gifts of His Holy Spirit<sup>n</sup> to all who seek them, will return soon to reckon with this generation: His faithful servants shall be amply rewarded, but a most terrible vengeance shall overtake those obstinate and unbelieving Jews “who would not have Him to reign over them.”—And that fearful reckoning will be but an emblem of the Great Day of Account; when, “after a long time,” the King shall come again in glory, to reward every good man according to his improvement of the trust committed to him, and to punish the slothful and wicked in everlasting fire.

And when He had thus spoken, He went on before (in advance of) the rest, ascending up to Jerusalem—thus shewing them His willingness to meet the dreadful trials and sufferings which awaited Him there.

(10) *With usury.*] The original word only imports what is produced by money, and signifies no more than “interest.” But if it were taken in the worst sense ever ascribed to usury, no approbation on the part of our Lord is here implied. The Mosaic prohibition was clearly a political and not a moral precept, for commerce was pre-

vented and mortgages discouraged by the infeasible right which every man had to his land; but the Israelites were allowed to take interest from strangers.

(11) *Unto every one which hath, &c.*] See Section L., Note 4.

Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee. Job xv. 6.

<sup>m</sup> The rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed.... Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Ps. ii. 2, 9.

<sup>n</sup> The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 1 Cor. xii. 7



## SECTION CIII.

**JESUS ARRIVES AT BETHANY SIX DAYS BEFORE THE PASSOVER. AN ENTERTAINMENT IS GIVEN AT THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE LEPER; AT WHICH LAZARUS IS PRESENT, AND MARY ANOINTS THE LORD'S HEAD AND FEET.**

*Matt. xxvi. 6—13. Mark xiv. 3—9. John xi. 55—57; xii. 1—11.*

\* Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. Acts xxi. 26.

AND the Jews' Passover was now nigh at hand; and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves<sup>(1)</sup> for the feast. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake thus among themselves, as they stood in the Temple, What think ye? suppose ye that He will not come to the feast?—Now they wondered whether he would venture to show Himself, for both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He were, he should show it to them, that they might take Him.

Then Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus, which had been dead, and whom He had raised from the dead, was still residing. Now when Jesus was yet in Bethany, in the house of Simon who was called the leper, for he had been formerly afflicted with leprosy, there they made him a supper; and Martha, noted among her neighbours as a diligent housewife, served<sup>(2)</sup> as hostess for Simon, and waited on Jesus: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him. Then Mary, the other sister, took an alabaster-box (a stone vessel) which held a pound of liquid ointment of spikenard,<sup>(3)</sup> very costly, for it was of the purest sort; and she brake the cement which sealed the box, and poured it on His head as He sat at meat: and she anointed also the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrant odour of the ointment.

But when His disciples saw it, there were some that had indignation within themselves at what Mary had done, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? And they murmured against her. Then saith

(1) To purify themselves.] This would be needful for many. Those who had entered on the vow of Nazarites usually managed that it's obligation should conclude at one of the feasts; and sinners were always allowed to defer the sacrifices for their sins till the next passover.

(2) And Martha served.] There is a tradition that Martha was the daughter of Simon; but if there was no other connexion, she might perform the part of a kind neighbour. Simon had probably been healed by Christ, and it is not impossible that he was the grateful and converted leper healed in Samaria. Luke xvii. 15.

(3) Ointment of spikenard.] The Nard was a

shrub with delicious smell, having ears or spikes like corn. It was mixed up with oil and other aromatics, and sealed up in stone flasks. Pliny states that it was often adulterated. It is also mentioned by Tibullus and others.—Such an ointment is still prepared in India, from the essential oil of a species of grass of the highest fragrancly. It should be noticed that some understand the words rendered "she brake the box," as if Mary had shaken the ingredients of the ointment contained in the vessel, thus diffusing the fragrance more strongly.—The estimated value of the ointment (more than three hundred pence) would be nearly 10*l*.

one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should (*who was about to*) betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold? for *certainly* it might have been sold for much, *even* for more than three hundred pence, and *the proceeds* given to the poor. This he said, not that he *at all* cared for the poor, but because he was a thief,<sup>(4)</sup> and had *in his charge* the bag<sup>b</sup> (*their common purse*), and bare (*carried away*, GR.) what was put therein: *and thus, if the ointment had been converted into money, he could have appropriated a portion to his own use.*

When Jesus understood it (*knew of this dissatisfaction*), He said unto them, Why trouble (*disturb*) ye the woman? let her alone; for she hath wrought a good work upon Me (*hath done Me a charitable and pious office*). For ye have the poor always with you,<sup>c</sup> and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good: but Me ye have not always.<sup>(5)</sup> Against the day of My burial hath she kept this, *and it is as a tribute of reverence for the dead. A generous heart is never sparing, and she hath done what she could: for in that she hath poured this ointment on My body, she is come afore-hand,—unconscious of the purpose herself, but under the direction of Divine Providence,—to anoint My body to the burying [to anticipate the embalming of it for My approaching burial, MATT.]. Nor shall her devotion be lost; for verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that this woman hath done, shall be honourably spoken of for a memorial of her<sup>d</sup> to all future ages.*

*Now Bethany was near to Jerusalem, and many who attended the Passover had already arrived at the city for the previous Purification. Much people of the Jews, therefore, knew that He was there: and they came over—*

<sup>b</sup> Some of them thought because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. John xiii. 29.

<sup>c</sup> The poor shall never cease out of the land. Dent. xv. 11.

<sup>d</sup> A good name is better than precious ointment. Eccles. vii. 1.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Because he was a thief.*] The case of Judas shows that sometimes evil men have authority in the church; and that inward holiness is not absolutely necessary to render the sacred offices belonging to the ministerial function *valid and effectual*. Judas was sent out to preach the Gospel, to heal diseases, and cast out devils; nor was he excepted when Jesus said "He that receiveth you, receiveth Me." Our Church, in her 26th Article, declares that the effect of Christ's ordinance is not taken away by the unworthiness or wickedness of ministers; that they minister not in their *own* name, but in Christ's; and that the Sacraments are, when rightly received, effectual because of *His* institution and promise, "although they be ministered by evil men."—Judas was not the son of *this* Simon. On his general character, see Section CXV., Note 2.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Me ye have not always.*] This intimation of our Lord that He should not continue present, bodily, among men, seems alone sufficient to overthrow the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation.

(<sup>6</sup>) *Shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*] We gather from this incident that the obligation of

charity to the poor is not to preclude acts of liberality on other fitting occasions—such as, aiding in the diffusion of religious education, the building and adorning of churches, honouring good men by appropriate testimonials, and the like.

A principle is also here involved, namely the *Love of Reputation*, which exercises no mean power over the natural heart. The desire of handing down a name to posterity was no doubt originally implanted in man by his Maker; but the principle would then be purely a desire to be "remembered for good,"—to promote the Creator's glory by working good to His creatures. Our Lord on a former occasion (John v. 44), did not condemn seeking honour and approbation from men; but He declared that the desire of God's approval was to *stand first*, and be the ruling principle. On the present occasion the act which was lauded, and which was to descend so honourably to posterity, was a simple act of self-sacrifice, faith, and love. Thus the Gospel *drives out all ambition and the love of self*, and by modifying and directing the thirst of praise to proper objects, robs it of all its power to defile or degrade.

not *however* for Jesus' sake only, but also that they might see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests, *full of envy and animosity against all who were in any way connected with Jesus*, consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that, by reason of him *and the wonderful miracle wrought on his behalf*, many of the Jews went away (*withdrew from their teaching*), and believed on Jesus.\*

\* Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him. John xi. 46.

## SECTION CIV.

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM IN TRIUMPH, RIDING, AS HAD BEEN PREDICTED, ON THE FOAL OF AN ASS. HE WEEPS OVER THE CITY, AND TAKES POSSESSION OF HIS TEMPLE.

*Matt. xxi. 1—11, 14—17. Mark xi. 1—11. Luke xix. 29—44. John xii. 12—19.*

AND it came to pass on the next day,—*being the first day of the last eventful week of the Saviour's Passion*,—when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to *the vicinity of Bethphage and Bethany*,<sup>(1)</sup> *even unto the Mount of Olives which stood eastward of the city*, then sent Jesus two of His disciples, saying unto them, Go your way into the village (*Bethphage*) over against you; and straightway, as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find an ass tied<sup>(2)</sup> *to a door*, and a colt tied with her whereon man never yet sat, *for the foal has been reserved for sacred uses*; loose him, and bring him hither unto Me. And if any man *shall object*, and say unto you, Why do ye loose him? ye shall say thus unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him: and straightway, *on hearing that*, he will send him hither.

And the disciples that were sent went their way, and found even as He had said unto them; *namely*, the colt tied *with its dam* by the door without; *and this was* in a *public* place where two ways met: and they *begin to loose* him as Jesus commanded them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof [certain of them that stood there, MARK] said unto them, What do ye (*What are you about*)?

(1) *Bethphage and Bethany.*] Bethphage denotes "the place of figs;" Bethany, "the place of palms," which trees appear, from John xii. 13, to have abounded there. These villages were contiguous, but Bethphage was nearest to the city,—being, in fact, its eastern suburb, and reaching in a long scattered street towards the Mount of Olives which adjoined it. It was chiefly occupied by the priests.

(2) *Ye shall find an ass tied, &c.*] In the

minuteness of the matters here predicted we have a remarkable proof of our Lord's Prescience. Thus, 1st, it is said, *Ye shall find a colt tied with an ass*; 2nd, *A colt, on which never man yet sat*; 3rd, *As ye enter into the village*; 4th, *The owners will be unwilling that you should unbind him, but when they hear the Lord has need of him, they will let him go*. It is probable that the owners of these animals knew Jesus by reputation.

why loose ye the colt, *which belongs not to you?* And they said unto them, even as Jesus had commanded, The Lord hath need of him. And *when they heard that*, they were satisfied, and let them both go.

And they brought the colt and the ass to Jesus, and cast their loose outer garments on them; and, *though the colt was unbroken*, they set Jesus thereon, and at once, *by the influence of His volition, it became perfectly tractable and gentle*. And as He sat on the young ass, and went on His way toward the city, where He had resolved to make a public entry, many [a very great multitude, MATT.] spread their garments in the way,<sup>a</sup> and others cut down the smaller branches from off the trees and strewed them in the way,—*which custom was only observed on the triumphant entrance of a prince or conqueror*.

All this was done that it might be exactly fulfilled which was spoken four centuries before by the prophet Zechariah, saying, as it is there written:—TELL YE TO JERUSALEM, THE DAUGHTER OF SION,<sup>c</sup> FEAR NOT (*Henceforth fear nothing*): BEHOLD THY KING, the long-expected Messiah, COMETH UNTO THEE; <sup>b</sup> not with vain earthly pomp, but, in token of His mild and peaceful government, MEEK, AND SITTING UPON AN ASS,<sup>d</sup>—*even A COLT THE FOAL OF AN ASS* (see Zech. ix. 9). These things understood not His disciples at the first as having been predicted of their Master: but when Jesus was glorified in heaven, and had shed on them the Spirit of Truth and Illumination, then remembered they<sup>e</sup> that these things were written of Him as the Messiah, and that they had themselves, as instruments under Divine Providence, done these things unto Him, exactly as it had been predicted.

And when He was come nigh to the city, and was even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, much people that were come up to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm-

<sup>a</sup> Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying Jehu is king. 2 Kings ix. 18.

<sup>b</sup> Say ye to the daughter of Sion, Behold thy Salvation cometh! Isa. lxii. 11.

<sup>c</sup> The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John xiv. 26.

(<sup>a</sup>) *Spread their garments in the way, &c.*] This was done at the proclamation of the Jewish kings; and cases are cited of the same custom in other countries. Plutarch relates, that when Cato left his soldiers to return to Rome, "they laid their garments in the way,—an honour then done only to few emperors." When Xerxes crossed the Hellespont, Herodotus records (lib. vii., cap. 56), that they "strewed the way with myrtle branches."

(<sup>c</sup>) *The daughter of Sion.*] This poetical manner of personifying cities and countries was familiar with the Prophets. Jerusalem might aptly be called the daughter of Sion, being situated at the foot, and, as it were, under the wing of that fortified mount.

(<sup>d</sup>) *Sitting upon an ass.*] We are not to suppose there was any thing mean in this circumstance. In the East the ass excites none of that contempt, with which the animal is associ-

ated in our minds: there it is a much finer animal, and is still used by persons of distinction. That it was used by the patriarchs and judges of the Jewish nation, appears from Gen. xxii. 3; Exod. iv. 20; Judg. v. 10.—But it was with peculiar propriety that Jesus, in His most public triumph, chose, according to Zechariah's prediction, to ride upon an ass. The removal of that warlike animal the horse, is spoken of by the same prophet (Zech. ix. 10) as a matter of promise in the days of the Messiah. See also Hos. i. 7; Mic. v. 10. To keep the children of Israel more dependant on Himself, God had forbidden horses to be used, Deut. xvii. 16. David therefore rode on a mule, and ordered Solomon to do so on his coronation day, 1 Kings i. 33, 38. When Solomon and succeeding kings multiplied horses, we find them rebuked by the prophets, and even punished for so doing, Isa. ii. 6, 7; Hos. xiv. 3.

<sup>d</sup> Ye shall take you boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees. Lev. xxiii. 40.

I beheld, and lo a great multitude stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. Rev. vii. 9.

\* Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord, send us now prosperity. Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Ps. cxviii. 26, 26.

trees,<sup>d</sup>—*the recognized symbols of peace and joy, which they used at their feast of Tabernacles in anticipation of the Messiah,*—and went forth to meet Him, and cried, *Hosanna (God save and prosper Him)!* Blessed is (be) the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord!<sup>e</sup>

The people, therefore, *that accompanied Him from Bethphage, and that were also with Him when He called forth Lazarus out of his grave and raised him after four days from the dead, bare record (testified) of this fact to the strangers now arrived from the city: indeed for this cause the people from thence also met Him, for that they had heard already that He had done this amazing miracle. And now the whole multitude of the disciples,—both they that went before and that followed,—began to rejoice together, and to praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had formerly seen done by Him: and cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be the long-expected King, He that Cometh in the name of the Lord. May there be peace in heaven and glory to God in the highest heavens. Blessed too be the glorious and long-promised Kingdom of our father David, that cometh to us in the name of the Lord to deliver us from all our enemies. Hosanna in the highest heavens!*

And some of the Pharisees, *who had been mixing with the crowd as spies,* said unto Him from among the multitude, Master, rebuke thy disciples; *for such acclamations of divine honour cannot be right, and they might lead to a tumult.* And He answered and said unto them, *It cannot be otherwise than it is: I tell you that if these people should hold their peace, and refuse to own Me as their King, a miracle would not be wanting to proclaim that truth—yea, as the Prophet has said, the very stones would immediately cry out!<sup>f</sup>(<sup>e</sup>)* The Pharisees therefore, *thus publicly rebuked,* said among themselves, *Perceive ye how, in spite of all opposition, ye prevail nothing? Behold the whole world is gone after him.*

And when He was come near *Jerusalem,* He beheld the magnificent city spread beneath Him; and forgetting every consideration of self, wept over it, saying, *If thou hadst but known and considered,—even thou, stained though thou art with sacred blood,—at least in this thy latest day of grace and trial, the momentous things which belong unto thy peace! But alas! now it is too late: the door of Mercy is about to be closed, and through thine own obstinacy they are hid for ever from thine eyes! For the days shall*

(<sup>e</sup>) *The stones would immediately cry out.*] This was a proverbial expression. So in Ovid, "Tutus eas; lapis iste prius tua furta loquetur!"

soon come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench (a rampart) about thee,<sup>(7)</sup> and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, & and thy children shall be buried in the ruins within thee; and they shall not leave in thee so much as one stone upon another:<sup>h</sup> because thou knewest not (*consideredst not*) the merciful time of thy visitation.

And in the manner which has been described Jesus entered into Jerusalem. And when He was come there, all the city was moved (*was in commotion*), saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the Great expected Prophet,<sup>(9)</sup> of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went at once into the Temple. And the blind and the lame, as soon as they heard of His arrival, came to Him in the Temple, and He healed them before the multitude. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and noticed even the children, who had caught up the acclamation of the people, crying in the Temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! they were sore displeased, and said unto Him, Hearest thou what these ignorant creatures say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea, I hear it, and it is the fulfilment of the Psalmist's prophecy. Have ye never read those words, OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS THOU HAST PERFECTED PRAISE?<sup>(9)</sup> (See Ps. viii. 2). Justly do these rebuke your silence, who from age and understanding ought to have been among the first to receive and acknowledge the Messiah.

And when He had looked round about (*had made His observations*) upon all things<sup>i</sup> in the Temple,—intending, as the market was over for that day, to correct on the following morning those abuses which He saw,—and now that the eventide was come, He left them (*the multitude*), and lest they should attempt to make Him King, went out of the city unto Bethany with the Twelve. And that night He lodged there.

(7) *Shall cast a trench about thee.*] The event corresponded most minutely with this prophecy. The Roman general, Titus, in order to cut off from the besieged all hope of safety by flight, encompassed the city with a trench or rampart almost five miles in circumference. Thus were the Jews literally hemmed in on every side. Josephus declares, that the soldiers (who performed this most laborious work in three days) seemed animated by a divine impetus; and that at last they so levelled the city, (even digging up its foundations, see Section CXII., Note 2,) that they who had not seen it before, would not believe that it had ever been inhabited!—See the History of the Jewish War by Josephus, particularly the sixth book. Also Socrates, Hist. Eccles. lib. 3.

(8) *Jesus the Prophet.*] The article here is emphatic. Jesus was not only a prophet sent from God, but He was that special and predicted Prophet, the principal events of whose life had been so accurately typified or expressly foretold in the Law and the Prophets. See Section LXI., Note 13.

(9) *Thou hast perfected praise.*] In other words, "Thou hast caused Thy praise to be set forth in the most perfect manner." The exact words of the Psalm, corresponding to these, are, "Thou hast ordained (or constituted) strength." The sense is the same: the divine perfections are the strength of God, and the ground of all the praise offered to Him by His creatures. It appears from the Talmud that Jewish children were taught by their parents to repeat this Psalm.

<sup>f</sup> I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee: and thou shalt be brought down. Isa. xxix. 3, 4.

<sup>h</sup> Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and Prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy . . . . . After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off: And the people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary; and unto the end of the War, desolations are determined. Dan. ix. 24, 26.

Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps. Mic. iii. 12.

<sup>i</sup> And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles. Zeph. i. 12.

## SECTION CV.

**JESUS CONDEMNS THE UNFRUITFUL FIG-TREE; AND AGAIN PURIFIES THE TEMPLE. CERTAIN GREEKS DESIRE AN INTERVIEW WITH HIM.**

*Matt. xxi. 12, 13, 18, 19. Mark xi. 12—19. Luke xix. 45—48.*

*John xii. 20—36.*

**A**ND on the morrow, *being the second day of the week*, when they were come from Bethany, as He returned in the morning into the city, He was hungry. And in the way seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, He came to it to *ascertain* if haply he might find thereon any thing <sup>(1)</sup> to eat, —*though it might not as yet be quite ripe*; for the time of gathering figs was not yet. And when He came to it, He found nothing thereon, but leaves only. And Jesus answered and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee [No man eat fruit of thee, MARK] henceforward for ever!<sup>a</sup> And His disciples heard it. And presently the fig-tree withered (*began to wither*) away—an emblem of the curse of God soon about to fall on the Jewish nation, which in its time of fruits had produced none.

<sup>a</sup> That which beareth thorns and briars is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned. Heb. vi. 8.

And they come to Jerusalem. And Jesus went into the Temple of God; and, *as at the first Passover after His baptism*, He began to cast out all them that, *under pretence of accommodating such as had offerings to make*, bought and sold in the court of the Temple appropriated to the Gentiles. And He overthrew the counting-tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves to the poorer worshippers; and would not suffer that any man should carry any common vessel or other burden through the Temple,—*so as to make a thoroughfare of its sacred precincts*. And He taught, saying unto them, My House is, and it is written in the book of the Prophet Isaiah<sup>b</sup> that it shall be called, the House of Prayer of all nations<sup>(2)</sup> (*for all the*

<sup>b</sup> Mine House shall be called an House of Prayer for all people. Isa. lvi. 7.

(1) *If haply He might find thereon any thing.*] In Judea the leaves of the fig-tree precede its fruit, which commonly ripens in June, but earlier with the more vigorous trees, especially after a mild winter. The figs could be eaten to allay hunger before they were ripe.—It has been asked, Why our Lord, being Omniscient, went up to this tree to ascertain if it bore any fruit. The answer is, that He was in the habit of speaking and acting *as a man* in the presence of others, when there was no special and sufficient reason why He should act otherwise. The destruction of this tree has been cavilled at; but it was already barren and useless, and, as it grew on the high road, was not private property. After prefiguring His eternal mercies by numberless miracles for the

good of mankind, He expressed the severity of His judgments on the wicked by one single sign inflicted on a senseless tree. It served a most important end as a warning to the Jewish nation, and indeed to all future ages. For, from each of us God expects not leaves merely,—not show, but fruit: if there is pretension without performance, knowledge without practice, we too must be cut off!

(2) *My House shall be called the House of Prayer of all nations.*] This is a very remarkable passage. St. John notices the first purification of the Temple by our Lord, during the first Passover which He attended (see Sect. XXII.); and the same act at the close of His Ministry is here specially recorded by the other

*Gentiles*); but ye have verified the complaint of the Prophet Jeremiah,<sup>c</sup> and have made it by your extortions a den of thieves.

And the Scribes and Pharisees and the chief of the people heard it, and were indignant; for although such traffic was forbidden by the Law, they had themselves, in contempt of the Gentiles, connived at it: and they sought how they might secretly destroy Him, and could not find out what they might with safety do; for they feared Him, and dared not do anything openly, because all the people were astonished at His doctrine,<sup>d</sup> and were very attentive (*hung upon Him, GR.*) to hear Him.

And He now taught daily in the Temple. And there were certain Greeks<sup>e</sup> among them that came up to worship at the feast;<sup>f</sup> for these Gentiles acknowledged the God of Israel, and were proselytes of the gate, though still uncircumcised. The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee and so from their own neighbourhood of Syrophenicia, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see (*we wish for an interview with*) Jesus. Philip, doubting what to do, cometh and telleth Andrew, who was also from that part of the country; and again, Andrew and Philip, after consulting together, tell Jesus.

And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come (*The time is at hand*) that the Son of man should be glorified<sup>g</sup> by the accession of the Gentiles to the Church, when all will share in the desire of these Greeks to see and know Me. But My death must be accessory to that glory: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn (*a grain*) of wheat fall into the ground and die,<sup>h</sup> in order that it may germinate, it abideth alone (*it remaineth a single grain*) without increase; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit: Even so must I undergo temporal death and be buried in the earth,<sup>h</sup> before the mighty spiritual harvest of the Gentile

<sup>e</sup> Is this House, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers? Jer. vii. 11.

<sup>d</sup> The people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as One having authority, and not as the Scribes. Matt. vii. 28, 29.

<sup>e</sup>—a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation. Mark vii. 26.

<sup>f</sup> Of the devout Greeks a great multitude believed. Acts xvii. 4.

<sup>g</sup> Concerning a stranger that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake; (for they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched out arm); when he shall come and pray toward this House, hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for. 1 Kings viii. 41—43.

<sup>h</sup> That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. 1 Cor. xv. 36.

<sup>h</sup> It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Heb. ii. 10.

three Evangelists. Comparing these statements, it is evident that the act was more than an expression of zeal against the profaners of the Temple, and that it remarkably exhibits the Saviour in His great character of a Prophet. The Scriptures abound in material images; and, with the Prophets, outward signs were of especial and approved use, when they would enforce some high and important topic of instruction. On the present occasion the whole proceeding seems to have been a prophetic information, by way of action, of the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles. Our Saviour found the Courts of the Gentiles polluted by the sale of beasts and other traffic; and, by a symbolical action, He publicly breaks down the partition-wall which had before separated the Jewish and heathen worshippers.—The rulers of the Jews, who had connived at this, and were ever jealous of interference with their privileges, seem to have regarded the action in the same light.—It is observable that our Lord here

calls the Temple "His House;" and the accompanying action was obviously that of a Master in his own House.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Certain Greeks.*] These Greeks would most probably be Syrophenicians, who had commerce with the Galileans, and had been accustomed to offer sacrifices from the time of Solomon. It was not unusual with the heathen to do this; and Josephus speaks of the refusal of an offering sent to Jerusalem by the Roman emperor as one cause of the last fatal war.

(<sup>4</sup>) *That the Son of man should be glorified.*] The Glory of Christ especially consists in the testimony which the Father gave Him at His Death, Resurrection, and Ascension; which appears from the texts Phil. ii. 8, 9; Heb. ii. 9. But the conversion of all nations to Christianity also eminently contributes to the Saviour's glory, and this view is more agreeable to the context in this place.



<sup>1</sup> Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory. John xvii. 24.

We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 17.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne. Rev. iii. 21.

<sup>h</sup> I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished. Luke xii. 60.

<sup>1</sup> And He went a little further, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Matt. xxvi. 39.

<sup>m</sup> And it came to pass on the third day that there were thunders and lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a Voice. Exod. xix. 18—19.

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. Rev. vi. 1.

And when the angel had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. Rev. x. 3.

<sup>n</sup> The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 2 Cor. iv. 4.

<sup>o</sup> And He said unto them, I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven. Luke x. 18.

world can grow up,—“bringing many sons to glory.” But if the wish of these Gentile strangers to see Me proceeds from the hope of any earthly advantage, they will be disappointed; for, as I have told you already, those who embrace the Gospel must be ready to suffer with Me: he that loveth his life better than Me shall lose it, and he that seemingly hateth his life,—disregarding it for My sake,—shall, even though he lose it here, keep it unto life eternal. If any man would faithfully serve Me, let him be prepared to imitate Me in all things, and take up his cross and follow Me; and then where I am, there shall My servant be also:<sup>1</sup> if any man, be he Jew or Gentile, thus truly serve Me, him will My Father also honour with a crown of everlasting glory.—I am tempted even as you are: for now is My soul, with keen sensibility, troubled<sup>k</sup> at the prospect of its shame, and of that wrath of God against Sin which I have to endure. And what shall I say? shall I say, Father, save Me from this hour? Nature would prompt this; for “a wounded spirit who can bear?” But I will not say it, since for this very cause,—that I might suffer the penalty of the sins of the world,—came I unto this hour. I rather say, Be it so; I am content to endure all: Father, glorify Thy Name.<sup>1</sup>

Then, as He spoke, there came a Voice from Heaven<sup>(<sup>o</sup>)</sup>, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again: in all that Thou hast said and done, the Divine Glory has hitherto been promoted, and it shall be even more conspicuously manifested by the events which are to come. The people, therefore, of the Gentile sort, that stood by when the Voice came, and heard it, said that it thundered,—for indeed thunder had accompanied the words: but others of the Jews, who understood what had been uttered, said, An angel from God spake to Him.<sup>m</sup>

Jesus answered and said, This Voice came not because of Me, for I knew well the eternal purpose of My Father to glorify His Name by Me; but it came for your sakes, that your faith might be confirmed notwithstanding all the indignities which I have shortly to endure. Now is the judgment (the condemnation) of this world, “which lieth in sin:” now shall the prince of this world, who has so long reigned in the hearts of the children of disobedience,<sup>n</sup> be cast out<sup>o</sup> from his dominion: and true and vital religion shall gradually take the place of idolatry. And if I be

(<sup>o</sup>) *There came a Voice from Heaven.*] Thus was Christ a third time attested from Heaven, and so was recognised in His three offices: at His Baptism, when He entered on His Ministry, as the great High Priest; at His Transfiguration, as the Prophet, whom all must hear; and now as King, after He had fulfilled the prophecy, “Re-

joice, O Zion, behold thy King cometh.” Thus are we bound to receive Him, as the Priest, who sacrificed even His own body for us; as the Prophet, teaching us both in life and in death; as the King, who shall govern us both here and for ever.

(when I am) lifted up from the earth, I will *thereby* draw all men (*men from every nation*) unto Me.—This He said signifying, as on a previous occasion to Nicodemus, what kind of death He should die.<sup>p</sup>—The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law (*the Scriptures*), that the Christ is immortal and abideth for ever<sup>q</sup> (<sup>o</sup>) on earth; and how then sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up (*must be removed hence*)? Who is this Son of man of whom thou speakest?

Then Jesus said unto them, *The true Son of man is now among you: prize the opportunity vouchsafed: yet a little longer* is the Light<sup>r</sup> with you; walk *suitably* while ye have the Light to guide you, lest, by the just judgment of God, darkness (*spiritual blindness*) come upon you:<sup>s</sup> for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. *And that you may so walk, while ye have the Light, believe in the Light, trusting in and rejoicing in it; that ye may be the children of light, being wise and good now, and heirs of immortality hereafter.*

These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself (*withdrew privately*) from them. And when even was come, He went, as before, out of the city to Bethany.

<sup>p</sup> As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. John iii. 14, 16.

<sup>q</sup> His seed shall endure for ever. Ps. lxxxix. 36. Of the increase of His government there shall be no end. Isa. ix. 7.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Dan. vii. 14.

The Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth even for ever. Mic. iv. 7.

<sup>r</sup> Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world. John viii. 12.

<sup>s</sup> Give glory to the Lord your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble. Jer. xiii. 16.

<sup>t</sup> Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. Eph. v. 8.

SECTION CVI.

THE EVANGELIST JOHN COMMENTS ON THE OBSTINATE UNBELIEF OF THE JEWS. JESUS, IN PASSING THE WITHERED EMBLEM OF THEIR DESTRUCTION, EXHORTS HIS DISCIPLES TO A LIVELY FAITH. HE AGAIN PREACHES IN THE TEMPLE, PLAINLY AVOWING HIMSELF TO BE THE MESSIAH; AND IS QUESTIONED AS TO HIS AUTHORITY BY A DEPUTATION FROM THE SANHEDRIM.

*Matt. xxi. 20—27. Mark xi. 20—33. Luke xx. 1—8. John xii. 37—50.*

BUT though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: so that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be (*was*) fulfilled in them<sup>a</sup> which he spake:—LORD, WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HATH THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED? (*Isaias liiii. 1.*) Therefore they could not believe, because that *they were set against the Truth, and at length became judicially blinded by the withdrawal of God's Grace; as Esaias said again, HE HATH BLINDED*

<sup>a</sup> They have not all obeyed the Gospel: for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? Rom. x. 16.

(<sup>o</sup>) *We have heard out of the Law, &c.*] The Scribes had been diligent enough in displaying to the people the glories and the eternity of the Messiah's kingdom; but they were blind to the knowledge that it was to be a *spiritual* kingdom in *this* world, and an *eternal* kingdom in

*heaven.* They were silent also as to His sufferings, but (as St. Peter declares) the same Prophets, duly explained, led them *from* His sufferings to His resurrection and future glory. See 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

• I saw also the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the Temple. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. Isa. vi. 1, 3.

• The Jews had agreed already that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the Synagogue. John ix. 22.

• How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only. John v. 44.

He is a Jew which is inwardly; whose praise is not of men, but of God. Rom. ii. 29.

• If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rom. x. 9, 10.

THEIR EYES,<sup>(1)</sup> AND HARDENED THEIR HEART (*Their eyes are blinded, and they have hardened their own hearts*); THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, NOR UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM (*Isaiah vi. 10*). These things said Esaias when he beheld the Lord of Hosts sitting upon a throne in heaven, and thus saw His,—the Messiah's,—glory,<sup>b</sup> and spake of Him<sup>(2)</sup> as one who should “pour out His soul unto death, and be numbered with the transgressors, and bear the sins of many” (*Isa. liii. 12*.) Nevertheless this infidelity was not universal; for, in addition to the common people, who heard Him gladly and followed Him, many among the chief rulers also believed on Him (*were convinced He must be the Christ*); but because of the Pharisees they did not venture to confess Him openly, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue.<sup>c</sup> For they loved the praise of men and their reputation in the world, more than the praise of God<sup>d</sup> and that honour which cometh of Him only: they believed, not with the heart, but with the understanding; and in this also their faith was wanting, that they did not “make confession of it with the mouth unto salvation.”<sup>e</sup>

And in the morning of the third day of the week, as they (*Jesus and His disciples*) passed by on their way to the city, when the disciples saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away! And Peter, calling to remembrance what had passed on the previous day, saith unto Him, Master,

(1) *Blinded their eyes, &c.*] It could not be intended by the prophet, that “God had blinded their eyes;” nor by our Lord, for, only the day previous, He had been earnestly exhorting them to “believe and walk in the Light.” He says also, “Ye will not come to Me that ye may have Life” (John v. 40); and again, “How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not” (Luke xiii. 34). In fact their hardness of heart, and Faith, were incompatible. Therefore the sense is, “They have blinded their eyes, &c.” it is so rendered in our Translation in the place where St. Matthew puts the same question into the mouth of our Lord, “Their eyes they have closed, &c.” (Matt. xiii. 15), and St. Luke makes St. Paul cite the words precisely in the same form (Acts xxviii. 27). Again, in a parallel passage of Isaiah (xliv. 18), the Septuagint or Greek Version more correctly translates the Original thus: “They have shut their eyes.”

Objections have been further laid against predictions of this class, as affecting the Justice of God in His dispensations:—It is said, that the freedom of human actions is destroyed, if they are certainly foreknown and must happen. But although Foreknowledge is plainly ascribed to God in Scripture, no such influence is laid on the will of man as to oblige him to do anything. The reason why all men are not actually saved is pre-

cisely because the Divine wisdom does not see fit to lay restraints on human actions. God foresaw that a very large proportion of the Jews would reject the Gospel; and He was pleased to foretell this among other events relative to the Advent and Ministry of Christ; for it was designed that the fulfilment of such predictions should form a part of the evidence of the divine authority of the Gospel. See Section VII., Note 3.

(2) *These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.*] The Person whom the Prophet saw was undoubtedly the Everlasting Deity, “the Lord of Hosts,” and a Jewish tradition declares that Isaiah was put to a cruel death for affirming this. St. John here makes an express application of this Vision to the Lord Jesus Christ; and that Isaiah “spake of Him” is evident from the whole of the 53rd chapter, which expressly relates to the Saviour’s sufferings and future glory. St. Paul also, citing the preface to the same Prophecy, distinctly applies it to the Gospel times, Rom. x. 16. It appears then, as plain as words can make it, that Jesus Christ was One with the Eternal Jehovah.—As plainly is the Holy Spirit to be here identified with both, for St. Paul says, Acts xxviii. 25—27, that it was the Spirit who spake to Isaiah in this passage of the prophet.

behold the fig-tree which Thou cursedst<sup>f</sup> (*didst devote to destruction for its barrenness*) is already withered away. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Have firm faith in God, *confiding in the success of miracles wrought through Him, and then the same power shall be conferred upon you*: for verily I say unto you, That if ye have such faith, and doubt not<sup>g</sup> of your success as heralds of the Gospel, ye shall not only be able to do this which is done to the fig-tree; but also, whosoever among you shall say unto this mountain (*Mount Olivet*) now before us, Be thou removed,<sup>h</sup> and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall firmly believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, it shall be done, and he shall have whatsoever he saith. *But the only effectual means to establish such faith is Prayer to God*: and, therefore, I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, and shall ask in prayer,<sup>(\*)</sup> in order to confirm your doctrine, and to make it manifest that ye are sent from God, believe without a misgiving that ye will really receive, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying in the presence of God, especially remember this condition of successful Prayer: forgive from the heart if ye have aught to complain of against any;<sup>i</sup> that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive your fellow-men, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

And they come again to Jerusalem. And when He was come into the Temple, Jesus cried aloud and said:—*I am come to teach with the authority of God*: He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me alone, but also on Him that sent Me;<sup>k</sup> and He that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me.<sup>l</sup> I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide any longer in darkness (*in spiritual blindness*), but, guided aright by the Sun of Righteousness, should learn the way of life and happiness. And if any man hear My words, and nevertheless believe not, I judge him not<sup>m</sup> now, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. *Yet the Gospel which I bring*

<sup>f</sup> That which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. Heb. vi. 8.

<sup>g</sup> Ask in faith, nothing wavering. Jas. i. 6.

<sup>h</sup> Verily, I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matt. xvii. 20.

<sup>i</sup> — forgiving one another if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Col. iii. 13.

<sup>k</sup> Christ was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God. 1 Pet. i. 20, 21.

He that hath received His (Christ's) testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true. John iii. 33.

<sup>l</sup> He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. John xiv. 9.

<sup>m</sup> God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John iii. 17.

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. John v. 45.

(\*) *What things soever ye desire, and shall ask in Prayer.*] This was a special promise, which must be limited to the persons of the Apostles and the age of miracles (see Section LXXIII., Note 2). Peter, the spokesman on this occasion, afterwards proved how firm was his faith in the powers conferred upon him, Acts iii. 6; ix. 34. Undoubtedly great constancy and courage was then required; for the speaker staked all his credit as a messenger from God, and consequently all the honour and usefulness of his future life, on the immediate miraculous energy attending his words.—St. John, in his first Epistle (written when the power of working miracles was gra-

dually declining), again speaks of the prayer of faith; and the limit to which he there confines its power, namely, its being asked "according to the Divine will," (see 1 John v. 14), would make the promise of successful Prayer a general one, and thenceforth applicable to every age. The Apostles had such a measure of wisdom vouchsafed, that they could scarcely ask, except according to the will of God: but succeeding Christians must limit their petitions to "what may be expedient for them."—On a similar general application of the powerful effects of Faith, see Section XC., Note 3.

▪ It shall come to pass that, whosoever will not hearken to My words, which He (the Prophet which I will raise up) shall speak in My name, I will require it of him. Deut. xviii. 19.

• I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. Deut. xviii. 18.

I am in the Father and the Father in Me: the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself. John xiv. 10.

will decide his lot: he that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that (*hath that which, GR.*) judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.<sup>a</sup> For I have not spoken of Myself (*merely of My own motion*), but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak<sup>o</sup> (*what I should enjoin as to the precepts of the Gospel, and what I should teach as to its principles*). And I know that His Commandment (*the Doctrine which I preach*) is *the way to life everlasting*: whatsoever therefore I speak, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.

And it came to pass, that, as He was walking and taught the people in the Temple, and preached the Gospel, *suddenly* there came upon Him *in a body* the chief priests and the scribes, and the elders of the people; and spake unto Him, saying:—Tell us,—*to whose charge the government of this Temple is committed*,—By virtue of what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority to do these things? *for none but a prophet, a priest, or a king, can take upon them to make these extraordinary changes, which are clearly beyond the office of any private individual.* And Jesus, *desirous of avoiding any immediate violence to His person*, answered them by another question,—*a method then familiar to Hebrew disputants*,—and said unto them, I will also ask you one question, and answer Me to one plain thing; which if ye tell Me, then I in likewise (*in like manner*) will tell you by what authority I do these things:—The Baptism of John, whence was it? from *the great God of heaven*, or of men only, and the contrivance of men? answer Me *this*. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, *It was from heaven*, he will *immediately* say unto us, Why then believed ye him not<sup>p</sup> *when he bore repeated testimony that I was the long-expected Messiah?* But [and] if we shall say, *His baptism was of men, that again might be hazardous; for we fear that all the people will be incensed against and stone us, for they be all firmly persuaded [for all men counted, MARK] that John was a prophet indeed.*<sup>q</sup>

¶ And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ . . . . . But there standeth One among you whom ye know not: He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, for He was before me. . . . The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John i. 19, 20, 26, 27, 29.

¶ When Herod would have put John to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. Matt. xiv. 6.

*Wherefore the chief priests and those who accompanied them thought it better to affect ignorance than to admit a truth which would condemn themselves; and they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell whence it was. And Jesus answering said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things: if you are unable to form a judgment concerning John, how can you be competent to decide on My pretensions?—So they could not answer Him again to these things, and “the wise were taken in their own craftiness.”*

## SECTION CVII.

JESUS REBUKES THE RULERS BY THE PARABLES OF THE TWO SONS,  
THE HUSBANDMEN AND THE HEIR, AND THE WEDDING-FEAST.

*Matt. xxi. 28—46; xxii. 1—14. Mark xii. 1—12. Luke xx. 9—19.*

**A**ND when Jesus had silenced the rulers who came to question Him respecting His authority, He began to speak unto them and to the people by parables.

And first He said, But what think ye? let me hear your opinion on this case:—A certain man had two sons, and he came to the first and said to him, Son, go and work to-day in my vineyard; he answered roughly, and said to his father, I will not; but, afterwards, on better consideration, he repented of his undutiful behaviour, and went. And he came to the second son, and said likewise: and he answered plausibly, and said, I go, Sir, immediately; and yet he went not. Now, whether of them twain (which of those two) did the will of his father? They say unto Him, The first only. Then Jesus saith unto them, The case of the second son has its parallel in your own conduct: you address God by the most honourable titles, and profess the greatest readiness and zeal in His service; but your whole lives are one continued course of disobedience and rebellion. Verily, I say unto you, That even the publicans<sup>a</sup> and the harlots,<sup>b</sup> worthless and insignificant as you may deem them, go into the kingdom of God before you: for their conduct more nearly resembles that of the first son: they are less privileged, less self-complacent, and less confirmed in sin; and the most profane and dissolute persons may be always nearer to Repentance than mere formalists and hypocrites. For John the Baptist came unto you in the way (the practice) of righteousness; and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And notwithstanding their conversion, ye, when ye had seen it, with all your pretences to extraordinary sanctity, repented not afterward,<sup>c</sup> that ye also might believe in him.

Hear another parable, that you may see God's gracious dealings towards you, and your base ingratitude to Him. There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard,<sup>d</sup> and hedged it round about, and digged a place for receiving the wine-fat, (under a wine-press which he made in it), and built a tower for the tenant or his watchman to lodge in, and let it out to husbandmen; and then went into a far country for a long time.

And at the season, when the time of gathering the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen

<sup>a</sup> And the publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John: but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. Luke vii. 29, 30.

<sup>b</sup> Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. Luke vii. 47.

<sup>c</sup> I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not. Rev. ii. 21.

<sup>d</sup> My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and He fenced it, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein. . . . The Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel. Isa. v. 1, 2, 7.

\* But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against Thee, and slew Thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to Thee. Neh. ix. 26.

Which of the Prophets have not your fathers persecuted? Acta vii. 52.

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were slain with the sword. Heb. xi. 37.

† And the Lord hath sent unto you all His servants the Prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. Jer. xxv. 4.

‡ The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Pa. ii. 7, 8.

God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things. Heb. i. 1, 2.

‡ Wherefore Jesus also suffered without the gate. Heb. xiii. 12.

‡ They have slain them which shewed before of the Coming of the Just One, of whom ye have now been the betrayers and the murderers. Acta vii. 52.

‡ Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it; Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land . . . It is (now) burnt with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance. Pa. lxxx. 8, 9, 16.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and My vineyard. What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it! Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now

that they might receive from the husbandmen *that portion of the fruit of the vineyard which was due to him as the stipulated rent.* And the husbandmen caught (seized) his servants, and beat one and sent him away empty, and killed another <sup>(1)</sup> *who had been more importunate with them,* and stoned (*threw stones at*) another [a third, *LUKE*], <sup>(1)</sup> *so that he dared not even approach to expostulate with them.* And, again, he sent unto them other servants, <sup>f</sup> *more in number than the first, hoping thus to terrify them into compliance;* and they, *growing audacious under their first success,* did unto them likewise: at him *who was the chief* they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away empty and shamefully handled. And, again, *not wishing yet to proceed to extremities,* he sent another *more confidential servant*; and him also they wounded, and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him: and so they dealt with many others, beating some and killing some.

Then said the lord of the vineyard, *What further shall I do for the sake of peace with these violent and dishonest men, whom I am loth to punish,—as I must do when I at length visit them,—so severely as they deserve? There is now but one alternative left: I will send my son unto them in my stead.—*Having yet, therefore, one *only* son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last of all unto them, saying *within himself,* It may be (*Surely, GR.*) they will reverence my son when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they, *hardened in their wickedness,* reasoned among themselves, saying, *This is the heir; ‡ come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance, that it may be more completely and permanently ours.* And *forthwith* they caught (*seized*) him, and cast him out <sup>h</sup> of the vineyard, and slew him.<sup>‡</sup>

When, therefore, the lord of the vineyard cometh, what, *think you,* will he do unto those husbandmen? They (*the Pharisees*) say unto Him, He will miserably (*terribly*) destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall *justly* render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, He shall *indeed* come and destroy those husbandmen,<sup>k</sup> and shall give the vineyard to others: *you have determined right, but therein have condemned yourselves.* You “for a long time” *have enjoyed great and peculiar privileges in the Lord’s Vineyard: many of the faithful servants and prophets, whom He successively sent to warn you, ye “shamefully handled and killed;” and, “last of all,” in the fulness of time, He has sent His only and well-beloved Son, whom ye*

(1) *And beat one, . . . and killed another, and stoned another.* The servant *beaten* would apply to the case of Jeremiah; the one *killed*, to Isaiah,

who suffered death under Manasses; and the third *stoned*, to Zacharias, son of Jehoiada (*otherwise Baruchias*; see Section XLIX., Note 12).

are even now plotting to destroy, and will shortly "cast out" of your city and kill.

Therefore say I unto you, *The blessings of the kingdom of God, which you no longer deserve to enjoy, shall be taken from you, and given to a nation (to a different race), that will dutifully and gratefully use the means of Grace, bringing forth the fruits thereof in due season.* And when they heard it, they said, God forbid that the case of those husbandmen should be a parallel case with ours: we are conscious of no such wickedness, and know that God will never desert His chosen people. And Jesus stedfastly beheld them, and said unto them, *Tell Me, what is this then that is written of the Messiah, and of the times upon which we are now come? Did ye never read this in the Scriptures? THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THE SAME IS BECOME THE HEAD OF THE CORNER:<sup>(\*)</sup> THIS IS THE LORD'S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELLOUS IN OUR EYES (Ps. cxviii. 22, 23).* Thus you, *professing to be the ablest workmen, refuse, as neither useful nor beautiful, that which shall become the chief ornament and support of the Spiritual Temple.* And whosoever shall fall on (against) this Stone shall be broken<sup>m</sup> (bruised); but on whomsoever it shall fall in vengeance with all its terrible weight, it will completely crush and grind him to powder. *Those who have taken offence at the Gospel, stumbling through the prejudices of others, shall be punished with few stripes; but the heaviest punishment shall fall on those blind guides, who go on sinning against knowledge and the light of their own consciences.*

And Jesus answered, and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven (*The Gospel Dispensation*) is like unto the conduct of a certain king, which made a marriage-feast for his son; and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden (*to summon from a neighbouring city those who had been invited*) to the wedding. And they would not come, but began, as though with one consent, to make excuse. Again, with gracious condescension, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things

go to: I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up, and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down; and I will lay it waste. For the Vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel. Isa. v. 3—6, 7.

<sup>l</sup> Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious corner-Stone, a sure foundation. Isa. xxviii. 16.

Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. 1 Cor. iii. 11.

— 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. Eph. ii. 20, 21.

<sup>m</sup> He shall be for a Sanctuary: but for a Stone of stumbling, and for a Rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken. Isa. viii. 14, 15.

They stumbled at that stumbling Stone, as it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling-Stone and Rock of offence. Rom. ix. 32, 33

(\*) *The Stone which the builders rejected, &c.*] This remarkable prediction (first applied by David, the distinguished type of Christ, to his own rejection by Saul) is also declared by St. Peter to be fulfilled in the days of the Gospel (see Acts iv. 11).—The Christian dispensation is often represented, as the Jewish had been, under the figure of a building, Christ being represented as the chief Stone in sustaining the whole fabric, and uniting Jews and Gentiles into one.—We may suppose the Stone in this metaphor to be an

upright one, or an ornamental column, such as might be added to protect a building at the corner where it was most exposed to injury: against this a passenger would be apt to stumble, and it might possibly fall on him.—There may also be some allusion to the method of stoning among the Jews: the criminal was precipitated from an eminence so as to dash him against some great stone; and if this did not dispatch him, they threw another upon him, thereby crushing him in pieces.



are now ready: come, *I pray you*, unto the marriage. But they, *alike regardless of the second invitation*, made light of it,<sup>a</sup> and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.<sup>o</sup> And the remnant (*the rest of them*) took his servants, *who had staid to expostulate with them*, and entreated them spitefully (*treated them contumeliously*), and *even savagely and wantonly slew them.*<sup>q</sup> But when the king heard thereof, he was *very wroth*, and, *as soon as the days of festivity were over*, he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.<sup>p</sup>

But then (*at the time when the feast was in readiness*), he saith to *some of his servants who had remained at home*, The wedding-entertainment is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy:<sup>q</sup> go ye therefore into the highways (*the most frequented places, where other ways unite*), and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.—So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good,<sup>r</sup> and the wedding was *abundantly furnished with guests; all of whom were liberally provided with clean white apparel, as was the custom on such auspicious occasions.*

And when the king came in *at night* to see the guests, he *immediately* saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment; <sup>s</sup> (<sup>t</sup>) *for this person, thinking his own apparel quite good enough, had ungraciously rejected the proffered robe.* And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding-garment? And he *could make no excuse for the gross want of respect which he had shewn, but was speechless.* Then said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, *so that he may cause no disturbance*, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness (*the darkness without*) far away from this cheerful scene: there, among those disappointed persons who are undeserving like himself, shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

*This was the last parable by which Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and rulers, and He could not have concluded His teaching with one more adapted to themselves and to that eventful age. They had ungratefully refused the Gospel invitation, and some of the Apostles they afterwards slew; but God at length sent the Roman legions, "the weapons of His indignation" (Isa. xiii. 5; Jer. l. 25); and having destroyed the murderers of His servants, and burned*

<sup>a</sup> I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded: but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof. Prov. i. 24, 25.

