The Training of the Twelve

A. B. Bruce
The Training of the Twelve
A. B. Bruce

Published by
Logos Divinity Library

Series Editors:
Dr. Johnson C. Philip
Dr. Saneesh Cherian
Forward by Olan Hendrix:

In more than twenty years in the ministry few books have influenced and helped me more than A. B. Bruce’s The Training of the Twelve. I was delighted to discover that Kregel Publications was planning to reissue this very valuable book, and I thank God for their foresight in this undertaking. With confidence and enthusiasm I commend this volume to my fellow ministers throughout the English speaking world.

As never before in the history of the Christian ministry the servant of Jesus Christ is constantly grappling with the problem of how to reproduce himself and multiply his endeavors so as to encounter our ever increasing world population with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This book, as few other books, gives the practical as well as the theological guidelines for the man of God working with his flock. Every pastor knows the frustration of looking out upon a broken and often hostile world and experiencing haunting limitations to meet those needs. Obviously, a part of the answer to this kind of frustration is the genius of “getting things done through other people.” This is precisely what Jesus Christ did with his apostles. The pattern and the ageless principles of this endeavor on the part of our Lord is lifted from the Holy Scriptures to guide us in the day in which we live.

The value of this volume is increased today as so many Christian workers are delving into the subject of management. For the first time in church history modern management techniques and principles are being sought out for their application to the local church, the mission, the missionary, and various types of Christian organizations. In the midst of this kind of upsurge of interest in management skills and tools it is increasingly vital that we have firmly fixed in our understanding the ageless management principles employed by our Lord in his relationships with his apostles.

It is difficult to estimate the value of Bruce’s instruction for the young pastor just beginning his ministry. It would be well for ordination councils to consider this as required reading for the young man facing ordination. I would recommend the book to my brethren who have been in the ministry for many years as an ideal refresher course to lift and inspire the servant of God. I have read and reread the book through the years of my own ministry and always with increasing profit.

All of this is to say nothing of the devotional benefit of these blessed pages. How wonderful and encouraging to realize that the problems we face in working with our people whom the Holy Spirit has called out into our flocks or organizations are like the problems the Lord Jesus faced in the apostolate.

Further, I am delighted for the reappearance of this volume because of the depth and stability it will unquestionably bring to the ministry in this day when superficiality and wavering tends to abound.

Olan Hendrix
Preface to the Second Edition:

ON receiving notice from the publisher that a second edition of The Training of the Twelve which first appeared in 1871, was called for, I was obliged to consider the question what alterations should be made on a work which, though written with care, was too obviously, to my maturer judgment, stamped with imperfection. Two alternatives suggested themselves to my mind. One was to recast the whole, so as to give it a more critical and scientific character, and make it bear more directly on current controversies respecting the origin of Christianity. The other was to allow the book to remain substantially as it was, retaining its popular form, and limiting alterations to details susceptible of improvement without change of plan. After a little hesitation, I decided for the latter course, for the following reasons. From expressions of opinion that reached me from many and very diverse quarters, I had come to be convinced that the book was appreciated and found useful, and I thence concluded that, notwithstanding its faults, it might continue to be of service in its primitive shape. Then, considering how difficult in all things it is to serve two masters or accomplish at once two ends, I saw that the adoption of the former of the two alternative courses was tantamount to writing a new book, which could be done, if necessary, independently of the present publication. I confess to having a vague plan of such a work in my head, which may or may not be carried into effect. The Tübingen school of critics, with whose works English readers are now becoming acquainted through translations, maintain that catholic Christianity was the result of a compromise or reconciliation between two radically opposed tendencies, represented respectively by the original apostles and by Paul, the two tendencies being Judaistic exclusiveness on the one hand, and Pauline universalism on the other. The twelve said: Christianity for Jews, and all who are willing to become Jews by compliance with Jewish custom; Paul said: Christianity for the whole world, and for all on the same terms. Now the material dealt with in The Training of the Twelve, must, from the nature of the case, have some bearing on this conflict hypothesis of Dr. Barr and his friends. The question arises, what was to be expected of the men that were with Jesus? and the consideration of this question would form an important division of such a controversial work as I have in view. Another chapter might consider the part assigned to Peter in the Acts of the Apostles (alleged by the same school of critics to be a part invented for him by the writer for an apologetic purpose), seeking especially to determine whether it was a likely part for him to play - likely in view of his idiosyncrasies, or the training he had received. Another appropriate topic would be the character of the Apostle John, as portrayed in the synoptical Gospels, in its bearing on the questions of the authorship of the fourth Gospel, and the hostility to Paul and his universalism alleged to be manifested in the Book of Revelation. In such a work there would further fall to be considered the materials bearing on the same theme in other parts of the New Testament, especially those to be found in the Epistle to the Galatians. Finally, there might not inappropriately be found a place in such a work for a discussion of the question, How far do the synoptic Gospels - the principal sources of information regarding the teaching and public actions of Christ - bear traces of the influence of controversial or conciliatory tendencies? e.g. what ground is there for the assertion that the mission of the seventy is an invention in the interest of Pauline universalism intended to throw the original apostles into the shade?

In the present work I have not attempted to develop the argument here outlined, but have merely indicated the places at which the different points of the argument might come in, and the way in which they might be used. The conflict hypothesis was not absent from my mind in writing the book at first; but I was neither so well acquainted with the literature relating thereto, nor so sensible of its importance, as I am now.

In preparing this new edition for the press, I have not lost sight of any hints from friendly critics which might tend to make it more acceptable and useful. In particular, I have kept steadily in view retrenchment of the homiletic element, though I am sensible that I may still have retained too much for some tastes, but I hope not too much for the generality of readers. I have had to remember, that while some friends
called for condensation, others have complained that the matter was too closely packed. I have also had occasion to observe in my reading of books on the Gospel history that it is possible to be so brief and sketchy as to miss not only the latent connections of thought, but even the thoughts themselves. The changes have not all been in the direction of retrenchment. While not a few paragraphs have been cancelled or reduced in bulk, other new ones have been added, and in one or two instances whole pages have been rewritten. Among the more important additions may be mentioned a note at the end of the chapter relating to the farewell discourse, giving an analysis of the discourse into its component parts; and a concluding paragraph at the end of the work summing up the instructions which the twelve had received from Jesus during the time they had been with Him. Besides these, a feature of this edition is a series of footnotes referring to some of the principal recent publications, British and foreign, whose contents relate more or less to the Gospel history, such as the works of Keim, Pfleiderer, Golani, Farrar, Sanday, and Supernatural Religion. The notes referring to Mr. Sanday’s work bear on the important question, how far we have in John’s Gospel a reliable record of the words spoken by Jesus to His disciples on the eve of His passion.

Besides the index of passages discussed which appeared in the first edition, this edition contains a carefully-prepared table of contents at the end, which it is hoped will add to the utility of the work. To make the bearing of the contents on the training of the disciples more apparent, I have in several instances changed the titles of chapters, or supplied alternative titles.

With these explanations, I send forth this new edition, with grateful feelings for the kind reception which the work has already received, and in the hope that by the divine blessing it may continue to be of use as an attempt to illustrate an interesting and important theme.
1. Beginnings

John 1:29–51.

The section of the Gospel history above indicated, possesses the interest peculiar to the beginnings of all things that have grown to greatness. Here are exhibited to our view the infant church in its cradle, the petty sources of the River of Life, the earliest blossoms of Christian faith, the humble origin of the mighty empire of the Lord Jesus Christ.

All beginnings are more or less obscure in appearance, but none were ever more obscure than those of Christianity. What an insignificant event in the history of the church, not to say of the world, this first meeting of Jesus of Nazareth with five humble men, Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, and another unnamed! It actually seems almost too trivial to find a place even in the evangelic narrative. For we have here to do not with any formal solemn call to the great office of the apostleship, or even with the commencement of an uninterrupted discipleship, but at the utmost with the beginnings of an acquaintance with and of faith in Jesus on the part of certain individuals who subsequently became constant attendants on His person, and ultimately apostles of His religion. Accordingly we find no mention made in the three first Gospels of the events here recorded.

Far from being surprised at the silence of the synoptical evangelists, one is rather tempted to wonder how it came to pass that John, the author of the fourth Gospel, after the lapse of so many years, thought it worthwhile to relate incidents so minute, especially in such close proximity to the sublime sentences with which his Gospel begins. But we are kept from such incredulous wonder by the reflection that facts objectively insignificant may be very important to the feelings of those whom they personally concern. What if John were himself one of the five who on the present occasion became acquainted with Jesus? That would make a wide difference between him and the other evangelists, who could know of the incidents here related, if they knew of them at all, only at second hand. In the case supposed, it would not be surprising that to his latest hour John remembered with emotion the first time he saw the Incarnate Word, and deemed the minutest memorials of that time unspeakably precious. First meetings are sacred as well as last ones, especially such as are followed by a momentous history, and accompanied, as is apt to be the case, with omens prophetic of the future. Such omens were not wanting in connection with the first meeting between Jesus and the five disciples. Did not the Baptist then first give to Jesus the name “Lamb of God,” so exactly descriptive of His earthly mission and destiny? Was not Nathanael’s doubting question, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” an ominous indication of a conflict with unbelief awaiting the Messiah? And what a happy omen of an opening era of wonders to be wrought by divine grace and power was contained in the promise of Jesus to the pious, though at first doubting, Israelite: “Henceforth ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man”!

That John, the writer of the fourth Gospel, really was the fifth unnamed disciple, may be regarded as certain. It is his way throughout his Gospel, when alluding to himself, to use a periphrasis, or to leave, as here, a blank where his name should be. One of the two disciples who heard the Baptist call Jesus the Lamb of God was the evangelist himself, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, being the other.

The impressions produced on our minds by these little anecdotes of the infancy of the Gospel must be feeble, indeed, as compared with the emotions awakened by the memory of them in the breast of the aged apostle by whom they are recorded. It would not, however, be creditable either to our intelligence or to our piety if we could peruse this page of the evangelic history unmoved, as if it were utterly devoid of interest. We should address ourselves to the study of the simple story with somewhat of the feeling with which men make pilgrimages to sacred places; for indeed the ground is holy.

The scene of the occurrences in which we are concerned was in the region of Persia, on the banks of the Jordan, at the lower part of its course. The persons who make their appearance on the scene were all
natives of Galilee, and their presence here is due to the fame of the remarkable man whose office it was to be the forerunner of the Christ. John, surnamed the Baptist, who had spent his youth in the desert as a hermit, living on locusts and wild honey, and clad in a garment of camel's hair, had come forth from his retreat, and appeared among men as a prophet of God. The burden of his prophecy was, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” In a short time many were attracted from all quarters to see and hear him. Of those who flocked to his preaching, the greater number went as they came; but not a few were deeply impressed, and, confessing their sins, underwent the rite of baptism in the waters of the Jordan. Of those who were baptized, a select number formed themselves into a circle of disciples around the person of the Baptist, among whom were at least two, and most probably the whole, of the five men mentioned by the evangelist. Previous converse with the Baptist had awakened in these disciples a desire to see Jesus, and prepared them for believing in Him. In his communications to the people around him John made frequent allusions to One who should come after himself. He spoke of this coming One in language fitted to awaken great expectations. He called himself, with reference to the coming One, a mere voice in the wilderness, crying, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.” At another time he said, “I baptize with water; but there standeth One among you whom ye know not: He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.” This great One was none other than the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel.

Such discourses were likely to result, and by the man of God who uttered them they were intended to result, in the disciples of the Baptist leaving him and going over to Jesus. And we see here the process of transition actually commencing. We do not affirm that the persons here named finally quitted the Baptist's company at this time, to become henceforth regular followers of Jesus. But an acquaintance now begins which will end in that. The bride is introduced to the Bridegroom, and the marriage will come in due season; not to the chagrin but to the joy of the Bridegroom’s friend.

How easily and artlessly does the mystic bride, as represented by these five disciples, become acquainted with her heavenly Bridegroom! The account of their meeting is idyllic in its simplicity, and would only be spoiled by a commentary. There is no need of formal introduction: they all introduce each other. Even John and Andrew were not formally introduced to Jesus by the Baptist; they rather introduced themselves. The exclamation of the desert prophet on seeing Jesus, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” repeated next day in an abbreviated form, was the involuntary utterance of one absorbed in his own thoughts, rather than the deliberate speech of one who was directing his disciples to leave himself and go over to Him of whom he spake. The two disciples, on the other hand, in going away after the personage whose presence had been so impressively announced, were not obeying an order given by their old master, but were simply following the dictates of feelings which had been awakened in their breasts by all they had heard him say of Jesus, both on the present and on former occasions. They needed no injunction to seek the acquaintance of one in whom they felt so keenly interested: all they needed was to know that this was He. They were as anxious to see the Messianic King as the world is to see the face of a secular prince.

It is natural that we should scan the evangelical narrative for indications of character with reference to those who, in the way so quaintly described, for the first time met Jesus. Little is said of the five disciples, but there is enough to show that they were all pious men. What they found in their new friend indicates what they wanted to find. They evidently belonged to the select band who waited for the consolation of Israel, and anxiously looked for Him who should fulfil God’s promises and realize the hopes of all devout souls. Besides this general indication of character supplied in their common confession of faith, a few facts are stated respecting these first believers in Jesus tending to make us a little better acquainted with them. Two of them certainly, all of them probably, had been disciples of the Baptist. This fact is decisive as to their moral earnestness. >From such a quarter none but spiritually earnest men were likely to come. For if the followers of John were at all like himself, they were men who hungered and thirsted after real righteousness, being sick of the righteousness then in vogue; they said Amen in their hearts to the preacher’s withering exposure of the hollowness of current religious profession and of the worthlessness of fashionable good works, and sighed for a sanctity other than that of pharisaic superstition and ostentation; their conscience acknowledged the truth of the prophetic oracle, “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away;” and they prayed fervently for the reviving of true religion, for the coming of the divine kingdom, for the advent of the Messianic King with fan in His hand to separate chaff from
wheat, and to put right all things which were wrong. Such, without doubt, were the sentiments of those who had the honor to be the first Disciples of Christ.

Simon, best known of all the twelve under the name of Peter, is introduced to us here, through the prophetic insight of Jesus, on the good side of his character as the man of rock. When this disciple was brought by his brother Andrew into the presence of his future Master, Jesus, we are told, “beheld him and said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas”—Cephas meaning in Syriac, as the evangelist explains, the same which Petros signifies in Greek. The penetrating glance of Christ discerned in this disciple latent capacities of faith and devotion, the rudiments of ultimate strength and power.

What manner of man Philip was the evangelist does not directly tell us, but merely whence he came. From the present passage, and from other notices in the Gospels, the conclusion has been drawn that he was characteristically deliberate, slow in arriving at decision; and for proof of this view, reference has been made to the “phlegmatic circumstantiality” with which he described to Nathanael the person of Him with whom he had just become acquainted. But these words of Philip, and all that we elsewhere read of him, rather suggest to us the idea of the earnest inquirer after truth, who has thoroughly searched the Scriptures and made himself acquainted with the Messiah of promise and prophecy, and to whom the knowledge of God is the sumnum bonum. In the solicitude manifested by this disciple to win his friend Nathanael over to the same faith we recognize that generous sympathetic spirit, characteristic of earnest inquirers, which afterwards revealed itself in him when he became the bearer of the request of devout Greeks for permission to see Jesus.

The notices concerning Nathanael, Philip’s acquaintance, are more detailed and more interesting than in the case of any other of the five; and it is not a little surprising that we should be told so much in this place about one concerning whom we otherwise know almost nothing. It is even not quite certain that he belonged to the circle of the twelve, though the probability is, that he is to be identified with the Bartholomew of the synoptical catalogues—his full name in that case being Nathanael the son of Tolmai. It is strongly in favor of this supposition that the name Bartholomew comes immediately after Philip in the lists of the apostles. Be this as it may, we know on the best authority that Nathanael was a man of great moral excellence. No sooner had Jesus seen him than He exclaimed, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” The words suggest the idea of one whose heart was pure; in whom was no doublemindedness, impure motive, pride, or unholy passion: a man of gentle, meditative spirit, in whose mind heaven lay reflected like the blue sky in a still lake on a calm summer day. He was a man much addicted to habits of devotion: he had been engaged in spiritual exercises under cover of a fig-tree just before he met with Jesus. So we are justified in concluding, from the deep impression made on his mind by the words of Jesus, “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.” Nathanael appears to have understood these words as meaning, “I saw into thy heart, and knew how thou wast occupied, and therefore I pronounced thee an Israelite indeed.” He accepted the statement made to him by Jesus as an evidence of preternatural knowledge, and therefore he forthwith made the confession, “Rabbi! Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel”—the King of that sacred commonwealth whereof you say I am a citizen.

It is remarkable that this man, so highly endowed with the moral dispositions necessary for seeing God, should have been the only one of all the five disciples who manifested any hesitancy about receiving Jesus as the Christ. When Philip told him that he had found the Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth, he asked incredulously, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” One hardly expects such prejudice in one so meek and amiable; and yet, on reflection, we perceive it to be quite characteristic. Nathanael’s prejudice against Nazareth sprung not from pride, as in the case of the people of Judea who despised the Galileans in general, but from humility. He was a Galilean himself, and as much an object of Jewish contempt as was the Nazarenes. His inward thought was, “Surely the Messiah can never come from among a poor despised people such as we are—from Nazareth or any other Galilean town or village!” He timidly allowed his mind to be biased by a current opinion originating in feelings with which he had no sympathy; a fault common to men whose piety, though pure and sincere, defers too much to human authority, and who thus become the slaves of sentiments utterly unworthy of them.

While Nathanael was not free from prejudices, he showed his guilelessness in being willing to have them
removed. He came and saw. This openness to conviction is the mark of moral integrity. The guileless man
dogmatizes not, but investigates, and therefore always comes right in the end. The man of bad, dishonest
heart, on the contrary, does not come and see. Deeming it his interest to remain in his present mind, he
studiously avoids looking at aught which does not tend to confirm his foregone conclusions. He may,
indeed, profess a desire for inquiry, like certain Israelites of whom we read in this same Gospel, of
another stamp than Nathanael, but sharing with him the prejudice against Galilee. “Search and look,” said
these Israelites not without guile, in reply to the ingenuous question of the honest but timid Nicodemus:
“Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?” “Search and look,” said they,
appealing to observation and inviting inquiry; but they added: “For out of Galilee ariseth no prophet” — a
dictum which at once prohibited inquiry in effect, and intimated that it was unnecessary. “Search and
look; but we tell you beforehand you cannot arrive at any other conclusion than ours; nay, we warn you,
you had better not.”

Such were the characters of the men who first believed in Jesus. What, now, was the amount and value
of their belief? On first view the faith of the five disciples, leaving out of account the brief hesitation of
Nathanael, seems unnaturally sudden and mature. They believe in Jesus on a moment’s notice, and they
express their faith in terms which seem appropriate only to advanced Christian intelligence. In the present
section of John’s Gospel we find Jesus called not merely the Christ, the Messiah, the King of Israel, but the
Son of God and the Lamb of God — names expressive to us of the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, the
Incarnation and the Atonement.

The haste and maturity which seem to characterize the faith of the five disciples are only superficial
appearances. As to the former: these men believed that Messiah was to come sometime; and they wished
much it might be then, for they felt He was greatly needed. They were men who waited for the consolation
of Israel, and they were prepared at any moment to witness the advent of the Comforter. Then the Baptist
had told them that the Christ was come, and that He was to be found in the person of Him whom he had
baptized, and whose baptism had been accompanied with such remarkable signs from heaven; and what
the Baptist said they implicitly believed. Finally, the impression produced on their minds by the bearing of
Jesus when they met, tended to confirm John’s testimony, being altogether worthy of the Christ.

The appearance of maturity in the faith of the five brethren is equally superficial. As to the name Lamb of
God, it was given to Jesus by John, not by them. It was, so to speak, the baptismal name which the
preacher of repentance had learned by reflection, or by special revelation, to give to the Christ. What the
name signified even he but dimly comprehended, the very repetition of it showing him to be but a learner
striving to get up his lesson; and we know that what John understood only in part, the men whom he
introduced to the acquaintance of Jesus, now and for long after, understood not at all.

The title Son of God was given to Jesus by one of the five disciples as well as by the Baptist, a title which
even the apostles in after years found sufficient to express their mature belief respecting the Person of
their Lord. But it does not follow that the name was used by them at the beginning with the same fullness
of meaning as at the end. It was a name which could be used in a sense coming far short of that which it
is capable of conveying, and which it did convey in apostolic preaching — merely as one of the Old
Testament titles of Messiah, a synonyme for Christ. It was doubtless in this rudimentary sense that
Nathanael applied the designation to Him, whom he also called the King of Israel.

The faith of these brethren was, therefore, just such as we should expect in beginners. In substance it
amounted to this, that they recognized in Jesus the Divine Prophet, King, Son of Old Testament prophecy;
and its value lay not in its maturity, or accuracy, but in this, that however imperfect, it brought them into
contact and close fellowship with Him, in whose company they were to see greater things than when they
first believed, one truth after another assuming its place in the firmament of their minds, like the stars
appearing in the evening sky as daylight fades away.
The twelve arrived at their final intimate relation to Jesus only by degrees, three stages in the history of their fellowship with Him being distinguishable. In the first stage they were simply believers in Him as the Christ, and His occasional companions at convenient, particularly festive, seasons. Of this earliest stage in the intercourse of the disciples with their Master we have some memorials in the four first chapters of John's Gospel, which tell how some of them first became acquainted with Jesus, and represent them as accompanying Him at a marriage in Cana, at a passover in Jerusalem, on a visit to the scene of the Baptist's ministry, and on the return journey through Samaria from the south to Galilee.

In the second stage, fellowship with Christ assumed the form of an uninterrupted attendance on His person, involving entire, or at least habitual abandonment of secular occupations. The present narratives bring under our view certain of the disciples entering on this second stage of discipleship. Of the four persons here named, we recognize three, Peter, Andrew, and John, as old acquaintances, who have already passed through the first stage of discipleship. One of them, James the brother of John, we meet with for the first time; a fact which suggests the remark, that in some cases the first and second stages may have been blended together - professions of faith in Jesus as the Christ being immediately followed by the renunciation of secular callings for the purpose of joining His company. Such cases, however, were probably exceptional and few.

The twelve entered on the last and highest stage of discipleship when they were chosen by their Master from the mass of His followers, and formed into a select band, to be trained for the great work of the apostleship. This important event probably did not take place till all the members of the apostolic circle had been for some time about the person of Jesus.

From the evangelic records it appears that Jesus began at a very early period of His ministry to gather round Him a company of disciples, with a view to the preparation of an agency for carrying on the work of the divine kingdom. The two pairs of brothers received their call at the commencement of the first Galilean ministry, in which the first act was the selection of Capernaum by the seaside as the centre of operations and ordinary place of abode. And when we think what they were called unto, we see that the call could not come too soon. The twelve were to be Christ's witnesses in the world after He Himself had left it; it was to be their peculiar duty to give to the world a faithful account of their Master's words and deeds, a just image of His character, a true reflection of His spirit. This service obviously could be rendered only by persons who had been, as nearly as possible, eye-witnesses and servants of the Incarnate Word from the beginning. While, therefore, except in the cases of Peter, James, John, Andrew, and Matthew, we have no particulars in the Gospels respecting the calls of those who afterwards became apostles, we must assume that they all occurred in the first year of the Saviour's public ministry. That these calls were given with conscious reference to an ulterior end, even the apostleship, appears from the remarkable terms in which the earliest of them was expressed. "Follow Me," said Jesus to the fishermen of Bethsaida, "and I will make you fishers of men." These words (whose originality stamps them as a genuine saying of Jesus) show that the great Founder of the faith desired not only to have disciples, but to have about Him men whom He might train to make disciples of others: to cast the net of divine truth into the sea of the world, and to land on the shores of the divine kingdom a great multitude of believing souls. Both from His words and from His actions we can see that He attached supreme importance to that part of His work which consisted in training the twelve. In the intercessory prayer, e.g., He speaks of the training He had given these men as if it had been the principal part of His own earthly ministry. And such, in one sense, it really was. The careful, painstaking education of the disciples secured that the Teacher's influence on the world should be permanent; that His kingdom should be founded on the rock of deep and indestructible convictions in the minds of the few, not on the shifting sands of superficial evanescent impressions on the minds of the many. Regarding that kingdom, as our Lord...
Himself has taught us in one of His parables to do, as a thing introduced into the world like a seed cast into the ground and left to grow according to natural laws, we may say that, but for the twelve, the doctrine, the works, and the image of Jesus might have perished from human remembrance, nothing remaining but a vague mythical tradition, of no historical value, and of little practical influence.

Those on whom so much depended, it plainly behoved to possess very extraordinary qualifications. The mirrors must be finely polished that are designed to reflect the image of Christ! The apostles of the Christian religion must be men of rare spiritual endowment. It is a catholic religion, intended for all nations; therefore its apostles must be free from Jewish narrowness, and have sympathies wide as the world. It is a spiritual religion, destined ere long to antiquate Jewish ceremonialism; therefore its apostles must be emancipated in conscience from the yoke of ordinances. It is a religion, once more, which is to proclaim the Cross, previously an instrument of cruelty and badge of infamy, as the hope of the world's redemption, and the symbol of all that is noble and heroic in conduct; therefore its heralds must be superior to all conventional notions of human and divine dignity, capable of glorying in the cross of Christ, and willing to bear a cross themselves. The apostolic character, in short, must combine freedom of conscience, enlargement of heart, enlightenment of mind, and all in the superlative degree.

The humble fishermen of Galilee had much to learn before they could satisfy these high requirements; so much, that the time of their apprenticeship for their apostolic work, even reckoning it from the very commencement of Christ's ministry, seems all too short. They were indeed godly men, who had already shown the sincerity of their piety by forsaking all for their Master's sake. But at the time of their call they were exceedingly ignorant, narrow-minded, superstitious, full of Jewish prejudices, misconceptions, and animosities. They had much to unlearn of what was bad, as well as much to learn of what was good, and they were slow both to learn and to unlearn. Old beliefs already in possession of their minds made the communication of new religious ideas a difficult task. Men of good honest heart, the soil of their spiritual nature was fitted to produce an abundant harvest; but it was stiff, and needed much laborious tillage before it would yield its fruit. Then, once more, they were poor men, of humble birth, low station, mean occupations, who had never felt the stimulating influence of a liberal education, or of social intercourse with persons of cultivated minds.

We shall meet with abundant evidence of the crude spiritual condition of the twelve, even long after the period when they were called to follow Jesus, as we proceed with the studies on which we have entered. Meantime we may discover significant indications of the religious immaturity of at least one of the disciples - Simon, son of Jonas - in Luke's account of the incidents connected with his call. Pressed by the multitude who had assembled on the shore of the lake to hear Him preach, Jesus, we read, entered into a ship (one of two lying near at hand), which happened to be Simon's, and requesting him to thrust out a little from the land, sat down, and taught the people from the vessel. Having finished speaking, Jesus said unto the owner of the boat, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Their previous efforts to catch fish had been unsuccessful; but Simon and his brother did as Jesus directed, and were rewarded by an extraordinary take, which appeared to them and their fishing companions, James and John, nothing short of miraculous. Simon, the most impressionable and the most demonstrative of the four, gave utterance to his feelings of astonishment by characteristic words and gestures. He fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

This exclamation opens a window into the inner man of him who uttered it through which we can see his spiritual state. We observe in Peter at this time that mixture of good and evil, of grace and nature, which so frequently reappears in his character in the subsequent history. Among the good elements discernible are reverential awe in presence of Divine Power, a prompt calling to mind of sin betraying tenderness of conscience, and an unfeigned self-humiliation on account of unmerited favor. Valuable features of character these; but they did not exist in Peter without alloy. Along with them were associated superstititious dread of the supernatural and a slavish fear of God. The presence of the former element is implied in the reassuring exhortation addressed to the disciple by Jesus, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Slavish fear of God is even more manifest in his own words, "Depart from me, O Lord." Powerfully impressed with the super-human knowledge revealed in connection with the great draught of fishes, he regards Jesus for the moment as a supernatural being, and as such dreads Him as one whom it is not safe to be near, especially for a poor sinful mortal like himself. This state of mind shows how utterly unfit Peter is, as yet, to be an apostle of a Gospel which magnifies the grace of God even to the chief of
sinners. His piety, sufficiently strong and decided, is not of a Christian type; it is legal, one might almost say pagan, in spirit.

With all their imperfections, which were both numerous and great, these humble fishermen of Galilee had, at the very outset of their career, one grand distinguishing virtue, which, though it may co-exist with many defects, is the cardinal virtue of Christian ethics, and the certain forerunner of ultimate high attainment. They were animated by a devotion to Jesus and to the divine kingdom which made them capable of any sacrifice. Believing Him who bade them follow Him to the Christ, come to set up God's kingdom on earth, they "straightway" left their nets and joined his company, to be thenceforth His constant companions in all His wanderings. The act was acknowledged by Jesus Himself to be meritorious; and we cannot, without injustice, seek to disparage it by ascribing it to idleness, discontent, or ambition as its motive. The Gospel narrative shows that the four brethren were not idle, but hard-working, industrious men. Neither were they discontented, if for no other reason than that they had no cause for discontent.

The family of James and John at least seems to have been in circumstances of comfort; for Mark relates that, when called by Jesus, they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after Him. But ambition, had it no place among their motives? Well, we must admit that the twelve, and especially James and John, were by no means free from ambitious passions, as we shall see hereafter. But to whatever extent ambition may have influenced their conduct at a later period, it was not the motive which determined them to leave their nets. Ambition needs a temptation: it does not join a cause which is obscure and struggling, and whose success is doubtful; it strikes in when success is assured, and when the movement it patronizes is on the eve of its glorification. The cause of Jesus had not got to that stage yet.

One charge only can be brought against those men, and it can be brought with truth, and without doing their memory any harm. They were enthusiasts: their hearts were fired, and, as an unbelieving world might say, their heads were turned by a dream about a divine kingdom to be set up in Israel, with Jesus of Nazareth for its king. That dream possessed them, and imperiously ruled over their minds and shaped their destinies, compelling them, like Abraham, to leave their kindred and their country, and to go forth on what might well appear beforehand to be a fool's errand. Well for the world that they were possessed by the idea of the kingdom! For it was no fool's errand on which they went forth, leaving their nets behind. The kingdom they sought turned out to be as real as the land of Canaan, though not such altogether as they had imagined. The fishermen of Galilee did become fishers of men on a most extensive scale, and, by the help of God, gathered many souls into the church of such as should be saved. In a sense they are casting their nets into the sea of the world still, and, by their testimony to Jesus in Gospel and Epistle, are bringing multitudes to become disciples of Him among whose first followers they had the happiness to be numbered.

The four, the twelve, forsook all and followed their Master. Did the "all" in any case include wife and children? It did in at least one instance - that of Peter; for the Gospels tell how Peter's mother-in-law was healed of a fever by the miraculous power of Christ. From a passage in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthian church, it appears that Peter was not the only one among the apostles who was married. From the same passage we further learn, that forsaking of wives for Christ's sake did not mean literal desertion. Peter the apostle led his wife about with him, and Peter the disciple may sometimes have done the same. The likelihood is that the married disciples, like married soldiers, took their wives with them or left them at home, as circumstances might require or admit. Women, even married women, did sometimes follow Jesus; and the wife of Simon, or of any other married disciple, may occasionally have been among the number. At an advanced period in the history we find the mother of James and John in Christ's company far from home; and where mothers were, wives, if they wished, might also be. The infant church, in its original nomadic or itinerant state, seems to have been a motley band of pilgrims, in which all sorts of people as to sex, social position, and moral character were united, the bond of union being ardent attachment to the person of Jesus.
This church itinerant was not a regularly organized society, of which it was necessary to be a constant member in order to true discipleship. Except in the case of the twelve, following Jesus from place to place was optional, not compulsory; and in most cases it was probably also only occasional. It was the natural consequence of faith, when the object of faith, the centre of the circle, was Himself in motion. Believers would naturally desire to see as many of Christ's works and hear as many of His words as possible. When the object of faith left the earth, and His presence became spiritual, all occasion for such nomadic discipleship was done away. To be present with Him thereafter, men needed only to forsake their sins.

**Matthew the Publican**  
Matt. 9:9-13; Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:27-32

The call of Matthew signally illustrates a very prominent feature in the public action of Jesus, viz., His utter disregard of the maxims of worldly wisdom. A publican disciple, much more a publican apostle, could not fail to be a stumbling-block to Jewish prejudice, and therefore to be, for the time at least, a source of weakness rather than of strength. Yet, while perfectly aware of this fact, Jesus invited to the intimate fellowship of discipleship one who had pursued the occupation of a tax-gatherer, and at a later period selected him to be one of the twelve. His procedure in this case is all the more remarkable when contrasted with the manner in which He treated others having outward advantages to recommend them to favorable notice, and who showed their readiness to follow by volunteering to become disciples; of whom we have a sample in the scribe who came and said, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." This man, whose social position and professional attainments seemed to point him out as a very desirable acquisition, the "Master" deliberately scared away by a gloomy picture of his own destitute condition, saying, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head."

The eye of Jesus was single as well as omniscient: He looked on the heart, and had respect solely to spiritual fitness. He had no faith in any discipleship based on misapprehensions and by-ends; and, on the other hand, He had no fear of the drawbacks arising out of the external connections or past history of true believers, but was entirely indifferent to men's antecedents. Confident in the power of truth, He chose the base things of the world in preference to things held in esteem, assured that they would conquer at the last. Aware that both He and His disciples would be despised and rejected of men for a season, He went calmly on His way, choosing for His companions and agents "whom He would," undisturbed by the gainsaying of His generation - like one who knew that His work concerned all nations and all time.

The publican disciple bears two names in the Gospel history. In the first Gospel he is called Matthew, while in the second and third Gospels he is called Levi. That the same person is intended, may, we think, be regarded as a matter of certainty. It is hardly conceivable that two publicans should have been called to be disciples at the same place and time, and with all accompanying circumstances, and these so remarkable, precisely similar. We need not be surprised that the identity has not been notified, as the fact of the two names belonging to one individual would be so familiar to the first readers of the Gospels as to make such a piece of information superfluous.

It is not improbable that Levi was the name of this disciple before the time of his call, and that Matthew was his name as a disciple, - the new name thus becoming a symbol and memorial of the more important change in heart and life. Similar emblematic changes of name were of frequent occurrence in the beginning of the Gospel. Simon son of Jonas was transformed into Peter, Saul of Tarsus became Paul, and Joses the Cypriot got from the apostles the beautiful Christian name of Barnabas (son of consolation or prophecy), by his philanthropy, and magnanimity, and spiritual wisdom, well deserved.

Matthew seems to have been employed as a collector of revenue, at the time when he was called, in the town of Capernaum, which Jesus had adopted as His place of abode. For it was while Jesus was at home
"in His own city," as Capernaum came to be called, that the palsied man was brought to Him to be healed; and from all the evangelists we learn that it was on His way out from the house where that miracle was wrought that He saw Matthew, and spoke to him the word, "Follow Me." The inference to be drawn from these facts is plain, and it is also important, as helping to explain the apparent abruptness of the call, and the promptitude with which it was responded to. Jesus and His new disciple being fellow-townspeople, had opportunities of seeing each other before.

The time of Matthew's call cannot be precisely determined, but there is good reason for placing it before the Sermon on the Mount, of which Matthew's Gospel contains the most complete report. The fact just stated is of itself strong evidence in favor of this chronological arrangement, for so full an account of the sermon was not likely to emanate from one who did not hear it. An examination of the third Gospel converts probability into something like certainty. Luke prefixes to his abbreviated account of the sermon a notice of the constitution of the apostolic society, and represents Jesus as proceeding "with them" - the twelve, whose names he has just given - to the scene where the sermon was delivered. Of course the act of constitution must have been preceded by the separate acts of calling, and by Matthew's call in particular, which accordingly is related by the third evangelist in an earlier part of his Gospel. It is true the position of the call in Luke's narrative in itself proves nothing, as Matthew relates his own call after the sermon; and as, moreover, neither one nor other systematically adheres to the chronological principle of arrangement in the construction of his story. We base our conclusion on the assumption, that when any of the evangelists professes to give the order of sequence, his statement may be relied on; and on the observations, that Luke does manifestly commit himself to a chronological datum in making the ordination of the twelve antecedent to the preaching of the Sermon on the Mount, and that Matthew's arrangement in the early part of his Gospel is as manifestly unchronological, his matter being massed on the topical principle, ch. v.-vii. showing Jesus as a great ethical teacher; ch. viii. and ix., as a worker of miracles; ch. x., as a master, choosing, instructing, and sending forth on an evangelistic mission the twelve disciples; ch. xi., as a critic of His contemporaries and assertor of His own prerogatives; ch. xii., as exposed to the contradictions of unbelief; and ch. xiii., as teaching the doctrines of the kingdom by parables.

Passing from these subordinate points to the call itself, we observe that the narratives of the event are very brief and fragmentary. There is no intimation of any previous acquaintance such as might prepare Matthew to comply with the invitation addressed to him by Jesus. It is not to be inferred, however, that no such acquaintance existed, as we can see from the case of the four fishermen, whose call is narrated with equal abruptness in the synoptical Gospels, while we know from John's Gospel that three of them at least were previously acquainted with Jesus. The truth is, that, in regard to both calls, the evangelists concerned themselves only about the crisis, passing over in silence all preparatory stages, and not deeming it necessary to inform intelligent readers that, of course, neither the publican nor any other disciple blindly followed one of whom he knew nothing merely because asked or commanded to follow. The fact already ascertained, that Matthew, while a publican, resided in Capernaum, makes it absolutely certain that he knew of Jesus before he was called. No man could live in that town in those days without hearing of "mighty works" done in and around it. Heaven had been opened right above Capernaum, in view of all, and the angels had been thronging down upon the Son of man. Lepers were cleansed, and demoniacs dispossessed; blind men received their sight, and palsied men the use of their limbs; one woman was cured of a chronic malady, and another, daughter of a distinguished citizen, - Jairus, ruler of the synagogue, - was brought back to life from the dead. These things were done publicly, made a great noise, and were much remarked on. The evangelists relate how the people "were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him;" how they glorified God, saying, "We never saw it on this fashion," or, "we have seen strange things today." Matthew himself concludes his account of the raising of Jairus' daughter with the remark: "The fame thereof went abroad into all that land."

We do not affirm that all these miracles were wrought before the time of the publican's call, but some of them certainly were. Comparing one Gospel with another, to determine the historical sequence, we conclude that the greatest of all these mighty works, the last mentioned, though narrated by Matthew after his call, really occurred before it. Think, then, what a powerful effect that marvelous deed would have in preparing the tax-gatherer for recognizing, in the solemnly uttered word, "Follow me," the
command of One who was Lord both of the dead and of the living, and for yielding to His bidding, prompt, unhesitating obedience!

In crediting Matthew with some previous knowledge of Christ, we make his conversion to discipleship appear reasonable without diminishing its moral value. It was not a matter of course that he should become a follower of Jesus merely because he had heard of, or even seen, His wonderful works. Miracles of themselves could make no man a believer, otherwise all the people of Capernaum should have believed. How different was the actual fact, we learn from the complaints afterwards made by Jesus concerning those towns along the shores of the Lake of Gennesareth, wherein most of His mighty works were done, and of Capernaum in particular. Of this city He said bitterly: "Thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. Christ's complaint against the inhabitants of these favored cities was that they did not repent, that is, make the kingdom of heaven their chief good and chief end. They wondered sufficiently at His miracles, and talked abundantly of them, and ran after Him to see more works of the same kind, and enjoy anew the sensation of amazement; but after a while they relapsed into their old stupidity and listlessness, and remained morally as they had been before He came among them, not children of the kingdom, but children of this world.

It was not so with the collector of customs. He not merely wondered and talked, but he "repented." Whether he had more to repent of than his neighbors, we cannot tell. It is true that he belonged to a class of men who, seen through the colored medium of popular prejudice, were all bad alike, and many of whom were really guilty of fraud and extortion; but he may have been an exception. His farewell feast shows that he possessed means, but we must not take for granted that they were dishonestly earned. This only we may safely say, that if the publican disciple had been covetous, the spirit of greed was now exorcised; if he had ever been guilty of oppressing the poor, he now abhorred such work. He had grown weary of collecting revenue from a reluctant population, and was glad to follow One who had come to take burdens off instead of laying them on, to remit debts instead of exacting them with rigor. And so it came to pass that the voice of Jesus acted on his heart like a spell: "He left all, rose up, and followed Him."

This great decision, according to the account of all the evangelists, was followed shortly after by a feast in Matthew's house at which Jesus was present. >From Luke we learn that this entertainment had all the character of a great occasion, and that it was given in honor of Jesus. The honor, however, was such as few would value, for the other guests were peculiar. "There was a great company of publicans, and of others that sat down with them;" and among the "others" were some who either were or were esteemed, in a superlative degree, "sinners."

This feast was, as we judge, not less rich in moral significance than in the viands set on the board. For the host himself it was, without doubt, a jubilee feast commemorative of his emancipation from drudgery and uncongenial society and sin, or, at all events. Temptation to sin, and of his entrance on the free, blessed life of fellowship with Jesus. It was a kind of poem, saying for Matthew what Doddridge's familiar lines say for many another, perhaps not so well -

"Oh happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour, and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad!Tis done;
The great transaction's done;
I am my Lord's and He is mine;
He drew me, and I followed on
Charmed to confess the voice divine."

The feast was also, as already said, an act of homage to Jesus. Matthew made his splendid feast in honor of his new master, as Mary of Bethany shed her precious ointment. It is the way of those to whom much grace is shown and given, to manifest their grateful love in deeds bearing the stamp of what a Greek philosopher called magnificence, and churls call extravagance; and whoever might blame such acts of devotion, Jesus always accepted them with pleasure.
The ex-publican’s feast seems further to have had the character of a farewell entertainment to his fellow-publicans. He and they were to go different ways henceforth, and he would part with his old comrades in peace.

Once more: we can believe that Matthew meant his feast to be the means of introducing his friends and neighbors to the acquaintance of Jesus, seeking with the characteristic zeal of a young disciple to induce others to take the step which he had resolved on himself, or at least hoping that some sinners present might be drawn from evil ways into the paths of righteousness. And who can tell but it was at this very festive gathering, or on some similar occasion, that the gracious impressions were produced whose final outcome was that affecting display of gratitude unutterable at that other feast in Simon’s house, to which neither publicans nor sinners were admitted?