<sup>o</sup> And they all, with one consent, began to make excuse. The first said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it, I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to prove them, I pray thee have me excused. Luke xiv. 18, 19.

<sup>p</sup> And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Dan. ix. 26.

O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee:—Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Luke xiii. 34, 35.

<sup>q</sup> It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Acts xiii. 46.

<sup>r</sup> The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind. Matt. xiii. 47.

<sup>s</sup> The Lord hath prepared a sacrifice; He hath bid His guests. And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish all such as are clothed with strange apparel. Zeph. i. 7, 8.

(<sup>o</sup>) *Slew them.*] The servants of God alluded to as slain in this part of the parable, would be John the Baptist, Peter, Stephen, James the son of Zebedee, and James the son of Alphaeus. According to Tradition others might be added to the list.

(<sup>q</sup>) *Which had not on a wedding-garment.*] The

wedding garment is the Christian character, a metaphor which is frequently applied to individual believers in Scripture. The Psalmist so describes the Church (Ps. xlv. 13), and St. Paul exhorts, that *putting off* the old man, we *put on* the new (Eph. iv. 22, 24), and that we "*put on* the Lord Jesus" (Rom. xiii. 14.)

*their city, He sent to call the Gentiles in, offering the Gospel to every creature.—But all who accept the Gospel invitation must be clothed, even as in a wedding-garment<sup>t</sup> of pure white, with a faith and conversation suitable to their high calling: for, at the Day of Judgment, the Heavenly King will immediately detect the most consummate hypocrite, and assign him his portion with the unbeliever and the sinner.*

And when the chief priests and the Scribes and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He had spoken against them: and the same hour they sought opportunity to lay hands on Him; but they feared the opposition and anger of the multitude, because they took Him for a Prophet.<sup>u</sup> And so for the present they left Him, and went their way.

<sup>u</sup> And they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us, and, that God hath visited His people. Luke vii. 16.

<sup>t</sup> Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments: and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. Rev. iii. 4.

<sup>u</sup> I counsel thee to buy of Me white raiment. Rev. iii. 18.

These arrayed in white robes are they which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Rev. vii. 13, 14.

—arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. Rev. xix. 8.

### SECTION CVIII.

JESUS CONFUTES THE PHARISEES WITH THE HERODIANS, AND AFTERWARDS THE SADDUCEES, WHO PUT ENSNARING QUESTIONS FOR HIS DECISION.

*Matt. xxii. 15—33. Mark xii. 13—27. Luke xx. 20—40.*

THEN went the Pharisees and took counsel together how they might entangle Him in His talk. And accordingly they watched Him for their opportunity; and sent forth unto Him spies of their own disciples, with the Herodians,<sup>(1)</sup> which should feign themselves just men (as those who venerated the Law of Moses, and were fearful of infringing it), that they might take hold of His words; that so, if He strictly adhered to the Jewish scruples respecting the Law, they might deliver Him up unto the power and authority of the Roman governor.

And when they were come, they asked Him, with an hypocritical semblance of great respect, saying, Master (Teacher), we know that thou art true (without guile) and sayest and teachest rightly;<sup>a</sup> neither carest thou for the praise or censure of any man: for thou regardest not [acceptest not, LUKE] the person of men,<sup>b</sup> but impartially teachest the way of God in truth. Tell us, therefore, What thinkest thou as to this matter? Is it lawful for us Jews to give tribute<sup>(c)</sup> (to pay taxes) to the Roman emperor

<sup>a</sup> With flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. Ps. xii. 2.

<sup>b</sup> The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart. Ps. lv. 21.

<sup>c</sup> God accepteth no man's person. Gal. ii. 6.

(1) Herodians.] See Section XXXVIII., Note 4.

(2) Tribute.] This was the annual capitation tax (amounting to about sevenpence halfpenny of our money) which had been imposed by the Romans. The coin is said to have borne this inscription, in Greek, around the head of the emperor, "Caesar Augustus, Judea being subdued."

—The Temple-due was altogether different, being a half-shekel of Jewish money.—The Roman tax was borne with great impatience, and it gave rise to various insurrections, in which Judas of Galilee, who first questioned its lawfulness, particularly distinguished himself. The Herodians might suspect that Jesus, as a Galilean, would be likely to favour this sect.

Cæsar, or not? *Can we do this consistently with our religious principles? for, as Abraham's children, and ever a peculiar people and royal nation, we ought not to be in bondage to any man. Shall we give them, or shall we not give?*

*Here was presented a very dangerous dilemma, affecting either the reputation, or the life of Jesus: for if He, in terms, directed them to pay the tax, the Pharisees would have represented Him to the People as advocating the cause of idolaters, in opposition to the Law and to their liberties; and also as renouncing for Himself the office of an all-triumphant Messiah. If, on the other hand, He declared the tax to be illegal, the Herodians would have charged Him with treason and at once arrested Him as an enemy to Cæsar. But Jesus perceived their craftiness and wickedness (malice); and knowing their thorough hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? you seek, not to be advised in this matter, but to ensnare One for whom you profess such deference. But your question shall be answered: Shew Me the tribute-money [Bring Me a penny that I may see it, MARK]. And they brought unto Him a Roman denarius or penny. And He saith unto them, Whose image and superscription (inscription, MARG.) is this [hath it, LUKE.]? And they answered and said unto Him, It is Cæsar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render, therefore, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, <sup>b</sup> (S)—*whatsoever is properly due to him as your governor under God; and also unto God the things that are God's: c for if allegiance should be paid to the kings of this world, much more is it due to Him who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords.**

<sup>b</sup> Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto Him, Of strangers. Matt. xvii. 25, 26.

Pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Rom. xiii 6, 7.

<sup>c</sup> A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then, I be a Father, where is Mine honour? and if I be a Master, where is My fear? saith the Lord of hosts. Mal. i. 6.

Fear God; honour the king. 1 Pet. ii. 17

*Thus were the enemies of Jesus completely baffled; for it was the received maxim of their schools, that wherever a king's coin was current, it was an evidence of his dominion: and while the seditious Pharisees were warned to pay those dues to the Roman government which, in heart at least, they resisted, the licentious Herodians and Sadducees were reminded of those dues to God which they altogether neglected. And when they had heard these words, they could not take any hold of His words before the people, so as to incense them against Him as an enemy to liberty; neither could they find any ground for an accusation against Him to the*

(S) *Render therefore unto Cæsar, &c.* The illative particle here shews that our Lord intended, though indirectly, to decide the lawfulness of the tribute, as well as the necessity of rendering what was due to God. He sanctions the duty of civil, as well as of religious obedience; and leaving the nature of the government just as He found it, inculcates submission to it because it is established. The right of levying tribute on the Jews had its rise in their own act of submission, with

promise of fidelity, to the Roman government, and it had then existed about a hundred years. So King Agrippa argues in his speech to the Jews before the commencement of the war (B. J. ii. 16), and Josephus himself takes the same view.—Notwithstanding the just as well as prudent answer of our Lord on this occasion, His unscrupulous enemies made it a subject of accusation against Him on His trial, "that He forbade to give tribute to Cæsar!" See Luke xxiii. 2.

Roman governor. And they marvelled at the singular wisdom and address which had been shewn in His answer, and held their peace, and left Him, and went their way.

Then the same day came to Him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is to be any Resurrection<sup>d</sup> (4) of the body, or any Future State after death; and they asked Him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us [said, MARK,—or enacted], If any man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife (*his widow*), and raise up seed unto his brother (*Deut. xxv. 5*). Now there were with us seven brethren; (5) and the first of them, when he had married a wife, deceased (*died*), and having no children, left his wife unto his brother. And the second took her to wife, and he likewise died childless. And the third took her; and, in like manner, the residue of the seven also had her: and they left no children, and died. And last of all, the woman died also. Therefore, in the Resurrection, when they shall rise as it is asserted shall happen at the Last Day, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for all the seven had her to wife in this world, and all would have an equal claim to that alliance in the next.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, *Your argument is altogether grounded on a wrong supposition: ye do err, not knowing the true sense of what the Scriptures declare concerning a Future State, nor the Omnipotent Power of God.* He who originally created all things with His word, can also preserve in existence the souls of men, independently of their bodies; and He will hereafter as readily collect the scattered particles of those bodies, and raise them up again, pure and glorified, to be united to their own souls. For the children of this world marry and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world which is to come, and attain to the Resurrection from the dead, when they shall rise, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more: f for, in respect of immortality and freedom from carnal passions, they are thenceforth equal unto the angels of God in heaven, who have no need of marriage to perpetuate

<sup>d</sup> The Sadducees say that there is no Resurrection, neither angel nor spirit. Acts xxiii. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? Acts xxvi. 8.

<sup>f</sup> There shall be no more death; for the former things are passed away. Rev. xxi. 4.

(4) Which deny that there is any Resurrection. Josephus states it (*Antiq. xviii. 1*) as the opinion of this sect, that "Death extinguishes the souls as well as the bodies" of men.—They thought the soul was only a more refined kind of matter.

(5) There were with us seven brethren, &c.] The erroneous notions of the Sadducees led them to suppose that if there was a Future State, it must in its circumstances resemble the present. They therefore come to puzzle our Lord with a common-place objection (for it is found in the old Jewish writers), derived from that obligation of

the Mosaic Law that a man should take the wife of a brother who had died childless. The case which they alleged was just supposable, and therefore might have occurred; but it is much more probable that it was invented for the purpose of cavil, and served as a plausible argument to the infidels of the time, to drive away the subject of the Resurrection from their minds. This method of insinuating against the Truth from imaginary difficulties, is a sort of logic of which sceptics in all ages have been fond.

*their generations; and like them, are the children of God, and heirs of eternal glory, being the children of the Resurrection.—But as touching the Resurrection, which you so perversely deny, the Scriptures in several places clearly shew the reality of a Future State.*<sup>5</sup> That the dead are indeed to be raised, even Moses, to whose authority you appeal, shewed<sup>(6)</sup> at that portion of his writings which treats of the Burning Bush. Have ye not read in the second book of Moses, how God spake unto him [Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, MATT.], saying, I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB? (*Exod.* iii. 6.) When he (*Moses*) calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,<sup>h</sup> he in effect decides this question: for those patriarchs were dead long before, and manifestly, God is not a God of the dead,—of mere lifeless dust and ashes,—but the God of the living; for all the faithful, though dead to the world, continue to live unto Him:<sup>i</sup> He is still their God and owns them as His children. Ye therefore do greatly err in denying this plain and most important truth.

Then certain of the Scribes who were of the party of the Pharisees, answering, said, Master, thou hast said (spoken) well in reference to this matter. And when the multitude heard this discussion, they were both gratified and astonished at the power of His doctrine in confutation of the Sadducees. And after that, they of that sect durst not ask Him any question at all.

<sup>5</sup> Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job xix. 26.

Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell. Ps. xvi. 10. Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise. Isa. xxvi. 19.

Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life. Dan. xii. 2.

<sup>h</sup> By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. . . . Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God. Heb. xi. 9 16.

<sup>i</sup>—in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Rom. vi. 10.

(<sup>6</sup>) That the dead are raised, even Moses shewed.] It could not rationally be supposed that the Hebrew legislator would withhold from the people that knowledge of the doctrine of a Future State, which we know was his own support and principle of action (see Heb. xi. 23—27); but he did not, for wise and obvious reasons, make that truth the direct and ostensible sanction of his national laws. He, and all the other patriarchs, unquestionably considered themselves but as sojourners in a foreign country, and looked for “a better native land:” and although we gratefully acknowledge with the Apostle (2 Tim. i. 10), that Christ hath “made manifest” (*made clear and distinct*, Gr.) the expectation of Immortality, yet we also believe (as our Church declares in her 7th Article) “that, both in the Old and New Testament, Everlasting Life is offered to mankind by Christ, and that they are not to be heard, which feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises.” At least, then, up to this point, our Lord’s argument in the text is triumphant. It has been supposed that He intended to prove no more than served the immediate purpose of reply to the Sadducees, who denied even the future existence of the soul; confuting them from the writings of Moses whom they had cited, and whose inspiration alone they

acknowledged. But the same thread of argument with which He began, leads us by just and clear consequences to the Resurrection of the body; for it implies that God will make the just perfectly and entirely happy. The immortal spirit cannot be so, until it is united again with its original companion. That companion, notwithstanding its taint from the fall of Adam, has been ennobled by its union with our Lord and elder Brother; and hereafter, while remaining substantially the same body, it will be incorruptible and spiritual,—not only purified, like that of Adam as it came fresh from the hands of its Maker, but assimilated to the glorious body of Christ.

(<sup>7</sup>) God is not a God of the dead, &c.] A relation of some sort is here implied between the Almighty and the patriarchs: but there would be no relation at all, if those patriarchs had no longer any existence.—It is St. Luke who adds the clause, that the pious dead “live unto God;” because, writing for Gentile readers, he would obviate the heathen notion that men became subject to a new dominion after death. Thus Virgil:—

— juvenem exanimum, et nil jam caelestibus  
ullis  
Debentem.

Æn. xi. 51, 52.

## SECTION CIX.

JESUS ANSWERS A SCRIBE RESPECTING THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT, AND SILENCES THE PHARISEES BY THE QUESTION, WHY DAVID CALLED THE MESSIAH HIS LORD?

*Matt. xxii. 34—46. Mark xii. 28—37. Luke xx. 41—44.*

**B**UT when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they, *although gratified by the defeat which their adversaries had sustained*, were again gathered together *to attack Him*. Then one of the Scribes, which was *also* a lawyer, came *with the rest*: and *at the time when Jesus confuted the Sadducees*, the Scribe having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him *now* a question, tempting<sup>a</sup> Him (*testing His skill in argument and knowledge of the Scriptures*), and saying:—Master, which is the first and great Commandment<sup>(1)</sup> of all in the Law? *dost thou consider one of the ceremonial, or one of the moral precepts, to be of the higher obligation?*

And Jesus answered him, The first and most comprehensive of all the Commandments is,—HEAR, O ISRAEL, the important truth: THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD:<sup>(2)</sup> AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD *with thy entire faculties*,—WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND, AND WITH ALL THY STRENGTH<sup>(3)</sup> (*see Deut. vi. 4, 5*): This is the first and great Commandment,—*the foundation of all the rest; for every other duty and every thing must be regarded only in subordination to God, the Great and Good Creator*. And the second Commandment is like unto it, *both in its intrinsic excellence and in the authority from which it springs*; namely this, *which comprises all thy duties to thy fellow creatures*:—“THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF”<sup>(4)</sup> (*Lev. xix. 18*): *for Charity is allied to Piety; and if a man loves his brother whom he has seen, it is an instance and an evidence of his loving God whom he has not seen*. There is none other Commandment greater than these: on these two Commandments

<sup>a</sup> And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. 1 Kings x. 1.

<sup>b</sup>—if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Rom. xiii. 9.

For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Gal. v. 15.

(1) Which is the first and great Commandment? See Section C., Note 2.

(2) The Lord our God is One Lord.] These words assert a Unity of Essence in the Godhead, but by no means preclude the Trinity of Persons. Our Lord declares that Jehovah alone is to be worshipped, in opposition to the plurality of heathen gods. So St. Paul reminds the Corinthians, “that an idol is nothing in the world, and that here is none other God but One; for though

there be that are called gods, to us there is but One God” (1 Cor. viii. 4—6). In further proof that our Saviour cannot be excluded, and did not intend to exclude Himself, from this Divinity, consult Section CXX., Note 2.

(3) Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.] See Section LXXXII., Note 1.

(4) Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.] See Section LXXXII., Note 2.

hang (*depend*) all the Law and the Prophets—they are an epitome of whatsoever else is contained in your Scriptures.

And the Scribe said unto Him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God, and there is none other but He: and for a man to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength; and to love his neighbour as himself; is of more importance than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices: <sup>c</sup> *Such a perfect rule of life as this is preferable in His sight to all the ceremonies in the world.*—And when Jesus saw that he answered so discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God; for He knew that sentiments so sound and pious must have a happy influence over his life, and that they would eventually dispose him to embrace the Gospel.

And while He taught in the Temple, and the Pharisees were still gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, How say the Scribes that the Christ is the Son of David? What think ye of the Christ? whose Son is He according to your view of the Scriptures? They say unto Him, Undoubtedly He is the Son of David. He saith unto them, Is that the fullest and most complete description of the Messiah? how then in the book of Psalms doth David himself, guided by the influence of the Holy Spirit,<sup>d</sup> call Him Lord? <sup>(5)</sup> saying, in that particular Psalm (Ps. cx. 1) which you admit to be written of the Messiah, THE LORD GOD SAID UNTO MY LORD, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND, exalted even as Myself in power and glory, TILL I utterly subdue and MAKE all THINE ENEMIES THY FOOTSTOOL.<sup>e</sup> <sup>(6)</sup> Here the royal Prophet acknowledges as a Superior a remote descendant of his own: if David himself then call Him Lord,—giving Him a title even of divine honour,—how is He merely his Son?

And no man among them was able to answer Him a word in reply to this plain proof of His divinity; neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more captious and insidious questions.—And the common people heard Him gladly.

<sup>c</sup> I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings. Hos. vi. 9.

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?—He hath shewed these, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Mic. vi. 7, 8.

<sup>d</sup> David said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. The Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David. Acts i. 16.

<sup>e</sup> For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. 1 Cor. xv. 25.

This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. Heb. x. 12, 13.

<sup>(5)</sup> How then doth David call Him Lord? No one will ever have better success than the Pharisees in answering this question, who deny the Divinity of David's Son and Lord. Jesus was both the Root and Offspring of His progenitor; the descendant of the most distinguished of the kings of Israel according to the flesh, but "Whose goings forth had been of old, from everlasting." The orthodox scheme can alone solve this seem-

ing paradox. The question cannot be better answered than in the words of inspiration: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

<sup>(6)</sup> Till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.] This is an image taken from the practice of conquerors of those days, who in token of victory placed their foot on the neck of the vanquished. See Josh. x. 24.

## SECTION CX.

JESUS, BEFORE QUITTING THE TEMPLE, SEVERELY REBUKES THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES.

*Matt. xxiii. 1—22. Mark xii. 38—40. Luke xx. 45—47.*

THEN spake Jesus in His doctrine unto His disciples, in the audience of all the people, saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; *they are your lawfully appointed rulers, and the authorized interpreters of the Law*: all, therefore, whatsoever, *in their official capacity*, they bid you to observe, that, *so far as it is consistent with the Divine Law, carefully* observe and do: but do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not; *their practice accords not with what they teach*. Beware, *I say, of imitating the letter-learned, but hypocritical*, Scribes: for, *lax as they are in regard to the moral precepts*, they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne,<sup>a</sup> and, *on the authority of their traditions*, lay them *unsparingly* on men's shoulders; but they themselves, *so far from lightening them*, will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do *with an ostentation of piety*, for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries,<sup>(1)</sup> and enlarge the borders of their garments, *crowding them with transcripts from the Law, as though they were really more anxious to observe its precepts than other men*; which desire to walk in long and stately robes; and love to be honoured, *as persons of distinction, with the uppermost rooms (places) at feasts, and even the highest seats in the synagogues where they should be the first to set the example of humility; and salutations from passers-by in the markets; and to be worshipfully called of men by that highest title assigned to learning, Rabbi, Rabbi.*<sup>(2)</sup>

But be not ye *anxious to be called Rabbi*: for One is your Master, even Christ, and ye are all brethren. And

<sup>a</sup> Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? Acts xv. 10.

(1) *Phylacteries.*] These took their rise from a literal, instead of a *spiritual*, interpretation of Exod. xiii. 9, and similar commands. They were small scrolls of parchment, with written passages from the Law. The intention of the Jewish Lawgiver doubtless was (as we find the sentiment expressed, Prov. iii. 3) to write the commandments "upon the table of the heart."—Phylacteries were regarded as *amulets*, or charms, to preserve the wearer from danger, and some have thought that the name is hence derived.

(2) *Rabbi.*] This title was the most honourable among the Jews, and it was conferred by the Sanhedrim, with imposition of hands, as a testimony of the highest erudition. The word

seems to have signified "a Guide." St. Paul says of the Pharisaical teachers, that they were confident they were "guides of the blind, instructors of the foolish, and teachers of babes" (see Rom. ii. 17—20). It was contended that their decisions were not to be doubted of, but were to be reputed of equal authority with the determinations of the Prophets.—Our Lord proceeds to caution His disciples against coveting mere titles of honour, and those other *outward* distinctions which He rebuked in the Pharisees: the ministers of Christ should be distinguished "not so much by their dignities, as by their learning; not only by their habit, but their conversation; not by the adornment of their body, but by purity of the mind."



*in respect to your faith, call no man upon the earth (no merely-human or uninspired teacher) your father:*<sup>a</sup> for One is your Father,—*even that Divine Triune Being which is in heaven,*<sup>b</sup>—*to whom alone you owe an absolute subjection; and no man must be allowed to control your religious principles, as a parent sways the will of its child. Neither be ye called masters,*<sup>c</sup> for One is your Master, even Christ; *from whom you receive, as stewards, what you communicate to others, and you have no right to that absolute power over the faith of others, which a master exercises over his servant. But he that is greatest, and most distinguished as God's minister, among you, shall be as your servant, and remarkable for his humility as much as for his zeal. And whosoever, in any of these ways, shall seek to exalt himself, shall, as I have so often told you, be at last abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be truly exalted.*<sup>d</sup>

But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for, *by your traditions and false interpretations of the Scriptures, ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering into it, to go in. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widow's houses,*<sup>e</sup>—*consuming all their little property and leading them captive to your will; and for a pretence (a show of devotion) ye make very long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation; for such hypocrisy cannot impose on an all-seeing God. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land,—leaving no arts unpractised to make one proselyte<sup>(\*)</sup> to your false doctrines; and so detestable is your system, that when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell (more deserving of eternal punishment) than yourselves.*

*Again; to serve your own base aims, what false and senseless distinctions ye have drawn respecting oaths—making the commandment of God of none effect through your tradition. Woe unto you, ye blind guides,*<sup>f</sup> which say, *Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing—that such an oath as this is not at all obligatory, and a matter but of trifling moment: but whosoever shall swear by the gold*

<sup>b</sup> Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and His name shall be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father. Isa. ix. 6.

—the Son of man which is in Heaven. John iii. 18.

<sup>c</sup> My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. Jas. iii. 1.

Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand. 2 Cor. i. 24.

—neither as being lords over God's heritage. 1 Pet. v. 8.

<sup>d</sup> A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. Prov. xxix. 23.

All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 1 Pet. v. 6.

<sup>e</sup> Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, that widows may be their prey. Isa. x. 1, 2.

Of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women. 2 Tim. iii. 6.

—who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. Tit. i. 11.

<sup>f</sup> Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. Matt. xv. 14.

(\*) *Call no man upon the earth your father.*] The Jews so termed the Rabbis, who were chiefs of their schools, and they swore by their names. —In another sense, however, those are rightly called fathers, who have “begotten us in the Gospel;” see 1 Cor. iv. 15, where St. Paul shews the nature of such paternity. The “sons of the Prophets” are the disciples of the Prophets (2 Kings ii. 6 and 12).—See Section LXXXIII., Note 9.

(\*) *Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte.*] The eagerness of the Jews to make pro-

selytes seems to have become proverbial even among the Romans. Horace says in his Satires (lib. ii., Sat. V. 143),

“ac veluti te  
Judei cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.”

What our Lord says of these proselytes is remarkably confirmed in one of the Dialogues of Justin Martyr, where he says, they were not only unbelievers, but proved twice as blasphemous and persecuting as the Jews themselves.

deposited in the treasury of the Temple, he is a debtor, and is religiously bound to perform that oath. Ye fools and blind guides: for whether is greater<sup>g</sup> and more sacred, the gold, which before its presentation for religious uses is but a piece of metal, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold? And so again, ye say, Whosoever shall swear by the Altar it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is offered upon it, he is guilty, if he dares to break that oath. Ye fools and blind guides: for whether is greater, the gift, or the Altar of God that sanctifieth the gift? It is evident why you encourage swearing by such things, claiming for them a higher sanctity: the gifts which are in consequence brought to the Altar, and the gold deposited in the treasury, are not devoted to the service of God alone; they are made to swell the gains of your corrupt priesthood. I tell you that all oaths, when it is proper to make such solemn appeals, are to be strictly observed; and that which is sworn by any created thing whatsoever, is in effect an appeal to the Deity who made it. Whoso therefore shall swear by the Altar, sweareth by it, and by all things laid thereon, and so by the Eternal Jehovah, to whom the offering is made. And whoso shall swear by the Temple, sweareth by it, and by Him that in an especial manner dwelleth therein.<sup>h</sup> And he that shall swear, as you so often profanely do, by Heaven, sweareth by nothing less than the throne of the most High God, and so by Him that sitteth thereon.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>g</sup> For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Heb. vi. 16.

<sup>h</sup> I have surely built Thee an House to dwell in, a settled place for Thee to abide in for ever. 1 Kings viii. 13.

I have hallowed this House which thou hast built, to put My name there for ever; and Mine eyes and Mine heart shall be there perpetually. 1 Kings ix. 3.

<sup>i</sup> Thus saith the Lord, The Heaven is My throne. Isa. lxvi. 1.

Swear not by Heaven, for it is God's throne. Matt. v. 34.

## SECTION CXI.

JESUS APPLAUDS THE CHARITY OF THE POOR WIDOW WHO CAST HER ALL INTO THE TREASURY.

Mark xii. 41—44. Luke xxi. 1—4.

AND Jesus sat in the Women's Court of the Temple, over against the Treasury, where the chests were placed to collect the voluntary contributions of worshippers who came to the feast. And he looked up, and beheld how the people cast money into the Treasury: <sup>a</sup> (1) and He saw the rich men casting in their gifts, and many of them cast in much.

And there came a certain poor widow; and she threw in thither two mites,<sup>(2)</sup> which make a Roman farthing.

<sup>a</sup> Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: And none shall appear before Me empty. Exod. xxiii. 15.

But Jahoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the Altar. And the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord. 2 Kings xii. 9. And all the princes and

(1) *The Treasury.*] The women's court was also called the Treasury, because of the thirteen chests there affixed to the pillars for offerings at the three great feasts. The money was intended for the service of the Altar, and for such necessities as were not otherwise provided for.

(2) *Two mites.*] These were small brass coins, two of them together not being more than three fourths of our farthing, and making up the smallest sum allowed to be given. The English word "mite" is a contraction of "minute," as "farthing" is of "fourthing."

all the people brought in, and cast into the chest. 2 Chron. xxiv. 10.

<sup>b</sup> To their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves.... For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath. 2 Cor. viii. 3, 12.

And He, *knowing exactly what she and others had respectively given*, called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast in *to the sacred chest more, in the sight of God and in proportion to her means*, than all they which have cast so *profusely* into the Treasury. For all these did cast in of their abundance (*of their superfluity*) unto the offerings of God, *for the service of His Temple*: but she of her penury <sup>b</sup> did cast in all that she had,<sup>(\*)</sup>—even all her *means of living for the day*.

## SECTION CXII.

JESUS, ON FINALLY QUITTING THE TEMPLE, FORETELLS ITS TOTAL DESTRUCTION; AND AT THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, DECLARES THE SIGNS WHICH WOULD PRECEDE HIS COMING TO TAKE VENGEANCE ON THE JEWS.

*Matt.* xxiv. 1—28, 40, 41. *Mark* xiii. 1—23. *Luke* xxi. 5—24.

AND Jesus went out *of the Treasury*, and departed from the Temple. And His disciples came to Him for to shew (*to point out to*) Him the *stately buildings and porticoes* of the Temple. And as some spake how it was adorned *within with costly gifts hung upon its walls*, and *without with goodly stones*<sup>(1)</sup> *of the whitest marble and of an unusual size*, one of them saith unto Him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto them, See ye not these great buildings,—*stupendous works of man's art as they certainly are?* Verily I say unto you, As for all these great things which ye behold, the days will come, *even before this generation has passed away*, in the

(\*) *Cast in all that she had.*] Of this fact our Lord's Omniscience informed Him, as well of the particular sum cast in—a proof that there was “*nothing hid from Him.*” His knowledge of the heart is also seen in the praise bestowed on this action, shewing us that it was done from no other motive than dependence on Providence and the Divine Promises.

(1) *Adorned with gifts and with goodly stones.*] Tacitus speaks of the immense opulence of the Jewish Temple (Hist. v. 8), and Dion Cassius describes it (lib. 36) as “*the greatest and most beautiful of all Temples.*” Among its treasure was a Golden Table given by Pompey, and several Golden Vases of great size and exquisite workmanship.—Of the *exterior* Josephus says that the marble was so white as to give it the appearance at a distance of a snow mountain, while the gilding in many parts rendered it a beautiful spectacle, and, when the sun was upon it, dazzling to behold. Its Eastern portion (from which our Saviour was now proceeding to the Mount of

Olives) overlooked the valley, having a stupendous wall raised from its bottom, 450 feet high, and containing blocks of stone of a magnitude that might well excite the admiration of beholders. The Jewish historian notices these blocks both in his Antiquities and the Jewish War, and though the accounts of ancient authors vary as to their exact size, they were, according to the *lowest* calculations, more than forty feet in length, eight or nine in height, and fourteen in breadth. Ancient heathen writers have left us some accounts of the dimensions of the stones used in their finest buildings, but none are said to have exceeded thirty-five feet in length. Immense stones have been since discovered among the ruins of Egyptian Temples on the Nile, but the largest of these has not exceeded thirty feet in length.—Upon entering Jerusalem, after a siege of nearly five months, it is recorded that Titus looked up at the towers which the Jews had abandoned, and exclaimed, “*Surely we have had God for our assistant; for what could human hands or machines do against these towers?*”

which there shall not be left here one stone upon another<sup>(\*)</sup> that shall not be thrown down *from its place.*

And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives,<sup>b</sup> *whither they had now proceeded—which celebrated Mount stood over against the Temple on the East, so as to command a magnificent view of its buildings and of the entire city—the confidential disciples, Peter, and James, and John, and with them Andrew, came unto Him privately, saying: Master, tell us when shall these fearful things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy Coming to execute these things, and of the end of the world,<sup>(\*)</sup> which is to follow when all these things shall be fulfilled?*

And Jesus answering them, began to say, *All those events, which tend to disturb public tranquillity and private comfort, shall be precursors of My Coming. First of all, deceivers shall go forth: take heed therefore that no man deceive you.<sup>c</sup> For, after My departure, many shall come in My name<sup>(\*)</sup> (pretending to My authority), saying, I am the Christ, and the time of your redemption draweth near; and by that pretence they shall deceive many,<sup>d</sup> causing them to err from the truth: go ye not therefore after them.*

Then said He unto them, *The signs which are next to follow shall be great commotions among nations, and signal judgments proceeding more immediately from God: Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. But when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars<sup>(\*)</sup> and those commotions which accompany a state of*

<sup>a</sup> Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps. Mic. iii. 12.

<sup>b</sup> And His (Messiah's) feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. Zech. xiv. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first. 2 Thes. ii. 3.

<sup>d</sup> But there was a certain man called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some Great One: to whom they all gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. Acts viii. 9, 10.

(\*) *There shall not be left here one stone upon another.*] The Saviour's memorable prediction of the utter destruction of Jerusalem was literally fulfilled in this, as in every other particular.—So many minute circumstances could never have been predicted, except by a true Prophet; and their exact fulfilment would never have become known, unless it had pleased Providence to preserve us a complete commentary upon it, in the detail of the Siege by Josephus; who was in the Roman camp, who was not a Christian, and it is most likely had never heard of the prediction. St. Matthew and St. Mark were certainly dead, and probably also St. Luke, before the Siege took place; and St. John (the only Evangelist who is known to have survived) left no record of it, so that it cannot be said the prophecy was forged after the event.—The magnificent Temple was destroyed on the same day of the same month on which Solomon's Temple had been rased to the ground by the Babylonians. Titus, having summoned a council of his generals, determined to save it as an ornament to the empire, and a trophy of his victory; but *One* greater than Titus had declared that it should be destroyed, and the soldiers suddenly set fire to it in their fury. The Roman general afterwards ordered the foundations to be dug up in search of buried treasure, so that thus "not one stone was left upon another;" and one of his officers (whom Maimonides, a Jewish writer, expressly names as

Turnus, otherwise Terentius, Rufus) carried out the order by using a plough-share. Thus was *another* memorable prediction literally fulfilled, and "Zion was ploughed as a field" (Mic. iii. 12).

(\*) *The end of the world.*] The Original may certainly be also understood here, "the end of the Age;" but that rendering is not material, for the Apostles and early Christians connected these events, and it is almost universally allowed that our Lord's reply referred at its close to the final termination of all things.

(\*) *Many shall come in My name.*] Such were (as we learn from Origen, adv. Ceia.) Simon Magus, who pretended he was the Son of God; and Dositheus, the Samaritan, who affirmed that he was "the Christ foretold by Moses." And Josephus speaks of many others, whom "the time of the advent of their King Messiah prevailed with to set up for kings."

(\*) *Wars and rumours of wars.*] At the time of this prophecy the Empire was in a state of peace: but before the destruction of Jerusalem, the most violent agitations universally prevailed. Four emperors (Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius) suffered violent deaths in the short space of eighteen months; and, in consequence of the strife of parties and the changes in the government, the whole civilized world became convulsed. Tacitus says of this period, "*Totius orbis mutatione fortuna imperii transit.*"

\* — which great dearth came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar. Acts xi. 28.

† And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison. Acts xvi. 23.

‡ And they stoned Stephen. Acts vii. 59.

And Herod killed James the brother of John with the sword. Acts xii. 2.

‡ And, on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, Paul was brought forth. Acts xxv. 23.

And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat. Acts xviii. 12.

‡ Striving together for the faith of the Gospel, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition; but to you of salvation. Phil. i. 27, 28.

‡ I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. Exod. iv. 12.

‡ And they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which Stephen spake. Acts vi. 10.

The Lord stood with me and strengthened me. 2 Tim. iv. 17.

*anarchy*, see that ye be not troubled or terrified; for all these things must first come to pass: but the end of the Jewish state is not even then yet come. And there shall be famines,\* and pestilences, and great earthquakes<sup>(6)</sup> in divers places, and troubles: and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven of more dreadful judgments to come. All these things are only the beginnings of sorrows (as it were the first labour-pangs, Gr.),—a prelude to the national misery which shall follow.

But take heed to yourselves: the next signs which are to follow will be grievous persecutions, and consequent apostacies, of those who have embraced the Gospel; for before all these things they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to councils, and to the synagogues, and casting you into prisons, to be beaten<sup>f</sup> and afflicted in various other ways: and they shall even kill some of you:§ and ye shall be hated of all nations, and brought before kings and rulers<sup>h</sup> for My name's sake, for a testimony against them that the Kingdom of God has been offered in vain for their acceptance: and to you it shall turn for a testimony<sup>i</sup> of your fidelity.—But when they shall lead you and deliver you up to the rulers, settle it in your hearts not to meditate before what ye shall answer to their accusations and questions: take no anxious thought beforehand what ye shall speak; but whatsoever shall be given and suggested to you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak from your own wisdom, but the Holy Ghost<sup>(7)</sup> speaketh in you. For I will give you a mouth (a power to plead) and wisdom,<sup>k</sup> which all your adversaries, powerful and subtle though they may be, shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.<sup>l</sup> And then, when persecution cometh, shall

(6) *Famines, and pestilences, and great earthquakes, &c.*] Four famines occurred in the reign of Claudius. That in the fourth year of his reign is spoken of by Eusebius as having oppressed Palestine more than any other part of the empire, which we find confirmed at Acts xi. 28. Josephus, alluding to the same, says that “many of the Jews perished during its continuance for lack of food.” Tacitus, and also Suetonius (in Claudio, cap. 18), mention this famine.—Of various pestilences in the Jewish cities, Josephus speaks, as having been brought on them by God.—Of earthquakes, which were always regarded by the ancients as portents presaging great public calamity, many are reckoned up during the reigns of Claudius and Nero as occurring in Judea, and in other places where Jews lived. (See accounts in Seneca, Suetonius, and Tacitus.)—Of “fearful sights and great signs from heaven,” minute particulars are also given by two of the same eminent historians, whose narratives cannot be thought partial, however extraordinary the events they state: Josephus, in the seventh book of his Jewish War, thus reckons up “the prodigies which manifestly portended the future desolation of the

Jews:—There was a comet which pointed down upon the city in the form of a fiery sword. Not long after the feast-days, there was seen a vision beyond all belief; and perhaps what I am going to relate might seem a fable, if some were not now alive who beheld it, and if the subsequent calamity had not been worthy of such a presage: for, before the sun set, there were seen in the clouds, chariots and armies in battle array, passing along, and investing the city. And upon the feast of Pentecost, at night, the priests, going into the inner Temple to attend their usual service, first felt the place move and tremble, and then heard a voice saying, *Let us depart hence!*” The Roman historian Tacitus, thus epitomizes the same extraordinary events in the fifth book of his History: “Armies seemed to meet in the clouds; weapons were seen glittering; the Temple seemed to be in flame with fire which issued from the clouds; and a more than human voice was heard ‘That the Gods were quitting the place,’ while there was a great motion as of their departure.”

(7) *It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.*] See Section LIX., Note 6.

many *professing and lukewarm Christians* be offended <sup>m</sup> and fall away, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another,—*the apostates betraying and hating those who are true.* Now, *when this day of trial shall arrive, the unbelieving brother shall betray the brother to death;*<sup>(8)</sup> and the *unbelieving father, the son; and children shall rise up against their believing parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.*<sup>n</sup> And *even ye, the ministers of My Gospel, shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men (men of all nations) among whom ye preach the Gospel, for My name's sake.*<sup>o</sup> But, *whatever judgments fall on others, ye shall continue safe; there shall not an hair of your head perish.*<sup>p</sup> In your patience possess ye your souls (*ye shall preserve your lives, GR.*). And, *in addition to the pretended Messiahs of whom I spake, many false prophets*<sup>(9)</sup> shall rise,<sup>q</sup> *pretending that they have received a divine commission to deliver the people from the Roman yoke, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity and the fierceness of persecution shall then abound, the love of the many, both towards Me and towards one another, shall wax cold.*<sup>r</sup> But he that shall *persevere in the faith and endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*<sup>s</sup> <sup>(10)</sup>

And before Jerusalem is destroyed, notwithstanding these persecutions and the general apostacy which will follow, this Gospel of the Kingdom of God shall first be preached in all the world,<sup>t</sup> <sup>(11)</sup> for a witness unto all nations of the Truth,

1 Tim. iv. 1.—All men forsook me. 2 Tim. iv. 16.—Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. Heb. x. 25.

<sup>a</sup> Fear none of those things . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. ii. 10.

<sup>b</sup> Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Rom. x. 18. — which Gospel is come unto you, as it is in all the world. Col. i. 6.—And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the Everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Rev. xiv. 6.

<sup>(8)</sup> *The brother shall betray the brother to death.* Josephus states, that "contention sprang up in their very houses;" and Tacitus, that in the persecution under Nero, "Christians were delivered up by their parents, brethren, kinsfolk, friends."

<sup>(9)</sup> *False prophets.* Such were, Theudas, "a magician, who said he was a prophet and could divide the Jordan, and deceived many;" and Barchochebas, an Egyptian, who was followed by about thirty thousand of the Jews. In accordance with the terms of this prediction, Josephus says, "The whole land was overrun with magicians, seducers, and impostors, who drew the people after them in multitudes into solitudes and deserts (see Matt. xxiv. 26), to see the signs and miracles, which to the last they promised to shew by the power of God."

<sup>(10)</sup> *He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.* We know from Ecclesiastical History (Euseb. Hist. iii. 5), that few, if any, of the Christians perished in the siege. At the very commencement of the War they abandoned the city.—Cestus Gallus, the president of Syria, first took possession of the lower city; "and had he

<sup>m</sup> When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended. Matt. xiii. 21.

<sup>n</sup> The son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother: a man's enemies are the men of his own house. Mic. vii. 6.

<sup>o</sup> The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John xvii. 14.

<sup>p</sup> But the very hairs of your head are all numbered: Fear ye not, therefore. Matt. x. 30, 31.

They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. John x. 28.

<sup>q</sup> Before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody. Acts v. 36.

— if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. John v. 43.

But there were false prophets also among the people. 2 Pet. ii. 1.

Many deceivers are entered into the world. 2 John 7.

<sup>r</sup> Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

and ourselves together as the

attempted," observes Josephus (B. J. ii. 19), "to get within the walls, he would have won the city presently. He retired without any reason in the world; for he might have put an end to the war that very day. Doubtless this conduct of the Roman general, so contrary to all the rules of prudence, was brought to pass by the superintending Providence of God."

<sup>(11)</sup> *Preached in all the world.* From the most credible records it appears that the Gospel was preached by St. Jude in Idumea, Mesopotamia, and Syria; in Egypt and Africa, by Mark, Simon, and Jude; in Ethiopia, by the converted Eunuch and Matthias; in Pontus, Galatia, and the neighbouring parts of Asia, by Peter; in the territories of the seven Asiatic Churches, by John; in Parthia, by Matthew; in Scythia, by Philip and Andrew; in the northern and western parts of Asia, by Bartholomew; in Persia, by Simon and Jude; in Media and several parts of the East, by Thomas; through the vast tract "from Jerusalem round about into Illyricum" by Paul. This Apostle was also in Greece and Italy, very probably in Spain and Gaul, and, we

and of the obstinacy and iniquity of the Jews in rejecting it. And then at last shall the end come.

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with the Roman armies, and the abomination of desolation<sup>(12)</sup> (the idolatrous standard of that desolating people) spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing<sup>u</sup> where it ought not, in the holy place,—even within the immediate precincts of the holy city, (Whoso readeth, let him weigh that memorable prediction so as to understand it,) then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea profit by this warning, and flee without delay to the mountains<sup>v</sup> (13) beyond Jordan; and let them which are in the midst of it (within the doomed city), depart out: and let not them that are in the countries adjacent, enter thereinto. And, as I before warned you, let him that is engaged on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take anything, however valued it may be, out of his house: but let him escape by the outer steps without a moment's lingering. And let him that is labouring in the field, not turn back again for to take up his garment. But the Providence of God shall remarkably interpose for the preservation of those faithful followers who cannot provide for their own safety:—Then shall two men be labouring in the field; the one shall be taken by the enemy, and the other left to make his escape: two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be in like manner taken, and the other left. For these be the days of vengeance on the guilty portion alone of the Jewish nation, that all things which are written in the Prophets from the time of Moses, may be fulfilled.<sup>w</sup>

But woe to (alas for) them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those dreadful days! for their helpless situation will prevent their fleeing from the impending ruin. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, when the days will be shortened, and the roads unfavourable

<sup>u</sup>—the abomination that maketh desolate, set up. Dan. xii. 11.

<sup>v</sup> Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. Gen. xix. 17.

<sup>w</sup> And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other. Deut. xxviii. 64.

I will cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this House which I have hallowed for My name, will I cast out of My sight, and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people. 1 Kings ix. 7.

I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity. Zech. xiv. 2.

may add also with great probability, Britain; for Clemens, his contemporary, declares (Ep. ad Cor. 20), that "the nations beyond the ocean were governed by the precepts of the Lord."—History, in fact, abundantly warrants the assertion that the Gospel has been generally preached throughout the world: in some countries it has been rejected; in many where it once flourished, it has been corrupted or lost; but still "God hath called the world from the rising up of the sun unto the going down thereof" (Ps. i. 1). See Section LII., Note 3.

(12) *The abomination of desolation.*] The representations of Cæsar, and of the eagle, on the Roman standards were worshipped by the soldiers of that nation, and thus were, in Hebrew phraseology, "an abomination."—With equal propriety is their army described by the word "desolation." They plundered and devastated

without mercy, and, to use the indignant expression of a hostile chieftain, "Where they have made a desert, they call it peace" (Speech of Galgacus, Tacitus; Life of Agricola 30).—They planted their standards before Jerusalem, several furlongs of land around which were accounted holy. The Temple was more particularly called "the holy place" (Acts vi. 13); and on the capture of the city, this prediction was fulfilled to the letter; for the Romans brought "the Eagles" into the Temple and sacrificed to them there. Out of respect to Jewish scruples, they had always before been left at Cesarea by the Roman governors.

(13) *Flee to the mountains.*] The Christians for the most part fled to the mountainous country of Perea, and took refuge in Pella, a city there. This was in the territory of Agrippa, who had remained faithful to the Romans.

for the journey; neither on the Sabbath-day,<sup>(14)</sup> when the indignation of the Jews would be excited against you for what they would term its violation. For in those days there shall indeed be great tribulation and distress in the land,<sup>z</sup> and wrath upon this people,—such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time; no, nor ever shall be again.<sup>y</sup> <sup>(15)</sup>

<sup>z</sup> After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself. And the people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the Sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. Dan. ix. 26.

And they (*the unbelievers*) shall fall in great numbers by the edge of the sword, and those that survive shall be led away captive <sup>z</sup> <sup>(16)</sup> into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down and remain in possession of the Gentiles,<sup>a</sup> <sup>(17)</sup>

<sup>y</sup> There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time. Dan. xii. 1.

of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness. There hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Joel ii. 2.

<sup>z</sup> Ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen. Deut. xxviii. 68.

<sup>a</sup> It is given unto the Gentiles; and the Holy City shall they tread under foot. Rev. xi. 2.

<sup>(14)</sup> *Neither on the Sabbath-day.*] The distance allowed for a Sabbath-day's journey was about five furlongs, which is supposed to have been the distance between the Camp and the Tabernacle. The gates of all Jewish towns were strictly closed on that day. Pompey and Sosius each took advantage of the Sabbatical rest to attack and storm the city.—From this passage it appears that there is to be a conjunction of our own endeavours with the Divine Aid for our preservation, which we are not to expect immediately from God, without the use of those means which He puts into our own power. Also we learn, that when tribulations come by Divine permission, the circumstances which attend them may be mitigated by our prayers.

<sup>(15)</sup> *Nor ever shall be.*] This is only a familiar way of expressing a very great calamity. Josephus however says that "No other city ever suffered such things: All the calamities which have ever happened to any from the beginning, seem not comparable to those which befell the Jews." He records, among other dreadful atrocities, that a mother killed and ate her own child, thus fulfilling the words of Moses, Deut. xxviii. 56, 57; also of Jeremiah, Lam. iv. 10.

<sup>(16)</sup> *Fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive.*] Eleven hundred thousand are said to have perished in the siege, besides many thousands put to the sword in other towns during the war. Five hundred were crucified daily before the walls, till materials, and even room for the crosses, could not be found. Within the city the fury of opposing factions was so great, that they filled all places, even the Temple itself, with continual slaughters: and to such a pitch did their madness carry them, that they destroyed the very granaries of corn which should have sustained them, and burnt the magazines of arms provided for their defence. Well might it be said, that unless a limited period had been assigned, the whole nation would have been exterminated!—Upon the destruction of the city, ninety-seven thousand were taken captive. Of these, some were reserved for triumph, some sent to Egypt to work in mines, and some destroyed by beasts in the Roman amphitheatres; but the greater part were sold for slaves (according to the prediction of Moses) at the vilest prices, for thirty could be bought for a piece of silver. So completely were the Slave-markets glutted, that on one occasion eleven thousand captives were left to perish from hunger. Ever since, the Jews have been a sign

to all nations; "an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word;" separate in language, in manners, in religion, and in appearance, from all those with whom they are concerned in the daily transactions of life; strangers and foreigners in the land to which, by birth and long occupation, they belong. Go where you will, and in every nation under heaven, in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, you will behold the face of some exiled Israelite fulfilling in his destiny the prophecy of the Lord. They have been left without either God or man for their king,—a distinct people without any government at all of their own, an event quite unparalleled in the history of nations!