Matthew’s feast was thus, looked at from within, a very joyous, innocent, and even edifying one. But, alas! looked at from without, like stained windows, it wore a different aspect: it was, indeed, nothing short of scandalous. Certain Pharisees observed the company assemble or disperse, noted their character, and made, after their wont, sinister reflections. Opportunity offering itself, they asked the disciples of Jesus the at once complimentary and censorious question: "Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?" The interrogants were for the most part local members of the pharisaic sect, for Luke calls them "their scribes and Pharisees," which implies that Capernaum was important enough to be honored with the presence of men representing that religious party. It is by no means unlikely, however, that among the unfriendly spectators were some Pharisees all the way from Jerusalem, the seat of ecclesiastical government, already on the track of the Prophet of Nazareth, watching His doings, as they watched those of the Baptist before Him. The news of Christ’s wondrous works soon spread over all the land, and attracted spectators from all quarters - from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and Persia, as well as Galilee: and we may be sure that the scribes and Pharisees of the holy city were not the last to go and see, for we must own they performed the duty of religious espionage with exemplary diligence.

The presence of ill-affected men belonging to the pharisaic order was almost a standing feature in Christ's public ministry. But it never disconcerted Him. He went calmly on His way doing His work; and when His conduct was called in question, He was ever ready with a conclusive answer. Among the most striking of His answers or apologies to them who examined Him, were those in which He vindicated Himself for mixing with publicans and sinners. They are three in number, spoken on as many occasions: the first in connection with Matthew’s feast; the second in the house of Simon the Pharisee; and the third on an occasion not minutely defined, when certain scribes and Pharisees brought against Him the grave charge, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." These apologies for loving the unloved and the morally unlovely are full of truth and grace, poetry and pathos, and not without a touch of quiet, quaint satire directed against the sanctimonious fault-finders. The first may be distinguished as the professional argument, and is to this effect: "I frequent the haunts of sinners, because I am a physician, and they are sick and need healing. Where should a physician be but among his patients? where oftenest, but among those most grievously afflicted?" The second may be described as the political argument, its drift being this: "It is good policy to be the friend of sinners who have much to be forgiven; for when they are restored to the paths of virtue and piety, how great is their love! See that penitent woman, weeping for sorrow and also for joy, and bathing her Saviour's feet with her tears. Those tears are refreshing to my heart, as a spring of water in the arid desert of pharisaic frigidity and formalism." The third may be denominated the argument from natural instinct, and runs thus: "I receive sinners, and eat with them, and seek by these means their moral restoration, for the same reason which moves the shepherd to go after a lost sheep, leaving his unstrayed flock in the wilderness, viz. because it is natural to seek the lost, and to have more joy in finding things lost than in possessing things which never have been lost. Men who understand not this feeling are solitary in the universe; for angels in heaven, fathers, housewives, shepherds, all who have human hearts on earth, understand it well, and act on it every day."

In all these reasonings Jesus argued with His accusers on their own premises, accepting their estimate of themselves, and of the class with whom they deemed it discreditable to associate, as righteous and sinful respectively. But He took care, at the same time, to let it appear that His judgment concerning the two parties did not coincide with that of His interrogators. This He did on the occasion of Matthew’s feast, by bidding them go study the text, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" meaning by the quotation to
insinuate, that while very religious, the Pharisees were also very inhuman, full of pride, prejudice, harshness, and hatred; and to proclaim the truth, that this character was in God's sight far more detestable than that of those who were addicted to the coarse vices of the multitude, not to speak of those who were "sinners" mainly in the pharisaic imagination, and within inverted commas.

Our Lord's last words to the persons who called His conduct in question at this time were not merely apologetic, but judicial. "I came not," He said, "to call the righteous, but sinners;" intimating a purpose to let the self-righteous alone and to call to repentance and to the joys of the kingdom those who were not too self-satisfied to care for the benefits offered, and to whom the gospel feast would be a real entertainment. The word, in truth, contained a significant hint of an approaching religious revolution in which the last should become first and the first last; Jewish outcasts, Gentile dogs, made partakers of the joys of the kingdom and the "righteous" shut out. It was one of the pregnant sayings by which Jesus made known to those who could understand, that His religion was an universal one, a religion for humanity, a gospel for mankind, because a gospel for sinners. And what this saying declared in word, the conduct it apologized for proclaimed yet more expressively by deed. It was an ominous thing that loving sympathy for "publicans and sinners" - the pharisaic instinct discerned it to be so, and rightly took the alarm. It meant death to privileged monopolies of grace and to Jewish pride and exclusivism - all men equal in God's sight, and welcome to salvation on the same terms. In fact it was a virtual announcement of the Pauline programme of an universalistic gospel, which the twelve are supposed by a certain school of theologians to have opposed as determinedly as the Pharisees themselves. Strange that the men who had been with Jesus were so obtuse as not to understand, even at the last, what was involved in their Master's fellowship with the low and the lost! Was Buddha more fortunate in his disciples than Jesus in His? Buddha said, "My law is a law of grace for all," directing the saying immediately against Brahminical caste prejudice; and his followers understood that it meant, Buddhism a missionary religion, a religion even for Sudras, and therefore for all mankind!

The Twelve


The selection by Jesus of the twelve from the band of disciples who had gradually gathered around His person is an important landmark in the Gospel history. It divides the ministry of our Lord into two portions, nearly equal, probably, as to duration, but unequal as to the extent and importance of the work done in each respectively. In the earlier period Jesus labored single-handed; His miraculous deeds were confined for the most part to a limited area, and His teaching was in the main of an elementary character. But by the time when the twelve were chosen, the work of the kingdom had assumed such dimensions as to require organization and division of labor; and the teaching of Jesus was beginning to be of a deeper and more elaborate nature, and His gracious activities were taking on ever-widening range.

It is probable that the selection of a limited number to be His close and constant companions had become a necessity to Christ, in consequence of His very success in gaining disciples. His followers, we imagine, had grown so numerous as to be an incumbrance and an impediment to his movements, especially in the long journeys which mark the later part of His ministry. It was impossible that all who believed could continue henceforth to follow Him, in the literal sense, whithersoever He might go: the greater number could now only be occasional followers. But it was His wish that certain selected men should be with Him at all times and in all places, - His travelling companions in all His wanderings, witnessing all His work, and ministering to His daily needs. And so, in the quaint words of Mark, "Jesus calleth unto Him whom He would, and they came unto Him, and He made twelve, that they should be with Him."

These twelve, however, as we know, were to be something more than travelling companions or menial servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were to be, in the mean time, students of Christian doctrine, and occasional fellow-laborers in the work of the kingdom, and eventually Christ's chosen trained agents for...
propagating the faith after He Himself had left the earth. From the time of their being chosen, indeed, the
twelve entered on a regular apprenticeship for the great office of apostleship, in the course of which they
were to learn, in the privacy of an intimate daily fellowship with their Master, what they should be, do,
believe, and teach, as His witnesses and ambassadors to the world. Henceforth the training of these men
was to be a constant and prominent part of Christ's personal work. He was to make it His business to tell
them in darkness what they should afterwards speak in the daylight, and to whisper in their ear what in
after years they should preach upon the housetops.

The time when this election was made, though not absolutely determined, is fixed in relation to certain
leading events in the Gospel history. John speaks of the twelve as an organized company at the period of
the feeding of the five thousand, and of the discourse on the bread of life in the synagogue of Capernaum,
delivered shortly after that miracle. From this fact we learn that the twelve were chosen at least one year
before the crucifixion; for the miracle of the feeding took place, according to the fourth evangelist, shortly
before a Passover season. From the words spoken by Jesus to the men whom He had chosen, in
justification of His seeming doubt of their fidelity after the multitude had deserted Him, "Did I not choose
you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" we conclude that the choice was then not quite a recent event.
The twelve had been long enough together to give the false disciple opportunity to show his real
character.

Turning now to the synoptical evangelists, we find them fixing the position of the election with reference
to two other most important events. Matthew speaks for the first time of the twelve as a distinct body in
connection with their mission in Galilee. He does not, however, say that they were chosen immediately
before, and with direct reference to, that mission. He speaks rather as if the apostolic fraternity had been
previously in existence, his words being, "When He had called unto Him His twelve disciples." Luke, on the
other hand, gives a formal record of the election, as a preface to his account of the Sermon on the Mount,
so speaking as to create the impression that the one event immediately preceded the other. Finally,
Mark's narrative confirms the view suggested by these observations on Matthew and Luke, viz. that the
twelve were called just before the Sermon the Mount was delivered, and some considerable time before
they were sent forth on their preaching and healing mission. There we read: "Jesus goeth up into the
mountain (t? ????), and calleth unto Him whom He would" - the ascent referred to evidently being that
which Jesus made just before preaching His great discourse. Mark continues: "And He ordained twelve,
that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal
sicknesses and to cast out devils." Here allusion is made to an intention on Christ's part to send forth His
disciples on a mission, but the intention is not represented as immediately realized. Nor can it be said that
immediate realization is implied, though not expressed; for the evangelist gives an account of
the mission as actually carried out several chapters further on in his Gospel, commencing with the words, "And He
calleth unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth."

It may be regarded, then, as tolerably certain, that the calling of the twelve was a prelude to the
preaching of the great sermon on the kingdom, in the founding of which they were afterwards to take so
distinguished a part. At what precise period in the ministry of our Lord the sermon itself is to be placed,
we cannot so confidently determine. Our opinion, however, is, that the Sermon on the Mount was
delivered towards the close of Christ's first lengthened ministry in Galilee, during the time which
intervened between the two visits to Jerusalem on festive occasions mentioned in the second and fifth
chapters of John's Gospel.

The number of the apostolic company is significant, and was doubtless a matter of choice, not less than
was the composition of the selected band. A larger number of eligible men could easily have been found in
a circle of disciples which afterwards supplied not fewer than seventy auxiliaries for evangelistic work; and
a smaller number might have served all the present or prospective purposes of the apostleship. The
number twelve was recommended by obvious symbolic reasons. It happily expressed in figures what Jesus
claimed to be, and what He had come to do, and thus furnished a support to the faith and a stimulus to
the devotion of His followers. It significantly hinted that Jesus was the divine Messianic King of Israel,
come to set up the kingdom whose advent was foretold by prophets in glowing language, suggested by
the palmy days of Israel's history, when the theocratic community existed in its integrity, and all the tribes
of the chosen nation were united under the royal house of David. That the number twelve was designed to
bear such a mystical meaning, we know from Christ's own words to the apostles on a later occasion, when,
describing to them the rewards awaiting them in the kingdom for past services and sacrifices, He said, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, 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."

It is possible that the apostles were only too well aware of the mystic significance of their number, and found in it an encouragement to the fond delusive hope that the coming kingdom should be not only a spiritual realization of the promises, but a literal restoration of Israel to political integrity and independence. The risk of such misapprehension was one of the drawbacks connected with the particular number twelve, but it was not deemed by Jesus a sufficient reason for fixing on another. His method of procedure in this, as in all things, was to abide by that which in itself was true and right, and then to correct misapprehensions as they arose.

From the number of the apostolic band, we pass to the persons composing it. Seven of the twelve - the first seven in the catalogues of Mark and Luke, assuming the identity of Bartholomew and Nathanael - are persons already known to us. With two of the remaining five - the first and the last - we shall become well acquainted as we proceed in the history. Thomas called Didymus, or the Twin, will come before us as a man of warm heart but melancholy temperament, ready to die with his Lord, but slow to believe in His resurrection. Judas Iscariot is known to all the world as the Traitor. He appears for the first time, in these catalogues of the apostles, with the infamous title branded on his brow, "Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him." The presence of a man capable of treachery among the elect disciples is a mystery which we shall not now attempt to penetrate. We merely make this historical remark about Judas here, that he seems to have been the only one among the twelve who was not a Galilean. He is surnamed, from his native place apparently, the man of Kerioth; and from the Book of Joshua we learn that there was a town of that name in the southern border of the tribe of Judah.

The three names which remain are exceedingly obscure. On grounds familiar to Bible scholars, it has often been attempted to identify James of Alphæus with James the brother or kinsman of the Lord. The next on the lists of Matthew and Mark has been supposed by many to have been a brother of this James, and therefore another brother of Jesus. This opinion is based on the fact, that in place of the Lébbæus or Thaddæus of the two first Gospels, we find in Luke's catalogues the name Judas "of James." The ellipsis in this designation has been filled up with the word brother, and it is assumed that the James alluded to is James the son of Alphæus. However tempting these results may be, we can scarcely regard them as ascertained, and must content ourselves with stating that among the twelve was a second James, besides the brother of John and son of Zebedee, and also a second Judas, who appears again as an interlocutor in the farewell conversation between Jesus and His disciples on the night before His crucifixion, carefully distinguished by the evangelist from the traitor by the parenthetical remark "not Iscariot." This Judas, being the same with Lébbæus Thaddæus, has been called the three-named disciple.

The disciple whom we have reserved to the last place, like the one who stands at the head of all the lists, was a Simon. This second Simon is as obscure as the first is celebrated, for he is nowhere mentioned in the Gospel history, except in the catalogues; yet, little known as he is, the epithet attached to his name conveys a piece of curious and interesting information. He is called the Kananite (not Canaanite), which is a political, not a geographical designation, as appears from the Greek work substituted in the place of this Hebrew one by Luke, who calls the disciple we now speak of Simon Zelotes; that is, in English, Simon the Zealot. This epithet Zelotes connects Simon unmistakably with the famous party which rose in rebellion under Judas in the days of the taxing, some twenty years before Christ's ministry began, when Judea and Samaria were brought under the direct government of Rome, and the census of the population was taken with a view to subsequent taxation. How singular a phenomenon is this ex-zelot among the disciples of Jesus! No two men could differ more widely in their spirit, ends, and means, than Judas of Galilee and Jesus of Nazareth. The one was a political malcontent; the other would have the conquered bow to the yoke, and give to Cæsar Cæsar's due. The former aimed at restoring the kingdom to Israel, adopting for his watchword, "We have no Lord or Master but God;" the latter aimed at founding a kingdom not national, but universal, not "of this world," but purely spiritual. The means employed by the two actors were as diverse as their ends. One had recourse to the carnal weapons of war, the sword and the dagger; the other relied solely on the gentle but omnipotent force of truth.
What led Simon to leave Judas for Jesus we know not; but he made a happy exchange for himself, as the party he forsook were destined in after years to bring ruin on themselves and on their country by their fanatical, reckless, and unavailing patriotism. Though the insurrection of Judas was crushed, the fire of discontent still smouldered in the breasts of his adherents; and at length it burst out into the blaze of a new rebellion, which brought on a death-struggle with the gigantic power of Rome, and ended in the destruction of the Jewish capital, and the dispersion of the Jewish people.

The choice of this disciple to be an apostle supplies another illustration of Christ's disregard of prudential wisdom. An ex-zealot was not a safe man to make an apostle of, for he might be the means of rendering Jesus and His followers objects of political suspicion. But the Author of our faith was willing to take the risk. He expected to gain many disciples from the dangerous classes as well as from the despised, and He would have them, too, represented among the twelve.

It gives one a pleasant surprise to think of Simon the zealot and Matthew the publican, men coming from so opposite quarters, meeting together in close fellowship in the little band of twelve. In the persons of these two disciples extremes meet - the tax-gatherer and the tax-hater: the unpatriotic Jew, who degraded himself by becoming a servant of the alien ruler; and the Jewish patriot, who chafed under the foreign yoke, and sighed for emancipation. This union of opposites was not accidental, but was designed by Jesus as a prophecy of the future. He wished the twelve to be the church in miniature or germ; and therefore He chose them so as to intimate that, as among them distinctions of publican and zealot were unknown, so in the church of the future there should be neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, bond nor free, but only Christ - all to each, and in each of the all.

These were the names of the twelve as given in the catalogues. As to the order in which they are arranged, on closely inspecting the lists we observe that they contain three groups of four, in each of which the same names are always found, though the order of arrangement varies. The first group includes those best known, the second the next best, and the third those least known of all, or, in the case of the traitor, known only too well. Peter, the most prominent character among the twelve, stands at the head of all the lists, and Judas Iscariot at the foot, carefully designated, as already observed, the traitor. The apostolic roll, taking the order given in Matthew, and borrowing characteristic epithets from the Gospel history at large, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST GROUP</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simon Peter</td>
<td>The man of rock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>Peter’s brother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James and John</td>
<td>Sons of Zebedee, and sons of thunder.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECOND GROUP</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>The earnest inquirer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batholomew, or Nathanael</td>
<td>The guileless Israelite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>The melancholy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>The publican (so called) by himself only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THIRD GROUP</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James (the son) of Alphæus</td>
<td>(James the Less? Mark xv. 40.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebbæus, Thaddæus, Judas of James,</td>
<td>The three-named disciple.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>The Zealot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20
Such were the men whom Jesus chose to be with Him while He was on this earth, and to carry on His work after He left it. Such were the men whom the church celebrates as the "glorious company of the apostles." The praise is merited; but the glory of the twelve was not of this world. In a worldly point of view they were a very insignificant company indeed, - a band of poor illiterate Galilean provincials, utterly devoid of social consequence, not likely to be chosen by one having supreme regard to prudential considerations. Why did Jesus choose such men? Was He guided by feelings of antagonism to those possessing social advantages, or of partiality for men of His own class? No; His choice was made in true wisdom. If He chose Galileans mainly, it was not from provincial prejudice against those of the south; if, as some think, He chose two or even four of his own kindred, it was not from nepotism; if He chose rude, unlearned, humble men, it was not because He was animated by any petty jealousy of knowledge, culture, or good birth. If any rabbi, rich man, or ruler had been willing to yield himself unreservedly to the service of the kingdom, no objection would have been taken to him on account of his acquirements, possessions, or titles. The case of Saul of Tarsus, the pupil of Gamaliel, proves the truth of this statement. Even Gamaliel himself would not have been objected to, could he have stooped to become a disciple of the unlearned Nazarene. But, alas! neither he nor any of his order would condescend so far, and therefore the despised One did not get an opportunity of showing His willingness to accept as disciples and choose for apostles such as they were.

The truth is, that Jesus was obliged to be content with fishermen, and publicans, and quondam zealots, for apostles. They were the best that could be had. Those who deemed themselves better were too proud to become disciples, and thereby they excluded themselves from what all the world now sees to be the high honor of being the chosen princes of the kingdom. The civil and religious aristocracy boasted of their unbelief. The citizens of Jerusalem did feel for a moment interested in the zealuous youth who had purged the temple with a whip of small cords; but their faith was superficial, and their attitude patronizing, and therefore Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew what was in them. A few of good position were sincere sympathizers, but they were not so decided in their attachment as to be eligible for apostles. Nicodemus was barely able to speak a timid apologetic word in Christ's behalf, and Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple "secretly," for fear of the Jews. These were hardly the persons to send forth as missionaries of the cross - men so fettered by social ties and party connections, and so enslaved by the fear of man. The apostles of Christianity must be made of sterner stuff.

And so Jesus was obliged to fall back on the rustic, but simple, sincere, and energetic men of Galilee. And He was quite content with His choice, and devoutly thanked His Father for giving Him even such as they. Learning, rank, wealth, refinement, freely given up to his service, He would not have despised; but He preferred devoted men who had none of these advantages to undevoted men who had them all. And with good reason; for it mattered little, except in the eyes of contemporary prejudice, what the social position or even the previous history of the twelve had been, provided they were spiritually qualified for the work to which they were called. What tells ultimately is, not what is without a man, but what is within. John Bunyan was a man of low birth, low occupation, and, up till his conversion, of low habits; but he was by nature a man of genius, and by grace a man of God, and he would have made - he was, in fact - a most effective apostle.

But it may be objected that all the twelve were by no means gifted like Bunyan; some of them, if one may judge from the obscurity which envelops their names, and the silence of history regarding them, having been undistinguished either by high endowment or by a great career, and in fact, to speak plainly, all but useless. As this objection virtually impugns the wisdom of Christ's choice, it is necessary to examine how far it is according to truth. We submit the following considerations with this view: -

I. That some of the apostles were comparatively obscure, inferior men, cannot be denied; but even the obscurest of them may have been most useful as witnesses for Him with whom they had companied from the beginning. It does not take a great man to make a good witness, and to be witnesses of Christian facts was the main business of the apostles. That even the humblest of them rendered important service in that capacity we need not doubt, though nothing is said of them in the apostolic annals. It was not to
be expected that a history so fragmentary and so brief as that given by Luke should mention any but the principal actors, especially when we reflect how few of the characters that appear on the stage at any particular crisis in human affairs are prominently noticed even in histories which go elaborately into detail. The purpose of history is served by recording the words and deeds of the representative men, and many are allowed to drop into oblivion who did nobly in their day. The less distinguished members of the apostolic band are entitled to the benefit of this reflection.

2. Three eminent men, or even two (Peter and John), out of twelve, is a good proportion; there being few societies in which superior excellence bears such a high ratio to respectable mediocrity. Perhaps the number of "Pillars" was as great as was desirable. Far from regretting that all were not Peters and Johns, it is rather a matter to be thankful for, that there were diversities of gifts among the first preachers of the gospel. As a general rule, it is not good when all are leaders. Little men are needed as well as great men; for human nature is one-sided, and little men have their peculiar virtues and gifts, and can do some things better than their more celebrated brethren.

3. We must remember how little we know concerning any of the apostles. It is the fashion of biographers in our day, writing for a morbidly or idly curious public, to enter into the minutest particulars of outward event or personal peculiarity regarding their heroes. Of this fond idolatrous minuteness there is no trace in the evangelic histories. The writers of the Gospels were not afflicted with the biographic mania. Moreover, the apostles were not their theme. Christ was their hero; and their sole desire was to tell what they knew of Him. They gazed steadfastly at the Sun of Righteousness, and in His effulgence they lost sight of the attendant stars. Whether they were stars of the first magnitude, or of the second, or of the third, made little difference.

Hearing and Seeing

Matt. 8:16, 17; Mark 4:33, 34.

In the training of the twelve for the work of the apostleship, hearing and seeing the words and works of Christ necessarily occupied an important place. Eye and ear witnessing of the facts of an unparalleled life was an indispensable preparation for future witness-bearing. The apostles could secure credence for their wondrous tale only by being able to preface it with the protestation: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." None would believe their report, save those who, at the very least, were satisfied that it emanated from men who had been with Jesus. Hence the third evangelist, himself not an apostle, but only a companion of apostles, presents his Gospel with all confidence to his friend Theophilus as a genuine history, and no mere collection of fables, because its contents were attested by men who "from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word."

In the early period of their discipleship hearing and seeing seem to have been the main occupation of the twelve. They were then like children born into a new world, whose first and by no means least important course of lessons consists in the use of their senses in observing the wonderful objects by which they are surrounded.

The things which the twelve saw and heard were wonderful enough. The great Actor in the stupendous drama was careful to impress on His followers the magnitude of their privilege. "Blessed," said He to them on one occasion, "are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not." Yet certain generations of Israel had seen very remarkable things: one had seen the wonders of the Exodus, and the sublimities connected with the lawgiving at Sinai; another, the miracles wrought by Elijah and Elisha; and successive generations had been privileged to listen to the not less
wonderful oracles of God, spoken by David, Solomon, Isaiah, and the rest of the prophets. But the things witnessed by the twelve eclipsed the wonders of all bygone ages; for a greater than Moses, or Elijah, or David, or Solomon, or Isaiah, was here, and the promise to Nathanael was being fulfilled. Heaven had been opened, and the angels of God - the spirits of wisdom, and power, and love - were ascending and descending on the Son of man.

We may here take a rapid survey of the mirabilia which it was the peculiar privilege of the twelve to see and hear, more or less during the whole period of their discipleship, and specially just after their election. These may be comprehended under two heads: the Doctrine of the Kingdom, and the Philanthropic Work of the Kingdom.

I. Before the ministry of Jesus commenced, His forerunner had appeared in the wilderness of Judea, preaching, and saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and some time after their election the twelve disciples were sent forth among the towns and villages of Galilee to repeat the Baptist's message. But Jesus Himself did something more than proclaim the advent of the kingdom. He expounded the nature of the divine kingdom, described the character of its citizens, and discriminated between genuine and spurious members of the holy commonwealth. This He did partly in what is familiarly called the Sermon on the Mount, preached shortly after the election of the apostles; and partly in certain parables uttered about the same period.

In the great discourse delivered on the mountain-top, the qualifications for citizenship in the kingdom of heaven were set forth, first positively, and then comparatively. The positive truth was summed up in seven golden sentences called the Beatitudes, in which the felicity of the kingdom was represented as altogether independent of the outward conditions with which worldly happiness is associated. The blessed, according to the preacher, were the poor, the hungry, the mournful, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peaceable, the sufferers for righteousness' sake. Such were blessed themselves, and a source of blessing to the human race: the salt of the earth, the light of the world raised above others in spirit and character, to draw them upwards, and lead them to glorify God.

Next, with more detail, Jesus exhibited the righteousness of the kingdom, and of its true citizens, in contrast to that which prevailed. "Except your righteousness," He went on to say with solemn emphasis, "shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and then He illustrated and enforced the general proposition by a detailed description of the counterfeit in its moral and religious aspects: in its mode of interpreting the moral law, and its manner of performing the duties of piety, such as prayer, alms, and fasting. In the one aspect He characterized pharisaic righteousness as superficial and technical; in the other as ostentatious, self-complacent, and censorious. In contrast thereto, He described the ethics of the kingdom as a pure stream of life, having charity for its fountainhead; a morality of the heart, not merely of outward conduct; a morality also broad and catholic, overlapping all arbitrary barriers erected by legal pedantry and natural selfishness. The religion of the kingdom He set forth as humble, retiring, devoted in singleness of heart to God and things supernal; having faith in God as a benignant gracious Father for its root, and contentment, cheerfulness, and freedom from secular cares for its fruits; and, finally, as reserved in its bearing towards the profane, yet averse to severity in judging, yea, to judging at all, leaving men to be judged by God.

The discourse, of which we have given a hasty outline, made a powerful impression on the audience. "The people," we read, "were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority (the authority of wisdom and truth), and not as the scribes," who had merely the authority of office. It is not probable that either the multitude or the twelve understood the sermon; for it was both deep and lofty, and their minds were pre-occupied with very different ideas of the coming kingdom. Yet the drift of all that had been said was clear and simple. The kingdom whereof Jesus was both King and Lawgiver was not to be a kingdom of this world: it was not to be here or there in space, but within the heart of man; it was not the monopoly of any class or nation, but open to all possessed of the requisite spiritual endowments on equal terms. It is nowhere said, indeed, in the sermon, that ritual qualifications, such as circumcision, were not indispensable for admission into the kingdom. But circumcision is ignored here, as it was ignored the teaching of Jesus. It is treated as something simply out of place, which cannot be dove-tailed into the scheme of doctrine set forth; an incongruity the very mention of which would create a sense of the grotesque. How truly it was so any one can satisfy himself by just imagining for a moment that among the
Beatitudes had been found one running thus: Blessed are the circumcised, for no uncircumcised ones shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. This significant silence concerning the seal of the national covenant could not fail to have its effect on the minds of the disciples, as a hint at eventual antiquation.

The weighty truths thus taught first in the didactic form of an ethical discourse, Jesus sought at other times to popularize by means of parables. In the course of His ministry He uttered many parabolic sayings, the parable being with Him a favorite form of instruction. Of the thirty parables preserved in the Gospels, the larger number were of an occasional character, and are best understood when viewed in connection with the circumstances which called them forth. But there is a special group of eight which appear to have been spoken about the same period, and to have been designed to serve one object, viz. to exhibit in simple pictures the outstanding features of the kingdom of heaven in its nature and progress, and in its relations to diverse classes of men. One of these, the parable of the sower, apparently the first spoken, shows the different reception given to the word of the kingdom by various classes of hearers, and the varied issues in their life. Two - the parables of the tares and of the net cast into the sea - describe the mixture of good and evil that should exist in the kingdom till the end, when the grand final separation would take place. Another pair of short parables - those of the treasure hid in a field and of the precious pearl - set forth the incomparable importance of the kingdom, and of citizenship therein. Other two - the grain of mustard seed, and the leaven hid in three measures of meal - explain how the kingdom advances from small beginnings to a great ending. An eighth parable, found in Mark's Gospel only, teaches that growth in the divine kingdom proceeds by stages, analogous to the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear, in the growth of grain.

These parables, or the greater number of them, were spoken in the hearing of a miscellaneous audience; and from a reply of Jesus to a question put by the disciples, it might appear that they were intended mainly for the ignorant populace. The question was, "Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?" and the reply, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given;" which seems to imply, that in the case of the twelve such elementary views of truth - such children's sermons, so to speak - might be dispensed with. Jesus meant no more, however, than that for them the parables were not so important as for common hearers, being only one of several means of grace through which they were to become eventually scribes instructed in the kingdom, acquainted with all its mysteries, and able, like a wise householder, to bring out of their treasures things new and old; while for the multitude the parables were indispensable, as affording their only chance of getting a little glimpse into the mysteries of the kingdom.

That the twelve were not above parables yet appears from the fact that they asked and received explanations of them in private from their Master: of all, probably, though the interpretations of two only, the parables of the sower and the tares, are preserved in the Gospels. They were still only children; the parables were pretty pictures to them, but of what they could not tell. Even after they had received private expositions of their meaning, they were probably not much wiser than before, though they professed to be satisfied. Their profession was doubtless sincere: they spake as they felt; but they spake as children, they understood as children, they thought as children, and they had much to learn yet of these divine mysteries.

When the children had grown to spiritual manhood, and fully understood these mysteries, they highly valued the happiness they had enjoyed in former years, in being privileged to hear the parables of Jesus. We have an interesting memorial of the deep impression produced on their minds by these simple pictures of the kingdom, in the reflection with, which the first evangelist closes his account of Christ's parabolic teaching. "All these things," he remarks, "spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables, . . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." The quotation (from the seventy-eighth Psalm) significantly diverges both from the Hebrew original and from the Septuagint version. Matthew has consciously adapted the words so as to express the absolute originality of the teaching in which he found their fulfillment. While the Psalmist uttered dark sayings from the ancient times of Israel's history, Jesus in the parables had spoken things that had been hidden from the creation. Nor was this an exaggeration on the part of the evangelist. Even the use of the parable as a vehicle of instruction was all but new, and the truths expressed in the parables were altogether new. They were indeed the eternal verities of the divine kingdom, but till the days of Jesus they had remained unannounced. Earthly things had always been fit to
emblem forth heavenly things; but, till the great Teacher appeared, no one had ever thought of linking them together, so that the one should become a mirror of the other, revealing the deep things of God to the common eye: even as no one before Isaac Newton had thought of connecting the fall of an apple with the revolution of the heavenly bodies, though apples had fallen to the ground from the creation of the world.

The things which the disciples had the happiness to see in connection with the philanthropic work of the kingdom were, if possible, still more marvelous than those which they heard in Christ's company. They were eye-witnesses of the events which Jesus bade the messengers of John report to their master in prison as unquestionable evidence that He was the Christ who should come. In their presence, as spectators, blind men received their sight, lame men walked, lepers were cleansed, the deaf recovered hearing, dead persons were raised to life again. The performance of such wonderful works was for a time Christ's daily occupation. He went about in Galilee and other districts, "doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." The "miracles" recorded in detail in the Gospels give no idea whatever of the extent to which these wondrous operations were carried on. The leper cleansed on the descent from the mountain, when the great sermon was preached, the palsied servant of the Roman centurion restored to health and strength, Peter's mother-in-law cured of a fever, the demoniac dispossessed in the synagogue of Capernaum, the widow's son brought back to life while he was being carried out to burial, - these, and the like, are but a few samples selected out of an innumerable multitude of deeds not less remarkable, whether regarded as mere miracles or as acts of kindness. The truth of this statement appears from paragraphs of frequent recurrence in the Gospels, which relate not individual miracles, but an indefinite number of them taken en masse. Of such paragraphs take as an example the following, cursorily rehearsing the works done by Jesus at the close of a busy day: "And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils; and all the city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils." This was what happened on a single Sabbath evening in Capernaum, shortly after the Sermon on the Mount was preached; and such scenes appear to have been common at this time: for we read a little farther on in the same Gospel, that "Jesus spake unto His disciples, that a small ship should wait on Him because of the multitude, lest they should throng Him; for He had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon Him for to touch Him, as many as had plagues." And yet again Mark tells how "they went into an house, and the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread."

The inference suggested by such passages as to the vast extent of Christ's labors among the suffering, is borne out by the impressions these made on the minds both of friends and foes. The ill-affected were so struck by what they saw, that they found it necessary to get up a theory to account for the mighty influence exerted by Jesus in curing physical, and especially psychical maladies. "This fellow," they said, "doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of devils." It was a lame theory, as Jesus showed; but it was at least conclusive evidence that devils were cast out, and in great numbers.

The thoughts of the well-affected concerning the works of Jesus were various, but all which have been recorded involve a testimony to His vast activity and extraordinary zeal. Some, apparently relatives, deemed him mad, fancying that enthusiasm had disturbed His mind, and compassionately sought to save Him from doing Himself harm through excessive solicitude to do good to others. The sentiments of the people who received benefit were more devout. "They marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men:" and they were naturally not inclined to criticize an "enthusiasm of humanity" whereof they were themselves the objects.

The contemporaneous impressions of the twelve concerning their Master's deeds are not recorded; but of their subsequent reflections as apostles we have an interesting sample in the observations appended by the first evangelist to his account of the transactions of that Sabbath evening in Capernaum already alluded to. The devout Matthew, according to his custom, saw in these wondrous works Old Testament Scripture fulfilled; and the passage whose fulfillment he found therein was that touching oracle of Isaiah, "Surely He hath borne our grieves and carried our sorrows;" which, departing from the Septuagint, he made apt to his purpose by rendering, "Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." The Greek translators interpreted the text as referring to men's spiritual maladies - their sins; but Matthew deemed it neither a misapplication nor a degradation of the words to find in them a prophecy of Messiah's deep sympathy with such as suffered from any disease, whether spiritual or mental, or merely physical. He
knew not how better to express the intense compassion of his Lord towards all sufferers, than by representing Him in prophetic language as taking their sicknesses on Himself. Nor did he wrong the prophet's thought by this application of it. He but laid the foundation of an à fortiori inference to a still more intense sympathy on the Saviour's part with the spiritually diseased. For surely He who so cared for men's bodies would care yet more for their souls. Surely it might safely be anticipated, that He who was so conspicuous as a healer of bodily disease would become yet more famous as a Saviour from sin.

The works which the twelve were privileged to see were verily worth seeing, and altogether worthy of the Messianic King. They served to demonstrate that the King and the kingdom were not only coming, but come; for what could more certainly betoken their presence, than mercy dropping like the "gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath"? John, indeed, seems to have thought otherwise, when he sent to inquire of Jesus if He were the Christ who was to come. He desiderated, we imagine, a work of judgment on the impenitent as a more reliable proof of Messiah's advent than these miracles of mercy. The prophetic infirmity of querulousness and the prison air had got the better of his judgment and his heart, and he was in the truculent humor of Jonah, who was displeased with God, not because He was too stern, but rather because He was too gracious, too ready to forgive.

The least in the kingdom of heaven is incapable now of being offended with these works of our Lord on account of their mercifulness. The offence in our day lies in a different direction. Men stumble at the miraculousness of the things seen by the disciples and recorded by the evangelists. Mercy, say they, is God-like, but miracles are impossible; and they think they do well to be skeptical. An exception is made, indeed, in favor of some of the healing miracles, because it is not deemed impossible that they might fall within the course of nature, and so cease to belong to the category of the miraculous. "Moral therapeutics" might account for them - a department of medical science which Mr. Matthew Arnold thinks has not been at all sufficiently studied yet. All other miracles besides those wrought by moral therapeutics are pronounced fabulous. But why not extend the dominion of the moral over the physical, and say without qualification: Mercy is God-like, therefore such works as those wrought by Jesus were matters of course? So they appeared to the writers of the Gospels. What they wondered at was not the supernaturality of Christ's healing operations, but the unfathomable depth of divine compassion which they revealed. There is no trace of the love of the marvelous either in the Gospels or in the Epistles. The disciples may have experienced such a feeling when the era of wonders first burst on their astonished view, but they had lost it entirely by the time the New Testament books began to be written. Throughout the New Testament miracles are spoken of in a sober, almost matter-of-fact, tone. How is this to be explained? The explanation is that the apostles had seen too many miracles while with Jesus to be excited about them. Their sense of wonder had been deadened by being sated. But though they ceased to marvel at the power of their Lord, they never ceased to wonder at His grace. The love of Christ remained for them throughout life a thing passing knowledge; and the longer they lived, the more cordially did they acknowledge the truth of their Master's words: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see"
Lessons on

It would have been matter for surprise if, among the manifold subjects on which Jesus gave instruction to His disciples, prayer had not occupied a prominent place. Prayer is a necessity of spiritual life, and all who earnestly try to pray soon feel the need of teaching how to do it. And what theme more likely to engage the thoughts of a Master who was Himself emphatically a man of prayer, spending occasionally whole nights in prayerful communion with His heavenly Father?

We find, accordingly, that prayer was a subject on which Jesus often spoke in the hearing of His disciples. In the Sermon on the Mount, for example, He devoted a paragraph to that topic, in which He cautioned His hearers against pharisaic ostentation and heathenish repetition, and recited a form of devotion as a model of simplicity, comprehensiveness, and brevity. At other times He directed attention to the necessity, in order to acceptable and prevailing prayer, of perseverance, concord, strong faith, and large expectation.

The passage cited from the eleventh chapter of Luke's Gospel gives an account of what may be regarded as the most complete and comprehensive of all the lessons communicated by Jesus to His disciples on the important subject to which it relates. The circumstances in which this lesson was given are interesting. The lesson on prayer was itself an answer to prayer. A disciple, in all probability one of the twelve, after hearing Jesus pray, made the request: "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." The request and its occasion taken together convey to us incidentally two pieces of information. From the latter we learn that Jesus, besides praying much alone, also prayed in company with His disciples, practicing family prayer as the head of a household, as well as secret prayer in personal fellowship with God His Father. From the former we learn that the social prayers of Jesus were most impressive. Disciples hearing them were made painfully conscious of their own incapacity, and after the Amen were ready instinctively to proffer the request, "Lord, teach us to pray," as if ashamed any more to attempt the exercise in their own feeble, vague, stammering words.

When this lesson was given we know not, for Luke introduces his narrative of it in the most indefinite manner, without noting either time or place. The reference to John in the past tense might seem to indicate a date subsequent to his death; but the mode of expression would be sufficiently explained by the supposition that the disciple who made the request had previously been a disciple of the Baptist. Nor can any certain inference be drawn from the contents of the lesson. It is a lesson which might have been given to the twelve at any time during their discipleship, so far as their spiritual necessities were concerned. It is a lesson for children, for spiritual minors, for Christians in the crude stage of the divine life, afflicted with confusion of mind, dumbness, dejection, unable to pray for want of clear thought, apt words, and above all, of faith that knows how to wait in hope; and it meets the wants of such by suggesting topics, supplying forms of language, and furnishing their weak faith with the props of cogent arguments for perseverance. Now such was the state of the twelve during all the time they were with Jesus; till He ascended to heaven, and power descended from heaven on them, bringing with it a loosed tongue and an enlarged heart. During the whole period of their discipleship, they needed prompting in prayer such as a mother gives her child, and exhortations to perseverance in the habit of praying, even as do the humblest followers of Christ. Far from being exempt from such infirmities, the twelve may even have experienced them in a superlative degree. The heights correspond to the depths in religious experience. Men who are destined to be apostles must, as disciples, know more than most of the chaotic, speechless condition, and of the great, irksome, but most salutary business of Waiting on God for light, and truth, and grace, earnestly desired but long withheld.

It was well for the church that her first ministers needed this lesson on prayer; for the time comes in the case of most, if not all, who are spiritually earnest, when its teaching is very seasonable. In the spring of the divine life, the beautiful blossom-time of piety, Christians may be able to pray with fluency and fervor, unembarrassed by want of words, thoughts, and feelings of a certain kind. But that happy stage soon passes, and is succeeded by one in which prayer often becomes a helpless struggle, an inarticulate groan, a silent, distressed, despondent waiting on God, on the part of men who are tempted to doubt whether God be indeed the hearer of prayer, whether prayer be not altogether idle and useless. The three wants
contemplated and provided for in this lesson - the want of ideas, of words, and of faith - are as common as they are grievous. How long it takes most to fill even the simple petitions of the Lord's Prayer with definite meanings! the second petition, e.g., "Thy kingdom come," which can be presented with perfect intelligence only by such as have formed for themselves a clear conception of the ideal spiritual republic or commonwealth. How difficult, and therefore how rare, to find out acceptable words for precious thoughts slowly reached! How many, who have never got anything on which their hearts were set without needing to ask for it often, and to wait for it long (no uncommon experience), have been tempted by the delay to give up asking in despair! And no wonder; for delay is hard to bear in all cases, especially in connection with spiritual blessings, which are in fact, and are by Christ here assumed to be, the principal object of a Christian man's desires. Devout souls would not be utterly confounded by delay, or even refusal, in connection with mere temporal goods; for they know that such things as health, wealth, wife, children, home, position, are not unconditionally good, and that it may be well sometimes not to obtain them, or not easily and too soon. But it is most confounding to desire with all one's heart the Holy Ghost, and yet seem to be denied the priceless boon; to pray for light, and to get instead deeper darkness; for faith, and to be tormented with doubts which shake cherished convictions to their foundations; for sanctity, and to have the mud of corruption stirred up by temptation from the bottom of the well of eternal life in the heart. Yet all this, as every experienced Christian knows, is part of the discipline through which scholars in Christ's school have to pass ere the desire of their heart be fulfilled.

The lesson on prayer taught by Christ, in answer to request, consists of two parts, in one of which thoughts and words are put into the mouths of immature disciples, while the other provides aids to faith in God as the answerer of prayer. There is first a form of prayer, and then an argument enforcing perseverance in prayer.