<sup>(17)</sup> *And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles.*] The whole land was sold by Vespasian to such Gentiles as chose to settle there. The emperor Adrian rebuilt the city, giving it the name of Ælia; but no Jew was permitted to enter or approach it. In after times the apostate emperor Julian, sensible that the accomplishment up to that time of our Lord's memorable prediction had made a great impression on the Gentiles, determined to deprive Christianity of this support by bringing the Jews back to their own land, allowing them the exercise of their religion and a form of civil government. Accordingly, preparations were commenced on a large scale for rebuilding the Temple; but the workmen, after repeated efforts, were driven back by balls of fire issuing from the earth. This fact is attested by a heathen historian, and by a Jew, as well as by Chrysostom among the Greeks, and Ambrose among the Latins. The emperor's own letter addressed to the community of the Jews, and inviting them to return, is also extant among his works.—Since the fall of the Eastern Empire, Jerusalem (except for eighty-eight years after the first Crusade) has been under the government of Mahomedans, and a Turkish mosque to this day pollutes the site of the Temple of God. It is said that "the golden gate" (as it is called) of this Mosque is incessantly and watchfully guarded, for there are Turks who believe that by it the Christians will one day enter, and that the Crescent and banner of their prophet will be removed. The modern city has still a somewhat imposing appearance, as seen from the Mount of Olives, but on entering, the illusion vanishes: it has no squares; the streets are narrow, the buildings mean; and we may exclaim with Jeremiah, (Lam. i. 6,) "From the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed."



‡ If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead!.. Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. Rom. xi. 15, 25.

\* Them that are carried away captive of Judah I will bring again to this land; and I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. Jer. xxiv. 5, 6.

Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And they all shall have one Shepherd. Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 24.

† Ye are a chosen generation,—an holy nation. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

‡ And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Zech. xiv. 2.

§ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 1 John iv. 1.

¶—whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders. 2 Thess. ii. 9.

‡ Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. 2 Pet. iii. 17.

† The eagle seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Where the slain are, there is she. Job xxxix. 29, 30.

until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.<sup>b</sup> *And when these are all called in, and the purposes of God respecting other nations have thus had their full accomplishment, He will remember His ancient people in mercy, and once more collect the scattered sheep of Israel, making one fold under one Shepherd.*<sup>c</sup>—And except that the Lord had mercifully shortened those days of vengeance, no flesh throughout the nation should be saved: but, for the Elect's sake,<sup>d</sup> (19)—*those faithful Christians whom He hath chosen, together with the remnant of the Jews preserved as monuments of His grace,*<sup>e</sup>—those days shall be shortened.

*Wherefore, as all these things shall surely come to pass, it will be in vain for this unhappy people to look for any miraculous deliverance from them.* And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is the Christ; or Lo, He is there; believe him not.<sup>f</sup> For, *as I told you*, false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall pretend to shew great signs and wonders:<sup>g</sup> insomuch that, if it were possible for them to succeed after these warnings, and if the power of Christ were not greater than the power of Satan, they shall deceive the very Elect. But take ye heed: behold I have foretold you (*forewarned you of*) all things.<sup>h</sup> Wherefore if they shall point out to you the very spot where the pretended deliverer may be found, and shall say unto you, Behold He is in the desert, go not forth to seek Him there: or if they shall say, Behold, He is concealed from the Romans in one of the secret chambers of the Treasury, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth (*flasheth*) even unto the west, so conspicuous, as well as swift and terrible in its course, shall also the Coming of the Son of man be. For whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together<sup>i</sup> (19) to prey upon it: and thus the great body of the Jewish nation, collected together in the devoted city, will lie a helpless prey to the foe, who shall appear with their Eagle-standards, ready to fall upon and utterly destroy them.

(19) For the Elect's sake.] This may also be taken to include a portion of the Jews. St. Paul, ten years before the destruction of the city, spoke of "a remnant" who should be saved through the grace of the Gospel; and though "blindness in part had happened unto Israel," they were still "beloved for their fathers' sakes," and were preserved to hand down the race of Abraham (see Rom. xi. 5,

25—28).—The shortening of the days of the siege was important to the Christians who had escaped; for they would not be able to subsist long in a mountainous district, and might have been destroyed by the Zealots, who massacred all that were adverse to the war.

(19) There will the eagles be gathered together.] See Section XCIII., Note 5.

## SECTION CXIII.

JESUS DESCRIBES THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM IN STRONGER IMAGES, APPLICABLE ALSO TO THE DAY OF JUDGMENT; AND SOLEMNLY INCUPLICATES THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS.

*Matt. xxiv. 29—39, 42. Mark xiii. 24—37. Luke xxi. 25—36.*

AND *Jesus continued His discourse to the four disciples, as follows*:—There shall be *extraordinary signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth universal distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring under the influence of mighty storms: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those fearful things which are so evidently coming on the earth. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,*<sup>a</sup> *according as the prophet Joel figuratively writes of this desolating time; and the stars, the powers of heaven, shall be shaken, and shall fall from heaven:*<sup>b</sup> *there shall be an utter destruction both of the Jewish state and of its sinful rulers. And then shall appear the hand of Divine Providence in this judgment,—manifest as the sign of the Son of man*<sup>(1)</sup> *in heaven, which they have so often desired to see: and then shall all the tribes of the earth (of the land of Judea) mourn, and they shall indeed see in effect the Son of man coming, as it were in the clouds of heaven,*<sup>c</sup> *with power and great glory, to execute vengeance. And then, as at the Last Great Day He shall send His angels*<sup>(2)</sup> *with a great sound of a trumpet,*<sup>d</sup> *so shall He send His messengers*<sup>e</sup> *to proclaim His will with the powerful Voice of Gospel truth;*<sup>f</sup> *and they shall gather together His elect*

blood: and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs. Rev. vi. 12, 13.

<sup>a</sup> Behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. Dan. vii. 13.—Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him. Rev. i. 7.

<sup>b</sup> The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised. 1 Cor. xv. 52.

<sup>c</sup> They mocked the messengers of God, and misused His prophets. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.—Haggai, the Lord's messenger. Hag. i. 13.

<sup>f</sup> Lift up thy voice like a trumpet. Isa. lviii. 1.—Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Rom. x. 18.

(1) *The sun shall be darkened, &c.]* In ancient Hieroglyphic writings the sun, moon, and stars represented empires and states, with their sovereigns and nobility. The eclipse of these luminaries was said to denote temporary national disasters, or an entire overthrow of any state. This is still an Eastern mode of writing, and there are some classical examples of it. The Prophets frequently employ it, so that their style seems to be a *speaking hieroglyphic*. Thus Isaiah describes the destruction of Babylon, and Ezekiel that of Egypt.—In accordance with this prediction, Josephus gives an account of the persecution and slaughter of the nobility and principal men in the city by the infuriated Zealots, computing their number at twelve thousand.—The same awful signs here spoken of are elsewhere mentioned as ushering in the Great

Day (see in the *Margin*), and undoubtedly are intended on this occasion to refer *also* to the final catastrophe of all things.

(2) *The sign of the Son of man.]* As “the sign of Jonas the prophet” is the same as the prophet Jonas himself delivered by miracle; so “the sign of the Son of man” is only “the Son of man coming in the clouds,” and manifested by miraculous powers.—This figurative expression is used in Scripture to signify the evident interposition of God, and His irresistibly executing vengeance on a wicked generation.

(3) *He shall send His Angels.]* Both in the Old and New Testament, the prophets and ministers of God are styled His *Angels*, that is, “Messengers,” for the word refers only to *office*.—So their preaching is styled a *Voice*, and the voice as of a trumpet (see in the *Margin*).

<sup>a</sup> Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate. The sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. Isa. xiii. 9, 10.

I beheld the heavens, and they had no light. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate. Jer. iv. 23, 27.

And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. Ezek. xxxii. 7.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. Joel ii. 31.

<sup>b</sup> And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine. For My sword shall come down upon Idumea. Isa. xxxiv. 4, 5.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal; and lo, the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as

<sup>s</sup> They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. Luke xiii. 29.

(*His true disciples wherever dispersed*) from the four winds, —from the uttermost part of the earth,<sup>s</sup> and from one end of heaven to the other. And when these things begin to come to pass, *and the enemies of the Truth are overthrown*, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption from trouble draweth nigh: *the wicked shall cease their persecutions, and the Churches shall have rest.*

<sup>h</sup> Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation. Matt. xxiii. 36.

<sup>i</sup> The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God shall stand for ever. Isa. xl. 8.

<sup>k</sup> It shall be One Day which shall be known to the Lord. Zech. xiv. 7.

And He spake to them a parable, *in reply to the enquiry they had at first made, When all these things should be?* Now behold and learn a parable of (*take an illustration from*) the fig-tree and all the trees: when his branch is yet tender, and they now shoot forth leaves, ye see and know of your own selves, that summer is now nigh at hand: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand—even at the doors: *As surely as the budding branch foretells approaching summer, so effectually shall My spiritual dominion be established upon the ruin of My enemies.* Verily I say unto you, This generation of men now living shall not pass away<sup>(4)</sup>, till all these things *which I have declared unto you* be fulfilled.<sup>h</sup> Heaven and earth shall pass away *at the final dissolution of all things*; but My words shall not pass away<sup>i</sup> void.

But, *though many who are now living shall witness My coming in vengeance to destroy Jerusalem, of that day and (or) that hour when heaven and earth are to pass away, and I shall finally come to judge the world*, knoweth no man—no, not even the angels which are in heaven; neither the Son<sup>(2)</sup> of man in His character of Teacher, but My Father only:<sup>k</sup> *for it is not for man to know the times and the seasons, and I am not commissioned, as a part of My prophetic office, to reveal this mystery.*

But *this is certain, and it will be proper for all to know it*: As were the days of Noe, *who in vain preached righteousness to the old world*, so *unlooked-for* shall also the final Coming of the Son of man be. For as, in the days that were before the Flood, *they despised every warning and were irretrievably sunk in sensual indulgences*; they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the *very day* that Noe entered into the ark; and knew not

(4) *This generation shall not pass away.*] Jerusalem fell about forty years after these words were uttered.

(2) *Neither the Son.*] We cannot suppose that Jesus was not partaker of the Father's counsels concerning the precise time when the world shall end. The Second Person in the Holy Trinity, abstractedly considered, *knows everything*, as Peter, *unrebuked*, declared that he believed (John xxi. 17); but the Messiah is sometimes described according to His human nature, as

gradually "increasing in wisdom," &c.; and, thus regarded, He taught only what the Spirit revealed to Him. *Omniscience in Christ's human mind* need not be supposed, any more than *Omnipresence in His human body*. He might surely divest Himself of knowledge, in the same way that He divested Himself of immortality. These are things "hard to be understood;" but it would be strange if there were *not* difficulties in a case so mysterious as the union of the Divine and human nature in the Person of Christ.

*their danger*, until the Flood came *with irresistible fury* and took them all away;<sup>1</sup> so *unlooked-for* shall also the Coming of the Son of man be.—And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts, *and all your nobler faculties*, be overcharged with surfeiting (*with gluttony*) and drunkenness,<sup>m</sup> and *needless* cares of this life, and so that *dreadful Day should* come upon you unawares. For as a snare<sup>n</sup> shall it come on *nearly* all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore; take ye heed, for ye know not when the time is *to be*, or *in* what hour your Lord doth come: and pray always, that, *for your Saviour's sake, and through Divine Grace enabling you to trust in Him*, ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand *at last accepted* before the Son of man.<sup>o</sup>

For the Son of man is *even* as a man taking a far (*a distant*) journey, who left his house *and affairs in charge*, and gave authority to his *confidential* servants, and *appointed* to every man his *proper* work, and commanded the porter *at the door to keep a careful* watch.—Watch ye, therefore, *as faithful servants*: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, *whether* at even, or at midnight, or at the *time of cock-crowing*, or in the morning: lest, coming suddenly, He find you sleeping<sup>p</sup> *at your post*. And what I say unto you, *My Apostles*, I say unto all *My disciples in every age*,—Watch!

<sup>1</sup> All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. Gen. vii. 23.

<sup>m</sup> Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness. Rom. xiii. 13.

— nor shall drunkards inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

<sup>n</sup> The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 1 Thess. v. 2.

I will come upon thee as a thief in the night, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Rev. iii. 3.

<sup>o</sup> The ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment. Ps. i. 6.

— to present you faultless before the presence of His glory. Jude 24.

<sup>p</sup> Let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch. 1 Thess. v. 6.

#### SECTION CXIV.

JESUS FURTHER WARNS HIS DISCIPLES TO BE READY AGAINST HIS COMING, IN THE PARABLES OF THE TEN VIRGINS AND THE TALENTS; AND CONCLUDES WITH A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

*Matt. xxv. 1—46. Luke xxi. 37, 38.*

THEN shall the Kingdom (*the Administration*) of Heaven be likened, *in dealing with mere professors of religion*, unto the case of ten Virgins; which, *according to the custom in celebrating marriages*, took their lamps, and went forth *at night* to meet the *bride and* bridegroom, *and to light them home to the banquet*.

And five of them were wise (*prudent*), and the other five were foolish.<sup>(1)</sup> They that were foolish took their

(1) *And five of them were wise, &c.*] The Jews had a parable somewhat similar to this: A teacher tells his disciple to be sure and repent before they die. They ask, if a man may know the hour of his death; to which he rejoins, Let

a man repent therefore every day, as he knows not when he shall die:—For there was a rich man who invited all his servants to a feast, but did not tell them at what hour the entertainment would be ready. Some of them at once attired

lamps, and took no *supply* of oil with them: but the wise, together with their lamps, took oil for replenishing them in their vessels. While the bridegroom tarried later than usual, they grew drowsy with watching, and at length all slumbered (*nodded*, Gr.) and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; and soon a hurried summons for the virgins arrived, Go ye out immediately to meet him.

Then all those ten virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the five who were foolish said unto the wise, Give us some of your oil, for we have neglected to bring a supply in our vessels, and now our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, [Not so] lest there be not enough for us and you:<sup>(1)</sup> but go ye rather to them that sell oil, and buy some for yourselves.—And when they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready (*the five prudent virgins*) joined the bridal procession, and went in with him to the marriage-feast. And, the guests being assembled, the door was now shut.<sup>(2)</sup> Afterward came also the other five virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open the door to us. But he, displeased at their want of attention, answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not<sup>a</sup>—I cannot acknowledge as friends those who have not acted as such towards me.

Take example, My disciples, from the disgrace of these foolish virgins. Like those who were prudent, the best of you will be subject to sins of infirmity and omission; but nevertheless, take care that your hearts be vessels furnished with a never-failing stock of grace,—having the inward principle of holiness, as well as the outward profession of a Christian. Watch, therefore,<sup>b</sup> lest the time of your summons for appearing before the Divine Bridegroom<sup>c</sup> should

<sup>a</sup> When once the Master of the house hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us, He shall answer, and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are. Luke xiii. 25.

<sup>b</sup> Prepare to meet thy God. Amos iv. 12.

Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. Luke xii. 35.

Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. 1 Thess. v. 6.

<sup>c</sup> The Bridegroom shall be taken from them. Matt. ix. 15.

The friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice. John iii. 29.

themselves fittingly for the occasion, that they might be ready whenever they might be summoned; but others idled away their holiday, thinking there was time enough, and that they could easily contrive to be ready at the last. But the call came suddenly, and as the idlers were quite unprepared to meet it, they were not allowed to sit down with their fellow-servants, and partake of their kind master's hospitality.

It need not occasion surprise that our Lord should sometimes apply those Jewish parables, or proverbs, which He considered were adapted to inculcate the spiritual truths of His Gospel. They would be better understood and remembered by His hearers, as being already familiar to them, and they would also give less offence.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you.*] The Original contains no such positive refusal as "*Not so*," (though there is an ellipsis here of some kind). But the prudent virgins could not assist their neighbours in their distress.—Those who would be saved must have grace of their own: the best have need of more, and certainly have no superfluous works of merit, the

benefit of which can be made over to others. "In many things we offend all" (Jas. iii. 2); and even the good virgins showed infirmity, for "*all* slumbered" at their post. Yet the simple words, "Go and buy for yourselves" have been adduced to support the Romish doctrine of works of Supererogation! The foolish virgins succeeded in purchasing oil, but were, after all, shut out.

(<sup>2</sup>) *And the door was shut.*] There seems an allusion here to a Jewish phrase of "shutting the gates of repentance." Our own Church, in opposition to the doctrines of Final Perseverance and Indefectible Grace, maintains it as the doctrine of the Bible, that *the day of Grace has its limits*. Not less numerous, than those passages which describe the mercy promised to repentance, are those which speak of the work of repentance as becoming more and more difficult,—and at length impossible,—after the rejection of grace given (see particularly Heb. xii. 17). The door of mercy may be closed, and there is a time beyond which the Almighty no longer suffers His compassion to be abused by the obstinacy of man.

*reach you suddenly*; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

For, to give you a further illustration of the necessity of being prepared, the Kingdom of Heaven is as the case of a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants,<sup>(\*)</sup> and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man of them according to his several ability (*the respective capacity of each*) a sum of money, that it might be employed to advantage: and, having done this, he straightway took his journey.

Then he that had received the five talents, went immediately to work, and traded successfully with the same, and made them other five talents,—thus doubling the capital which had been entrusted to him. And, likewise, he that had received two talents, he also laid them out to the best advantage, and gained other two. But he that had received only one, without making the least effort to turn it to account, went and digged a hole in the earth, and there hid his lord's money.

After a long time the lord of those servants cometh home, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents, came and brought with him other five talents, saying to his master, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents to trade with in thy absence; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord, much pleased with the industry and fidelity he had displayed, said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things;<sup>d</sup> I will henceforth make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord on his happy return to his family and home.—He also that had received two talents, came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me in charge two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord, gratified with this other instance of trustworthiness, said, in like manner, unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will reward thy service and make thee ruler over many things: enter thou also into the joy of thy lord.

Then he which had received the one talent, came and

<sup>d</sup> He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much. Luke xvi. 10.

(\*) *His own servants.*] This would seem immediately to refer to the Apostles, the Seventy Disciples, and others, on whom different Spiritual gifts were then conferred. But, though primarily addressed to our Lord's living followers, this Parable is not confined to them, but includes all Christians. What He had, just before, said to them, He declares that He said unto all: "Watch!"—To all are assigned their respective portions of duty in their respective stations: one has gifts of mind, another of fortune; one has

temporal, another has moral influence. There is no escape, no exemption for any man from his trust, however small that trust may be. The command is universal: "Occupy till I come." The single talent described in the Parable as given to the worthless servant would be a large sum, though it were given in silver; and thus would seem to be intimated the value to every Christian of his respective trust.—See Section CII. on the Parable of the Pounds.

*impudently* said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an *hard-dealing* man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid *that thou wouldst expect a higher profit than I could obtain, and that if I should unfortunately lose the money in trading, thou wouldst severely exact it of me again*; and so I went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast *safely back* that *which* is thine. His lord, *much displeased with his conduct*, answered and said unto him, *Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee*, thou wicked (*malicious*) and slothful servant: thou knewest,<sup>e</sup> *for so thou hast audaciously presumed to say*, that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: *on thine own shewing thou shouldst have made some exertion to satisfy so strict a master, and not have deprived me even of the common profit which is my due*; thou oughtest therefore *at the least* to have put my money to the exchangers *at the bank*, and then at my coming *back* I should have received mine own with usury<sup>(\*)</sup> (*with interest*). Take therefore, *some of you*, the talent from him, and give it, *as an immediate reward*, unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that *improveth what he hath*, shall *more* be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, *so as to improve what has been bestowed*, shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

*So shall the Lord of all return again, after some time, from Heaven to take account of the actions of men. Those who have improved the several talents<sup>f</sup> entrusted to them,—their opportunities of religious improvement, whether gifts of intellectual capacity, or of worldly substance,—these shall receive their due reward, partaking with their Master in the joys of heaven.<sup>g</sup> But the slothful, and they who have unprofitably buried even their single talent, must be cast into the regions of darkness to receive that punishment which they have deserved. No excuses can then serve; it will not be sufficient to have done no wrong, if they have neglected what is plainly their duty.*

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him,<sup>h</sup> then shall He sit *as the Judge* upon the throne of His glory<sup>i</sup> (*upon His glorious throne*): and before Him shall be gathered all nations;<sup>k</sup> and *by His angels* He shall separate them one from another,<sup>l</sup> as a shepherd<sup>m</sup> divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep *n—such as, like those useful creatures, have led, so far as in them lay, an innocent and profitable life,—on His right*

\* Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee. Job xv. 6.

<sup>f</sup> Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. Rom. xii. 6.

There are diversities of gifts: but the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 1 Cor. xii. 4, 7.

<sup>g</sup> To him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in My throne. Rev. iii. 21.

<sup>h</sup> The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels. 2 Thess. i. 7.

The Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints. Jude 14.

<sup>i</sup> And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it. Rev. xx. 11.

<sup>k</sup> We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Rom. xiv. 10.

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. 2 Cor. v. 10.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. Rev. xx. 12.

<sup>l</sup> At the end of the world, the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just. Matt. xiii. 49.

<sup>m</sup> As for you, O My flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats. Ezek. xxxiv. 17.

<sup>n</sup> We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Ps. c 3.

I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. John x. 14.

(\*) *With usury.*] See Section CII., Note 10.

hand;<sup>(6)</sup> but the goats,<sup>o</sup>—*those who are offensive to Him*,—on the left. Then shall the King<sup>(7)</sup> say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:<sup>p</sup> for I was an hungred (*hungry*), and ye gave Me meat;<sup>q</sup> I was thirsty, and ye gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in *to your houses*; naked (*in want of proper clothing*), and ye clothed Me;<sup>r</sup> I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came *even there* unto Me<sup>t</sup> *to aid and condole with Me*. Then shall the righteous answer Him *with humility*, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee to drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in *to our houses*? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and *charitably* came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them *with gracious condescension*, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least (*the meanest or most afflicted*) of these My brethren,<sup>a</sup>—*for such they truly are when they do My Father's will*,—ye have in effect done it unto Me.<sup>t</sup>

hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,—he shall surely live, saith the Lord God. Ezek. xviii. 5, 7, 9.

<sup>r</sup> Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. Heb. xiii. 3.

<sup>s</sup> Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother. Matt. xii. 60. —Both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. ii. 11.

<sup>t</sup> He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again. Prov. xix. 17.—Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. Matt. x. 42.—God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Heb. vi. 10.

(<sup>6</sup>) *He shall set the sheep on His right hand, &c.*] The imagery here is partly pastoral (for we often find the Messiah and true Christians compared to a shepherd and his sheep), and partly it is derived from the Jewish mode of administering justice: those who were to receive sentence of absolution were placed on the right hand in the Sanhedrim; those who were to receive sentence of condemnation, on the left.—It is remarkable that there is a Hebrew word which signifies both a *goat* and an *evil spirit*.

(<sup>7</sup>) *The King.*] Jesus on this occasion changes the appellation “Son of man,” and takes the title of *King* when speaking of His exercising the highest act of kingly power, viz., passing final sentence on all men as *His subjects*. The glory in which He will come is, at Matt. xvi. 27, said to be “*His Father's*.” here it has been described as *His own*.

(<sup>8</sup>) *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, &c.*] There is a remarkable variation between the language employed here, and that made use of in addressing the reprobate. The circumstance of the righteous being *first* absolved, may of itself serve to show that God takes greater delight in rewarding, than in punishing His creatures.—The righteous are addressed “Ye blessed of My Father;” the wicked simply, “Ye cursed.” Again, the blessings are said to have been *all along* prepared for the former; while the punishment was designed ori-

<sup>o</sup> And I punished the goats. Zech. x. 3.

<sup>p</sup> Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him. Isa. lxiv. 4.

To sit on My right hand and on My left shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. Matt. xx. 23.

Vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory. Rom. ix. 23.

—an inheritance in corruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. 1 Pet. i. 4.

<sup>q</sup> Is not this the fast that I have chosen? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out, to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him? Isa. lviii. 6, 7.

If a man be just,—and

ginally, not for man, but for the fallen spirits. The same merciful distinction is observed elsewhere (see Rom. ix. 22, 23). God is the author of man's happiness: man alone, the author of his own misery.

(<sup>9</sup>) *I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat.*] We must not hastily conclude from this passage, that mere alms-giving will as it were purchase heaven for us, or make amends for the want of Faith and the omission of other duties Good Works are acceptable to God, but they must spring from Faith in Christ, being the best proof of the soundness of the principle from which they spring (see Jas. ii. 15—18). Charity is said to be the end of the Commandment; and the distinguishing and conspicuous virtue of Benevolence is here brought forward (as it is also at James i. 27) to *illustrate* the Christian character. Such a virtue cannot exist alone, and, if it be genuine, extensive, and permanent, can only spring from that saving faith in the Redeemer which necessarily “works by love.” Those who are kind to the poor and needy, show that they possess “*His Spirit*.”—We should particularly note that the quality here selected is not general, but *Christian* benevolence; love to the brethren, for the sake of their common Master: “inasmuch as ye did it” (not merely to your fellow creatures out of *pity*, but) “to the least of these *My brethren*, ye did it unto Me.”



<sup>a</sup> Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. Ps. vi. 8.

—vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction. Rom. ix. 22.

That which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. Heb. vi. 8.

<sup>v</sup> As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. Matt. xiii. 40.

—in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

<sup>w</sup> The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the Judgment of the Great Day. Jude 6.

<sup>x</sup> He that honoureth his Maker, hath mercy on the poor. Prov. xiv. 31.

Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord . . . . . and he heard a Voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Acts ix. 1, 4.

<sup>y</sup> Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. xii. 2.—The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. John v. 28, 29.

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed<sup>a</sup> (*devoted as ye are to destruction*), into everlasting fire<sup>v</sup>—prepared, *not originally for you, but for the devil and his evil angels,*<sup>w</sup> *whose lot you must now share, as during life you have resembled them in impiety and your neglect of mercy.* For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these *whom I esteem as My brethren*, ye did it not to Me:<sup>x</sup> *The ability to do good imposes the obligation to do it, and if you really loved Me, you would have ministered to them for My sake.*

And these, *notwithstanding every vain excuse*, shall go away *from the sacred presence of the Judge* into everlasting punishment;<sup>(10)</sup> but the righteous, *through the grace of God, who will accept their imperfect obedience for His Son's sake, shall be admitted into life eternal.*

And in the day-time He was *thus* teaching in the Temple *during this last week of His ministry*; and at night He went out *of the city to avoid tumult*, and abode *during the remaining nights in the retirement of the mount* that is called the Mount of Olives: and all the people came early in the morning to Him in the Temple for to hear Him.

(10) *Into everlasting punishment.*] No philological criticism can lower the force of our Saviour's declarations, so often and so plainly repeated, concerning the Eternity of Future Punishment. If we trace the use of the Greek word, translated *everlasting* in the text, through the Scriptures of the New Testament, and also the Greek translation of the Old Testament, we find that when it signifies a long indefinite duration, or any portion of time short of eternal, it is applied in such a manner and to such objects, that the limitation of the sense is clearly seen, and all ambiguity

precluded. On the other hand, it is sometimes used with reference to God (Deut. xxxiii. 27); to the Holy Spirit (Heb. ix. 14); to the Gospel (Rev. xiv. 6): and in all these places, as in the passage before us, a duration really eternal is to be understood. Here too, where the phrases "*eternal life*" and "*everlasting punishment*" occur in the same sentence of our Translation (Matt. xxv. 46), we find in the Original the same word (*αἰώνιον*) used with both: yet the absolute eternity of life in the state of happiness has never been disputed.

## SECTION CXV.

THE RULERS DEBATE AS TO THE APPREHENSION OF JESUS; AND JUDAS AGREES TO DELIVER HIM UP FOR THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER.

*Matt. xxvi. 1—5, 14—16. Mark xiv. 1, 2, 10, 11. Luke xxii. 1—6.*

NOW the feast of Unleavened Bread,<sup>(1)</sup> (which is called the Passover) drew nigh, and was to be celebrated after two more days. And so it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings in the Temple and at the Mount of Olives, He said unto His disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and then the time, of which I have so often spoken<sup>a</sup>, will have arrived, and the Son of man is betrayed (delivered up to His enemies) to be crucified.

<sup>a</sup> Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to crucify Him. *Matt. xx. 18, 19.*

Then assembled together secretly the chief priests, and the Scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the High-priest, who was called Caiaphas; and consulted<sup>b</sup> how they might take Jesus by subtilty, and put Him to death. But they said, Let us not do this, if it can be avoided, on the feast-day (during the time of the feast, GR.), lest there be in consequence an uproar among the people: for they feared the people, among whom were many Galileans at this time; and any open attack on Jesus might have been summarily defeated.

<sup>b</sup> The rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. *Psa. ii. 2.*

Then entered Satan into the heart of Judas,<sup>(2)</sup> surnamed Iscariot—he being one of the number of the Twelve, which was a dreadful aggravation of the crime into which he fell. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests, and with the captains of the military guard then stationed at the Temple, how he might best betray Him unto them; and said unto them, What will ye give me as a recompence for this service, and I will deliver Him unto you this very night in His place of retirement? And when they heard it, they were glad of the opportunity, and promised to give him money: and at length they covenanted (bargained) with Him for thirty pieces of silver.<sup>(3)</sup> Thus was fulfilled

(1) *The feast of Unleavened Bread.*] This feast was celebrated for seven days, and bread not leavened was eaten during the whole of these: hence the name. It is St. Luke who adds the explanation, "which is called the Passover," because he was writing also for Gentiles. See Sec. XIV., Note 2. The Feast fell on our 9th April.

(2) *Then entered Satan into Judas.*] Satan tempted Judas by his predominant passion of covetousness, and he yielded to the instigation.—He seems also to have been excited (as indeed the others were, more or less, previous to the Crucifixion) by ambition. He had hitherto been disappointed in his hopes; and fully believing in

Jesus as the Messiah according to Jewish notions (that is, as the great expected Temporal Prince, who would have ample power to reward His followers), he was impatient to precipitate events, so as to compel His Master to prove His pretensions to the assembled rulers and at once assume His regal power and dignity. The subsequent remorse and end of Judas shew that these must have been his views.

(3) *Thirty pieces of silver.*] Wherever pieces of money are mentioned in Scripture, it is to be understood of the Jewish shekel, which was not more than 2s. 6d. of our money. Thirty shekels would only amount to 3l. 15s. This amount

*the prophecy of Zechariah, "They weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver: a goodly price that I was prized at of them" (Zech. xi. 12, 13).*

And he promised to *make good his word*, and from that time sought a *favourable* opportunity, in the absence of the multitude (without tumult, MARG.), to betray Him unto them.

## SECTION CXVI.

**JESUS DIRECTS HIS DISCIPLES TO PREPARE THE PASSOVER; AND AT SUPPER-TIME TEACHES THEM A STRIKING LESSON OF HUMILITY BY WASHING THEIR FEET.**

*Matt. xxvi. 17—20. Mark xiv. 12—17. Luke xxii. 7—14, 24—30. John xiii. 1—20.*

**T**HEN came the first day of Unleavened Bread,<sup>(1)</sup> when, according to the direction of the Law, the lamb to be sacrificed every year in remembrance of the Passover must be killed. And they said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare for Thee to eat the Passover? And He sent two of His disciples, Peter and John, saying, Go ye, purchase a lamb and kill it, and prepare us the Passover, that we may once more eat of it together. And He said moreover unto them, Go into the city to such a man <sup>(2)</sup> of whom

was exactly the fine which the Law commanded to be paid to the owner of a *slave* accidentally gored or killed (Exod. xxi. 32). The payment of so trifling a sum as the price of our Lord's blood, shews how true was the saying of the Apostle, that "He took on Him the form of a *servant*" (Phil. ii. 7); and also the prediction of the Evangelical Prophet, "He was despised, and we esteemed Him not" (Isa. liii. 3).

(1) *The first day of unleavened bread.*] Our Lord celebrated the Passover on the evening preceding His death; whereas some at least of the Jews ate it on the Friday (John xviii. 28). Since the Law required that all should eat it on the same day, it has been supposed that the Jews differed among themselves,—in consequence of their imperfect mode of calculating full moon,—as to which was the *right* day. Another supposition is, that our Lord anticipated the Feast by one day; so that, as the true Paschal Victim, He might suffer at the very hour when the typical lamb was eaten. But it seems more satisfactory to conclude, that our Lord partook of the Feast at the *right hour of the right day* (for the Passover commenced at sunset on the Thursday), while the Jews,—although they killed the lamb on the right day,—violated the command (Deut. xvi. 4) as to the time of eating it.—The mystical signification of this Jewish rite is plainly given by St. Paul (1 Cor. v. 7), who calls Christ "our Passover;" and the Baptist referred to this type, when he pointed Him out as "the

Lamb of God" (John i. 29). St. Peter, in like manner, calls Him "a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 19), and the beloved disciple, in the Revelation, "the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. v. 12). As the Israelites were preserved from the destroying angel by the blood of the lamb sprinkled on their door-posts, so alone can sinners escape the wrath to come by taking refuge at the foot of the Cross, and thus "pleading the sprinkling of the Saviour's blood." (See Heb. xii. 24: 1 Pet. i. 2.)

Our Saviour commanded His disciples to prepare the Passover, because every Jew was permitted on this occasion to be his own priest, killing his paschal lamb in his own house. It was to be *without spot or blemish*, of a year old; to be roasted whole, for *not a bone was to be broken*. Sauce made with bitter herbs was eaten with it. None of it was to be left whole till morning, so that two families joined together when one was too small. In the time of Josephus a paschal company consisted of not less than ten, nor more than twenty persons. The number of Jews usually attending this festival was so great, that when Cestius made a public enquiry, he found that the lambs killed at one Passover amounted to 2,065,500.

(2) *To such a man.*] The classic writers use the same expression, when the person referred to was well known to the person addressed, and there existed any reason (as here on account of Judas) for concealing the name. Our Lord would know this householder to be a correct observer of

*you know; and that you may find him without difficulty, behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall meet you a servant-man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him into the house where he entereth in. And wheresoever he shall go in, ye shall say unto the good man (the master) of the house, whom you will find to be the person of whom I spake:—The Master (The Teacher) saith unto thee, My time for celebrating the Feast is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house: where therefore is the guest-chamber (which is the apartment allotted for the accommodation of strangers), where I shall (may) eat the Passover with My disciples? And accordingly he shall shew you a large upper room furnished, and prepared for the occasion. There make ready for us.*

And His *two* disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found *every thing exactly* as He had said unto them: and they did as Jesus had said unto [had appointed, MATT.] them, and they made ready the Passover. And in the evening, when the *appointed* hour was come, He cometh, and sat down *to table* with *all* the twelve Apostles *assembled*.

Now before *they began to eat* the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was *nearly* come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father; having *always affectionately* loved His own (*the Apostles* which were *with Him under all His trials* in the world), He loved them unto the end of His life, and *now proceeded to testify it by a remarkable proof of His anxiety for their best interests.*

And supper being ended<sup>(\*)</sup> (*supper-time having come, GR.*), there was also a strife among them which of them should be [accounted] the greatest *in that reign of power which they supposed would succeed their Master's sufferings.* Then Jesus, knowing as He did His own inherent dignity,—that the Father had given all things into His hands,<sup>a</sup> and that He was come *originally* from God, and went (*was now shortly returning*) to reign again with God,—*nevertheless humbled Himself by assuming the menial duties of a servant, that so He might set an example to all to follow His steps.* Accordingly, He riseth from the supper-table, and laid aside His loose upper garments, and took a long towel, and girded Himself with it as with an apron. After that He poureth water into

<sup>a</sup> All things are delivered unto Me of My Father. Matt. xi. 27.

And Jesus came and spake to them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Matt. xxviii. 18.

He left nothing that is not put under Him. Heb. ii. 8.

the Paschal laws. The free use of houses was given to all strangers who chose to eat the Passover in them, the only remuneration being the skin of the lamb sacrificed. Our Lord directs Peter and John in a *circuitous* manner to the house that He wished to use, which served a double purpose: it would render Him, while yet in privacy, less liable to interruption from His enemies, and it must have convinced the disciples that He was exactly acquainted with the whole of those circumstances which

were to befall Him. Samuel, on anointing Saul, takes a similar mode of confirming his faith. (See 1 Sam. x. 2—7.)

(\*) *Supper being ended.*] There is no doubt of the participle being here incorrectly translated in the common Version. In a subsequent chapter of the same Evangelist (John xxi. 4), our translators have rendered the same verb, "*come*;" and they preserve that sense at Luke iv. 42; Acts xii. 18; xvi. 35.—The washing of feet, too, was always practised *before*, not *after*, a meal.

a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

Then cometh He *in turn* to Simon Peter: and Peter, *affected at such an act of condescension*, saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou *intend to wash my feet?* Jesus answered and said unto him, *The meaning of what I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter (after it is done)* Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet: *for I am a sinful man, O Lord, and cannot permit Thee to stoop to such a degradation.* Jesus answered him, If I wash<sup>b</sup> thee not, thou hast no part (*no lot*) *in common with Me, and henceforth art none of Mine.* Simon Peter then, *submissively and with eagerness*, saith unto Him, Lord, wash not my feet only, but also my hands and my head; *for I would devote all my members and all my faculties to Thy service.* Jesus, *who in this act of outward cleansing had referred to inward purity*, saith to him, *This is not intended as an ordinary washing:* he that is washed (*who has bathed*) needeth not, *upon returning from the bath to supper*, to wash again, save his feet, but in other respects is every whit (*thoroughly*) clean: *so they who have been baptized in My name and truly converted, need no second immersion, and no entire change of mind subsequently; but have only to use the daily means of grace that they may be cleansed from their sins of infirmity:* and ye are thus clean,<sup>c</sup> but not all of you.—For He knew who *it was that should betray Him,*<sup>d</sup> *and was acquainted with every wicked movement of the traitor's heart.* Therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.

So after He had washed their feet, and had taken up His garments *which He had laid by*, and was set down again at table, He said unto them, Know ye *the meaning of what I have done to you?* And, *that they might more effectually profit by the striking example He had just given*, He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them,—*sometimes in a very arbitrary manner;* and they that exercise *such* authority upon them, are nevertheless, *in flattery*, called Benefactors:<sup>(4)</sup> but ye shall not be so:<sup>(5)</sup> but he that is greatest *and most distinguished* among you, let him be *lowly* as the younger; and he that is chief *in office*, as he that doth serve. For whether is *accounted* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth

<sup>b</sup> Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John iii. 5.

Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the Word. Eph. v. 26.

According to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration. Tit. iii. 5.

—having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb. x. 22.

<sup>c</sup> Ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you. John xv. 8.

Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

<sup>d</sup> Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. John vi. 64.

(4) *Called Benefactors.*] This title was more particularly given to the Roman emperors, but those potentates, generous as they might be abroad, were certainly oppressive to their subjects at home. Other kings, as appears from medals, styled themselves *Evergetes*, or "Benefactors," of whom Antiochus, King of Syria, was one. The following inscription, it is said, still

exists at Athens, in honour of Bernice, who is mentioned Acts xxv. 13:—"The great queen Julia Berenice, daughter of King Julius Agrippa, and descendant of the great kings, *Benefactors* to this city."

(5) *But ye shall not be so.*] See Section CI., Note 6.

him? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But, *as ye have just now witnessed*, I am among you as he that serveth.<sup>e</sup> Ye call Me *the Master*<sup>f</sup> and *the Lord*;<sup>g</sup> and ye say well (*correctly*), for so I am. If I then, *who am* your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet: *if I have condescended to so menial a service, surely you ought cheerfully to perform the humblest offices of charity to your fellow-Christians.* For I have now *purposely* given you an example, that ye should do *to others* as I have done to you.<sup>h</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord, neither *is* he that is sent, greater than he that sent him; and you, *therefore, having received My commission to preach the Gospel, must never think it beneath you to do as I have done.* Remember, too, that *although knowledge must precede holiness, all your knowledge will be of no avail without suitable practice: if then ye know these things, and are conscious that purity and humility are the true characteristics of the Christian, happy are ye if ye do them.*<sup>i</sup>

Ye are they which *hitherto* have *faithfully* continued with Me in *all My troubles and temptations*; and I appoint unto you (*I promise you*) a kingdom,<sup>k</sup> as My Father hath appointed (*hath granted*) a kingdom unto Me; that *as honoured guests* ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>l</sup> I speak not *this* of you all: I know *the character and the inmost thoughts of those* whom I have chosen<sup>m</sup> *as My Apostles*; but *the traitor is permitted to go on still in his wickedness*, that the Scripture may be fulfilled which saith, "HE THAT EATETH BREAD WITH ME and whom I trusted as Mine own familiar friend, HATH, like an ungrateful animal that injures its feeder, LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME" (*see Ps. xli. 9*). Now I tell you *this* before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye *may not be disconcerted by such an event, but may believe more firmly* that I am He—even *the Messiah predicted by the Psalmist, the Searcher of all hearts, and who foreknoweth all things.* And *whatever ye may see Me suffer, remember, for your consolation and support, what I before said unto you*: Verily, verily, I say unto you *again*, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, *shall be esteemed as one that receiveth Me*; <sup>n</sup> and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me<sup>o</sup>—*for My Father in heaven will regard it as an acknowledgment of Himself.*

<sup>e</sup> Jesus cried and said, He that believeth in Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. John xii. 44.

<sup>f</sup> Let thine handmaid be a servant, to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. 1 Sam. xxv. 41.

<sup>g</sup> The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Matt. xx. 28.

<sup>h</sup> One is your Master, even Christ. Matt. xxiii. 10.

<sup>i</sup> To us there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

<sup>j</sup> Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. Matt. xi. 29.

<sup>k</sup> Bear ye one another's burdens,—and so fulfil the law of Christ. Gal. vi. 2.

<sup>l</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, took upon Him the form of a servant. Phil. ii. 6–7.

<sup>m</sup> — not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. Jas. i. 26.

<sup>n</sup> He that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. Rev. ii. 26.

<sup>o</sup> When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt. xix. 28.

— do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? 1 Cor. vi. 2.

<sup>p</sup> Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil. John vi. 70.

<sup>q</sup> And the King shall answer and say unto them, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Matt. xxv. 40.

<sup>r</sup> Ye received me as an angel of God,—even as Christ Jesus. Gal. iv. 14.

<sup>s</sup> He that receiveth you, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. Matt. x. 40.

(<sup>o</sup>) *And sit on thrones, &c.*] See Section C., Note 7.

## SECTION CXVII.

HE SITS DOWN TO EAT THE PASCHAL SUPPER WITH THE TWELVE; WHEN HE FORETELLS HIS BETRAYAL BY JUDAS, AND THE THREE-FOLD DENIAL OF HIM BY PETER.

*Matt.* xxvi. 21—25, 33—35. *Mark* xiv. 18—21, 29—31.

*Luke* xxii. 21—23, 33, 34. *John* xiii. 21—38.

WHEN Jesus had thus said,—the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,—He was troubled in spirit *at such impiety in one of His own followers*. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus testified *more plainly to them* and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you which eateth with Me shall *be the one that is to betray Me*: yea, behold, the hand of him which betrayeth Me is *even now* with Me on the table. Then the disciples were exceeding sorrowful, and looked *round anxiously* one on another, *perplexed and* doubting of whom *it was that He spake*: and *all, with the exception of Judas, being conscious of their innocence*, they began *first* to enquire among themselves which of them it was (*it could possibly be*) that should do this *monstrous* thing; and *then* began every one of them to say unto Him, one by one, Lord, is it I? *But He, overcome with emotion, as yet answered none of them.*

Now there was one of His disciples, *namely, John the son of Zebedee*, whom Jesus *tenderly and more especially* loved;<sup>a</sup> and he was *reclining at the table close to His Master, leaning as it were on Jesus' bosom*. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom He spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast, saith *privately* unto Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop (*a portion of the lamb, or of the unleavened bread*), when I have dipped it. And when He had dipped the sop *in the sauce prepared to eat with the supper*, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And *then* He answered and said unto them, *so that all might hear*, It is one of the twelve, *even he that now* dippeth his hand with Me in the dish: the same shall betray Me. The Son of man indeed goeth (*is to depart*), as it is written<sup>b</sup> *in the Scriptures and determined*<sup>c(1)</sup> of Him

<sup>a</sup> —the disciple whom Jesus loved: this is the disciple which testified of these things. *John* xxi. 20, 24.

<sup>b</sup> Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself. *Luke* xxiv. 26, 27.

<sup>c</sup> Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. *Acts* ii. 23.

(1) *As it is written and determined.*] The predictions in the Old Testament, here confirmed by Jesus Himself, did not at all interfere with the free-agency of the traitor; for before Judas left the Supper-room, he received the fullest warning of the consequences. All the earliest ancient writers held the same rational and con-

sistent opinion. "The Divine Prescience (says Chrysostom) is not the cause of man's wickedness, nor does it induce any necessity of it: Judas was not a traitor because God foresaw it; but He foresaw it, because Judas would be so." See Section CVI., Note 1.

*in the Divine Counsels ; but, nevertheless, woe unto that man—since the wickedness of the act is entirely his own,—by whom the Son of man is betrayed : so dreadful shall be his punishment, that it had been good for that man if he had not been born.*

Then Judas Iscariot, which indeed proved to be the one that betrayed Him, answered, lest his silence might excite suspicion or shew a consciousness of guilt, and said, Master, is it I of whom Thou speakest ? He said unto him, It is as thou hast said. And after the sop had been eaten by Judas, Satan entered into him more completely than before ; and, as the Council of rulers was yet sitting, he was on the point of proceeding to accomplish his purpose : Then said Jesus unto him,—to convince him that all his plans were perfectly known and understood,—That which thou doest, do quickly. Now as these words were unintelligible to the rest, no man at the table knew for what immediate intent He spake this unto him : for some of them thought, that, because Judas had the bag<sup>d</sup> which contained their little store of money, Jesus had in effect said unto him, Buy without delay those sacrifices and other things that we have need of against the remainder of the feast ; or, that he should give something to the poor,<sup>e</sup> which it was customary to do on these occasions.—He then, having thus received the sop, went immediately out to effect his purpose : and it was then night.

Therefore, when he was gone out, and thus the preliminary step towards the betrayal was taken, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man about to be glorified<sup>f</sup> by that Exaltation which shall succeed His sufferings ; and God is equally glorified in Him, making manifest the Divine justice, and wisdom, and goodness, in finishing the great work of Redemption. And if God be glorified in Him, the mutual relation between the Father and the Son must be perfect : God shall also glorify Him even in and with Himself ;<sup>g</sup> (4) and moreover He shall straightway,—even in the midst of all His sufferings,—glorify Him both by signs on earth and from heaven.<sup>h</sup>

Little children,<sup>(2)</sup> Yet a little while longer I am with you ; ye shall seek Me in vain : and, as I said unto the Jews,<sup>1</sup> Whither I go, ye cannot come ; so now I say to you : Your work on earth remains unfinished, and ye cannot as yet ascend to the place of My destination. As a departing friend, who would leave behind Him the firmest bond of

<sup>d</sup> Judas had the bag, and bare what was put therein. John xii. 6.

<sup>e</sup> — days of feasting and joy, and of sending gifts to the poor. Esth. ix. 22.

<sup>f</sup> We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. Heb. ii. 9.

He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross : wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him. Phil. ii. 8, 9.

<sup>g</sup> Jesus said, Father, the hour is come : glorify Thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify Thee : glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. John xvii. 1, 5.

<sup>h</sup> And there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour : and the sun was darkened, and the veil of the Temple was rent in the midst. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. Luke xxiii. 44, 45, 47.

<sup>1</sup> Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me ; and where I am, thither ye cannot come. John vii. 33, 34.

(4) *Glorify Him in Himself.*] If the words "in Himself" be here referred to the Son, the same truth is conveyed ; for the glory is still His own, though given by the Father. It cannot be determined which is the more correct sense, but that given above with the text seems preferable.

(2) *Little children.*] This common appellation, expressive of affection (especially parental), was applied among the ancients by teachers to their

pupils, and also by superiors generally to inferiors. The term "children" is often given to Christians, implying that the Divine Being sustains towards the faithful the endearing relation of Father : See particularly Rom. viii. 14, 15. At Gal. iv. 19, St. Paul uses the precise expression in the text. St. John, the Evangelist by whom it is here employed, has adopted it no less than seven times in his first Epistle.

Y



<sup>k</sup> Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Gal. vi. 10.

Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him. 1 John v. 1.

<sup>l</sup> Jesus saith unto Peter, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee, whither thou wouldest not. —This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God. John xxi. 17, 19.

Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, as the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. 2 Pet. i. 14.

*strength and consolation, I give this as a new Commandment* <sup>(4)</sup> unto you:—That, as *Christian brethren*, ye love one another: *if possible, as disinterestedly and affectionately* as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.<sup>k</sup> *Let mutual love become the distinguishing badge of your profession; for by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

Simon Peter, *surprised at his Master's announcement of so soon leaving them*, said unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou *that we cannot follow Thee?* Jesus answered Him, Whither I go, thou canst not (*art unable to*) follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterwards<sup>l</sup> <sup>(5)</sup> *both to death and to glory.* But Peter answered and said unto Him, Lord, why cannot I follow Thee *even now?* Though all men shall be offended *and fall away* because of Thee, yet will I never be offended: I am ready, Lord, to go with Thee *this moment*, both into prison and to death; I will *cheerfully* lay down my life for Thy sake.

Jesus answered and saith unto him, Peter, *thou little knowest thine own inherent weakness*: wilt thou *indeed* lay down thy life for My sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, That this day, even in this *very* night, before the cock crow twice <sup>(6)</sup> (*before the time of cock-crowing*), thou, —*even thou, self-confident as thou art*,— shalt thrice deny that thou *so much as* knowest Me. But Peter *now* spake the more vehemently <sup>(7)</sup>, and said unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny (*disown*) Thee in any wise. Likewise also said all the disciples.

(<sup>4</sup>) *A new Commandment.*] The command of neighbourly, or universal love, does not seem to be intended here (although *that* was a renewed command enforced by new motives, and had been in a manner abrogated by universal disuse). St. John expressly says elsewhere, that philanthropy or universal love is "*no new commandment*" (see 1 John ii. 7—10; iii. 11; 2 John 5.). The virtue *here* so strongly recommended and enjoined, seems to be *brotherly love among Christians*: the disciples of Christ are especially called upon "*to love one another*;" and the Evangelist, in one of his Epistles, makes the assurance of our being in Christ to depend on the performance of this particular duty (1 John iii. 14). In countries where all profess Christianity, the two virtues are apt to be confounded, but St. Peter carefully marks the distinction, "*Add to brotherly kindness, charity*;" "*Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves*" (1 Pet. iv. 8; 2 Pet. i. 7).—In fulfilment of the words in the text, "*By this shall all men know*," &c., we learn from Tertullian, that this *was* the mark and means by which the disciples of Jesus were known in early days; and it became a common remark among their enemies, "*See how these Christians love one another!*" We learn from Tradition, that the beloved Disciple, who records this beautiful discourse, was accustomed

to be carried in his old age to church, and being no longer capable of preaching, would merely say, "*Little children, love one another!*" when asked why he always dwelt on the same theme, he replied, "*Because it is the Lord's command, and if this be done, it is sufficient.*"

(<sup>5</sup>) *Thou canst not follow Me now, but, &c.*] Peter, notwithstanding the warmth and loyalty of affection which prompted his reply, had not as yet the martyr's spirit; but our Lord's prediction, here first obscurely intimated, of Peter's dying like Himself on the Cross, was afterwards literally fulfilled. See Section CXXXVIII., Note 6.

(<sup>6</sup>) *Before the cock crow twice.*] St. Mark alone speaks of the cock crowing *twice*. A double crowing of this vigilant bird is spoken of by ancient authors; one at midnight, and the other (more emphatically called "*cock-crowing*") to which the three Evangelists refer, at break of day. St. Mark particularly records that the cock crew after Peter's first denial, and again a second time after his third denial (see Mark xiv. 68—72): thus the three denials had taken place before the regular "*cock-crowing*" in the morning.

(<sup>7</sup>) *Peter spake the more vehemently.*] Peter still relied on his own strength, instead of asking, as he ought to have done, the necessary aid of Him, from whom all human sufficiency is derived. Hence we learn, how ignorant of themselves

## SECTION CXVIII.

JESUS INSTITUTES THE SACRAMENT OF HIS BODY AND BLOOD;  
AND CONSOLES HIS DISCIPLES WITH THE PROMISE OF ANOTHER  
COMFORTER.

*Matt.* xxvi. 26—30. *Mark* xiv. 22—26. *Luke* xxii. 15—20.  
*John* xiv. 1—31.

AND He said unto them, With *earnest* desire I have desired<sup>(1)</sup> to eat this passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, *That, after this*, I will not any more eat thereof, until it (*this paschal type*) be fulfilled<sup>a</sup> in the Kingdom of God, *and become changed into reality by the oblation of the true Paschal Lamb, redeeming all men from spiritual bondage.*<sup>b</sup> And, *after the other usual ceremonies had been performed*, He took the cup<sup>(2)</sup> of thanksgiving, with which the feast commenced, and gave thanks, and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come, *and I partake of it with you after a new and a spiritual manner.*

<sup>a</sup> Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us. 1 Cor. v. 7.

<sup>b</sup> — that through death He might deliver them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Heb. ii. 14, 15.

And as they were yet eating, *though about to finish supper*, Jesus took bread, and gave thanks<sup>(3)</sup> [*blessed God, MARK*], and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, *Take and eat; this bread is (represents) My body,*<sup>(4)</sup>

men are; and that, to be virtuous, it is not enough merely to form resolutions. We learn also that violent impulse is not the same as firm determination, and that religious excitement may fail in producing ultimate obedience. Too often does such mere excitement of the feelings usurp the place of practical efforts to serve God; and, unhappily, such notions form a part of the popular theology of our own day. It is true that emotion is often the first stirring of Divine Grace, but it is not therefore the highest state of the Christian mind. Such feelings come and go; and that man alone has perfect peace, and is free from all agitated feelings, whose mind is calmly stayed on God (Isa. xxvi. 3). It is observable, that our Blessed Lord set no example of passionate devotion, of enthusiastic wishes, or of intemperate words: a deep tranquillity and a calm simplicity pervaded His whole character.

(1) *With desire I have desired.*] This was a Hebrew mode of expression. It occurs at Gen. xxxi. 30, and in the Septuagint Version Laban addresses Jacob in the same Greek phrase which is here employed by St. Luke.

(2) *And He took the cup, &c.*] Some ceremonies usually preceded this act. First, the rite was explained to any young persons present. Psalms were then said or sung, particularly the 118th, as significant of the coming of Christ. There were, altogether, four cups of wine passed round; the first being the cup of thanksgiving, the one here alluded to. That which they called

“the cup of blessing,” (equivalent to our saying Grace) is the one which is supposed to have been advanced by our Lord into the Cup commemorative of His death. See 1 Cor. x. 16.

(3) *Gave thanks.*] In some editions of St. Matthew's Gospel there is predominant evidence for the same original expression which St. Luke here employs. Hence the name which this Rite afterwards received, as a “Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.” The Sacramental blessing, 1 Cor. x. 16, is at 1 Cor. xi. 24 interpreted by the giving of thanks.

(4) *This is My body.*] It is remarkable that this is the only expression used on one single occasion, which is recorded separately, by each Evangelist, in the same words. Our Lord uses a figure, because the language in which He spake has no verb equivalent to our “signify” or “represent.” The Scriptures usually speak thus in Sacramental matters: thus the lamb is called “the Passover” (Exod. xii. 11), though it was only the sign of it. At Gen. xli. 26, “the seven ears of corn are seven years.” The Apostles would be accustomed to such phrases, and therefore would readily understand the Bread as representing the body of Christ. It is objected, that the pronoun “This,” being of the neuter gender in the Greek of the Evangelist, cannot agree with “Bread,” which is of the masculine; but similar modes of writing occur in the best Greek tragedians, and the same pronoun employed here is applied by one of them to a woman (see Soph. Antig. ii. 650—1 ex Recens. Brunck). St. Paul twice

\* The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner, also, He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. 1 Cor. xi. 23—26.

speaks of the material substance as being *still* Bread after its consecration; and our Lord says of the Wine, that it was still "the fruit of the vine," and so not changed, substantially, into His blood. Common sense seems to require the figurative interpretation; for otherwise, our Lord must have held Himself in his own hands, and it might as reasonably be argued that He was literally "a door" (John x. 9), or "a vine," as He had typified Himself on the same evening. Even a heathen could see the absurdity of such a line of argument: "When we call wine Bacchus, and our grain Ceres," writes Cicero, "we only use a common figure of speech; but can you suppose any person so silly as to believe that what he feeds upon is God?" (*Ecquem tam amentem esse putas, qui illud quo vescalur Deum credat esse?* De Natura Deorum, lib. iii. n. 28.)

It is upon the *literal* interpretation of our Lord's words, that the repulsive and untenable dogma of *Transubstantiation* has been built by the Roman Church—thus completely overthrowing the very nature of a Sacrament, which "consists of a sign and of the thing it signifies." According to the Romish view, the bread and wine, on consecration, lose their own substance and become the body and blood of Christ; but as they still appear to be the same as before consecration, this hypothesis is helped out by another, that though the *substance* be changed, the *accidents* or *qualities* remain. The Council of Trent defined, in as plain terms as could be used, that "the very God we worship" is eaten in this Sacrament (Concil. Trid., Sess. 13, cap. 5). Scripture, to which they venture to appeal, (though Bellarmine, their most eminent controversialist, grants that the doctrine *cannot* be proved from it,) appears most decisive against them. The reason why Moses compelled the Jews to drink of the golden calf beaten to powder, seems to have been (as Jerome observes) "that they might learn to condemn what went down into the draught;" and Jeremiah informs the captive Jews, that the Babylonians worshipped what afterwards they would eat, by which it might be known they were "no gods." Our Lord's declaration to the Apostles, (at a supper previous to this,) "that they would not continue to have Him bodily present among them, as they had the poor" (see Matt. xxvi. 11), seems alone sufficient to destroy the doctrine of Transubstantiation.—But the appeal is chiefly made to Tradition. Certainly some few of the Fathers have expressed themselves in what, with our experience, we should term *incautious* language; but some of the most eminent, when they had occasion to refute an imputation of heathen objectors, "that the Christians ate human flesh," reject that imputation as a vile and abominable calumny: Justin Martyr says in his Apology, "It is an infamous thing, and falsely is reported of us;" Irenæus, that it was "a plain mistake to think the Sacrament was really Christ's flesh and blood;" and Origen, that "the understanding our Saviour's words according to the *letter*, is a

letter that killeth" (Homily on Lev. x.). From Transubstantiation has proceeded the belief of what is technically called *opus operatum*—which is, that the Body and the Blood of Christ possess an intrinsic value, not depending on the disposition of the receiver, but operating on all who do not obstruct the operation by mortal sin: it is difficult to conceive a tenet more destructive to the soul, for its obvious tendency is to substitute the *form* of religion for its power. Another fatal consequence of the whole doctrine is an *undue* exaltation of the minister's office; for a victim requires a sacrificer, and he who is thought able to convert a wafer into a God, comes to be regarded with more reverence than is due from one fallible mortal to another; thus, too, is eclipsed the glory of the Intercessory office of our Lord, the only Priest (in the *proper* acceptation of that term) of the New Covenant; and Christians are brought back, by an unexpected road, to a Levitical priesthood and the elements of the Law.

(<sup>3</sup>) *This do in remembrance of Me.*] All denominations of Christians (with the solitary exception of the Quakers) comply with this demand of the Saviour; and though some may exalt it too high, and many more *degrade it too low*, it is generally retained as an indispensable part of Divine Service. It is, indeed, the proper and distinguishing act of our religion, the great appointed means of Renovation and Remission of our sins, and the badge of Christian men's profession; for though we may attend a place of worship, we cannot be considered as members of the Church, unless we comply with this last command of its Founder. It pleased Him to unite His people into one Society by two Sacraments,—both easy to be observed, and both most important in their meaning: the one, Baptism, admits into covenant with Him; the other, a devout commemoration of His death, marks continuance in it. If the view be correct that the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel is an *anticipation* of this Sacrament, which many good and learned men have considered it to be, the 53rd verse deserves the serious attention of every Christian (see Section LXIII., latter part of Note 11).—The lamentable infrequency of communion must arise from some misconception either of its nature, or of the qualifications of a communicant. Many hastily apply to themselves the language of St. Paul, who had occasion to reprove the Corinthians for perverting this solemn feast into an occasion of intemperance (1 Cor. xi.): he tells them (ver. 29), that they ate and drank to themselves "damnation;" but that this by no means refers to *eternal* punishment is evident from the context: it signifies no more than condemnation and temporal visitations in *this* world. No one can now be guilty of not distinguishing the Lord's Supper from a common meal; and the very fear which keeps such persons away from this Sacrament, is a proof that they would not willingly receive it in an unworthy manner.—As to preparation, the feeblest

of My death, until I come again to judge the world. And likewise also, after Supper, He took the Cup,<sup>d</sup> called the Cup of Blessing, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:<sup>(6)</sup> and accordingly they all drank of it: For,—He said in continuation unto them,—the wine contained in this cup is (represents) My blood—even the blood of the Sacrifice slain for the ratification of the New Testament<sup>e</sup> <sup>(7)</sup> [is the seal of the New Testament, or Covenant, established in My blood, LUKE], which is to be shed for you, and for many<sup>f</sup> (for multitudes—even for the whole world), for the remission of sins. But verily I say again unto you, Henceforth I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it in a new and spiritual manner with you in the Kingdom of God, My Father.<sup>g</sup> <sup>(8)</sup>

Let not your heart be troubled at what I have said to you of My departure, and of your own impending trials: believe ye in God, and believe also in Me as One with Him, —placing your entire trust in the Divine promises. In My

<sup>d</sup> The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ. 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>e</sup> Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Jer xxxi. 31.

<sup>f</sup> The Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many. Matt. xx. 28.

<sup>g</sup> If any man hear My voice; I will come in to him; and will sup with him, and he with Me. Rev. iii. 20.

aspiration after holiness is a sufficient warrant for us to come, for all such desires are excited in us by the Holy Spirit, in order that we may be drawn to God. That degree of goodness unto which some would attain before receiving the Holy Communion, is not to be had but by the use of it: it is not proposed as a reward for our being good,—any more than it is a proof of our being so,—but as a means of making us good.

<sup>(6)</sup> Drink ye all of it.] Though nothing can be more plain than that these words concern all believers, yet that Church, which exclusively arrogates the title of Catholic, has by authority, since the year 1414, taken away the cup from the laity. In the fifth century, Pope Gelasius, having heard that the Manichæans partook not of the cup, decided that any dividing of the Sacrament was a sacrilegious violation of the Saviour's positive command. Pope Leo, fifty years previous, had expressed a similar opinion.

When we consider that it was an ancient custom to drink wine, instead of blood, for the ratifying of covenants, we are led to regard the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as more than a mere commemoration, although we cannot, with the Romanist, regard it as a real sacrifice. It is a federal rite, carrying with it on God's part the force of a contract; that (fit qualification on our part being presumed) this symbolical communion shall be as a deed of conveyance instrumentally investing us with the benefits of Christ's death, and conveying spiritual grace. If we make this Supper a mere commemoration, we make it a strange and unintelligible rite (for what can be more strange than eating the flesh of one who is only to be regarded as a benefactor?); but conceive it to be "a Feast upon a Sacrifice," and all is easy and simple.

The Lord's Supper is called the *Sacrament* (from the Latin word for the military oath which bound the Roman soldier), because it pledges the participant to allegiance and obedience to his Master, "who has bought him with a price,"—

"whose he is," and under whose banner as a faithful soldier he is to serve. It is also called (from the Greek) the *Eucharist*, because the act which it represents demands above all others our gratitude. Lastly, it is called the *Communion*, because, as St. Paul expresses it (1 Cor. x. 17), we are therein partakers of the same bread, and, whatever be our external differences, are to regard ourselves as members of one family, of which Christ is the head.

<sup>(7)</sup> *New Testament*.] The word "Testament" commonly signifies "a will;" and though we are used to the title as designating the Scriptures, it tends to obscure the subject. It is inapplicable to the Old Covenant, in which no contracting party died; and though, with respect to the Christian Covenant, the meritorious death of our Saviour may seem to justify the term, it is not strictly correct. The term *Dispensation* seems the most suitable between parties infinitely unequal.

<sup>(8)</sup> *When I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of God, my Father*.] The Future State of Bliss is often represented by the image of a Feast.—To the promise which was made to the Apostles of sitting on thrones in the Regeneration (see Section C., Note 7), our Lord afterwards added, that they should "eat and drink at His table in His kingdom." Under the same view, the passage in the text may be understood of a distinguished pre-eminence and felicity promised to the Apostles,—expressed in a manner suitable to their Jewish notions and prepossessions (see Section LXXXVI., Note 4).—It should, however, be noticed, that some have considered this passage to be an allusion to our Lord's *Spiritual Presence* with the faithful in the Holy Communion. It is urged, that this was the last time when this Commemorative Supper should represent the Egyptian Passover; thenceforward it was to take a new signification, becoming the memorial of that more noble Sacrifice, of which the deliverance from Egyptian bondage was but a type.

Father's house are many mansions<sup>(9)</sup> (*Heaven contains ample space and abiding dwelling-places*) for the reward of all the faithful: if it were not so, as the Sadducees pretend, I would have told you; I would not have deceived you with vain expectations, or have suffered you to give up all that you hold dear in this life, for the endurance of persecution: but I die to open heaven to you, and go now before to prepare a place for you.<sup>h</sup> And if (when) I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again at the Judgment-day, and receive you unto Myself, that ye may be partakers of My joy, and that where I am, there ye may be also.<sup>i</sup> And whither I go ye know, and the way which leadeth thither, so that ye may follow, ye know also, for I have often told you of both.

But although they had been told so frequently that He should go to the Father, and that the way for them to follow was by Faith in Him, their thoughts were still dwelling on a temporal kingdom: and Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how then can we know anything of the way? Jesus saith unto Him, I am the Way by which every man must seek heaven; and the Truth,<sup>k</sup> for I alone teach it; and the Life,<sup>l(10)</sup> for I am the Author and Giver of it. No man cometh unto the Father in those heavenly mansions, but by receiving Me<sup>m</sup> as his Guide. If ye had fully known Me, and had duly considered My doctrine and miracles, ye should have known My Father also, who has been so plainly manifested in them; and from henceforth ye know Him in Me, and have as it were seen Him.

Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father in some glorious symbol of His presence, such as Moses was permitted to behold, and then it sufficeth (that will amply satisfy) us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time (more than three years) constantly with you, Philip, and yet hast thou not known Me, and discovered My true character? I tell you once again, He that hath seen Me, hath in effect seen the Father;<sup>n</sup> for the Son of God is "very God, the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His Person." And how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father, as if thou hadst never seen any manifestation of Him at all? Believest thou not in that essential union and mutual in-dwelling which I have

<sup>h</sup> Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterwards. John xiii. 30.

<sup>i</sup> Where I am, there shall also My servant be. John xii. 26.  
— so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 17.

<sup>k</sup> Truth came by Jesus Christ. John i. 17.

<sup>l</sup> In Him was Life. John i. 4.  
Jesus said, I am the Life. John xi. 25.

<sup>m</sup> I am the Door; if any man enter in by Me, he shall be saved. John x. 9.

<sup>n</sup> We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John i. 14.

He that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me. John xii. 45.

His dear Son, who is the image of the invisible God. Col. i. 15.

(9) In My Father's house are many mansions.] Tertullian thought that this referred to Degrees of Bliss in Heaven, and such is the common view taken of the text; but it is not supported by sufficient authority, true as that doctrine undoubtedly is in itself (see Section CII., Note 9). Some have thought that by the expression, "My Father's House," the Universe is designated, where God is everywhere present, and which contains abodes far more desirable for Christians than their present earthly dwelling-place. But the assurance of a permanent and abundant re-

ward in heaven, sufficient for all men if they would seek for it, appears to be all that is here intended.—Our Lord sometimes called the Temple "His Father's House;" and as it was noted for its numerous chambers, there may be an indirect allusion to the circumstance.

(10) I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.] This, perhaps, is a Hebraism; and if so, it may be simply rendered, "I am the true and living Way." Thus Daniel (iii. 7) writes, "All the people, the nations, and the languages," for "The people of all nations and languages."

so often revealed to you—that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?° *There is between Us a perfect community of counsel and power: the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself<sup>p</sup> alone; and the works that I do, I do not of Myself alone; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, by the Holy Spirit, He also concurrently speaketh the words and doeth the works.*¶ Believe Me, as you surely may even on My own testimony, that I am thus in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else, *if thou believest not for My sake, believe Me for the very works' sake,<sup>r</sup> when those works so manifestly proceed from God.* Verily, verily, I say unto you, *There shall be displayed yet more complete manifestations of the Divine Power: he among you that believeth in Me, the like wonderful works that I do, shall he do also; and, for the more effectual propagation of the Gospel, he shall do works even greater in their result than these,<sup>s(11)</sup> because I go unto My Father to send down that power which shall enable him to do them.* And whatsoever ye shall ask for the furtherance of the great work committed to you,—remembering always to ask it in My name,<sup>t</sup>—that will I do, or enable you to do, that the Father may still be glorified here in the Son after His Ascension into heaven. *Let this then be your never-failing encouragement: if ye shall ask anything, be it what it may, in My name, I will assuredly do it.*<sup>u</sup>

If ye indeed love Me, *shew that such is your disposition, and keep My commandments: v for love is but the seed; holiness is the fruit.* And if you thus evince your fidelity, I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter,<sup>(12)</sup> that He may abide with you, not for a time

hath made this man strong. Acts iii. 12, 16.—And now, Lord, grant unto Thy servants, that signs and wonders may be done by the name of Thy holy child, Jesus. Acts iv. 29, 30.

° All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Matt. xxi. 22.

¶ — shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments. Exod. xx. 6.—Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John xv. 14.—This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. I John v. 3.

° God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. 2 Cor. v. 19.

In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. ii. 19.

¶ He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. John iii. 34.

I speak that which I have seen with My Father. John viii. 38.

¶ No man can do these miracles that Thou doest except God be with him. John iii. 2.

¶ The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me. John v. 36.

If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not: but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I in Him. John x. 37, 38.

° And these signs shall follow them that believe: . . . . they shall speak with new tongues. Mark xvi. 17.

¶ Ye men of Israel, why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? . . . . His name, through faith in His name,

(11) *He shall do works greater than these.*] The miracles wrought by the Apostles were not essentially greater; for although diseases were healed by Peter's shadow, and by napkins sent from Paul's body, no miracles could possibly be so illustrious as those performed by our Lord: yet in their effects the works of the Apostles were permitted to be greater. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel became spread abroad in the most astonishing manner, thousands being converted by a single sermon (Acts ii. 40, 41). The Apostles had the wonderful gift of Tongues as well as of Prophecy, with the power of imparting the same to others; yet such gifts, of course, demonstrate the power, not of the agent, but of the Great Giver of them. It was a greater work in Jesus, while in Heaven, to assist them thus powerfully by His Spirit, than to do miracles personally, however great, in their presence.

(12) *I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.*] Though the original

word *Paraclete* includes other important senses, it is not inaptly rendered "*Comforter*" in this *Consolatory* discourse; and the word seems invariably used in the same sense in the Septuagint. St. John alone employs it in the New Testament; and in his writings, it further bears the sense of *Instructor*: likewise the very important one of *Advocate*, or *Intercessor*—that is, one who undertakes to act effectually for another, and to plead his cause. In this sense it would seem that the Jews understood the term.—Thus in Scripture we have the Son and the Spirit called by the same title, and the same office of *Intercession* is ascribed to each (compare Rom. viii. 26 with Heb. vii. 25 and I John ii. 1); but then they are *Advocates* in different courts,—the Son pleading His own merits for us in His Father's Presence,—the Spirit, as His vicegerent, pleading with men, and having for His province the human heart.

In this discourse, recorded by St. John (ch. xiv.) we have several remarkable illustrations of the truth of the Trinity, and of the Divinity of the

<sup>w</sup> When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth. John xvi. 13.

<sup>x</sup> The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

<sup>y</sup> Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matt. xxviii. 20.

<sup>z</sup> If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. Mark xvi. 18.

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 2 Cor. iv. 9, 10.

<sup>a</sup> Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

Though He was crucified, yet He liveth: for we also shall live with Him by the power of God. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

<sup>b</sup> That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us. John xvii. 21.

And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. 1 Cor. iii. 23.

<sup>c</sup> — Judas, the brother of James; and Judas Iscariot. Luke vi. 16.

*only as I have done, but for ever; even the Blessed Spirit of Truth,<sup>w</sup> the author of all Truth and the impartor of it; whom the corrupt and unbelieving world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him<sup>x</sup> (it hath neither any perception nor knowledge of Spiritual things); but ye already know Him in part, for He dwelleth with you, and hath wrought by you, and shall soon be in you more abundantly. I will not leave you comfortless,—as destitute orphans who have lost their earthly guide and protector: I will come again to you by My Spirit, and remain with you for ever.<sup>y</sup> Yet a little while longer, and then the world seeth Me no more; but ye shall see Me, and shall know experimentally that I am present with you. Because I rise from the dead and live, ye shall live<sup>z</sup> also: in the midst of all your worldly perils and persecutions, “no man shall set on you to hurt you,” except in so far as I may permit; and you shall live for ever in eternity.<sup>a</sup> At that day, when I send the Comforter, ye shall know, in all its reality and without a shadow of doubt, how intimate and inseparable is the union between the Father and Me, and also between the Son, as the great Christian Head, and His members—that I am indeed in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.<sup>b</sup> But bear constantly in mind that the indispensable condition of such high privileges is Obedience,—a principle ever inseparably connected with true Love: he that hath My commandments in remembrance, and diligently keepeth them, he it is that really loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I also will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.*

Judas,<sup>c</sup>—not Iscariot, for he, though his heart was the most set on temporal things, was too finished a hypocrite ever to speak openly of them; but Jude, the brother of James,—saith unto Him, interrupting His discourse, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not

Holy Spirit. At ver. 16 of the chapter, our Lord promises the Comforter (“which,” as He afterwards distinctly says, “is the Holy Ghost,” ver. 26), to abide with His disciples for ever; but He goes on to speak of Himself as the Comforter who would so come to them (ver. 18); and soon after, speaking of the Father's love to the faithful Christian, He adds, “We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him” (ver. 23).—Again, the words, “I will pray the Father, &c.” show us the distinct Persons of the Godhead in their several offices; the Son as Redeemer entreating for us, the Father granting, and the Spirit coming for our consolation.—At the 17th verse we have the Spirit described as dwelling in the faithful: the same is said of the Father (1 Cor. xiv. 25), and of the Son (2 Cor. xiii. 5).—At the 26th verse, the title of Holy is ascribed to the Spirit: the same is said of the Father (Rev. xv. 4), and of the Son (Acts iii. 14). The Spirit is shown to be

the Spirit of the Father (Matt. x. 20), and the Spirit of the Son (Rom. viii. 9; Gal. iv. 6; 1 Pet. i. 11).—In other parts of Scripture the names of God are as clearly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. When St. Peter condemns Ananias for lying to the Holy Ghost, he tells him that he had “lied unto God” (Acts v. 4); and St. Paul tells the Corinthians that “the Lord is that Spirit” (2 Cor. iii. 17). All the Attributes of the Deity are spoken of as equally pertaining to the Holy Ghost: He is Omniscient, for He “searcheth all things” (1 Cor. ii. 10), and “guideth into all truth” (John xvi. 13); He is Omnipresent, for the Psalmist enquires, “Whither could he go from the Spirit?” He is Eternal, for He existed before the world was made (Gen. i. 2).—It may be added, that, in all ages of the Church, Divine honours have been paid to the Third Person in the Holy Trinity, equally with the Father and the Son.

also unto the world, seeing that Thou art to reign over all nations? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man really love Me, he will, as I was observing to you, keep My words, and will prove their influence by his actions; and then My Father will love him, and We will both come unto him, and by the in-dwelling Spirit make Our continued abode with him:<sup>d</sup> and thus will there be an effectual manifestation of Myself—although a Spiritual one—to the faithful Christian, which cannot be vouchsafed to the world.<sup>e</sup> He that is worldly and loveth Me not, keepeth not My sayings, and therefore cannot be loved either by My Father or Myself: and what I declare and teach may well demand the attention and diligent observance of every man, for the Word which ye hear Me speak is not Mine alone, but it is the Father's which sent Me; and thus he that rejects Me and My doctrine, rejects the Father also.<sup>f</sup>

These things have I spoken unto you, My faithful followers, for your consolation and instruction, being yet present with you. You will not perfectly comprehend them now; but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send to act in My name and for My cause, He shall teach you all things<sup>g</sup> necessary and important for you to know, and shall bring to your remembrance<sup>h</sup> all things,<sup>(12)</sup> whatsoever they may be that I have said unto you, in order that you may teach others. Peace I now leave with you, even that Peace of the Holy Spirit "which passeth all understanding." My Peace,<sup>i</sup>—for it can only be obtained through Me,—I give and bequeath unto you, as My best and parting legacy: not as the world giveth,—in unmeaning forms and with ineffectual wishes,—give I unto you; but solid and lasting peace of mind conferred by an efficacious blessing. Therefore let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (neither be disheartened nor intimidated) at any thing which shall henceforth occur. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away to My Father, and, as I added for your consolation, I come again unto you: if ye loved Me with a right affection, ye would rejoice for My sake because I said, I go to My Father; for I am here as Mediator, in respect to which office My Father is greater than I,<sup>(14)</sup> but I go hence

<sup>d</sup> Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Cor. iii. 16.

In Whom ye also are builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph. ii. 22.

<sup>e</sup> The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can be. Rom. viii. 7.

<sup>f</sup> Ye have not His Word abiding in you; for whom He hath sent, Him ye believe not. John v. 38.

<sup>g</sup> When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth. He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. John xvi. 13, 14.

We speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

<sup>h</sup> Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 1 John ii. 20.

<sup>i</sup> These things understood not His disciples at the first, but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they these things. John xii. 16.

<sup>j</sup> Being justified by faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1. He is our Peace. Eph. ii. 14.

(12) And bring to your remembrance all things.] Wonderfully has Divine Providence watched over the important Doctrines taught by the Apostles, though not, indeed, over the particular words by which they were conveyed. Verbal differences are immaterial when the spirit is one: for the Spirit of God is more careful to guide the thoughts of the heart than the words of the lips. And, in fact, the exact words of the Apostles are now lost to us, for no two ancient copies correspond *verbatim* throughout. But this is no subject for serious regret. The readings of various copies, written in countries

widely distant, sufficiently establish a correct text. The number of copies alarms some; but the probability of restoring the genuine text of any author increases with the number of copies, and the most inaccurate and mutilated editions of ancient writers are precisely those of which the fewest manuscripts remain.—To point to a comparatively modern instance, it has only been by collation of copies that the text of Shakespeare, who wrote *since* the invention of printing, has been recovered from a very corrupt state.

(14) My Father is greater than I.] As the Athanasian Creed expressly states, Christ is



*from this world of sorrow to share the glory which I had with Him before the world began. And now I have unreservedly told you of My sufferings and death, as well as of the Comforter who is to come, before it all come to pass; that, when it is come to pass, ye might not be taken by surprise, and that, instead of wavering in your faith under the trials that befall you, ye might believe yet more firmly that I am the Son of God, invested with all knowledge and power both in heaven and in earth.*

\* Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. John xii. 31.

† He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. ii. 8.

Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. Heb. v. 8.

I will (*I shall*) not have opportunity to talk much with you hereafter (*after this*); for Satan the prince (*the ruler*) of this world shortly cometh to encounter and make a final effort against Me; and yet he hath nothing in Me<sup>k</sup> (*no power over Me*) as he hath with sinful men. But I freely yield up Myself to death, that the world may know that I truly love the Father: and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do,<sup>l</sup> proving My love by My perfect submission to His will.—Arise, let us now go hence.

And when they had sung an hymn<sup>(15)</sup> (a psalm, MARG.) of thanksgiving, which it was customary to do at the conclusion of the Paschal feast, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

## SECTION CXIX.

### AT THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, JESUS AGAIN URGES SOME FINAL INSTRUCTIONS ON HIS APOSTLES.

*Matt. xxvi. 31, 32. Mark xiv. 27, 28. Luke xxii. 31, 32, 35—40. John xv. 1—27; xvi. 1—33.*

AND thus He came out from the house in which they had eaten the Passover, and went, as He was wont, to the Mount of Olives;<sup>a</sup> and His eleven disciples also followed Him. And when He was at the place, He said unto them, *The time of trial is now close at hand: pray that ye enter not into any temptation which may overcome you. And the Lord said unto Peter,—whose infirmity more especially*

\* At night He went out, and abode in the Mount that is called the Mount of Olives. Luke xxi. 37.

"inferior to the Father as touching His manhood, but equal to the Father as touching His Godhead;" that is, equal as to essence, not of course as to Original, for the Father is the fountain of the Deity—not God of any other, but of Himself. "In the very name of Father (writes Pearson on the Creed) there is something of eminence which is not in that of Son: some kind of priority we must ascribe unto Him whom we call the First, in respect of Him whom we term the Second Person; and as we cannot but ascribe, so must we endeavour to preserve it" (consult 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28).—The very mention, however, of such a

comparison by our Lord Himself, shows that He was not, as the Socinian contends, simply a man.

(<sup>15</sup>) *And when they had sung an hymn.*] According to the Original text, the psalm might have been either recited or sung: the latter is more probable. In order that they might sing together, it must have been a hymn well known to them, and no doubt was the *Hallel*, comprising the Paschal Psalms, from the 113th to the 118th, in which are mentioned the Sorrows of the Messiah and the Resurrection from the Dead. We find a Christian hymn spoken of (Acts iv. 24).

needed caution, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired, and hath obtained his desire, to have all of you<sup>b</sup> in his power, that, like as wheat is shaken in a sieve,<sup>c</sup> he may sift and distract you by his temptations. But, as thou in particular art over-confident, I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not<sup>d</sup> utterly; and when thou art converted (recovered from thy fall) and confirmed in thy duty, strengthen thy brethren,<sup>e</sup> (1) when subjected to the like temptations, by thy example of eminent faith for the future. Then saith Jesus unto them, addressing them collectively, All ye shall be offended (shall stumble and fall) because of what shall happen to Me this night: for it is written, and shall have an accomplishment in you, "I WILL SMITE THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED ABROAD" (see Zech. xiii. 7): that was said at first of an evil shepherd, but it shall be more completely verified when the Good and Great Shepherd of all the sheep is smitten. But you, My followers, shall recover your Guide and Pastor, for, after I am risen again, I will go before you<sup>f</sup> into Galilee.<sup>g</sup>

And He said unto them, Let your experience of the past strengthen you against the apprehension of future trials: When I sent you forth to preach the Gospel, without purse and scrip and shoes,<sup>h</sup> lacked ye anything? And they said, We lacked nothing. Then said He unto them, But now the times are different: he that hath a purse of money, let him take it with him, and likewise his scrip of provisions; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one, for so perilous will the time be, that, according to human calculation, it would appear the more needful of the two. For I say unto you, That this, that is so expressly written of the Messiah, must yet be accomplished in Me:<sup>i</sup>—"AND HE WAS RECKONED AMONG THE TRANSGRESSORS" (Isa. liii. 12). For all the things written concerning Me are to have an end (an accomplishment), and that of an ignominious death yet remains unfulfilled.—And they, supposing Him to have spoken literally of arming themselves, said, Lord, behold, here are, in any event, two swords for our protection. But He had only intended to impress on them the magnitude of the trials which were approaching, with the consequent necessity of faith and patience: and as they misconceived His object, and the

<sup>b</sup> And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he hath is in thy power. Job i. 12.

The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. v. 8.

<sup>c</sup> Lo, I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is silted in a sieve. Amos ix. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me. . . . I pray that Thou shouldst keep them from the Evil. John xvii. 11, 16.

<sup>e</sup> Jesus saith unto Peter, Feed My sheep. John xxi. 17.

<sup>f</sup> When the shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him. John x. 4.

<sup>g</sup> He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you. Mark xvi. 7.

<sup>h</sup> These twelve Jesus sent forth, saying, Provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither shoes. Matt. x. 5, 10.

<sup>i</sup> And with Him they crucify two thieves, the one on His right hand, and the other on His left: and the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, And He was numbered with the transgressors. Mark xv 27, 28.

(1) When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.] Peter was again enjoined, when receiving forgiveness after his fall, to prove his love and sincerity by a regard for the spiritual welfare of others. The same important lesson is taught to all Christians. Those who, to their own cost, have known the snares and stumbling blocks of sin, are the best able to point out to

others any coming danger and the evil consequence of a fall. In grateful thankfulness to Him who has raised them up, they are called upon to assist their brethren; and so, in some small measure, they may bear a part in the work so affectionately committed to the restored Apostle.

event would so soon correct the inference they had drawn, He dismissed the subject and said unto them, It is enough.<sup>(2)</sup>

After this the Lord continued His final instructions to His disciples:—I am the true Vine,—henceforth the source of all Spiritual nourishment to believers; and My Father is the Husbandman<sup>k</sup> who owns and tends this vineyard of the Christian Church. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away<sup>l</sup> entirely from the stem: like to such branches are all mere professors or useless members of the Church, whom, in His righteous judgments, God will remove from their place. And, on the other hand, every branch that beareth fruit or promiseth well, He purgeth (clears by pruning) it from those superfluous suckers that impair its growth, that so it may bring forth more and better fruit; for even the fruitful branch will sometimes need pruning, and, by fatherly chastisements, God corrects His faithful people, that they may become more and more holy. Thus is it with you; for, now that Judas is gone, ye are all in a measure clean<sup>m</sup> (purified) through the sanctifying influence of the Word which I have spoken unto you,<sup>n</sup> and fitted, like the pruned branches of a vine, to bring forth fruit.—Yet, lest your growth in grace should decay, be careful to preserve this spiritual union unbroken. Abide then, by a practical Faith, in Me,<sup>o</sup> and I will abide in you: for, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, or have any vitality, except it abide in its parent stock, the vine, no more (so neither, GR.) can ye bring forth the fruit of good works, or have any spiritual life, except ye abide in the true faith of Me, and in the practice of My religion. I am the Vine; ye are the branches grafted in, and receiving nourishment: he that abideth in Me by faith, and I in him by the Spirit, the same alone bringeth forth much fruit,<sup>p</sup> which is ever the surest evidence of vitality; for, without Me, ye, being cut off from the source of your spiritual life, can of yourselves do nothing<sup>q</sup> effectual for your salvation, and would eventually fall away. You see, then, that your fruitfulness depends altogether on this adherence and constancy: if a man, pro-

<sup>k</sup> Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Pa. lxxx. 8.

The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel. Isa. v. 7.

<sup>l</sup> If it bear fruit, well: and if not, after that, Thou shalt cut it down. Luke xiii. 9.

Faith without works is dead. Jas. ii. 26.

<sup>m</sup> Ye are clean, but not all (for He knew who should betray Him). John xiii. 10, 11.

<sup>n</sup> Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is Truth. John xvii. 17.

Christ also loved the Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. Eph. v. 26, 26.

<sup>o</sup> Continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard. Col. i. 23.

<sup>p</sup> From Me is thy fruit found. Hos. xiv. 8.

— filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ. Phil. i. 11.

<sup>q</sup> There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12.

Our sufficiency is of God. 2 Cor. iii. 5.

(<sup>2</sup>) *It is enough.*] Some have supposed that our Lord meant, "It is enough as to weapons of that sort,"—that is, as a sign of defence, though not of resistance. But He does not say, "Two swords are enough," and clearly they were not sufficient to arm eleven men, if resistance had been intended. The Saviour's pacific admonitions and practice on every occasion shew that His language cannot be so interpreted. According to the oriental custom of speaking by symbols, and also in agreement with the language of Prophecy, He signified how perilous the times would be, by representing what men commonly do to guard against danger. As the Apostles did not apprehend His

meaning, He concludes with a common Hebrew phrase, "It is enough (or, "That will do"—"It is very well"), which would be the natural reply of a kind master to a well-meaning but dull servant, and was used when one wished to stop the inopportune remarks of another. The same may be met with in classical writers.—It appears from the scene which followed in the Garden, that one of these swords was Peter's (for travellers from Galilee and Persæa carried them as a protection against the robbers), but he is expressly reprehended for using it as he did on that occasion (see Matthew xxvi. 51, 52).

*fessing to be My disciple, abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a sapless branch, and is soon withered; and as men gather dry sticks and cast them into the fire, and they are burned,<sup>r</sup> the like will be the awful end of all unfruitful members of the Church. But as for you, My chosen followers, if ye abide faithfully in Me, and My words abide in you, so that ye observe them in your practice as well as teach them to other men, ye shall ask what ye will for the furtherance of your great work, and, if it be asked in My name, it shall be done unto you (for you). For herein is My Father glorified, and for this purpose has He grafted you in, that in your Apostleship ye may bear much fruit:<sup>s</sup> So, by your resemblance to Me in this respect, shall ye appear unto all to be My genuine disciples; for the qualities of the parent stock will be perceived to be the qualities also of the branch.*

*Especially remember what I said to you respecting Mutual Love. I have set before you My own example of this distinguishing Christian virtue; for even as the Father hath loved Me, so affectionately and constantly have I loved you: continue ye in My love (still keep for yourselves this place in My affections). And reflect, that love is a principle of action: if ye keep My commandments, ye shall assuredly abide in My love;<sup>t</sup> even as I, according to the declaration of Moses, have kept all My Father's commandments,<sup>u</sup> and abide in His love. These things have I again spoken unto you, that My joy in you, on account of your fidelity, might remain undiminished, and that your joy in Me, on the assurance of retaining your place in My affections, might be full and complete.—This, then, is in a peculiar manner My commandment, which I solemnly enjoin on all Christians, That ye love one another in the same degree, if possible, as I have loved you. Mark well the measure of that love: My affection is manifested even unto the end; for greater love hath no man, nor can he give more decisive evidence of it, than this,—that a man lay down his life for the welfare of his friends:<sup>v</sup> this you must learn to imitate, for your lives will be endangered in promoting the Salvation of others.*

*Again: so ardently have I loved you, that, notwithstanding the immeasurable difference between us, I have taken you into a covenant of friendship with Me: for indeed ye are My friends,<sup>w</sup> and ye shall be esteemed and rewarded as such, if ye do whatsoever I command you: henceforth I call you not servants, nor treat you any longer with reserve,—for the servant commonly knoweth not the reason of what his lord doeth,—but I have now called you friends; for all things that I have heard and received in charge of My Father, such as are at present fit for you to know, I have*

<sup>r</sup> Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Matt. iii. 10.

That which beareth thorns and briers is rejected; whose end is to be burned. Heb. vi. 8.

<sup>s</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matt. v. 16.

<sup>t</sup> He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. 1 John iii. 24.

<sup>u</sup> I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. Deut. xviii. 18.

<sup>v</sup> Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: but God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom. v. 7, 8.

Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God. Eph. v. 2.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 1 John iii. 16.

<sup>w</sup> Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God. Jas. ii. 23.

freely made known unto you.—*And this is another proof of the confidence which I have reposed in you: I have made you the instruments of My glory and honour in the world: ye have not first chosen Me, as disciples ordinarily choose a master, but I have chosen you<sup>x</sup> (2) and ordained (appointed) you as My Apostles; that ye should go forth into the world, and bring forth fruit<sup>y</sup> by converting many to the Faith, and that your fruit should remain in a succession of Christians to the world's end. And thus it shall come to pass, that whatever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He may give it you.—Such has been the measure of My love towards you: and now these things I expressly command you, That ye love one another: indeed, mutual concord and goodwill are qualities absolutely essential to the success of your cause.*

*In the world you must expect to meet with opposition and persecution; but let not this deter you from the path of duty: if the world hate you,<sup>z</sup> ye know that it has hated Me when pursuing the same benevolent work, before it hated you: if My blameless life could not shield Me from persecution, neither can you expect to escape. If ye were followers of the world, and lived as the worldly do, the world would love his own: <sup>a</sup> but because ye are not of the world, but I have set you apart to lead a new life, and have chosen you out of the world to reprove its vices by your teaching and your practice, therefore the world hateth you.<sup>b</sup> Remember the word that I said unto you when I first sent you forth, The servant is not greater, and he cannot expect better treatment, than his Lord.<sup>c</sup> If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept My saying,—though upon that supposition alone,—they will keep your's also <sup>d</sup> when you declare to them the same thing: judge by the reception that My doctrine has met with, whether your's is at all likely to be better received. But all these things will they do unto you, not from any fault of yours, but for My name's sake<sup>e</sup> and on account of your attachment to Me; because they know not (are wilfully ignorant of) Him that sent Me. Their perverseness is inexcusable, for ample means have been vouchsafed that they might learn the truth: if indeed I had not come, and spoken unto them the will of My Father, they had not had the sin<sup>f</sup> of infidelity; but now they have heard in vain, and have no cloak (no excuse, MARG.) for their sin.<sup>g</sup> He that hateth Me, rebelleth against God, and, in effect, hateth My Father also, whose commission I bear. Again,*

<sup>x</sup> Have not I chosen you twelve? John vi. 70.

<sup>y</sup> Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations. Matt. xxviii. 19.

— which Gospel is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit. Col. i. 6.

<sup>z</sup> Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 1 John iii. 13.

<sup>a</sup> They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 1 John iv. 5.

<sup>b</sup> The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John xvii. 14.

<sup>c</sup> The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. Matt. x. 24.

<sup>d</sup> But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee, for they will not hearken unto Me. Ezek. iii. 7.

<sup>e</sup> Ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake. Matt. xxiv. 9.

<sup>f</sup> If ye were blind, ye should have no sin. John ix. 41.

<sup>g</sup> To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. Jas. iv. 17.

(2) *Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.*] Although literal, the translation of these words has not the full force of the Original. The pronouns there are designedly contrasted, and the

phrase might be more pointedly rendered as follows:—“It was not you who chose Me, but it was I who chose you.”

if I had not done among them the works which none other man, *and such as no prophet before Me, ever did*, they had not had *this sin of wilful infidelity*; but now have they both seen *them*, and hated both Me and My Father, *whose works, being works of Omnipotence, they undeniably were*. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled (*by this being permitted is the word made good*) that is written in their Law, "**THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE**" (see Ps. xxxv. 19). But, *although I am rejected by wicked men*, when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father,—even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father,—He shall testify of Me *by those miraculous gifts which He shall bestow*. And ye also shall *successfully* bear witness<sup>b</sup> of Me *by your preaching and by your writings*, because, *as faithful companions*, ye have been with Me from the beginning<sup>1</sup> of My ministry: *so at last, instead of contempt and hatred, you will experience, even among men, a grateful recompense of your labours*.

These things have I spoken unto you *concerning the world's opposition*, that *when the time comes*, ye should not be offended and deterred from your duty. They shall *excommunicate and put you out of the synagogues*: yea, *to far greater lengths will their enmity be carried*, for the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God *as acceptable a service<sup>k</sup> as sacrifice*. And these things will they do unto you because they *have chosen to continue in their wilful ignorance*, and have not known the Father nor Me. But these things I have told you *beforehand*, that when the time of *such trials* shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them, *and so be consoled under them, and be confirmed the more in your faith, when you see My complete foreknowledge of all that is to come*. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning of My ministry, because I was *still with you to protect and comfort you*; but now *it is fit you should know them, for My ministry draws to its conclusion, and I go My way to Him that sent Me*. And none of you *now* asketh Me, Whither goest Thou? but because I have said these things unto you, *a natural though an ill-timed sorrow hath filled your heart and engrossed your thoughts*. Nevertheless, *though you have not asked Me*, I tell you *what should be the welcome truth*, It is expedient for you (*It is better, and requisite on your own account*) that I go away: for if I go not away *first to take possession of My kingdom*, the Comforter, whom I promised, will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you:<sup>1</sup> *He will supply My place here, while you will have in Me a Great High-Priest and another Advocate in heaven*. And when He is come, He will *effectually* reprove (convince, MARG.) the *whole world,—and*

<sup>b</sup> Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts i. 8.

<sup>1</sup> We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. Acts iv. 20.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life—that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you. 1 John i. 1, 3.

<sup>k</sup> Certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a great curse that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. Acts xxiii. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. Acts ii. 33.

<sup>m</sup> Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Acts ii. 37.

<sup>n</sup> This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses . . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Acts ii. 32, 36.

— declared to be the Son of God with power, by the Resurrection from the dead. Rom. i. 4.

<sup>o</sup> And He said unto them, I beheld Satan, as lightning fall from heaven. Luke x. 18.

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. John xii. 31.

Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them. Col. ii. 16.

<sup>p</sup> The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. Acts xx. 23.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. 1 Tim. iv. 1.

<sup>q</sup> All things are delivered unto Me of My Father. Matt. xi. 37.

*more especially the obstinate Jews,—of their sin, and of My righteousness, and of the Divine judgment: of their sin,<sup>m</sup> because they believe not on Me; but they will perceive their grievous error, when, in accordance with My promise, that Spirit returns among them after an absence of four centuries, conferring His miraculous gifts on those who have believed: He will convince them of My righteousness, because then it will be also evident, from His testimony of Me, that I go, as I said, to My Father, and ye see Me no more<sup>n</sup> on earth in the form of a servant; and thither I could not ascend if I were, as they affirmed, in league with Satan: He will convince them, moreover, of judgment (of My power to judge My enemies), because then Satan, the prince of this world, is to be judged, and cast out of his kingdom;<sup>o</sup> and My triumph will be manifested in the conversion of many of his subjects from idolatry to the true religion.*

I have yet many more things to say unto you than those of which I have spoken, but ye cannot bear them now: your disaffection towards the Gentiles is at present too deeply-rooted; your prejudices remain too strong in favour of your own nation; and you confide too much in the sufficiency of your Law, for which another mode of Justification is henceforth to be substituted. Howbeit when He, who is the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all the Truth; for He shall not, like the heathen oracles, speak deceitfully, and merely of Himself, but whatsoever He, who “searcheth and knoweth the deep things of God” (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11), shall hear and receive in charge, that shall He speak. And He will not only unfold to you the whole truth of things past, but He will shew you those things as yet to come,<sup>p</sup> the knowledge of which may be requisite to qualify you for your work.—You will then perceive, that, in all which the Holy Spirit shall reveal and teach, He shall glorify Me; for His revelations will be exactly conformable to the doctrine I have taught, and thus He shall receive of Mine, and in My name shall shew it unto you. Indeed all things without exception that the Father hath, are also Mine;<sup>q</sup> and My cause is the cause of the Eternal Jehovah: in that sense, therefore, I said, That He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you. Let all this sink into your hearts; for, a little while longer, and ye shall not see Me; and yet again, a little while after that, and ye shall see Me; because I go hence to the Father, and My removal is not to be regarded in the light of a separation.