The form of prayer commonly called the Lord's Prayer, which appears in the Sermon on the Mount as a sample of the right kind of prayer, is given here as a summary of the general heads under which all special petitions may be comprehended. We may call this form the alphabet of all possible prayer. It embraces the elements of all spiritual desire, summed up in a few choice sentences, for the benefit of those who may not be able to bring their struggling aspirations to birth in articulate language. It contains in all six petitions, of which three - the first three, as was meet - refer to God's glory, and the remaining three to man's good. We are taught to pray, first for the advent of the divine kingdom, in the form of universal reverence for the divine name, and universal obedience to the divine will; and then, in the second place, for daily bread, pardon, and protection from evil for ourselves. The whole is addressed to God as Father, and is supposed to proceed from such as realize their fellowship one with another as members of a divine family, and therefore say, "Our Father." The prayer does not end, as our prayers now commonly do, with the formula, "for Christ's sake;" nor could it, consistently with the supposition that it proceeded from Jesus. No prayer given by Him for the present use of His disciples, before His death, could have such an ending, because the plea it contains was not intelligible to them previous to that event. The twelve did not yet know what Christ's sake (sache) meant, nor would they till after their Lord had ascended, and the Spirit had descended and revealed to them the true meaning of the facts of Christ's earthly history. Hence we find Jesus, on the eve of His passion, ascending, and the Spirit had descended and revealed to them the true meaning of the facts of Christ's kingdom, in the form of the "Lor

To what extent the disciples afterwards made use of this beautifully simple yet profoundly significant form, we do not know; but it may be assumed that they were in the habit of repeating it as the disciples of the Baptist might repeat the forms taught them by their master. There is, however, no reason to think that the "Lord's Prayer," though of permanent value as a part of Christ's teaching, was designed to be a stereotyped, binding method of addressing the Father in heaven. It was meant to be an aid to inexperienced disciples, not a rule imposed upon apostles. Even after they had attained to spiritual maturity, the twelve might use this form if they pleased, and possibly they did occasionally use it; but Jesus expected that by the time they came to be teachers in the church they should have outgrown the need of it as an aid to devotion. Filled with the Spirit, enlarged in heart, mature in spiritual understanding, they should then be able to pray as their Lord had prayed when He was with them; and while the six petitions of the model prayer would still enter into all their supplications at the throne of grace, they would
do so only as the alphabet of a language enters into the most extended and eloquent utterances of a
speaker, who never thinks of the letters of which the words he utters are composed.

In maintaining the provisional, pro tempore character of the Lords' Prayer, so far as the twelve were
concerned, we lay no stress on the fact already adverted to, that it does not end with the phrase, "for
Christ's sake." That defect could easily be supplied afterwards mentally or orally, and therefore was no
valid reason for disuse. The same remark applies to our use of the prayer in question. To allow this form
to fall into desuetude merely because the customary concluding plea is wanting, is as weak on one side as
the too frequent repetition of it is on the other. The Lord's Prayer is neither a piece of Deism unworthy of
a Christian, nor a magic charm like the "Pater noster" of Roman Catholic devotion. The most advanced
believer will often find relief and rest to his spirit in falling back on its simple, sublime sentences, while
mentally realizing the manifold particulars which each of them includes; and he is but a tyro in the art of
praying, and in the divine life generally, whose devotions consist exclusively, or even mainly, in repeating
the words which Jesus put into the mouths of immature disciples.

The view now advocated regarding the purpose of the Lord's Prayer is in harmony with the spirit of
Christ's whole teaching. Liturgical forms and religious methodism in general were much more congenial to
the strict ascetic school of the Baptist than to the free school of Jesus. Our Lord evidently attached little
importance to forms of prayer, any more than to fixed periodic fasts, else He would not have waited till He
was asked for a form, but would have made systematic provision for the wants of His followers, even as
the Baptist did, by, so to speak, compiling a book of devotion or composing a liturgy. It is evident, even
from the present instructions on the subject of praying, that Jesus considered the form He supplied of
quite subordinate importance: a mere temporary remedy for a minor evil, the want of utterance, till the
greater evil, the want of faith, should be cured; for the larger portion of the lesson is devoted to the
purpose of supplying an antidote to unbelief.

The second part of this lesson on prayer is intended to convey the same moral as that which is prefixed to
the parable of the unjust judge - "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The supposed cause of
fainting is also the same, even delay on the part of God in answering our prayers. This is not, indeed,
made so obvious in the earlier lesson as in the later. The parable of the ungenerous neighbor is not
adapted to convey the idea of long delay: for the favor asked, if granted at all, must be granted in a very
few minutes. But the lapse of time between the presenting and the granting of our requests is implied and
presupposed as a matter of course. It is by delay that God seems to say to us what the ungenerous
neighbor said to his friend, and that we are tempted to think that we pray to no purpose.

Both the parables spoken by Christ to inculcate perseverance in prayer seek to effect their purpose by
showing the power of importunity in the most unpromising circumstances. The characters appealed to are
both bad - one in ungenerous, and the other unjust; and from neither is anything to be gained except by
working on his selfishness. And the point of the parable in either case is, that importunity has a power of
annoyance which enables it to gain its object.

It is important again to observe what is supposed to be the leading subject of prayer in connection with
the argument now to be considered. The thing upon which Christ assumes His disciples to have set their
hearts is personal sanctification. This appears from the concluding sentence of the discourse: "How much
more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!" Jesus takes for granted that
the persons to whom He addresses Himself here seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.
Therefore, though He inserted a petition for daily bread in the form of prayer, He drops that object out of
view in the latter part of His discourse; both because it is by hypothesis not the chief object of desire, and
also because, for all who truly give God's kingdom the first place in their regards, food and raiment are
thrown into the bargain.

To such as do not desire the Holy Spirit above all things, Jesus has nothing to say. He does not encourage
them to hope that they shall receive any thing of the Lord; least of all, the righteousness of the kingdom,
personal sanctification. He regards the prayers of a double-minded man, who has two chief ends in view,
as a hollow mockery - mere words, which never reach Heaven's ear.
The supposed cause of fainting being delay, and the supposed object of desire being the Holy Spirit, the spiritual situation contemplated in the argument is definitely determined. The Teacher's aim is to succor and encourage those who feel that the work of grace goes slowly on within them, and wonder why it does so, and sadly sigh because it does so. Such we conceive to have been the state of the twelve when this lesson was given them. They had been made painfully conscious of incapacity to perform aright their devotional duties, and they took that incapacity to be an index of their general spiritual condition, and were much depressed in consequence.

The argument by which Jesus sought to inspire His discouraged disciples with hope and confidence as to the ultimate fulfillment of their desires, is characterized by boldness, geniality, wisdom, and logical force. Its boldness is evinced in the choice of illustrations. Jesus has such confidence in the goodness of His cause, that He states the case as disadvantageously for Himself as possible, by selecting for illustration not good samples of men, but persons rather below than above the ordinary standard of human virtue. A man who, on being applied to at any hour of the night by a neighbor for help in a real emergency, such as that supposed in the parable, or in a case of sudden sickness, should put him off with such an answer as this, "Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee," would justly incur the contempt of his acquaintances, and become a byword among them for all that is ungenerous and heartless. The same readiness to take an extreme case is observable in the second argument, drawn from the conduct of fathers towards their children. "If a son shall ask bread of any of you" - so it begins. Jesus does not care what father may be selected; He is willing to take any one they please: He will take the very worst as readily as the best; nay, more readily, for the argument turns not on the goodness of the parent, but rather on his want of goodness, as it aims to show that no special goodness is required to keep all parents from doing what would be an outrage on natural affection, and revolting to the feelings of all mankind.

The genial, kindly character of the argument is manifest from the insight and sympathy displayed therein. Jesus divines what hard thoughts men think of God under the burden of unfulfilled desire; how they doubt His goodness, and deem Him indifferent, heartless, unjust. He shows His intimate knowledge of their secret imaginations by the cases He puts; for the unkind friend and unnatural father, and we may add, the unjust judge, are pictures not indeed of what God is, or of what He would have us believe God to be, but certainly of what even pious men sometimes think Him to be. And He cannot only divine, but sympathize. He does not, like Job's friends, find fault with those who harbor doubting and apparently profane thoughts, nor chide them for impatience, distrust, and despondency. He deals with them as men compassed with infirmity, and needing sympathy, counsel, and help. And in supplying these, He comes down to their level of feeling, and tries to show that, even if things were as they seem, there is no cause for despair. He argues from their own thoughts of God that they should still hope in Him. "Suppose," He says in effect, "God to be what you fancy, indifferent and heartless, still pray on; see, in the case I put, what perseverance can effect. Ask as the man who wanted loaves asked, and ye shall also receive from Him who seems at present deaf to your petitions. Appearances, I grant, may be very unfavorable, but they cannot be more so in your case than in that of the petitioner in the parable; and yet you observe how he fared through not being too easily disheartened."

Jesus displays His wisdom in dealing with the doubts of His disciples, by avoiding all elaborate explanations of the causes or reasons of delay in the answering of prayer, and using only arguments adapted to the capacity of persons weak in faith and in spiritual understanding. He does not attempt to show why sanctification is a slow, tedious work, not a momentary act: why the Spirit is given gradually and in limited measure, not at once and without measure. He simply urges His hearers to persevere in seeking the Holy Spirit, assuring them that, in spite of trying delay, their desires will be fulfilled in the end. He teaches them no philosophy of waiting on God, but only tells them that they shall not wait in vain.

This method the Teacher followed not from necessity, but from choice. For though no attempt was made at explaining divine delays in providence and grace, it was not because explanation was impossible. There were many things which Christ might have said to His disciples at this time if they could have borne them; some of which they afterwards said themselves, when the Spirit of Truth had come, and guided them into all truth, and made them acquainted with the secret of God's way. He might have pointed out to them, e.g., that the delays of which they complained were according to the analogy of nature, in which gradual
growth is the universal law; that time was needed for the production of the ripe fruits of the Spirit, just in
the same way as for the production of the ripe fruits of the field or of the orchard; that it was not to be
wondered at if the spiritual fruits were peculiarly slow in ripening, as it was a law of growth that the higher
the product in the scale of being, the slower the process by which it is produced; that a momentary
sanctification, though not impossible, would be as much a miracle in the sense of a departure from law, as
was the immediate transformation of water into wine at the marriage in Cana; that if instantaneous
sanctification were the rule instead of the rare exception, the kingdom of grace would become too like the
imaginary worlds of children's dreams, in which trees, fruits, and palaces spring into being full-grown,
ripe, and furnished, in a moment as by enchantment, and too unlike the real, actual world with which men
are conversant, in which delay, growth, and fixed law are invariable characteristics.

Jesus might further have sought to reconcile His disciples to delay by descanting on the virtue of patience.
Much could be said on that topic. It could be shown that a character cannot be perfect in which the virtue
of patience has no place, and that the gradual method of sanctification is best adapted for its
development, as affording abundant scope for its exercise. It might be pointed out how much the ultimate
enjoyment of any good thing is enhanced by its having to be waited for; how in proportion to the trial is
the triumph of faith; how, in the quaint words of one who was taught wisdom in this matter by his own
experience, and by the times in which he lived, "It is fit we see and feel the shaping and sewing of every
piece of the wedding garment, and the framing and moulding and fitting of the crown of glory for the head
of the citizen of heaven;" how "the repeated sense and frequent experience of grace in the ups and
downs in the way, the falls and risings again of the traveler, the revolutions and changes of the spiritual
condition, the new moon, the darkened moon, the full moon in the Spirit's ebbing and flowing, raiseth in
the heart of saints on their way to the country a sweet smell of the fairest rose and lily of Sharon;" how,"as travelers at night talk of their foul ways, and of the praises of their guide, and battle being ended,
soldiers number their wounds, extol the valor, skill, and courage of their leader and captain," so "it is
meet that the glorified soldiers may take loads of experience of free grace to heaven with them, and there
speak of their way and their country, and the praises of Him that hath redeemed them out of all nations,
tongues, and languages."

Such considerations, however just, would have been wasted on men in the spiritual condition of the
disciples. Children have no sympathy with growth in any world, whether of nature or of grace. Nothing
pleases them but that an acorn should become an oak at once, and that immediately after the blossom
should come the ripe fruit. Then it is idle to speak of the uses of patience to the inexperienced; for the
moral value of the discipline of trial cannot be appreciated till the trial is past. Therefore, as before stated,
Jesus abstained entirely from reflections of the kind suggested, and adopted a simple, popular style of
reasoning which even a child could understand.

The reasoning of Jesus, while very simple, is very cogent and conclusive. The first argument - that
contained in the parable of the ungenerous neighbor - is fitted to inspire hope in God, even in the darkest
hour, when He appears indifferent to our cry, or positively unwilling to help, and so to induce us to
persevere in asking. "As the man who wanted the loaves knocked on louder and louder, with an
importunity that knew no shame, and would take no refusal, and thereby gained his object, the selfish
friend being glad at last to get up a
importunity that knew no shame, and would take no refusal, and thereby gained his object, the selfish
friend being glad at last to get up a
impossible to sleep with such a noise; so (such is the drift of the argument), so continue thou knocking at
the door of heaven, and thou shalt obtain thy desire if it were only to be rid of thee. See in this parable
what a power importunity has, even at a most unpromising time - midnight - and with a most unpromising
person, who prefers his own comfort to a neighbor's good: ask, therefore, persistently, and it shall be
given unto you also; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."
failure of the analogy at this point. We can annoy a man, like the ungenerous neighbor in bed, or the unjust judge, but we cannot annoy God. The parable does not suggest the true explanation of divine delay, or of the ultimate success of importunity. It merely proves, by a homely instance, that delay, apparent refusal, from whatever cause it may arise, is not necessarily final, and therefore can be no good reason for giving up asking.

This is a real if not a great service rendered. But the doubting disciple, besides discovering with characteristic acuteness what the parable fails to prove, may not be able to extract any comfort from what it does prove. What is he to do then? Fall back on the strong asseveration with which Jesus follows up the parable: "And I say unto you." Here, doubter, is an oracular dictum from One who can speak with authority; One who has been in the bosom of the eternal God, and has come forth to reveal His inmost heart to men groping in the darkness of nature after Him, if haply they might find Him. When He addresses you in such emphatic, solemn terms as these, "I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," you may take the matter on His word, at least pro tempore. Even those who doubt the reasonableness of prayer, because of the constancy of nature's laws and the unchangeableness of divine purposes, might take Christ's word for it that prayer is not vain, even in relation to daily bread, not to speak of higher matters, until they arrive at greater certainty on the subject than they can at present pretend to. Such may, if they choose, despise the parable as childish, or as conveying crude anthropopathic ideas of the Divine Being, but they cannot despise the deliberate declarations of One whom even they regard as the wisest and best of men.

The second argument employed by Jesus to urge perseverance in prayer is of the nature of a reductio ad absurdum, ending with a conclusion à fortiori. "If," it is reasoned, "God refused to hear His children's prayers, or, worse still, if He mocked them by giving them something bearing a superficial resemblance to the things asked, only to cause bitter disappointment when the deception was discovered, then were He not only as bad as, but far worse than, even the most depraved of mankind. For, take fathers at random, which of them, if a son were to ask bread, would give him a stone? or if he asked a fish, would give him a serpent? or if he asked an egg, would offer him a scorpion? The very supposition is monstrous. Human nature is largely vitiated by moral evil; there is, in particular, an evil spirit of selfishness in the heart which comes into conflict with the generous affections, and leads men of times to do base and unnatural things. But men taken at the average are not diabolic; and nothing short of a diabolic spirit of mischief could prompt a father to mock a child's misery, or deliberately to give him things fraught with deadly harm. If, then, earthly parents, though evil in many of their dispositions, give good, and, so far as they know, only good, gifts to their children, and would shrink with horror from any other mode of treatment, is it to be credited that the Divine Being, that Providence, can do what only devils would think of doing? On the contrary, what is only barely possible for man is for God altogether impossible, and what all but monsters of iniquity will not fail to do God will do much more. He will most surely give good gifts, and only good gifts, to His asking children; most especially will He give His best gift, which His true children desire above all things, even the Holy Spirit, the enlightener and the sanctifier. Therefore again I say unto you: Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened."

Yet it is implied in the very fact that Christ puts such cases as a stone given for bread, a serpent for a fish, or a scorpion for an egg, that God seems at least sometimes so to treat His children. The time came when the twelve thought they had been so treated in reference to the very subject in which they were most deeply interested, after their own personal sanctification, viz., the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. But their experience illustrates the general truth, that when the Hearer of prayer seems to deal unnaturally with His servants, it is because they have made a mistake about the nature of good, and have not known what they asked. They have asked for a stone, thinking it bread, and hence the true bread seems a stone; for a shadow, thinking it a substance, and hence the substance seems a shadow. The kingdom for which the twelve prayed was a shadow, hence their disappointment and despair when Jesus was put to death: the egg of hope, which their fond imagination had been hatching, brought forth the scorpion of the cross, and they fancied that God had mocked and deceived them. But they lived to see that God was true and good, and that they had deceived themselves, and that all which Christ had told them had been fulfilled. And all who wait on God ultimately make a similar discovery, and unite in testifying that "the Lord is good is rational, even if the Divine Being were like men in the average, not indisposed to do good when self-interest does not stand in the way - the creed of heathenism. It is still more manifestly rational if, as Christ taught unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him."
For these reasons should all men pray, and not faint. Prayer and Christians believe, God be better than the best of men - the one supremely good Being - the Father in heaven. Only in either of two cases would prayer really be irrational: if God were no living being at all, - the creed of atheists, with whom Christ holds no argument; or if He were a being capable of doing things from which even bad men would start back in horror, i.e., a being of diabolic nature, - the creed, it is to be hoped, of no human being.

Religious Liberty or the Nature of True Holiness

Section I. Fasting

We have learnt in the last chapter how Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and we are now to learn in the present chapter how He taught them to live.

Christ's ratio vivendi was characteristically simple; its main features being a disregard of minute mechanical rules, and a habit of falling back in all things on the great principles of morality and piety.

The practical carrying out of this rule of life led to considerable divergence from prevailing custom. In three respects especially, according to the Gospel records, were our Lord and His disciples chargeable, and actually charged, with the offence of nonconformity. They departed from existing practice in the matters of fasting, ceremonial purifications as prescribed by the elders, and Sabbath sanctification. The first they neglected for the most part, the second altogether; the third they did not neglect, but their mode of observing the weekly rest was in spirit totally, and in detail widely, diverse from that which was in vogue.

These divergences from established custom are historically interesting as the small beginnings of a great moral and religious revolution. For in teaching His disciples these new habits, Jesus was inaugurating a process of spiritual emancipation which was to issue in the complete deliverance of the apostles, and through them of the Christian church, from the burdensome yoke of Mosaic ordinances, and from the still more galling bondage of a "vain conversation received by tradition from the fathers."

The divergences in question have much biographical interest also in connection with the religious experience of the twelve. For it is a solemn crisis in any man's life when he first departs in the most minute particulars from the religious opinions and practices of his age. The first steps in the process of change are generally the most difficult, the most perilous, and the most decisive. In these respects, learning spiritual freedom is like learning to swim. Every expert in the aquatic art remembers the troubles he experienced in connection with his first attempts, - how hard he found it to make arms and legs keep stroke; how he floundered and plunged; how fearful he was lest he should go beyond his depth and sink to the bottom. At these early fears he may now smile, yet were they not altogether groundless; for the tyro does run some risk of drowning though the bathing-place be but a small pool or dam built by schoolboys on a burn flowing through an inland dell, remote from broad rivers and the great sea.

It is well both for young swimmers and for apprentices in religious freedom when they make their first essays in the company of an experienced friend, who can rescue them should they be in danger. Such a friend the twelve had in Christ, whose presence was not only a safeguard against all inward spiritual risks, but a shield from all assaults which might come upon them from without. Such assaults were to be expected. Nonconformity invariably gives offence to many, and exposes the offending party to interrogation at least, and often to something more serious. Custom is a god to the multitude, and no one
can withhold homage from the idol with impunity. The twelve accordingly did in fact incur the usual penalties connected with singularity. Their conduct was called in question, and censured, in every instance of departure from use and wont. Had they been left to themselves, they would have made a poor defense of the actions impugned; for they did not understand the principles on which the new practice was based, but simply did as they were directed. But in Jesus they had a friend who did understand those principles, and who was ever ready to assign good reasons for all He did Himself, and for all He taught His followers to do. The reasons with which he defended the twelve against the upholders of prevailing usage were specially good and telling; and they constitute, taken together, an apology for nonconformity not less remarkable than that which He made for graciously receiving publicans and sinners, consisting, like it, of three lines of defense corresponding to the charges which had to be met. That apology we propose to consider in the present chapter under three divisions, in the first of which we take up the subject of fasting.

From Matthew's account we learn that the conduct of Christ's disciples in neglecting fasting was animadverted on by the disciples of John the Baptist. "Then," we read, "came to Him the disciples of John" - those, that is, who happened to be in the neighborhood - "saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not?" From this question we learn incidentally that in the matter of fasting the school of the Baptist and the sect of the Pharisees were agreed in their general practice. As Jesus told the Pharisees at a later date, John came in their own "way" of legal righteousness." But it was a case of extremes meeting; for no two religious parties could be more remote in some respects than the two just named. But the difference lay rather in the motives than in the external acts of their religious life. Both did the same things - fasted, practiced ceremonial ablutions, made many prayers - only they did them with a different mind. John and his disciples performed their religious duties in simplicity, godly sincerity, and moral earnestness; the Pharisees, as a class, did all their works ostentatiously, hypocritically, and as matters of mechanical routine.

From the same question we further learn that the disciples of John, as well as the Pharisees, were very zealous in the practice of fasting. They fasted oft, much (p????, Luke; p????, Matthew). This statement we otherwise know to be strictly true of such Pharisees as made great pretensions to piety. Besides the annual fast on the great day of atonement appointed by the law of Moses, and the four fasts which had become customary in the time of the Prophet Zechariah, in the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months of the Jewish year, the stricter sort of Jews fasted twice every week, viz., on Mondays and Thursdays. This bi-weekly fast is alluded to in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. Luke xviii. 12. It is not to be assumed, of course, that the practice of the Baptist's disciples coincided in this respect with that of the strictest sect of the pharisaic party. Their system of fasting may have been organized on an independent plan, involving different arrangements as to times and occasions. The one fact known, which rests on the certain basis of their own testimony, is that, like the Pharisees, John's disciples fasted often, if not on precisely the same days and for the same reasons.

It does not clearly appear what feelings prompted the question put by John's disciples to Jesus. It is not impossible that party spirit was at work, for rivalry and jealousy were not unknown, even in the environment of the forerunner. John iii. 26. In that case, the reference to pharisaic practice might be explained by a desire to overwhelm the disciples of Jesus by numbers, and put them, as it were, in a hopeless minority on the question. It is more likely, however, that the uppermost feeling in the mind of the interrogators was one of surprise, that in respect of fasting they should approach nearer to a sect whose adherents were stigmatized by their own master as a "generation of vipers," than to the followers of One for whom that master cherished and expressed the deepest veneration. In that case, the object of the question was to obtain information and instruction. It accords with this view that the query was addressed to Jesus. Had disputation been aimed at, the questioners would more naturally have applied to the disciples.

If John's followers came seeking instruction, they were not disappointed. Jesus made a reply to their question, remarkable at once for originality, point, and pathos, setting forth in lively parabolic style the great principles by which the conduct of His disciples could be vindicated, and by which He desired the conduct of all who bore His name to be regulated. Of this reply it is to be observed, in the first place, that it is of a purely defensive character. Jesus does not blame John's disciples for fasting, but contents Himself with defending His own disciples for abstaining from fasting. He does not feel called on to disparage the
one party in order to justify the other, but takes up the position of one who virtually says: "To fast may be right for you, the followers of John: not to fast is equally right for my followers." How grateful to Christ's feelings it must have been that He could assume this tolerant attitude on a question in which the name of John was mixed up! For He had a deep respect for the forerunner and his work, and ever spoke of him in most generous terms of appreciation; now calling him a burning and a shining effect: "Jesus is the Bridegroom, I am but not do otherwise than fast; though whether they did well to rotest against an ungodly e bride as that in the ty jealousies in e

things new and unusual need take away the sin of the world. Own master, is another matter. Their grief was continue in that mood after the Bridegroom had come, and had been announced to them as such by their 

the principle underlying this graphic representation is, that fasting should not be a matter of fixed mechanical rule, but should have reference to the state of mind; or, more definitely, that men should fast when they are sad, or in a state of mind akin to sadness - absorbed, pre-occupied - as at some great solemn crisis in the life of an individual or a community, such as that in the history of Peter, when he was exercised on the great question of the admission of the Gentiles to the church, or such as that in the history of the Christian community at Antioch, when they were about to ordain the first missionaries to the heathen world. Christ's doctrine, clearly and distinctly indicated here, is that fasting in any other circumstances is forced, unnatural, unreal; a thing which men may be made to do as a matter of form, but which they do not with their heart and soul. "Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber to fast while the bridegroom is with them?" He asked, virtually asserting that it was impossible.

By this rule the disciples of our Lord were justified, and yet John's were not condemned. It was admitted to be natural for them to fast, as they were mournful, melancholy, unsatisfied. They had not found Him who was the Desire of all nations, the Hope of the future, the Bridegroom of the soul. They only knew that all was wrong; and in their querulous, despairing mood they took pleasure in fasting, and wearing coarse raiment, and frequenting lonely, desolate regions, living as hermits, a practical protest against an ungodly age. The message that the kingdom was at hand had indeed been preached to them also; but as proclaimed by John the announcement was awful news, not good news, and made them anxious and dispirited, not glad. Men in such a mood could not do otherwise than fast; though whether they did well to continue in that mood after the Bridegroom had come, and had been announced to them as such by their own master, is another matter. Their grief was willful, idle, causeless, when He had appeared who was to take away the sin of the world.

Jesus had yet more to say in reply to the questions addressed to Him. Things new and unusual need manifold apology, and therefore to the beautiful similitude of the children of the bride-chamber He added two other equally suggestive parables: those, viz., of the new patch on the old garment, and the new wine in old skins. The design of these parables is much the same as that of the first part of His reply, viz., to
enforce the law of congruity in relation to fasting and similar matters; that is, to show that in all voluntary religious service, where we are free to regulate our own conduct, the outward act should be made to correspond with the inward condition of mind, and that no attempt should be made to force particular acts or habits on men without reference to that correspondence. "In natural things," He meant to say, "we observe this law of congruity. No man putteth a piece of unfulled cloth on an old garment. Neither do men put new wine into old skins, and that not merely out of regard to propriety, but to avoid bad consequences. For if the rule of congruity be neglected, the patched garment will be torn by the contraction of the new cloth; and the old skin bottles will burst under the fermenting force of the new liquor, and the wine will be spilled and lost."

The old cloth and old bottles in these metaphors represent old ascetic fashions in religion; the new cloth and the new wine represent the new joyful life in Christ, not possessed by those who tenaciously adhered to the old fashions. The parables were applied primarily to Christ's own age, but they admit of application to all transition epochs; indeed, they find new illustration in almost every generation.

The force of these homely parables as arguments in vindication of departure from current usage in matters of religion may be evaded in either of two ways. First, their relevancy may be denied; i.e., it may be denied that religious beliefs are of such a nature as to demand congenial modes of expression, under penalties if the demand is not complied with. This position is usually assumed virtually or openly by the patrons of use and wont. Conservative minds have for the most part a very inadequate conception of the vital force of belief. Their own belief, their spiritual life altogether, is often a feeble thing, and they imagine tameness or pliancy must be an attribute of other men's faith also. Nothing but dire experience will convince them that they are mistaken; and when the proof comes in the shape of an irrepressible revolutionary outburst, they are stupefied with amazement. Such men learn nothing from the history of previous generations; for they persist in thinking that their own case will be an exception. Hence the vis inertiae of established custom evermore insists on adherence to what is old, till the new wine proves its power by producing an explosion needlessly wasteful, by which both wine and bottles often perish, and energies which might have quietly wrought out a beneficent reformation are perverted into blind powers of indiscriminate destruction.

Or, in the second place, the relevancy of these metaphors being admitted in general terms, it may be denied that a new wine (to borrow the form of expression from the second, more suggestive metaphor) has come into existence. This was virtually the attitude assumed by the Pharisees towards Christ. "What have you brought?" they asked Him in effect, "to your disciples, that they cannot live as others do, but must needs invent new religious habits for themselves? This new life of which you boast is either a vain pretence, or an illegitimate, spurious thing, not worthy of toleration, and the waste of which would be no matter for regret." Similar was the attitude assumed towards Luther by the opponents of the Reformation. They said to him in effect: "If this new revelation of yours, that sinners are justified by faith alone, were true, we admit that it would involve very considerable modification in religious opinion, and many alterations in religious practice. But we deny the truth of your doctrine, we regard the peace and comfort you find in it as a hallucination; and therefore we insist that you return to the time-honored faith, and then you will have no difficulty in acquiescing in the long-established practice." The same thing happens to a greater or less extent every generation; for new wine is always in course of being produced by the eternal vine of truth, demanding in some particulars of belief and practice new bottles for its preservation, and receiving for answer an order to be content with the old ones.

Observe, then, how Christ answers the honest admirers of the old wine. He concedes the point: He admits that their preference is natural. Luke represents Him as saying, in the conclusion of His reply to the
disciples of the Baptist: "No man also, having drunk old wine, desireth the new; for he saith, The old is good." This striking sentiment exhibits rare candor in stating the case of opponents, and not less rare modesty and tact in stating the case of friends. It is as if Jesus had said: "I do not wonder that you love the old wine of Jewish piety, fruit of a very ancient vintage; or even that you dote upon the very bottles which contain it, covered over with the dust and cobwebs of ages. But what then? Do men object to the existence of new wine, or refuse to have it in their possession, because the old is superior in flavor? No: they drink the old, but they carefully preserve the new, knowing that the old will get exhausted, and that the new, however harsh, will mend with age, and may ultimately be superior even in flavor to that which is in present use. Even so should you behave towards the new wine of my kingdom. You may not straightway desire it, because it is strange and novel; but surely you might deal more wisely with it than merely to spurn it, or spill and destroy it!"

Too seldom for the church's good have lovers of old ways understood Christ's wisdom, and lovers of new ways sympathized with His charity. A celebrated historian has remarked: "It must make a man wretched, if, when on the threshold of old age, he looks on the rising generation with uneasiness, and does not rather rejoice in beholding it; and yet this is very common with old men. Fabius would rather have seen Hannibal unconquered than see his own fame obscured by Scipio." There are always too many Fabii in the world, who are annoyed because things will not remain stationary, and because new ways and new men are ever rising up to take the place of the old. Not less rare, on the other hand, is Christ's charity among the advocates of progress. Those who affect freedom despise the stricter sort as fanatics and bigots, and drive on changes without regard to their scruples, and without any appreciation of the excellent qualities of the "old wine." When will young men and old men, liberals and conservatives, broad Christians and narrow, learn to bear with one another; yea, to recognize each in the other the necessary complement of his own one-sidedness?

Section II. Ritual Ablutions
Matt. xv. 1-20; Mark vii. 1-23; Luke xi. 37-41

The happy free society of Jesus, which kept bridal hightide when others fasted, was in this further respect singular in its manners, that its members took their meals unconcerned about existing usages of purification. They ate bread with "defiled, that is to say, with unwashen hands." Such was their custom, it may be assumed, from the beginning, though the practice does not appear to have become the subject of animadversion till an advanced period in the ministry of our Lord, at least in a way that gave rise to incidents worthy of notice in the Gospel records. Even at the marriage in Cana, where were set six water-pots of stone for the purposes of purifying, Christ and His disciples are to be conceived as distinguished from the other guests by a certain inattention to ritual ablutions. This we infer from the reasons by which the neglect was defended when it was impugned, which virtually take up the position that the habit condemned was not only lawful, but incumbent - a positive duty in the actual circumstances of Jewish society, and therefore, of course, a duty which could at no time be neglected by those who desired to please God rather than men. But indeed it needs no proof that one of such grave earnest spirit as Jesus could never have paid any regard to the trifling regulations about washing before eating invented by the "elders."

These regulations were no trifles in the eyes of the Pharisees; and therefore we are not surprised to learn that the indifference with which they were treated by Jesus and the twelve provoked the censure of that zealous sect of religionists on at least two occasions, adverted to in the Gospel narratives. On one of these occasions, certain Pharisees and scribes, who had followed Christ from Jerusalem to the north, seeing some of His disciples eat without previously going through the customary ceremonial ablutions, came to Him, and asked, "Why walk not Thy disciples according to the traditions of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?"Mark vii. 1, 2, 5. In the other instance Jesus Himself was the direct object of censure. "A certain Pharisee," Luke relates, "besought Jesus to dine with him; and He went in, and sat (directly) down to meat: and when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner."
Whether the host expressed his surprise by words or by looks only is not stated; but it was observed by his guest, and was made an occasion for exposing the vices of the pharisaic character. "Now," said the accused, in holy zeal for true purity, "now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you." That is to say, the offending guest charged His scandalized host, and the sect he belonged to, with sacrificing inward to outward purity, and at the same time taught the important truth that to the pure all things are pure, and showed the way by which inward real purity was to be reached, viz., by the practice of that sadly neglected virtue, humanity or charity.

The Lord's reply in the other encounter with pharisaic adversaries on the subject of washings was similar in its principle, but different in form. He told the zealots for purifications, without periphrasis, that they were guilty of the grave offence of sacrificing the commandments of God to the commandments of men - to these pet traditions of the elders. The statement was no libel, but a simple melancholy fact, though its truth does not quite lie on the surface. This we hope to show in the following remarks; but before we proceed to that task, we must force ourselves, however reluctantly, to acquire a little better acquaintance with the contemptible senilities whose neglect once seemed so heinous a sin to persons deeming themselves holy.

The aim of the rabbinical prescriptions respecting washings was not physical cleanliness, but something thought to be far higher and more sacred. Their object was to secure, not physical, but ceremonial purity; that is, to cleanse the person from such impurity as might be contracted by contact with a Gentile, or with a Jew in a ceremonially unclean state, or with an unclean animal, or with a dead body or any part thereof. To the regulations in the law of Moses respecting such uncleanness the rabbis added a vast number of additional rules on their own responsibility, in a self-willed zeal for the scrupulous observance of the Mosaic precepts. They issued their commandments, as the Church of Rome has issued hers, under the pretext that they were necessary as means towards the great end of fulfilling strictly the commandments of God.

The burdens laid on men's shoulders by the scribes on this plausible ground were, by all accounts, indeed most grievous. Not content with purifications prescribed in the law for uncleanness actually contracted, they made provision for merely possible cases. If a man did not remain at home all day, but went out to market, he must wash his hands on his return, because it was possible that he might have touched some person or thing ceremonially unclean. Great care, it appears, had also to be taken that the water used in the process of ablution was itself perfectly pure; and it was necessary even to apply the water in a particular manner to the hands, in order to secure the desired result. Without travelling beyond the sacred record, we find, in the items of information supplied by Mark respecting prevailing Jewish customs of purification, enough to show to what ridiculous lengths this momentous business of washing was carried.

"Many other things," remarks he quaintly, and not without a touch of quiet satire, "there be which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." All things, in short, used in connection with food - in cooking it, or in placing it on the table - had to be washed, not merely as people might wash them now to remove actual impurity, but to deliver them from the more serious uncleanness which they might possibly have contracted since last used, by touching some person or thing not technically clean. A kind and measure of purity, in fact, were aimed at incompatible with life in this world. The very air of heaven was not clean enough for the doting patrons of patristic traditions; for, not to speak of other more real sources of contamination, the breeze, in blowing over Gentile lands to the sacred land of Jewry, had contracted defilement which made it unfit to pass into ritualistic lungs till it had been sifted by a respirator possessing the magic power to cleanse it from its pollution.

The extravagant fanatical zeal of the Jews in these matters is illustrated in the Talmud by stories which, although belonging to a later age, may be regarded as a faithful reflection of the spirit which animated the Pharisees in the time of our Lord. Of these stories the following is a sample: "Rabbi Akiba was thrown by the Christians into prison, and Rabbi Joshua brought him every day as much water as sufficed both for washing and for drinking. But on one occasion it happened that the keeper of the prison got the water to take in, and spilled the half of it. Akiba saw that there was too little water, but nevertheless said, Give me the water for my hands. His brother rabbi replied, My master, you have not enough for drinking. But Akiba
replied, He who eats with unwashed hands perpetrates a crime that ought to be punished with death. Better for me to die of thirst than to transgress the traditions of my ancestors." Rabbi Akiba would rather break the sixth commandment, and be guilty of self-murder, than depart from the least punctilio of a fantastic ceremonialism; illustrating the truth of the declaration made by Christ in His reply to the Pharisees, which we now proceed to consider.

It was not to be expected that, in defending His disciples from the frivolous charge of neglecting the washing of hands, Jesus would show much respect for their accusers. Accordingly, we observe a marked difference between the tone of His reply in the present case, and that of His answer to John's disciples. Towards them the attitude assumed was respectfully defensive and apologetic; towards the present interrogants the attitude assumed is offensive and denunciatory. To John's disciples Jesus said, "Fasting is right for you: not to fast is equally right for my disciples." To the Pharisees He replies by a retort which at once condemns their conduct and justifies the behavior which they challenged. "Why," ask they, "do Thy disciples transgress the traditions of the elders?" "Why," asked He in answer, "do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your traditions?" as if to say, "It becomes not you to judge; you, who see the imaginary mote in the eye of a brother, have a beam in your own."

This spirited answer was something more than a mere retort or et tu quoque argument. Under an interrogative form it enunciated a great principle, viz., that the scrupulous observance of human traditions in matters of practice leads by a sure path to a corresponding negligence and unscrupulousness in reference to the eternal laws of God. Hence Christ's defense of His disciples was in substance this: "I and my followers despise and neglect those customs because we desire to keep the moral law. Those washings, indeed, may not seem seriously to conflict with the great matters of the law, but to be at worst only trifling and contemptible. But the case is not so. To treat trifles as serious matters, as matters of conscience, which ye do, is degrading and demoralizing. No man can do that without being or becoming a moral imbecile, or a hypocrite: either one who is incapable of discerning between what is vital and what not in morals, or one who finds his interest in getting trifles, such as washing of hands, or paying tithe of herbs, to be accepted as the important matters, and the truly great things of the law - justice, mercy, and faith - quietely pushed aside as if they were of no moment whatever."

The whole history of religion proves the truth of these views. A ceremony and tradition ridden time is infallibly a morally corrupt time. Hypocrites ostensibly zealots, secretly atheists; profligates taking out their revenge in licentiousness for having been compelled, by tyrannous custom or intolerant ecclesiastical authorities, to conform outwardly to practices for which they have no respect; priests of the type of the sons of Eli, gluttonous, covetous, wanton: such are the black omens of an age in which ceremonies are everything, and godliness and virtue nothing. Ritualistic practices, artificial duties of all kinds, whether originating with Jewish rabbis or with doctors of the Christian church, are utterly to be abjured. Recommended by their zealous advocates, often sincerely, as eminently fitted to promote the culture of morality and piety, they ever prove, in the long run, fatal to both. Well are they called in the Epistle to the Hebrews "dead works." They are not only dead, but death-producing; for, like all dead things, they tend to putrefy, and to breed a spiritual pestilence which sweeps thousands of souls into perdition. If they have any life at all, it is life feeding on death, the life of fungi growing on dead trees; if they have any beauty, it is the beauty of decay, of autumnal leaves sere and yellow, when the sap is descending down to the earth, and the woods are about to pass into their winter state of nakedness and desolation. Ritualism at its best is but the shortlived after-summer of the spiritual year! very fascinating it may be, but when it cometh, be sure winter is at the doors. "We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

Having brought a grave countercharge against the Pharisees, that of sacrificing morality to ceremonies, the commandments of God to the traditions of men, Jesus proceeded forthwith to substantiate it by a striking example and a Scripture quotation. The example selected was the evasion of the duties arising out of the fifth commandment, under pretence of a previous religious obligation. God said, "Honor thy father and mother," and attached to a breach of the commandment the penalty of death. The Jewish scribes said, "Call a thing Corban, and you will be exempt from all obligation to give it away, even for the purpose of assisting needy parents." The word Corban in the Mosaic law signifies a gift or offering to God, of any kind, bloody or bloodless, presented on any occasion, as in the fulfillment of a vow. In rabbinical dialect it signified a thing devoted to sacred purposes, and therefore not available for private or secular use. The
traditional doctrine on the subject of Corban was mischievous in two ways. It encouraged men to make
religion an excuse for neglecting morality, and it opened a wide door to knavery and hypocrisy. It taught
that a man might not only by a vow deny himself the use of things lawful, but that he might, by devoting
a thing to God, relieve himself of all obligation to give to others what, but for the vow, it would have been
his duty to give them. Then, according to the pernicious system of the rabbis, it was not necessary really
to give the thing to God in order to be free of obligation to give it to man. It was enough to call it Corban.
Only pronounce that magic word over anything, and forthwith it was sealed over to God, and sacred from
the use of others at least, if not from your own use. Thus self-willed zeal for the honor of God led to the
dishonoring of God, by taking His name in vain; and practices which at best were chargeable with setting
the first table of the law over against the second, proved eventually to be destructive of both tables. They
made the whole law of God of none effect by their traditions. The disannulling of the fifth commandment
was but a sample of the mischief the zealots for the commandments of men had wrought, as is implied in
Christ's concluding words, "Many such like things do ye."

The Scripture quotation made by our Lord in replying to the Pharisees was not less apt than the example
was illustrative, as pointing out their characteristic vices, hypocrisy and superstition. They were near to
God with their mouth, they honored Him with their lips, but they were far from Him in their hearts. Their
religion was all on the outside. They scrupulously washed their hands and their cups, but they took no
care to cleanse their polluted souls. Then, in the second place, their fear of God was taught by the precept
of men. Human prescriptions and traditions were their guide in religion, which they followed blindly,
heedless how far these commandments of men might lead them from the paths of righteousness and true
godliness.

The prophetic word was quick, powerful, sharp, searching, and conclusive. Nothing more was needed to
confound the Pharisees, and nothing more was said to them at this time. The sacred oracle was the fitting
conclusion of an unanswerable argument against the patrons of tradition. But Jesus had compassion on
the poor multitude who were being misled to their ruin by their blind spiritual guides, and therefore He
took the opportunity of addressing a word to those who stood around on the subject of dispute. What He
had to say to them He expressed in the terse, pointed form of a proverb: "Hear and understand: not that
which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man."
This was a riddle to be solved, a secret of wisdom to be searched out, a lesson in religion to be conned. Its
meaning, though probably understood by few at the moment, was very plain. It was simply this: "Pay
most attention to the cleansing of the heart, not, like the Pharisees, to the cleansing of the hands. When
the heart is pure, all is pure; when the heart is impure, all outward purification is vain. The defilement to
be dreaded is not that from meat ceremonially unclean, but that which springs from a carnal mind, the
defilement of evil thoughts, evil passions, evil habits."

This passing word to the bystanders became the subject of a subsequent conversation between Jesus and
His disciples, in which He took occasion to justify Himself for uttering it, and explained to them its
meaning. The Pharisees had heard the remark, and were naturally offended by it, as tending to weaken
their authority over the popular conscience. The twelve observed their displeasure, perhaps they
overheard their comments; and, fearing evil consequences, they came and informed their Master,
probably with a tone which implied a secret regret that the speaker had not been less outspoken. Be that
as it may, Jesus gave them to understand that it was not a case for forbearance, compromise, or timid,
time-serving, prudent policy; the ritualistic tendency being an evil plant which must be uprooted, no
matter with what offence to its patrons. He pleaded, in defense of His plainness of speech, His concern for
the souls of the ignorant people whose guides the Pharisees claimed to be. "Let them alone, what would
follow? Why, the blind leaders and the blindly led would fall together into the ditch. Therefore if the
leaders be so hopelessly wedded to their errors that they cannot be turned from them, let us at least try
to save their comparatively ignorant victims."

The explanation of the proverbial word spoken to the people Jesus gave to His disciples by request of
Peter. It is rudely plain and particular, because addressed to rudely ignorant hearers. It says over again,
in the strongest possible language, that to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man, because nothing
entering the mouth can come near the soul; that the defilement to be dreaded, the only defilement worth
speaking of, is that of an evil, unrenewed heart, out of which proceed thoughts, words, and acts which are
offences against the holy, pure law of God. The concluding words, "purging all meats," have, however, a
peculiar significance, if we adopt the reading approved by critics: "This He said, purging all meats." In that case we have the evangelist giving his own opinion of the effect of Christ's words, viz., that they amounted to an abrogation of the ceremonial distinction between clean and unclean. A very remarkable comment, as coming from the man to whom we are indebted for the report of the preaching of that apostle who in his disciple days called forth the declaration, and who had the vision of the sheet let down from heaven.

The evangelist having given us his comment, we may add ours. We observe that our Lord is here silent concerning the ceremonial law of Moses (to which the traditions of the elders were a supplement), and speaks only of the commandments of God, i. e. the precepts of the decalogue. The fact is significant, as showing in what direction He had come to destroy, and in what to fulfill. Ceremonialism was to be abolished, and the eternal laws of morality were to become all in all. Men's consciences were to be delivered from the burden of outward positive ordinances, that they might be free to serve the living God, by keeping His ten words, or the one royal law of love. And it is the duty of the church to stand fast in the liberty Christ designed and purchased for her, and to be jealous of all human traditions out of holy zeal for the divine will, shunning superstition on the one side, and the licentious freedom of godless libertinism on the other. Christ's true followers wish to be free, but not to do as they like; rather to do what God requires of them. So minded, they reject unceremoniously all human authority in religion, thereby separating themselves from the devotees to tradition; and at the same time, as God's servants, they reverence His word and His law, thereby putting a wide gulf between them and the lawless and disobedient, who side with movements of religious reform, not in order to get something better in the place of what is rejected, but to get rid of all moral restraint in matters human or divine.

**Section III. Sabbath Observance**

Matt. xii. 1-14; Mark ii. 23-28; Mark iii. 1-6; Luke vi. 1-11; xiii. 10-16; xiv. 1-6; John v. 1-18; ix. 13-17.

In no part of their conduct were Jesus and His disciples more frequently found fault with than in respect to their mode of observing the Sabbath. Six distinct instances of offence given or taken on this score are recorded in the Gospel history; in five of which Jesus Himself was the offender, while in the remaining instance His disciples were at least the ostensible objects of censure.

The offences of Jesus were all of one sort; His crime was, that on the Sabbath-day He wrought works of healing on the persons of men afflicted respectively with palsy, a withered hand, blindness, dropsy, and on the body of a poor woman "bowed together" by an infirmity of eighteen years' standing. The offence of the disciples, on the other hand, was that, while walking along a way which lay through a corn-field, they stepped aside and plucked some ears of grain for the purpose of satisfying their hunger. This was not theft, for it was permitted by the law of Moses; but nevertheless it was, in the judgment of the Pharisees, Sabbath-breaking. It was contrary to the command, "Thou shalt not work;" for to pluck some ears was reaping on a small scale, and to rub them was a species of threshing!

These offences, deemed so grave when committed, seem very small at this distance. All the transgressions of the Sabbath law charged against Jesus were works of mercy; and the one transgression of the disciples was for them a work of necessity, and the toleration of it was for others a duty of mercy, so that in condemning them the Pharisees had forgotten that divine word: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." It is, indeed, hard for us now to conceive how anyone could be serious in regarding such actions as breaches of the Sabbath, especially the harmless act of the twelve. There is a slight show of plausibility in the objection taken by the ruler of the synagogue to miraculous cures wrought on the seventh day: "There are six days on which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day." The remark was specially plausible with reference to the case which had provoked the ire of the dignitary of the synagogue. A woman who had been a sufferer for eighteen years might surely bear her trouble one day more, and come and be healed on the morrow! But on what pretence could the disciples be blamed as Sabbath-breakers for helping themselves to a few ears of corn? To call such an act working was too ridiculous. Men who found a Sabbatic offence here must have been very anxious to catch the disciples of Jesus in a fault.
On the outlook for faults we have no doubt the Pharisees were; and yet we must admit that, in condemning the act referred to, they were acting faithfully in accordance with their theoretical views and habitual tendencies. Their judgment on the conduct of the twelve was in keeping with their traditions concerning washings, and their tithing of mint and other garden herbs, and their straining of gnats out of their wine-cup. Their habit, in all things, was to degrade God's law by framing innumerable petty rules for its better observance, which, instead of securing that end, only made the law appear base and contemptible. In no case was this miserable micrology carried greater lengths than in connection with the fourth commandment. With a most perverse ingenuity, the most insignificant actions were brought within the scope of the prohibition against labor. Even in the case put by our Lord, that of an animal fallen into a pit, it was deemed lawful to lift it out - so at least those learned in rabbinical lore tell us - only when to leave it there till Sabbath was past would involve risk to life. When delay was not dangerous, the rule was to give the beast food sufficient for the day; and if there was water in the bottom of the pit, to place straw and bolsters below it, that it might not be drowned.

Yet with all their strictness in abstaining from everything bearing the faintest resemblance to work, the Jews were curiously lax in another direction. While scrupulously observing the law which prohibited the cooking of food on Sabbath, they did not make the holy day by any means a day of fasting. On the contrary, they considered it their duty to make the Sabbath a day of feasting and good cheer. In fact, it was at a Sabbath feast, given by a chief man among the Pharisees, that one of the Sabbath miracles was wrought for which Jesus was put upon His defense. At this feast were numerous guests, Jesus Himself being one, - invited, it is to be feared, with no friendly feelings, but rather in the hope of finding something against Him concerning the Sabbatic law. "It came to pass," we read in Luke, "as He (Jesus) went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on a Sabbath-day, that they were watching Him. They set a trap, and hoped to catch in it Him whom they hated without cause; and they got for their pains such searching, humbling table-talk as they had probably never heard before. This habit of feasting had grown to a great abuse in the days of Augustine, as appears from the description he gives of the mode in which contemporary Jews celebrated their weekly holiday. "To-day," he writes, "is the Sabbath, which the Jews at the present time keep in loose, luxurious ease, for they occupy their leisure in frivolity; and whereas God commanded a Sabbath, they spend it in those things which God forbids. Our rest is from evil works, theirs is from good works; for it is better to plough than to dance. They rest from good work, they rest not from idle work."

From the folly and pedantry of scribes and Pharisees we gladly turn to the wisdom of Jesus, as revealed in the animated, deep, and yet sublimely simple replies made by Him to the various charges of Sabbath-breaking brought against Himself and His disciples. Before considering these replies in detail, we premise one general remark concerning them all. In none of these apologies or defenses does Jesus call in question the obligation of the Sabbath law. On that point He had no quarrel with His accusers. His argument in this instance is entirely different from the line of defense adopted in reference to fasting and purifications. In regard to fasting, the position He took up was: Fasting is a voluntary matter, and men may fast or not as they are disposed. In regard to purification His position was: Ceremonial ablations at best are of secondary moment, being mere types of inward purity, and as practiced now, lead inevitably to the utter ignoring of spiritual purity, and therefore must be neglected by all who are concerned for the great interests of morality. But in reference to the alleged breaches of the Sabbath, the position Jesus took up was this: These acts which you condemn are not transgressions of the law, rightly apprehended, in its spirit and principle. The importance of the law was conceded, but the pharisaic interpretation of its meaning was rejected. An appeal was made from their pedantic code of regulations about Sabbath observance to the grand design and principle of the law; and the right was asserted to examine all rules in the light of the principle, and to reject or disregard those in which the principle had either been mistakenly applied, or, as was for the most part the case with the Pharisees, lost sight of altogether.

The key to all Christ's teaching on the Sabbath, therefore, lies in His conception of the original design of that divine institution. This conception we find expressed with epigrammatic point and conciseness, in contrast to the pharisaic idea of the Sabbath, in words uttered by Jesus on the occasion when He was defending His disciples. "The Sabbath," said He, "was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." In other words, His doctrine was this: The Sabbath was meant to be a boon to man, not a burden; it was not a day taken from man by God in an exacting spirit, but a day given by God in mercy to man - God's
holiday to His subjects; all legislation enforcing its observance having for its end to insure that all should really get the benefit of the boon - that no man should rob himself, and still less his fellow-creatures, of the gracious boon.

This difference between Christ's mode of regarding the Sabbath and the pharisaic involves of necessity a corresponding difference in the spirit and the details of its observance. Take Christ's view, and your principle becomes: That is the best way of observing the Sabbath which is most conducive to man's physical and spiritual well-being - in other words, which is best for his body and for his soul; and in the light of this principle, you will keep the holy day in a spirit of intelligent joy and thankfulness to God theCreator for His gracious consideration towards His creatures. Take the pharisaic view, and your principle of observance becomes: He best keeps the Sabbath who goes greatest lengths in mere abstinence from any thing that can be construed into labor, irrespective of the effect of this abstinence either on his own well-being or on that of others. In short, we land in the silly, senseless minuteness of a rabbinical legislation, which sees in such an act as that of the disciples plucking and rubbing the ears of corn, or that of the healed man who carried his bed home on his shoulders, or that of one who should walk a greater distance than two thousand cubits, or three-fourths of a mile, on a Sabbath, a heinous offence against the fourth commandment and its Author.

A Sabbath observance regulated by the principle that the institution was made for man's good, obviously involves two great general uses - rest for the body, and worship as the solace of the spirit. We should rest from servile labor on the divinely given holiday, and we should lift up our hearts in devout thought to Him who made all things at the first, who "worketh hitherto," preserving the creation in being and well-being, and whose tender compassion towards sinful men is great, passing knowledge. These things are both necessary to man's true good, and therefore must enter as essential elements of a worthy Sabbath observance.

But, on the other hand, the Sabbath being made for man, the two general requirements of rest and worship may not be so pressed that they shall become hostile to man's well-being, and in effect self-destructive, or mutually destructive. The rule, "Thou shalt rest," must not be so applied as to exclude all action and all work; for absolute inaction is not rest, and entire abstinence from work of every description would often-times be detrimental both to private and to public well-being. Room must be left for acts of "necessity and mercy;" and too peremptory as well as too minute legislation as to what are and what are not acts of either description must be avoided, as these may vary for different persons, times, and circumstances, and men may honestly differ in opinion in such details who are perfectly loyal to the great broad principles of Sabbath sanctification. In like manner, the rule, "Thou shalt worship," must not be so enforced as to make religious duties irksome and burdensome - a mere mechanical, legal service; or so as to involve the sacrifice of the other great practical end of the Sabbath, viz., rest to the animal nature of man. Nor may men dictate to each other as to the means of worship any more than as to the amount; for one may find helps to devotion in means which to another would prove a hindrance and a distraction.

It was only in regard to cessation from work that pharisaic legislation and practice anent Sabbath observance were carried to superstitious and vexatious excess. The Sabbatic mania was a monomania, those affected thereby being mad simply on one point, the stringent enforcement of rest. Hence the peculiar character of all the charges brought against Christ and His disciples, and also of His replies. The offences committed were all works deemed unlawful; and the defenses all went to show that the works done were not contrary to law when the law was interpreted in the light of the principle that the Sabbath was made for man. They were works of necessity or of mercy, and therefore lawful on the Sabbath-day.

Jesus drew His proofs of this position from three sources: Scripture history, the everyday practice of the Pharisees themselves, and the providence of God. In defense of His disciples, He referred to the case of David eating the shewbread when he fled to the house of God from the court of King Saul, and to the constant practice of the priests in doing work for the service of the temple on Sabbath-days, such as offering double burnt-offerings, and removing the stale shewbread from the holy place, and replacing it by hot loaves. David's case proved the general principle that necessity has no law, hunger justifying his act, as it should also have justified the act of the disciples even in pharisaic eyes. The practice of the priests showed that work merely as work is not contrary to the law of the Sabbath, some works being not only lawful, but incumbent on that day.
The argument drawn by Jesus from common practice was well fitted to silence captious critics, and to suggest the principle by which His own conduct could be defended. It was to this effect: "You would lift an ox or an ass out of a pit on Sabbath, would you not? Why? To save life? Why then should not I heal a sick person for the same reason? Or is a beast's life of more importance than that of a human being? Or again: Would you scruple to loose you ox or your ass from the stall on the day of rest, and lead him away to watering? If not, why object to me when on the Sabbath-day I release a poor human victim from a bondage of eighteen years' duration, that she may draw water out of the wells of salvation?" The argument is irresistible, the conclusion inevitable; that it is lawful, dutiful, most seasonable, to do well on the Sabbath-day. How blind they must have been to whom so obvious a proposition needed to be proved! how oblivious of the fact that love is the foundation and fulfillment of all law, and that therefore no particular precept could ever be meant to suspend the operation of that divine principle!

The argument from providence used by Jesus on another occasion was designed to serve the same purpose with the others, viz., to show the lawfulness of certain kinds of work on the day of rest. "My Father worketh even until now," said He to His accusers, "and I work." The Son claimed the right to work because and as the Father worked on all days of the week. The Father worked incessantly for beneficent, conservative ends, most holily, wisely, and powerfully preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions, keeping the planets in their orbits, causing the sun to rise and shine, and the winds to circulate in their courses, and the tides to ebb and flow on the seventh day as on all the other six. So Jesus Christ, the son of God, claimed the right to work, and did work - saving, restoring, healing; as far as might be bringing fallen nature back to its pristine state, when God the Creator pronounced all things good, and rested, satisfied with the world He had brought into being. Such works of beneficence, by the doctrine of Christ, may always be done on the Sabbath-day: works of humanity, like those of the physician, or of the teacher of neglected children, or of the philanthropist going his rounds among the poor and needy, or of the Christian minister preaching the gospel of peace, and many others, of which men filled with love will readily bethink themselves, but whereof too many, in the coldness of their heart, do not so much as dream. Against such works there is no law save that of churlish, ungenial, pharisaic custom.

One other saying our Lord uttered on the present subject, which carries great weight for Christians, though it can have had no apologetic value in the opinion of the Pharisees, but must rather have appeared an aggravation of the offence it was meant to excuse. We refer to the word, "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day," uttered by Jesus on the occasion when He defended His disciples against the charge of Sabbath-breaking. This statement, remarkable, like the claim made at the same time to be greater than the temple, as an assertion of superhuman dignity on the part of the meek and lowly One, was not meant as a pretension to the right to break the law of rest without cause, or to abrogate it altogether. This is evident from Mark's account, where the words come in as an inference from the proposition that the Sabbath was made for man, which could not logically be made the foundation for a repeal of the statute, seeing it is the most powerful argument for the perpetuity of the weekly rest. Had the Sabbath been a mere burdensome restriction imposed on men, we should have expected its abrogation from Him who came to redeem men from all sorts of bondage. But was the Sabbath made for man - for man's good? Then should we expect Christ's function to be not that of a repealer, but that of a universal philanthropic legislator, making what had previously been the peculiar privilege of Israel a common blessing to all mankind. For the Father sent His Son into the world to deliver men indeed from the yoke of ordinances, but not to cancel any of His gifts, which are all "without repentance," and, once given, can never be withdrawn.

What, then, does the lordship of Christ over the Sabbath signify? Simply this: that an institution which is of the nature of a boon to man properly falls under the control of Him who is the King of grace and the administrator of divine mercy. He is the best judge how such an institution should be observed; and He has a right to see that it shall not be perverted from a boon into a burden, and so put in antagonism to the royal imperial law of love. The Son of man hath authority to cancel all regulations tending in this direction emanating from men, and even all by-laws of the Mosaic code savoring of legal rigor, and tending to veil the beneficent design of the fourth commandment of the decalogue. He may, in the exercise of His mediatorial prerogative, give the old institution a new name, alter the day of its
celebration, so as to invest it with distinctively Christian associations congenial to the hearts of believers, and make it in all the details of its observance subservient to the great ends of His incarnation.

To such effect did the Son of man claim to be Lord of the Sabbath-day; and His claim, so understood, was acknowledged by the church, when, following the traces of the apostolic usage, she changed the weekly rest from the seventh day to the first, that it might commemorate the joyful event of the resurrection of the Saviour, which lay nearer the heart of a believer than the old event of the creation, and called the first day by His name, the Lord's day. That claim all Christians acknowledge who, looking at the day in the light of God's original design, and of Christ's teaching, example and work, so observe it as to keep the golden mean between the two extremes of pharisaic rigor and of Sadducaic laxity: recognizing on the one hand the beneficent ends served by the institution, and doing their utmost to secure that these ends shall be fully realized, and, on the other hand, avoiding the petty scrupulosity of a cheerless legalism, which causes many, especially among the young, to stumble at the law as a statute of unreasonable arbitrary restriction; avoiding also the bad pharisaic habit of indulging in over-confident judgments on difficult points of detail, and on the conduct of those who in such points do not think and act as they do themselves.

We may not close this chapter, in which we have been studying the lessons in free yet holy living given by our Lord to His disciples, without adding a reflection applicable to all the three. By these lessons the twelve were taught a virtue very necessary for the apostles of a religion in many respects new - the power to bear isolation and its consequences. When Peter and John appeared before the Sanhedrim, the rulers marveled at their boldness, till they recognized in them companions of Jesus the Nazarene. They seem to have imagined that His followers were fit for anything requiring audacity. They were right. The apostles had strong nerves, and were not easily daunted; and the lessons which we have been considering help us to understand whence they got their rare moral courage. They had been accustomed for years to stand alone, and to disregard the fashion of the world, till at length they could do what was right, heedless of human criticism, without effort, almost without thought.
First attempts at Evangelism

Section I. The Mission

The twelve are now to come before us as active agents in advancing the kingdom of God. Having been for some time in Christ's company, witnessing His miraculous works, hearing His doctrine concerning the kingdom, and learning how to pray and how to live, they were at length sent forth to evangelize the towns and villages of their native province, and to heal the sick in their Master's name, and by His power. This mission of the disciples as evangelists or miniature apostles was partly, without doubt, an educational experiment for their own benefit; but its direct design was to meet the spiritual necessities of the people, whose neglected condition lay heavy on Christ's heart. The compassionate Son of man, in the course of His wanderings, had observed how the masses of the population were, like a shepherdless flock of sheep, scattered and torn, and it was His desire that all should know that a good Shepherd had come to care for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The multitudes were ready enough to welcome the good news; the difficulty was to meet the pressing demand of the hour. The harvest, the grain, ready for reaping, was plenteous, but the laborers were few.

In connection with this mission four things call for special notice: The sphere assigned for the work, the nature of the work, the instructions for carrying it on, the results of the mission, and the return of the missionaries. These points we shall consider in their order, except that, for convenience, we shall reserve Christ's instructions to His disciples for the last place, and give them a section to themselves.

I. The sphere of the mission, as described in general terms, was the whole land of Israel. "Go," said Jesus to the twelve, "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and further on, in Matthew's narrative, He speaks to them as if the plan of the mission involved a visit to all the cities of Israel. Practically, however, the operations of the disciples seem to have been restricted to their native province of Galilee, and even within its narrow limits to have been carried on rather among the villages and hamlets, than in considerable towns or cities like Tiberias. The former of these statements is supported by the fact that the doings of the disciples attracted the attention of Herod the tetrarch of Galilee, which implies that they took place in his neighborhood; while the latter is proved by the words of the third evangelist in giving a summary account of the mission: "They departed and went through the villages (towns, Eng. Ver.), preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere."

While the apprentice missionaries were permitted by their instructions to go to any of the lost sheep of Israel, to all if practicable, they were expressly forbidden to extend their labors beyond these limits. They were not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor enter into any city or town of the Samaritans. This prohibition arose in part out of the general plan which Christ had formed for founding the kingdom of God on the earth. His ultimate aim was the conquest of the world; but in order to do that, He deemed it necessary first to secure a strong base of operations in the Holy Land and among the chosen people. Therefore He ever regarded Himself personally as a Messenger of God to the Jewish nation, seriously giving that as a reason why He should not work among the heathen, and departing occasionally from the rule only in order to supply in His own ministry prophetic intimations of an approaching time when Jew and Samaritan and Gentile should be united on equal terms in one divine commonwealth. But the principal reason of the prohibition lay in the present spiritual condition of the disciples themselves. The time would come when Jesus might say to His chosen ones, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" but that time was not yet. The twelve, at the period of their first trial mission, were not fit to preach the gospel, or to do good works, either among Samaritans or Gentiles. Their hearts were too narrow, their prejudices too strong: there was too much of the Jew, too little of the Christian, in their character. For the catholic work of the apostleship they needed a new divine illumination and a copious baptism with the benignant spirit of love. Suppose these raw evangelists had gone into a Samaritan village, what would have happened? In all probability they would have been drawn into disputes on the religious differences between Samaritans and Jews, in which, of course, they would have lost their temper; so that, instead of seeking the salvation of the people among whom they had come, they would
rather be in a mood to call down fire from heaven to consume them, as they actually proposed to do at a
subsequent period.

2. The work intrusted to the twelve was in one department very extensive, and in the other very limited. They were endowed with unlimited powers of healing, but their commission was very restricted so far as preaching was concerned. In regard to the former their instructions were: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give;" in regard to the latter: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The commission in the one case seems too wide, in the other too narrow; but in both the wisdom of Jesus is apparent to a deeper consideration. In so far as miraculous works were concerned, there was no need for restriction, unless it were to avoid the risk of producing elation and vanity in those who wielded such wonderful power - a risk which was certainly not imaginary, but which could be remedied when it assumed tangible form. All the miracles wrought by the twelve were really wrought by Jesus Himself, their sole function consisting in making a believing use of His name. This seems to have been perfectly understood by all; for the works done by the apostles did not lead the people of Galilee to wonder who they were, but only who and what He was in whose name all these things were done. Therefore, it being Christ's will that such miracles should be wrought through the instrumentality of His disciples, it was just as easy for them to do the greatest works as to do the smaller; if, indeed, there be any sense in speaking of degrees of difficulty in connection with miracles, which is more than doubtful.

As regards the preaching, on the other hand, there was not only reason, but necessity, for restriction. The disciples could do no more than proclaim the fact that the kingdom was at hand, and bid men everywhere repent, by way of a preparation for its advent. This was really all they knew themselves. They did not as yet understand, in the least degree, the doctrine of the cross; they did not even know the nature of the kingdom. They had, indeed, heard their Master discourse profoundly thereon, but they had not comprehended his words. Their ideas respecting the coming kingdom were nearly as crude and carnal as were those of other Jews, who looked for the restoration of Israel's political independence and temporal prosperity as in the glorious days of old. In one point only were they in advance of current notions. They had learned from John and from Jesus that repentance was necessary in order to citizenship in this kingdom. In all other respects they and their hearers were pretty much on a level. Far from wondering, therefore, that the preaching programme of the disciples was so limited, we are rather tempted to wonder how Christ could trust them to open their mouths at all, even on the one topic of the kingdom. Was there not a danger that men with such crude ideas might foster delusive hopes, and give rise to political excitement? Nay, may we not discover actual traces of such excitement in the notice taken of their movements at Herod's court, and in the proposal of the multitude not long after, to take Jesus by force to make Him a king? Doubtless there was danger in this direction; and therefore, while He could not, to avoid it, leave the poor perishing people uncared for, Jesus took all possible precautions to obviate mischief as far as might be, by in effect prohibiting His messengers from entering into detail on the subject of the kingdom, and by putting a sound form of words into their mouths. They were instructed to announce the kingdom as a kingdom of heaven; a thing which some might deem a lovely vision, but which all worldly men would guess to be quite another thing from what they desired. A kingdom of heaven! What was that to them? What they wanted was a kingdom of earth, in which they might live peaceably and happily under just government, and, above all, with plenty to eat and drink. A kingdom of heaven! That was only for such as had no earthly hope; a refuge from despair, a melancholy consolation in absence of any better comfort. Even so, ye worldlings! Only for such as ye deem miserable was the message meant. To the poor the kingdom was to be preached. To the laboring and heavy laden was the invitation "Come to me" addressed, and the promise of rest made; of rest from ambition and discontent, and scheming, carking care, in the blessed hope of the supernal and the eternal.

3. The impression produced by the labors of the twelve seems to have been very considerable. The fame of their doings, as already remarked, reached the ears of Herod, and great crowds appear to have accompanied them as they moved from place to place. On their return, e.g. from the mission to rejoin the company of their Master, they were thronged by an eager, admiring multitude who had witnessed or experienced the benefits of their work, so that it was necessary for them to withdraw into a desert place in order to obtain a quiet interval of rest. "There were many," the second evangelist informs us, "coming and
going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed unto a desert place by ship privately." Even in the desert solitudes on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee they failed to secure the desired privacy. "The people saw them departing, and ran afoot thither (round the end of the sea) out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto Him."

In quality the results of the mission appear to have been much less satisfactory than in their extent. The religious impressions produced seem to have been in a great measure superficial and evanescent. There were many blossoms, so to speak, on the apple-tree in the springtide of this Galilean "revival;" but only a comparatively small number of them set in fruit, while of these a still smaller number ever reached the stage of ripe fruit. This we learn from what took place shortly after, in connection with Christ's discourse on the bread of life, in the synagogue of Capernaum. Then the same men who, after the miraculous feeding in the desert, would have made Christ a king, deserted Him in a body, scandalized by His mysterious doctrine; and those who did this were, for the most part, just the men who had listened to the twelve while they preached repentance.

Such an issue to a benevolent undertaking must have been deeply disappointing to the heart of Jesus. Yet it is remarkable that the comparative abortiveness of the first evangelistic movement did not prevent Him from repeating the experiment some time after on a still more extensive scale. "After these things," writes the third evangelist, "the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face, into every city and place whither He Himself would come." The Tübingen school of critics, indeed, as we have already indicated, assure us that this mission had no existence, being a pure invention of the third evangelist, intended to thrust into the shade the mission of the twelve, and to exhibit the Christian religion as a religion for humanity, represented by the Samaritans as the recipients, and by the seventy as the preachers of the faith, the number corresponding to the number of the nations. The theory is not devoid of plausibility, and it must be owned the history of this mission is very obscure; but the assumption of invention is violent, and we may safely take for granted that Luke's narrative rests on an authentic tradition. The motive of this second mission was the same as in the case of the first, as were also the instructions to the missionaries. Jesus still felt deep compassion for the perishing multitude, and hoping against hope, made a new attempt to save the lost sheep. He would have all men called at least to the fellowship of the kingdom, even though few should be chosen to it. And when the immediate results were promising He was gratified, albeit knowing, from past experience as well as by divine insight, that the faith and repentance of many were only too likely to be evanescent as the early dew. When the seventy returned from their mission, and reported their great success, He hailed it as an omen of the downfall of Satan's kingdom, and, rejoicing in spirit, gave thanks to the Supreme Ruler in heaven and earth, His Father, that while the things of the kingdom were hid from the wise and the prudent, the people of intelligence and discretion, they were by His grace revealed unto babes - the rude, the poor, the ignorant.

The reference in the thanksgiving prayer of Jesus to the "wise and prudent" suggests the thought that these evangelistic efforts were regarded with disfavor by the refined, fastidious classes of Jewish religious society. This is in itself probable. There are always men in the church, intelligent, wise, and even good, to whom popular religious movements are distasteful. The noise, the excitement, the extravagances, the delusions, the misdirection of zeal, the rudeness of the agents, the instability of the converts - all these things offend them. The same class of minds would have taken offence at the evangelistic work of the twelve and the seventy, for undoubtedly it was accompanied with the same drawbacks. The agents were ignorant; they had few ideas in their heads; they understand little of divine truth; their sole qualification was, that they were earnest and could preach repentance well. Doubtless, also, there was plenty of noise and excitement among the multitudes who heard them preach; and we certainly know that their zeal was both ill-informed and short-lived. These things, in fact, are standing features of all popular movements. Jonathan Edwards, speaking with reference to the "revival" of religion which took place in America in his day, says truly: "A great deal of noise and tumult, confusion and uproar, darkness mixed with light, and evil with good, is always to be expected in the beginning of something very glorious in the state of things in human society or the church of God. After nature has long been shut up in a cold, dead state, when the sun returns in the spring, there is, together with the increase of the light and heat of the sun, very tempestuous weather before all is settled, calm, and serene, and all nature rejoices in its bloom and beauty."
None of the "wise and prudent" knew half so well as Jesus what evil would be mixed with the good in the work of the kingdom. But He was not so easily offended as they. The Friend of sinners was ever like Himself. He sympathized with the multitude, and could not, like the Pharisees, contentedly resign them to a permanent condition of ignorance and depravity. He rejoiced greatly over even one lost sheep restored; and He was, one might say overjoyed, when not one, but a whole flock, even began to return to the fold. It pleased Him to see men repenting even for a season, and pressing into the kingdom even rudely and violently; for His love was strong, and where strong love is, even wisdom and refinement will not be fastidious.

Before passing from this topic, let us observe that there is another class of Christians, quite distinct from the wise and prudent, in whose eyes such evangelistic labors as those of the twelve stand in no need of vindication. Their tendency, on the contrary, is to regard such labors as the whole work of the kingdom. Revival of religion among the neglected masses is for them the sum of all good-doing. Of the more still, less observable work of instruction going on in the church they take no account. Where there is no obvious excitement, the church in their view is dead, and her ministry inefficient. Such need to be reminded that there were two religious movements going on in the days of the Lord Jesus. One consisted in rousing the mass out of the stupor of indifference; the other consisted in the careful, exact training of men already in earnest, in the principles and truths of the divine kingdom. Of the one movement the disciples, that is, both the twelve and the seventy, were the agents; of the other movement they were the subjects. And the latter movement, though less noticeable, and much more limited in extent, was by far more important than the former; for it was destined to bring forth fruit that should remain - to tell not merely on the present time, but on the whole history of the world. The deep truths which the great Teacher was now quietly and unobservedly, as in the dark, instilling into the minds of a select band, the recipients of His confidential teaching were to speak in the broad daylight ere long; and the sound of their voice would not stop till it had gone through all the earth. There would have been a poor outlook for the kingdom of heaven if Christ had neglected this work, and given Himself up entirely to vague evangelism among the masses.

4. When the twelve had finished their mission, they returned and told their Master all that they had done and taught. Of their report, or of His remarks thereon, no details are recorded. Such details we do find, however, in connection with the later mission of the seventy. "The seventy," we read, "returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name." The same evangelist from whom these words are quoted, informs us that, after congratulating the disciples on their success, and expressing His own satisfaction with the facts reported, Jesus spoke to them the warning word: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." It was a timely caution against elation and vanity. It is very probable that a similar word of caution was addressed to the twelve also after their return. Such a word would certainly not have been unseasonable in their case. They had been engaged in the same exciting work, they had wielded the same miraculous powers, they had been equally successful, they were equally immature in character, and therefore it was equally difficult for them to bear success. It is most likely, therefore, that when Jesus said to them on their return, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile," He was not caring for their bodies alone, but was prudently seeking to provide repose for their heated minds as well as for their jaded frames.

The admonition to the seventy is indeed a word in season to all who are very zealous in the work of evangelism, especially such as are crude in knowledge and grace. It hints at the possibility of their own spiritual health being injured by their very zeal in seeking the salvation of others. This may happen in many ways. Success may make the evangelists vain, and they may begin to sacrifice unto their own net. They may fall under the dominion of the devil through their very joy that he is subject unto them. They may despise those who have been less successful, or denounce them as deficient in zeal. The eminent American divine already quoted gives a lamentable account of the pride, presumption, arrogance, conceit, and censoriousness which characterized many of the more active promoters of religious revival in his day. Once more, they may fall into carnal security respecting their own spiritual state, deeming it impossible that anything can go wrong with those who are so devoted, and whom God has so greatly owned. An obvious as well as dangerous mistake; for doubtless Judas took part in this Galilean mission, and, for aught we know to the contrary, was as successful as his fellow-disciples in casting out devils. Graceless
men may for a season be employed as agents in promoting the work of grace in the hearts of others. Usefulness does not necessarily imply goodness, according to the teaching of Christ Himself. "Many," He declares in the Sermon on the Mount, "will say unto me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by Thy name, and by Thy name cast out devils, and by Thy name do many wonderful works?" And mark the answer which He says He will give such. It is not: I call in question the correctness of your statement - that is tacitly admitted; it is: "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

These solemn words suggest the need of watchfulness and self-examination; but they are not designed to discourage or countenance zeal. We must not interpret them as if they meant, "Never mind doing good, only be good;" or, "Care not for the salvation of others: look to your own salvation." Jesus Christ did not teach a listless or a selfish religion. He inculcated on His disciples a large-hearted generous concern for the spiritual well-being of men. To foster such a spirit He sent the twelve on this trial mission, even when they were comparatively unfitted for the work, and notwithstanding the risk of spiritual harm to which it exposed them. At all hazards He would have His apostles be filled with enthusiasm for the advancement of the kingdom; only taking due care, when the vices to which young enthusiasts are liable began to appear, to check them by a warning word and a timely retreat into solitude.

**Section II. The Instructions**

The instructions given by Jesus to the twelve in sending them forth on their first mission, are obviously divisible into two parts. The first, shorter part, common to the narratives of all the three first evangelists, relates to the present; the second and much the longer part, peculiar to Matthew's narrative, relates mainly to the distant future. In the former, Christ tells His disciples what to do now in their apprentice apostleship; in the latter, what they must do and endure when they have become apostles on the great scale, preaching the gospel, not to Jews only, but to all nations.

It has been doubted whether the discourse included in the second part of the apostolic or missionary instructions, as given by Matthew, was really uttered by Jesus on this occasion. Stress has been laid by those who take the negative view of this question on the facts that the first evangelist alone gives the discourse in connection with the trial mission, and that the larger portion of its contents are given by the other evangelists in other connections. Reference has also been made, in support of this view, to the statement made by Jesus to His disciples, in His farewell address to them before the crucifixion, that He had not till then spoken to them of coming persecutions, and for this reason, that while He was with them it was unnecessary. Finally, it has been deemed unlikely that Jesus would frighten His inexperienced disciples by alluding to dangers not imminent at the time of their mission in Galilee. These doubts, in view of the topical method of grouping his materials undoubtedly followed by Matthew, are legitimate, but they are not conclusive. It was natural that Jesus should signalize the first missionary enterprise of the twelve chosen men by some such discourse as Matthew records, setting forth the duties, perils, encouragements, and rewards of the apostolic vocation. It was His way, on solemn occasions, to speak as a prophet who in the present saw the future, and from small beginnings looked forward to great ultimate issues. And this Galilean mission, though humble and limited compared with the great undertaking of after years, was really a solemn event. It was the beginning of that vast work for which the twelve had been chosen, which embraced the world in its scope, and aimed at setting up on earth the kingdom of God. If the Sermon on the Mount was appropriately delivered on the occasion when the apostolic company was formed, this discourse on the apostolic vocation was not less appropriate when the members of that company first put their hands to the work unto which they had been called. Even the allusions to distant dangers contained in the discourse appear on reflection natural and seasonable, and calculated to re-assure rather than to frighten the disciples. It must be remembered that the execution of the Baptist had recently occurred, and that the twelve were about to commence their missionary labors within the dominions of the tyrant by whose command the barbarous murder had been committed. Doubtless these humble men who were to take up and repeat the Baptist's message, "Repent," ran no present risk of his fate; but it was natural that they should fear, and it was also natural that their Master should think of their future when such fears would be anything but imaginary; and on both accounts it was seasonable to say to them in effect: Dangers are coming, but fear not.
Such, in substance, is the burden of the second part of Christ's instructions to the twelve. Of the first part,
on the other hand, the burden is, Care not. These two words, Care not, Fear not, are the soul and marrow
of all that was said by way of prelude to the first missionary enterprise, and we may add, to all which
might follow. For here Jesus speaks to all ages and to all times, telling the Church in what spirit all her
missionary enterprises must be undertaken and carried on, that they may have His blessing.

I. The duty of entering on their mission without carefulness, relying on Providence for the necessaries of
life, was inculcated on the twelve by their Master in very strong and lively terms. They were instructed to
procure nothing for the journey, but just to go as they were. They must provide neither gold nor silver,
nor even so much as brass coin in their purses, no scrip or wallet to carry food, no change of raiment; not
even sandals for their feet, or a staff for their hands. If they had the last-mentioned articles, good and
well; if not, they could do without them. They might go on their errand of love barefooted, and without
the aid even of a staff to help them on their weary way, having their feet shod only with the preparation
of the gospel of peace, and leaning their weight upon God's words of promise, "As thy days, so shall thy
strength be."

In these directions for the way, it is the spirit, and not the mere letter, which is of intrinsic and permanent
value. The truth of this statement is evident from the very variations of the evangelists in reporting
Christ's words. One, for example (Mark), makes Him say to His disciples in effect: "If you have a staff in
your hand, and sandals on your feet, and one coat on your back, let that suffice." Another (Matthew)
represents Jesus as saying: "Provide nothing for this journey, neither coat, shoes, nor staff." In spirit the
two versions come to the same thing; but if we insist on the letter of the injunctions with legal strictness,
there is an obvious contradiction between them. What Jesus meant to say, in whatever form of language
He expressed Himself, was this: Go at once, and go as you are, and trouble not yourselves about food or
raiment, or any bodily want; trust in God for these. His instructions proceeded on the principle of division
of labor, assigning to the servants of the kingdom military duty, and to God the commissariat department.

So understood, the words of our Lord are of permanent validity, and to be kept in mind by all who would
serve Him in His kingdom. And though the circumstances of the church have greatly altered since these
words were first spoken, they have not been lost sight of. Many a minister and missionary has obeyed
those instructions almost in their letter, and many more have kept them in their spirit. Nay, has not every
poor student fulfilled these injunctions, who has gone forth from the humble roof of his parents to be
trained for the ministry of the gospel, without money in his pocket either to buy food or to pay fees, only
with simple faith and youthful hope in his heart, knowing as little how he is to find his way to the pastoral
office, as Abraham knew how to find his way to the promised land when he left his native abode, but, with
Abraham, trusting that He who said to him, "Leave thy father's house," will be his guide, his shield, and
his provider? And if those who thus started on their career do at length arrive at a wealthy place, in which
their wants are abundantly supplied, what is that but an endorsement by Providence of the law enunciated
by the Master: "The workman is worthy of his meat"?

The directions given to the twelve with respect to temporalities, in connection with their first mission,
were meant to be an education for their future work. On entering on the duties of the apostolate, they
should have to live literally by faith, and Jesus mercifully sought to inure them to the habit while He was
with them on earth. Therefore, in sending them out to preach in Galilee, He said to them in effect: "Go
and learn to seek the kingdom of God with a single heart, unconcerned about food or raiment; for till ye
can do that ye are not fit to be my apostles." They had indeed been learning to do that ever since they
began to follow Him; for those who belonged to His company literally lived from day to day, taking no
thought for the morrow. But there was a difference between their past state and that on which they were
about to enter. Hitherto Jesus had been with them; now they were to be left for a season to themselves.
Hitherto they had been like young children in a family under the care of their parents, or like young birds
in a nest sheltered by their mother's wing, and needing only to open their mouths wide in order to get
them filled; now they were to become like boys leaving their father's house to serve an apprenticeship, or
like fledglings leaving the warm nest in which they were nursed, to exercise their wings and seek food for
themselves.
While requiring His disciples to walk by faith, Jesus gave their faith something to rest on, by encouraging them to hope that what they provided not for themselves God would provide for them through the instrumentality of His people. "Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence." He took for granted, we observe, that there would always be found at every place at least one good man with a warm heart, who would welcome the messengers of the kingdom to his house and table for the pure love of God and of the truth. Surely no unreasonable assumption! It were a wretched hamlet, not to say town, that had not a single worthy person in it. Even wicked Sodom had a Lot within its walls who could entertain angels unawares.

To insure good treatment of His servants in all ages wherever the gospel might be preached, Jesus made it known that He put a high premium on all acts of kindness done towards them. This advertisement we find at the close of the address delivered to the twelve at this time: "He that receiveth you," He said to them, "receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." And then, with increased pathos and solemnity, He added: "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." How easy to go forth into Galilee, yea, into all the world, serving such a sympathetic Master on such terms!

But while thus encouraging the young evangelists, Jesus did not allow them to go away with the idea that all things would be pleasant in their experience. He gave them to understand that they should be ill received as well as kindly received. They should meet with churls who would refuse them hospitality, and with stupid, careless people who would reject their message; but even in such cases, He assured them, they should not be without consolation. If their peaceful salutation were not reciprocated, they should at all events get the benefit of their own spirit of good-will: their peace would return to themselves. If their words were not welcomed by any to whom they preached, they should at least be free from blame; they might shake off the dust from their feet, and say: "Your blood be upon your own heads, we are clean; we leave you to your doom, and go elsewhere." Solemn words, not to be uttered, as they are too apt to be, especially by young and inexperienced disciples, in pride, impatience, or anger, but humbly, calmly, deliberatively, as a part of God's message to men. When uttered in any other spirit, it is a sign that the preacher has been as much to blame as the hearer for the rejection of his message. Few have any right to utter such words at all; for it requires rare preaching indeed to make the fault of unbelieving hearers so great that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for them. But such preaching has been. Christ's own preaching was such, and hence the fearful doom He pronounced on those who rejected His words. Such also the preaching of the apostles was to be; and therefore to uphold their authority, Jesus solemnly declared that the penalty for despising their word would be not less than for neglecting His own.

2. The remaining instructions, referring to the future rather than to the present, while much more copious, do not call for lengthened explanation. The burden of them all, as we have said, is "Fear not." This exhortation, like the refrain of a song, is repeated again and again in the course of the address. From that fact the twelve might have inferred that their future lot was to be of a kind fitted to inspire fear. But Jesus did not leave them to learn this by inference; He told them of it plainly. "Behold," He said, with the whole history of the church in His view, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." Then He went on to explain in detail, and with appalling vividness, the various forms of danger which awaited the messengers of truth; how they should be delivered up to councils, scourged in synagogues, brought before governors and kings (like Felix, Festus, Herod), and hated of all for His name's sake. He explained to them, at the same time, that this strange treatment was inevitable in the nature of things, being the necessary consequence of divine truth acting in the world like a chemical solvent, and separating men into parties, according to the spirit which ruled in them. The truth would divide even members of the same family, and make them bitterly hostile to each other; and however deplorable the result might be, it was one for which there was no remedy. Offences must come: "Think not," He said to His disciples, horrified at the dark picture, and perhaps secretly hoping that their Master had painted it in too sombre colors, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."
Amid such dangers two virtues are specially needful - caution and fidelity; the one, that God's servants may not be cut off prematurely or unnecessarily, the other, that while they live, they may really do God's work, and fight for the truth. In such times Christ's disciples must not fear, but be brave and true; and yet, while fearless, they must not be foolhardy. These qualities it is not easy to combine; for conscientious men are apt to be rash, and prudent men are apt to be unfaithful. Yet the combination is not impossible, else it would not be required, as it is in this discourse. For it was just the importance of cultivating the apparently incompatible virtues of caution and fidelity that Jesus meant to teach by the remarkable proverb-precept: "Be wise as serpents, harmless as doves." The serpent is the emblem of cunning, the dove of simplicity. No creatures can be more unlike; yet Jesus requires of His disciples to be at once serpents in cautiousness, and doves in simplicity of aim and purity of heart. Happy they who can be both; but if we cannot, let us at least be doves. The dove must come before the serpent in our esteem, and in the development of our character. This order is observable in the history of all true disciples. They begin with spotless sincerity; and after being betrayed by a generous enthusiasm into some acts of rashness, they learn betimes the serpent's virtues. If we invert the order, as too many do, and begin by being prudent and judicious to admiration, the effect will be that the higher virtue will not only be postponed, but sacrificed. The dove will be devoured by the serpent: the cause of truth and righteousness will be betrayed out of a base regard to self-preservation and worldly advantage.