(\*) All things that the Father hath are Mine, &c.] The whole context of this passage establishes the great leading truth of the Gospel, a Trinity in Unity. The Three Persons are expressly distinguished from each other, and yet among them the closest connexion, the most perfect commu-

nity of council, will, energy, and operation, is shewn to subsist. The glory ascribed to each is also equal; yet this by no means precludes the supposition that the Son is the Heir of the Father, and the Holy Spirit the Legate of both.

Then said some of His disciples among themselves,—*for, notwithstanding all He had said, they were in doubt as to His meaning*,—What is this that He saith unto us? A little while, and ye shall not see Me, and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me; and *why does He add*, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore *thus one to another*, What is this that He saith, A little while? we cannot tell *the meaning of what He saith*. Now Jesus *well* knew that, *although afraid*, they were desirous to ask Him, and said *therefore* unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves *the meaning of that which I said*, A little while, and ye shall not see Me, and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me? *The events of which I speak must surely come to pass, and I will tell you of signs that will accompany them*: Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament *when I go hence*, but the world shall *for a time triumph and rejoice*: and *when ye no longer see Me*, ye *for a little while* shall be sorrowful<sup>r</sup>, but your sorrow shall *soon after* be turned into joy<sup>s</sup> *by My presence*. Thus a woman, when she is in travail (*in labour*) hath sorrow, because her hour *of delivery* is come;<sup>t</sup> but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish *which she endured*, for joy that a man (*a human being*) is born into the world: and *so* ye now therefore have sorrow *at the near approach of My departure and of your own trials*; but *as I said* I will see you *soon* again, and *remain with you ever after by My Spirit*; and then your heart shall rejoice,<sup>u</sup> and your joy,—*unlike every earthly joy*,—*shall be uninterrupted, and such as no man taketh from you*.<sup>v</sup>

And in that day, *when the Comforter is come*, ye shall have occasion to ask Me nothing *of this sort for the resolution of your doubts: the Divine Illumination shall then be fully imparted to you*. Ye shall ask also *without fear, and your prayers shall be answered*: Verily, verily, I say unto you *again*, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name *and as My ministers*, He will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name, *as the Mediator between God and man*; *for ye have not fully understood the nature of that high office, but have made known your wants directly to Myself*: ask in future *by appealing to Me as your Intercessor*, and then ye shall be *sure* to receive, that your joy may be full. These *mysterious* things have I *frequently* spoken unto you *as it were* in proverbs (in parables, MARG.); *for such a mode of teaching can be opened and expanded hereafter, and it is fit that My exalted nature and the mysteries of My kingdom should be unfolded by degrees*: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but *in person*,

<sup>r</sup> And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? Luke xxiv. 17.

<sup>s</sup> And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Luke xxiv. 52.

<sup>t</sup> And they, continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Acts ii. 46.

<sup>u</sup> Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs, so have we been in Thy sight, O Lord. Isa. xxvi. 17.

— the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child. Jer. iv. 31.

<sup>v</sup> Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. John xx. 20.

<sup>w</sup> — in whom, tho now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. 1 Pet. i. 8.



<sup>w</sup> — being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Acts i. 3.

For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Acts xx. 27.

<sup>x</sup> I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. John xvii. 8.

<sup>y</sup> Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men. 1 Kings viii. 39.

I, the Lord, search the heart. Jer. xvii. 10.

And Peter said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. John xxi. 17.

<sup>a</sup> And they all forsook Him and fled. Mark xiv. 60.

<sup>b</sup> He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone. John viii. 29.

<sup>c</sup> — the Prince of Peace. Isa. ix. 6.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1.

He is our Peace. Eph. ii. 14.

<sup>e</sup> All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

<sup>d</sup> Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xv. 67.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 John iv. 4.

Who is he that overcome the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 John v. 6.

or by the illumination of My Spirit, I shall shew you plainly all the counsels of the Father,<sup>w</sup> whether referring to the establishment of the Church or the Salvation of the Gentiles. At that day ye shall ask in My name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray (*intercede with*) the Father for you: *you need no such assurance of My regard; and indeed I need not promise to plead your cause, for the Father Himself, whose mercy is over all His works, more especially loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.*<sup>x</sup> *The perception of that great truth ought at once to have guided you to the meaning of what I said, That for a while ye shall not see Me: I came indeed forth from the Father, and am come as a Saviour into the world; again, now that My task is fulfilled, I am about to leave the world, and go back to the Father.*

His disciples, on receiving this reply, which so exactly corresponded with the question they had wished to propose, proving that He knew what was passing in their minds, said unto Him, Lo, now Thou speakest plainly enough, and speakest no proverb: now we are quite sure that Thou knowest all things,<sup>y</sup> even the very secrets of the heart, and needest not that any man should ask Thee with the mouth what he desires to know: by this extraordinary proof of Thy Omniscience we firmly believe that Thou camest forth from God; and it is impossible we can ever again doubt Thy Divine mission.

To check this excessive confidence, and to inculcate more diffidence in their own strength, Jesus answered them, Do ye indeed now believe, and esteem yourselves to be henceforth My confirmed disciples? Your faith is not so firm as you imagine; and when the hour of trial comes, you will be loth to suffer in confirmation of the truth which you now profess. Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that, as I have already told you this night, ye shall be scattered every man to his own home,—each regarding only his own safety,—and shall leave Me deserted and alone:<sup>z</sup> and yet even then I am not alone, because the Father is with Me<sup>a</sup> continually.

These things,—the last instructions which I shall be able to give,—I have thus freely spoken unto you, that in Me ye might in the end have true and never-ending peace.<sup>b</sup> I have not withheld from you the fact, that in the world ye shall have tribulation;<sup>c</sup> but be of good cheer (*take courage*): the Christian's victory is sure: I, the Captain of your Salvation, have already overcome the world, and ye too, in the day of your greatest affliction, shall be "more than conquerors"<sup>d</sup> (Rom. viii. 37).

## SECTION CXX.

## THE PRAYER OF JESUS FOR HIS CAUSE, FOR HIS APOSTLES, AND FOR ALL CHRISTIANS.

*John xvii. 1—26.*

THESE words spake Jesus as His last instructions to His Apostles before He suffered; and then lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said,<sup>(1)</sup> Father, the hour of completing My work is come: glorify thy Son in His death and the wonders that shall accompany it,<sup>a</sup> that Thy Son also may glorify Thee—turning many to righteousness, and teaching them, by the knowledge and practice of true religion, eternally to celebrate Thy praise: inasmuch as Thou hast given Him complete power over all flesh<sup>b</sup> (the whole human race), in order that, as He has purchased for them Salvation, so He should also give Eternal Life<sup>c</sup> to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is the way to Life Eternal: that they (the Gentiles), putting aside their false deities, might know (fully acknowledge) Thee to be the Only True God;<sup>d</sup> and that the Jews, together with them, might

<sup>a</sup> Now when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. Matt. xxvii. 54.

Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Acts ii. 36.

<sup>b</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Matt. xxviii. 18.

<sup>c</sup> God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 1 John v. 11.

<sup>d</sup> The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. Deut. xxxii. 12.—Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only. 1 Sam. vii. 3.—We preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the Living God. Acts xiv. 15. —We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. 1 Cor. viii. 4. —how ye turned from idols to God, to serve the Living and True God. 1 Thess. i. 9.

(1) *Lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, &c.]*

Had we no other knowledge of the Saviour than what is furnished in this Prayer, it would be sufficient to shew us the supreme dignity of His Person, His ardent love to man, and the momentous consequences of the work He was effecting.—As a composition, it has its difficulties to the ordinary reader; for though our Lord so frequently delivers Himself in the course of it with Majesty and Divine authority, He sometimes supplicates as man, and again, in other parts, speaks as Mediator of His people. The address at the commencement, “Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee,” is evidently not the language of a creature to his Creator, for the effect prayed for was to be reciprocal. The magnanimity of the sentiment throughout the Prayer is conspicuous: there is not a thought bestowed on the cruel and ignominious death He was on the point of suffering, but His whole soul seems intent on His great work, the Salvation of men.—Many pass over this Prayer with cold indifference, but a more sublime composition cannot be found, and no one will ever adequately value it on this side the grave.—Some Commentators have thought that the Prayer (together with the Discourse which precedes it, in the last Section) was spoken before quitting the guest-chamber. While there, after instituting the Holy Supper, and giving the promise of the Comforter, our Lord distinctly said, “Arise, let us go hence;” which it is attempted to explain by supposing He might have risen from table, and returned to add His last discourse together with this prayer. But it seems unlikely He would so soon refresh their

memories on several topics already spoken of; and the circumstance of His here “lifting up His eyes to heaven” in some measure corroborates the idea of His being in the open air.

(2) *Thee, the only true God.]* The Father is not here styled “the only true God” in exclusion of the Son, but in opposition to a plurality of gods which had no real entity; for this was the dispute which prevailed between the Pagans and the Jews, and not at all as to the nature and essence of the One True God. The word “only” is frequently used in this sense in the Old Testament, and the epithet “true” has no force at all, as a mark of contradistinction, except as opposed to “false” (see the Marginal citations above).

Trinitarians hold, in accordance with this text, that “the Father is the only true God;” but it is not said that “the Father alone is the true God;” which would have excluded the divinity of the Son: there is a wide difference between the two expressions. That Jesus Himself does not here disclaim Divinity is evident, for in the same sentence He declares, that, to obtain eternal life, He too must be really and practically known (that is, obeyed and worshipped, for to this extent the Greek expression goes), as well as the Father. He also proceeds to describe Himself as sharing the original glory of the Father.—St. John who records this Prayer, commences his Gospel with the most solemn declaration of the Deity of Christ, and he expressly says in his first Epistle, “We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God, and Eternal Life” (1 John v. 20).

\* All men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him. John v. 23.

† He said, It is finished, and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. John xix. 30.

‡ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John i. 1.

§ Unto the Son God saith,—Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. Heb. i. 8, 10.

¶ He continued all night in prayer to God: and when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples, and of them He chose twelve. Luke vi. 12, 13.

¹ As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. John viii. 28.

² The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself. John xiv. 10.

³ His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speakest Thou plainly: by this we believe that Thou earnest forth from God. John xvi. 29, 30.

⁴ All things that the Father hath are Mine. John xvi. 16.

⁵ And they glorified God in me. Gal. i. 24.

⁶ — kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 1 Pet. i. 5.

⁷ — sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ. Jude 1.

*know and believe in Jesus the Christ, whom Thou hast sent<sup>e</sup> to declare Thy will unto man. I have glorified Thee by My ministry on the earth: I have already as it were finished the work<sup>f</sup> of Atonement which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, make Me perfect through sufferings, and glorify Thou Me with Thine own self,—with the original glory which I had with Thee before the world was made.<sup>g</sup>*

*By My doctrine and My works I have clearly manifested Thy name (the knowledge of Thy will and perfections) unto the men which Thou gavest Me<sup>h</sup> out of the evil world as My Apostles: Thine they already were by creation, and by adoption as Israelites, and Thou gavest them to Me as the Messiah and King; and they have valued and faithfully kept Thy Word, which I have taught them. Now they have, at length, known assuredly that all things, whatsoever Thou hast given Me in commission to teach, are of, and from Thee:<sup>i</sup> for I have in like manner given unto them the words and truths which Thou gavest Me; and they have in faith received them as Thine, and have known surely that I came out (came forth) from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.<sup>k</sup> I pray, therefore, O Father, especially for them: I pray not now for the unbelieving world,<sup>l</sup> but for them which Thou hast so graciously given Me out of it, for they are not only Mine as subjects of My mediatorial kingdom, but Thine: and, indeed, all those instruments which I speak of as Mine, are equally Thine, serving Our united purpose of love and mercy to man: and so Thine are Mine,<sup>m</sup> and I am glorified in them<sup>n</sup> and their labours. And now I am to continue no more in the world: but these, My faithful servants, are to remain, unsupported by My visible presence, in the world, encompassed with all its difficulties and dangers; and I come to Thee in Heaven, leaving them to fulfil their perilous task. Holy Father, keep<sup>n</sup> through Thine own name (preserve in their more perfect knowledge of Thee) those whom Thou hast given Me, that they, confiding in one another, may be one in counsel and action, even as We are One. While I was with them in the world, I kept them, by My instruction and example, steadfast in Thy name: even those that Thou gavest Me I have kept with anxious care, and none (not one) of them is eternally lost but the*

(\*) *I pray not for the world.*] Our Lord's immediate object at this part of His prayer was the welfare of the Apostles, but (as He proceeds to say) it was His wish that through them "the world might know that the Father had sent Him" (see John xvii. 23), and that all might thus be in a capacity of being saved.—The Evangelist repeatedly declares, in other places, that Jesus

came to save the whole world (see John iii. 17; xii. 47; and 1 Ep. ii. 2): and we know that with His last breath He prayed for His bitterest adversaries. The nature of the case does not here permit Him to pray for the opposers of His religion, in the sense that He prays for His disciples; that is, for their mutual concord and perseverance in one cause.

son of perdition °, *who has fully merited the dreadful lot that awaits him: his wilful perfidy Thou hast permitted*, that the Scripture <sup>p</sup> concerning *Me* might be fulfilled in all things. And now I am to come to Thee; and these things I speak in their presence while I continue in the world, that they may hear them, and, deriving holy consolation from them, might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy Word (*Thy doctrine*) to guide their teaching and influence their practice; and the world hath hated them, because it has plainly appeared that they are not followers of the world, even as I, their Master, am not of the world. I pray not, indeed, that Thou shouldst take them out of the world—they must not desire, as yet, to go hence, for they have a great and glorious work appointed them to do—but that Thou shouldst grant them perseverance, and keep them safe from the evil <sup>q</sup> and malice of the world. Many severe trials they have to undergo, because they are not of the world, <sup>r</sup> even as I am not of the world. Consecrate and sanctify them more and more through Thy Truth <sup>s</sup> (<sup>t</sup>) (*for the Ministry of the Truth, Gr.*): Thy Word is Truth <sup>t</sup> itself. As Thou hast commissioned and sent Me into the world to preach the Gospel and make known Thy will, even so (*for the same purpose*) have I also sent them <sup>u</sup> into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify and dedicate Myself as a holy Sacrifice, that they also, seeing My doctrine thus confirmed, might be sanctified <sup>v</sup> through the Truth (*spiritualized for their ministry of the Truth*).

Neither pray I for these, *My Apostles*, alone, <sup>(<sup>5</sup>)</sup> but for them also, *My disciples throughout the world*, which shall believe on Me through their word (*their instruction*): that

God, Thou art that God, and Thy words be true. 2 Sam. vii. 28.—O Lord, all Thy commandments are Truth. Ps. cxix. 161.

<sup>°</sup> As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. John xx. 21.

<sup>q</sup> Both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of One. Heb. ii. 11.—Sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Heb. x. 10.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Sanctify them through Thy truth.*] The original text, strictly rendered, gives the sense as added in the emendation above: but some eminent Practical Expositors of this Gospel have been contented with the words as they stand in the Common Version, and consider the petition to be for personal Sanctification of the Apostles by means of the doctrine which had been taught them, rather than to refer to their teaching. That sense is also a good one (see John xv. 3: and Eph. v. 26), and there can be no doubt that the Word of God is a leading instrument of Sanctification,—the weapon in the hand of the Spirit.

(<sup>5</sup>) *Neither pray I for these alone.*] This Prayer has been called “the *Intercessory Prayer*,” a title which may be fitly applied to the greater portion of it; and here, in the gradual development of Christian doctrine, we are brought to Christ as our Great High-Priest. The true Priest’s office consists of two parts, *Sacrifice* and

<sup>°</sup> Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil. John vi. 70.

<sup>p</sup> Let his days be few, and let another take his office. Ps. cix. 8.

This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus: for he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. For it is written in the Book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein, and his bishoprick let another take. Acts i. 16—18, 20.

<sup>q</sup> Deliver us from evil. Matt. vi. 13.

—who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world. Gal. i. 4.

The Lord is faithful, who shall establish you and keep you from evil. 2 Thess. iii. 3.

<sup>r</sup> We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. 1 John v. 19.

<sup>s</sup> Hallow them to minister unto Me in the priest’s office. Exod. xxix. 1.

<sup>t</sup> And now, O Lord

*Intercession*: Christians are now, happily, nearly unanimous in admitting the first (namely the necessity and efficacy of Christ’s expiatory death); but the second is by too many overlooked, and yet it is the most important, as giving efficacy to the former: this St. Paul repeatedly impresses upon us (see Rom. v. 10; and viii. 34).—It involves, too, the more consolatory truths of our religion. As the Aaronitic priest on the great day of Atonement sprinkled the mercy-seat with the blood of the victim slain in the presence of the people (Lev. xvi.), so this *High-Priest* after the order of Melchizedec, whose office as Intercessor is perpetual, now appears continually in His Father’s presence, to plead the merits of His oblation for His brethren. At Rev. i. 13, St. John describes the Lord as appearing in the sacerdotal garment, in which the priests were enjoined to minister, and which Josephus has particularly described in his Antiquities, Book iii. chap. 7.

¶ The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Acts iv. 32.

Be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Cor. i. 10.

— endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all. Eph. iv. 3, 4.

Be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Phil. ii. 2.

Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Phil. iii. 16.

Finally, be ye all of one mind. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

\* And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun; a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him, and thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. Numb. xxvii. 18, 20.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory. John ii. 11.

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? John xi. 40.

† He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not, but I know Him, for I am from Him. John vii. 28, 29.—As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father. John x. 15.

‡ We believe that Thou camest forth from God. John xvi. 30.

*the Unity of the Faith may be fully preserved, and that they all may be one* <sup>w</sup> *(<sup>e</sup>) in affection, and will, and good works; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also, by participation of the Spirit, may be one in Us: that so the world, perceiving this perfect accord and mutual love, may believe that Thou hast sent Me, and that this Gospel proceeds from God.*

And the glory (*the glorious gifts of miracles and inspiration*)<sup>x</sup> which Thou gavest Me, and by which My Apostles were converted, I have given them, that they may be united in teaching one perfect scheme of religion, and be one, even as We are One; I dwelling in them by the Spirit, and Thou essentially in Me, that so they also may be made completely perfect in one; and that the world, contemplating a religion so productive of peace and happiness, may know that Thou hast sent Me, and that for My sake Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.

Father, I will (*I desire*) also, that all they whom Thou hast given Me, may, when they have finished their course, be at last with Me in that Blessed Place where I am; that they may behold and thus participate in My glory which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.

O righteous Father, the world at large hath not known Thee; and it continueth still in ignorance of Thy gracious counsels for their salvation; but I have ever known Thee,<sup>†</sup> and these, for whom I now desire this glory, have known and truly believed that Thou hast sent Me:<sup>‡</sup> and I have declared unto them Thy name,—manifesting Thy glorious attributes, Thy will, and Thy love,—and I will declare

(<sup>e</sup>) *That they all may be One.*] The solemn and repeated admonitions respecting *Unity* among Christians can hardly fail to have struck every reader of the New Testament. Our Lord had already urged this subject upon the Apostles in His last discourse, under the expressive image of the Vine and its branches; and now it appears to be the subject *nearest of all* to His heart, as the time for His quitting the world drew near. In accordance with this, no one subject is more strongly and constantly pressed in the Apostolical Epistles than the avoidance of divisions (see particularly Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. i. 10; xii. 25; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Jude 19).—It was, no doubt, foreseen what a strong tendency there would be among men to break this Unity: for the spirit of Separation (or Dissent as the modern phrase is) is sweet, and acceptable to our fallen nature—enlisting on its side the self-will and the self-love of man, which may be ranked among our strongest and worst passions.—The Prayer of the Saviour, which represents in so strong a light the guilt of schism, ought to be considered, with earnest self-examination and supplication

for Divine guidance, by all who are living in separation from any branch of Christ's Catholic and Apostolic Church; for there is *nothing* which can justify Separation, but the departure of that Church (as in the case of the Roman) from some really essential article of *faith*.—That the foundation of Christian Unity is "the Unity of the Faith," is plain from Eph. iv. 5, 13; 1 Cor. xii. 13, and other passages. "*In necessariis Unitas*" has ever been a principle of the Universal Church: so that, first of all, we must hold the One Faith and the One Baptism, whereby, through the power of the One Spirit, we are incorporated into the One body of Christ, and reconciled by Him to the One God and Father of all. These essential truths are faithfully embodied in the Creeds of the Church; and the next point, as important to Unity, which seems to have obtained the fullest consent among wise and good men, is the use of a national Liturgy in each particular branch of the Catholic Church,—combined with submission to the discipline of its lawful governors, where such discipline is not plainly repugnant to the Word of God.

it yet further by the illumination of the Spirit which I will send them; that the love, wherewith from all eternity Thou hast loved Me, may be also in them, and I in them by the same in-dwelling Spirit, henceforth and for ever.

SECTION CXXI.

THE SAVIOUR'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

*Matt. xxvi. 36—46. Mark xiv. 32—42. Luke xxii. 41—46. John xviii. 1.*

WHEN Jesus had spoken these words, He came down from the Mount of Olives, and went forth with His disciples, and cometh with them unto a place,—also situate over the brook (or winter-torrent) Cedron,—called Gethsemane (or place of oil-presses), where was a garden,<sup>(1)</sup> into the which He and His disciples entered.—Here it was the Saviour's purpose to await the son of perdition, and to prepare Himself for His approaching sufferings by prayer: and when He was at the place, He saith to eight of His disciples, Sit ye here at the entrance, and watch who comes, while I go and pray yonder. This injunction He gave, partly to test their vigilance in His service, and in part that His sacred privacy might not be disturbed by the presence of more witnesses than were needful for a testimony.

And He took with Him Peter, and James and John (the two sons of Zebedee), to witness this remarkable scene of His life—these being the same three confidential disciples who had beheld His glory when He was Transfigured on the Mount. And He began to be sorrowful, sore amazed, and, soon after, very heavy (almost overwhelmed with grief). Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even almost unto death,<sup>a</sup> so insupportable do I feel it: tarry ye here, and watch with Me while I pray. And He went forward a little space from the three, and was withdrawn from them who had been stationed at the entrance about a stone's cast; and kneeled down, and fell on His face on the ground,<sup>b</sup> adopting the posture of most earnest supplication; and prayed that, if it were possible to remit the sin of mankind without so dreadful a penalty, the hour to which

<sup>a</sup> The sorrows of death compassed me. Pa. cxvi. 3.

<sup>b</sup> It pleased the Lord to bruise Him: He hath put Him to grief. Isa. liii. 10.

Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow wherewith the Lord hath afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger. Lam. i. 12.

<sup>c</sup> And Jehosaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. 2 Chron. xx. 18.

And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God: and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Neh. viii. 6.

(1) *Where was a garden.*] No gardens were allowed within the sacred precincts of the city, on account of the pollution of the weeds and the manure necessary for cultivation.—It is remarkable that as the sin of the first Adam, which brought destruction on his posterity, was committed in a garden, so did the Passion of the Second Adam, rescuing us from the consequences of that sin, commence in a like place.

Our Lord was also buried in a garden.—The Garden of Gethsemane, as it may now be seen, measures between forty and fifty paces in length and breadth. It contains eight olive trees, the knotted trunks of which betoken great antiquity (probably at least an age of eight hundred years), and which are believed to have sprung from the roots of those which existed in our Lord's time.

\* Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. Rom. viii. 15.

† Thou hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury,—the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out. Isa. li. 17.

‡ Thus saith the Lord God, Take the wine-cup of this fury at My hand. Jer. xxv. 16.

§ I came down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. John vi. 38.

¶ Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. John xii. 27.

‡ Even Christ pleased not Himself. Rom. xv. 3.

§ Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God. Heb. x. 7.

¶—praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Eph. vi. 18.

§ I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. Rom. vii. 18.

¶ The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Gal. v. 17.

† I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. 2 Cor. xii. 8.

*He had now come might pass from Him. And He said, Abba (Father),<sup>c</sup> I know that all things are possible unto Thee: O My Father, if it be possible,—consistently with Divine Justice and with what has been designed for Thy glory and the Salvation of man,—take away this bitter cup<sup>d</sup> of sorrow, and let it now pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt [not what I will, but what Thou wilt, MARK].<sup>e</sup>*

And, rising up, He cometh unto the three disciples, and findeth them sleeping; and saith unto Peter, *who awoke first*, Sleepest thou, Simon? couldest thou not, after all thy protestations of fidelity, watch with Me one hour? Then in like manner He mildly rebuked the other two:—What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch ye with constancy, and pray<sup>f</sup> with perseverance for Spiritual aid, lest ye enter irretrievably into Temptation: thus only can the infirmity of human nature be safe from the manifold dangers that assail it: the spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak,<sup>g</sup> and cannot, unaided, perform even its best resolutions.

And again He went away the second time, and prayed, and spake the same words, saying, O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink of it to the dregs, Thy will be done. And when He returned to the three disciples, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; neither, when He repeated His admonition, wist they (*knew they*) in their confusion what to answer Him.

And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time,<sup>h</sup> saying in the same words,<sup>(1)</sup> Father, if Thou be willing (*O, that Thou wouldst*, Gr.) remove this cup from Me! nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done. And so keen was the spiritual conflict He endured, that there appeared this time unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And being still in an agony,<sup>(2)</sup>

(<sup>1</sup>) *Take away this cup.*] That this cup was the mental Agony our Lord was now enduring, and not His painful death, appears from what St. Paul says, that He was "heard in what He feared, when He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears" (Heb. v. 7): He was not delivered from dying, but He was strengthened, so as to meet the approaching danger with calmness and self-possession. On the expression "Cup," see Section CI., Note 3.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Saying the same words.*] This circumstance can scarcely have been duly weighed by those who object to repetitions (as with respect to the Lord's Prayer) in our excellent Liturgy. The length of our Morning Service has also been objected to; but the Saviour's authority may again be cited from this scene in the Garden. Allowing for the musical portions of Divine Service and the sermon, the Prayers seldom exceed

an hour: and it may be replied to objectors, "What, can ye not watch and pray one hour?"

(<sup>3</sup>) *Being in an agony.*] The bitterness of unmitigated anguish endured by our Lord in this awful scene is one of those mysteries which here we shall never be able fully to comprehend; and so the Liturgy of the Greek Church, pleading with the Saviour His own merits, makes an appeal to Him "by His unknown sorrows."—It seems clear, with reference to the nature of this Agony,—so far as we may venture, with the light of God's Word, to meditate upon it,—that there was no slavish apprehension of death or bodily suffering. To suppose this, when so many Christian martyrs, and even heathen heroes, have calmly and cheerfully suffered the most dreadful torments, would be lowering Him, who warns His disciples not to fear them who can only kill the body; and who, on one occasion,

He prayed more earnestly *than before*; and, *though the night "was cold"* (John xviii. 18), His sweat was as it were great drops of blood<sup>(3)</sup> falling down to the ground.

And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His disciples the third time, He found them sleeping for sorrow,<sup>(4)</sup> *for the grief caused by witnessing their Master's agony had exhausted and stupified them.* And He said unto them, *Why sleep ye at such a time as this? rise up and pray that ye enter not into temptation; sleep on now (sleep hereafter, GR.) and take your rest: surely it is enough which has been already given to repose: behold the long-expected hour is come, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners: rise up, let us be going (let us go on) to meet the coming danger: behold he is already at hand that doth betray Me.*

<sup>1</sup> — sinners of the Gentiles. Gal. ii. 15.

Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Acts ii. 23.

## SECTION CXXII.

THE BETRAYAL BY JUDAS, AND THE FLIGHT OF THE ELEVEN APOSTLES.

*Matt. xxvi. 47—56. Mark xiv. 43—52. Luke xxii. 47—53.*

*John xviii. 2—12.*

AND Judas, which betrayed Him, also knew the place *where they were passing the night*; for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with His disciples *for retirement*

strongly rebuked Peter, in words which implied that to offer any suggestion of *shrinking from death* was acting towards Him the part of Satan and an enemy.—There is no doubt that "the plague of the heart" is greater than any other, for "a wounded spirit, that alone knoweth its own bitterness, who can bear?" (Prov. xiv. 10; xviii. 14). From the Saviour's mental agony we must exclude remorse and despair (which to the guilty bring the severest pang of all), but there were some bitter ingredients mixed in His cup which were not in that of other sufferers, as well as some cordial infused into theirs which was denied to Him. What agonizing thoughts, what overwhelming scenes were in the Saviour's contemplation in the garden of Gethsemane! There was the shame of every kind which He had to endure; the great scandal of the Cross; the insults of his enemies; the desertion of all who were near and dear to Him,—by one of whom He was on the point of being betrayed, and by another of being obstinately denied. But all these *personal* considerations, overwhelming though they were, were as nothing to Him (whose grief was ever for others, not for Himself), compared with His reflections upon Sin; its weight and awful penalty; the innumerable transgressions of all mankind; the obstinacy with which many would still reject the gracious offers of Salvation, and the consequent miseries which those, for whom He desired to die, would have to endure. This cup which He had to drink was the cup of *God's wrath against Sin* (the "Cup of fury," "the cup of trembling" of which the Prophets had spoken): in the language

of Job, it was *for Him* "to drink the wrath of the Almighty"—to experience in the hour of darkness an utter and total *desertion*. An early writer of the Church says of the Christian martyrs, "God did not indeed deliver them from death, *but He did not forsake them:*" they found rest to their souls, and the Peace of God was theirs to the last! But the Saviour's bitter complaint was "My God, My God, why hast *Thou* forsaken Me?" He was afflicted by the Father Himself in the day of His fierce anger; in whose Holy sight His death was "accursed," because He was made a *curse for us* (see Gal. iii. 13).

(<sup>3</sup>) *His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood.*] This may be understood literally, for similar facts are recorded both by physicians and historians, some of whom were not Christians. Aristotle twice speaks of such a fact in the 3rd Book of his *Hist. Animal*. Diodorus Siculus (lib. 17) speaks of this effect as resulting from the bite of a particular serpent; and Voltaire (*Univers. Hist.*, c. 142) says of Charles IX. of France, "He died in his five and twentieth year. The malady he died of was very extraordinary: the blood gushed out of all his pores: this circumstance, of which there are some instances, was owing either to excessive fear, to violent passion, or to a warm and melancholy constitution."

(<sup>4</sup>) *Sleeping for sorrow.*] Cases of profound sleep from the effects of excessive grief are not uncommon. Mothers have been known to sleep immediately after the death of a child, and criminals often sleep soundly the night before their execution.



and devotion. And immediately, while He yet spake to them of what was about to happen, lo, Judas,—even that Judas Iscariot who was one of the Twelve,—having received a band of men (a detachment of Roman soldiers) from the chief priests and Pharisees, and the Scribes, and the elders of the people, cometh thither armed with weapons, and bearing lanterns and torches, for though it was full moon, the place itself was dark; and with him came a great multitude armed with swords and staves (clubs). And as the person of Jesus would not be known to the Roman guard, he that betrayed Him went on before them, for he had given them a token<sup>a</sup> (a signal), saying, Whomsoever I shall go up to and kiss, that same is He whom you are sent to apprehend: take Him, hold Him fast when He is secured, and lead Him away safely.

<sup>a</sup> — Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. Acts i. 16.

And as soon as he was come into the garden, he drew near unto the place where Jesus stood to kiss Him, as the signal agreed upon with the guard; and goeth up straightway to Him as if rejoiced to see Him again, and saith, Hail, Master, Master! and kissed<sup>b</sup> Him. But Jesus said calmly unto him, Friend<sup>(1)</sup> (Companion), wherefore art thou come?—then adding with stern dignity, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? can such be indeed the signal of thy treachery?

<sup>b</sup> The kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Prov. xxvii. 6.

Therefore (Then, upon this), Jesus, perfectly knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth<sup>(2)</sup> to meet the soldiers who had now assembled in the garden, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered Him, We are in search of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He.

And Judas which betrayed Him,—he who used to stand on the side of Christ,—stood also now in the opposite rank, with them who contended against Him!

<sup>c</sup> When the wicked, even mine enemies and foes, came upon me, they stumbled and fell. Ps. xxvii. 2.

Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise My hurt. Ps. xxxv. 4.

And he fell to the earth, and heard a Voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Acts ix. 4.

As soon then as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and, being preternaturally struck by an exertion of Divine power, fell to the ground.<sup>c</sup> Then, when they were recovered from the shock, He asked them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, as before, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you plainly that I am He, and I at once surrender Myself: if therefore ye

(1) Friend.] In the Original this is merely a word of ordinary salutation, and not the same expression which is employed when our Saviour called the other Apostles "His friends." It is also applied to the disaffected labourer in the vineyard (Matt. xx. 13), and to the guest who declined the wedding garment (Matt. xxii. 12).—In the sentence which follows, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" every word is emphatic, and must have gone to the very soul of the traitor.

(2) Knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth.] This seems expressly noted, partly to show what a willing sacrifice our Lord was: when a multitude would have forced Him to a crown, He withdrew Himself; when they came to force Him to a cross, He offered Himself. Partly, too, we may be called on to notice how complete was our Lord's knowledge of every circumstance of horror and ignominy that awaited Him.

seek Me, let these *who are with Me* go their way. *This He said*, that the saying, which He spake in *His prayer to the Father*, might be fulfilled (*made good*) *to the last*, "Of them which Thou gavest Me *as Apostles*, have I lost none *but the son of perdition*" (John xvii. 12).—*Thus, unmindful of the trials that awaited Himself, did He love "His own" unto the end.*

Then came they *of the guard*, and laid their hands on Jesus, and took Him *prisoner*. Now when they which were with Jesus [about Him, LUKE] saw what would follow, they said unto Him, Lord, shall we smite *them* with the sword? And behold, *before He could reply*, one of them (Simon Peter)<sup>(\*)</sup> having a sword, stretched out his hand and drew it; and, *with his accustomed rashness and zeal attacking them indiscriminately*, struck a servant of the High-priest's, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up again thy sword into the sheath; for all they that take up the sword *unlawfully*, shall commonly perish with the sword:<sup>d</sup> *leave such merited retribution to the Jewish rulers, who now seek by violence to shed innocent blood. I do not need the feeble aid of men, and any resistance on the part of My followers would imply both a distrust in Divine Providence and an ignorance of the Scriptures: thinkest thou that I cannot, even now, pray to (call upon) My Father, and He shall presently give Me (bring to My rescue) more than twelve legions of angels?e* But then, *if it were so*, how shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, *which declare that thus it must be?f* The cup of affliction which My Father hath given Me, shall I not obediently and willingly drink of it?<sup>(\*)</sup>

Then the band of soldiers and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound Him. And as they were yet binding Him, Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye Me to be at liberty and to advance thus far:<sup>(\*)</sup> and, going up to the servant who had been wounded, He touched his ear, and healed Him *immedia'tely*. By this act He proved to His enemies that His surrender was voluntary, and that He possessed ample power, had He chosen to exert it, to deliver Himself out of their hands.

(\*) *One of them, Simon Peter.* The name is added to the account of the other Three by St. John, for Peter was dead when John wrote his Gospel. Had the other Evangelists named during his life-time the party who committed this assault, it might have subjected him to persecution, and perhaps have rendered him amenable also to public justice.

(\*) *The cup which My Father hath given Me, &c.* From these words we see that afflictions are gifts from God; and this great Example teaches us, that though we may pray for trouble to pass

<sup>d</sup> Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. Gen. ix. 6.

Because thou hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword, therefore as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee. Ezek. xxxv. 6, 6.

Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. xii. 19.

He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Rev. xiii. 10.

<sup>e</sup> And it came to pass that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four score and five thousand. 2 Kings xix. 35.

For He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. Ps. xci. 11.

<sup>f</sup> He was oppressed and He was afflicted; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. He was taken from prison and from judgment; He was cut off out of the land of the living. Isa. liii. 7, 8.

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off. Dan. ix. 26.

Then He said to them, O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? Luke xxiv. 25, 26.

away from us, yet if the cup be put into our hands to drink, we are to drink of it, bitter though it may be. Nature struggles, but Grace will submit.

(\*) *Suffer ye thus far.* This somewhat ambiguous phrase has also been understood (though it would seem with less probability) as having been addressed to the disciples, before our Saviour was bound: in that case the sense would be, "Suffer ye the matter thus far;" in other words, "Let there be no more violence."

Then Jesus said in that same hour to the multitudes, and to the chief-priests and captains of the Temple and the elders, *some of which were now come to Him upon hearing of the arrest*, Be ye come out, as ye would come against a thief, with swords and staves (*clubs*) for to take Me? When I was daily with you of late, I sat quietly teaching in the Temple: then ye took Me not, and stretched forth no violent hands against Me. But you are the permitted instruments of Satan in this work; this is your hour,<sup>g</sup> and the hour of the power of darkness, under the influence of which you act.—But all this was permitted to be done, that the Scriptures of the Prophets might be fulfilled.

<sup>g</sup> The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment. Job xx. 6.

Then, as He did not defend Himself, all the disciples, yielding to the crisis and to their own fears, forsook Him and fled.<sup>h</sup>

<sup>h</sup> I, — that speak in righteousness, mighty to save,—have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Me. Isa. lxiii. 1—3.

And, as He was led away by the soldiers, there followed Him a certain young man<sup>(i)</sup> of that neighbourhood, who had been aroused from sleep; and, in the confusion and alarm of the moment, having only a linen cloth cast about his naked body:<sup>(j)</sup> and the young men<sup>1</sup> of the Roman guard, supposing him to be one of the immediate followers of Jesus, laid hold on him: And he left in their hands the linen cloth, by which they had detained him, and fled from them naked.

<sup>1</sup> And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. Now there arose twelve of Benjamin, and twelve of the servants of David: and they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side. 2 Sam. ii. 14—16.

(<sup>i</sup>) *A certain young man.*] The circumstance of this young man following our Lord at His apprehension is mentioned only by St. Mark, and as it does not seem to have had any connection with that event, the very probable supposition has occurred that the Evangelist himself was the person.

It is not material, however, to consider St. Mark as an original witness, for there is no doubt that he was as intimate an associate of some of the Apostles as St. Luke had been, and more particularly of St. Peter (see Acts xiii. 5; xv. 37; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24; 1 Pet. vi. 13). His Gospel is in effect the work of Peter, being revised, if not immediately dictated, by that eminent Apostle—of which it is a sufficient proof, that scarcely any action or conversation is recorded, when Peter was not present. It was written at Rome, probably before the year 63, for a mixed society of converts, chiefly Gentile. From the Hebraisms of style, it is evident that the author was a Jew, and from his Latinisms, that he lived among the Romans. Although much resembling St. Matthew's Gospel, there is a sufficient variation, in the omission or addition of important particulars, to shew that at least the writer exercised his own judgment,

and was no servile copyist: thus, he deviates no less than thirteen times in his arrangement of facts; he has several omissions, and twenty-three additions; facts are related more circumstantially, while discourses are abridged. Mark was the son of Mary,—a pious woman at Jerusalem, at whose house the Apostles often assembled, and who was sister to Barnabas (see Acts xii. 12; Col. iv. 10). Mark's Hebrew name was John, and the former would be assumed when he went among the Gentiles. It is said that he afterwards founded the Church at Alexandria, where he died in the eighth year of the reign of Nero.

(<sup>j</sup>) *Having a linen cloth, &c.*] A garment of *Sindon* (the word which is here employed in the Original, and supposed to be derived from Sidon where *linen* was made) was commonly worn during the day, and used as a wrapper at night: the party who fled might have had on such a garment. Herodotus (lib. ii. cap. 95.) speaks of the *Sindon* as the usual night-dress of the Egyptians even in his time, which was long before our Lord's Coming; and Dionysius Alexandrinus has the Greek which occurs here in the original text, "I was naked (undressed), having on only a linen garment," (apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. vi. 40).

## SECTION CXXIII.

JESUS IS REMOVED TO THE PALACE OF CAIAPHAS, WHITHER PETER FOLLOWS TO SEE THE EVENT; AND, ACCORDING TO THE PREDICTION OF HIS MASTER, THRICE DENIES THAT HE KNOWS HIM.

*Matt.* xxvi. 57, 58, 69—75. *Mark* xiv. 53, 54, 66—72. *Luke* xxii. 54—62. *John* xviii. 13—18, 24—27.

AND they led Him away from *Gethsemane*, first to Annas,<sup>(1)</sup> for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the High-priest that same memorable year. Now Caiaphas was he, which, upon the raising of Lazarus, gave counsel to the Jews,—and, being influenced by God, in effect prophesied the fact,—that it was expedient that one man should die for the safety of the people.<sup>a</sup> And, as Annas judged it best that there should be a formal trial, they that had laid hold on (*had apprehended*) Jesus, took Him and led Him away, and brought Him next into the house of Caiaphas the High-priest; where all the chief-priests, and Scribes, and the elders, having received a summons for the occasion, were assembled with him.

And Simon Peter followed Jesus afar off, and so did another disciple<sup>(2)</sup> (*the Evangelist John*), for they had now partly recovered from their panic. That disciple was known unto some of the household of the High-priest, and without any difficulty went in with Jesus into the palace of the High-priest. But Peter, who had no such influence there, stood waiting at the door without: then went out that other disciple which was known unto the High-priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. And

<sup>a</sup> And one of them named Caiaphas, being the high-priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he, not of himself, but being high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation. *John* xi. 49—51.

(1) *First to Annas.*] At so critical a juncture they might think Annas the best to advise with, since of all the rulers he was the most experienced in the Law. After remaining High-priest for eleven years, he had been deposed (nine years previous to this) by the Romans. Yet five sons, and now his son-in-law, succeeded to the office.

(2) *Another disciple.*] This is rendered from the Vulgate. The article in the *Greek* would seem to point to Judas, the other disciple who had just before been mentioned by the Evangelist (St. John) who uses the expression. Certainly the traitor might now be in favour with the High-Priest, but Peter would scarcely be any longer familiar with Judas. St. John himself was the most likely of all to have followed his Master. From his very circumstantial account of what took place at the trial, it would seem that he was present; and it was evidently important that one of our Lord's avowed historians should be an eye-witness of that event.—Again, a particular friendship seems always to have existed between himself and Peter. They were sent together to prepare the Passover (*Luke* xxii. 8): it was respecting John that Peter was so soli-

citous to know what should become of him (*John* xxi. 20, 21): upon the news of the Resurrection of Jesus these two hastened together to the Sepulchre, in recording which circumstance John expressly describes himself, as he does here, by the expression, "that other disciple" (*John* xx. 2, 3, 4, 8): after the Ascension we find them going to the Temple, preaching to the people, cast into prison, and pleading before the Sanhedrim, together; on which occasion the rulers "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus"—having perhaps received information from their attendants with reference to this very occasion (*Acts* iv. 13): lastly, Peter and John were selected by the rest of the Apostles to preach the Gospel in Samaria (*Acts* viii. 14).—With regard to this disciple being "known to the High-priest," no acknowledged disciple of Jesus was likely to be intimately known to that dignitary: the fact seems only mentioned to show how they gained admittance: John had probably some relation or acquaintance in the palace; and there are many circumstances which occasion a knowledge of each other between persons whose conditions are unequal.

when they *who had brought in Jesus* had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, *which they did by burning charcoal in a chafing-dish*, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them, with the servants, to see the end (*the issue of the trial*), and warmed himself at the fire.

And as Peter sat *thus* beneath [without, MATT.] *the tribunal in the hall of the palace*,<sup>(\*)</sup> there cometh up unto him one of the maids of the High-priest—even the *same* damsel that *before* kept the door. And when she saw Peter, as he sat warming himself by the fire, she looked earnestly upon him and said, This man was also with him, *as well as his companion who brought him in: tell us*, art not thou also one of this man's disciples? *surely* thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee. And he, *thrown into confusion by this unexpected charge*, abruptly denied Him before them all, saying, Woman, I am not *one of them*: I know Him not, neither understand I *anything of* what thou sayest. And *turning away*, he went out into the porch to avoid any further question; and it was now midnight, and the cock crew.<sup>(4)</sup>

And the servants and officers *still* stood there, who, *as it was stated*, had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves. And Simon Peter, *having returned and mixed with the crowd*, again stood with them and warmed himself. And when he was gone out into (*had now been out in*) the porch—and *thus the first denial, which had driven him there, had taken place*—after a little while again another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth: and *presently* she began to say to them that stood by *her*, This *certainly* is one of them. They said therefore unto him, *taking now more particular notice of him, Is it not as she says?* art not thou also one of his disciples? And another *coming up at the moment* saw him, and *charging him directly with the fact*, said, Thou art also *one* of them. And Peter again denied it, *and this time with an oath,—adding perjury to his falsehood,—and said to him who had charged it so directly upon him*, Man, I am not *one of them*; I call God to witness that I do not know the man!

And after a while, about the space of one hour after *this*, another person present confidently affirmed *the fact*,

(\*) *Beneath in the palace.*] Matthew describes Peter as sitting "without;" but both accounts are consistent. The Hall was an extensive one, having in the upper part a raised tribunal, upon which Jesus now stood awaiting the judges: Peter would be considered as "without the court," when he stood *beneath*, where the attendants were.

(4) *The cock crew.*] It has been objected that these birds were not allowed to be kept in the city, and there is no doubt that some regulation existed on the subject; but that it was not strictly enforced, appears from a passage in the Jerusalem Talmud, where a cock, which had killed a little child, is stoned by sentence of the Council.

saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him, for he too is a Galilean. And they that stood by, *hearing the charge renewed from a fresh quarter*, came unto Peter, and said again to him, Surely thou also art one of them, and it is in vain any longer to deny it; for thou art indeed, as he says, a Galilean, and thy speech (*the dialect in which thou speakest*) agreeth plainly thereto and bewrayeth thee?<sup>b</sup> And at this moment one of the servants of the High-priest,—being his kinsman (*the kinsman of him*) whose ear Peter had cut off,—saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Then Peter, *more alarmed than ever at a charge so nearly affecting his personal safety*, denied again; and, *accused as he was on all sides*, began to curse and to swear (*imprecating curses on himself if he spoke not the truth*), saying, Man, I know not what thou sayest: I know not this man of whom ye all speak! And immediately, while he yet spake,—*just as the words had escaped his lips*,—the cock crew the second time.

And Peter, when he heard it, felt the first consciousness of his dreadful sin; and his eyes immediately became rivetted on his Master, who stood calmly awaiting His trial at the upper end of the hall. And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. That one impressive look, conveying reproof, yet at the same time beaming forth pity and forgiveness, at once struck conviction to the heart of the offending disciple, and Peter now fully remembered the word of the Lord Jesus, how He had said unto him, “Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice” (*Mark xiv. 30*).—And Peter, full of contrition and unable to contain himself, went out; and when he thought thereon,<sup>c</sup> he wept bitterly!<sup>c</sup> <sup>(6)</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans? Acts ii. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of. 2 Cor. vii. 10.

<sup>(5)</sup> When he thought thereon.] A great deal of learning has been expended to show that the original expression, thus translated, has been employed to signify “having covered his head with his mantle,” and also, “having cast himself forth:” the former of these readings is adopted by some eminent Greek Fathers, and is certainly applicable to a person in great affliction (see 2 Sam. xv. 30; and Esth. vi. 12): the latter has also been ably supported, and the word is repeatedly used in that sense by the writers of the Septuagint. Still there is not sufficient reason to disturb the very suitable sense conveyed in our Translation, and perhaps there are more classical examples in its favour than for any other.

<sup>(6)</sup> He wept bitterly.] Peter’s sin had been no sin of infirmity, but was a positive fall from grace. He had deliberately affirmed a base falsehood three times,—on each occasion with greater positiveness and vehemency; first affirming flatly that he knew nothing of Jesus, then strengthening it “with an oath,” and ending with “cursing and swearing.”—Yet the same night, which beheld Peter a pertinacious sinner, beheld

him an humble, heart-broken penitent. The reality of that repentance, and of permanent conversion to his Saviour, was abundantly proved by a life-long of obedience and zeal.—The account of St. Mark on this occasion is the most circumstantial; and, as that Gospel was no doubt dictated or supervised by Peter, it affords a striking evidence of the simplicity and openness of his character. His humility (John xiii. 6),—his ardent zeal (John xviii. 10),—his faith when he leaped into the sea to join his Master, and the remarkable events, redounding so much to his honour, which followed on that occasion (John xxi. 7—19)—all these are not touched on in St. Mark’s narrative; and even his present repentance but slightly.—The frequent repetition of the Apostle’s name in this place (which is used particularly by St. Luke in the closing sentences) may be intended to draw our attention to the fact, that, notwithstanding the fortitude and resolution with which Peter afterwards defended the Gospel (with a particular view to which qualities that memorable name was given by his Master), he could fall very low indeed, when he relied solely upon himself. And the

## SECTION CXXIV.

JESUS IS TWICE EXAMINED; AND THE SECOND TIME, ON BEING ADJURED BY THE HIGH-PRIEST, AVOWS HIMSELF TO BE THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD.