On hearing a general maxim of morals announced, one naturally wishes to know how it applies to particular cases. Christ met this wish in connection with the deep, pregnant maxim, "Be wise as serpents, harmless as doves," by giving examples of its application. The first case supposed is that of the messengers of truth being brought up before civil or ecclesiastical tribunals to answer for themselves. Here the dictate of wisdom is, "Beware of men," "Do not be so simple as to imagine all men good, honest, fair, tolerant. Remember there are wolves in the world - men full of malice, falsehood, and unscrupulousness, capable of inventing the most atrocious charges against you, and of supporting them by the most unblushing mendacity. Keep out of their clutches if you can; and when you fall into their hands, expect neither candor, justice, nor generosity." But how are such men to be answered? Must craft be met with craft, lies with lies? No; here is the place for the simplicity of the dove. Cunning and craft boot not at such an hour; safety lies in trusting to Heaven's guidance, and telling the truth. "When they deliver you up, take no (anxious) thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." The counsel given to the apostles has been justified by experience. What a noble book the speeches uttered by confessors of the truth under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, collected together, would make! It would be a sort of Martyrs' Bible.

Jesus next puts the case of the heralds of His gospel being exposed to popular persecutions, and shows the bearing of the maxim upon it likewise. Such persecutions, as distinct from judicial proceedings, were common in apostolic experience, and they are a matter of course in all critical eras. The ignorant, superstitious populace, filled with prejudice and passion, and instigated by designing men, play the part of obstructives to the cause of truth, mobbing, mocking, and assaulting the messengers of God. How, then, are the subjects of this ill-treatment to act? On the one hand, they are to show the wisdom of the serpent by avoiding the storm of popular ill-will when it arises; and on the other hand, they are to exhibit the simplicity of the dove by giving the utmost publicity to their message, though conscious of the risk they run. "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into the next;" yet, undaunted by clamor, calumny, violence, "what I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops."

To each of these injunctions a reason is annexed. Flight is justified by the remark, "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come." The coming alluded to is the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jewish nation; and the meaning is, that the apostles would barely have time, before the catastrophe came, to go over all the land, warning the people to save themselves from the doom of an untoward generation, so that they could not well afford to tarry in any locality after its inhabitants had heard and rejected the message. The souls of all were alike precious; and if one city did not receive the word, perhaps another would. The reason annexed to the injunction to give the utmost publicity to the truth, in spite of all possible dangers, is: "The disciple is not above his master,
nor the servant above his lord." That is to say: To be evil entreated by the ignorant and violent multitude is hard to bear, but not harder for you than for me, who already, as ye know, have had experience of popular malice at Nazareth, and am destined, as ye know not, to have yet more bitter experience of it at Jerusalem. Therefore see that ye hide not your light under a bushel to escape the rage of wolfish men.

The disciples are supposed, lastly, to be in peril not merely of trial, mocking, and violence, but even of their life, and are instructed how to act in that extremity. Here also the maxim, "Wise as serpents, harmless as doves," comes into play in both its parts. In this case the wisdom of the serpent lies in knowing what to fear. Jesus reminds His disciples that there are two kinds of deaths, one caused by the sword, the other by unfaithfulness to duty; and tells them in effect, that while both are evils to be avoided, if possible, yet if a choice must be made, the latter death is most to be dreaded. "Fear not," He said, "them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," - the tempter, that is, who, when one is in danger, whispers: Save thyself at any sacrifice of principle or conscience. The simplicity of the dove in presence of extreme peril consists in childlike trust in the watchful providence of the Father in heaven. Such trust Jesus exhorted His disciples to cherish in charmingly simple and pathetic language. He told them that God cared even for sparrows, and reminded them that, however insignificant they might seem to themselves, they were at least of more value than many sparrows, not to say than two, whose money value was just one farthing. If God neglected not even a pair of sparrows, but provided for them a place in His world where they might build their nest and safely bring forth their young, would He not care for them as they went forth two and two preaching the doctrine of the kingdom? Yea! He would; the very hairs of their head were numbered. Therefore they might go forth without fear, trusting their lives to His care; remembering also that, at worst, death was no great evil, seeing that for the faithful was reserved a crown of life, and, for those who confessed the Son of man, the honor of being confessed by Him in turn before His Father in heaven.

Such were the instructions of Christ to the twelve when He sent them forth to preach and to heal. It was a rare, unexampled discourse, strange to the ears of us moderns, who can hardly imagine such stern requirements being seriously made, not to say exactly complied with. Some readers of these pages may have stood and looked up at Mont Blanc from Courmayeur or Chamounix. Such is our attitude towards this first missionary sermon. It is a mountain at which we gaze in wonder from a position far below, hardly dreaming of climbing to its summit. Some noble ones, however, have made the arduous ascent; and among these the first place of honor must be assigned to the chosen companions of Jesus

The Galilean Crisis

Section I. The Miracle

The sixth chapter of John's Gospel is full of marvels. It tells of a great miracle, a great enthusiasm, a great storm, a great sermon, a great apostasy, and a great trial of faith and fidelity endured by the twelve. It contains, indeed, the compendious history of an important crisis in the ministry of Jesus and the religious experience of His disciples, - a crisis in many respects foreshadowing the great final one, which happened little more than a year afterwards, when a more famous miracle still was followed by a greater popularity, to be succeeded in turn by a more complete desertion, and to end in the crucifixion, by which the riddle of the Capernaum discourse was solved, and its prophecy fulfilled.

The facts recorded by John in this chapter of his Gospel may all be comprehended under these four heads: the miracle in the wilderness, the storm on the lake, the sermon in the synagogue, and the subsequent sifting of Christ's disciples. These, in their order, we propose to consider in four distinct sections.

The scene of the miracle was on the eastern shore of the Galilean Sea. Luke fixes the precise locality in the neighborhood of a city called Bethsaida. This, of course, could not be the Bethsaida on the western shore, the city of Andrew and Peter. But there was, it appears, another city of the same name at the north-eastern extremity of the lake, called by way of distinction, Bethsaida Julias. The site of this city, we
are informed by an eye-witness, "is discernible on the lower slope of the hill which overhangs the rich plain at the mouth of the Jordan" (that is, at the place where the waters of the Upper Jordan join the Sea of Galilee). "The 'desert place,'" the same author goes on to say, by way of proving the suitableness of the locality to be the scene of this miracle, "was either the green tableland which lies halfway up the hill immediately above Bethsaida, or else in the parts of the plain not cultivated by the hand of man would be found the 'much green grass,' still fresh in the spring of the year when this event occurred, before it had faded away in the summer sun: the tall grass which, broken down by the feet of the thousands then gathered together, would make 'as it were, 'couches' for them to recline upon."

To this place Jesus and the twelve had retired after the return of the latter from their mission, seeking rest and privacy. But what they sought they did not find. Their movements were observed, and the people flocked along the shore toward the place whither they had sailed, running all the way, as if fearful that they might escape, and so arriving at the landing place before them. The multitude which thus gathered around Jesus was very great. All the evangelists agree in stating it at five thousand; and as the arrangement of the people at the miraculous repast in groups of hundreds and fifties made it easy to ascertain their number, we may accept this statement not as a rough estimate, but as a tolerably exact calculation.

Such an immense assemblage testifies to the presence of a great excitement among the populations living by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. A fervid enthusiasm, a hero-worship, whereof Jesus was the object, was at work in their minds. Jesus was the idol of the hour: they could not endure his absence; they could not see enough of His work, nor hear enough of His teaching. This enthusiasm of the Galileans we may regard as the cumulative result of Christ's own past labors, and in part also of the evangelistic mission which we considered in the last chapter. The infection seems to have spread as far south as Tiberias, for John relates that boats came from that city "to the place where they did eat bread." Those who were in these boats came too late to witness the miracle and share in the feast, but this does not prove that their errand was not the same as that of the rest; for, owing to their greater distance from the scene, the news would be longer in reaching them, and it would take them longer to go thither.

The great miracle wrought in the neighborhood of Bethsaida Julias consisted in the feeding of this vast assemblage of human beings with the utterly inadequate means of "five barley loaves and two small fishes." It was truly a stupendous transaction, of which we can form no conception; but no event in the Gospel history is more satisfactorily attested. All the evangelists relate the miracle with much minuteness, with little even apparent discrepancy, and with such graphic detail as none but eye-witnesses could have supplied. Even John, who records so few of Christ's miracles, describes this one with as careful a hand as any of his brother evangelists, albeit introducing it into his narrative merely as a preface to the sermon on the Bread of Life found in his Gospel only.

This wonderful work, so unexceptionably attested, seems open to exception on another ground. It appears to be a miracle without a sufficient reason. It cannot be said to have been urgently called for by the necessities of the multitude. Doubtless they were hungry, and had brought no victuals with them to supply their bodily wants. But the miracle was wrought on the afternoon of the day on which they left their homes, and most of them might have returned within a few hours. It would, indeed, have been somewhat hard to have undertaken such a journey at the end of the day without food; but the hardship, even if necessary, was far within the limits of human endurance. But it was not necessary; for food could have been got on the way without going far, in the neighboring towns and villages, so that to disperse them as they were would have involved no considerable inconvenience. This is evident from the terms in which the disciples made the suggestion that the multitude should be sent away. We read: "When the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto Him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and country round about, and lodge and get victuals." In these respects there is an obvious difference between the first miraculous feeding and the second, which occurred at a somewhat later period at the south-eastern extremity of the Lake. On that occasion the people who had assembled around Jesus had been three days in the wilderness without ought to eat, and there were no facilities for procuring food, so that the miracle was demanded by considerations of humanity. Accordingly we find that compassion is assigned as the motive for that miracle: "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, and have
nothing to eat; and if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way; for some of them are come from far."

His own benefit He would not use it in case even of extreme need, not even after a fast of forty days. But when the well-being (not to say the being) of others was concerned, He dispensed miraculous blessings with a liberal hand. He did not ask Himself: Is this a grave enough occasion for the use of divine power? Is this man ill enough to justify a miraculous interference? If our object were merely to get rid of the difficulty of assigning a sufficient motive for the first great miracle of feeding, we might content ourselves with saying that Jesus did not need any very urgent occasion to induce Him to use His power for the benefit of others. For with the laws of nature by healing him? Are these people here assembled hungry enough to be fed, like their fathers in the wilderness, with bread from heaven? But we do not insist on this, because we believe that something else and higher was aimed at in this miracle than to satisfy physical appetite. It was a symbolic, didactic, critical miracle. It was meant to teach, and also to test; to supply a text for the subsequent sermon, and a touchstone to try the character of those who had followed Jesus with such enthusiasm. The miraculous feast in the wilderness was meant to say to the multitude just what our sacramental feast says to us: "I, Jesus the Son of God Incarnate, am the bread of life. What this bread is to your bodies, I myself am to your souls." And the communicants in that feast were to be tested by the way in which they regarded the transaction. The spiritual would see in it a sign of Christ's divine dignity, and a seal of His saving grace; the carnal would rest simply in the outward fact that they had eaten of the loaves and were filled, and would take occasion from what had happened to indulge in high hopes of temporal felicity under the benign reign of the Prophet and King who had made His appearance among them.

The miracle in the desert was in this view not merely an act of mercy, but an act of judgment. Jesus mercifully fed the hungry multitude in order that He might sift it, and separate the true from the spurious disciples. There was a much more urgent demand for such a sifting than for food to satisfy merely physical cravings. If those thousands were all genuine disciples, it was well; but if not - if the greater number were following Christ under misapprehension - the sooner that became apparent the better. To allow so large a mixed multitude to follow Himselse any longer without sifting would have been on Christ's part to encourage false hopes, and to give rise to serious misapprehensions as to the nature of His kingdom and His earthly mission. And no better method of separating the chaff from the wheat in that large company of professed disciples could have been devised, than first to work a miracle which would bring to the surface the latent carnality of the greater number, and then to preach a sermon which could not fail to be offensive to the carnal mind.

That Jesus freely chose, for a reason of His own, the miraculous method of meeting the difficulty that had arisen, appears to be not obscurely hinted at in the Gospel narratives. Consider, for example, in this connection, John's note of time, "The Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." Is this a merely chronological statement? We think not. What further purpose, then, is it intended to serve? To explain how so great a crowd came to be gathered around Jesus? - Such an explanation was not required, for the true cause of the great gathering was the enthusiasm which had been awakened among the people by the preaching and healing work of Jesus and the twelve. The evangelist refers to the approaching Passover, it would seem, not to explain the movement of the people, but rather to explain the acts and words of His Lord about to be related. "The Passover was nigh, and" - so may we bring out John's meaning - "Jesus was thinking of it, though He went not up to the feast that season. He thought of the paschal lamb, and how He, the true Paschal Lamb, would ere long be slain for the life of the world; and He gave expression to the deep thoughts of His heart in the symbolic miracle I am about to relate, and in the mystic discourse which followed."

The view we advocate respecting the motive of the miracle in the wilderness seems borne out also by the tone adopted by Jesus in the conversation which took place between Himself and the twelve as to how the wants of the multitude might be supplied. In the course of that conversation, of which fragments have been preserved by the different evangelists, two suggestions were made by the disciples. One was to dismiss the multitude that they might procure supplies for themselves; the other, that they (the disciples) should go to the nearest town (say Bethsaida Julias, probably not far off) and purchase as much bread as they could get for two hundred denarii, which would suffice to alleviate hunger at least, if not to satisfy appetite. Both these proposals were feasible, otherwise they would not have been made; for the twelve
had not spoken thoughtlessly, but after consideration, as appears from the fact that one of their number, Andrew, had already ascertained how much provision could be got on the spot. The question how the multitude could be provided for had evidently been exercising the minds of the disciples, and the two proposals were the result of their deliberations. Now, what we wish to point out is, that Jesus does not appear to have given any serious heed to these proposals. He listened to them, not displeased to see the generous concern of His disciples for the hungry people, yet with the air of one who meant from the first to pursue a different line of action from any they might suggest. He behaved like a general in a council of war whose own mind is made up, but who is not unwilling to hear what his subordinates will say. This is no mere inference of ours, for John actually explains that such was the manner in which our Lord acted on the occasion. After relating that Jesus addressed to Philip the question, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? he adds the parenthetical remark, "This He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do."

Such, then, was the design of the miracle; what now was its result? It raised the swelling tide of enthusiasm to its full height, and induced the multitude to form a foolish and dangerous purpose - even to crown the wonder - working Jesus, and make Him their king instead of the licentious despot Herod. They said, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world;" and they were on the point of coming and taking Jesus by force to make Him a king, insomuch that it was necessary that He should make His escape from them, and depart into a mountain Himself alone. Such are the express statements of the fourth Gospel, and what is there stated is obscurely implied in the narratives of Matthew and Mark. They tell how, after the miracle in the desert, Jesus straightway constrained His disciples to get into a ship and to go to the other side. Why such haste, and why such urgency? Doubtless it was late, and there was no time to lose if they wished to get home to Capernaum that night. But why go home at all, when the people, or at least a part of them, were to pass the night in the wilderness? Should the disciples not rather have remained with them, to keep them in heart and take a charge of them? Nay, was it dutiful in disciples to leave their Master alone in such a situation? Doubtless the reluctance of the twelve to depart sprang from their asking themselves these very questions; and, as a feeling having such an origin was most becoming, the constraint put on them presupposes the existence of unusual circumstances, such as those recorded by John. In other words, the most natural explanation of the fact recorded by the synoptical evangelists is, that Jesus wished to extricate both Himself and His disciples from the foolish enthusiasm of the multitude, an enthusiasm with which, beyond question, the disciples were only too much in sympathy, and for that purpose arranged that they should sail away in the dusk across the lake, while He retired into the solitude of the mountains.

What a melancholy result of a hopeful movement have we here! The kingdom has been proclaimed, and the good news has been extensively welcomed. Jesus, the Messianic King, is become the object of most ardent devotion to an enthusiastic population. But, alas! their ideas of the kingdom are radically mistaken. Acted out, they would mean rebellion and ultimate ruin. Therefore it is necessary that Jesus should save Himself from His own friends, and hide Himself from His own followers. How certainly do Satan's tares get sown among God's wheat! How easily does enthusiasm run into folly and mischief!

The result of the miracle did not take Jesus by surprise. It was what He expected; nay, in a sense, it was what He aimed at. It was time that the thoughts of many hearts should be revealed; and the certainty that the miracle would help to reveal them was one reason at least for its being worked. Jesus furnished for the people a table in the wilderness, and gave them of the corn of heaven, and sent them meat to the full, that He might prove them, and know what was in their heart, - whether they loved Him for His own sake, or only for the sake of expected worldly advantage. That many followed Him from by-ends He knew beforehand, but He desired to bring the fact home to their own consciences. The miracle put that in His power, and enabled Him to say, without fear of contradiction, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." It was a searching word, which might well put all His professed followers, not only then, but now, on self-examining thoughts, and lead each man to ask himself, Why do I profess Christianity? is it from sincere faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of the world, or from thoughtless compliance with custom, from a regard to reputation, or from considerations of worldly advantage?
Section II. The Storm
Matt. xiv. 24-33; Mark vi. 45-52; John vi. 16-21.

"In perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea," wrote Paul, describing the varied hardships encountered by himself in the prosecution of his great work as the apostle of the Gentiles. Such perils meet together in this crisis in the life of Jesus. He has just saved himself from the dangerous enthusiasm manifested by the thoughtless multitude after the miraculous repast in the desert; and now, a few hours later, a still greater disaster threatens to befall Him. His twelve chosen disciples, whom He had hurriedly sent off in a boat, that they might not encourage the people in their foolish project, have been overtaken in a storm while He is alone on the mountain praying, and are in imminent danger of being drowned. His contrivance for escaping one evil has involved Him in a worse; and it seems as if, by a combination of mischances, He were to be suddenly deprived of all His followers, both true and false, at once, and left utterly alone, as in the last great crisis. The Messianic King watching on those heights, like a general on the day of battle, is indeed hard pressed, and the battle is going against Him. But the Captain of salvation is equal to the emergency; and however sorely perplexed He may be for a season, He will be victorious in the end.

The Sea of Galilee, though but a small sheet of water, some thirteen miles long by six broad, is liable to be visited by sharp, sudden squalls, probably due to its situation. It lies in a deep hollow of volcanic origin, bounded on either side by steep ranges of hills rising above the level from one to two thousand feet. The difference of temperature at the top and bottom of these hills is very considerable. Up on the tablelands above the air is cool and bracing; down at the margin of the lake, which lies seven hundred feet below the level of the ocean, the climate is tropical. The storms caused by this inequality of temperature are tropical in violence. They come sweeping down the ravines upon the water; and in a moment the lake, calm as glass before, becomes from end to end white with foam, whilst the waves rise into the air in columns of spray.

Two such storms of wind were encountered by the twelve after they had become disciples, probably within the same year; the one with which we are concerned at present, and an earlier one on the occasion of a visit to Gadara. Both happened by night, and both were exceedingly violent. In the first storm, we are told, the ship was covered with the waves, and filled almost to sinking, so that the disciples feared they should perish. The second storm was equally violent, and was of much longer duration. It caught the twelve apparently when they were half-way across, and after the gray of dusk had deepened into the darkness of night. From that time the wind blew with unabated force till daybreak, in the fourth watch, between the hours of three and six in the morning. Some idea of the fury of the blast may be gathered from the fact recorded, that even then they were still little more than half-way over the sea. They had rowed in all only a distance of twenty-five or thirty furlongs, the whole distance in a slanting direction, from the eastern to the western shore, being probably about fifty. During all those weary hours they had done little more, pulling with all their might, than hold their own against wind and waves.

All this while what was Jesus doing? In the first storm He had been with His disciples in the ship, sweetly sleeping after the fatigues of the day, "rocked in cradle of the imperious surge." This time He was absent, and not sleeping; but away up among the mountains alone, watching unto prayer. For He, too, had His own struggle on that tempestuous night; not with the howling winds, but with sorrowful thoughts. That night He, as it were, rehearsed the agony in Gethsemane, and with earnest prayer and absorbing meditation studied the passion sermon which He preached on the morrow. So engrossed was His mind with His own sad thoughts, that the poor disciples were for a season as if forgotten; till at length, at early dawn, looking seawards, He saw them toiling in rowing against the contrary wind, and without a moment's further delay made haste to their rescue.

This storm on the Sea of Galilee, besides being important as a historical fact, possesses also the significance of an emblem. When we consider the time at which it occurred, it is impossible not to connect it in our thoughts with the untoward events of the next day. For the literal storm on the water was succeeded by a spiritual storm on the land, equally sudden and violent, and not less perilous to the souls of the twelve than the other had been to their bodies. The bark containing the precious freight of Christ's
true discipleship was then overtaken by a sudden gust of unpopularity, coming down on it like a squall on
a highland loch, and all but upsetting it. The fickle crowd which but the day before would have made Jesus
their king, turned away abruptly from Him in disappointment and disgust; and it was not without an effort,
as we shall see, that the twelve maintained their steadfastness. They had to pull hard against wind and
waves, that they might not be carried headlong to ruin by the tornado of apostasy.

There can be little doubt that the two storms, - on the lake and on the shore, - coming so close one on the
other, would become associated in the memory of the apostles; and that the literal storm would be
sterotyped in their minds as an expressive emblem of the spiritual one, and of all similar trials of faith.
The incidents of that fearful night - the watching, the wet, the toil without result, the fatigue, the terror
and despair - would abide indelibly in their recollection, the symbolic representation of all the perils and
tribulations through which believers must pass on their way to the kingdom of heaven, and especially of
those that come upon them while they are yet immature in the faith. Symbolic significance might be
discovered specially in three features. The storm took place by night; in the absence of Jesus; and while it
lasted all progress was arrested. Storms at sea may happen at all hours of the day, but trials of faith
always happen in the night. Were there no darkness there could be no trial. Had the twelve understood
Christ's discourse in Capernaum, the apostasy of the multitude would have seemed to them a light
matter. But they did not understand it, and hence the solicitude of their Master lest they too should
forsake Him. In all such trials, also, the absence of the Lord to feeling is a constant and most painful
feature. Christ is not in the ship while the storm rages by night, and we toil on in rowing unaided, as we
think, by His grace, uncheered by His spiritual presence.

It was so even with the twelve next day on shore. Their Master, present to their eyes, had vanished out of
sight to their understanding. They had not the comfort of comprehending His meaning, while they clung to
Him as one who had the words of eternal life. Worst of all, in these trials of faith, with all our rowing, we
make no progress; the utmost we can effect is to hold our own, to keep off the rocky shore in the midst of
the sea. Happily that is something, yea, it is everything. For it is not always true that if not going forward
we must be going backward. This is an adage for fair weather only. In a time of storm there is such a
thing as standing still, and then to do even so much is a great achievement. Is it a small thing to weather
the storm, to keep off the rocks, the sands, and the breakers? Vex not the soul of him who is already
vexed enough by the buffeting winds, by retailing wise saws about progress and backsliding indiscriminately applied. Instead of playing thus the part of a Job's friend, rather remind him that the
great thing for one in his situation is to endure, to be immovable, to hold fast his moral integrity and his
profession of faith, and to keep off the dangerous coasts of immorality and infidelity; and assure him that
if he will only pull a little longer, however weary his arm, God will come and calm the wind, and he will
forthwith reach the land.

The storm on the lake, besides being an apt emblem of the trial of faith, was for the twelve an important
lesson in faith, helping to prepare them for the future which awaited them. The temporary absence of
their Master was a preparation for His perpetual absence. The miraculous interposition of Jesus at the
crisis of their peril was fitted to impress on their minds the conviction that even after He had ascended He
would still be with them in the hour of danger. From the ultimate happy issue of a plan which threatened
for a time to miscarry, they might further learn to cherish a calm confidence in the government of their
exalted Lord, even in midst of most untoward events. They probably concluded, when the storm came on,
that Jesus had made a mistake in ordering them to sail away across the lake while He remained behind to
dismiss the multitude. The event, however, rebuked this hasty judgment, all ending happily. Their
experience in this instance was fitted to teach a lesson for life: not rashly to infer mismanagement or
neglect on Christ's part from temporary mishaps, but to have firm faith in His wise and loving care for His
cause and people, and to anticipate a happy issue out of all perplexities; yea, to glory in tribulation,
because of the great deliverance which would surely follow.

Such strong faith the disciples were far enough from possessing at the time of the storm. They had no
expectation that Jesus would come to their rescue; for when He did come, they though He was a spirit
flitting over the water, and cried out in an agony of superstitious terror. Here also we note, in passing, a
curious correspondence between the incidents of this crisis and those connected with the final one. The
disciples had then as little expectation of seeing their Lord return from the dead as they had now of seeing
Him come to them over the sea; and therefore His re-appearance at first frightened rather than comforted.
them. "They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." Good, unlooked for in either case, was turned into evil; and what to faith would have been a source of intense joy, became, through unbelief, only a new cause of alarm.

The fact of His not being expected seems to have imposed on Jesus the necessity of using artifice in His manner of approaching His storm-tossed disciples. Mark relates that "He would have passed by then," affecting strangeness, as we understand it, out of delicate consideration for their weakness. He knew what He would be taken for when first observed; and therefore He wished to attract their attention at a safe distance, fearing lest, by appearing among them at once, He might drive them distracted. He found it needful to be as cautious in announcing His advent to save as men are wont to be in communicating evil tidings: first appearing, as the spectre, as far away as He could be seen; then revealing Himself by His familiar voice uttering the words of comfort, "It is I; be not afraid," and so obtaining at length a willing reception into the ship.

The effects which followed the admission of Jesus into the vessel betrayed the twelve into a new manifestation of the weakness of their faith. "The wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered." They ought not to have wondered so greatly, after what had happened once before on these same waters, and especially after such a miracle as had been wrought in the wilderness on the previous day. But the storm had blown all thoughts of such things out of their mind, and driven them utterly stupid. "They reflected not on the loaves (nor on the rebuking of the winds), for their heart was hardened."

But the most interesting revelation of the mental state of the disciples at the time when Jesus came to their relief, is to be found in the episode concerning Peter related in Matthew's Gospel. When that disciple understood that the supposed spectre was his beloved Master, he cried, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water;" and on receiving permission, he forthwith stepped out of the ship into the sea. This was not faith, but simple rashness. It was the rebound of an impetuous, headlong nature from one extreme of utter despair to the opposite extreme of extravagant, reckless joy. What in the other disciples took the tame form of a willingness to receive Jesus into the ship, after they were satisfied it was He who walked on the waters, took, in the case of Peter, the form of a romantic, adventurous wish to go out to Jesus where He was, to welcome Him back among them again. The proposal was altogether like the man - generous, enthusiastic, and well-meant, but inconsiderate.

Such a proposal, of course, could not meet with Christ's approval, and yet He did not negative it. He rather thought good to humor the impulsive disciple so far, by inviting him to come, and then to allow him, while in the water, to feel his own weakness. Thus would He teach him a little self-knowledge, and, if possible, save him from the effects of his rash, self-confident temper. But Peter was not to be made wise by one lesson, nor even by several. He would go on blundering and erring, in spite of rebuke and warning, till at length he fell into grievous sin, denying the Master whom he loved so well. The denial at the final crisis was just what might be looked for from one who so behaved at the minor crisis preceding it. The man who said, "Bid me come to Thee," was just the man to say, "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death." He who was so courageous on deck, and so timid amid the waves, was the one of all the disciples most likely to talk boldly when danger was not at hand, and then play the coward when the hour of trial actually arrived. The scene on the lake was but a foreshadowing or rehearsal of Peter's fall.

And yet that scene showed something more than the weakness of that disciple's faith. It showed also what is possible to those who believe. If the tendency of weak faith be to sink, the triumph of strong faith is to walk on the waves, glorying in tribulation, and counting it all joy when exposed to divers temptations. It is the privilege of those who are weak in faith, and the duty of all, mindful of human frailty, to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." But when storms come not of their inviting, and when their ship is upset in midst of the sea, then may Christians trust to the promise, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee;" and if only they have faith, they shall be enabled to tread the rolling billows as if walking on firm land.
"He bids me come; His voice I know,  
And boldly on the waters go,  
And brave the tempest's shock.  
O'er rude temptations now I bound;  
The billows yield a solid ground,  
The wave is firm as rock."

**Section III. The Sermon**  
John vi. 32–58.

The task now before us is to study that memorable address delivered by Jesus in the synagogue of Capernaum on the bread of life, which gave so great offence at the time, and which has ever since been a stone of stumbling, a subject of controversy, and a cause of division in the visible church, and, so far as one can judge from present appearances, will be to the world's end. On a question so vexed as that which relates to the meaning of this discourse, one might well shrink from entering. But the very confusion which prevails here points it out as our plain duty to disregard the din of conflicting interpretations, and, humbly praying to be taught of God, to search for and set forth Christ's own mind.

The sermon on the bread of life, however strangely it sounds, was appropriate both in matter and manner to the circumstances in which it was delivered. It was natural and seasonable that Jesus should speak to the people of the meat that endureth unto everlasting life after miraculously providing perishable food to supply their physical wants. It was even natural and seasonable that He should speak of this high topic in the startling, apparently gross, harsh style which He adopted on the occasion. The form of thought suited the situation. Passover time was approaching, when the paschal lamb was slain and eaten; and if Jesus desired to say in effect, without saying it in so many words, "I am the true Paschal Lamb," what more suitable form of language could He employ than this: "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"? The style was also adapted to the peculiar complexion of the speaker's feelings at the moment. Jesus was in a sad, austere mood when He preached this sermon. The foolish enthusiasm of the multitude had saddened Him. Their wish to force a crown on His head made Him think of His cross; for He knew that this idolatrous devotion to a political Messiah meant death sooner or later to one who declined such carnal homage. He spoke, therefore, in the synagogue of Capernaum with Calvary in view, setting Himself forth as the life of the world in terms applicable to a sacrificial victim, whose blood is shed, and whose flesh is eaten by those presenting the offering; not mincing His words, but saying everything in the strongest and intensest manner possible.

The theme of this memorable address was very naturally introduced by the preceding conversation between Jesus and the people who came from the other side of the lake, hoping to find Him at Capernaum, His usual place of abode. To their warm inquiries as to how He came thither, He replied by a chilling observation concerning the true motive of their zeal, and an exhortation to set their hearts on a higher food than that which perisheth. Understanding the exhortation as a counsel to cultivate piety. The persons to whom it was addressed inquired what they should do that they might work the works of God, i.e. please God. Jesus replied by declaring that the great testing work of the hour was to receive Himself as one whom God had sent. This led to a demand on their part for evidence in support of this high claim to be the divinely missioned Messiah. The miracle just wrought on the other side of the lake was great, but not great enough, they thought, to justify such lofty pretensions. In ancient times a whole nation had been fed for many years by bread brought down from heaven by Moses. What was the recent miracle compared to that? He must show a sign on a far grander scale, if He wished them to believe that a greater than Moses was here. Jesus took up the challenge, and boldly declared that the manna, wonderful as it was, was not the true heavenly bread. There was another bread, of which the manna was but the type: like it, coming down from heaven; but unlike it, giving life not to a nation, but to a world, and not life merely for a few short years, but life for eternity. This announcement, like the similar one concerning the wonderful water of life made to the woman of Samaria, provoked desire in the hearts of the hearers, and
they exclaimed, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Then said Jesus unto them, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh unto me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

In these words Jesus briefly enunciated the doctrine of the true bread, which He expounded and inculcated in His memorable Capernaum discourse. The doctrine, as stated, sets forth what the true bread is, what it does, and how it is appropriated.

I. The true bread is He who here speaks of it - Jesus Christ. "I am the bread." The assertion implies, on the speaker's part, a claim to have descended from heaven; for such a descent is one of the properties by which the true bread is defined. Accordingly we find Jesus, in the sequel of His discourse, expressly asserting that He had come down from heaven. This declaration, understood in a supernatural sense, was the first thing in His discourse with which His hearers found fault. "The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?" It was natural they should murmur if they did not know or believe that there was anything out of course in the way in which Jesus came into the world. For such language as He here employs could not be used without blasphemy by a mere man born after the fashion of other men. It is language proper only in the mouth of a Divine Being who, for a purpose, hath assumed human nature.

In setting Himself forth, therefore, as the bread which came down from heaven, Jesus virtually taught the doctrine of the incarnation. The solemn assertion, "I am the bread of life," is equivalent in import to that made by the evangelist respecting Him who spoke these words: "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

It is, however, not merely as incarnate that the Son of God is the bread of eternal life. Bread must be broken in order to be eaten. The Incarnate One must die as a sacrificial victim that men may truly feed upon Him. The Word become flesh, and crucified in the flesh, is the life of the world. This special truth Jesus went on to declare, after having stated the general truth that the heavenly bread was to be found in Himself. "The bread," said He, "that I will give is my flesh, (which I will give) for the life of the world." The language here becomes modified to suit the new turn of thought. "I am" passes into "I will give," and "bread" is transformed into "flesh."

Jesus evidently refers here to His death. His hearers did not so understand Him, but we can have no doubt on the matter. The verb "give," suggesting a sacrificial act, and the future tense both point that way. In words dark and mysterious before the event, clear as day after it, the speaker declares the great truth, that His death is to be the life of men; that His broken body and shed blood are to be as meat and drink to a perishing world, conferring on all who shall partake of them the gift of immortality. How He is to die, and why His death shall possess such virtue, He does not here explain. The Capernaum discourse makes no mention of the cross; it contains no theory of atonement, the time is not come for such details; it simply asserts in broad, strong terms that the flesh and blood of the incarnate Son of God, severed as in death, are the source of eternal life.

This mention by Jesus of His flesh as the bread from heaven gave rise to a new outburst of murmuring among His hearers. "They strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Jesus had not yet said that His flesh must be eaten, but they took for granted that such was His meaning. They were right; and accordingly He went on to say, with the greatest solemnity and emphasis, that they must even eat His flesh and drink His blood. Unless they did that, they should have no life in them; if they did that, they should have life in all its fullness - life eternal both in body and in soul. For His flesh was the true food, and His blood was the true drink. They who partook of these would share in His own life. He should dwell in them, incorporated with their very being; and they should dwell in Him as the ground of their being. They should live as secure against death by Him, as He lived from everlasting to everlasting by the Father. "This, therefore," said the speaker, reverting in conclusion to the proposition with which he started, "this (even my flesh) is that bread which came down from Heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."
A third expression of disapprobation ensuing led Jesus to put the copestone on His high doctrine of the bread of life, by making a concluding declaration, which must have appeared at the time the most mysterious and unintelligible of all: that the bread which descended from heaven must ascend up thither again, in order to be to the full extent the bread of everlasting life. Doth this offend you? asked He at his hearers: this which I have just said about your eating my flesh and blood; what will ye say "if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?" The question was in effect an affirmation, and it was also a prophetic hint, that only after He had left the world would He become on an extensive scale and conspicuously a source of life to men; because then the manna of grace would begin to descend not only on the wilderness of Israel, but on all the barren places of the earth; and the truth in Him, the doctrine of His life, death, and resurrection, would become meat indeed and drink indeed unto a multitude, not of murmuring hearers, but of devout, enlightened, thankful believers; and no one would need any longer to ask for a sign when he could find in the Christian church, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread and in prayers, the best evidence that He had spoken truth who said, "I am the bread of life."

2. This, then, is the heavenly bread: even the God-man incarnate, crucified, and glorified. Let us now consider more attentively the marvelous virtue of this bread. It is the bread of life. It is the office of all bread to sustain life, but it is the peculiarity of this divine bread to give eternal life. "He that cometh to me," said the speaker, "shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst." With reference to this life-giving power He called the bread of which He spake "living bread," and meat indeed, and declared that he who eat thereof should not die, but should live forever.

In commending this miraculous bread to His hearers, Jesus, we observe, laid special stress on its power to give eternal life even to the body of man. Four times over He declared in express terms that all who partook of this bread of life should be raised again at the last day. The prominence thus given to the resurrection of the body is due in part to the fact that throughout His discourse Jesus was drawing a contrast between the manna which fed the Israelites in the desert and the true bread of which it was the type. The contrast was most striking just at this point. The manna was merely a substitute for ordinary food; it had no power to ward off death: the generation which had been so miraculously supported passed away from the earth, like all other generations of mankind. Therefore, argued Jesus, it could not be the true bread from heaven; for the true bread must be capable of destroying death, and endowing the recipients with the power of an endless existence. A man who eats thereof must not die; or dying, must rise again. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die."

But the prominence given to the resurrection of the body is due mainly to its intrinsic importance. For if the dead rise not, then is our faith vain, and the bread of life degenerates into a mere quack nostrum, pretending to virtues which it does not possess. True, it may still give spiritual life to those who eat thereof, but what is that without the hope of a life hereafter? Not much, according to Paul, who says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Many, indeed, in our day do not concur in the apostle's judgment. They think that the doctrine of the life everlasting may be left out of the creed without loss - nay, even with positive advantage, to the Christian faith. The life of a Christian seems to them so much nobler when all thought of future reward or punishment is dismissed from the mind. How grand, to pass through the wilderness of this world feeding on the manna supplied in the high, pure teaching of Jesus, without caring whether there be a land of Canaan on the other side of Jordan! Very sublime indeed! but why, in that case, come into the wilderness at all? why not remain in Egypt, feeding on more substantial and palatable viands? The children of Israel would not have left the house of bondage unless they had hoped to reach the promised land. An immortal hope is equally necessary to the Christian. He must believe in a world to come in order to live above the present evil world. If Christ cannot redeem the body from the power of the grave, then it is in vain that He promises to redeem us from guilt and sin. The bread of life is unworthy of the name, unless it hath power to cope with physical as well as with moral corruption.

Hence the prominence given by Jesus in this discourse to the resurrection of the body. He knew that here lay the crucial experiment by which the value and virtue of the bread He offered to His hearers must be tested. "You call this bread the bread of life, in contrast to the manna of ancient times: - do you mean to
say that, like the tree of life in the garden of Eden, it will confer on those who eat thereof the gift of a blessed immortality? "Yes, I do," replied the Preacher in effect to this imaginary question: "this bread I offer you will not merely quicken the soul to a higher, purer life; it will even revivify your bodies, and make the corruptible put on incorruption, and the mortal put on immortality."

3. And how, then, is this wondrous bread to be appropriated that one may experience its vitalizing influences? Bread, of course, is eaten; but what does eating in this case mean? It means, in one word, faith. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." Eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood, and, we may add, drinking the water of which he spake to the woman by the well, all signify believing in Him as He is offered to men in the gospel: the Son of God manifested in the flesh, crucified, raised from the dead, ascended into glory; the Prophet, the Priest, the King, and the Mediator between God and man. Throughout the Capernaum discourse eating and believing are used interchangeably as equivalents. Thus, in one sentence, we find Jesus saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life: I am that bread of life;" and shortly after remarking: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." If any further argument were necessary to justify the identifying of eating with believing, it might be found in the instruction given by the Preacher to His hearers before He began to speak of the bread of life; "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." That sentence furnishes the key to the interpretation of the whole subsequent discourse. "Believe," said Jesus, with reference to the foregoing inquiry, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? - "Believe, and thou hast done God's work." "Believe," we may understand Him as saying with reference to an inquiry, How shall we eat this bread of life? - "Believe, and thou hast eaten."

Believe, and thou hast eaten: such was the formula in which Augustine expressed his view of Christ's meaning in the Capernaum discourse. The saying is not only terse, but true, in our judgment; but it has not been accepted by all interpreters. Many hold that eating and faith are something distinct, and would express the relation between them thus: Believe, and thou shalt eat. Even Calvin objected to the Augustinian formula. Distinguishing his own views from those held by the followers of Zwingli, he says: "To them to eat is simply to believe. I say that Christ's flesh is eaten in believing because it is made ours by faith, and that eating is the fruit and effect of faith. Or more clearly: To them eating is faith, to me it seems rather to follow from faith."

The distinction taken by Calvin between eating and believing seems to have been verbal rather than real. With many other theologians, however, it is far otherwise. All upholders of the magical doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation contend for the literal interpretation of the Capernaum discourse even in its strongest statements. Eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood are, for such, acts of the mouth, accompanied perhaps with acts of faith, but not merely acts of faith. It is assumed for the most part as a matter of course, that the discourse recorded in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel has reference to the sacrament of the Supper, and that only on the hypothesis of such a reference can the peculiar phraseology of the discourse be explained. Christ spoke then of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, so we are given to understand, because He had in His mind that mystic rite ere long to be instituted, in which bread and wine should not merely represent, but become, the constituent elements of His crucified body.

While the sermon on the bread of life continues to be mixed up with sacramentarian controversies, agreement in its interpretation is altogether hopeless. Meantime, till a better day dawn on a divided and distracted church, every man must endeavor to be fully persuaded in his own mind. Three things are clear to our mind. First, it is incorrect to say that the sermon delivered in the Capernaum synagogue refers to the sacrament of the Supper. The true state of the case is, that both refer to a third thing, viz. the death of Christ, and both declare, in different ways, the same thing concerning it. The sermon says in symbolic words what the Supper says in a symbolic act: that Christ crucified is the life of men, the world's hope of salvation. The sermon says more than this, for it speaks of Christ's ascension as well as of His death; but it says this for one thing.

A second point on which we are clear is, that it is quite unnecessary to assume a mental reference by anticipation to the Holy Supper, in order to account for the peculiarity of Christ's language in this famous discourse. As we saw at the beginning, the whole discourse rose naturally out of the present situation. The mention by the people of the manna naturally led Jesus to speak of the bread of life; and from the bread
He passed on as naturally to speak of the flesh and the blood, because he could not fully be bread until He had become flesh and blood dissevered, i.e. until He had endured death. All that we find here might have been said, in fact, although the sacrament of the Supper had never existed. The Supper is of use not so much for interpreting the sermon as for establishing its credibility as an authentic utterance of Jesus. There is no reason to doubt that He who instituted the mystic feast, could also have preached this mystic sermon.