*Matt. xxvi. 59—68. Mark xiv. 55—65. Luke xxii. 63—71.  
John xviii. 19—23.*

THEN, *the Court being constituted*, the High-priest asked Jesus of (*concerning*) His disciples, and also of His doctrine; *intending first, upon His admissions as to the number of His followers, to charge Him with sedition to the Roman power; and then, upon His declarations as to His Divinity, to found the charge of blasphemy—a crime which was directly cognizable in their own court.*

<sup>a</sup> Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this He whom they seek to kill? But lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing to Him. John vii. 26, 26.

<sup>b</sup> And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. Luke iv. 15.

<sup>c</sup> This thing was not done in a corner. Acts xxvi. 26.

<sup>d</sup> And the high-priest Ananias commanded them that stood by Paul, to smite him on the mouth. Acts xxiii. 2.

<sup>e</sup> —that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for Him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. Isa. xxix. 21.

But Jesus, *willing as He was to become the great Sacrifice, demurred to this unjust proceeding of the High-priest, in making Him criminate Himself; and, without replying at all to the first question, for that might have endangered His disciples, answered him,*<sup>(1)</sup> *As to My doctrine, I spake it openly to the world:*<sup>a</sup> *I ever taught in the synagogue,*<sup>b</sup> *and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret*<sup>c</sup> *(with seditious views) have I said nothing. Why therefore askest thou Me concerning My doctrine? Ask rather them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they well know what I said,*

Now Annas had sent Him bound to Caiaphas, the *legally-constituted High-priest, before whom He now stood.* And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers of the court, which stood by, *wantonly struck Jesus, bound as He was, on the cheek with the palm of his hand,*<sup>d</sup> *saying, Answerest thou the High-priest so rudely? Jesus meekly answered him upon this unprovoked assault, If I have spoken evil (contumeliously), shew Me My fault, and bear witness against Me of the evil; but if I have spoken well, and only that which is just, why smitest thou Me?*

Now the chief-priests and elders, and all the council, *being driven to the necessity of proving their charges, sought for false witness*<sup>e</sup> *against Jesus, to put Him to death with*

narrative of this fall being so expressly recorded by all (for even St. John repeats it with the rest), would seem to be a caution against the extravagant regard afterwards claimed for St. Peter and his successors by the Roman Church.

(1) *Jesus answered him, &c.*] In this reply Jesus stood upon his right, thus upholding justice and the honour of the Law, which were made for the protection of the innocent as well as the

punishment of the guilty.—Hence we learn that we may insist on justice being done to us, and, whenever unjustly accused, may compel our slanderers to prove what they have to urge against us. Our Lord referred to those who had attended His teaching for a testimony; and the lesson is one still more important, that to those who have known us, we may be able confidently to appeal as witnesses of our sincerity and of the purity and rectitude of our lives.

at least some semblance of Justice: but found none which sufficiently answered their purpose, or that established any charge on which they could obtain a capital sentence; for though many false witnesses came,<sup>f</sup> and bare false witness against Him, yet found they none: their witness agreed not together, and the Law absolutely required the concurrent evidence of at least two persons in all capital cases.<sup>g</sup>

At the last there came two false witnesses, who arose and bare false witness against Him,<sup>h</sup>—perverting certain words which He had spoken concerning His own body three years before,—and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days: we ourselves distinctly heard him say, as he stood in the court of the Gentiles, I will destroy this Temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But, although it was a capital offence to speak against the Temple, neither so did their witness agree together; and even by their own admission, He had promised to restore it complete again.

Now as soon as it was break of day, and a more regular court could be held in the public place of justice, the elders of the people, and the chief-priests, and the Scribes, came again together, and led Jesus from the palace of Caiaphas into their council. And, the two witnesses being again brought forward, the High-priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing to such a serious accusation? what is it which these men witness against thee? But Jesus held His peace,<sup>i</sup> and answered nothing, for He did not deign a reply, well knowing that to make any would have been in vain. And they, urging Him to make some confession, said, Art thou the Christ? tell us plainly if such are thy pretensions. And He said unto them, If I merely tell you that I am, you will not believe Me: and if I also ask you what you object to the proofs I bring, you will not answer Me, nor let Me go.

And now, in order to force a confession from Jesus and bring the matter to an issue, the High-priest craftily be-thought himself of an expedient; and answered again and said unto Him, I solemnly adjure thee<sup>k</sup> (°) by the Living God, that thou tell us at once whether thou be the Christ, the Son of the Blessed God? And Jesus, thus solemnly adjured, no longer declined to answer, and saith unto him, in the customary form of strong affirmation, Thou hast said the truth: I am the Messiah, the Son of God. Nevertheless

<sup>f</sup> False witnesses did rise up; they laid to My charge things that I knew not. Pa. xxxv. 11.

<sup>g</sup> At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death: but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. Deut. xvii. 6.

<sup>h</sup> Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But He spake of the temple of His body. John ii. 19, 21.

And they stirred up the people, and the elders and the scribes, and brought him to the council, and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this Holy Place. Acta vi. 12, 13.

<sup>i</sup> They that seek after My life lay snares for Me: but I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth,—as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. Pa. xxxviii. 12—14.

As a sheep before shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. Isa liii. 7.

<sup>k</sup> If a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity. Lev. v. 1.

And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the judge, even that man shall die. Deut. xvii. 12.

And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing, but that which is true, in the name of the Lord? 1 Kings xxii. 16.

(°) I adjure thee.] This adjuration imperatively claimed a reply in the Jewish courts when it was accompanied by an interrogation; and the answer returned was regarded as an answer on oath. The silence of a person so

adjured was construed into guilt. Our Lord, who had disdained to reply to unfounded charges, now considered Himself bound to answer—thus setting the example to others of due reverence to authority and of respect for solemn forms.



<sup>1</sup> The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Ps. cx. 1.

Who, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb. i. 3.

<sup>2</sup> I saw in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom. Dan. vii. 13, 14.

Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matt. xxiv. 30.

<sup>3</sup> The Jews sought to kill Him, because He said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. John v. 18.

<sup>4</sup> And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death. Lev. xxiv. 16.

The Jews answered him, We have a Law, and by our Law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. John xix. 7.

<sup>5</sup> They abhor me, and spare not to spit in my face. Job xxx. 10.

<sup>6</sup> They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me. Job xvi. 10.—I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting. Isa. l. 6.—He giveth His cheek to him that smiteth Him: He is filled full with reproach. Lam. iii. 30.

(Moreover, Gr.), little as My present appearance and situation may accord with a character of such high dignity, I say unto you now present, that hereafter (after a little while) shall ye see the Son of man, as it has been predicted of Him by the Psalmist, sitting on the right hand of the power of God;<sup>1</sup> and, as predicted also by the prophet Daniel, coming in the clouds of heaven:<sup>2</sup> even that sign, which you have so often demanded in confirmation of My mission, shall be given, and in this generation, as at the Last Day, you will witness its coming in vengeance.

Then said they all with eagerness, anxious to fix His words, Art thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye say that which indeed I am. Then the High-priest, as if horror-struck with what he heard, solemnly and in the accustomed form rent his clothes,<sup>3</sup> saying, He hath spoken open blasphemy:<sup>4</sup> what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have all heard his blasphemy: what think ye of it? They answered and said, He is guilty of (liable to and deserving of) death:<sup>5</sup> thou hast justly observed, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.—And accordingly they all, who were then present, unanimously condemned Him to be guilty of death.

Then the men that held Jesus, hearing that He was condemned, mocked Him; and some, to shew their contempt, began to spit in His sacred face,<sup>6</sup> and to buffet Him about, and others roughly smote Him<sup>7</sup>—the whole of which contumelious treatment He patiently endured. And when they had blindfolded Him, the servants struck Him on the face with the palms of their hands, and derisively asked Him, saying, Thou Christ, who pretendest to know all things, let us see a proof of thy skill: prophesy (declare) unto us, who is he that last smote thee?—And many other things blasphemously spake they against Him.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Rent his clothes.*] This was an ancient mode of expressing violent grief or indignation; and, among the Jews, he who heard blasphemy spoken was bound in holy zeal to rend his garments. The Apostles did so at Lystra (Acts xiv. 14).—It has been objected that the High-priest was forbidden by the Law to rend his garments; but that was only in case of private mourning for the dead (Lev. xxi. 10, 11),—that so the chief minister of religion should not appear as a mourner before God, or make his grief public by any outward sign. The pontifical dress was

made so as not to admit of being rent (Exod. xxviii. 32): it descended from father to son, and was only to be worn when they ministered (Exod. xxix. 29, 30); so that that could not be the dress worn by the High-priest on the present occasion.—After this solemn formality of rending the garments, and the condemnation of Jesus for assumed blasphemy, it is observable how the Evangelist Luke sums up by fixing the charge upon our Lord's enemies: it was they who "spake blasphemously against Him."

## SECTION CXXV.

THE COUNCIL DETERMINE TO DELIVER UP JESUS TO PILATE, THE ROMAN GOVERNOR; WHO, BELIEVING HIM TO BE INNOCENT, DECLINES TO CONDEMN HIM, AND, HAVING DISCOVERED THAT HE IS A GALILEAN, SENDS HIM TO HEROD ANTIPAS.

*Matt.* xxvii. 1, 2, 11—14. *Mark* xv. 1—5. *Luke* xxiii. 1—7.

*John* xviii. 28—38.

AND straightway when the morning was now fully come, all the chief-priests, with the elders of the people and Scribes, and the whole council, held a *private* consultation against Jesus,<sup>a</sup> concerning the best mode of procedure to put Him to death.—And they at length determined to accuse Him, in the first instance, of sedition to the Roman government.

<sup>a</sup> The rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. Pa. ii. 2.

And, as His bonds had been removed for the last public examination, when they had again bound Him, as though He were now proved to be a notorious malefactor and worthy of death, the whole multitude (*assembly*) of them arose; and they led Him away unto the Hall of Judgment of the Roman magistrate, and there delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, the governor,<sup>(1)</sup> who had come up according to custom, from Cesarea, to administer justice and prevent tumults during the Feast. And it was still early in the day, so that the Court was not yet sitting: and they themselves went not into the Judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled<sup>b</sup> by coming in contact with the Roman officers or other heathen, but remained without that they might be legally-pure to eat the passover;<sup>c</sup> for they entertained solemn scruples on all such ceremonial points, although they hesitated not to seek a death-warrant against an innocent person.

<sup>b</sup> It is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to come unto one of another nation. Acts x. 28.

<sup>c</sup> Whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even. Numb. xix. 22.

Pilate then, in compliance with these formal scruples of the Jewish rulers, went out from the Judgment-hall unto them<sup>(2)</sup> on an open platform which adjoined the palace,

(1) *Pontius Pilate, the Governor.*] Judea, being now a Roman province, under the immediate control of the emperor, and annexed to Syria, was governed by an inferior officer or Procurator. Pontius Pilate, the fifth of these since the removal of Archelaus, came into office the twenty-seventh year of the vulgar Æra. He is generally characterized by Josephus as an unjust and cruel governor. After he had held office ten years, the Samaritans, whom he had grievously persecuted, sent an embassy to the pro-consul of Syria, by whom he was ordered to Rome to give an account of his administration: but Tiberius being dead before his arrival, A.D. 37, the succeeding emperor banished him to

Gaul, where he is said to have committed suicide A.D. 41.

(2) *Went out unto them.*] This could be done without fear of defilement from himself or his retinue. A kind of stage had been erected in the open court before the palace; it was called in Hebrew "Gabbatha" from its height; in Greek "the Pavement" from its tessellated flooring, for, as it was exposed to the weather, it had been paved with pieces of coloured marble in Mosaic. Suetonius relates in his life of Julius Cæsar, that that emperor carried about with him in his expeditions such pieces of sawn marble and variegated stone to adorn his prætorium. As this platform adjoined the palace-

and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not *already proved to be* a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee *for judgment*. Then said Pilate unto them, —for he “*knew that from envy they had delivered Him*” (see *Matt. xxvii. 18*),—Take ye him, and judge (*try*) him according to your Law,<sup>d</sup> *for the Roman Law cannot condemn a man unheard*. The Jews therefore said unto him, *We already adjudge him to be deserving of death; but, as thou well knowest, it is not lawful for us, without confirmation from thee, to put any man to death.*<sup>(3)</sup>—*And all this was done that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He so repeatedly spake, signifying what manner of death He should die—that it would be by a Roman, and not by a Jewish punishment.*

And they,—*thinking that Pilate might care little for the charge of blasphemy*,—began to accuse Him of *treason to the emperor*, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar;<sup>(4)</sup> saying also, that he himself is Christ, a King<sup>f</sup> *who shall be superior to all other kings*. And when He was accused of the chief-priests and elders of *this and many other things equally false and malicious*, He still answered nothing. Then Pilate, *who could no longer decline to examine Him on such charges*, saith unto Him, Answerest thou nothing in *thine own vindication*? hearest thou not *what they say*? behold, how many *grave* things they witness against thee. And Jesus yet (*still*) answered him to never a word, inso-much that Pilate the governor marvelled greatly.

Then Pilate entered into the Judgment-hall again, and called Jesus in, *that he might examine Him according to the regular forms of justice*. And Jesus stood there before the governor. And Pilate asked Him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? *hast thou any such pretensions as they ascribe to thee*? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, *really believing that I would usurp the Government*; or did others, *who reject My claims as the Messiah*,

<sup>d</sup> If it be a question of words, and names, and of your Law, look ye to it, for I will be no judge of such matters. *Acts xviii. 16.*

<sup>e</sup> And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the Scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge, and to crucify Him. *Matt. xx. 17—19.*

<sup>f</sup> As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. *John iii. 14.*

<sup>g</sup> I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me: this He said, signifying what death He should die. *John xii. 32.*

<sup>h</sup> The Jews cried out, Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar. *John xix. 12.*

wall, and communicated with it by a door, the governor could easily come out and address the people. When causes were heard there, it was covered above, and a throne was placed for judgment, as described at *John xix. 13*.

(<sup>3</sup>) *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*] The Sanhedrim could adjudicate on any matters affecting their religion, and punish offenders with scourging, without authority from the Roman governor; but it has been a point much disputed whether they still retained the power of inflicting capital punishment. Some of the most powerful arguments adduced to shew they had not such power, will yet admit of weighty answers; and on the whole it appears most reasonable to suppose, that this power had, from

various causes, gradually been relinquished by the Jews, and had now imperceptibly lapsed into the hands of the Romans. We do not, indeed, find any permission for the stoning of Stephen after the trial of that martyr, but the act appears to have been somewhat tumultuous (see *Acts vi.*).—The Jews could not have condemned Jesus to death while their Passover lasted, nor have retained Him in custody without tumult; and being afraid of the people, they rather press the political charges, so as to bring in the authority of Pilate and remove the odium from themselves.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar.*] Upon the utter falsehood of this charge, see Section CVIII., with Note 3.

tell it thee of Me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew, *that I should understand any such claims in regard to thy religion, or enquire respecting them for my own satisfaction? I am here as a judge to act impartially, and the suspicions of thy fidelity to the government proceed entirely from others: yea, thine own nation,*<sup>g</sup> *and the chief-priests themselves at its head, have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done to incense them thus, and induce them to lay this heavy crime to thy charge?* Jesus answered *with calm dignity, It is true that I have a kingdom, but then My kingdom is not of this world,*<sup>h</sup> *nor is it attended with outward shew and power: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the rulers of the Jews; but now, since this has not been attempted, it is evident that My kingdom is not from hence, and cannot be opposed to the Roman power.*

Pilate therefore, *wishing to hear further,* said unto Him, *Art thou a king then, that thou speakest of thy kingdom; and dost thou really claim that title?* And Jesus, *freely acknowledging His dignity,* answered him and said, *Thou sayest only the truth, that I am a King.*<sup>1</sup> *To this end was I born,*<sup>k</sup> *that I should reign over true Israelites for ever; and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness*<sup>l</sup> *unto the Truth. Every one that is a lover of the Truth is My subject, and he heareth and obeyeth My voice.*<sup>m</sup> —*Pilate, now fully satisfied of His innocence, and regarding Him only as some harmless visionary,* saith unto Him, *with hurried and contemptuous indifference, What is Truth?* <sup>(<sup>2</sup>)</sup>

And when he had said this, *without waiting for a reply,* he went out again *on the Pavement* unto the Jews, and saith to the people, and to the chief-priests *who were also standing below awaiting his decision,* I find no fault (no crime) at all in this man *such as that of which you accuse him.*

And, *when they found that the governor was disposed to acquit Him,* they were the more fierce in their accusations, and exaggerated their former charge, saying, He stirreth up the people *from one end of the country to the other,* teaching his seditious doctrines throughout a<sup>l</sup> Jewry, beginning from Galilee, *ever the fountain-head of faction, even to this sacred place.* When Pilate heard them speak of Galilee, and understood that Jesus had commenced His preaching

<sup>g</sup> The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. Acts iii. 13.

<sup>h</sup> The sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Ps. xlv. 6.

The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Luke xvii. 20.

When Jesus, therefore, perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone. John vi. 15.

The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rom. xiv. 17.

<sup>1</sup> Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession. 1 Tim. vi. 13.

<sup>k</sup> And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke i. 33.

<sup>l</sup> Behold I have given Him for a Witness to the people. Isa. lv. 4.

<sup>m</sup> He that is of God, heareth God's words. John viii. 47.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Pilate saith unto him, What is Truth?* This same question had long agitated the world, and was, in our Lord's time, the great subject of inquiry in the Greek schools. Pilate did not suppose that a person in the apparent condition of a Jewish peasant could solve such a question, and most probably he only put it to our Lord in contempt. The explanation which Jesus had given of the nature of His sovereignty, must have

satisfied the governor that his conduct did not involve the guilt of treason; and as he would be aware how frequently lofty titles and a chimerical royalty formed a part of the heathen philosophy, he may have taken Him for one of those harmless Wise men attached to the Stoic school, "Who reigned a monarch, though without a throne." Francis's *Horace* (lib. i. Sat. 3).

*there, an expedient immediately suggested itself, that he might without offence get rid of this perplexing affair; and, accordingly, he asked whether the man were a Galilean: and as soon as he knew that he was, and therefore belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction,*<sup>a</sup> *(<sup>4</sup>) he sent Him at once to Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time to attend the Feast.*

<sup>a</sup> Herod, being tetrarch of Galilee. Luke iii. 1.

## SECTION CXXVI.

HEROD, HAVING MOCKED JESUS, SENDS HIM BACK TO PILATE; WHO, AFTER REPEATED EFFORTS TO SAVE HIS LIFE, PASSES THE SENTENCE OF CONDEMNATION.

*Matt. xxvii. 15—31. Mark xv. 6—20. Luke xxiii. 8—25.  
John xviii. 39, 40; xix. 1—16.*

AND when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad *of the opportunity*; for he was desirous of a long season to see Him, because he had heard many things (*much*) of Him,<sup>a</sup> and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. *But Jesus,—though He had never denied the petition of the meanest applicant who came to Him in faith,—would not gratify the idle curiosity of this tyrant and murderer of the Baptist.* Then he questioned with Him in many words, but *Jesus still disappointed him, for He answered him nothing.*

<sup>a</sup> Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him . . . . . And he desired to see Him. Luke ix. 7, 9.

And the chief-priests and Scribes, *having followed Jesus from the judgment-hall, stood in the presence of the Tetrarch, and again vehemently accused Him of blasphemy and of assuming the title of a King; for they did not venture, on this occasion, to charge Him with fomenting sedition in Galilee.*

And Herod, *who had suffered some remorse, as well as much unpopularity, for his murder of the Baptist, would have nothing to do with the death of Jesus; yet, with his men of war (his body-guard) he set Him at nought,—treating Him as a person utterly insignificant; and mocked Him in respect to His royal pretensions, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe which had been cast aside, and sent Him again to Pilate for final judgment—thus in his turn paying deference to the Roman governor.* And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together,<sup>b</sup> for before

<sup>b</sup> Of a truth, against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together. Acts iv. 27.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Herod's jurisdiction.*] It was the regular practice of the Roman Law to remit a prisoner to the governor of the province to which he belonged.—Pilate might also be glad of the opportunity of showing some deference to Herod,

whom he had offended (probably by his slaughter of the Galileans in the Temple, Luke xiii. 1): indeed, this compliment appears to have led to a reconciliation between the two dignitaries (Luke xxiii. 12).

*this interchange of courtesies they were living at enmity between themselves.*

And Pilate took advantage of Herod's concurrence with him in opinion, as a further confirmation of the innocence of Jesus: and, when he had called together the chief-priests, and the rulers, and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people from their allegiance to Cæsar; and behold, I, having examined him before you as well as in private, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod although he is a Jew; for I sent you to him with the accused, and lo, nothing, as though he were worthy (deserving) of death, is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him by scourging, and then release him.

Now at that important Feast, which the Jews so specially commemorated as their own release from bondage, the Governor was wont of late years,—and, as the custom had become established, he must now of necessity do the same,—to release unto the people one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was then a notable (a notorious) prisoner named Barabbas, which lay bound, together with them that had with him as their chief made insurrection in the city—an act that rendered him popular with the Jews; and who, in addition to the crime of sedition with which Jesus was also charged, had committed murder in the insurrection, and was commonly known as a highway robber.—And the multitude therefore, when they were gathered together before the tribunal, crying aloud to the Governor, began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them, and to award them a prisoner. But Pilate answered them, saying, Ye have, it is true, a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover: whom will ye therefore that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ, the king of the Jews?—For he knew that the chief-priests had delivered Him for (from) envy of His popularity and jealousy of His pretensions, rather than from any regard to justice; and he hoped that the people would be ashamed to ask for the liberation of so great a criminal as Barabbas.

But the chief-priests and elders moved and persuaded the people,—weak and capricious in inclination as multitudes ever are,—that they should ask Pilate that he should rather release Barabbas unto them, and destroy Jesus.—The Governor answered and said formally unto them, Whether of the twain whom I have named will ye that I release unto you? And then again they cried out all at once, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas: away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas!<sup>c</sup> And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then

<sup>c</sup> In the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go, ye denied the Holy One and the Just; and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. Acts iii. 13, 14.

that I shall do with Jesus, which is called Christ,—whom ye call the king of the Jews? And they all cried out again, and, *blindly doing as they were told by their rulers*, say unto him, Crucify him! *we own him not as a king*; let him be *treated as the vilest slave, and crucified!*—Pilate therefore, willing, *if possible, rather* to release Jesus, spake again to them *on His behalf*: but they *still* cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him!—And Pilate said unto them the third time, *Why are you so desirous that I should crucify him?* what *grievous* evil hath he done *to deserve such a punishment?* I, *who have strictly examined him*, have found no *sufficient* cause of death in him. I will, therefore, *as I purposed*, chastise him *by scourging*, and let him go. And they were instant (*urgent*) with loud voices, and cried out the more exceedingly, requiring that He might be crucified; and the voices of them, and of the chief-priests *who had influenced them*, prevailed *over the weak and irresolute Governor*.

Then Pilate therefore, *that he might stay the clamours of the Jews*, took Jesus and scourged Him <sup>d</sup>(<sup>1</sup>) *in their sight*; *which punishment was often preparatory to crucifixion, and he hoped that it might suffice to appease their fury.*—Then, *when He had suffered from the scourge*, the soldiers of the Governor took Jesus and led Him away into the common-hall of Judgment, called Prætorium, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him of *His own mantle*, and clothed Him with purple <sup>e</sup>(<sup>2</sup>) [*put on Him a cast off scarlet robe, MATT.*] *such as was worn by kings*; and when they had platted a crown or wreath of thorns,<sup>(3)</sup> they put it upon His head, and *in place of a sceptre, they put a reed or cane* in His right hand: and *then* they began, *with mock deference*, to salute Him, and bowing their knees, worshipped (*did reverence to*) Him, and mocked Him *with regal titles*, saying, Hail, king of the Jews! And *when they were tired with this mockery*, they did spit upon Him; <sup>e</sup> and took the reed *out of His hand* and smote Him on the head—*driving the thorns deeper into His temples by their blows*; and *others* smote Him with their hands.

<sup>d</sup> The ploughers ploughed upon My back; they made long their furrows. Ps. cxxix. 3.

I gave My back to the smiters. Isa. l. 6.

With His stripes we are healed. Isa. liii. 5.

<sup>e</sup> I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Isa. l. 6.

(<sup>1</sup>) *And scourged Him.*] That this was a prelude to crucifixion in the case of slaves, is mentioned by Livy. St. Matthew elsewhere uses the common Latin expression, when he speaks of this part of the Roman punishment; but St. John, who had less intercourse with the Romans, employs instead an expression which was familiar to the Greeks. The *flagella* were terribly sharp, and are termed by Horace *horribilia*.

(<sup>2</sup>) *With purple.*] St. Matthew calls it a scarlet robe, but the name of "purple" was given by the ancients to all colours which had any

mixture of red in them, and thus scarlet obtained that name.

(<sup>3</sup>) *A crown of thorns.*] Thorns were the first fruits of the Curse, and were placed, not inappropriately, on the head of the Sacred Victim. Eastern thorns are described as being much larger than any known to us. A common sort, growing on the pliant branches of the Arabian *Naba*, were probably the thorns made use of at the Crucifixion: the leaf, too, of that tree bears a strong resemblance to ivy, with which kings and victors were formerly crowned.

Now when he (*Pilate*) was set down on the Judgment-seat to judge two robbers, who were executed the same day, his wife<sup>(4)</sup> sent a messenger in haste unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with the condemnation of that Just man; <sup>f</sup> for I have suffered many things (*much*) in a dream<sup>g</sup> this day because of him. Pilate, therefore, moved by this omen to further efforts on behalf of Jesus, went forth again, and having ordered Jesus to be brought from the common-hall in view of the people, saith unto them, Behold I bring him forth to you, having scourged him, that ye may know, and pause before proceeding further, that I find in him no fault at all.

Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, from which the blood trickled down over His face, and the purple robe being still left in mockery upon Him. And Pilate, appealing to their compassion at so piteous a spectacle, saith unto them, Behold the man,—this supposed usurper of royalty!—be appeased with what he has already suffered. When the chief-priests, therefore, and officers saw Him thus exhibited, they feared the people might relent at the sight, and, forgetful of that decorum which their own dignity required, cried out vehemently, saying, Crucify him, crucify him! Pilate, perceiving that they were as inexorable as ever, saith unto them, If ye will have it so, take ye him and crucify him at your own peril of the consequences, for I find no fault in him, and cannot give sentence that it should be done. The Jews, fearing that Jesus would not be condemned as a rebel, and still anxious to force the responsibility of His death on the governor, answered him:—We cannot in any case condemn to death during the Feast; but we have a Divine Law, and by our Law, if not by the Roman, he ought certainly to die,<sup>h</sup> because he has been guilty of blasphemy, and even before our Council made himself out to be the Son of God.<sup>i</sup>

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid<sup>(5)</sup> to deny their request; for he well knew the

<sup>f</sup> My righteous servant. Isa. liii. 11.

He is just. Zech. ix. 9. Certainly this was a Righteous Man. Luke xxiii. 47.

— Who did no sin. 1 Pet. ii. 22.

Jesus Christ, the Righteous. 1 John ii. 1.

<sup>g</sup> In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then God openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. Job xxxiii. 15.

I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw a dream which made me afraid; and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Dan. iv. 2, 4, 5.

<sup>h</sup> He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death. Lev. xxiv. 16.

<sup>i</sup> The Jews therefore sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. John v. 18.

The High-priest asked Him, and said unto Him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am. Mark xiv. 61, 62.

(4) *His wife.*] Her name was Claudia Procula, as appears from Ecclesiastical writers. This incident serves to mark the period of the Crucifixion, and is a remarkable confirmation of the truth of the Sacred narrative; for it was only in the reign of Tiberius that governors were permitted to take their wives into the provinces (Tacitus, Annal. 3). It would appear that the dream of Pilate's wife occurred in the early morning, and to such dreams more especially, the Romans, as well as other heathen, attached particular importance, for they regarded them as marked indications of the Divine will.

(5) *He was the more afraid.*] Tumults had before occurred under Pilate's government: once, when he attempted to bring the image of Cæsar into Jerusalem; and again, when he would have supplied the city with water at the expense

of the Sacred Treasury. But some have thought that the fears of Pilate lay in crucifying Jesus, rather than in denying the request of the Jews; and that he was afraid to order the execution on these grounds:—Pilate had become impressed with a certain wonderful greatness about Jesus: he was much moved by His calmness during trial, by His refusal to propitiate His judges, His resignation and sublime deportment; and he began to fear that if our Lord's pretensions were such as had been described, and if He had wrought any such miracles as had been asserted, He might after all be some demigod, who, after the warning sent to his wife, might take severe vengeance on him. It is well known that the Romans, and the heathen generally, believed in the existence of such beings, and also in their occasional appearance on earth (Acts xiv. 11, 12).



<sup>k</sup> And David said unto the young man, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. 2 Sam. i. 13.

<sup>l</sup> Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? Dan. iii. 16.

<sup>m</sup> There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Rom. xiii. 1.

Every gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father. Jas. i. 17.

<sup>n</sup> To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. Jas. iv. 17.

\* These all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another King, one Jesus. Acts xvii. 7.

*obstinacy of the Jews in all matters that affected their religion: and so he went again into the Judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Tell me truly, whence art thou<sup>k</sup> (what is thy origin)? But Jesus gave him no answer—for indeed Pilate's conscience was already sufficiently persuaded of His innocence. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee,<sup>l</sup> and have power to release thee? Jesus answered him, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above:<sup>m</sup> therefore he (the High-priest) that delivered Me unto thee, and who professes to acknowledge that Heavenly authority, hath the greater sin.<sup>n</sup>*

And from thenceforth Pilate, more convinced than ever of His innocence, sought earnestly to release Him: but the leaders of the Jews, intimating a threat of accusing the governor to his jealous master, and returning to their first charge, cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend;<sup>(6)</sup> for whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh in effect against Cæsar,<sup>o</sup> as not being our rightful sovereign. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth again, and sat down in the Judgment-seat, in a place, whence he before addressed the Jews, that is called the Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.<sup>(7)</sup> And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour:<sup>(8)</sup> and, before pronouncing sentence of condemnation, he saith unto the Jews, as a last appeal, Behold your King,—your Messiah, whom you so lately owned, and followed to the city in triumph! But they still cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief-priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar: Thus did they renounce their national faith in a Messiah, making use of a pretence to serve their wicked purpose; for, in private, they maintained that their allegiance was not due to any earthly monarch.

Now when Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and, according to a custom of ancient times, washed his hands

(<sup>6</sup>) *Thou art not Cæsar's friend.*] This was a well-contrived and effective threat, for the reigning emperor, Tiberius, was of a remarkably jealous and suspicious temper. We learn from Suetonius, as well as Tacitus, that he was in the habit of punishing with death any offence that infringed upon his own dignity.—His jealousy would easily be roused on this occasion, as the Jews had repeatedly struggled under his yoke.

(<sup>7</sup>) *In a place, called the Pavement, &c.*] See Section CXXV., Note 2.

(<sup>8</sup>) *About the sixth hour.*] There is little doubt that this rendering is an error of number. It was the *third* hour according to the Jewish computation of time, and also according to St.

Mark's express statement (ch. xv. 25). The error might easily have arisen thus: In ancient times all numbers were written not at length, but with numeral letters; and in some early copies, the symbol for *six* might be substituted for that which represents *three*, to which it bears much resemblance. Another mode of explaining this difficulty (allowing the common text to be correct), is this: as the Jews divided their day from sun-rise to sun-set into four portions, and St. Mark states that "it was" already "the *third* hour," while St. John states that "it was about the *sixth*," the time of the Crucifixion would be before noon, consistently with both statements.

before the multitude, saying, I *hereby* declare that I am innocent of the blood<sup>p</sup> of this Just person:<sup>(9)</sup> see ye to the consequences of it.<sup>q</sup> Then answered all the people and said, His blood and the guilt of shedding it be on us, and on our children!<sup>(10)</sup> And after this, Pilate, willing to content the people, and sacrificing at last his conscience to his fears, gave final Sentence that it should be as they required. And he released to them Barabbas,—even him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison,—whom they had desired: and he delivered Jesus to their will to be crucified. And after that they had mocked Him, in the manner that the soldiers of Herod and Pilate had done already, they took the purple robe off from Him, as if to dethrone Him from His pretended kingdom, and put His own raiment again on Him, and led Him away with the Roman guard to crucify Him.

<sup>p</sup> And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Deut. xxi. 6, 7.

<sup>q</sup> I will wash mine hands in innocency. Ps. xxvi. 6.

<sup>r</sup> Behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Acts v. 28.

## SECTION CXXVII.

JUDAS AVOWS THE INNOCENCE OF HIS MASTER; AND, HAVING RESTORED TO THE PRIESTS THE WAGES OF HIS INIQUITY, HANGS HIMSELF IN DESPAIR.

*Matt. xxvii. 3—10.*

THEN Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, and had made no effort to escape death, repented himself<sup>(1)</sup> of his treachery, and brought back again his unlawful gains, even the thirty

<sup>(9)</sup> *I am innocent of the blood of this Just person.* It is unprecedented in the annals of mankind, that a person at the very time of being capitally condemned, should be declared innocent by the judge who passed sentence upon him: to which we may add, that our Saviour's innocence was also proclaimed by the person who betrayed Him, by one of those who suffered with Him, and by the officer who superintended His execution. In particular, that so bad a man as Pilate should persevere so long in pleading for our Lord, can be attributed to nothing else than the over-ruling Providence of God; which directed that His Son, at the same time that He suffered death for the sins of others, should, in the most public manner, and by independent evidence, be proclaimed altogether faultless Himself.—The practice of formally cleansing the hands which had been polluted with blood, was observed among the Gentiles, as well as the Jews. Homer and Virgil represent their heroes as observing this practice on their return from battle, previous to their attending to sacred duties (Il. vi. 266; Æn. ii. 719).

<sup>(10)</sup> *His blood be on us and on our children.* Thus was the death of the Messiah made completely a national act. The blood which was shed did indeed fall on them, but not with that

effect for which it was mercifully shed—not to save them by its sprinkling, but sealing their condemnation. Vast numbers of them suffered the very same death before the walls of their city during the War, and the weight of that blood lies heavy on their dispersed and humiliated posterity even at this distant day.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Repented himself.* That the repentance of Judas was true Repentance we are forbidden to hope, from what is elsewhere recorded by the Evangelists: by St. Matthew (xxvi. 24), that “it had good for him if he had not been born;” by St. John (xvii. 12), that none of the Apostles were lost “but the son of perdition;” and by St. Luke (Acts i. 25), that he went “to his own place.”—His Repentance had some of the marks, but it wanted the complete reality of Christian Repentance. There was conviction of sin, confession, sorrow, self-condemnation, with anxiety to make restitution and counteract the effect of his crime; yet all this was only the work of Natural Conscience, and did not spring from Grace. The crime itself was not repented of, and instead of being followed by Prayer, or by an application for pardon, it terminated in Despair.

pieces of silver *which he had received*, to the chief-priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.<sup>(1)</sup> And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that: *thy regret altogether is thine own concern.*

And he cast down the pieces of silver *before them* in the Temple (*the Sanctuary*), and departed, and went and hanged himself <sup>a</sup> <sup>(2)</sup> *in despair.*

<sup>a</sup> Thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days. Ps. lv. 23.

And the chief-priests took up the silver pieces and said, It is not lawful for us to put them *again* into the Treasury, because it is *money given as the price of blood.* And they took counsel *together on the matter*, and bought with them *the field*, called the potter's field <sup>(3)</sup> (*because a potter had used the clay, of which the soil was composed, for his wares*), and allotted it to bury Jewish strangers in. Wherefore that field was *afterwards* called, *as it is* unto this day, The field of blood.<sup>b</sup> Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet,<sup>(4)</sup> saying, *in the words recorded by Zechariah, AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF HIM THAT WAS SO CONTEMPTUOUSLY VALUED, WHOM THEY OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DID VALUE; AND GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD AS THE LORD APPOINTED ME (see Zech. xi. 13).*

<sup>b</sup> That field is called, in their proper tongue, Aeldama, that is to say, The field of blood. Acts i. 19.

(<sup>1</sup>) *I have betrayed the innocent blood.*] This declaration by Judas of the innocence of Jesus is most important. He had been an eye-witness of his Master's miracles, and a companion of His private hours. If, then, there was any deceit in the Saviour's character or pretensions, Judas must have known it: and if the Truth had not been too strong for him, he would have been glad to impeach his former associates.—His testimony was not that of a partial friend, nor of an enemy insufficiently acquainted with Christ to give evidence, but of a traitor,—of one who enjoyed all the advantages of a friend, and possessed all the malice of an enemy. He is a Witness, no less powerful than the converted Paul, to the truth of Christianity. If he declared Jesus to be innocent, He must have been innocent; His miracles were real miracles; His teaching was truly Divine; and His life was a perfect exemplification of His doctrine. It is not impossible that so bad a man was permitted to be numbered among the Apostles, in order that we might be furnished with so very peculiar a confirmation of the truth of the Gospel, in addition to evidences of almost every other description.

(<sup>2</sup>) *Hanged himself.*] This is not inconsistent with what is recorded of the death of Judas in the Book of Acts, viz., that he "fell headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out" (Acts i. 18). St. Matthew records the kind of death by which he sought destruction; and St. Luke, that by which he made his final exit, and which was the event of the other: by the rope breaking, or in some manner giving way, he fell down, and, being ruptured by the fall, his bowels protruded. The wood of the Judas tree (traditionally so called) is remarkably brittle.—There might be a more than ordinary judgment in the shocking mode of the traitor's departure, as in the case of Herod Agrippa (Acts xii. 23).

(<sup>3</sup>) *And bought with them the potter's field.*] As executioners could not make offerings, so, by analogy, it seems that *this* money could not be laid out for strictly religious uses; but wishing to spend it in some way that might appear charitable, the chief-priests bought this piece of ground for the burial of any foreign Jews who might die in the city. Having been dug for clay, it would be unfit for tillage, though good enough for this purpose; hence the smallness of the price. The Aeldama or "Field of blood" (*still* so called since the Evangelists wrote) continues to be a public burying-place; and a large chamber excavated in the rock remains the common charnel-house of the poor and unhonoured dead of Jerusalem.

(<sup>4</sup>) *Spoken by Jeremy the Prophet.*] The words do not occur in what we possess of the writings of Jeremiah, but the prophecy is found at Zechariah xi. 13. This has been accounted for in various ways:—As St. Matthew frequently omits the name of the prophet whom he happens to quote, the name of Jeremiah may have been erroneously inserted by some later pen; or, as names were often contracted in writing, the alteration of the initial letter would cause the mistake. We need not wonder at occasional carelessness of transcribers in that early age, and when abbreviations were so commonly used. But it appears, yet further, that the words might be Jeremiah's, without their occurring in the Book that goes by his name: many of his words, not to be found there, are to be found in the Second Book of Maccabees; and Jerome affirms that he read *these* very words in an Apocryphal book by him: thus they *might* be preserved till the time of Zechariah, who was accustomed so frequently to use his words, that the Jews said, the spirit of Jeremiah was in Zechariah, and that both made one prophet.

## SECTION CXXVIII.

JESUS IS LED AWAY TO GOLGOTHA, IN COMPANY WITH TWO ROBBERS, TO BE CRUCIFIED; AND ADDRESSES SOME WOMEN OF JERUSALEM BY THE WAY.

*Matt. xxvii. 31—34. Mark xv. 20—23. Luke xxiii. 26—32. John xix. 16, 17.*

AND they took Jesus, and led Him away to crucify Him. And there were also two other, *who were* malefactors, led with Him,<sup>a</sup> to be put to death. And He, bearing, *according to custom, the transverse beam of His Cross,*<sup>b</sup> went forth<sup>c</sup> *from the city,—for within its bounds no executions were permitted,—*into a place which is called in the Hebrew *tongue Golgotha*<sup>(1)</sup> (*or, in the Latin, Calvary*), that is to say, the place of a skull.

And as they led Him away, and came out of the city, *Jesus sunk exhausted under His burden*; and they found a man of Cyrene,<sup>d</sup>—Simon by name,<sup>(2)</sup> and the father of Alexander and Rufus,<sup>e</sup> *afterwards well known as Christians,—*who passed by; *for he was coming out of the country to attend the feast*: and they laid hold upon him, and on him they laid *that portion of the Cross*, and compelled him to bear it after Jesus.

And there followed Him a great company of people, and especially of women, which also *with the natural tenderness of their sex* bewailed and lamented Him—*many of His own disciples being among them*. But Jesus, *who compassionated their sorrows more than He considered His own*, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days of *vengeance* are coming, in the which they shall *have cause to say*, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck; *for the most endearing ties shall be but an increase of sorrow, and mothers will behold their offspring torn from them and sold for slaves. So dreadful will be the calami-*

<sup>a</sup> And He was numbered with the transgressors. Isa. liii. 12.

<sup>b</sup> And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son. Gen. xxii. 6.

<sup>c</sup> The sin-offering shall one carry without the camp. Lev. xvi. 27.

Then they carried Naboth forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones that he died. 1 Kings xxi. 13.

Jesus also suffered without the gate. Heb. xiii. 12.

<sup>d</sup> — the parts of Libya, about Cyrene. Acts ii. 10.

— certain of the synagogue which is called the synagogue of the Libertines and Cyrenians. Acts vi. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord. Rom. xvi. 13.

(1) *Golgotha.*] The original word was *Golgotha*, the second *l* being afterwards omitted for euphony. It bears a strong resemblance to *Gilgal* (so named by Joshua, the temporal redeemer and type of Christ, as the place where the Israelites were freed from bondage, Josh. v. 9), and hence it has been thought to convey a prophetic sense.—The place was a sort of knoll or bluff point on a slope west of the city, the shape of which, somewhat resembling a head, has given rise to an idea that it therefore received its name, but it was more probably so called from the skulls of persons who had been executed there.—When Christianity triumphed over Paganism, the population gathered round this ve-

nerated spot, and it is now not only within the walls, but the centre of the modern city. It forms a portion of the site of the magnificent "Church of the Holy Sepulchre."

(2) *A man of Cyrene, Simon by name, &c.*] This African Jew seems to have been impressed as a known disciple, or at least favourer of Christ. We may judge so from the known conversion of his two sons. St. Luke, writing for the Gentiles of Asia, only mentions Simon himself, who might be known to them; but St. Mark, writing to the Romans, takes particular notice that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, the latter of whom is saluted by Paul as a member of their Church (see in the *Margin*).

<sup>f</sup> And they shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth. *Isa. ii. 19.*

<sup>g</sup> He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf, also, shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. *Ps. i. 3.*

I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. *Ps. liii. 8.*

<sup>h</sup> His (the wicked man's) branch shall not be green. *Job xv. 32.*

Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. *Matt. iii. 10.*

If judgment first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? *1 Pet. iv. 17.*

<sup>i</sup> Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment. *Ps. lx. 3.*—Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish. *Prov. xxxi. 6.*

*ties of those days, that then, in the words of the prophet, they shall begin to "say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us" (Hos. x. 8). For if they do these things in a green tree,<sup>g</sup> what shall be done in the dry?<sup>h</sup> If I am thus sorely afflicted, who am as unfitted for punishment as green wood is unfit for fuel—what shall be done to the guilty, who, like dry wood ready for burning, are ripe for vengeance, and are fit only, as is the worthless trunk, to be utterly consumed?*

And when they were come to the place called Golgotha, they (*the women*) charitably gave Him to drink <sup>(<sup>g</sup>)</sup> vinegar, or sour wine, mingled with myrrh or gall (*wormwood*)—*a medicated draught, which was allowed to be administered for allaying the sense of pain, and which, as it contained spice of a poisonous quality, would hasten death: <sup>i</sup> but Jesus was resolved to suffer death in all its bitterness, and when He had just tasted thereof, He received it not, and would not drink.*

## SECTION CXXIX.

### THE CRUCIFIXION; AND ITS ATTENDANT CIRCUMSTANCES.

*Matt. xxvii. 35—44. Mark xv. 24—32. Luke xxiii. 33—43. John xix. 18—27.*

AND it was the third hour (*the hour of nine in the morning*) when they arrived at *Golgotha*, and there they crucified Him.<sup>(1)</sup> And with Him they crucify two thieves (*robbers*),—the same malefactors who had been led out with Him,—the one on His right hand, and the other on His left: and thus was Jesus placed in the midst as though He

(<sup>2</sup>) *They gave Him to drink, &c.]* The anodyne draught here spoken of stupified the sufferer, and Jewish women of rank were allowed to provide it on such occasions. We find the following in the Talmud:—*Prodeunt ad supplicum capitis potium dederunt, granium thuris in poculo vini, ut turbaretur intellectus ejus.* There would at this time be some female disciples present who were in good circumstances, for they were able (as it subsequently appears) to purchase expensive drugs for our Lord's embalming.—In only *tasting* this cup, He had (as an old writer observes) the *worst*, without the best of it: He let no bitter cup pass Him untasted, when He made atonement for man's sinful tasting of the forbidden fruit.

(1) *They crucified Him.]* Crucifixion is spoken of in Egyptian, Grecian, and Carthaginian, as well as in Roman history; but it was never employed as a Jewish punishment. The Romans executed slaves in this manner, and it was deemed so disgraceful, that Cicero, enlarging on

the crimes of Verres, describes his ordering the crucifixion of a Roman citizen as the highest conceivable enormity, and declares, that "no language is adequate to express the horror he feels at the infliction upon any such persons of this most shocking punishment" (*in Verrem*, lib. v. See also the Oration *pro Rabirio*).—It was the most *cruel* of punishments; and the Romans, when expressing the greatest degree of suffering, borrow from it the term, which we retain, *excruciating*.—Some crosses were of the form of an X, but the one used on the present occasion was in the form of a T, and not so lofty as is commonly supposed. Upon the transverse beam the arms were extended back in an unnatural position, and the hands nailed to it, causing exquisite pain from their many nerves and tendons. Thus suspended, the sufferer occasionally hung some days, till he perished through agony and gradual exhaustion.—The emperor Constantine abolished this punishment out of respect to the Saviour, and it has never been revived.

had been the greatest criminal of the three. And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, "AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS" (*Isa. liii. 12*).

Then said Jesus,—*putting up, in the very first moments of His anguish, a prayer in behalf of His enemies*—Father, forgive them,<sup>a</sup> for they know not what they do,<sup>b</sup> nor whom it is they are dishonouring thus.

Then the *four soldiers, who were employed immediately about the Cross*, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made of them four parts, to every soldier a part,—casting lots upon them, what every man should take: and, as the executioners were entitled to all the apparel of the condemned, they took also His coat (*His inner vest*). Now the coat,—*the gift probably of some pious female disciple*,—was without seam, and of one piece like the vestment of the priests, being woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: and this was done that the Scripture spoken by the Prophet David might be fulfilled, which saith, THEY PARTED MY RAIMENT AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY VESTURE THEY DID CAST LOTS (*see Ps. xxii. 18*).—These things therefore the soldiers did.

And sitting down, they watched Him there, lest any of His disciples should attempt to rescue Him. And, according to the Roman custom, they set up over His head the superscription of His accusation, written *conspicuously as follows*: — THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS; which titular inscription, though it was supposed to set forth His pretended crime, declared a glorious truth concerning Him. And Pilate himself wrote the title, and put it (*caused it to be put*) on the Cross.

This title then read many of the Jews, for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and that it might be generally understood, it was written in letters of Hebrew, or the vulgar tongue; and of Greek, for the information of foreigners attending the Passover; and of Latin,<sup>(\*)</sup> which was the imperial language. Then the chief-priests of the Jews, unwilling that any idea of sovereignty

<sup>a</sup> But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. *Matt. v. 44.*

And Stephen kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. *Acts vii. 60.*

<sup>b</sup> They proceed from evil to evil, and they know not Me, saith the Lord. *Jer. ix. 8.*

These things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor Me. *John xvi. 3.*

Ye killed the Prince of Life . . . And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. *Acts iii. 16, 17.*

They that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, desired Pilate that He should be slain. *Acts xiii. 27, 28.*

Had they known the Wisdom of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. *1 Cor. ii. 8.*

(\*) In letters of Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.] An inscription set up in the Temple, prohibiting strangers from intruding on its more sacred limits, was in like manner written in different languages.—A titular inscription on the Cross was a regular accompaniment of the Roman punishment; and we find, in Dio (lib. 54), an express mention of this circumstance in connection with the crucifixion of a Roman slave. The letters seem to have been engraved on a metal plate, in black characters on a white ground. The Evangelists mention the Title on our Lord's

Cross differently, though all conclude it with the words "the King of the Jews." It is possible that Pilate slightly varied it in the three languages: on which supposition St. Matthew would naturally give the tenour of the Hebrew inscription; St. Mark of the Latin; while St. Luke and St. John would retain the Greek. These two Evangelists also vary as to their form; but St. John (who omits the words "This is" from the Title as given above) was present at the Cross, and has, therefore, probably preserved the more correct and exact inscription.

in Jesus should be entertained, said to Pilate, Write not, "The King of the Jews," for we all entirely repudiate His claims; but rather write, that "He said, I am the King of the Jews." Pilate, declining to alter at their bidding what he had thought it proper to do, answered them, What I have written, I have written, and thus it shall stand.