The third truth which shines clear as a star to our eye is, - that through faith alone we may attain all the blessings of salvation. Sacraments are very useful, but they are not necessary. If it had pleased Christ not to institute them, we could have got to heaven notwithstanding. Because He has instituted them, it is our duty to celebrate them, and we may expect benefit from their celebration. But the benefit we receive is simply an aid to faith, and nothing which cannot be received by faith. Christians eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man at all times, not merely at communion times, simply by believing in Him. They eat His flesh and drink His blood at His table in the same sense as at other times; only perchance in a livelier manner, their hearts being stirred up to devotion by remembrance of His dying love, and their faith aided by seeing, handling, and tasting the bread and the wine.

Section IV. The Sifting
John vi. 66–71.

The sermon on the bread of life produced decisive effects. It converted popular enthusiasm for Jesus into disgust; like a fan, it separated true from false disciples; and like a winnowing breeze, it blew the chaff away, leaving a small residuum of wheat behind. "From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

This result did not take Jesus by surprise. He expected it; in a sense, He wished it, though He was deeply grieved by it. For while His large, loving human heart yearned for the salvation of all, and desired that all should come and get life, He wanted none to come to Him under misapprehension, or to follow Him from by-ends. He sought disciples God-given, God-drawn, God-taught, knowing that such alone would continue in His word. He was aware that in the large mass of people who had recently followed Him were many disciples of quite another description; and He was not unwilling that the mixed multitude should be sifted. Therefore He preached that mystic discourse, fitted to be a savor of life or of death according to the spiritual state of the hearer. Therefore, also, when offence was taken at the doctrine taught, He plainly declared the true cause, and expressed His assurance that only those whom His Father taught and drew would or could really come unto Him. These things He said not with a view to irritate, but He deemed it right to say them though they should give rise to irritation, reckoning that true believers would take all in good part, and that those who took umbrage would thereby reveal their true character.

The apostatizing disciples doubtless thought themselves fully justified in withdrawing from the society of Jesus. They turned their back on Him, we fancy, in most virtuous indignation, saying in their hearts - nay, probably saying aloud to one another: "Who ever heard the like of that? how absurd! how revolting! The man who can speak thus is either a fool, or is trying to make fools of his hearers." And yet the hardness of His doctrine was not the real reason which led so many to forsake Him; it was simply the pretext, the most plausible and respectable reason that they could assign for conduct springing from other motives. The grand offence of Jesus was this: He was not the man they had taken Him for; He was not going to be at their service to promote the ends they had in view. Whatever He meant by the bread of life, or by eating His flesh, it was plain that He was not going to be a bread-king, making it His business to furnish supplies for their physical appetites, ushering in a golden age of idleness and plenty. That ascertained, it was all over with Him so far as they were concerned: He might offer His heavenly food to whom He pleased; they wanted none of it.

Deeply affected by the melancholy sight of so many human beings deliberately preferring material good to eternal life, Jesus turned to the twelve, and said, "Will ye also go away?" or more exactly, "You do not wish to go away too, do you?" The question may be understood as a virtual expression of confidence in the persons to whom it was addressed, and as an appeal to them for sympathy at a discouraging crisis.
And yet, while a negative answer was expected to the question, it was not expected as a matter of course. Jesus was not without solicitude concerning the fidelity even of the twelve. He interrogated them, as conscious that they were placed in trying circumstances, and that if they did not actually forsake Him now, as at the great final crisis, they were at least tempted to be offended in Him.

A little reflection suffices to satisfy us that the twelve were indeed placed in a position at this time calculated to try their faith most severely. For one thing, the mere fact of their Master being deserted wholesale by the crowd of quondam admirers and followers involved for the chosen band a temptation to apostasy. How mighty is the power of sympathy! how ready are we all to follow the multitude, regardless of the way they are going! and how much moral courage it requires to stand alone! How difficult to witness the spectacle of thousands, or even hundreds, going off in sullen disaffection, without feeling an impulse to imitate their bad example! how hard it must have been for the twelve to resist the tendency to apostatize if, as is more than probable, they sympathized with the project entertained by the multitude when their enthusiasm for Jesus was at full-tide. If it would have gratified them to have seen their beloved Master made king by popular acclamation, how their spirits must have sunk when the bubble burst, and the would-be subjects of the Messianic Prince were dispersed like an idle mob, and the kingdom which had seemed so near vanished like a cloudland!

Another circumstance trying to the faith of the twelve was the strange, mysterious character of their Master's discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum. That discourse contained hard, repulsive, unintelligible sayings for them quite as much as for the rest of the audience. Of this we can have no doubt when we consider the repugnance with which some time afterward they received the announcement that Jesus was destined to be put to death. If they objected even to the fact of His death, how could they understand its meaning, especially when both fact and meaning were spoken of in such a veiled and mystic style as that which pervades the sermon on the bread of life? While, therefore, they believed that their Master had the words of eternal life, and perceived that His late discourse bore on that high theme, it may be regarded as certain that the twelve did not understand the words spoken any more than the multitude, however much they might try to do so. They knew not what connection existed between Christ's flesh and eternal life, how eating that flesh could confer any benefit, or even what eating it might mean. They had quite lost sight of the Speaker in His eagle flight of thought; and they must have looked on in distress as the people melted away, painfully conscious that they could not altogether blame them.

Yet, however greatly tempted to forsake their Master, the twelve did abide faithfully by His side. They did come safely through the spiritual storm. What was the secret of their steadfastness? what were the anchors that preserved them from shipwreck? These questions are of practical interest to all who, like the apostles at this crisis, are tempted to apostasy by evil example or by religious doubt; by the fashion of the world they live in, whether scientific or illiterate, refined or rustic; or by the deep things of God, whether these be the mysteries of providence, the mysteries of revelation, or the mysteries of religious experience: we may say, indeed, to all genuine Christians, for what Christian has not been tempted in one or other of these ways at some period in his history?

Sufficient materials for answering these questions are supplied in the words of Simon Peter's response to Jesus. As spokesman for the whole company, that disciple promptly said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and know that Thou art that Christ, the son of the living God," or, according to the reading preferred by most critics, "that Thou art the Holy One of God."

Three anchors, we infer from these words, helped the twelve to ride out the storm: Religious earnestness or sincerity; a clear perception of the alternatives before them; and implicit confidence in the character and attachment to the person of their Master.

I. The twelve, as a body, were sincere and thoroughly in earnest in religion. Their supreme desire was to know "the words of eternal life," and actually to gain possession of that life. Their concern was not about the meat that perisheth, but about the higher heavenly food of the soul which Christ had in vain exhorted the majority of His hearers to labor for. As yet they knew not clearly wherein that food consisted, but according to their light they sincerely prayed, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Hence it was no
disappointment to them that Jesus declined to become a purveyor of mere material food: they had never
expected or wished Him to do so; they had joined His company with entirely different expectations. A
certain element of error might be mingled with truth in their conceptions of His Mission, but the gross,
carnal hopes of the multitude had no place in their breasts. They became not disciples to better their
worldly circumstances, but to obtain a portion which the world could neither give them nor take from
them.

What we have now stated was true of all the twelve save one; and the crisis we are at present considering
is memorable for this, among other things, that it was the first occasion on which Jesus gave a hint that
there was a false disciple among the men whom He had chosen. To justify Himself for asking a question
which seemed to cast a doubt upon their fidelity, He replied to Peter's protestation by the startling
remark: "Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" as if to say: "It is painful to me to
have to use this language of suspicion, but I have good cause: there is one among you who has had
thoughts of desertion, and who is capable even of treachery." With what sadness of spirit must He have
made such an intimation at this crisis! To be forsaken by the fickle crowd of shallow, thoughtless followers
had been a small matter, could He have reckoned all the members of the select band good men and true
friends. But to have an enemy in one's own house, a diabolus capable of playing Satan's part in one's
small circle of intimate companions: - it was hard indeed!

But how could a man destined to be a traitor, and deserving to be stigmatized as a devil, manage to pass
creditably through the present crisis? Does not the fact seem to imply that, after all, it is possible to be
steadfast without being single-minded? Not so; the only legitimate inference is, that the crisis was not
searching enough to bring out the true character of Judas. Wait till you see the end. A little religion will
carry a man through many trials, but there is an experimentum crucis which nothing but sincerity can
stand. If the mind be double, or the heart divided, a time comes that compels men to act according to the
motives that are deepest and strongest in them. This remark applies especially to creative, revolutionary,
or transition epochs. In quiet times a hypocrite may pass respectably through this world, and never be
detected till he get to the next, whither his sins follow him to judgment. But in critical eras the sins of the
double-minded find them out in this life. True, even then some double-minded men can stand more
temptation than others, and are not to be bought so cheaply as the common herd. But all of them have
their price, and those who fall less easily than others fall in the end most deeply and tragically.

Of the character and fall of Judas we shall have another opportunity to speak. Our present object is simply
to point out that from such as he Jesus did not expect constancy. By referring to that disciple as He did,
He intimated His conviction that no one in whom the love of God and truth was not the deepest principle
of his being would continue faithful to the end. In effect He inculcated the necessity, in order to
steadfastness in faith, of moral integrity, or godly sincerity.

2. The second anchor by which the disciples were kept from shipwreck at this season was a clear
perception of the alternatives. "To whom shall we go?" asked Peter, as one who saw that, for men having
in view the aim pursued by himself and his brethren, there was no course open but to remain where they
were. He had gone over rapidly in his mind all the possible alternatives, and this was the conclusion at
which he had arrived. "To whom shall we go - we who seek eternal life? John, our former master, is dead;
and even were he alive, he would send us back to Thee. Or shall we go to the scribes and Pharisees? We
have been too long with Thee, ignoring God and the world to come; that when
he leaves Christ, he must go to school to some of the great masters of thoroughgoing un
belief. In the
works of a well-known German author is a dream, which portrays with appalling vividness the

We may understand what a help this clear perception of the alternatives was to Peter and his brethren, by
reflecting on the help we ourselves might derive from the same source when tempted by dogmatic
difficulties to renounce Christianity. It would make one pause if he understood that the alternatives open
to him were to abide with Christ, or to become an atheist, ignoring God and the world to come; that when
he leaves Christ, he must go to school to some of the great masters of thoroughgoing unbelief. In the
works of a well-known German author is a dream, which portrays with appalling vividness the
consequences that would ensue throughout the universe should the Creator cease to exist. The dream was invented, so the gifted writer tells us, for the purpose of frightening those who discussed the being of God as coolly as if the question respected the existence of the Kraken or the unicorn, and also to check all atheistic thoughts which might arise in his own bosom. "If ever," he says, "my heart should be so unhappy and deadened as to have all those feelings which affirm the being of a God destroyed, I would use this dream to frighten myself, and so heal my heart, and restore its lost feelings." Such benefit as Richter expected from the perusal of his own dream, would anyone, tempted to renounce Christianity, derive from a clear perception that in ceasing to be a Christian he must make up his mind to accept a creed which acknowledges no God, no soul, no hereafter.

Unfortunately it is not so easy for us now as it was for Peter to see clearly what the alternatives before us are. Few are so clear-sighted, so recklessly logical, or so frank as the late Dr. Strauss, who in his latest publication, The Old and the New Faith, plainly says that he is no longer a Christian. Hence many in our day call themselves Christians whose theory of the universe (or Weltanschauung, as the Germans call it) does not allow them to believe in the miraculous in any shape or in any sphere; with whom it is an axiom that the continuity of nature's course cannot be broken, and who therefore cannot even go the length of Socinians in their view of Christ and declare Him to be, without qualification, the Holy One of God, the morally sinless One. Even men like Renan claim to be Christians, and, like Balaam, bless Him whom their philosophy compels them to blame. Our modern Balaams all confess that Jesus is at least the holiest of men, if not the absolutely Holy One. They are constrained to bless the Man of Nazareth. They are spellbound by the Star of Bethlehem, as was the Eastern soothsayer by the Star of Jacob, and are forced to say in effect: "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and He hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it." Others not going so far as Renan, shrinking from thoroughgoing naturalism, believing in a perfect Christ, a moral miracle, yet affect a Christianity independent of dogma, and as little as possible encumbered by miracle, a Christianity purely ethical, consisting mainly in admiration of Christ's character and moral teaching; and, as the professors of such a Christianity, regard themselves as exemplary disciples of Christ. Such are the men of whom the author of Supernatural Religion speaks as characterized by a "tendency to eliminate from Christianity, with thoughtless dexterity, every supernatural element which does not quite accord with current opinions," and as endeavoring "to arrest for a moment the pursuing wolves of doubt and unbelief by practically throwing to them scrap by scrap the very doctrines which constitute the claims of Christianity to be regarded as a divine revelation at all." Such men can hardly be said to have a consistent theory of the universe, for they hold opinions based on incompatible theories, are naturalistic in tendency, yet will not carry out naturalism to all its consequences. They are either not able, or are disinclined, to realize the alternatives and to obey the voice of logic, which like a stern policeman bids them "Move on;" but would rather hold views which unite the alternatives in one compound eclectic creed, like Schleiermacher, - himself an excellent example of the class, - of whom Strauss remarks that he ground down Christianity and Pantheism to powder, and so mixed them that it is hard to say where Pantheism ends and Christianity begins. In presence of such a spirit of compromise, so widespread, and recommended by the example of many men of ability and influence, it requires some courage to have and hold a definite position, or to resist the temptation to yield to the current and adopt the watchword: Christianity without dogma and miracle. But perhaps it will be easier by and by to realize the alternatives, when time has more clearly shown whither present tendencies lead. Meantime it is the evening twilight, and for the moment it seems as if we could do without the sun, for though he is below the horizon, the air is still full of light. But wait awhile; and the deepening of the twilight into the darkness of night will show how far Christ the Holy One of the Church's confession can be dispensed with as the Sun of the spiritual world.

3. The third anchor whereby the twelve were enabled to ride out the storm, was confidence in the character of their Master. They believed, yea, they knew, that He was the Holy One of God. They had been with Jesus long enough to have come to very decided conclusions respecting Him. They had seen Him work many miracles; they had heard Him discourse with marvellous wisdom, in parable and sermon, on the divine kingdom; they had observed His wondrously tender, gracious concern for the low and the lost; they had been present at His various encounters with Pharisees, and had noted His holy abhorrence of their falsehood, pride, vanity, and tyranny. All this blessed fellowship had begotten a confidence in, and reverence for, their beloved Master, too strong to be shaken by a single address containing some statements of an incomprehensible character, couched in questionable or even offensive language. Their
intellect might be perplexed, but their heart remained true; and hence, while others who knew not Jesus well went off in disgust, they continued by His side, feeling that such a friend and guide was not to be parted with for a trifle.

"We believe and know," said Peter. He believed because he knew. Such implicit confidence as the twelve had in Jesus is possible only through intimate knowledge; for one cannot thus trust a stranger. All, therefore, who desire to get the benefit of this trust, must be willing to spend time and take trouble to get into the heart of the Gospel story, and of its great subject. The sure anchorage is not attainable by a listless, random reading of the evangelic narratives, but by a close, careful, prayerful study, pursued it may be for years. Those who grudge the trouble are in imminent danger of the fate which befell the ignorant multitude, being liable to be thrown into panic by every new infidel book, or to be scandalized by every strange utterance of the Object of faith. Those, on the other hand, who do take the trouble, will be rewarded for their pains. Storm-tossed for a time, they shall at length reach the harbor of a creed which is no nondescript compromise between infidelity and scriptural Christianity, but embraces all the cardinal facts and truths of the faith, as taught by Jesus in the Capernaum discourse, and as afterwards taught by the men who passed safely through the Capernaum crisis.

May God in His mercy guide all souls now out in the tempestuous sea of doubt into that haven of rest!

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees
Matt. 16:1–12; Mark 8:10–21.

This new collision between Jesus and His opponents took place shortly after a second miracle of feeding similar to that performed in the neighborhood of Bethsaida Julias. What interval of time elapsed between the two miracles cannot be ascertained; but it was long enough to admit of an extended journey on the part of our Lord and His disciples to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, the scene of the pathetic meeting with the Syrophoenician woman, and round from thence through the region of the ten cities, on the eastern border of the Galilean lake. It was long enough also to allow the cause and the fame of Jesus to recover from the low state to which they sank after the sifting sermon in the synagogue of Capernaum. The unpopular One had again become popular, so that on arriving at the south-eastern shore of the lake He found Himself attended by thousands, so intent on hearing Him preach, and on experiencing His healing power, that they remained with Him three days, almost, if not entirely, without food, thus creating a necessity for the second miraculous repast.

After the miracle on the south-eastern shore, Jesus, we read, sent away the multitude; and taking ship, came into the coasts of Magdala, on the western side of the sea. It was on His arrival there that He encountered the party who came seeking of Him a sign from heaven. These persons had probably heard of the recent miracle, as of many others wrought by Him; but, unwilling to accept the conclusion to which these wondrous works plainly led, they affected to regard them as insufficient evidence of His Messiahship, and demanded still more unequivocal proof before giving in their adherence to His claim. "Show us a sign from heaven," said they; meaning thereby, something like the manna brought down from heaven by Moses, or the fire called down by Elijah, or the thunder and rain called down by Samuel; it being assumed that such signs could be wrought only by the power of God, whilst the signs on earth, such as Jesus supplied in His miracles of healing, might be wrought by the power of the devil! It was a demand of a sort often addressed to Jesus in good faith or in bad; for the Jews sought after such signs - miracles of a singular and startling character, fitted to gratify a superstitious curiosity, and astonish a wonder-loving mind - miracles that were merely signs, serving no other purpose than to display divine power; like the rod of Moses, converted into a serpent, and reconverted into its original form.

These demands of the sign-seekers Jesus uniformly met with a direct refusal. He would not condescend to
work miracles of any description merely as certificates of His own Messiahship, or to furnish food for a superstitious appetite, or materials of amusement to sceptics. He knew that such as remained unbelievers in presence of His ordinary miracles, which were not naked signs, but also works of beneficence, could not be brought to faith by any means; nay, that the more evidence they got, the more hardened they should become in unbelief. He regarded the very demand for these signs as the indication of a fixed determination on the part of those who made it not to believe in Him, even if, in order to rid themselves of the disagreeable obligation, it should be necessary to put Him to death. Therefore, in refusing the signs sought after, He was wont to accompany the refusal with a word of rebuke or of sad foreboding; as when He said, at a very early period of His ministry, on His first visit to Jerusalem, after His baptism: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

On the present occasion the soul of Jesus was much perturbed by the renewed demands of the sign-seekers. "He sighed deeply in His spirit," knowing full well what these demands meant, with respect both to those who made them and to Himself; and He addressed the parties who came tempting Him in excessively severe and bitter terms, - reproaching them with spiritual blindness, calling them a wicked and adulterous generation, and ironically referring them now, as He had once done before, to the sign of the prophet Jonas. He told them, that while they knew the weather signs, and understood what a red sky in the morning or evening meant, they were blind to the manifest signs of the times, which showed at once that the Sun of righteousness had arisen, and that a dreadful storm of judgment was coming like a dark night on apostate Israel for her iniquity. He applied to them, and the whole generation they represented, the epithet "wicked," to characterize their false-hearted, malevolent, and spiteful behavior towards Himself; and He employed the term "adulterous," to describe them, in relation to God, as guilty of breaking their marriage covenant, pretending great love and zeal with their lip, but in their heart and life turning away from the living God to idols - forms, ceremonies, signs. He gave them the story of Jonah the prophet for a sign, in mystic allusion to His death; meaning to say, that one of the most reliable evidences that He was God's servant indeed, was just the fact that He was rejected, and ignominiously and barbarously treated by such as those to whom He spake: that there could be no worse sign of a man than to be well received by them - that he could be no true Christ who was so received.

Having thus freely uttered His mind, Jesus left the sign-seekers; and entering into the ship in which He had just crossed from the other side, departed again to the same eastern shore, anxious to be rid of their unwelcome presence. On arriving at the land, He made the encounter which had just taken place the subject of instruction to the twelve. "Take heed," He said as they walked along the way, "and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." The word was spoken abruptly, as the utterance of one waking out of a revery. Jesus, we imagine, while His disciples rowed Him across the lake, had been brooding over what had occurred, sadly musing on prevailing unbelief, and the dark, lowering weather-signs, portentous of evil to Him and to the whole Jewish people. And now, recollecting the presence of the disciples, He communicates His thoughts to them in the form of a warning, and cautions them against the deadly influence of an evil time, as a parent might bid his child beware of a poisonous plant whose garish flowers attracted its eye.

In this warning, it will be observed, pharisaic and sadducaic tendencies are identified. Jesus speaks not of two leavens, but of one common to both sects, as if they were two species of one genus, two branches from one stem. And such indeed they were. Superficially, the two parties were very diverse. The one was excessively zealous, the other was "moderate" in religion; the one was strict, the other easy in morals; the one was exclusively and intensely Jewish in feeling, the other was open to the influence of pagan civilization. Each party had a leaven peculiar to itself: that of the Pharisees being, as Christ was wont to declare, hypocrisy; that of the Sadducees, an engrossing interest in merely material and temporal concerns, assuming in some a political form, as in the case of the partisans of the Herod family, called in the Gospels Herodians, in others wearing the guise of a philosophy which denied the existence of spirit and the reality of the future life, and made that denial an excuse for exclusive devotion to the interests of time. But here, as elsewhere, extremes met. Phariseeism, Sadduceeism, Herodianism, though distinguished by minor differences, were radically one. The religionists, the philosophers, the politicians, were all members of one great party, which was inveterately hostile to the divine kingdom. All alike were worldly-minded (of the Pharisees it is expressly remarked that they were covetous); all were opposed to Christ for fundamentally the same reason, viz. because He was not of this world; all united fraternally at this time in the attempt to vex Him by unbelieving, unreasonable demands; and they all had a hand in His
death at the last. It was thus made apparent, once for all, that a Christian is not one who merely differs superficially either from Pharisees or from Sadducees separately, but one who differs radically from both. A weighty truth, not yet well understood; for it is fancied by many that right believing and right living consist in going to the opposite extreme from any tendency whose evil influence is apparent. To avoid pharisaic strictness and superstition, grown odious, men run into sadducaic scepticism and license; or, frightened by the excesses of infidelity and secularity, they seek salvation in ritualism, infallible churches, and the revival of medieval monkery. Thus the two tendencies continue ever propagating each other on the principle of action and reaction; one generation or school going all lengths in one direction, and another making a point of being as unlike its predecessor or its neighbor as possible, and both being equally far from the truth.

What the common leaven of Phariseism and Sadduceism was, Jesus did not deem it necessary to state. He had already indicated its nature with sufficient plainness in His severe reply to the sign-seekers. The radical vice of both sects was just ungodliness: blindness, and deadness of heart to the Divine. They did not know the true and the good when they saw it; and when they knew it, they did not love it. All around them were the evidences that the King and the kingdom of grace were among them; yet here were they asking for arbitrary outward signs, “external evidences” in the worst sense, that He who spake as never man spake, and worked wonders of mercy such as had never before been witnessed, was no impostor, but a man wise and good, a prophet, and the Son of God. Verily the natural man, religious or irreligious, is blind and dead! What these seekers after a sign needed was not a new sign, but a new heart; not mere evidence, but a spirit willing to obey the truth.

The spirit of unbelief which ruled in Jewish society Jesus described as a leaven, with special reference to its diffusiveness; and most fitly, for it passes from sire to son, from rich to poor, from learned to unlearned, till a whole generation has been vitiated by its malign influence. Such was the state of things in Israel as it came under His eye. Spiritual blindness and deadness, with the outward symptom of the inward malady,—a constant craving for evidence,—met him on every side. The common people, the leaders of society, the religious, the skeptics, the courtiers, and the rustics, were all blind, and yet apparently all most anxious to see; ever renewing the demand, “What sign showest Thou, that we may see and believe Thee? What dost Thou work?”

Vexed an hour ago by the sinister movements of foes, Jesus next found new matter for annoyance in the stupidity of friends. The disciples utterly, even ludicrously, misunderstood the warning word addressed to them. In conversation by themselves, while their Master walked apart, they discussed the question, what the strange words, so abruptly and earnestly spoken, might mean; and they came to the sapient conclusion that they were intended to caution them against buying bread from parties belonging to either of the offensive sects. It was an absurd mistake, and yet, all things considered, it was not so very unnatural: for, in the first place, as already remarked, Jesus had introduced the subject very abruptly; and secondly, some time had elapsed since the meeting with the seekers of a sign, during which no allusion seems to have been made to that matter. How were they to know that during all that time their Master’s thoughts had been occupied with what took place on the western shore of the lake? In any case, such a supposition was not likely to occur to their mind; for the demand for a sign had, doubtless, not appeared to them an event of much consequence, and it was probably forgotten as soon as their backs were turned upon the men who made it. And then, finally, it so happened that, just before Jesus began to speak, they remembered that in the hurry of a sudden departure they had forgotten to provide themselves with a stock of provisions for the journey. That was what they were thinking about when He began to say, “Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.” The momentous circumstance that they had with them but one loaf was causing them so much concern, that when they heard the caution against a particular kind of leaven, they jumped at once to the conclusion, “It is because we have no bread.”

Yet the misunderstanding of the disciples, though simple and natural in its origin, was blameworthy. They could not have fallen into the mistake had the interest they took in spiritual and temporal things respectively been proportional to their relative importance. They had treated the incident on the other side of the lake too lightly, and they had treated their neglect to provide bread too gravely. They should have taken more to heart the ominous demand for a sign, and the solemn words spoken by their Master in reference thereto; and they should not have been troubled about the want of loaves in the company of
Him who had twice miraculously fed the hungry multitude in the desert. Their thoughtlessness in one direction, and their over-thoughtfulness in another, showed that food and raiment occupied a larger place in their minds than the kingdom of God and its interests. Had they possessed more faith and more spirituality, they would not have exposed themselves to the reproachful question of their Master: “How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?”

And yet, Jesus can hardly have expected these crude disciples to appreciate as He did the significance of what had occurred on the other side of the lake. It needed no common insight to discern the import of that demand for a sign; and the faculty of reading the signs of the times possessed by the disciples, as we shall soon see, and as all we have learned concerning them already might lead us to expect, was very small indeed. One of the principal lessons to be learned from the subject of this chapter, indeed, is just this: how different were the thoughts of Christ in reference to the future from the thoughts of His companions. We shall often have occasion to remark on this hereafter, as we advance towards the final crisis. At this point we are called to signalize the fact prominently for the first time.
Peter’s Confession,  
Current opinion and Eternal Truth  

From the eastern shore of the lake Jesus directed His course northwards along the banks of the Upper Jordan, passing Bethsaida Julias, where, as Mark informs us, He restored eyesight to a blind man. Pursuing His journey, He arrived at length in the neighborhood of a town of some importance, beautifully situated near the springs of the Jordan, at the southern base of Mount Hermon. This was Caesarea Philippi, formerly called Paneas, from the heathen god Pan, who was worshipped by the Syrian Greeks in the limestone cavern nearby, in which Jordan's fountains bubble forth to light. Its present name was given to it by Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, in honor of Caesar Augustus; his own name being appended (Caesarea Philippi, or Philip's Caesarea) to distinguish it from the other town of the same name on the Mediterranean coast. The town so named could boast of a temple of white marble, built by Herod the Great to the first Roman Emperor, besides villas and palaces, built by Philip, Herod's son, in whose territories it lay, and who, as we have just stated, gave it its new name.

Away in that remote secluded region, Jesus occupied Himself for a season in secret prayer, and in confidential conversations with His disciples on topics of deepest interest. One of these conversations had reference to His own Person. He introduced the subject by asking the twelve the question, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" This question He asked, not as one needing to be informed, still less from any morbid sensitiveness, such as vain men feel respecting the opinions entertained of them by their fellow-creatures. He desired of His disciples a recital of current opinions, merely by way of preface to a profession of their own faith in the eternal truth concerning Himself. He deemed it good to draw forth from them such a profession at this time, because He was about to make communications to them on another subject, viz. His sufferings, which He knew would sorely try their faith. He wished them to be fairly committed to the doctrine of His Messiah-ship before proceeding to speak in plain terms on the unwelcome theme of His death.

From the reply of the disciples, it appears that their Master had been the subject of much talk among the people. This is only what we should have expected. Jesus was a very public and a very extraordinary person, and to be much talked about is one of the inevitable penalties of prominence. The merits and the claims of the Son of man were accordingly freely and widely canvassed in those days, with gravity or with levity, with prejudice or with candor, with decision or indecision, intelligently or ignorantly, as is the way of men in all ages. As they mingled with the people, it was the lot of the twelve to hear many opinions concerning their Lord which never reached His ear; sometimes kind and favorable, making them glad; at other times unkind and unfavorable, making them sad.

The opinions prevalent among the masses concerning Jesus - for it was with reference to these that He interrogated His disciples - seem to have been mainly favorable. All agreed in regarding Him as a prophet of the highest rank, differing only as to which of the great prophets of Israel He most nearly resembled or personated. Some said He was John the Baptist revived, others Elias, while others again identified Him with one or other of the great prophets, as Jeremiah. These opinions are explained in part by an expectation then commonly entertained, that the advent of the Messiah would be preceded by the return of one of the prophets by whom God had spoken to the fathers, partly by the perception of real or supposed resemblances between Jesus and this or that prophet; His tenderness reminding one hearer of the author of the Lamentations, His sternness in denouncing hypocrisy and tyranny reminding another of the prophet of fire, while perhaps His parabolic discourses led a third to think of Ezekiel or of Daniel.

When we reflect on the high veneration in which the ancient prophets were held, we cannot fail to see that these diverse opinions current among the Jewish people concerning Jesus imply a very high sense of His greatness and excellence. To us, who regard Him as the Sun, while the prophets were at best but lamps of greater or less brightness, such comparisons may well seem not only inadequate, but dishonoring. Yet we must not despise them, as the testimonies of open-minded but imperfectly-formed contemporaries to the
worth of Him whom we worship as the Lord. Taken separately, they show that in the judgment of candid observers Jesus was a man of surpassing greatness; taken together, they show the many-sidedness of His character, and its superiority to that of any one of the prophets; for He could not have reminded those who witnessed His works, and heard Him preach, of all the prophets in turn, unless He had comprehended them all in His one person. The very diversity of opinion respecting Him, therefore, showed that a greater than Elias, or Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, or Daniel, had appeared.

These opinions, valuable still as testimonials to the excellence of Christ, must be admitted further to be indicative, so far, of good dispositions on the part of those who cherished and expressed them. At a time when those who deemed themselves in every respect immeasurably superior to the multitude could find no better names for the Son of man than Samaritan, devil, blasphemer, glutton and drunkard, companion of publicans and sinners, it was something considerable to believe that the calumniated One was a prophet as worthy of honor as any of those whose sepulchres the professors of piety carefully varnished, while depreciating, and even putting to death, their living successors. The multitude who held this opinion might come short of true discipleship; but they were at least far in advance of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who came in tempting mood to ask a sign from heaven, and whom no sign, whether in heaven or in earth, would conciliate or convince.

How, then, did Jesus receive the report of His disciples? Was He satisfied with these favorable, and in the circumstances really gratifying, opinions current among the people? He was not. He was not content to be put on a level with even the greatest of the prophets. He did not indeed express any displeasure against those who assigned Him such a rank, and He may even have been pleased to hear that public opinion had advanced so far on the way to the true faith. Nevertheless He declined to accept the position accorded. The meek and lowly Son of man claimed to be something more than a great prophet. Therefore He turned to His chosen disciples, as to men from whom He expected a more satisfactory statement of the truth, and pointedly asked what they thought of Him. "But you - whom say ye that I am?"

In this case, as in many others, Simon son of Jonas answered for the company. His prompt, definite, memorable reply to his Master's question was this: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

With this view of His person Jesus was satisfied. He did not charge Peter with extravagance in going so far beyond the opinion of the populace. On the contrary, He entirely approved of what the ardent disciple had said, and expressed His satisfaction in no cold or measured terms. Never, perhaps, did He speak in more animated language, or with greater appearance of deep emotion. He solemnly pronounced Peter "blessed" on account of His faith; He spake for the first time of a church which should be founded, professing Peter's faith as its creed; He promised that disciple great power in that church, as if grateful to him for being the first to put the momentous truth into words, and for uttering it so boldly amid prevailing unbelief, and crude, defective belief; and He expressed, in the strongest possible terms, His confidence that the church yet to be founded would stand to all ages proof against all the assaults of the powers of darkness.

Simon's confession, fairly interpreted, seems to contain these two propositions, - that Jesus was the Messiah, and that He was divine. "Thou art the Christ," said he in the first place, with conscious reference to the reported opinions of the people, - "Thou art the Christ," and not merely a prophet come to prepare Christ's way. Then he added: "the Son of God," to explain what he understood by the term Christ. The Messiah looked for by the Jews in general was merely a man, though a very superior one, the ideal man endowed with extraordinary gifts. The Christ of Peter's creed was more than man - a superhuman, a divine being. This truth he sought to express in the second part of his confession. He called Jesus Son of God, with obvious reference to the name His Master had just given Himself - Son of man. "Thou," he meant to say, "art not only what Thou hast now called Thyself, and what, in lowliness of mind, Thou art wont to call Thyself - the Son of man; Thou art also Son of God, partaking of the divine nature not less really than of the human." Finally, he prefixed the epithet "living" to the divine name, to express his consciousness that he was making a very momentous declaration, and to give that declaration a solemn, deliberate character. It was as if he said: "I know it is no light matter to call any one, even Thee, Son of God, of the One living eternal Jehovah. But I shrink not from the assertion, however bold, startling, or even blasphemous it may seem. I cannot by any other expression do justice to all I know and feel concerning Thee, or convey the impression left on my mind by what I have witnessed during the time I
have followed Thee as a disciple." In this way was the disciple urged on, in spite of his Jewish monotheism, to the recognition of his Lord's divinity.

That the famous confession, uttered in the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, really contains in germ the doctrine of Christ's divinity, might be inferred from the simple fact that Jesus was satisfied with it; for He certainly claimed to be Son of God in a sense predicable of no mere man, even according to synoptical accounts of His teaching. But when we consider the peculiar terms in which He expressed Himself respecting Peter's faith, we are still further confirmed in this conclusion. "Flesh and blood," said He to the disciple, "hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." These words evidently imply that the person addressed had said something very extraordinary; something he could not have learned from the traditional established belief of his generation respecting Messiah; something new even for himself and his fellow-disciples, if not in word, at least in meaning, to which he could not have attained by the unaided effort of his own mind. The confession is virtually represented as an inspiration, a revelation, a flash of light from heaven, - the utterance not of the rude fisherman, but of the divine Spirit speaking, through his mouth, a truth hitherto hidden, and yet but dimly comprehended by him to whom it hath been revealed. All this agrees well with the supposition that the confession contains not merely an acknowledgment of the Messiahship of Jesus in the ordinary sense, but a proclamation of the true doctrine concerning Messiah's person - viz. that He was a divine being manifest in the flesh.

The remaining portion of our Lord's address to Simon shows that He assigned to the doctrine confessed by that disciple the place of fundamental importance in the Christian faith. The object of these remarkable statements is not to assert the supremacy of Peter, as Romanists contend, but to declare the supremely important nature of the truth he has confessed. In spite of all difficulties of interpretation, this remains clear and certain to us. Who or what the "rock" is we deem doubtful; it may be Peter, or it may be his confession: it is a point on which scholars equally sound in the faith, and equally innocent of all sympathy with Popish dogmas, are divided in opinion, and on which it would ill become us to dogmatize. Of this only we are sure, that not Peter's person, but Peter's faith, is the fundamental matter in Christ's mind. When He says to that disciple, "Thou art Petros," He means, "Thou art a man of rock, worthy of the name I gave thee by anticipation the first time I met thee, because thou hast at length got thy foot planted on the rock of the eternal truth." He speaks of the church that is to be, for the first time, in connection with Simon's confession, because that church is to consist of men adopting that confession as their own, and acknowledging Him to be the Christ, the Son of God. He alludes to the keys of the kingdom of heaven in the same connection, because none but those who homologate the doctrine first solemnly enunciated by Simon, shall be admitted within its gates. He promises Peter the power of the keys, not because it is to belong to him alone, or to him more than others, but by way of honorable mention, in recompense for the joy he has given his Lord by the superior energy and decision of his faith. He is grateful to Peter, because he has believed most emphatically that He came out from God; and He shows His gratitude by promising first to him individually a power which He afterwards conferred on all His chosen disciples.] Finally, if it be true that Peter is here called the rock on which the church shall be built, this is to be understood in the same way as the promise of the keys. Peter is called the foundation of the church only in the same sense as all the apostles are called the foundation by the Apostle Paul, viz. as the first preachers of the true faith concerning Jesus as the Christ and Son of God; and if the man who first professed that faith be honored by being called individually the rock, that only shows that the faith, and not the man, is after all the true foundation. That which makes Simon a Petros, a rock-like man, fit to build on, is the real Petra on which the Ecclesia is to be built.

After these remarks we deem it superfluous to enter minutely into the question to what the term "rock" refers in the sentence, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." At the same time, we must say that it is by no means so clear to us that the rock must be Peter, and can be nothing else, as it is the fashion of modern commentators to assert. To the rendering, "Thou art Petros, a man of rock; and on thee, as on a rock, I will build my church," it is possible, as already admitted, to assign an intelligible scriptural meaning. But we confess our preference for the old Protestant interpretation, according to which our Lord's words to His disciple should be thus paraphrased: "Thou, Simon Barjonas, art Petros, a man of rock, worthy of thy name Peter, because thou hast made that bold, good confession; and on the truth thou hast now confessed, as on a rock, will I build my church; and so long as it abides on that foundation it will stand firm and unassailable against all the powers of hell." So rendering, we make Jesus say not only what He really thought, but what was most worthy to be said. For divine truth is the sure foundation. Believers, even Peters, may fail, and prove anything but stable; but truth is eternal, and faileth never.
This we say not unmindful of the counterpart truth, that "the truth," unless confessed by living souls, is dead, and no source of stability. Sincere personal conviction, with a life corresponding, is needed to make the faith in the objective sense of any virtue.

We cannot pass from these memorable words of Christ without adverting, with a certain solemn awe, to the strange fate which has befallen them in the history of the church. This text, in which the church's Lord declares that the powers of darkness shall not prevail against her, has been used by these powers as an instrument of assault, and with only too much success. What a gigantic system of spiritual despotism and blasphemous assumption has been built on these two sentences concerning the rock and the keys! How nearly, by their aid, has the kingdom of God been turned into a kingdom of Satan! One is tempted to wish that Jesus, knowing beforehand what was to happen, had so framed His words as to obviate the mischief. But the wish were vain. No forms of expression, however carefully selected, could prevent human ignorance from falling into misconception, or hinder men who had a purpose to serve, from finding in Scripture what suited that purpose. Nor can any Christian, on reflection, think it desirable that the Author of our faith had adopted a studied prudential style of speech, intended not so much to give faithful expression to the actual thoughts of His mind and feelings of His heart, as to avoid giving occasion of stumbling to honest stupidity, or an excuse for perversion to dishonest knavery. The spoken word in that case had been no longer a true reflection of the Word incarnate. All the poetry and passion and genuine human feeling which form the charm of Christ's sayings would have been lost, and nothing would have remained but prosaic platitudes, like those of the scribes and of theological pedants. No; let us have the precious words of our Master in all their characteristic intensity and vehemence of unqualified assertion; and if prosaic or disingenuous men will manufacture out of them incredible dogmas, let them answer for it. Why should the children be deprived of their bread, and only the dogs be cared for?

One remark more ere we pass from the subject of this chapter. The part we find Peter playing in this incident at Cæsarea Philippi prepares us for regarding as historically credible the part assigned to him in the Acts of the Apostles in some momentous scenes, as, e.g., in that brought before us in the tenth chapter. The Tübingen school of critics tell us that the Acts is a composition full of invented situations adapted to an apologetic design; and that the plan on which the book proceeds is to make Peter act as like Paul as possible in the first part, and Paul, on the other hand, as much like Peter as possible in the second. The conversion of the Roman centurion by Peter's agency they regard as a capital instance of Peter being made to pose as Paul, i.e., as an universalist in his views of Christianity. Now, all we have to say on the subject here is this. The conduct ascribed to Peter the apostle in the tenth chapter of the Acts is credible in the light of the narrative we have been studying. In both we find the same man the recipient of a revelation; in both we find him the first to receive, utter, and act on a great Christian truth. Is it incredible that the man who received one revelation as a disciple should receive another as an apostle? Is it not psychologically probable that the man who now appears so original and audacious in connection with one great truth, will again show the same attributes of originality and audacity in connection with some other truth? For our part, far from feeling skeptical as to the historic truth of the narrative in the Acts, we should have been very much surprised if in the history of the nascent church Peter had been found playing a part altogether devoid of originalities and audacities. He would in that case have been very unlike his former self.
The First Lesson on the Cross

Section I. First Announcement of Christ’s Death
Matt. 16:21-28; Mark 8:31-38; Luke 9:22-27

Not till an advanced period in His public ministry - not, in fact, till it was drawing to a close - did Jesus speak in plain, unmistakable terms of His death. The solemn event was foreknown by Him from the first; and He betrayed His consciousness of what was awaiting Him by a variety of occasional allusions. These earlier utterances, however, were all couched in mystic language. They were of the nature of riddles, whose meaning became clear after the event, but which before, none could, or at least did, read. Jesus spake now of a temple, which, if destroyed, He should raise again in three days; at another time of a lifting up of the Son of man, like unto that of the brazen serpent in the wilderness; and on yet other occasions, of a sad separation of the bridegroom from the children of the bridechamber, of the giving of His flesh for the life of the world, and of a sign like that of the prophet Jonas, which should be given in His own person to an evil and adulterous generation.

At length, after the conversation in Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus changed His style of speaking on the subject of His sufferings, substituting for dark, hidden allusions, plain, literal, matter-of-fact statements. This change was naturally adapted to the altered circumstances in which He was placed. The signs of the times were growing ominous; storm-clouds were gathering in the air; all things were beginning to point towards Calvary. His work in Galilee and the provinces was nearly done; it remained for Him to bear witness to the truth in and around the holy city; and from the present mood of the ecclesiastical authorities and the leaders of religious society, as manifested by captious question and unreasonable demand, and a constant espionage on His movements, it was not difficult to foresee that it would not require many more offences, or much longer time, to ripen dislike and jealousy into murderous hatred. Such plain speaking, therefore, concerning what was soon to happen, was natural and seasonable. Jesus was now entering the valley of the shadow of death, and in so speaking He was but adapting His talk to the situation.