\* They stand staring and looking upon Me. Ps. xxii. 17.

† All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head. Ps. xxii. 7.

‡ I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon Me, they shaked their heads. Ps. cix. 26.

§ Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels? Matt. xxvi. 53.

And the people stood beholding<sup>c</sup> Him without pity, as He hung between earth and heaven—rejected for a time both by God and man! And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads<sup>d</sup> in derision, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the Temple and buildest it up again in three days, save thyself if thou art able, with all thy boasting; and if thou be the Son of God, come down now from the Cross. Likewise also the chief-priests and the rulers, with the Scribes and elders, forgetting even their official dignity in their inherent meanness of soul, derided Him in the midst of His agony; and, mocking, said among themselves, He saved others forsooth! you see he cannot save himself.—And then turning to Jesus, they added, so that He might hear the taunt, If he be indeed the Christ,—the Chosen of God and the King of Israel,—let him now come down from the Cross, and save himself, that we may see an undoubted proof of his power, and we will believe in him: When he was arrested in the Garden, "he trusted in God<sup>e</sup> as willing to save him; let Him deliver him now, if He will have him" (if He so delights in him; Ps. xxii. 8); for he said, I am the Son of God. Thus did these Jewish dignitaries profanely insult Him in the very language, which David, a thousand years before, had put into the mouths of the murderers of the Messiah.—And the soldiers also in their turn mocked Him, coming to Him, and,—under the pretence of giving Him refreshment, though in reality to prolong His sufferings,—offering Him vinegar, which, mixed with water, was their common beverage; and saying, as the rest had done, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself, before thou pretendest to exercise dominion over others.

And one of the malefactors<sup>(\*)</sup> also which were crucified [hanged, or suspended, ΛΥΚΕ] with Him, cast the same in His teeth, and railed on Him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us also with thee. But the other, answering with genuine faith and true repentance,—for he was at last awakened to the crimes of his past life,—rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God at this awful moment, seeing that thou art thyself in the same condem-

(\*) One of the malefactors.] St. Matthew says, "the thieves" reviled Him, thus putting the plural for the singular by what is termed an enallage of numbers. This occurs frequently. The following are instances:—"They brought the ass and the colt and set Him thereon," i. e.

upon one of them (Matt. xxi. 7).—"The disciples had indignation" (Matt. xxvi. 8); but only one of them exhibited any such feeling (John xii. 4).—These two men executed with our Lord were robbers, not thieves; for what we call theft was not a capital crime among the Jews.

nation (*sentenced to the same punishment*)? And we indeed justly *suffer this sentence*, for we receive *only* the due reward of our *wicked deeds*; but this Man hath done nothing amiss. And *then* he said *reverentially and imploringly* unto Jesus, Lord, remember me *in mercy* when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus, *knowing his sincerity, forgave his sins, as He was God, though dying as man*; and said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise,<sup>(4)</sup>—*even in the blessed abode of those faithful spirits that depart hence in the Lord.*

Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus, His mother,<sup>(5)</sup> and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas or *Alpheus*, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore,—*now at the height of His sufferings*,—saw His mother, and also the disciple *John* standing by, whom He *especially* loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son, *and henceforth regard him as such*. Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother, *and cherish her for My sake*. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home, *and maintained and solaced her as long as she lived*.

(<sup>4</sup>) *To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.*] The pardon conveyed to the dying malefactor in these words must not be construed into an argument for the efficacy of *late* Repentance in ordinary cases. If he did not repent *before*, which is possible (for he knew our Lord's history, and declared that He had done nothing amiss), yet his case is altogether extraordinary, and similar circumstances can *never* occur again. Though he may not have fully understood the nature of the Messiah's spiritual kingdom, yet no one ever so improved a dying hour:—he had broken no covenants, and had not sinned against that light, to which all sinners who live under the Gospel dispensation now close their eyes; his faith was of that saving kind, which would have expanded, had time allowed, into all the actions of a Christian life; he confessed his vileness and the justice of his sentence; he was anxious only for the salvation of his soul, and at the same time also for that of his fellow-criminal; and he professed his faith in his divine Redeemer, when all others were silent or had forsaken Him: "with the heart he believed unto righteousness, and with his mouth (the only member now at his command) he made confession unto salvation" (see Rom. x. 10). It was fit that the Cross of Christ should be distinguished by so signal an exhibition

as this of its atoning power. The case may be recorded to show us, that we should not despair of any who will unreservedly throw themselves, even at the last extremity, on the Redeemer's mercy; and that such awakened sinners should never despair of themselves. In this *one* instance only has God set close together an example of His justice and His mercy,—teaching us that we are to fear without despair, and to hope without presumption. — With regard to the expression "Paradise" in this place, the word, in its original derivation, signified a pleasure-garden; hence a place of enjoyment; and so it came to be synonymous with Hades, or that *Intermediate Place of rest*, where the pious dead receive a foretaste of felicity, until, after the Day of Judgment, they are united again to their own bodies (see Section LXXXIX., Note 4).

(<sup>5</sup>) *His mother.*] *Mary*, by her presence on this last most mournful occasion, completely fulfilled Simeon's prediction of her bitter sorrows (Luke ii. 34, 35). It is said that she lived with the beloved disciple in Judea for fifteen years after the Crucifixion. Joseph was no doubt dead before the event.—With regard to our Lord's seemingly-peculiar manner of addressing the Virgin, see Section XXI., Note 3.



## SECTION CXXX.

## THE DEATH OF JESUS; AND THE PRODIGES WHICH ENSUED.

*Matt.* xxvii. 45—56. *Mark* xv. 33—41. *Luke* xxiii. 44—49.

*John* xix. 28—30.

**N**OW it was about the sixth hour (*nearly noon*), and from the sixth hour there was a *supernatural darkness or thick gloom* over all the land<sup>(1)</sup> of *Judea* until the ninth hour (*the hour of three in the afternoon*): and the sun was darkened. And about the ninth hour, *Jesus in the anguish of His spirit* cried with a loud voice, saying, *in the Hebrew tongue, those exact words which the Psalmist had predicted that He would use*, ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACTHANI—that is to say, being interpreted, MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?<sup>a</sup> (*Ps.* xxii. 1). And some of them that stood by there, when they heard that, *not perfectly comprehending the words*, said, Behold this man calleth for *Elias to come and help him*.—After this, *Jesus, knowing that all other things which He had to do and to suffer were now accomplished*, that the Scripture might in *this particular also* be fulfilled, saith, I thirst<sup>b</sup>—*a circumstance which would naturally arise out of His state of excessive pain*. Now there was set *there* a vessel full of vinegar *for the soldiers to drink*; and straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it upon a reed (*or stalk of hyssop*), and put it to His mouth, and gave Him to drink. The rest said, Let *him* alone; let us see whether *Elias* will come to take him down and save him.

When *Jesus* therefore had received the vinegar, He said *triumphantly*, It is finished: *the great work of human Redemption is at length accomplished!* And when He had cried again with a loud voice, *that all might hear His dying declaration of confidence in His Father*, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.<sup>c</sup> And having said thus,<sup>(2)</sup> He *submitively* bowed His head *upon His bosom*, and *peacefully* gave up the ghost.

<sup>a</sup> Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger. *Lam.* i. 12.

<sup>b</sup> In my thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. *Ps.* lxix. 21.

<sup>c</sup> Into Thine hand I commit My spirit. *Ps.* xxxi. 5.

(1) *Darkness over all the land.*] An extraordinary *effulgence* gave intelligence of the birth of *Christ*, and a *darkness*, alike extraordinary, aptly notified that the Sun of Righteousness was about to withdraw His beams.—Although a Roman astronomer mentions a remarkable defection of the sun in the reign of Tiberius, and the same fact was recorded (as Tertullian states, *Apol.* cap. 21) in the Roman archives, *this* could not have been a total eclipse of the sun; for it was now full-moon (when that phenomenon never occurs), and the duration of the darkness was too protracted for such a supposition. The gloom

was, no doubt, supernatural; and, without being so intense, it might resemble that produced in Egypt (*Exod.* x. 21—23). As that was confined to Egypt, so was this to *Judea* (for the expression “all the land” does not necessarily signify more); and there was a judgment in the wrath of God being peculiarly manifested on the offending country.

(2) *And having said thus, &c.*] The last words of the dying commonly meet with more than ordinary attention, and Scripture itself has placed a mark upon *Last Words* (2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1). Our Blessed Lord uttered Seven very memorable Sayings from the Cross, thus exer-

And behold the veil of the Temple, *which divided the Sanctuary from the Holy of Holies*<sup>d</sup>, was rent in twain,<sup>(3)</sup>—even in the midst, from the top to the bottom: *thus to all future generations "making manifest the way into the Holiest, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us—through the veil, that is to say, His flesh"* (Heb. ix. 8; x. 19, 20).—And the earth did quake; and, *in consequence of this terrible convulsion, the rocks were rent:*<sup>(4)</sup> and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints, which *had believed in Jesus, and lately slept*, arose, and came out of the graves after His Resurrection,<sup>e</sup> and went into the Holy City, and, *as an earnest of the*

<sup>d</sup> The veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the Most Holy. Exod. xxvi. 33.

• Thy dead men shall live; together with My dead body shall they arise. Isa. xxvi. 19.

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

He is the first-born from the dead. Col. i. 18.

cising together His priestly and prophetic offices—redeeming us by His blood and instructing us by His death. *Forgiveness of enemies*, a distinguishing feature of Christianity, occurs as the *first* of these Sayings: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Here our Lord exemplified His own admirable rule in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 44); and the latter words further point out to us how greatly *ignorance* is the cause of enmity to Christ.—The *second* Saying conveys pardon to the Penitent Thief, implying the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, with a Future State of rewards and punishments; and teaching us (as explained in the previous Section, see Note 4) the wide extent of the *Divine Mercy* even to late penitents in particular cases.—The *third* is addressed to the beloved disciple: "Behold thy mother:" the duty of *Obedience to parents* is here exemplified—that leading commandment of the Second Table which our Lord had complied with from His earliest years (Luke ii. 51), and in fulfilling which to the last He proved that He partook of all the sympathies and affections of man's nature. Those who neglect the relative duties of private life are here taught that there is something wrong, when they make public duties an excuse for not discharging those which they so solemnly owe to the private ties of kindred.—The *fourth* Saying, containing the awful exclamation of the Saviour, that God had forsaken Him, shows us how bitter was the Cup of the Father's wrath against Sin, and therefore against Him as our Surety (see Section CXXI., Note 4, latter part); here we are warned in the most impressive manner *how hateful Sin is in its nature*, and how certainly, after what has been done for us, a God of Justice will forsake all obstinate and wilful sinners.—The *fifth* Saying, "I thirst," was (as the Evangelist notes) a particular *fulfilment of Prophecy*, showing us the *universal* importance of that branch of evidence; and as violent pain is accompanied by thirst, this circumstance is a proof of the agonizing bodily, as well as mental, pain endured by our Lord.—The *sixth* Saying, uttered just before death ensued, was an exclamation of triumph, "It is finished!" The whole scheme of Redemption, whether set forth by Type or Prophecy, had now received its completion. He was crucified at the Paschal feast, and breathed out His soul at the hour of Evening Sacrifice, with that *minute ob-er-vance* of what had been fore-

shown, which caused Him afterwards to rest in the grave on the Jewish Sabbath, and to rise from the dead on the day when the Sheaf of first-fruits was waved. The righteousness of the Law was in *every* particular fulfilled. All that could be done *for us*, as far as Justification was concerned, was at that moment done; and all that thenceforth remained was the work of Sanctification to be wrought *in us*.—The *seventh* and last of the Last Sayings,—that with which our Lord breathed forth His soul upon the Cross—was simply an act of Faith, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." It was uttered aloud, that so all present might be convinced of His never-failing Trust in the Father; and Christians are hereby taught (in the spirit of both Covenants) that, when the flesh faileth, God is still an everlasting portion to the believer, and that the soul is to be committed unto Him as unto a faithful Creator (see Pa. lxxiii. 26; 1 Pet. iv. 19).

(3) *The veil of the Temple was rent in twain.* The rending of this veil signified, that "Christ having overcome the sharpness of death, the Kingdom of Heaven was thenceforth opened to all believers" by the rending of His flesh. The High-priest entered into the Holy of Holies, which this veil enclosed, only on *one* day in the year; but when our Great High-Priest entered into Heaven, of which the Temple was typical, the Inner Sanctuary was thrown open, and God's mercy-seat could be approached *at all times*. The ceremonies of the Mosaic Law were thenceforth no longer binding on the disciples of Christ.

The veil of the Temple is described as of purple wool, richly embroidered, a foot in thickness, and sixty feet in length, reaching from the roof to the ground. Such a veil, we may imagine, must have been *preternaturally* rent; and the Evangelist has expressly noticed its being rent "*from the top to the bottom*," whereas a curtain, hanging at a door-way, would naturally be rent *from the bottom upwards*.

(4) *The earth did quake, and the rocks rent.* Of this miraculous earthquake vestiges still remain in immense fissures of the principal rock; and these do not occur in its weakest parts, but cross the veins,<sup>a</sup> attesting the violence of the rending. The conversion of an avowed deist who viewed these fissures, when travelling through Palestine, is upon record (see Fleming's *Christol.*, vol. ii).

*General Resurrection*, appeared unto many *who had formerly known them there*.

† Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Phil. ii. 11.

‡ — the Holy One and the Just. Acts iii. 14.

And when the centurion, which stood over against Him, saw what was done, and that He so cried out *with firm reliance on God*, and so peacefully gave up the ghost, he glorified God *by confessing both the innocence and the Divinity of Jesus*,<sup>†</sup> saying, Certainly this was a Righteous Man:‡ this Man truly was, *as He affirmed Himself to be*, the Son of God.

‡ And certain women were with Him, Mary, called Magdalene, and many others which ministered to Him of their substance. Luke viii. 1—3.

And they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done; and they feared greatly, saying *in like manner*, Truly this was the Son of God. And all His acquaintance, and many women, who, when He was in Galilee, followed Him *from place to place* and ministered *there* unto Him<sup>‡</sup> *of their substance*, stood afar off,—*for they were now forbidden to approach the Cross*,—*sorrowfully* beholding these things: among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children, and many other women which followed Him from Galilee and came up with Him unto Jerusalem. And all the people that came together to that *mournful* sight, beholding the *awful* things which were done,—*signs, as they now feared, of God's coming judgments upon their nation*,—smote their breasts<sup>(\*)</sup> *with regret and self-reproach*, and returned home.

## SECTION CXXXI.

THE BURIAL; AND THE MAKING SECURE OF THE SEPULCHRE BY THE CHIEF-PRIESTS AND ROMANS.

*Matt. xxvii. 57—66. Mark xv. 42—47. Luke xxiii. 50—56. John xix. 31—42.*

THE Jews therefore, because it was the preparation (that is, the day before the Sabbath), that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day,—for that Sabbath-day was an high-day<sup>(1)</sup> *and a triple festival*,—besought Pilate that their legs might be broken<sup>(2)</sup>, *so as to*

(\*) *Smote their breasts.*] A manifest change in the conduct of the people is observable from the time that the fearful gloom came on. The taunts ceased during the three last hours; and it is probable they felt a certain misgiving as to our Lord's character, even if they did not view Him with incipient awe. Their convictions, which commenced with these prodigies, do not seem to have been temporary, for, only seven weeks after, we read of multitudes being converted during a single sermon by the preaching of *Christ crucified* (Acts ii. 36, 41).

(1) *That Sabbath-day was an high-day.*] Besides being the usual Sabbath, it was the Second day of Unleavened Bread, whence they reckoned to Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 15); and also it was the great festival on which the people assembled in the Temple to offer the Sheaf of first-fruits.

(2) *That their legs might be broken.*] This very cruel operation was performed just above the ancle with an iron mallet; and as the body was no longer supported from below, and was less capable of enduring such accumulated suffering, death speedily ensued.

*hasten their death, and that they might be taken away as the Jewish Law required.*<sup>a</sup> Then the four soldiers who were on guard came by order of the governor, and brake the legs of the first malefactor, and then of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but, to ensure His death, one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and, the weapon having reached the region of the heart, forthwith came thereout blood and water<sup>b</sup> (3): thus were the very fountains of life broken up, and a demonstration was given that the Saviour had a natural body like other men.

And he (the beloved disciple) that stood by and saw it, bare this record of so memorable an event, and his record is true; and he knoweth (is conscious) that he saith true,<sup>c</sup> that ye might believe. And well may the record be believed, for these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, which saith of Him, the true Paschal Lamb, that a bone of Him shall not be broken.<sup>d</sup> (4) And again another Scripture saith, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED"<sup>e</sup> (see Zech. xii. 10).

And now after this, when the even was come, behold, there came a rich man<sup>f</sup> (5) of Arimathea (which was a city of the Jews), named Joseph, an honourable counsellor (a person of condition and member of the Sanhedrim), and he was a good and a just man: the same had not consented to the deed and counsel of them who condemned Jesus; but was one of those who, like Simeon, waited for the predicted Kingdom of God,<sup>g</sup> being himself a disciple of Jesus, but hitherto secretly, for fear of offending the rulers of the Jews, his colleagues. This man,—above all such false shame

\* If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day. Deut. xxi. 22, 23.

b This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. 1 John v. 6.

c I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness. Rom. ix. 1.

d—neither shall ye break a bone thereof. Exod. xii. 46.

He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken. Ps. lxxiv. 20.

e Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him. Rev. i. 7.

f And He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death. Isa. liii. 9.

g Behold there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. Luke ii. 25.

(3) *Came thereout blood and water.*] The ancient fathers thought that St. John announced this fact with such particular emphasis, to confute the Docetæ and others; for Gnostic doctrines had met with great success in Asia, and of all the circumstances which attended the Crucifixion, none would be more conclusive than this, to establish the corporeal nature of Jesus. The weapon was the formidable Roman *pilum*, and the presence of water with the blood proved that the *pericardium* was pierced, and that death was certain—a fact which, no doubt, it was the object of the Evangelist to show. We may also suppose, from his solemnity of expression, that this circumstance was emblematical of something further, and that it conveyed a spiritual meaning: we find the Old Covenant was confirmed by water mixed with blood (Heb. ix. 19), and so also, (as St. John afterwards tells us in his Epistle, 1 John v. 6) was the Covenant of the New Testament. The blood and water which flowed from the pierced side of the Redeemer, signified that two-fold salvation which He thereby wrought for believers, delivering them both from the guilt and from the dominion of

sin: in other words, they are emblematical of Justification and Sanctification, of which the two great Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the signs, memorials, and pledges. To this incident of the Crucifixion our Church alludes in the Baptismal office (see the Prayer of Consecration).

(4) *A bone of Him shall not be broken.*] This command is quoted, to show us that the minutest points of the Ceremonial Law were previously contrived, in order to direct the spiritual worshipper to Christ.

(5) *A rich man.*] The circumstance of Joseph being *wealthy* would seem mentioned to show the fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction; for that prophet had foretold events which appeared to be incompatible, that the Messiah should suffer an ignominious death, and yet receive an honourable interment (see in the *Margin*). It has been considered by the ablest Hebrew scholars, that the word "wicked" in that prophecy is in the *dual* number, and there is no doubt that "rich" is in the *singular*. Thus the death and burial of Jesus were events associated with *two criminals* and *one rich man*.

after the prodigies that had taken place, and animated by his veneration for the memory of Jesus,—went in boldly unto Pilate, and begged that he might be allowed to take away the body of Jesus,<sup>(6)</sup> that it might not be interred with the remains of the two malefactors. And Pilate marvelled if He were (thought it strange that He should be) already dead; and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead. And when he knew the certainty of it from the mouth of the centurion, who was appointed to guard the Cross and had witnessed the death of Jesus, Pilate gave Joseph leave, and at once commanded the body to be delivered to him.

<sup>b</sup> There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night. John iii. 1, 2.

<sup>1</sup> All Thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes. Ps. xlv. 8.

<sup>k</sup> And they laid Asa in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art. 2 Chron. xvi. 14.

And therefore Joseph went without delay and bought fine linen, and came, and with the help of his servants took down the body of Jesus, and wrapped it in a winding-sheet of clean linen cloth. And there came also Nicodemus,—the same which at the first came alone to Jesus by night,<sup>b</sup>—and he, with the like generous eagerness to shew his reverence for Jesus, brought a costly mixture of myrrh and aloes,<sup>1</sup> about an hundred pound in weight.<sup>(7)</sup> Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in wrappers of the linen clothes with the spices, as is the manner of the Jews to bury.<sup>k</sup>

Now in the vicinity of the place where He was crucified there was a garden: and in the garden there was a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid;<sup>(8)</sup> which he (Joseph) had caused to be hewn in stone out of a rock, so that it had but one entrance. There laid they Jesus therefore at once in this his own new tomb, because that day was the Jews' preparation; and the Sabbath, which commenced at six in the evening, drew on—for on this account dispatch was needful, and the sepulchre was conveniently placed nigh at hand for the reception of the body. And, with the help of his servants, he rolled a very great stone<sup>1</sup> to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

<sup>1</sup> And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?—for it was very great. Mark xvi. 3, 4.

<sup>(6)</sup> Begged that he might take away the body of Jesus.] The Mosaic Law required that the bodies of persons who had been executed should be removed on the same day, and in ordinary cases it was not the Roman practice to deny the rites of sepulture. Ulpian, "On the duties of a Pro-consul," states, that the bodies of executed malefactors ought to be given up to their relatives. Tiberius sometimes withheld that privilege, but both Tacitus and Suetonius represent such an act as one of his uncommon cruelties.

<sup>(7)</sup> Myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.] The aloes here mentioned (and also at Ps. xlv. 8.) was not the drug now known under that name, but an aromatic gum. The quantity of spice provided on this occasion may appear very great, but the entire Sepulchre would be perfumed, and a considerable part might be reserved

for the funeral, when it was usual to burn large quantities, especially when marked reverence was intended to be shown. At Herod's funeral five hundred servants followed, bearing spices and aromatics.—The remark, here added by St. John, "as the manner of the Jews is to bury," shows, that this Apostle addressed his Gospel to a people who were not Jews, for he would hardly have told his countrymen what their own custom was.

<sup>(8)</sup> Wherein was never man yet laid.] As no other body had ever been deposited in this tomb, there could be no doubt as to the identity of the person who rose again.—The remark which follows, that the sepulchre was "hewn out of a rock," is equally important, for it could not be dug through, or approached in any other way than by its single entrance, which was guarded.

And Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, the mother of *James the less and of Joses*, beheld where He was laid, and remained until the Sabbath had commenced, sitting there over against the Sepulchre.—And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee and had attended the Crucifixion, followed after, and beheld the Sepulchre, and how His body was laid: and then they returned to the city, and prepared spices and ointments for embalming Him; <sup>m</sup> and having completed the preparations in time, rested from their work on the Sabbath-day according to the Commandment.<sup>n</sup>

Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation,—when the sixth hour of evening had passed, and the Sabbath had commenced,<sup>o</sup>—the chief-priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.<sup>p</sup> Command, therefore, that the Sepulchre be made sure until the third day,<sup>q</sup> lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error (*deceit*, GR.) of his coming to life again shall be worse even than the first of his pretending to be the Messiah. Pilate saith unto them, Ye have already a watch, for you can take one from the company of soldiers set apart to protect your Temple during the Feast: go your way, make it as sure as you can.

So they went immediately; and, having ascertained that the body was actually there, made the Sepulchre sure—sealing the stone <sup>q</sup>(<sup>10</sup>) with an official signet, and setting a watch of sixty Roman sentinels to guard its entrance.

(<sup>o</sup>) *Until the third day.*] It is clear, from this remark of the Jews, that the declaration of our Lord concerning His rising “after three days,” was synonymous with His rising “on the third day” (see Section XLVIII., Note 4). From the case of Lazarus it appears that corruption was supposed to have taken place on the fourth day (see John xi. 39); a fact which shows the intimate correspondence of those two predictions, that our Lord’s flesh should not see corruption, and, that He would rise from the dead within three days (see Ps. xvi. 10; John ii. 19, 21).

*Error.*] This expression is from the Vulgate, a Version evidently much used by our Translators, and the adherence to which has in several places injured the sense. The word, *error*, in English, suggests rather the idea of “mistake,” and not of that which is intended, *deceit* or *trick*. Consult *Æn.* ii. 48.

(<sup>10</sup>) *Sealing the stone.*] It was the usage of the East to impress seals in clay; and a ligature, to which the seal would be attached, could connect the stone with the Sepulchre.

<sup>m</sup> And Joseph commanded the physicians to embalm his father, and the physicians embalmed Israel. Gen. i. 2.

<sup>n</sup> The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work. Exod. xx. 10.

<sup>o</sup> From even unto even shall ye celebrate your sabbaths. Lev. xxiii. 32.

<sup>p</sup> As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matt. xii. 40.

Jesus answered, and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But He spake of the temple of His body. John ii. 19, 21.

<sup>q</sup> And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. Dan. vi. 17.

## SECTION CXXXII.

THE RESURRECTION. THE FIRST PARTY OF THREE WOMEN VISIT THE SEPULCHRE, PETER AND JOHN FOLLOWING. JESUS APPEARS TO MARY MAGDALENE, AND TO HER TWO COMPANIONS.

*Matt.* xxviii. 1—10. *Mark* xvi. 1—11. *John* xx. 1—18.

AND when the Sabbath was past [in the end of (*or after*) the Sabbath, **MATT.**], and when it was now late in the evening of the second day, Mary Magdalene,<sup>(1)</sup> and the other Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and Salome, had brought sweet spices ready prepared, that they might come and anoint Him.<sup>(2)</sup>

And very early in the morning, when it was as yet somewhat dark,—just as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week,—they came to see the Sepulchre; and not knowing that a military guard had been stationed there, they said among themselves on the way, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?—for it was very great.

And behold, while they were on their way, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord had descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door of the Sepulchre, and sat upon it. His countenance (*His appearance*) was like lightning, and his raiment was white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers of the Sepulchre did shake,—famed though the Roman sentinels were for their courage; and they became for awhile as dead men: and, when they recovered from the stroke, they fled.

And they (*the three women*) came unto the Sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away [taken away, **JOHN**]. Then Mary Magdalene, not doubting but that the body was gone, runneth back to the city, and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the Sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.

And they (*the two women who remained*) entering

(1) *Mary Magdalene.*] St. John, writing subsequently to Matthew and Mark, who name this Mary first with her companions, gives her name alone, but it does not follow that he meant to speak of her as going alone. In his account he states, that, upon running back to tell the disciples, she said, "We know not where they have laid Him" (*John* xx. 2), but afterwards, when all left her, she says, "I know not where they have laid Him" (*John* xx. 13).—There are several variations between the Evangelists at this part of the Gospel narrative, but no contradic-

tions: each recorded only what suited his particular object in writing, and these minute discrepancies, instead of diminishing, increase the credibility of the writers, for they are a proof of their scrupulous accuracy.

(2) *That they might come and anoint Him.*] This pious attention was not permitted to be accomplished, nor would it have been proper. Our Lord had in effect declared, six days before, when Mary, the sister of Lazarus, had anointed His body, that *that* was the unction which it should receive for the grave.

into the Sepulchre,<sup>(3)</sup> saw *one who appeared to them as a young man—no longer terrible to behold, as he had presented himself to the guard, but sitting with calm dignity on the right side of the chamber of the tomb, clothed in a long white garment. And when they saw him, they were affrighted. And the angel answered and said unto the women in gentle accents, Be not affrighted: fear not ye;<sup>a</sup> they only who are enemies of the Lord should be dismayed: for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is not here; for He is risen,<sup>(4)</sup> as He said that He should;<sup>b</sup> come, behold the place where the Lord lay [where they laid Him, MARK]. And go your way quickly, and tell His disciples, and also Peter<sup>(5)</sup>, that He is risen from the dead: and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee, as He said unto you;<sup>c</sup> there shall ye see Him. Lo, I have told you.*

And they went out quickly, *struck with reverential fear, and also incited with great joy at these good tidings, and fled from the Sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed at what they had seen and heard: neither said they any thing to any man by the way,—for they were afraid (they had been too much alarmed) to stop and do so,—and did run forward to bring His disciples word.*

Peter therefore, and that other disciple *whom Jesus loved, went forth, as soon as Mary Magdalene had told them that the body was removed, and came to the Sepulchre by a different route from that taken by the two women who were in search of them. So they ran with eagerness, both of them together: and the other disciple, being the younger, did outrun Peter, and came first to the Sepulchre; and he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes which had enveloped the body lying by themselves: yet went he not in. Then cometh up Simon Peter following him; and he, with his accustomed ardour, went in at once into the Sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes<sup>d</sup> lie, and also the*

<sup>a</sup> And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas! O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face. And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee, fear not; Judg. vi. 22, 23.

And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him: but the angel said unto him, Fear not. Luke i. 12, 13.

<sup>b</sup> From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief-priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Matt. xvi. 21.

<sup>c</sup> But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Matt. xxvi. 32.

<sup>d</sup> Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes. John xix. 40.

(<sup>3</sup>) *Entering into the Sepulchre.*] The tomb consisted of two parts—1st., “the Sepulchre” (μνημείον) or inner part, where the Body was deposited, and the entrance of which was closed with a large stone: 2ndly, “the Vestibule” (ράφος) or outer chamber, into which the women had now entered. The two expressions are distinguished in the Greek at Matt. xxvii. 60, 61.

(<sup>4</sup>) *He is risen.*] The Resurrection of the Saviour is the pledge and earnest of our own. It is the most glorious event of Christianity, and at the same time its grand evidence, because it sets God’s seal to the reality of the Divine mission of His Son, and to the truth of His doctrine. St. Paul allows, that “if Christ be not risen, our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins” (1 Cor. xv. 14, 17). It was this main point of faith which the Apostles were commissioned to teach and establish in the Church of God; and accordingly, when they preached “repentance to Israel and for-

givness of sins,” it was in *His* name “whom God hath raised up” (Acts ii. 24; v. 31): when they turned to the Gentiles, it was still with the offer of salvation through *Him*, whom “God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly to chosen witnesses, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead” (Acts x. 40, 41).—In the first ages of the Church, Christians were accustomed to greet one another on the morning of Easter with this phrase, “The Lord is risen!”

(<sup>5</sup>) *Tell His disciples, and Peter.*] The interesting addition “and Peter,” is noticed by St. Mark, writing, no doubt, under the direction of Peter. To that Apostle in particular it was a most gracious and consoling message; for, after his sad apostacy, he might well doubt whether he had not forfeited all right to be included under the title of “a disciple.”



• And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. John xi. 44.

† He taught His disciples and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him. Mark ix. 31, 32.

‡ Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Ps. xvi. 10.

David spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. Acts ii. 31.

‡ He calleth His own sheep by name . . . . and the sheep know His voice. John x. 3, 4.

napkin<sup>c</sup> that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped (*rolled*) together and laid carefully aside in a place by itself: from which orderly arrangement it was manifest that there had been no hasty or clandestine removal of the body. Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the Sepulchre, and he also saw this, and now firmly believed: for as yet, notwithstanding the Lord's repeated declaration, they knew not<sup>t</sup> the true import of the Scripture,<sup>s</sup> that He must rise again from the dead: they had thought, in common with all other Jews, that the Messiah could not die, and regarded their Master's death as overthrowing rather than as confirming His title to that office.

Then the two disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary Magdalene, who had returned with them, stood without the inner cave wherein the body had lain, and remained at the Sepulchre, weeping.

Now when Jesus was risen early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene<sup>(\*)</sup>—the same out of whom He had formerly cast seven devils. And as she now stood and wept, she stooped down and looked into the Sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.—And when she had thus said, hearing some one move, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing by her, and knew not that it was Jesus, for her eyes were filled with tears. Jesus, revealing Himself to her by degrees, that the surprise might not be too sudden, saith unto her, just as a stranger would, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener (*the keeper of the garden*), and conceiving that the thoughts of every one she met were engaged on the subject which engrossed her own mind, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away for fitting burial, that He may trouble no one. Jesus saith unto her, with marked emphasis and thrilling accent, yet in His usual affectionate manner, Mary!<sup>h</sup> She turned herself at the sound of that well-known voice, and saith unto Him, Rabboni (which is to say, My blessed Master)!

(\*) He appeared first to Mary Magdalene.] Thus was a woman rewarded with the first sight of the Risen Saviour, and His next appearance was vouchsafed to the two women who had been honoured with the first joyful intelligence of His Resurrection. It is but a just tribute to that sex to notice here the remarkable courage and generosity displayed by those pious women "whose praise is in the Gospel." They faith-

fully attended our Blessed Lord during His life, ministering to Him of their substance; when at the last the Apostles deserted Him, they bewailed His sufferings, and attended Him to Calvary: at the Sepulchre, as at the Cross, women were still found watchers, and desired to have paid their Lord the last pious offices of sepulture.

*And as she uttered this, she drew near to clasp His knees with adoration—desiring to assure herself that He was there really and bodily present. Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not: be not impatient to satisfy thyself at once; for I am not yet ascended (I ascend not as yet finally) to My Father, and time now presses: but go at once to My brethren<sup>i</sup>,—for such do I still esteem them,—and say unto them, I ascend, as I predicted, unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God;<sup>(?)</sup> and the promise of the Comforter<sup>k</sup> shall assuredly be fulfilled.*

And accordingly Mary Magdalene went, and told the disciples that had been with Him during His ministry, as they mourned and wept, that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her. And they, when they had so distinctly heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, yet all of them, with the exception of John, believed it not.

But the other two women, Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and Salome, were left on their way to bring the disciples word what the Angel had said: and as they went to tell His disciples, behold Jesus Himself met them, saying, All hail! (Rejoice!) And they came and held Him by the feet, embracing them; and, convinced that it was indeed He, they worshipped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go on your way with the message which you have in charge: tell My brethren that they are to go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me, as I declared unto them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. ii. 11.

<sup>k</sup> It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. John xvi. 7.

<sup>1</sup> After that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. Mark xiv. 28.

(?) *I ascend, &c.*] These words are a plain allusion to the Saviour's own words in His last consolatory discourse with the Eleven, in which He promised them another Comforter on His Ascension to the Father. To that discourse none had been privy but themselves. The message also of the angel, presently confirmed by our Lord, repeated another assurance given on the same occasion, viz., that He "would go before them into Galilee." The disciples ought, therefore, to have been at once convinced.—The words "My

God and your God," are intended to show (as St. Paul seems to intimate, Heb. ii. 11), that He had the same interest in their welfare as before, and that they were still united with Him by the same Spiritual and heavenly bond.—He speaks of the Father as *His God*, because He is yet upon earth in bodily form as *Mediator*. The Psalmist, in consecutive sentences, addresses the Saviour as *God*, and yet speaks of the Father as *His God* (see Ps. xiv. 6, 7).

## SECTION CXXXIII.

THE ROMAN GUARD REPORT THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, AND ARE BRIBED BY THE CHIEF-PRIESTS INTO SILENCE.

*Matt. xxviii. 11—15.*

**N**OW when they (*the women*) were going on *their way to tell the disciples*, behold, some of the watch, *which had been set to guard the Sepulchre*, came into the city to *exculpate themselves by stating the facts as they occurred*: and they shewed unto the chief-priests,—*who, by permission of the governor, had employed them in this matter*,—all the things that were done.

*Now the chief-priests were greatly disconcerted at this startling intelligence*, and when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel *with them as to what should be done*, they gave a large *sum of money* unto the soldiers *who had kept watch*, saying to them, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away, while we slept.<sup>(1)</sup> And if this *should* come to the Governor's ears, we will persuade (*conciliate*) him, and secure you *from harm*.

So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying (*this fabrication about the stealing of the body*) is commonly reported *and credited* among the Jews until this day.

(1) *Say ye, His disciples came by night, &c.*] A more futile, inconsistent, and improbable statement than this, it is difficult to imagine. The disciples were friendless and dispirited, and evidently in expectation of arrest themselves; for when they met together, they fastened the door through fear (John xx. 19): the time was the Passover, when the moon was at the full, and the city crowded; while the Sepulchre was but just without the walls, and open to observation. Was it likely that a Roman guard of sixty men (to whom the penalty of sleeping on their post was death) would be *all* asleep, or so soundly asleep, that a body could be silently carried through their ranks?—while, if they were awake, it is clear that they could neither be overpowered

by persons so weak, nor bribed by those so poor. —Justly, therefore, has an early Christian writer apostrophized them: "Ye wicked, corrupt, senseless wretches; *either ye were awake, or ye were asleep*. If *awake*, it was your business to secure the Body from being stolen away; if *asleep*, it was impossible you should either know what was done, or who were the persons that did it."—It is clear that the Council did not themselves believe the story, for when the Apostles, who were brought before them, repeatedly declared that God had raised that Jesus whom they had put to death (Acts iv. 10; v. 30), they did not venture to make the charge of stealing the Body.

## SECTION CXXXIV.

THE WOMEN IN A LARGER PARTY VISIT THE SEPULCHRE; AND, UPON THEIR REPORT, PETER RUNS THERE A SECOND TIME, ALONE.

*Luke xxiv. 1—12.*

NOW upon the first day of the week, *and still* very early in the morning, they (*the women*) who on the evening of the Crucifixion had "*prepared spices and ointments and rested the Sabbath-day*" (*Luke xxiii. 56*), and certain others with them, *set out together from another part of the city; and* they came unto the Sepulchre,<sup>(1)</sup> bringing the spices which they had prepared.<sup>a</sup> And they found the stone rolled away, *even as the first party of women had found it, from the entrance of the Sepulchre.* And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two *angels, appearing in the form of men*, stood by them in shining garments (*garments which streamed out light, Gr.*). And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces *reverentially* to the earth, they (*the angels*) said unto them, Why seek ye the Living,—*Him who "hath Life in Himself"* (*John v. 26*),—among (*in the place of*) the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.<sup>b</sup>—And they remembered<sup>c</sup> *that such were indeed* His words *on more than one occasion*; and returned from the Sepulchre, and told all these things unto the Eleven, and to all the rest of the disciples.

Thus it was Joanna,<sup>d</sup> and Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, together with Salome, and other honourable and trustworthy women that had accompanied Joanna to the Sepulchre, and were now with them in the city, which severally told these things unto the Apostles—all assuring them of the fact. And, nevertheless, their words seemed to the greater part of them as idle tales,—the mere delusions of weak imaginations,—and they believed

<sup>a</sup> And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath-day according to the commandment. *Luke xxiii. 56.*

<sup>b</sup> The Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify Him. and the third day He shall rise again. *Matt. xx. 18, 19.*

<sup>c</sup> Jesus said, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But He spake of the temple of His body. When, therefore, He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them: and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. *John ii. 19, 21, 22.*

<sup>d</sup> Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. *Luke viii. 3.*

(1) *They came unto the Sepulchre.* The most accurate plans of Jerusalem, compiled from ancient documents, satisfactorily show that this second party of women might visit the Sepulchre at least an hour later than the two Marys and Salome, without encountering them either in going or returning. The house which Zebedee had in the city, where Salome would be with her son John and whence the two Marys would set out with her, stood near the city wall, and they would proceed through the adjoining gate, called

the Dunghill-gate, direct to the Sepulchre. But Joanna, who led the second party, being the wife of Herod's steward, would most likely lodge in or near the palace of Herod, which was situated to the north of the Temple; and the direct way from that quarter of the city to the Sepulchre would be through the gate of the Valley. This was quite a different road, and more than twice the distance which the other party had to traverse.

them not.—*So completely were the hopes of the disciples blasted, and such a severe blow had their Lord's Crucifixion given to their faith.*

Then however arose Peter, stimulated by these fresh reports, and ran again unto the Sepulchre.<sup>(\*)</sup> And stooping down to examine everything more intently, he beheld the linen clothes laid as before by themselves: and for a while he remained there alone, meditating on these things; but not knowing what to think, he at length departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

### SECTION CXXXV.

#### THE APPEARANCE TO THE TWO DISCIPLES ON THEIR WAY TO EMMAUS.

Mark xvi. 12. Luke xxiv. 13—33.

AND behold, after that, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was distant from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs (*about seven miles*). And He (*the Lord*) appeared unto them in another form (*presenting a more glorified appearance*), as they walked, and went into the country.

And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together<sup>a</sup> and reasoned, Jesus Himself, *overtaking them as from the city*, drew near, and went along the same route with them. But they, not sufficiently noticing their fellow-traveller, failed to recognise Jesus; and so their eyes were holden that they should not know Him.

And, that they might continue their discourse on the subject nearest to their hearts, He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are so sad? And the one of them whose name was Cleopas,<sup>(1)</sup> answering said unto Him, Art

\* They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. Mal. iii. 16.

(\*) *Then arose Peter, and ran unto the Sepulchre.*] Here we find this Apostle, who had so grievously fallen by his desertion of His Master, a second time eagerly running to His tomb. It appears, from a subsequent part of the Narrative (Luke xxiv. 34), that his sincere repentance and awakened affection met with its due and a truly glorious reward: it pleased Christ on this same day to make a special appearance to him—the first, indeed, which seems to have been vouchsafed to any man. No particulars of the meeting are recorded, but the fact is confirmed by St. Paul, who describes the Apostle under his corresponding name of Cephas (1 Cor. xv. 5). It appears to have taken place soon

after the two disciples set out for Emmaus (as recorded in the next Section), for clearly they were not aware of it till their return.

(1) *One of them whose name was Cleopas.*] This was the husband of Mary (John xix. 25), sister to the Virgin, and thus father-in-law to two of the Apostles. Cleopas is supposed to be the same with Alpheus, the latter being his Greek name. Who the other disciple was, is not known; but it could not have been an Apostle, for they returned to tell what had passed to the Eleven (Luke xxiv. 33).—The incident of these two disciples conversing upon religion, and "reasoning together" on their journey, is encouraging

thou only (*alone*) *such* a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, *Of what things speak you?* And they said unto Him, *The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word*<sup>b</sup> (*both in His miracles, and the Divine wisdom with which He spake*) before God and all the people: and how the chief-priests and our rulers delivered Him up to the Roman governor to be condemned to death, and have since crucified Him. But we, *His disciples*, trusted that it had been He,—*even the long expected Messiah*,—which should have redeemed Israel:<sup>c</sup> and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done, and it was on this very day that He declared He would rise from the dead. Yea, and certain women also of our company, which were early at the Sepulchre wherein His Body was placed, made us astonished, before we left the city, by their report of what they themselves saw, and are ready to attest: and when they found not His body there, they came to acquaint us with the fact, saying also, that they had seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain men also of them which were with us,—*whose names are Peter and John*,—went to the Sepulchre, and found that it was, as to all the particular circumstances, even so as the women had said: *the body was gone, and the funeral clothes were left*; but Him they saw not.

Then He said unto them, O fools (*O, thoughtless that ye are*)! and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have so plainly spoken!<sup>d</sup> Ought not the Christ, in accordance with the Sacred Oracles, to have suffered these very things which you describe, and so, by the path of mortal tribulation, to enter into His glory?<sup>e</sup>—And then, beginning at Moses,<sup>f</sup> by whom the First Promise had been recorded, and in turn passing through all the Prophets,<sup>g</sup> He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures,—in successive types and prophecies, clearer and clearer,—the things concerning Himself.<sup>h</sup>

seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Gen. iii. 15.

<sup>b</sup>—Him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. John i. 45.—To Him give all the Prophets witness. Acts x. 43.—I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come; that Christ should suffer, and that he should rise from the dead. Acts xxvi. 22, 23.

<sup>b</sup> And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, that a great Prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited His people. Luke vii. 16.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle which Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world. John vi. 14.

Jesus of Nazareth, man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you. Acts ii. 22.

<sup>c</sup> And one Anna, a prophetess, spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Luke ii. 36, 38.

<sup>d</sup> Ye are dull of hearing: for when for the time ye ought to be teachers ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the Oracles of God. Heb. v. 11, 12.

<sup>e</sup> And Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead. Acts xvii. 2, 3.

Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

<sup>f</sup> I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy

to inquirers after Truth under all circumstances: while the disciples were searching for it, they found it, and "Jesus Himself drew near."

(<sup>h</sup>) He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.] The following short parallel passages, relative to the atonement and death of the Saviour, (taken alternately from the Old and New Testaments,—the Prophetic and Historic writings) will verify this:—

"He is despised and rejected of men" (Isa. liii. 3): "The Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Luke ix. 58).

"He was wounded for our transgressions, He

was bruised for our iniquities" (Isa. liii. 5): "He was delivered for our offences; He gave Himself for our sins" (Rom. iv. 25; Gal. i. 4).

"By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many" (Isa. liii. 11): "By the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life" (Rom. v. 18).

"He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not his mouth" (Isa. liii. 7): "Jesus held His peace" (Matt. xxvi. 63).

"He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth" (Isa. liii. 9): "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Pet. ii. 22).

<sup>b</sup> And Lot pressed up on the angels greatly, and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house. Gen. xix. 3.

And she besought us, saying, Come unto my house, and abide there; and she constrained us. Acts xvi. 16.

<sup>i</sup> And He took the loaves and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to His disciples. Matt. xv. 36.

<sup>k</sup> My heart was hot within me: while I was musing, the fire burned, Ps. xxxix. 3.

His Word was in mine heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones. Jer. xx. 9.

Is not My Word like as a fire? saith the Lord. Jer. xxiii. 29.

And now they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and *it appeared to them that He made a movement as though He would have gone further. But they, unwilling to lose so instructive a companion, constrained<sup>h</sup> (pressed) Him to stay, saying, Abide with us at this place; for it is drawing on toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And He consented, and went in to tarry with them.*

And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, that He,—*presiding as the master of the family, rather than occupying a place as the guest,—took up a loaf of bread, and blessed God over it, and brake it, and gave portions to them, as He had formerly been accustomed to do in their presence.*<sup>i</sup> Now the Lord's dignified manner of doing this made them observe Him more attentively; and thus their eyes were opened, and to their astonishment and great joy they knew Him to be their Divine Master. And when they would have risen up to worship Him, He vanished out of their sight<sup>(2)</sup> (He ceased to be seen of them, MARG.).

And they said one to another, Did not our heart *glow with rapture, and seem to burn within us,*<sup>k</sup> while He talked with us by the way, and while He *so powerfully and convincingly* opened to us the Scriptures?—And, *at once set-*

"Thou, Lord, shalt make His soul an offering for sin" (Isa. liii. 10): "God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21).

"He shall divide the spoil with the strong" (Isa. liii. 12): "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them" (Col. ii. 15).

"Rejoice, O daughter of Zion: behold, Thy King cometh unto thee, riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass" (Zech. ix. 9): "They set Jesus on the colt: and when He was come nigh, the whole multitude began to rejoice, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord (Luke xix. 35—38).

"They weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver" (Zech. xi. 12): "They covenanted with Judas for thirty pieces of silver" (Matt. xxvi. 15).

"I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheek to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not My face from shame and spitting" (Isa. l. 6): "Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands" (Matt. xxvi. 67).

"They pierced My hands and My feet" (Ps. xxii. 16): "They crucified Him" (John xix. 18).

"He was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. liii. 12): "With Him they crucify two thieves" (Mark xv. 27).

"They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture" (Ps. xxii. 18): "They took His garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; but cast lots for His coat" (John xix. 23, 24).

"They gave Me also gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink" (Ps.

lxix. 21): "They gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall" (Matt. xxvii. 34).

"He made His grave with the rich" (Isa. liii. 9): "There came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb" (Matt. xxvii. 57, 58, 60).

(<sup>3</sup>) *He vanished out of their sight.*] It is supposed that our Lord's body underwent its change at His Resurrection. The corruptible had put on incorruption, and the body, before so mysteriously united to the Divinity, was now also raised to immortality. The Saviour evidently had no longer any local residence on earth; for the place of His abode for any single night is no where mentioned: He had become the inhabitant of another region, and His first message to the disciples by Mary Magdalene was, "I ascend to My Father." Whatever was before miraculous is now natural to Him: whatever was natural (such as His appearing visibly) now becomes the miracle. Although, previously, on some particular occasions, His own body had been the subject of His miraculous power,—as when He vanished suddenly from mortal sight,—yet other circumstances prove that it was then, in its natural constitution, the frail body of a man: it became no more changed, than other material objects, which were the subjects of His power, lost their nature.—The two disciples may not, on this occasion, have recognized Him at first in consequence of His glorified appearance. The scheme of Redemption seems to require, that before His Passion the form of the *servant* should predominate, but that, after His Resurrection, the form of the *God* should be conspicuous.