Plain-speaking regarding His death was now not only natural on Christ's part, but at once necessary and safe in reference to his disciples. It was necessary, in order that they might be prepared for the approaching event, as far as that was possible in the case of men who, to the last, persisted in hoping that the issue would be different from what their Master anticipated. It was safe; for now the subject might be spoken of plainly without serious risk to their faith. Before the disciples were established in the doctrine of Christ's person, the doctrine of the cross might have scared them away altogether. Premature preaching of a Christ to be crucified might have made them unbelievers in the fundamental truth that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. Therefore, in consideration of their weakness, Jesus maintained a certain reserve respecting His sufferings, till their faith in Him as the Christ should have become sufficiently rooted to stand the strain of the storm soon to be raised by a most unexpected, unwelcome, and incomprehensible announcement. Only after hearing Peter's confession was He satisfied that the strength necessary for enduring the trial had been attained.

Wherefore, "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."

Every clause in this solemn announcement demands our reverent scrutiny.

Jesus showed unto His disciples –

I. "That He must go unto Jerusalem." Yes! there the tragedy must be enacted: that was the fitting scene for the stupendous events that were about to take place. It was dramatically proper that the Son of man should die in that "holy," unholy city, which had earned a most unenviable notoriety as the murderess of the prophets, the stoner of them whom God sent unto her. "It cannot be" - it were incongruous - "that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." It was due also to the dignity of Jesus, and to the design of His death,
that He should suffer there. Not in an obscure corner or in an obscure way must He die, but in the most public place, and in a formal, judicial manner. He must be lifted up in view of the whole Jewish nation, so that all might see Him whom they had pierced, and by whose stripes also they might yet be healed. The "Lamb of God" must be slain in the place where all the legal sacrifices were offered.

2. "And suffer many things." Too many to enumerate, too painful to speak of in detail, and better passed over in silence for the present. The bare fact that their beloved Master was to be put to death, without any accompanying indignities, would be sufficiently dreadful to the disciples; and Jesus mercifully drew a veil over much that was present to His own thoughts. In a subsequent conversation on the same sad theme, when His passion was near at hand, He drew aside the veil a little, and showed them some of the "many things." But even then He was very sparing in His allusions, hinting only by a passing word that He should be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon. He took no delight in expatiating on such harrowing scenes. He was willing to bear those indignities, but He cared not to speak of them more than was absolutely necessary.

3. "Of the elders and chief priests and scribes." Not of them alone, for Gentile rulers and the people of Israel were to have a hand in evil-entreating the Son of man as well as Jewish ecclesiastics. But the parties named were to be the prime movers and most guilty agents in the nefarious transaction. The men who ought to have taught the people to recognize in Jesus the Lord's Anointed, would hound them on to cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him," and by importunities and threats urge heathen authorities to perpetrate a crime for which they had no heart. Gray-haired elders sitting in council would solemnly decide that He was worthy of death; high priests would utter oracles, that one man must die for the people, that the whole nation perish not; scribes learned in the law would use their legal knowledge to invent plausible grounds for an accusation involving capital punishment. Jesus had suffered many petty annoyances from such persons already; but the time was approaching when nothing would satisfy them but getting the object of their dislike cast forth out of the world. Alas for Israel, when her wise men, and her holy men, and her learned men, knew of no better use to make of the stone chosen of God, and precious, than thus contemptuously and wantonly to fling it away!

4. "And be killed." Yes, and for blessed ends pre-ordained of God. But of these Jesus speaks not now. He simply states, in general terms, the fact, in this first lesson on the doctrine of the cross. Anything more at this stage had been wasted words. To what purpose speak of the theology of the cross, of God's great design in the death which was to be brought about by man's guilty instrumentality, to disciples unwilling to receive even the matter of fact? The rude shock of an unwelcome announcement must first be over before anything can be profitably said on these higher themes. Therefore not a syllable here of salvation by the death of the Son of man; of Christ crucified for man's guilt as well as by man's guilt. The hard bare fact alone is stated, theology being reserved for another season, when the hearers should be in a fitter frame of mind for receiving instruction.

5. Finally, Jesus told His disciples that He should "be raised again the third day." To some so explicit a reference to the resurrection at this early date has appeared improbable. To us, on the contrary, it appears eminently seasonable. When was Jesus more likely to tell His disciples that He would rise again shortly after His death, than just on the occasion when He first told them plainly that He should die? He knew how harsh the one announcement would be to the feelings of His faithful ones, and it was natural that He should add the other, in the hope that when it was understood that His death was to be succeeded, after a brief interval of three days, by resurrection, the news would be much less hard to bear. Accordingly, after uttering the dismal words "be killed," He, with characteristic tenderness, hastened to say, "and be raised again the third day;" that, having torn, He might heal, and having smitten, He might bind up.

The grave communications made by Jesus were far from welcome to His disciples. Neither now nor at any subsequent time did they listen to the forebodings of their Lord with resignation even, not to speak of cheerful acquiescence or spiritual joy. They never heard Him speak of His death without pain; and their only comfort, in connection with such announcements as the present, seems to have been the hope that He had taken too gloomy a view of the situation, and that His apprehensions would turn out groundless. They, for their part, could see no grounds for such dark anticipations, and their Messianic ideas did not dispose them to be on the outlook for these. They had not the slightest conception that it behoved the Christ to suffer. On the contrary, a crucified Christ was a scandal and a contradiction to them, quite as
much as it continued to be to the majority of the Jewish people after the Lord had ascended to glory. Hence the more firmly they believed that Jesus was the Christ, the more confounding it was to be told that He must be put to death. "How," they asked themselves, "can these things be? How can the Son of God be subject to such indignities? How can our Master be the Christ, as we firmly believe, come to set up the divine kingdom, and to be crowned its King with glory and honor, and yet at the same time be doomed to undergo the ignominious fate of a criminal execution?" These questions the twelve could not now, nor until after the Resurrection, answer; nor is this wonderful, for if flesh and blood could not reveal the doctrine of Christ's person, still less could it reveal the doctrine of His cross. Not without a very special illumination from heaven could they understand the merest elements of that doctrine, and see, e.g., that nothing was more worthy of the Son of God than to humble Himself and become subject unto death, even the death of the cross; that the glory of God consists not merely in being the highest, but in this, that being high, He stoops in lowly love to bear the burden of His own sinful creatures; that nothing could more directly and certainly conduce to the establishment of the divine kingdom than the gracious self-humiliation of the King; that only by ascending the cross could Messiah ascend the throne of His mediatorial glory; that only so could He subdue human hearts, and become Lord of men's affections as well as of their destinies. Many in the church do not understand these blessed truths, even at this late era: what wonder, then, if they were hid for a season from the eyes of the first disciples! Let us not reproach them for the veil that was on their faces; let us rather make sure that the same veil is not on our own.

On this occasion, as at Cæsarea Philippi, the twelve found a most eloquent and energetic interpreter of their sentiments in Simon Peter. The action and speech of that disciple at this time were characteristic in the highest degree. He took Jesus, we are told (laid hold of Him, we suppose, by His hand or His garment), and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord;" or more literally, "God be merciful to Thee: God forbid! this shall not be unto Thee." What a strange compound of good and evil is this man! His language is dictated by the most intense affection: he cannot bear the thought of any harm befalling his Lord; yet how irreverent and disrespectful he is towards Him whom he has just acknowledged to be the Christ, the Son of the living God! How he overbears, and contradicts, and domineers, and, as it were, tries to bully his Master into putting away from His thoughts those gloomy forebodings of coming evil! Verily he has need of chastisement to teach him his own place, and to scourge out of his character the bad elements of forwardness, and undue familiarity, and presumptuous self-will.

Happily for Peter, he had a Master who, in His faithful love, spared not the rod when it was needful. Jesus judged that it was needed now, and therefore He administered a rebuke not less remarkable for severity than was the encomium at Cæsarea Philippi for warm, unqualified approbation, and curiously contrasting with that encomium in the terms in which it was expressed. He turned round on His offending disciple, and sternly said: "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." The same disciple who on the former occasion had spoken by inspiration of Heaven is here represented as speaking by inspiration of mere flesh and blood - of mere natural affection for His Lord, and of the animal instinct of self-preservation, thinking of self-interest merely, not of duty. He whom Christ had pronounced a man of rock, strong in faith, and fit to be a foundation-stone in the spiritual edifice, is here called an offence, a stumbling-stone lying in his Master's path. Peter, the noble confessor of that fundamental truth, by the faith of which the church would be able to defy the gates of hell, appears here in league with the powers of darkness, the unconscious mouth-piece of Satan the tempter. "Get thee behind me, Satan!" What a down come for him who but yesterday got that promise of the power of the keys! How suddenly has the novice church dignitary, too probably lifted up with pride or vanity, fallen into the condemnation of the devil!

This memorable rebuke seems mercilessly severe, and yet on consideration we feel it was nothing more than what was called for. Christ's language on this occasion needs no apology, such as might be drawn from supposed excitement of feeling, or from a consciousness on the speaker's part that the infirmity of His own sentient nature was whispering the same suggestion as that which came from Peter's lips. Even the hard word Satan, which is the sting of the speech, is in its proper place. It describes exactly the character of the advice given by Simon. That advice was substantially this: "Save thyself at any rate; sacrifice duty to self-interest, the cause of God to personal convenience." An advice truly Satanic in principle and tendency! For the whole aim of Satanic policy is to get self-interest recognized as the chief end of man. Satan's temptations aim at nothing worse than this. Satan is called the Prince of this world, because self-interest rules the world; he is called the accuser of the brethren, because he does not believe
that even the sons of God have any higher motive. He is a skeptic; and his skepticism consists in
determined, scornful unbelief in the reality of any chief end other than that of personal advantage. "Doth Job, or even Jesus, serve God for naught? Self-sacrifice, suffering for righteousness' sake, fidelity to truth
even unto death: - it is all romance and youthful sentimentalism, or hypocrisy and hollow cant. There is
absolutely no such thing as a surrender of the lower life for the higher; all men are selfish at heart, and
have their price: some may hold out longer than others, but in the last extremity every man will prefer his
own things to the things of God. All that a man hath will he give for his life, his moral integrity and his
piety not excepted." Such is Satan's creed.

The suggestion made by Peter, as the unconscious tool of the spirit of evil, is identical in principle with
that made by Satan himself to Jesus in the temptation in the wilderness. The tempter said then in effect:
"If Thou be the Son of God, use Thy power for Thine own behoof; Thou art hungry, e.g., make bread for
Thyself out of the stones. If Thou be the Son of God, presume on Thy privilege as the favorite of Heaven;
cast Thyself down from this elevation, securely counting on protection from harm, even where other men
would be allowed to suffer the consequences of their foolhardiness. What better use canst Thou make of
Thy divine powers and privileges than to promote Thine own advantage and glory?" Peter's feeling at the
present time seems to have been much the same: "If Thou be the Son of God, why shouldst Thou suffer
an ignominious, violent death? Thou hast power to save Thyself from such a fate; surely Thou wilt not
hesitate to use it!" The attached disciple, in fact, was an unconscious instrument employed by Satan to
subject Jesus to a second temptation, analogous to the earlier one in the desert of Judea. It was the god
of this world that was at work in both cases; who, being accustomed to find men only too ready to prefer
safety to righteousness, could not believe that he should find nothing of this spirit in the Son of God, and
therefore came again and again seeking an open point in His armor through which he might shoot his fiery
darts; not renouncing hope till his intended victim hung on the cross, apparently conquered by the world,
but in reality a conqueror both of the world and of its lord.

The severe language uttered by Jesus on this occasion, when regarded as addressed to a dearly beloved
disciple, shows in a striking manner His holy abhorrence of
everything savoring of self-
seeking. "Save Thyself," counsels Simon: "Get thee behind me, Satan," replies Simon's Lord. Truly Christ was not one
who pleased Himself. Though He were a Son, yet would He learn obedience by the things which He had to
suffer. And by this mind He proved Himself to be the Son, and won from His Father the approving voice:
"Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased," - Heaven's reply to the voice from hell
counseling Him to pursue a course of self-pleasing. Persevering in this mind, Jesus was at length lifted up on the
cross, and so became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him. Blessed now and
forevermore be His name, who so humbled Himself, and became obedient as far as death!

Section II. Cross-Bearing, the Law of Discipleship


After one hard announcement, comes another not less hard. The Lord Jesus has told His disciples that He
must one day be put to death; He now tells them, that as it fares with Him, so it must fare with them
also. The second announcement was naturally occasioned by the way in which the first had been received.
Peter had said, and all had felt, "This shall not be unto Thee." Jesus replies in effect, "Say you so? I tell
you that not only shall I, your Master, be crucified, — for such will be the manner of my death, — but ye
too, faithfully following me, shall most certainly have your crosses to bear. 'If any man will come after me,
let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.'"

The second announcement was not, like the first, made to the twelve only. This we might infer from the
terms of the announcement, which are general, even if we had not been informed, as we are by Mark and
Luke, that before making it Jesus called the people unto Him, with His disciples, and spake in the hearing
of them all. The doctrine here taught, therefore, is for all Christians in all ages: not for apostles only, but
for the humblest disciples; not for priests or preachers, but for the laity as well; not for monks living in
cloisters, but for men living and working in the outside world. The King and Head of the church here
proclaims a universal law binding on all His subjects, requiring all to bear a cross in fellowship with Himself.

We are not told how the second announcement was received by those who heard it, and particularly by the twelve. We can believe, however, that to Peter and his brethren it sounded less harsh than the first, and seemed, at least theoretically, more acceptable. Common experience might teach them that crosses, however unpleasant to flesh and blood, were nevertheless things that might be looked for in the lot of mere men. But what had Christ the Son of God to do with crosses? Ought He not to be exempt from the sufferings and indignities of ordinary mortals? If not, of what avail was His divine Sonship? In short, the difficulty for the twelve was probably, not that the servant should be no better than the Master, but that the Master should be no better than the servant.

Our perplexity, on the other hand, is apt to be just the reverse of this. Familiar with the doctrine that Jesus died on the cross in our room, we are apt to wonder what occasion there can be for our bearing a cross. If He suffered for us vicariously, what need, we are ready to inquire, for suffering on our part likewise? We need to be reminded that Christ’s sufferings, while in some respects peculiar, are in other respects common to Him with all in whom His spirit abides; that while, as redemptive, His death stands alone, as suffering for righteousness’ sake it is but the highest instance of a universal law, according to which all who live a true godly life must suffer hardship in a false evil world. And it is very observable that Jesus took a most effectual method of keeping this truth prominently before the mind of His followers in all ages, by proclaiming it with great emphasis on the first occasion on which He plainly announced that He Himself was to die, giving it, in fact, as the first lesson on the doctrine of His death: the first of four to be found in the Gospels. Thereby He in effect declared that only such as were willing to be crucified with Him should be saved by His death; nay, that willingness to bear a cross was indispensable to the right understanding of the doctrine of salvation through Him. It is as if above the door of the school in which the mystery of redemption was to be taught, He had inscribed the legend: Let no man who is unwilling to deny himself, and take up his cross, enter here.

In this great law of discipleship the cross signifies not merely the external penalty of death, but all troubles that come on those who earnestly endeavor to live as Jesus lived in this world, and in consequence of that endeavor. Many and various are the afflictions of the righteous, differing in kind and degree, according to times and circumstances, and the callings and stations of individuals. For the righteous One, who died not only by the unjust, but for them, the appointed cup was filled with all possible ingredients of shame and pain, mingled together in the highest degree of bitterness. Not a few of His most honored servants have come very near their Master in the manner and measure of their afflictions for His sake, and have indeed drunk of His cup, and been baptized with His bloody baptism. But for the rank and file of the Christian host the hardships to be endured are ordinarily less severe, the cross to be borne less heavy. For one the cross may be the calumnies of lying lips, “which speak grievous things proudly and contumeliously against the righteous:” for another, failure to attain the much-worshipped idol success in life, so often reached by unholy means not available for a man who has a conscience; for a third, mere isolation and solitariness of spirit amid uncongenial, unsympathetic neighbors, not minded to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and not loving those who do so live.

The cross, therefore, is not the same for all. But that there is a cross of some shape for all true disciples is clearly implied in the words: “If anyone will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross.” The plain meaning of these words is, that there is no following Jesus on any other terms — a doctrine which, however clearly taught in the Gospel, spurious Christians are unwilling to believe and resolute to deny. They take the edge off their Lord’s statement by explaining that it applies only to certain critical times, happily very different from their own; or that if it has some reference to all times, it is only applicable to such as are called to play a prominent part in public affairs as leaders of opinion, pioneers of progress, prophets denouncing the vices of the age, and uttering unwelcome oracles, — a proverbially dangerous occupation, as the Greek poet testified who said: “Apollo alone should prophesy, for he fears nobody.” To maintain that all who would live devoutly in Christ Jesus must suffer somehow, is, they think, to take too gloomy and morose a view of the wickedness of the world, or too high and exacting a view of the Christian life. The righteousness which in ordinary times involves a cross is in their view folly and fanaticism. It is speaking when one should be silent, meddling in matters with which one has no concern; in a word, it is being righteous overmuch. Such thoughts as these, expressed or unexpressed, are sure to
prevail extensively when religious profession is common. The fact that fidelity involves a cross, as also the fact that Christ was crucified just because He was righteous, are well understood by Christians when they are a suffering minority, as in primitive ages. But these truths are much lost sight of in peaceful, prosperous times. Then you shall find many holding most sound views of the cross Christ bore for them, but sadly ignorant concerning the cross they themselves have to bear in fellowship with Christ. Of this cross they are determined to know nothing. What it can mean, or whence it can come, they cannot comprehend; though had they the true spirit of self-denial required of disciples by Christ, they might find it for themselves in their daily life, in their business, in their home, nay, in their own heart, and have no need to seek for it in the ends of the earth, or to manufacture artificial crosses out of ascetic austerities.

To the law of the cross Jesus annexed three reasons designed to make the obeying of it easier, by showing disciples that, in rendering obedience to the stern requirement, they attend to their own true interest. Each reason is introduced by a “For.”

The first reason is: “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” In this startling paradox the word “life” is used in a double sense. In the first clause of each member of the sentence it signifies natural life, with all the adjuncts that make it pleasant and enjoyable; in the second, it means the spiritual life of a renewed soul. The deep, pregnant saying may therefore be thus expanded and paraphrased: Whosoever will save, i.e., make it his first business to save or preserve, his natural life and worldly wellbeing, shall lose the higher life, the life indeed; and whosoever is willing to lose his natural life for my sake shall find the true eternal life. According to this maxim we must lose something, it is not possible to live without sacrifice of some kind; the only question being what shall be sacrificed — the lower or the higher life, animal happiness or spiritual blessedness. If we choose the higher, we must be prepared to deny ourselves and take up our cross, though the actual amount of the loss we are called on to bear may be small; for godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. If, on the other hand, we choose the lower, and resolve to have it at all hazards, we must inevitably lose the higher. The soul’s life, and all the imperishable goods of the soul, — righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, — are the price we pay for worldly enjoyment.

This price is too great: and that is what Jesus next told His hearers as the second persuasive to cross-bearing. “For what,” He went on to ask, “is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” The two questions set forth the incomparable value of the soul on both sides of a commercial transaction. The soul, or life, in the true sense of the word, is too dear a price to pay even for the whole world, not to say for that small portion of it which falls to the lot of any one individual. He who gains the world at such a cost is a loser by the bargain. On the other hand, the whole world is too small, yea, an utterly inadequate price, to pay for the ransom of the soul once lost. What shall a man give in exchange for the priceless thing he has foolishly bartered away? “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” No! O man; not any of these things, nor any thing else thou hast to give; not the fruit of thy merchandise, not ten thousands of pounds sterling. Thou canst not buy back thy soul, which thou hast bartered for the world, with all that thou hast of the world. The redemption of the soul is indeed precious; it cannot be delivered from the bondage of sin by corruptible things, such as silver and gold: the attempt to purchase pardon and peace and life that way can only make thy case more hopeless, and add to thy condemnation.

The appeal contained in these solemn questions comes home with irresistible force to all who are in their right mind. Such feel that no outward good can be compared in value to having a “saved soul,” i.e. being a right-minded Christian man. All, however, are not so minded. Multitudes account their souls of very small value indeed. Judas sold his soul for thirty pieces of silver; and not a few who probably deem themselves better that he would part with theirs for the most paltry worldly advantage. The great ambition of the million is to be happy as animals, not to be blessed as “saved,” noble-spirited, sanctified men. “Who will show us any good?” is that which the many say. “Give us health, wealth, houses, lands, honors, and we care not for righteousness, either imputed or personal, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost. These may be good also in their way, and if one could have them along with the other,
without trouble or sacrifice, it were perhaps well; but we cannot consent, for their sakes, to deny ourselves any pleasure, or voluntarily endure any hardship.”

The third argument in favor of cross-bearing is drawn from the second advent. “For the son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels; and then shall He reward every man according to his works.” These words suggest a contrast between the present and the future state of the speaker, and imply a promise of a corresponding contrast between the present and the future of His faithful followers. Now Jesus is the Son of man, destined ere many weeks pass to be crucified at Jerusalem. At the end of the days He will appear invested with the manifest glory of Messiah, attended with a mighty host of ministering spirits; His reward for enduring the cross, despising the shame. Then will He reward every man according to the tenor of his present life. To the cross-bearers He will grant a crown of righteousness; to the cross-spurners He will assign, as their due, shame and everlasting contempt. Stern doctrine, distasteful to the modern mind on various grounds, specially on these two: because it sets before us alternatives in the life beyond, and because it seeks to propagate heroic virtue by hope of reward, instead of exhibiting virtue as its own reward. As to the former, the alternative of the promised reward is certainly a great mystery and burden to the spirit; but it is to be feared that an alternative is involved in any earnest doctrine of moral distinctions or of human freedom and responsibility. As to the other, Christians need not be afraid of degenerating into moral vulgarity in Christ’s company. There is no vulgarity or impurity in the virtue which is sustained by the hope of eternal life. That hope is not selfishness, but simply self-consistency. It is simply believing in the reality of the kingdom for which you labor and suffer; involving, of course, the reality of each individual Christian’s interest therein, your own not excepted. And such faith is necessary to heroism. For who would fight and suffer for a dream? What patriot would risk his life for his country’s cause who did not hope for the restoration of her independence? And who but a pedant would say that the purity of his patriotism was sullied, because his hope for the whole nation did not exclude all reference to himself as an individual citizen? Equally necessary is it that a Christian should believe in the kingdom of glory, and equally natural and proper that he should cherish the hope of a personal share in its honors and felicities. Where such faith and hope are not, little Christian heroism will be found. For as an ancient Church Father said, “There is no certain work where there is an uncertain reward.” Men cannot be heroes in doubt or despair. They cannot struggle after perfection and a divine kingdom, sceptical the while whether these things be more than devout imaginations, unrealizable ideals. In such a mood they will take things easy, and make secular happiness their chief concern.
The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Day of Pentecost

'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.'—2:1

The Feast of Unleavened Bread: The 'Feast of Unleavened Bread,' which commenced in the Paschal night itself and lasted for seven days, derived its name from the Mazzoth, or unleavened cakes, which were the only bread allowed during that week. This is called in Scripture 'the bread of affliction' (Deut 16:3), as is commonly supposed, because its insipid and disagreeable taste symbolised the hardship and affliction of Egypt. But this explanation must be erroneous. It would convert one of the most joyous festivals into an annual season of mourning. The idea intended to be conveyed by the Scriptural term is quite different. For, just as we should ever remember the death of our Saviour in connection with His resurrection, so were Israel always to remember their bondage in connection with their deliverance. Besides, the bread of the Paschal night was not that of affliction because it was unleavened; it was unleavened because it had been that of affliction. For it had been Israel's 'affliction,' and a mark of their bondage and subjection to the Egyptians, to be driven forth in such 'haste' (Deut 16:3; Exo 12:33,39) as not even to have time for leavening their bread. Hence also the prophet, when predicting another and far more glorious deliverance, represents Israel, in contrast to the past, as too holy to seek enrichment by the possessions, and as too secure to be driven forth in haste by the fear of those who had held them captives:

'Deport ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence,—no unclean thing; Go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of Jehovah. For ye shall not go out with haste,—go by light: For Jehovah will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your reward' (Isa 52:11,12).

The Passover, therefore, was not so much the remembrance of Israel's bondage as of Israel's deliverance from that bondage, and the bread which had originally been that of affliction, because that of haste, now became, as it were, the bread of a new state of existence. None of Egypt's leaven was to pervade it; nay, all the old leaven, which served as the symbol of corruption and of death, was to be wholly banished from their homes. They were to be 'a new lump,' as they were 'unleavened' (1 Cor 5:7). Thus what had originally been the necessity of one day, became the ordinance of a feast, bearing the sacred number of seven days. As the cross has become to us the tree of life; as death hath been abolished by death, and captivity been led captive by the voluntary servitude (Psa 40:6,7) of the Lord of glory, so to Israel the badge of former affliction became the symbol of a new and joyous life, in which they were to devote themselves and all that they had unto the Lord.

The First Day of the Feast: The same truth is fully symbolised in the sacrifices of this feast, and especially in the presentation of the first ripe sheaf on the second day of the Passover. The first day of 'unleavened bread,' or the 15th of Nisan, was a 'holy convocation,' when neither servile nor needless work was to be done, that only being allowed which was necessary for the joyous observance of the festival. After the regular morning sacrifice the public offerings were brought. These consisted, on each of the seven days of the festive week, of two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs for a burnt-offering, with their appropriate meat-offerings; and of 'one goat for a sin-offering, to make an atonement for you' (Num 28:19-24). After these public sacrifices (for the whole congregation), the private offerings of each individual were brought, commonly on the first day of the feast (the 15th of Nisan), but if this had been neglected, on any of the other days. These sacrifices were a burnt-offering, of the value of at least one meah of silver<1> (= 1/3 denar, or about 2 1/2 d.); then, the 15th day Chagigah (literally, festivity), of the value of at least two meahs of silver (= 5d.); and lastly, the so-called 'sacrifices of joyousness' (Deut
Both the Chagigah and the 'offerings of joyousness' were 'peace-offerings.' They required imposition of hands, sprinkling of blood, burning of the inside fat and kidneys on the altar, and the proper setting aside of what went to the priest, viz. the breast as a wave-offering and the right shoulder as a heave-offering (Lev 3:1-5; 7:29-34); the difference, as we have seen, being, that the wave-offering belonged originally to Jehovah, who gave His portion to the priests, while the heave-offering came to them directly from the people. The rest was used by the offerers in their festive meals (but only during two days and one night from the time of sacrifice). Tradition allowed the poor, who might have many to share at their board, to spend even less than one meah on their burnt-offerings, if they added what had been saved to their peace-offerings. Things devoted to God, such as tithes, firstlings, etc., might be used for this purpose, and it was even lawful for priests to offer what had come to them as priestly dues (Mishnah, Chag. i. 3, 4). In short, it was not to be a heavy yoke of bondage, but a joyous festival. But on one point the law was quite explicit—Chagigah might not be offered by any person who had contracted Levitical defilement (Pes. vi. 3). It was on this ground that, when the Jews led 'Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment,' they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might 'eat the Passover' (John 18:28). And this brings us once more to the history of the last real Passover.

The Day of Our Lord's Betrayal: 'It was early' on the 15th day of Nisan when the Lord was delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. In the previous night He and His disciples had partaken of the Paschal Supper. The betrayer alone was too busy with his plans to finish the meal. He had, so to speak, separated from the fellowship of Israel before he excommunicated himself from that of Christ. While the Paschal services in the 'guest-chamber' were prolonged by the teaching and the intercession of the Master, and when the concluding rites of that night merged in the institution of the Lord's Supper, Judas was completing, with the chief priests and elders, the betrayal of Jesus, and received the 'reward of iniquity' (Acts 1:18). Either the impetuosity of the traitor, or, more probably, the thought that such an opportunity might never come to them again, decided the elders, who, till then, had intended to delay the capture of Jesus till after the Feast, for 'fear of the multitude.' It was necessary to put aside, not only considerations of truth and of conscience, but to violate almost every fundamental principle of their own judicial administration. In such a cause, however, the end would sanctify any means.

The Arrest of Our Lord: Some of their number hastily gathered the Temple guard under its captains. A detachment of Roman soldiers under an officer would readily be granted from the neighbouring fortress, Antonia, when the avowed object was to secure a dangerous leader of rebellion and to prevent the possibility of a popular tumult in his favour.

A number of trusty fanatics from the populace accompanied 'the band.' They were all armed with clubs and swords, 'as against a murderer'; and though the dazzling light of a full moon shone on the scene, they carried torches and lamps, in case He or His followers should hide in the recesses of the garden or escape observation. But far other than they had expected awaited them in 'the garden.' He whom they had come to take prisoner by violent means first overcame, and then willingly surrendered to them, only stipulating for the freedom of His followers. They led Him back into the city, to the Palace of the High Priest, on the slope of Mount Zion, almost opposite to the Temple. What passed there need not be further described, except to say, that, in their treatment of Jesus, the Sanhedrim violated not only the law of God, but grossly outraged every ordinance of their own traditions.

Possibly the consciousness of this, almost as much as political motives, may have influenced them in handing over the matter to Pilate. The mere fact that they possessed not the power of capital punishment would scarcely have restrained them from killing Jesus, as they afterwards stoned Stephen, and would have murdered Paul but for the intervention of the Roman garrison from Fort Antonia. On the other hand, if it was, at the same time, their object to secure a public condemnation and execution, and to awaken the susceptibilities of the civil power against the movement which Christ had initiated, it was necessary to carry the case to Pilate. And so in that grey morning light of the first day of unleavened bread the saddest and strangest scene in Jewish history was enacted. The chief priests and elders, and the most fanatical of the people were gathered in Fort Antonia. From where they stood outside the Praetorium they would, in all
probability, have a full view of the Temple buildings, just below the rocky fort; they could see the morning sacrifice offered, and the column of sacrificial smoke and of incense rise from the great altar towards heaven. At any rate, even if they had not seen the multitude that thronged the sacred buildings, they could hear the Levites' song and the blasts of the priests' trumpets. and now the ordinary morning service was over, and the festive sacrifices were offered. It only remained to bring the private burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice the Chagigah, which they must offer undefiled, if they were to bring it at all, or to share in the festive meal that would afterwards ensue.

And so the strangest contradiction was enacted. They who had not hesitated to break every law of God's and of their own making, would not enter the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled and prevented from the Chagigah! Surely, the logic of inconsistency could go no further in punctiliously observing the letter and violating the spirit of the law.

The Darkness: That same afternoon of the first Passover day, 'when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsake Me?...And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.' This, just about the time when the evening sacrifice had been offered, so that the incensing priest standing in the Holy Place must have witnessed the awful sight.

The Sheaf of Firstfruits: A little later on in the evening of that same day, just as it was growing dark, a noisy throng followed delegates from the Sanhedrin outside the city and across the brook Kedron. It was a very different procession, and for a very different purpose, from the small band of mourners which, just about the same time, carried the body of the dead Saviour from the cross to the rock-hewn tomb wherein no man had yet been laid. While the one turned into 'the garden' (John 20:15), perhaps to one side, the other emerged, amidst loud demonstrations, in a field across Kedron, which had been marked out for the purpose. They were to be engaged in a service most important to them. It was probably to this circumstance that Joseph of Arimathea owed their non-interference with his request for the body of Jesus, and Nicodemus and the women, that they could go undisturbed about the last sad offices of loving mourners. The law had it, 'Ye shall bring a sheaf [literally the omer] of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall wave the omer before Jehovah, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it' (Lev 23:10,11). This Passover-sheaf, or rather omer, was to be accompanied by a burnt-offering of a 'he lamb, without blemish, of the first year,' with its appropriate meat- and drink-offering, and after it had been brought, but not till then, fresh barley might be used and sold in the land. Now, this Passover-sheaf was reaped in public the evening before it was offered, and it was to witness this ceremony that the crowd gathered around 'the elders,' who took care that all was done according to traditionary ordinance.

'TheMorrow After the Sabbath': The expression, 'the morrow after the Sabbath' (Lev 23:11), has sometimes been misunderstood as implying that the presentation of the so-called 'first sheaf' was to be always made on the day following the weekly Sabbath of the Passover-week. This view, adopted by the 'Boethusians' and the Sadducees in the time of Christ, and by the Karaite Jews and certain modern interpreters, rests on a misinterpretation of the word 'Sabbath' (Lev 23:24,32,39). As in analogous allusions to other feasts in the same chapter, it means not the weekly Sabbath, but the day of the festival. The testimony of Josephus (Antiq. iii. 10, 5, 6), or Philo (Op. ii. 294), and of Jewish tradition, leaves no room to doubt that in this instance we are to understand by the 'Sabbath' the 15th of Nisan, on whatever day of the week it might fall. Already, on the 14th of Nisan, the spot whence the first sheaf was to be reapd had been marked out by delegates from the Sanhedrim, by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley that was to be cut down. Though, for obvious reasons, it was customary to choose for this purpose the sheltered Ashes-valley across Kedron, there was no restriction on that point, provided the barley had grown in an ordinary field— course in Palestine itself— not in garden or orchard land, and that the soil had not been manured nor yet artificially watered (Mishnah, Menach. viii. 1, 2).
When the time for cutting the sheaf had arrived, that is, on the evening of the 15th of Nisan (even though it were a Sabbath), just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, formally set to work.

But in order clearly to bring out all that was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked of the bystanders three times each of these questions: 'Has the sun gone down?' 'With this sickle?' 'Into this basket?' 'On this Sabbath (or first Passover-day)?'—lastly, 'Shall I reap?' Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down barley to the amount of one ephah, or ten omers, or three seahs, which is equal to about three pecks and three pints of our English measure. The ears were brought into the Court of the Temple, and thrashed out with canes or stalks, so as not to injure the corn; then 'pard' on a pan perforated with holes, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. The corn thus prepared was ground in a barley-mill, which left the hulls whole. According to some, the flour was always successfully passed through thirteen sieves, each closer than the other. The statement of a rival authority, however, seems more rational—it was only done till the flour was sufficiently fine (Men. vi. 6, 7), which was ascertained by one of the 'Gizbarim' (treasurers) plunging his hands into it, the sifting process being continued so long as any of the flour adhered to the hands (Men. viii. 2). Though one ephah, or ten omers, of barley was cut down, only one omer of flour, or about 5 1/4 pints of our measure, was offered in the Temple on the second Paschal, or 16th day of Nisan. The rest of the flour might be redeemed, and used for any purpose. The omer of flour was mixed with a 'log,' or very nearly three-fourths of a pint of oil, and a handful of frankincense put upon it, then waved before the Lord, and a handful taken out and burned on the altar.

The remainder belonged to the priest. This was what is popularly, though not very correctly, called 'the presentation of the first or wave-sheaf' on the second day of the Passover-feast, of the 16th of Nisan.

The Last Day of the Passover: Thus far the two first days. The last day of the Passover, as the first, was a 'holy convocation,' and observed like a Sabbath. The intervening days were 'minor festivals,' or Moed Katon. The Mishnah (Tract. Moed Katon) lays down precise rules as to the kind of work allowed on such days. As a general principle, all that was necessary either for the public interest or to prevent private loss was allowed; but no new work of any kind for private or public purposes might be begun. Thus you might irrigate dry soil, or repair works for irrigation, but not make new ones, nor dig canals, etc. It only remains to add, that any one prevented by Levitical defilement, disability, or distance from keeping the regular Passover, might observe what was called 'the second,' or 'the little Passover,' exactly a month later (Num 9:9-12). The Mishnah has it (Pes. ix. 3) that the second differed from the first Passover in this—leaven might be kept in the house along with the unleavened bread, that the Hallel was not sung at the Paschal Supper, and that no Chagigah was offered.

Pentecost: The 'Feast of Unleavened Bread' may be said not to have quite passed till fifty-days after its commencement, when it merged in that of Pentecost, or 'of Weeks.' According to unanimous Jewish tradition, which was universally received at the time of Christ, the day of Pentecost was the anniversary of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, which the Feast of Weeks was intended to commemorate. Thus, as the dedication of the harvest, commencing with the presentation of the first omer on the Passover, was completed in the thank-offering of the two wave-loaves at Pentecost, so the memorial of Israel's deliverance appropriately terminated in that of the giving of the Law— as, making the highest application of it, the Passover sacrifice of the Lord Jesus may be said to have been completed in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Jewish tradition has it, that on the 2nd of the third month, or Sivan, Moses had ascended the Mount (Exo 19:1-3), that he communicated with the people on the 3rd (Exo 19:7), reascended the Mount on the 4th (Exo 19:8), and that then the people sanctified themselves on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of Sivan, on which latter day the ten commandments were actually given them (Exo 19:10-16).

Accordingly the days before Pentecost were always reckoned as the first, second, third, etc., since the presentation of the omer. Thus Maimonides beautifully observes: 'Just as one who is expecting the most faithful of his friends is wont to count the days and hours to his arrival, so we also count from the omer of the day of our Exodus from Egypt to that of the giving of the law, which was the object of our Exodus, as it is said: 'I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto Myself.' And because this great manifestation did not last more than one day, therefore we annually commemorate it only one day.'
Full seven weeks after the Paschal day, counting from the presentation of the omer on the 16th of Nisan, or exactly on the fiftieth day (Lev 23:15,16), was the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, 'a holy convocation,' in which 'no servile work' was to be done (Lev 23:21; Num 28:26), when 'all males' were to 'appear before Jehovah' in His sanctuary (Exo 34:22; Deut 16:10,16; 2 Chron 8:13) and 'Feast of the Fiftieth Day,' or 'Day of Pentecost' (Jos. Jew. Wars, ii. e, 1; Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor 16:8), bear reference to this interval from the Passover. Its character is expressed by the terms 'feast of harvest' (Exo 23:16) and 'day of firstfruits' (Num 28:26), while Jewish tradition designates it as 'Chag ha Azereth,' or simply 'Azereth' (the 'feast of the conclusion,' or simply 'conclusion'), and the 'Season of the giving our our Law.'

The festive sacrifices for the day of Pentecost were, according to Numbers 28:26-31, 'two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year' for a burnt-offering, along with their appropriate meat-offerings; and 'one kid of the goats' for a sin-offering—these, of course, irrespective of the usual morning sacrifice. But what gave to the feast its distinctive peculiarity was the presentation of the two loaves, and the sacrifices which accompanied them. Though the attendance of worshippers at the Temple may not have been so large as at the Passover, yet tens of thousands crowded to it (Jos. Antiq. xiv. 13, 4; xvii. 10, 2). From the narrative in Acts 2 we also infer that perhaps, more than at any of the other great festivals, Jews from distant countries came to Jerusalem, possibly from the greater facilities for travelling which the season afforded. On the day before Pentecost the pilgrim bands entered the Holy City, which just then lay in the full glory of early summer. Most of the harvest all over the country had already been reaped, and a period of rest and enjoyment seemed before them.

As the stars shone out in the deep blue sky with the brilliancy peculiar to an Eastern clime, the blasts of the priests' trumpets, announcing the commencement of the feast, sounded from the Temple mount through the delicious stillness of the summer night. Already in the first watch the great altar was cleansed, and immediately after midnight the Temple gates were thrown open. For before the morning sacrifice all burnt- and peace-offerings which the people proposed to bring at the feast had to be examined by the officiating priesthood. Great as their number was, it must have been a busy time, till the announcement that the morning glow extended to Hebron put an end to all such preparations, by giving the signal for the regular morning sacrifice. After that the festive offerings prescribed in Numbers 28:26-30 were brought—, the sin-offering, with proper imposition of hands, confession of sin, and sprinkling of blood; and similarly the burnt-offerings, with their meat-offerings. The Levites were now chanting the 'Hallel' to the accompanying music of a single flute, which began and ended the song, so as to give it a sort of soft sweetness. The round, ringing treble of selected voices from the children of Levites, who stood below their fathers, gave richness and melody to the hymn, while the people either repeated or responded, as on the evening of the Passover sacrifice.

The Two Wave-loaves: Then came the peculiar offering of the day—of the two wave-loaves, with their accompanying sacrifices. These consisted of seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bullock, and two rams for a burnt-offering, with their appropriate meat-offerings; and then 'one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings' (Lev 23:19).

As the omer for the 16th of Nisan was of barley, being the first ripe corn in the land, so the 'two wave-loaves' were prepared from wheat grown in the best district of the country—conditions similar to those already noticed about the Passover-sheaf. Similarly, three seahs, or about three pecks and three pints of wheat, were cut down, brought to the Temple, thrashed like other meat-offerings, ground, and passed through twelve sieves.

From the flour thus obtained two omers (or double the quantity of that at the Passover) were used for 'the two loaves'; the rest might be redeemed and used for any purpose. Care was taken that the flour for each loaf should be taken separately from one and a half seah, that it should be separately kneaded with lukewarm water (like all thank-offerings), and separately baked—latter in the Temple itself. The loaves were made the evening preceding the festival; or, if that fell on the Sabbath, two evenings before. In shape they were long and flat, and turned up, either at the edges or at the corners. According to the
Mishnah, each loaf was four handbreadths wide, seven long, and four fingers high, and as it contained one omer of flour (5 1/2 pints, or rather less than four pounds weight), the dough would weigh about five pounds and three-quarters, yielding, say, five pounds and a quarter of bread, or ten and a half for the two 'wave-loaves.'

The Wave-loaves Were Leavened: Contrary to the common rule of the Sanctuary, these loaves were leavened, which, as the Mishnah, informs us (Men. v. 1), was the case in all thank-offerings. The common explanation— the wave-loaves were leavened because they represented the ordinary food of the people— partially accounts for this. No doubt these wave-loaves expressed the Old Testament acknowledgment of the truth which our Lord embodied in the prayer, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' But this is not all. Let it be remembered that these two loaves, with the two lambs that formed part of the same wave-offering, were the only public peace- and thank-offerings of Israel; that they were accompanied by burnt- and sin-offerings; and that, unlike ordinary peace-offerings, they were considered as 'most holy.' Hence they were leavened, because Israel's public thank-offerings, even the most holy, are leavened by imperfection and sin, and they need a sin-offering. This idea of a public thank-offering was further borne out by all the services of the day. First, the two lambs were 'waved' while yet alive; that is, before being made ready for use. Then, after their sacrifice, the breast and shoulder, or principal parts of each, were laid beside the two loaves, and 'waved' (generally towards the east) forwards and back wards, and up and down.

After burning the fat, the flesh belonged, not to the offerers, but to the priests. As in the case of the most holy sacrifices, the sacrificial meal was to take place within the Temple itself, nor was any part of it to be kept beyond midnight. One of the wave-loaves and of the lambs went to the high-priest; the other belonged to all the officiating priesthood. Lastly, after the ceremony of the wave-loaves, the people brought their own freewill-offerings, each as the Lord had prospered him— afternoon and evening being spent in the festive meal, to which the stranger, the poor, and the Levite were bidden as the Lord's welcome guests. On account of the number of such sacrifices, the Feast of Weeks was generally protracted for the greater part of a week; and this the more readily that the offering of firstfruits also began at this time. Lastly, as the bringing of the omer at the Passover marked the period when new corn might be used in the land, so the presentation of the wave-loaves that when new flour might be brought for meat-offerings in the Sanctuary.