*ting aside the business on which they had proceeded to Emmaus, they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem to inform their fellow disciples of all which had occurred.*

## SECTION CXXXVI.

THE APPEARANCE TO ALL THE APOSTLES EXCEPT THOMAS, AND TO OTHERS.

*Mark xvi. 13, 14. Luke xxiv. 33—43. John xx. 19, 20.*

**S**O the two disciples returned from Emmaus to Jerusalem, after Jesus had appeared unto them; and they went and told it unto the residue, and found the Eleven<sup>(1)</sup> (the collected body of the Apostles, Thomas only being absent), and them that were with them, gathered together: and some of those assembled were eager to communicate their own good tidings, saying to the two disciples as they entered, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath also appeared to (has been seen by) Simon.<sup>2</sup> (2)

\* He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and He was seen of Cephas (i. e. Peter), then of the Twelve. 1 Cor. xv. 4, 5.

And then they in their turn told what things were done in the way to Emmaus, and how He was known of them in the breaking of bread. But some of those present, who heard their statement, were still so incredulous that neither believed they them.<sup>(3)</sup> And just afterward, even as they thus spake, He (the Lord) put an end to all their doubts, and appeared unto the Eleven as they sat at meat, in the manner now to be related—as attested by the beloved disciple, an eye-witness of what took place on the occasion.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week,<sup>(4)</sup> which was the reason of their meeting together for

(1) *The Eleven.*] Strictly speaking, there were only ten assembled, for Thomas was not present. But "the Eleven" would be the correct title of the Apostolical College after the death of Judas; and an assembly of them would go by that name, though one might happen to be absent. St. Paul, speaking of the appearance to Simon, which was subsequent to the death of Judas, says he was "then of the twelve."—It is usual with the best authors to speak technically in round numbers. Thus Xenophon calls the tyrants "the Thirty," after Critias and Hippomachus had been killed (Hellen. II. iv. 24).

(2) *Hath appeared to Simon.*] See Section CXXXIV., Note 2.

(3) *Neither believed they them.*] The continued doubts of the disciples,—however blameable in them,—serve as a confirmation of our faith. It is evident they were cautious men, who would not have suffered themselves to be imposed upon; as well as honest men, who would not impose on others.

(4) *The first day of the week.*] It would

appear that the Sabbath had already been changed from the seventh day of the week to the first, probably under our Lord's own authority. We find the disciples again assembled together, and Jesus making another (His next) appearance, on the octave of His Resurrection. It was on a Lord's day that Jesus thought fit to display His glory to the beloved disciple in his banishment at Patmos (Rev. i. 10—13).—The First day has been since regularly observed as the *Christian Sabbath* (see Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2). "This is," as the Psalmist prophesied, pre-eminently "the day which the Lord Jehovah hath made;" and Christians should gratefully say, with David, "We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. cxviii. 24). It has been appropriately designated "*The Lord's Day*" (a term soon substituted for that of the First Day). Thus, superseding the seventh as the day of public worship and of rest from secular pursuits, it has fulfilled a memorable prediction of Isaiah, namely, that the *New Creation* (that is, the restoration of man to holiness and to the Divine image through the death



<sup>b</sup> The angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth. Acts v. 19.

*religious as well as social communion*; when the doors of the house where the disciples were assembled were shut (*fastened*) for fear of the rulers of the Jews, came Jesus Himself,—*having, unperceived by them, miraculously opened the doors,*<sup>b</sup>—and stood suddenly in the midst of them. And *He saluteth and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

But they, *knowing with what care the doors had been secured from within,* were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit; *for they were at a loss to conceive how any living and corporeal being could have entered, unperceived by them.*

And He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had *already* seen Him after He was risen from the dead. And He said *also* unto them, Why are ye *even now* troubled (*perplexed*), and why do *doubtful* thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My *pierced* hands and My feet, *and ascertain for yourselves* that it is I Myself *who now speak to you:* handle Me and see;<sup>c</sup> for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have.—And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them His *wounded* hands, and His feet, and His *pierced* side; *and He allowed all who would to touch Him.*

<sup>c</sup> That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life. 1 John i. 1.

<sup>d</sup> I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. John xvi. 22.

<sup>e</sup> When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Ps. cxxvi. 1.

<sup>f</sup> Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God; even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. Acts x. 40, 41.

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord;<sup>d</sup> *for, beholding these evident proofs of His Resurrection, they assured themselves that it must be He.* And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, *almost thinking that it was a dream and could scarcely be the joyful reality*<sup>e</sup>, He said unto them,—*the more effectually to convince them that He had a real body like unto their own,—*Have ye here any meat (*food of any kind*)? And they gave Him *what remained of their supper, namely,* a piece of a broiled fish, and *part* of an honey-comb. And He took it, and did eat before them.<sup>f</sup> <sup>(5)</sup>

and Resurrection of the Saviour) would be commemorated in preference to that inferior work, the Creation of the material world (Isa. lxxv. 17, 18).

(5) *And did eat before them.*] Thus, as the fourth Article of our Church maintains, our Lord rose with the *same* body in which He was incarnate, “with flesh and bones, and all things pertaining to the perfection of man’s nature.” But although the *same* body, it would still be a

glorified body, as our own are to be. The action of eating was merely performed to prove to the Apostles that He was their Master again in bodily form among them.—He withdrew Himself from them as soon as He had partaken of their meal. The immediate object of His visit was attained; and it would seem not fit that He should be, as heretofore, frequently and familiarly in their society.

## SECTION CXXXVII.

THE SECOND APPEARANCE TO THE ASSEMBLED APOSTLES, AND THE INCREDULITY AND SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION OF THOMAS ON THAT OCCASION.

*John* xx. 24—29.

**B**UT Thomas, *who had been originally appointed one of the Twelve, and who was called Didymus (or, the Twin),* was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he *would not be convinced, except by the evidence of his own senses, that they had not beheld a spirit,* and said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into (*place my hand upon*) His wounded side, I will not believe.<sup>(1)</sup>

And after eight days again, *on the next Lord's day,* His disciples were *assembled within as before:* and Thomas was now with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being again securely shut, and stood in the midst of them, and saluting them said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas,—*offering him the very criterion which he had required,*—Reach hither thy finger, and behold and examine My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into (*place it upon*) My side: and be not *any longer faithless (incredulous),* but believing. And Thomas, *perceiving that his Master was exactly aware of what he had said, and of his inmost thoughts, stayed not to make the proffered examination, but answered with shame and said unto Him, My Lord, and My God*<sup>(2)</sup> (*Thou art "the Lord of me, and the God of me," GR.*). Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, and hast had the evidence of thy senses in confirmation of the truth, thou hast at length believed: but

(1) *I will not believe.*] There seems to have been, on the part of Thomas, almost a kind of *boasting* of the strength of his understanding. Perhaps, too, he stood on what he might term his *right*—that the same favour of ocular demonstration should be conceded to him as to the other ten. But whatever might be the motive of the incredulity of Thomas, it was based on the prejudices of his own mind. He demanded evidence of a particular kind, without weighing the evidence *already* before him; and this *he had no right to do:* for if every man were to do the same, a general Revelation could never be. Further it should be considered, that Belief founded on ocular and undeniable evidence has little merit in it; for it becomes an unavoidable act of the understanding, and one in which the *heart* may be totally uninterested.

(2) *My Lord and My God.*] The opposers of the Saviour's divinity have been driven to the miserable expedient of making these very plain words a *mere* exclamation of surprise, or, at most, of thanks! Such an idiom, although known to some modern languages, is not to be found in *any* ancient ones, and certainly there is no instance of astonishment being so expressed by a Jew. The literal words are an *address*, which, though in the form of an exclamation, amount to a direct assertion of our Lord's *proper Divinity*. Although this was the most *explicit* confession from a disciple, and was addressed immediately to Himself, Jesus utters no rebuke, but plainly commends and receives it as an acknowledgment of conviction.

• We walk by faith, *more blessed are they, now and in all future time, that have not seen Me, and yet have believed* <sup>a</sup> *on the credible testimony of faithful witnesses.*  
 not by sight. 2 Cor. v. 7.  
 Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. xi. 1.—Whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. 1 Pet. i. 8.

## SECTION CXXXVIII.

JESUS SHOWS HIMSELF TO A MULTITUDE OF BELIEVERS IN GALILEE; AND AGAIN, TO PETER AND OTHERS ON THE SHORE OF THE LAKE.

*Matt. xxviii. 16—20. John xxi. 1—24.*

**T**HEN the Eleven disciples went away *from Jerusalem* into Galilee, where Jesus had appointed them <sup>a</sup> *to meet Him, into a mountain (called Mount Tabor), where on a former occasion He had been transfigured. And as this next memorable appearance was by promise, and there were many disciples in Galilee, "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6). And when they (the Apostles) saw Him, they worshipped* <sup>(1)</sup> *Him: but some of the other disciples who stood at a distance, doubted if it were He; and, to remove all doubt, Jesus came up nearer to them, and spake unto them, saying, All power and authority is given unto Me in heaven and in earth; and, since I am the Head over all things in My kingdom, My disciples need not doubt My full power to protect and guide them. Go ye, therefore, and teach (make disciples of, or convert, GR.) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* <sup>(2)</sup> *(into the*

<sup>a</sup> But after I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. *Matt. xxvi. 32.*  
 Then said Jesus unto them, Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me. *Matt. xxviii. 10.*

<sup>b</sup> The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. *John iii. 35.*  
 Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. *Heb. ii. 8.*

<sup>c</sup> All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. *Isa. lii. 10.*  
 Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. *Rom. x. 18.*

<sup>(\*)</sup> *Blessed are they that have not seen, &c.]* This may be an allusion to the case of the beloved Apostle, who here simply records the Saviour's words, and who was the first that believed on entering the vacant Sepulchre (*John xx. 8*). But the promise of Blessing which the words convey, was no doubt mainly intended for the encouragement of all future believers, who could believe only upon testimony. Faith is not praiseworthy on account of its reception of that which it is impossible to doubt, but because it is the fruit of a *willing heart*, freely yielding its assent upon proper and sufficient arguments. The declaration of the Saviour on this occasion, may well check any repinings in the heart of those who would have delighted to have beheld Him in the flesh: they know that even *that happiness is not denied; it is only deferred* until His Coming again, when all true believers shall enjoy it without interruption—when their faith shall be exchanged for perfect knowledge.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Worshipped.]* Out of sixty places in which this word occurs in the New Testament, there are only two or three in which it clearly bears the inferior sense of civil respect,

or homage due to persons of rank and dignity. Here, as in most other places, it is unquestionably to be understood of *religious worship*.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c.]* That is, baptizing them into the one true Religion, the characteristic tenet of which is belief in the existence, offices, and operations of the *Holy Trinity*—as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. That this is the sense, appears from St. Paul: the Jews, writes that Apostle, were "baptized unto Moses" (*1 Cor. x. 2*); that is, they acknowledged that system of religion which he taught: so again the Apostle asks, "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (*1 Cor. i. 13*); that is, Were you devoted to Paul by this rite? did you give yourselves away to him, and not rather to Christ?—It is difficult to understand how any one can denominate himself a Christian, and refuse his assent to the truth of *the Trinity*. All the Catholic churches of Christendom, by whatever name they are called, and whatever their differences, have ever agreed on this one fundamental point, "that they worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."—The earliest and more eminent of the Christian writers thus testify to the doctrine:—*Clement, A. D. 61, writes to*

*belief of the ever-blessed Trinity*); teaching them, *in accordance with the Baptismal vow*, to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, *as the duties of the Christian life*: and, lo, *by My Spirit*, I am with you, *and with your successors in the ministerial office*, *always (all the days, GR.)*, even unto the end of the world <sup>(\*)</sup> *and the final consummation of all things*. Amen.

After these things Jesus showed Himself <sup>d</sup> again *that same evening to seven of the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (or lake of Gennesareth)*; and on this wise (*after the manner following*) shewed He Himself:—There were assembled together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and *James and John* (the two sons of Zebedee), and two other of His disciples. *Now as they had lost the protecting aid and counsel of their Divine Master, they had of late returned to their former industrious pursuits, working with their hands that they might not be burdensome to any*. Simon Peter therefore saith unto them, *I go a fishing (I am going to fish)*. They say unto him, *We also will go with thee*. Then they went forth, and entered into a ship immediately: and all that night they caught nothing.

But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then, *as they drew near to land*, Jesus saith unto them, *Children (Sirs, MARG.)*, have ye any meat (*have ye caught any fish*) for your morning meal?—and this He said that He might draw from them an acknowledgment of their wants, before He supplied them by a manifestation of His

<sup>d</sup> Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly. Acts x. 40.

the Corinthians, "Diligently attending to God's words, ye have embosomed them in your affections, and His sufferings were before your eyes."—*Ignatius*, who suffered martyrdom, A. D. 107, says, "There is One Physician, fleshly and spiritual, made and not made, God Incarnate; both of Mary and of God, of the seed indeed of David, but from the Holy Ghost."—*Polycarp*, who knew many that had seen Christ, prayed thus at his martyrdom: "I praise and bless Thee, O God, together with the Eternal and Heavenly Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son; with whom, to Thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and for evermore."—*Justin Martyr*, who wrote from A. D. 140 to 162, says that "Christ was from the beginning, and existeth for ever; He is to be worshipped as God, and is God."—*Theophilus*, A. D. 180, who first employed the word "Trinity," says, "The Son and Holy Ghost are always present with God: by them and in them He made all things."—*Irenaeus*, in his work against heresies, A. D. 185, says, "Man was made after the image of the Uncreated God, the Father approving and commanding, the Son executing and creating, and the Holy Ghost supplying nourishment and increase."—And, to pass on to the year 200, *Tertullian* writes, "The Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and each is God."

(\*) *I am with you always*, &c.] In our Lord's discourses, the Twelve are sometimes to be considered exclusively as Apostles, in which character they had no successors; sometimes as ministers of the Gospel; and sometimes simply as disciples or private Christians. Here they seem to be addressed as ordinary ministers of the Christian religion; and consequently, in this promise of assistance (though not of infallibility) our Lord spake through them to their successors in all time,—or "all the days," as the Original so emphatically expresses it. In any other sense He could not be with them "to the end of the world"—a phrase, the original of which some would translate "the end of the (Jewish) age," but which we find repeatedly and undeniably used by the Evangelist here employing it for the end and dissolution of all things (see Matt. v. 40, 49, and xiii. 39).

It is an historical fact, that, since the days of the Apostles, the descent of the Christian priesthood has been regularly preserved, and it can be satisfactorily traced. This the older Presbyterian divines asserted as well as ourselves; only they maintained that the Ministerial commission has descended through a succession of Presbyters, while we (with the testimony of all history on our side) hold that it has come down to us through a line of Bishops.

*power.* They answered Him, No; *we have taken nothing.* And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and *there ye shall find fish.* They cast the net therefore—*willing to try whether the stranger had conjectured right;* and now they were not able to draw it *up into the boat* for the multitude of fishes *which it enclosed.*

• He said unto Simon, Let down your nets for a draught. And Simon, answering, said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes. Luke v. 4—6.

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved,—*ever the most observant and intelligent of them all,—struck with the resemblance of what had occurred to the first memorable miracle which he had witnessed,*<sup>e</sup> saith unto Peter, It is the Lord! *He alone can have done this.*

Now when Simon Peter heard *the remark of John, and perceived with what good reason he had supposed* that it was the Lord, he girt his *short fisher's coat* unto him,—*for with the exception of his under garment, he was naked,*<sup>(\*)</sup>—and did cast himself into the sea *to swim ashore, that he might be the first to salute Jesus.*—And the other disciples came *on as fast as they could* in a little ship (*in the boat*),—*for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits (not much further off than a hundred yards),—dragging the net, which they were unable as yet to raise, with the fishes in it.*

As soon as they were come *up close to the land,* they saw a fire of coals there, and fish *already laid thereon,* and bread—*all which had been miraculously provided for their accommodation by the Lord.* Jesus saith unto them, Bring *some of the fish which ye have just now caught.* Simon Peter *then went up into the boat to help them,* and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: <sup>(\*)</sup> and for all there were so many *and that they were so large,* yet was not the net broken (*rent*). *When the fish were all secured,* Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine (*eat*). And none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art Thou? *all of them well-knowing that it was the Lord.* Jesus then cometh *to the chief place as Master of the feast,* and taketh bread, and *having given thanks after His accustomed manner,* giveth them *some,* and fish likewise.

(\*) *For he was naked.*] See Section CXXII., Note 7.

(\*) *An hundred and fifty and three.*] This is stated to be the number of the species of fish then known to naturalists, and Oppian, in his poem on Fishing, is quoted in support of this fact; but it can scarcely have determined (as some think) the number now caught. A fish, called the Char mud or Karmud, often weighing thirty pounds, is still taken by the Arabs in the Lake.—The remarkable success of the disciples on this occasion, as at the commencement of our Lord's Ministry, would seem to intimate that in their character of "fishers of men," they should successfully bring within the net of the Gospel

those of all nations, ranks, and characters. The two miracles now wrought (for the meal was miraculously provided) seem also symbolically to teach, that Jesus, as He has the power, so He has the will to provide for the comfortable subsistence of His disciples, and is interested in all their circumstances and wants; justifying St. Paul's assurance that, as our God will supply all our need, we should not be solicitous about anything earthly (Phil. iv. 6, 19). The sale of the fish taken on this occasion would provide the Apostles with necessaries, so long as they continued in Galilee, without diverting their minds from the great events which were taking place and the instruction which they had to receive.

This is now the third time<sup>(3)</sup> (*the third day*) that Jesus shewed Himself to *any number* of His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead.

So when they had dined (*had finished their meal*), Jesus saith to Simon Peter, *whose denial of his Master required a special notice,—yet, in His address to the fullen Apostle, omitting the latter appellation which he did not deserve to retain,—Simon, son of Jonas, thou who didst make such eager professions of thy fidelity,*<sup>f</sup> *lovest thou Me more than these thy companions do? But Peter, now humbled by his fall, was no longer boastful of the excess of his zeal over that of others; and he simply saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee! He saith unto him, Then feed My lambs: § shew thy love by providing the little ones of My flock with fitting nourishment, and let the remembrance of thine own weakness teach thee to regard and watch over the humblest of those who believe in Me.—*He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, *lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, as before, Yea Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Then feed My sheep: h tend also those who have been trained up in the right paths, that they wander not from the fold.—*He saith unto him the third time,—*that his having thrice denied his Master might thus be cancelled by a threefold confession,—*Simon, son of Jonas, *lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved and mortified because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou art Omniscient and knowest all things: i Thou, who canst look into the heart, knowest well that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Then feed all My sheep: k for love to Me and regard to My honour is the great qualification of My ministers; and the surest and fittest evidence of that love is the watchful guardianship of all the flock committed to their charge.*

*And now, having reinstated Peter in his Apostleship,—for he had virtually abdicated it by his denial,—His Master warned him that he would be summoned to manifest his love, not only by labours in the cause of the Gospel, but by martyrdom:—*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Peter, When thou wast young, *and active, and at liberty, thou girdedst*

<sup>f</sup> Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended. Matt. xxvi. 33.

And he said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both unto prison and to death. Luke xxii. 33.

§ He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom. Isa. xl. 11.

h—pastors, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. Jer. iii. 16.

i Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men. 1 Kings viii. 39.

I, the Lord, search the heart. Jer. xvii. 10.

He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. John ii. 24, 25.

Thou knowest all things. John xvi. 30.

k Take heed, therefore, unto all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. Acts xx. 28.

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. 1 Pet. v. 2.

(3) *The third time.*] This was strictly the third time as here recorded by St. John; but, as our Lord had appeared six times previous to this, we must understand the words with some limitation, as applying either to the third appearance to the disciples collectively, which this was; or, to the third day of His showing Himself, for five appearances had taken place on the first day of His Resurrection, and another on the eighth.—The two appearances here in Galilee, and a further one when our Lord ascended at Jerusalem,

make up all that are recorded in the Gospels; but St. Paul is our authority for another appearance to James (1 Cor. xv. 7), making ten in all previous to the Ascension. St. Luke subsequently records (Acts ix. 3–5) a special appearance to St. Paul; which that Apostle himself confirms (1 Cor. xv. 8). The only remaining appearances on record are those to the first martyr Stephen (Acts vii. 55), and to the beloved Apostle at Patmos (Rev. i. 13).

<sup>1</sup> Jesus answered Peter, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now: but thou shalt follow Me afterwards. John xiii. 36.

Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. 2 Pet. i. 14.

<sup>m</sup> Then said one unto Him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And He said, Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Luke xiii. 23, 24.

<sup>n</sup> His record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true. John xix. 36. Ye know that our record is true. 3 John 12.

thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands *upon a cross as thy Master has done*, and another shall gird thee, a *helpless prisoner*, and carry thee whither, *according to natural inclinations*, thou wouldst not go.—This spake He to Peter, signifying by what *kind of death* he should glorify God<sup>(6)</sup> *in confirmation of the faith*.—And when He had spoken this, He *rose up to walk*, and saith unto him, Follow Me, and show now thy willingness to do as I do in all things—*even to die upon a Cross*. Then Peter immediately followed in the direction his Master had taken, but turning about, on hearing the steps of a third person behind him, seeth the disciple following whom Jesus loved,—which also leaned on His breast at the *paschal Supper* and said on that occasion, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? for John, although not summoned, was equally ready to prove his love by martyrdom, and had ventured thus expressively to shew it. Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do (*what is to become of him*)? shall he too suffer thus for the Faith? Jesus saith unto him,—*gently rebuking this curiosity on a matter which did not concern his own duty*,—If I will that he tarry on earth till I come, what is that to thee? <sup>m</sup> Follow thou Me.

Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him (*Peter*), He shall not die; but He simply said, If I will that he tarry till I come<sup>(7)</sup> (*intending, until He came to execute vengeance on the Jews*), what is that to thee?—This is the same disciple which here testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; and we know<sup>(8)</sup> (*it is well known and acknowledged*) that his testimony is true<sup>n</sup>, being a declaration of incontrovertible facts.

(<sup>6</sup>) *By what death he should glorify God.*] A magnificent title of martyrdom, which was accomplished about forty years after at Rome in the reign of Nero (see Euseb. Hist. ii. 25; Tertull. Prescript. c. 36). St. John, who wrote subsequently to the crucifixion of Peter, understood these words of Jesus by their fulfilment. Peter was crucified, it is stated, with his head downwards, thinking himself unworthy to die exactly as his Master had died, after his denial of Him. Our Lord, alluding to the girding or binding him for execution, may have spoken, according to His custom, from what was taking place before Him; for Peter, who had "girt his fisher's coat unto him" to leap into the water, might now be in the act of again girding on his dry clothes. The "carrying" about spoken of in the prediction, is supposed to be an allusion to the leading

the condemned about the city, as it was customary to do at Rome.

(<sup>7</sup>) *That he tarry till I come.*] All the Apostles were dead, except St. John, before the destruction of Jerusalem,—*"the Coming"* which is here referred to. He was one of that generation which should not pass till the declarations of the Lord's Coming in vengeance were all fulfilled. He beheld the Vineyard taken from the wicked husbandmen and given to others, and lived a sufficient time to see the Kingdom established "with power."

(<sup>8</sup>) *We know, &c.*] It has been supposed, from this expression, that St. John did not conclude his own Gospel, but such was a common way of speaking according to the Chaldee dialect. So St. Paul says, "We know that the Law is spiritual" (Rom. vii. 14).

## SECTION CXXXIX.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS ARE GIVEN TO THE ELEVEN AT JERUSALEM.

*Mark* xvi. 15—18. *Luke* xxiv. 44—49. *John* xx. 21—23.

**A**ND the Apostles went up to Jerusalem, to attend the approaching feast of Pentecost; and Jesus appeared there unto them, and said, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you,<sup>a</sup> That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms,<sup>(1)</sup> concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures—*removing all their prejudices, and clearing up their doubts, through the operation of His Spirit on their minds*: and He said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead<sup>b</sup> the third day; and that the doctrines of Repentance<sup>c</sup> and Remission of sins<sup>d</sup> should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are to be Witnesses<sup>(2)</sup> of these things<sup>e</sup> which ye

<sup>a</sup> Then He took unto Him the Twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man, shall be accomplished. *Luke* xviii. 31.

<sup>b</sup> Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. *Acts* iii. 18.

And Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead. *Acts* xvii. 2, 3.

<sup>c</sup> The times of ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every-where to repent. *Acts* xvii. 30.

<sup>d</sup> Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. *Acts* xiii. 38.—I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. *1 John* ii. 12.

<sup>e</sup> Ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning. *John* xv. 27.

(1) *In the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms.*] St. Luke here signifies to the unlearned Gentile the different classes of writings which were comprehended in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. That this division of the Sacred Books was usual in our Lord's time, appears from Josephus, who says, "We have only twenty-two divine books: of which five are the books of Moses, thirteen are the writings of the Prophets, and four contain Hymns to God and documents of life" (*Contra Apion*). In these "Hymns" the Psalms had always the first place.

(2) *Ye are Witnesses.*] It was important that the Witnesses of our Lord's Resurrection should have been *eye-witnesses* of its truth. So important did the Apostles themselves deem this qualification, that when they assembled, soon after the Ascension, to fill up the vacancy occasioned by the death of the traitor Judas, the ability to give personal testimony of the Resurrection is the point insisted on in a successor (*Acts* i. 22). When St. Paul was to be added to the delegated band, he was especially favoured with the sight of the Lord in glory, and he thus appeals to the fact as evidence of his Apostleship: "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (*1 Cor.* ix. 1).

It has been sometimes asked, Why, if the identity of our Lord's Person would stand the test, He should have showed Himself (as St. Peter acknowledged) "not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God" (*Acts* x. 41)? The reason was, because those, to whom Jesus was known in His life-time, were the only com-

petent Witnesses of that personal identity; and as to their number, that surely was sufficient, inasmuch as He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once (*1 Cor.* xv. 6). It was sufficient also in another respect: all great changes are effected by the deep-seated resolution of a few, whom the many follow.—The evidence which unbelievers call for would not have satisfied them; for it is certain that the understanding is much under the influence of the will, and a succession of miracles (some even of this very sort) had in vain been wrought among the Jews. There was a moral impossibility, too, in their seeing the Lord after He was risen; for they had not deserved this favour, and it is declared that "none but the pure in heart shall see God." If the fact of the Resurrection were to be made as clear as the presence of the sun at noon-day, then indeed none could attempt to contradict it; but then it would have been positively known,—not "believed," accurately speaking,—and thus it would have extinguished faith.

As to the credibility of the Witnesses who were chosen, greater proofs of sincerity never were, and never can, under any circumstances, be given by men, than were given by these. They left all they had in this world,—which, be it more or less, was accompanied with ease and innocence,—to prosecute a scheme, that exposed them to infinite sufferings; and which, on the supposition of fraud, involved them in horrible guilt. They found, by sad experience, that if in this life only they had hope in Christ,



<sup>f</sup> When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father. John xv. 26.

<sup>g</sup> I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed. Isa. xlv. 3.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh. Joel ii. 28.

<sup>h</sup> Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Acts ii. 38.

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house: and he was baptized, he and all his, straightway. Acts xvi. 31—33.

Even Baptism doth also now save us. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

<sup>1</sup> He that believeth not is condemned already . . . the wrath of God abideth on him. John iii. 18, 36.

—that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess. ii. 12.

<sup>k</sup> Then came a multitude, bringing them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one. Acts v. 16.—And Paul said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her: and he came out the same hour. Acts xvi. 18.

<sup>l</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts ii. 4.—And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues. Acts xix. 6.

<sup>m</sup> Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions. Luke x. 19.—There came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on Paul's hand, and he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Acts xxviii. 5.

<sup>n</sup> And nothing shall by any means hurt you. Luke x. 19.

<sup>o</sup> There came a multitude bringing sick folks: and they were healed every one. Acts v. 16.

they were of all men most miserable: still they could not but speak the things they had seen and heard, and they were ever ready, and even rejoiced, to suffer death in testimony of the Truth. The event, it is well known, did not disappoint their expectation, for the greater part of the Apostolic band sealed the truth of the Resurrection with their blood.

(<sup>8</sup>) *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.* ] It is evident that *Belief* is here put for the Christian system in general; for, just before, our Lord had told them that *Repentance* was to be preached in His name (Luke xxiv. 47); and again, when He showed Himself on the mountain, that they were to teach *Obedience* (Matt. xxviii. 20), of which *universality*, with continuance in well doing, is to be the test.

(<sup>4</sup>) *He that believeth not shall be damned.* ] Those who "believe not" are those who wilfully and from corrupt reasons resist the truth (John iii. 19)—not those who have never had the opportunity of knowing it. No mention is here made of Baptism, as in the first and corresponding clause, because the nature of the case ren-

*have seen—the great events of My life, of My death, and especially of My Resurrection: these ye are to shew forth to men as the proofs of My divine mission.* And behold, to fit you for this great and important work, I will shortly send upon you the promise of My Father, even the gift of the Holy Spirit,<sup>f</sup> assurance of which He too has given you by the mouth of His Prophets.<sup>g</sup> But tarry ye here in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with *this* power from on high.

And He said also unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature (*every human being, whether Jew or Gentile*) with whom you may have intercourse. He that truly believeth,—*proving his faith by repentance and obedience*,—and is baptized,<sup>h</sup> shall be saved:<sup>(3)</sup> *for by virtue of such lively Faith and the grace of Baptism he shall be placed in a state of salvation, and by continued observance of his baptismal vow he shall finally be saved:* but he that believeth not, "*loving darkness rather than light because his deeds are evil,*" shall be damned.<sup>i</sup> (<sup>4</sup>) And these signs (<sup>o</sup>) shall shortly follow them that believe: in My name shall they cast out devils;<sup>k</sup> they shall speak with new tongues<sup>l</sup> (*in languages which they had never learned*); they shall take up serpents<sup>m</sup> and suffer no harm; and if they drink any deadly thing (*any poison*), it shall not hurt them;<sup>n</sup> they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover.<sup>o</sup>

Acts v. 16.—And I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her: and he came out the same hour. Acts xvi. 18.

Acts ii. 4.—And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues. Acts xix. 6.

Luke x. 19.—There came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on Paul's hand, and he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Acts xxviii. 5.

Luke x. 19.

Acts v. 16.

dered it unnecessary: if a person truly believed, he was admitted to the necessary rite of Baptism; if he did not believe, he was not baptized, for he was "condemned already:" the first step being wanting, of course the second did not follow.—The argument cannot be deduced from this text, that infants are incapable of Baptism, as being incapable of belief; for then, as faith is absolutely necessary, they could not (in case of early death) be saved at all.

(<sup>5</sup>) *These signs.* ] Of the exercise of the gifts mentioned we have evidence in the testimonies of the earliest Christian writers, as well as in the page of Scripture.—With regard to *poisoning*, it was carried to a great height about that time, and the Apostles would of course be much exposed to that description of danger from their unscrupulous enemies; but of such cases, and of taking up serpents (of which only one instance is recorded in Scripture), it has seemed good to divine Providence to be silent, as miracles of *this* nature would be more liable to exceptions than those which were performed upon unbelievers.

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: As My Father hath sent Me *here to minister, to teach Salvation, and to "commit the same to faithful men;"* even so send I you<sup>p</sup>, and appoint you as *My Vicegerents upon earth.* And when He had said this, He breathed on them,<sup>(6)</sup> as a significant token of that *Spiritual power which they were soon more fully to receive in His name,* and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye, *thus Divinely assisted to discern the spirits of others, shall remit on the terms of the Gospel-covenant and declare to be forgiven of God,* they are remitted and forgiven unto them;<sup>q</sup> and whose soever sins ye retain,—*declaring that, according to the conditions of the Gospel, they still lie under the guilt of them,*—they are retained.<sup>(7)</sup>

<sup>p</sup> As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. John xvii. 18.

—the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus. Heb. iii. 1.

<sup>q</sup> If I forgave anything to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ. 2 Cor. ii. 10.

## SECTION CXL.

JESUS GIVES HIS LAST BLESSING TO HIS DISCIPLES, AND IS THEN TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN.

Mark xvi. 19, 20. Luke xxiv. 50—53. John xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25.

AND so then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, and had now given them sufficient proofs of His Resurrection, He led them out of the city to the Mount of Olives—as far as to the verge of Bethany. And then He lifted up His hands and fervently blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted by the Divine power from them; and, being gradually carried up in their sight, was received up into Heaven,<sup>(1)</sup> to take

(<sup>6</sup>) *He breathed on them.*] The symbolical sign which our Lord was here pleased to employ, expressed (as nearly as such a subject could be adapted to human conception) the nature and the source of the particular influence which it was intended to illustrate. "God breathed into man the breath of life," it is said in the Book of Genesis (ii. 7). The word rendered "spirit" in Scripture denotes *breath or air*: hence the operations of the Holy Spirit are compared to the wind (John iii. 8).

(<sup>7</sup>) *Whosoever sins ye remit, &c.*] These words must be received with limitation before they can be applied to the succeeding Ministers of Christ. The Apostles were miraculously endowed to know whether the conditions of the Gospel were complied with: thus *they* could, in any particular case, pronounce men to be in a state of acceptance with God, the only actual Absolver of Sin—for sin can only be committed against Him (Pa. li. 4). Ministers can now only declare, that Pardon of sin and Salvation will be granted conditionally to all who seek it by the appointed means. They speak, however, with authority as ambassadors of God; and though they cannot pretend to look into the

hearts of their fellow-men, yet all who seek to them as ministers of reconciliation with Him, will receive that Divine blessing which has been annexed to the duly-appointed Ministry.

(<sup>1</sup>) *Was received up into Heaven.*] Thus our Lord ascended up in the presence of the disciples, though He had not risen from the grave in their sight. This was proper: because His Resurrection was sufficiently proved by their afterwards seeing Him alive; but they could not know that He had been "received up" without actually witnessing that event. While they remained on earth, no number of them were to behold Him glorified in Heaven: Stephen alone (the first martyr in the cause of the Gospel), and the beloved Apostle, enjoyed that high privilege.

The Saviour's Ascension, the crowning event of the Gospel scheme, had been typified under the Law by the High-priest's entering once every year into the Holy of Holies; which showed (as St. Paul explains to us) "that the High-Priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, was to enter into the Holy Place, having ob-

\* Thou hast ascended on high: Thou hast led captivity captive. Pa. lxxviii. 18.

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Pa. cx. 1.

Jesus Christ is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto Him. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

I overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne. Rev. iii. 21.

b I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. John xvi. 22.

c —to offer burnt sacrifices unto the Lord upon the Altar of the burnt offering continually, morning and evening. 1 Chron. xvi. 40.

—which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. Luke ii. 37.

—they, continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, praising God. Acts ii. 46, 47.

d And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people. Acts v. 12.

Long time therefore abode they, speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the Word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. Acts xiv. 3.—God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will. Heb. ii. 4.

e Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for, if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repeated long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. Matt. xi. 21.

f The land is not able to bear all his words. Amos vii. 10.

*possession of His Mediatorial throne: and He sat on the right hand of God<sup>a</sup> the Father—there to remain until His enemies be made His footstool.*

“And while they looked stedfastly toward Heaven as He went up, behold, two” angels in the form of “men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven” (Acts i. 10, 11). And they, without a doubt remaining upon their minds, worshipped Him as God; and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy,<sup>b</sup> now fully convinced how much fitter and better it was that Jesus should be their Intercessor and Sovereign in heaven, than remain with them in the world, or become the Lord of an earthly kingdom.—And, as long as they continued in the city, they were continually<sup>c</sup> in the Temple at the appointed hours of prayer, praising and blessing God for these and all His other great mercies. And soon after, when they had received, according to the Divine promise, the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, they went forth, and preached the Gospel every where they came—the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following<sup>d</sup> (with attendant miracles).

And there are also many other things which Jesus did; and in particular many other signs (miracles) truly did Jesus, and many other proofs gave He of His Messiahship, in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book:<sup>e</sup> the which, if they should be written and recorded every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written<sup>f</sup> (<sup>g</sup>)—so voluminous

tained eternal redemption for us” (Heb. ix. 11, 12). The manner of our Lord’s ascent is also remarkable: Elijah, the Restorer of the Law, had been taken up in a chariot of fire; but the Author of a better Covenant was gently received up in a cloud—with that sort of meek and calm magnificence which bespeaks the peaceful genius of the Gospel.

(<sup>g</sup>) *Even the world itself could not contain, &c.*] This is a strong Eastern and hyperbolical mode of expression, which, although carried higher than is practised in European languages, is not un-frequent in Scripture (see Gen. xi. 4; xv. 5; Numb. xiii. 33; Dan. iv. 20; John xii. 19). There are also instances of the same in the purest classical writers: Thus, Virgil speaks of a man “so tall as to reach the stars;” and Longinus, of one who was “owner of a piece of ground not larger than a Lacedæmonian letter” (see further instances; Eurip. Hipp. 1248, and Menalipp. frag. 22; Æschyl. Pers. 435). The plainest sense, then, of this passage of St. John

is, that the remarkable actions and sayings of Jesus were exceedingly numerous, and many more than those recorded—a fact which is confirmed as to His miracles by St. Matthew (xi. 21), and as to His sayings in the Book of the Acts (xx. 35), where St. Paul quotes certain words of our Saviour not recorded in any of the Gospels.—But another sense has been given to this passage, which well deserves attention, although involving a verbal difficulty. The word rendered “contain” is elsewhere repeatedly rendered “receive” (as it is twice at Matt. xix. 11, 12). Thus the sense would be, that so astonishing were the miracles of Jesus not recorded, that the world would not have received them, deeming them absolutely incredible.

It is clear, however, with either of the above interpretations, that this History of the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Our Blessed Lord has been, both as to its bulk and its matter, under the direction of an all-wise and over-ruling Providence, and that it is perfectly accommodated to

would they prove to be. But these things are briefly and plainly written, that ye might more readily believe this great and leading truth which they are intended to teach, That Jesus is the Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; § and that, so believing, ye might have Eternal Life through His all-prevailing name.<sup>h</sup> AMEN.

§ We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and Eternal Life. 1 John v. 20.

<sup>h</sup> There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12.

its great purpose of the good of mankind. Enough is given, even in this portion of the New Testament, for our guidance. Here may the root and foundation of every article of our Faith be found, and if we may be permitted to make any distinction between Books all alike inspired, we must chiefly honour those in which the Son of God speaks the most in His own Person.

And here, in conclusion, let us observe of these Writers of Truth, how much (notwithstanding that each has his peculiar style) *simplicity* is the characteristic of all. They lay before us nothing but facts, and are at no pains to make them appear credible, or excite an interest in the reader. Equally certain of the truth of all which they advance, the most signal miracles and the most ordinary events are narrated in the same tone, as by faithful witnesses, whose business it was to testify and not to argue. They neither explain nor command, promise nor threaten, commend nor blame; but preserve one even tenour, report-

ing what was said or done by the enemies or friends of their Master, without any encomiums on the one, or invectives against the other. As to their Lord, they appear to consider His character as infinitely superior to any praise they could bestow: they do not *presume* to offer even the tribute of their admiration, and instead of pointing out the wisdom and virtue of the Saviour's life, they leave it to speak for itself. Unlettered as they were, and indifferent to the ornaments of style, they have drawn for us a Pattern of Excellence, moral and intellectual, infinitely surpassing all that ever before has been, or ever will again be described: in their pages we see the developement of a *Perfect Character*, brightening in trial, and consummated in death. The admired wish of the heathen, that Virtue should assume a human shape, has been fulfilled—the Divinity has “come down to us in the likeness of men.”



# TABLES

BY WHICH ANY PASSAGE FROM THE COMMON VERSION MAY BE FOUND,  
WITH ITS CONTEXT, IN THIS WORK.

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VI.	1-6	58	141-142
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XI.	1-11	104	276-279
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XII.	1-12	107	287-291
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XIII.	1-23	112	300-306
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III.	1-6	15	28-30
	7-14	16	30-31
	15-18	19	35-37
	19, 20	25	49-50
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IV.	1-13	18	33-35
	14, 15	27	55-56
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V.	1-11	30	59-61
	12-16	33	65-66
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VI.	1-5	37	74-75
	6-11	38	76-77
	12-17	40	79-80
	17-19	39	77-79
	20-49	41	81-98
VII.	1-10	42	101-102
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VIII.	1-3	47	110-114
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THE END.



# EPISCOPAL TESTIMONIALS

TO

A WORK, ENTITLED

## THE GOSPEL-NARRATIVE,

WITHOUT REPETITION OR OMISSION,

&c., &c.

(Dedicated, by permission, to Her Majesty the Queen.)

BY THE

REV. JOHN FORSTER, M.A.,

HER MAJESTY'S CHAPLAIN OF THE SAVOY.

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[The following Communications are, in each case, addressed to the Author; and are copied with the permission of each Right Reverend Prelate.]

FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH.

*“London, Nov. 7, 1846.*

I have read through your Book, and think it a very useful one. I have for that reason given away several copies, and am glad to hear that you purpose to print in a cheaper form. It is to my eye peculiarly free from anything which I deem objectionable.

T. V. ST. ASAPH.”

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FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

*“Chester, Oct. 28, 1846.*

Some months ago, when I received the first edition of your ‘Gospel Narrative,’ I had not had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with its merits. Since that time I have frequently consulted it, and have no hesitation in bearing my Testimony to its usefulness: and I shall be glad if its general circulation recompenses you for the great labour which you have employed upon it.

J. B. CHESTER.”

You are quite at liberty to print this Testimonial.”

---

FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF CHICHESTER.

*“4, Green Street, 3rd February, 1846.*

I can add my Testimony to the perspicuity and moderation of the Paraphrase and Commentary. I conceive it well calculated to be of use to almost all classes of readers, scarcely excepting the learned at one extreme, and certainly not the ignorant who may be blessed with plain understandings and a teachable spirit at the other.—I have already begun to recommend the Work, and shall provide myself with copies from time to time, as I may see opportunity of using them.”

*“Palace, Chichester, 23 Oct., 1846.*

I quite consent to your making any use you wish of the extract from my letter.

A. T. CHICHESTER.”

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S.

*"Abergwili, Carmarthen, 13 Nov., 1845.*

The Plan of your 'Gospel-Narrative' appears to me calculated to be very useful to readers of every class, being well adapted to convey the most important information in the smallest compass and the most convenient form."

*"Abergwili, 29 Oct., 1846.*

I beg that you will make any use you may think proper of my former letter, and I shall be extremely glad if it should in any degree contribute to promote the circulation of your valuable Work. C. ST. DAVIDS."

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

*"Bishopstowce, Torquay, 11 Dec., 1845.*

I have much pleasure in saying that I have sufficiently looked into your Work, to assure myself that it is a work of merit, and calculated (with God's blessing) to be useful to the Students in Theology and to Christian Readers generally.

P.S. I wish to be understood as thinking HIGHLY of the Work."

*"Bishopstowce, Torquay, 24 Oct., 1846.*

I most readily assent to your request, that you may extract any passage from my letter to you. H. EXETER."

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

*"Stapleton, near Bristol, Nov. 20, 1845.*

I have looked into several parts of your 'Continuous Gospel-Narrative,' and am extremely pleased both with the Plan and the Execution. I think that you have rendered an important service to the cause of Scripture illustration."

*"Stapleton, Oct. 27, 1846.*

I remember having read a part of your Work on the Gospels, with much approbation both of the Plan and of the Execution. I do not recollect what I said about your Book : but, whatever it was, I am sure that it was said with sincerity ; and if you think it will render you service, you are at liberty to make use of it.

J. H. GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL."

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF LICHFIELD.

*"Eccleshall, Staffordshire, 29 July, 1845.*

I have read your proof, and am VERY MUCH pleased with it. That it is no common Work, and has cost no common pains, I have seen quite enough to satisfy me. From the specimen, I think it very probable that I shall feel myself more than justified in recommending the whole Work."

*"Eccleshall Castle, 23 Oct., 1846.*

Heartily wishing success to your excellent Work on the Gospels, I readily consent to your using the testimony borne by me to its merits—if you think such a testimony will be received by any body as a recommendation.

J. LICHFIELD."

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

*“Riseholme, Lincoln, Oct. 30, 1846.*

As nearly a twelvemonth has elapsed since I received the copy of your Work, entitled ‘The Gospel-Narrative,’ I can only state the general impression made upon my mind by the perusal. I then thought it a Work admirably calculated to answer the end for which it is designed; and one likely to be eminently useful to all classes of readers, but especially to Students in Theology.

J. LINCOLN.

P.S. You are at perfect liberty to make the above note public.”

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

*“Deanery, St. Paul’s, Dec. 9, 1845.*

I have examined your Volume, entitled ‘The Gospel-Narrative,’ in several parts, and have always found it most satisfactory. *I do not think indeed that any Work of the kind has been so complete.*—There always will be passages difficult to be reconciled with any hypothesis; but your method of harmonizing the Gospels appears to me freer than any other that I have seen from objections. It is admirably arranged, perspicuous throughout, and highly instructive to the Biblical Student. I intend therefore to present a copy to each of the Divinity Schools in my Diocese.”

*“Hardwick House, Chepstow, Oct. 25th, 1846.*

I have no hesitation in saying that you are at liberty to make what use you please of my letter of Decr. 9, 1845; and I sincerely hope that your Work will be extensively circulated—especially among the Clergy, and the places of Clerical Education.

E. LLANDAFF.”

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

*“Malvern, Nov. 4th, 1846.*

The BISHOP of OXFORD has only been able to look into Mr. Forster’s Book more slightly than he hopes to do—that inspection having convinced him that it has been very carefully prepared.—The Bishop may at a future time, if Mr. Forster desires it, be able to enter more into its merits.”

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

*“Peterborough, Feb. 10, 1846.*

I have little doubt, from what I have seen of your Work on the Gospels, that it will be a valuable Work, and such as may be safely recommended.”

*“Peterborough, Nov. 29, 1846.*

I can have no objection to your quoting the passage in my letter.

G. PETERBOROUGH.”

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

*“Farnham Castle, Dec. 18, 1846.*

When I acknowledged the receipt of a copy of your Work, entitled ‘The Gospel-Narrative,’ I stated my opinion ‘that the scheme of the Paraphrase, if carried out successfully, was calculated to be extensively useful.’ I have since had opportunities of referring frequently to the volume, and have found my expectations fully satisfied. *I know of no Harmony which may be consulted with so much advantage.*

C. WINTON.

You are at liberty to make use of my reply as you think proper.”

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

"*Hartlebury Castle, Oct. 25, 1846.*

The best Testimony which I can give to the merit of your Book is by informing you of what is the real fact: That ever since I received it, a twelve-month since, it has always laid upon my table for my habitual reference and perusal.—The Paraphrase is most judiciously framed—long enough to be explanatory, without being (as I have often observed in other attempts of the kind) too verbose and redundant. The Notes are just what they should be; explanatory of the meaning of the Text, without any of that affectation of learning which is apt to offend one in a book intended for general circulation.—I consider the Work as a most valuable present to the Church, and I intend either publicly or privately to recommend its use to the Candidates for Orders at my next general Ordination.

H. WORCESTER.

P.S. You are quite welcome to make whatever use you think proper of this Note.—H. W."

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR.

"*The Palace, near Belfast, Nov. 15th, 1845.*

My attention has been occasionally drawn to particular passages of your Work on 'The Gospel-Narrative;' and in all those passages which took my notice, I observed with pleasure that you take accurate views of texts which bear on 'the doctrine, discipline, and sacraments of Christ as received by the Church,' whereby she is assimilated to the Holy Catholic Church in her primitive professions and practices."

"*The Palace, near Belfast, Oct. 30th, 1846.*

Nothing has occurred to abate the good opinion which I formed last year of your publication, 'The Gospel-Narrative;' and I shall be glad if what I then said can be made conducive to the furtherance of your object.

Rd. DOWN & CONNOR."

## FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF MEATH.

"*Ardbraccan, Navan, Jan. 21, 1846.*

I have carefully read nearly two-thirds of the Book, and *I never saw a Harmony to be compared with it.* It is brief, and yet very full, and most judicious in all its views, which are strictly those of the Church of England."

"*Ardbraccan House, Nov. 23, 1846.*

As I consider your 'Gospel-Narrative' the most judicious plan for a Harmony that I have seen, and that it avoids all the doctrinal errors into which persons, not of genuine orthodox principles, might be inclined to run at either side, I shall be very happy to bear my Testimony, in any way, to the value of the Book; and I feel satisfied that the cause of sound Biblical interpretation will be much promoted by its general circulation.

EDWARD MEATH."

## FROM THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP OF ABERDEEN.

"*Aberdeen, 2d Nov., 1846.*

I can have no hesitation in granting you permission to make use of my name and humble approval of your valuable and useful Work, 'The Gospel-Narrative, &c.,' in any way that may prove advantageous. I am quite sensible of the benefit which it must hold out, not only to Theological Students, but to every one who would diligently search the Scriptures.

W. SKINNER," *Primus*  
of the Scottish Episcopal Church.





