The Later Significance of Pentecost: If Jewish tradition connected the 'Feast of Firstfruits' with the 'Mount that might be touched,' and the 'voice of words which they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them anymore,' we have in this respect also 'come unto Mount Zion,' and to the better things of the New Covenant. To us the Day of Pentecost is, indeed, the 'feast of firstfruits,' and that of the giving of the better law, 'written not in tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart,' 'with the Spirit of the living God.' For, as the worshippers were in the Temple, probably just as they were offering the wave-lambs and the wave-bread, the multitude heard that 'sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind,' which drew them to the house where the apostles were gathered, there to hear 'every man in his own language' 'the wonderful works of God.' And on that Pentecost day, from the harvest of firstfruits, not less than three thousand souls added to the Church were presented as a wave-offering to the Lord. The cloven tongues of fire and the apostolic gifts of that day of firstfruits have, indeed, long since disappeared. But the mighty rushing sound of the Presence and Power of the Holy Ghost has gone forth into all the world.

Footnotes

1. In this, as in many other particulars, the teaching of Shammai differed from that of Hillel. We have followed Hillel, whose authority is generally recognized.

2. We derive our account from all the four Gospels. The language of St. John (18:3,12) leaves no doubt that a detachment of Roman soldiers accompanied such of the elders and priests as went out with the Temple guard to take Jesus. Thee was no need to apply for Pilate's permission (as Lange supposes) before securing the aid of the soldiers.

3. We cannot here enter on the evidence; the fact is generally admitted even by Jewish writers.
4. The evidence that the expression in John 18:28, 'They went not into the judgment-hall...that they might eat the Passover,' refers not to the Paschal lamb, but to the Chagigah, is exceedingly strong, in fact, such as to have even convinced an eminent but impartial Jewish writer (Saalschutz, Mos. Recht, p. 414). It does seem strange that it should be either unknown to, or ignored by, 'Christian' writers.

5. This would not necessarily disclose a view of the Most Holy Place if, as the Rabbis assert, there were two veils between the Holy and the Most Holy Place.

6. The field was to be ploughed in the autumn, and sowed seventy days before the Passover.

7. There was a controversy on this point between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The article in Kitto's Cycl. erroneously names the afternoon of the 16th of Nisan as that on which the sheaf was cut. It was really done after sunset on the 15th, which was the beginning of the 16th of Nisan.

8. The term is difficult to define. The Mishnah (Men. ii. 2) says, 'He stretcheth the fingers over the flat of the hand.' I suppose, bending them inwards.

9. Owing to the peculiarity of the Jewish calendar, Pentecost did not always take place exactly on the 6th Sivan. Care was taken that it should not occur on a Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday. (Reland. p. 430.)

10. The completion of the wheat harvest throughout the land is computed by the Rabbis at about a month later. See Relandus, Antiq. p. 428.

11. This offering, accompanying the wave-loaves, has by some been confounded with the festive sacrifices of the day, as enumerated in Numbers 28:27. But the two are manifestly quite distinct.

12. In the case of the first omer it had been thirteen sieves; but both specifications may be regarded as Rabbinical fancifulness.

13. These numbers are sufficiently accurate for general computation. By actual experiment I find that a pint of flour weighs about three-quarters of a pound and two ounces, and that 3 3/4 lbs. of flour, with half a teacup of barm and an ounce of salt, yield 5 3/4 pounds of dough and 5 1/4 lbs. of bread.

14. The Rabbinical statement is, that the whole offering was to be waved together by a priest; but that if each loaf, with one breast and shoulder of lamb, was waved separately, it was valid. From the weight of the mass, this must have been the common practice.
The Feast of Tabernacles

'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.'— 7:37

The Feast of Tabernacles: The most joyous of all festive seasons in Israel was that of the 'Feast of Tabernacles.' It fell on a time of year when the hearts of the people would naturally be full of thankfulness, gladness, and expectancy. All the crops had been long stored; and now all fruits were also gathered, the vintage past, and the land only awaited the softening and refreshment of the 'latter rain,' to prepare it for a new crop. It was appropriate that, when the commencement of the harvest had been consecrated by offering the first ripe sheaf of barley, and the full ingathering of the corn by the two wave-loaves, there should now be a harvest feast of thankfulness and of gladness unto the Lord. But that was not all. As they looked around on the goodly land, the fruits of which had just enriched them, they must have remembered that by miraculous interposition the Lord their God had brought them to this land and given it them, and that He ever claimed it as peculiarly His own. For the land was strictly connected with the history of the people; and both the land and the history were linked with the mission of Israel. If the beginning of the harvest had pointed back to the birth of Israel in their Exodus from Egypt, and forward to the true Passover-sacrifice in the future; if the corn-harvest was connected with the giving of the law on Mount Sinai in the past, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; the harvest-thanksgiving of the Feast of Tabernacles reminded Israel, on the one hand, of their dwelling in booths in the wilderness, while, on the other hand, it pointed to the final harvest when Israel's mission should be completed, and all nations gathered unto the Lord. Thus the first of the three great annual feasts spoke, in the presentation of the first sheaf, of the founding of the Church; the second of its harvesting, when the Church in its present state should be presented as two leavened wave-loaves; while the third pointed forward to the full harvest in the end, when 'in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things...And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people (Israel) shall He take away from all the earth' (Isa 25:6-8; comp.. Rev 21:4, etc.)

The Names of the Feast: That these are not ideal comparisons, but the very design of the Feast of Tabernacles, appears not only from the language of the prophets and the peculiar services of the feast, but also from its position in the Calendar, and even from the names by which it is designated in Scripture. Thus in its reference to the harvest it is called 'the feast of ingathering' (Exo 23:16; 34:22); in that to the history of Israel in the past, 'the Feast of Tabernacles' (Lev 23:34; and specially v 43; Deut 16:13,16; 31:10; 2 Chron 8:13; Ezra 3:4); while its symbolical bearing on the future is brought out in its designation as emphatically 'the feast' (1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chron 5:3; 7:8,9); and 'the Feast of Jehovah' (Lev 23:39). In this sense also Josephus, Philo, and the Rabbis (in many passages of the Mishnah) single it out from all the other feasts. And quite decisive on the point is the description of the 'latter-day' glory at the close of the prophecies of Zechariah, where the conversion of all nations is distinctly connected with the 'Feast of Tabernacles' (Zech 14:16-21). That this reference is by no means isolated will appear in the sequel.

The Time of the Feast: The Feast of Tabernacles was the third of the great annual festivals, at which every male in Israel was to appear before the Lord in the place which He should choose. It fell on the 15th of the seventh month, or Tishri (corresponding to September or the beginning of October), as the Passover had fallen on the 15th of the first month. The significance of these numbers in themselves and relatively will not escape attention, the more so that this feast closed the original festive calendar; for Purim and 'the feast of the dedication of the Temple,' which both occurred later in the season, were of post-Mosaic origin. The Feast of Tabernacles, or, rather (as it should be called), of 'booths,' lasted for seven days—the 15th to the 21st Tishri—was followed by an Octave on the 22nd Tishri. But this eighth day, though closely connected with the Feast of Tabernacles, formed no part of that feast, as clearly shown by the difference in the sacrifices and the ritual, and by the circumstance that the people no longer
lived in 'booths.' The first day of the feast, and also its Octave, or Azereth (clausura, conclusio), were to be days of 'holy convocation' (Lev 23:35,36), and each 'a Sabbath' (Lev 23:39), not in the sense of the weekly Sabbath, but of festive rest in the Lord (Lev 23:25,32), when no servile work of any kind might be done.

**It Followed Close Upon the Day of Atonement:** There is yet another important point to be noticed. The 'Feast of Tabernacles' followed closely on the Day of Atonement. Both took place in the seventh month; the one on the 10th, the other on the 15th of Tishri. What the seventh day, or Sabbath, was in reference to the week, the seventh month seems to have been in reference to the year. It closed not only the sacred cycle, but also the agricultural or working year. It also marked the change of seasons, the approach of rain and of the winter equinox, and determined alike the commencement and the close of a sabbatical year (Deut 31:10). Coming on the 15th of this seventh month— is, at full moon, when the 'sacred' month had, so to speak, attained its full strength— Feast of Tabernacles appropriately followed five days after the Day of Atonement, in which the sin of Israel had been removed, and its covenant relation to God restored. Thus a sanctified nation could keep a holy feast of harvest joy unto the Lord, just as in the truest sense it will be 'in that day' (Zech 14:20) when the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles shall be really fulfilled. <1>

**The Three Chief Features of the Feast:** Three things specially marked the Feast of Tabernacles: its joyous festivities, the dwelling in 'booths,' and the peculiar sacrifices and rites of the week. The first of these was simply characteristic of a 'feast of ingathering': 'Because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice—, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.' Nor were any in Israel to '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 16:13-17). Votive, freewill, and peace-offerings would mark their gratitude to God, and at the meal which ensued the poor, the stranger, the Levite, and the homeless would be welcome guests, for the Lord's sake. Moreover, when the people saw the treasury chests opened and emptied at this feast for the last time in the year, they would remember their brethren at a distance, in whose name, as well as their own, the daily and festive sacrifices were offered. Thus their liberality would not only be stimulated, but all Israel, however widely dispersed, would feel itself a new one before the Lord their God and in the courts of His House. There was, besides, something about this feast which would peculiarly remind them, if not of their dispersion, yet of their being 'strangers and pilgrims in the earth.' For its second characteristic was, that during the seven days of its continuance 'all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths; that 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 23:42,43).

**The Booths:** As usual, we are met at the outset by a controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The law had it (Lev 23:40): 'Ye shall take you on the first day the fruit (so correctly in the margin) of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook,' which the Sadducees understood (as do the modern Karaite Jews) to refer to the materials whence the booths were to be constructed, while the Pharisees applied it to what the worshippers were to carry in their hands. The latter interpretation is, in all likelihood, the correct one; it seems borne out by the account of the festival at the time of Nehemiah (Neh 8:15,18), when the booths were constructed of branches of other trees than those mentioned in Leviticus 23; and it was universally adopted in practice at the time of Christ. The Mishnah gives most minute details as to the height and construction of these 'booths,' the main object being to prevent any invasion of the law. Thus it must be a real booth, and constructed of boughs of living trees, and solely for the purposes of this festival. Hence it must be high enough, yet not too high— least ten handbreadths, but not more than thirty feet; three of its walls must be of boughs; it must be fairly covered with boughs, yet not so shaded as not to admit sunshine, nor yet so open as to have not sufficient shade, the object in each case being neither sunshine nor shade, but that it should be a real booth of boughs of trees. It is needless to enter into further details, except to say that these booths, and not their houses, were to be the regular dwelling of all in Israel during the week, and that, except in very heavy rain, they were to eat, sleep, pray, study— short, entirely to live in them. The only exceptions were in favour of those absent on some pious duty, the sick, and their attendants, women, slaves, and infants who were still depending on their mothers. Finally, the rule was that,
'whatever might contract Levitical defilement (such as boards, cloth, etc.), or whatever did not grow out of
the earth, might not be used' in constructing the 'booths.'

The Fruit and Palm Branches: It has already been noticed that, according to the view universally prevalent at the time of Christ, the direction on the first day of the feast to 'take the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook,' was applied to what the worshippers were to carry in their hands. The Rabbis ruled, that 'the fruit of the goodly trees' meant the aethrog, or citron, and 'the boughs of thick trees' the myrtle, provided it had 'not more berries than leaves.' The aethrogs must be without blemish or deficiency of any kind; the palm branches at least three handbreadths high, and fit to be shaken; and each branch fresh, entire, unpolluted, and not taken from any idolatrous grove. Every worshipper carried the aethrog in his left hand, and in his right the lulav, or palm, with myrtle and willow branch on either side of it, tied together on the outside with its own kind, though in the inside it might be fastened even with gold thread. There can be no doubt that the lulav was intended to remind Israel of the different stages of their wilderness journey, as represented by the different vegetation— palm branches recalling the valleys and plains, the 'boughs of thick trees,' the bushes on the mountain heights, and the willows those brooks from which God had given His people drink; while the aethrog was to remind them of the fruits of the good land which the Lord had given them. The lulav was used in the Temple on each of the seven festive days, even children, if they were able to shake it, being bound to carry one. If the first day of the feast fell on a Sabbath, the people brought their lulavs on the previous day into the synagogue on the Temple Mount, and fetched them in the morning, so as not needlessly to break the Sabbath rest.

The Offerings: The third characteristic of the Feast of Tabernacles was its offerings. These were altogether peculiar. The sin-offering for each of the seven days was 'one kid of the goats.' The burnt-offerings consisted of bullocks, rams, and lambs, with their appropriate meat- and drink-offerings. But, whereas the number of the rams and lambs remained the same on each day of the festival, that of the bullocks decreased every day by one— thirteen on the first to seven bullocks on the last day, 'that great day of the feast.' As no special injunctions are given about the drink-offering, we infer that it was, as usually (Num 15:1-10), 1/4 of a hin of wine for each lamb, 1/3 for each ram, and 1/2 for each bullock (the hin = 1 gallon 2 pints). The 'meat-offering' is expressly fixed (Num 19:12, etc.) at 1/10 of an ephah of flour, mixed with 1/4 of a hin of oil, for each lamb; 2/10 of an ephah with 1/3 hin of oil, for each ram; and 3/10 of an ephah, with 1/2 hin of oil, for each bullock. Three things are remarkable about these burnt-offerings. First, they are evidently the characteristic sacrifice of the Feast of Tabernacles. As compared with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the number of the rams and lambs is double, while that of the bullocks is fivefold (14 during the Passover week, 5 x 14 during that of Tabernacles). Secondly, the number of the burnt-sacrifices, whether taking each kind by itself or all of them together, is always divisible by the sacred number seven. We have for the week 70 bullocks, 14 rams, and 98 lambs, or altogether 182 sacrifices (26 x 7), to which must be added 336 (48 x 7) tenths of ephahs of flour for the meat-offering. We will not pursue the tempting subject of this symbolism of numbers further than to point out that, whereas the sacred number 7 appeared at the Feast of Unleavened Bread only in the number of its days, and at Pentecost in the period of its observance (7 x 7 days after Passover), the Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days, took place when the seventh month was at its full height, and had the number 7 impressed on its characteristic sacrifices. It is not so easy to account for the third peculiarity of these sacrifices— of the daily diminution in the number of bullocks offered. The common explanation, that it was intended to indicate the decreasing sanctity of each successive day of the feast, while the sacred number 7 was still to be reserved for the last day, is not more satisfactory than the view propounded in the Talmud, that these sacrifices were offered, not for Israel, but for the nations of the world: 'There were seventy bullocks, to correspond to the number of the seventy nations in the world.' But did the Rabbis understand the prophetic character of this feast? An attentive consideration of its peculiar ceremonial will convince that it must have been exceedingly difficult to ignore it entirely.

On the day before the Feast of Tabernacles— 14th Tishri— festive pilgrims had all arrived in Jerusalem. The 'booths' on the roofs, in the courtyards, in streets and squares, as well as roads and gardens, within a Sabbath day's journey, must have given the city and neighbourhood an unusually picturesque appearance. The preparation of all that was needed for the festival—, the care of the offerings that each would bring, and friendly communications between those who were to be invited to the sacrificial meal—
doubt sufficiently occupied their time. When the early autumn evening set in, the blasts of the priests' trumpets on the Temple Mount announced to Israel the advent of the feast.

**Special Service at the Temple:** As at the Passover and at Pentecost, the altar of burnt-offering was cleansed during the first night-watch, and the gates of the Temple were thrown open immediately after midnight. The time till the beginning of the ordinary morning sacrifice was occupied in examining the various sacrifices and offerings that were to be brought during the day. While the morning sacrifice was being prepared, a priest, accompanied by a joyous procession with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam, whence he drew water into a golden pitcher, capable of holding three log (rather more than two pints). But on the Sabbaths they fetched the water from a golden vessel in the Temple itself, into which it had been carried from Siloam on the preceding day. At the same time that the procession started for Siloam, another went to a place in the Kedron valley, close by, called Motza, whence they brought willow branches, which, amidst the blasts of the priests' trumpets, they stuck on either side of the altar of burnt-offering, bending them over towards it, so as to form a kind of leafy canopy. Then the ordinary sacrifice proceeded, the priest who had gone to Siloam so timing it, that he returned just as his brethren carried up the pieces of the sacrifice to lay them on the altar. As he entered by the 'Water-gate,' which obtained its name from this ceremony, he was received by a threefold blast from the priests' trumpets. The priest then went up the rise of the altar and turned to the left, where there were two silver basins with narrow holes—eastern a little wider for the wine, and the western somewhat narrower for the water. Into these the wine of the drink-offering was poured, and at the same time the water from Siloam, the people shouting to the priest, 'Raise thy hand,' to show that he really poured the water into the basin which led to the base of the altar. For, sharing the objections of the Sadducees, Alexander Jannaeus, the Maccabean king-priest (about 95 BC), had shown his contempt for the Pharisees by pouring the water at this feast upon the ground, on which the people pelted him with their aethrogs, and would have murdered him, if his foreign body-guard had not interfered, on which occasion no less than six thousand Jews were killed in the Temple.

**The Music of the Feast:** As soon as the wine and the water were being poured out, the Temple music began, and the 'Hallel' (Psa 113-118) was sung in the manner previously prescribed, and to the accompaniment of flutes, except on the Sabbath and on the first day of the feast, when flute-playing was not allowed, on account of the sanctity of the days. When the choir came to these words (Psa 118:1), 'O give thanks to the Lord,' and again when they sang (Psa 118:25), 'O work then now salvation, Jehovah'; and once more at the close (Psa 118:29), 'O give thanks unto the Lord,' all the worshippers shook their lulavs towards the altar. When, therefore, the multitudes from Jerusalem, on meeting Jesus, 'cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way, and...cried, saying, O then, work now salvation to the Son of David!' (Matt 21:8,9; John 12:12,13) they applied, in reference to Christ, what was regarded as one of the chief ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles, praying that God would now from 'the highest' heavens manifest and send that salvation in connection with the Son of David, which was symbolized by the pouring out of water. For though that ceremony was considered by the Rabbis as bearing a subordinate reference to the dispensation of the rain, the annual fall of which they imagined was determined by God at that feast, its main and real application was to the future outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as predicted—in allusion to this very rite—Isaiah the prophet (Isa 12:3).<2>

Thus the Talmud says distinctly: 'Why is the name of it called, The drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."' Hence, also, the feast and the peculiar joyousness of it are alike designated as those of 'the drawing out of water'; for, according to the same Rabbinical authorities, the Holy Spirit dwells in many only through joy.

**The Daily Circuit of the Altar:** A similar symbolism was expressed by another ceremony which took place at the close, not of the daily, but of the festive sacrifices. On every one of the seven days the priests formed in procession, and made the circuit of the altar, singing: 'O then, now work salvation, Jehovah! O Jehovah, give prosperity!' (Psa 118:25). But on the seventh, 'that great day of the feast,' they made the circuit of the altar seven times, remembering how the walls of Jericho had fallen in similar circumstances, and anticipating how, by the direct interposition of God, the walls of heathenism would fall before Jehovah, and the land lie open for His people to go in and possess it.
The References in John 7:37: We can now in some measure realize the event recorded in John 7:37. The festivities of the Week of Tabernacles were drawing to a close. 'It was the last day, that great day of the feast.' It obtained this name, although it was not one of 'holy convocation,' partly because it closed the feast, and partly from the circumstances which procured it in Rabbinical writings the designations of 'Day of the Great Hosannah,' on account of the sevenfold circuit of the altar with 'Hosannah'; and 'Day of Willows,' and 'Day of Beating the Branches,' because all the leaves were shaken off the willow boughs, and the palm branches beaten in pieces by the side of the altar. It was on that day, after the priest had returned from Siloam with his golden pitcher, and for the last time poured its contents to the base of the altar; after the 'Hallel' had been sung to the sound of the flute, the people responding and worshipping as the priests three times drew the threefold blasts from their silver trumpets—when the interest of the people had been raised to its highest pitch, that, from amidst the mass of worshippers, who were waving towards the altar quite a forest of leafy branches as the last words of Psalm 118 were chanted—voice was raised which resounded through the temple, startled the multitude, and carried fear and hatred to the hearts of their leaders. It was Jesus, who 'stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.' Then by faith in Him should each one truly become like the Pool of Siloam, and from his inmost being 'rivers of living waters flow' (John 7:38). 'This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.' Thus the significance of the rite, in which they had just taken part, was not only fully explained, but the mode of its fulfillment pointed out. The effect was instantaneous. It could not but be, that in that vast assembly, so suddenly roused by being brought face to face with Him in whom every type and prophecy is fulfilled, there would be many who, 'when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ.' Even the Temple-guard, whose duty it would have been in such circumstances to arrest one who had so interrupted the services of the day, and presented himself to the people in such a light, owned the spell of His words, and dared not to lay hands on Him. 'Never man spake like this man,' was the only account they could give of their unusual weakness, in answer to the reproaches of the chief priests and Pharisees. The rebuke of the Jewish authorities, which followed, is too characteristic to require comment. One only of their number had been deeply moved by the scene just witnessed in the Temple. Yet, timid as usually, Nicodemus only laid hold of this one point, that the Pharisees had traced the popular confession of Jesus to their ignorance of the law, to which he replied, in the genuine Rabbinical manner of arguing, without meeting one's opponent face to face: 'Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?'

The Man Born Blind: But matters were not to end with the wrangling of priests and Pharisees. The proof which Nicodemus had invited them to seek from the teaching and the miracles of Christ was about to be displayed both before the people and their rulers in the healing of the blind man. Here also it was in allusion to the ceramic of the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus, when He saw the 'man blind from his birth,' said (John 9:5): 'As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world'; having 'anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,' just as He told him, 'Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, Sent).' For the words, 'I am the light of the world,' are the same which He had just spoken in the Temple (John 8:12), and they had in all probability been intended to point to another very peculiar ceremony which took place at the Feast of Tabernacles. In the words of the Mishnah (Succah v. 2, 3, 4), the order of the services for the feast was as follows: 'They went first to offer the daily sacrifice in the morning, then the additional sacrifices; after that the votive and freewill-offerings; from thence to the festive meal; from thence to the study of the law; and after that to offer the evening sacrifice; and from thence they went to the joy of the pouring out of the water.' It is this 'joy of the pouring out of the water' which we are about to describe.

The Ceremonies in the Court of the Women: At the close of the first day of the feast the worshippers descended to the Court of the Women, where great preparations had been made. Four golden candelabras were there, each with four golden bowls, and against them rested four ladders; and four youths of priestly descent held, each a pitcher of oil, capable of holding one hundred and twenty log, from which they filled each bowl. The old, worn breeches and girdles of the priests served for wicks to these lamps. There was not a court in Jerusalem that was not lit up by the light of 'the house of water-pouring.' The 'Chassidim' and 'the men of Deed' danced before the people with flaming torches in their hands, and sang before them hymns and songs of praise; and the Levites, with harps, and lutes, and cymbals, and trumpets, and instruments of music without number, stood upon the fifteen steps which led down from the Court of Israel to that of the Women, according to the number of the fifteen Songs of Degrees in the Book of Psalms. They stood with their instruments of music, and sang hymns. Two priests, with trumpets in their
hands, were at the upper gate (that of Nicanor), which led from the Court of Israel to that of the Women. At cock-crowing they drew a threefold blast. As they reached the tenth step, they drew another threefold blast; as they entered the court itself, they drew yet another threefold blast; and so they blew as they advanced, till they reached the gate which opens upon the east (the Beautiful Gate). As they came to the eastern gate, they turned round towards the west (to face the Holy Place), and said: 'Our fathers who were in this place, they turned their back upon the Sanctuary of Jehovah, and their faces toward the east, and they worshipped towards the rising sun; but as for us, our eyes are towards the Lord.'

A fragment of one of the hymns sung that night has been preserved. It was sung by the 'Chassidim' and 'men of Deed,' and by those who did penance in their old age for the sins of their youth:

**The Chassidim and Men of Deed.**
'Oh joy, that our youth, devoted, sage, Doth bring no shame upon our old age!' The Penitents.
'Oh joy, we can in our old age Repair the sins of youth not sage!' Both in unison.
'Yes, happy he on whom no early guilt doth rest, And he who, having sinned, is now with pardon blest.'

**Significance of the Illumination**

It seems clear that this illumination of the Temple was regarded as forming part of, and having the same symbolical meaning as, 'the pouring out of water.' The light shining out of the Temple into the darkness around, and lighting up every court in Jerusalem, must have been intended as a symbol not only of the Shechinah which once filled the Temple, but of that 'great light' which 'the people that walked in darkness' were to see, and which was to shine 'upon them that dwell in the land of the shadow of death' (Isa 9:2). May it not be, that such prophecies as Isaiah 9 and 60 were connected with this symbolism? At any rate, it seems most probable that Jesus had referred to this ceremony in the words spoken by Him in the Temple at that very Feast of Tabernacles: 'I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (John 8:12).

**The Six Minor Days:** Only the first of the seven days of this feast was 'a holy convocation'; the other six were 'minor festivals.' On each day, besides the ordinary morning and evening sacrifices, the festive offerings prescribed in Numbers 29:12-38 were brought. The Psalms sung at the drink-offering after the festive sacrifices (or Musaph, as they are called), were, for the first day of the feast, Psalm 105; for the second, Psalm 29; for the third, Psalm 50, from verse 16; for the fourth, Psalm 94, from verse 16; for the fifth, Psalm 94, from verse 8; for the sixth, Psalm 81, from verse 6; for the last day of the feast, Psalm 82, from verse 5. As the people retired from the altar at the close of each day's service, they exclaimed, 'How beautiful art thou, O altar!'—, according to a later version, 'We give thanks to Jehovah and to thee, O altar!' All the four-and-twenty orders of the priesthood were engaged in the festive offerings, which were apportioned among them according to definite rules, which also fixed how the priestly dues were to be divided among them. Lastly, in every sabbatical year the Law was to be publicly read on the first day of the feast (Deut 31:10-13).<3>

On the afternoon of the seventh day of the feast the people began to remove from the 'booths.' For at the Octave, on the 22nd of Tishri, they lived no longer in booths, nor did they use the lulav. But it was observed as 'a holy convocation'; and the festive sacrifices prescribed in Numbers 29:36-38 were offered, although no more by all the twenty-four courses of priests, and finally the 'Hallel' sung at the drink-offering.

**The Pouring and Lighting Post-Mosaic:** It will have been observed that the two most important ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles—pouring out of water and the illumination of the Temple—of post-Mosaic origin. According to Jewish tradition, the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night had first appeared to Israel on the 15th of Tishri, the first day of the feast. On that day also Moses was said to have come down from the Mount, and accounted to the people that the Tabernacle of God was to be reared among them. We know that the dedication of Solomon's Temple and the descent of the Shechinah...
took place at this feast (1 Kings 8; 2 Chron 7). Nor can we greatly err in finding an allusion to it in this description of heavenly things: 'After this 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; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb' (Rev 7:9,10).

Whether or not our suggestions be adopted as to the typical meaning of the two great ceremonies of the 'pouring out of the water' and the Temple illumination, the fact remains, that the Feast of Tabernacles is the one only type in the Old Testament which has not yet been fulfilled.

Footnotes
1. Quite another picture is drawn in Hosea 9, which seems also to refer to the Feast of Tabernacles (see specially verse 5). Indeed, it is remarkable how many allusions to this feast occur in the writings of the prophets, as if its types were the goal of all their desires.
2. Of course, one or other of these two views is open, either, that the words of Isaiah were based on the ceremony of water-pouring, or that this ceremony was derived from the words of Isaiah. In either case, however, our inference from it holds good. It is only fair to add, that by some the expression 'water' in Isaiah 12:3 is applied to the 'law.' But this in no way vitiates our conclusion, as the Jews expected the general conversion of the Gentiles to be a conversion to Judaism.
3. In later times only certain portions were read, the law as a whole being sufficiently known from the weekly prelections in the synagogues.
The New Moons:
The Feast of the Seventh New Moon, or of Trumpets, or New Year's Day

'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.'— 2:16, 17

The New Moons: Scarcely any other festive season could have left so continuous an impress on the religious life of Israel as the 'New Moons.' Recurring at the beginning of every month, and marking it, the solemn proclamation of the day, by—'It is sanctified,' was intended to give a hallowed character to each month, while the blowing of the priests' trumpets and the special sacrifices brought, would summon, as it were, the Lord's host to offer their tribute unto their exalted King, and thus bring themselves into 'remembrance' before Him. Besides, it was also a popular feast, when families, like that of David, might celebrate their special annual sacrifice (1 Sam 20:6,29); when the king gave a state-banquet (1 Sam 20:5,24); and those who sought for instruction and edification resorted to religious meetings, such as Elisha seems to have held (2 Kings 4:23). And so we trace its observance onwards through the history of Israel; marking in Scripture a special Psalm for the New Moon (in Tishri) (Psa 81:3); noting how from month to month the day was kept as an outward ordinance, even in the decay of religious life (Isa 1:13; Hosea 2:11), apparently all the more rigidly, with abstinence from work, not enjoined in the law, that its spirit was no longer understood (Amos 8:5); and finally learning from the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel that it also had a higher meaning, and was destined to find a better fulfillment in another dispensation, when the New Moon trumpet should summon 'all flesh to worship before Jehovah' (Isa 66:23), and the closed eastern gate to the inner court of the new Temple be opened once more to believing Israel (Eze 46:1). And in New Testament times we still find the 'New Moon' kept as an outward observance by Jews and Judaising Christians, yet expressly characterized as 'a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ' (Col 2:16,17).

The Determination of the New Moon: We have already shown of what importance the right determination of the new moon was in fixing the various festivals of the year, and with what care and anxiety its appearance was ascertained from witnesses who had actually seen it; also how the tidings were afterwards communicated to those at a distance. For the new moon was reckoned by actual personal observation, not by astronomical calculation, with which, however, as we know, many of the Rabbis must have been familiar, since we read of astronomical pictures, by which they were wont to test the veracity of witnesses. So important was it deemed to have faithful witnesses, that they were even allowed, in order to reach Jerusalem in time, to travel on the Sabbath, and, if necessary, to make use of horse or mule (Mish. Rosh ha Sh. i. 9; iii. 2). While strict rules determined who were not to be admitted as witnesses, every encouragement was given to trustworthy persons, and the Sanhedrim provided for them a banquet in a large building specially destined for that purpose, and known as the Beth Yaazek.

The Blowing of Trumpets: In the law of God only these two things are enjoined in the observance of the 'New Moon'—'blowing of trumpets' (Num 10:10) and special festive sacrifices (Num 28:11-15). Of old the 'blowing of trumpets' had been the signal for Israel's host on their march through the wilderness, as it afterwards summoned them to warfare, and proclaimed or marked days of public rejoicing, and feasts, as well as the 'beginning of their months' (Num 10:1-10). The object of it is expressly stated to have been 'for a memorial,' that they might 'be remembered before Jehovah,' it being specially added: 'I am Jehovah your God.' It was, so to speak, the host of God assembled, waiting for their Leader; the people of God united to proclaim their King. At the blast of the priests' trumpets they ranged themselves, as it were, under His banner and before His throne, and this symbolical confession and proclamation of Him as 'Jehovah their God,' brought them before Him to be 'remembered' and 'saved.' And so every season of 'blowing the trumpets,' whether at New Moons, at the Feast of Trumpets or New Year's Day, at other festivals, in the Sabbatical and Year of Jubilee, or in the time of war, was a public acknowledgment of
Jehovah as King. Accordingly we find the same symbols adopted in the figurative language of the New Testament. As of old the sound of the trumpet summoned the congregation before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle, so 'His elect' shall be summoned by the sound of the trumpet in the day of Christ's coming (Matt 24:31), and not only the living, but those also who had 'slept' (1 Cor 15:52)—'the dead in Christ' (1 Thess 4:16). Similarly, the heavenly hosts are marshalled to the war of successive judgments (Rev 8:2; 10:7), till, as 'the seventh angel sounded,' Christ is proclaimed King Universal: 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever' (Rev 11:15).

The Sacrifices of the New Moon: Besides the 'blowing of trumpets,' certain festive sacrifices were ordered to be offered on the New Moon (Num 28:11-15). These most appropriately mark 'the beginnings of months' (Num 28:11). For it is a universal principle in the Old Testament, that 'the first' always stands for the whole—firstfruits for the whole harvest, the firstborn and the firstlings for all the rest; and that 'if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy.' And so the burnt-offerings and the sin-offerings at 'the beginning' of each month consecrated the whole. These festive sacrifices consisted of two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year for a burnt-offering, with their appropriate meat- and drink-offerings, and also of 'one kid of the goats for a sin-offering unto Jehovah.' <1>

When we pass from these simple Scriptural directions to what tradition records of the actual observance of 'New Moons' in the Temple, our difficulties increase. For this and New Year's Day are just such feasts, in connection with which superstition would most readily grow up, from the notions which the Rabbis had, that at changes of seasons Divine judgments were initiated, modified, or finally fixed.

Necessity for Distinguishing the Temple and Synagogue Use: Modern critics have not been sufficiently careful in distinguishing what had been done in the Temple from what was introduced into the synagogue, gradually and at much later periods. Thus, prayers which date long after the destruction of Jerusalem have been represented as offered in the Temple, and the custom of chanting the 'Hallel' (Psa 113-118) on New Moons in the synagogue has been erroneously traced to Biblical times. So far as we can gather, the following was the order of service on New Moon's Day. The Council sat from early morning to just before the evening sacrifice, to determine the appearance of the new moon. The proclamation of the Council—'It is sanctified!'—not the actual appearance of the new moon, determined the commencement of the feast. Immediately afterwards, the priests blew the trumpets which marked the feast. After the ordinary morning sacrifice, the prescribed festive offerings were brought, the blood of the burnt-offerings being thrown round the base of the altar below the red line, and the rest poured out into the channel at the south side of the altar; while the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled or dropped from the finger on the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, beginning from the east, the rest being poured out, as that of the burnt-offerings. The two bullocks of the burnt-offerings were hung up and flayed on the uppermost of the three rows of hooks in the court, the rams on the middle, and the lambs on the lowest hooks. In all no less than 107 priests officiated at this burnt-offering? with every bullock, 11 with every ram, and 8 with every lamb, including, of course, those who carried the appropriate meat- and drink-offerings. At the offering of these sacrifices the trumpets were again blown. All of them were slain at the north side of the altar, while the peace- and freewill-offerings, which private Israelites were wont at such seasons to bring, were sacrificed at the south side. The flesh of the sin-offering and what of the meat-offering came to them, was eaten by the priests in the Temple itself; their portion of the private thank-offerings might be taken by them to their homes in Jerusalem, and there eaten with their households.

A Prayer of the Third Century, AD: If any special prayers were said in the Temple on New Moons' Days, tradition has not preserved them, the only formula dating from that period being that used on first seeing the moon—'Blessed be He who reneweth the months.' To this the synagogue, towards the close of the third century, added the following: 'Blessed be He by whose word the heavens were created, and by the breath of whose mouth all the hosts thereof were formed! He appointed them a law and time, that they should not overstep their course. They rejoice and are glad to perform the will of their Creator, Author of truth; their operations are truth! He spoke to the moon, Be thou renewed, and be the beautiful diadem (i.e. the hope) of man (i.e. Israel), who shall one day be quickened again like the moon (i.e. at the coming of Messiah), and praise their Creator for His glorious kingdom. Blessed be He who reneweth the moons.' At a yet much later period, a very superstitious prayer was next inserted, its repetition being accompanied by leaping towards the moon! New Moon's Day, though apparently observed in the time of
Amos as a day of rest (Amos 8:5), is not so kept by the Jews in our days, nor, indeed, was abstinence from work enjoined in the Divine Law.<2>

The Moon of the Seventh Month: Quite distinct from the other new moons, and more sacred than they, was that of the seventh month, or Tishri, partly on account of the symbolical meaning of the seventh or sabbatical month, in which the great feasts of the Day of Atonement and of Tabernacles occurred, and partly, perhaps, because it also marked the commencement of the civil year, always supposing that, as Josephus and most Jewish writers maintain, the distinction between the sacred and civil year dates from the time of Moses.<3>

In Scripture this feast is designated as the 'memorial blowing' (Lev 23:24), or 'the day of blowing' (Num 29:1), because on that day the trumpets, or rather, as we shall see, the horns were blown all day long in Jerusalem. It was to be observed as 'a Sabbath,' and 'a holy convocation,' in which 'no servile work' might be done. The prescribed offerings for the day consisted, besides the ordinary morning and evening sacrifices, first, of the burnt-offerings, but not the sin-offering, of ordinary new moons, with their meat- and drink-offerings, and after that, of another festive burnt-offering of one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs, with their appropriate meat- and drink-offerings, together with 'one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, to make an atonement for you.' While the drink-offering of the festive sacrifice was poured out, the priests and Levites chanted Psalm 81, and if the feast fell on a Thursday, for which that Psalm was, at any rate, prescribed, it was sung twice, beginning the second time at verse 7 in the Hebrew text, or verse 6 of our Authorised Version. At the evening sacrifice Psalm 29 was sung. For reasons previously explained (chiefly to prevent possible mistakes), it became early common to observe the New Year's Feast on two successive days, and the practice may have been introduced in Temple times.

The Mishnah on New Year's Day: The Mishnah, which devotes a special tractate to this feast, remarks that a year may be arranged according to four different periods; the first, beginning with the 1st of Nisan, being for 'kings' (to compute taxation) and for computing the feasts; the second, on the 1st of Elul (the sixth month), for tithing flocks and herds, any animal born after that not being reckoned within the previous year; the third, on the 1st of Tishri (the seventh month), for the Civil, the Sabbatical, and the Jubilee year, also for trees and herbs; and lastly, that on the 1st of Shebat (the eleventh month), for all fruits of trees. Similarly, continues the Mishnah, there are four seasons when judgment is pronounced upon the world: at the Passover, in regard to the harvest; at Pentecost, in regard to the fruits of trees; on the Feast of Tabernacles, in regard to the dispensation of rain; while on 'New Year's Day all the children of men pass before Him like lambs (when they are counted for the tithing), as it is written (Psa 33:15), "He fashioneth their hearts alike; He considereth all their works."'

The Talmud on the New Year: To this we may add, as a comment of the Talmud, that on New Year's Day three books were opened— of life, for those whose works had been good; another of death, for those who had been thoroughly evil; and a third, intermediate, for those whose case was to be decided on the Day of Atonement (ten days after New Year), the delay being granted for repentance, or otherwise, after which their names would be finally entered, either in the book of life, or in that of death. By these terms, however, eternal life or death are not necessarily meant; rather earthly well-being, and, perhaps, temporal life, or the opposite. It is not necessary to explain at length on what Scriptural passages this curious view about the three books is supposed to rest.<4>

But so deep and earnest are the feelings of the Rabbis on this matter, that by universal consent the ten days intervening between New Year and the Day of Atonement are regarded as 'days of repentance.' Indeed, from a misunderstanding of a passage in the Mishnah (Sheb. i. 4, 5), a similar superstition attaches to every new moon, the day preceding it being kept by rigid Jews as one of fasting and repentance, and called the 'Lesser Day of Atonement.' In accordance with this, the Rabbis hold that the blowing of the trumpets is intended, first, to bring Israel, or rather the merits of the patriarchs and God's covenant with them, in remembrance before the Lord; secondly, to be a means of confounding Satan, who appears on that day specially to accuse Israel; and, lastly, as a call to repentance— it were, a blast to wake men from their sleep of sin (Maimonides, Moreh Nev. iii. 43). <5>

New Year's Day in Jerusalem: During the whole of New Year's Day, trumpets and horns were blown in Jerusalem from morning to evening. In the Temple it was done, even on a Sabbath, but not outside its walls. Since the destruction of Jerusalem this restriction has been removed, and the horn is blown in every
synagogue, even though the feast fall upon a Sabbath. It has already been hinted that the instruments used were not the ordinary priests' trumpets, but horns. The Mishnah holds that any kind of horns may be blown except those of oxen or calves, in order not to remind God of the sin of the golden calf! The Mishnah, however, specially mentions the straight horn of the antelope and the bent horn of the ram; the latter with special allusion to the sacrifice in substitution of Isaac, it being a tradition that New Year's Day was that in which Abraham, despite Satan's wiles to prevent or retard him, had offered up his son Isaac on Mount Moriah. The mouthpiece of the horns for New Year's Day were fitted with gold—used on fast days with silver. Another distinction was this—New Year's Day those who blew the horn were placed between others who blew the trumpets, and the sound of the horn was prolonged beyond that of the trumpets; but on fast days those who sounded the trumpets stood in the middle, and their blast was prolonged beyond that of the horn. For the proper observance of these solemn seasons, it was deemed necessary not only to hear but to listen to the sound of the horns, since, as the Mishnah adds, everything depends on the intent of the heart, not on the mere outward deed, just as it was not Moses lifting up his hands that gave Israel the victory, nor yet the lifting up of the brazen serpent which healed, but the upturning of the heart of Israel to 'their Father who is in heaven'—faith (Rosh ha Sh. iii. 8). We quote the remark, not only as one of the comparatively few passages in the Mishnah which turn on the essence of religion, but as giving an insight into the most ancient views of the Rabbis on these types, and as reminding us of the memorable teaching of our Lord to one of those very Rabbis (John 3:14,15).

The New Year's Blessings: The Mishnah (Rosh ha Sh. iv. 5, etc.) mentions various 'Berachoth' or 'benedictions' as having been repeated on New Year's Day. These, with many others of later date, still form part of the liturgy in the synagogue for that day. But there is internal evidence that the prayers, at any rate in their present form, could not have been used, at least, in the Temple. <6>

Besides, the Rabbis themselves differ as to their exact amount and contents, and finally satisfy themselves by indicating that the titles of these benedictions are rather intended as headings, to show their contents, and what special direction their prayers had taken. One set of them bore on 'the kingdom' of God, and is accordingly called Malchiyoth; another, the Sichronoth, referred to the various kinds of 'remembrance' on the part of God; while a third, called Shopharoth, consisted of benedictions, connected with the 'blowing of the horn.' It is said that any one who simply repeated ten passages from Scripture—to another authority, three—on 'the kingdom of God,' 'the remembrance of God,' and 'the blowing of horns,' had fulfilled his duty in regard to these 'benedictions.'

The First Day of the Seventh Month: From Scripture we know with what solemnity the first day of the seventh month as observed at the time of Ezra, and how deeply moved the people were by the public reading and explanation of the law, which to so many of them came like a strange sound, all the more solemn, that after so long a period they heard it again on that soil which, as it were, bore witness to its truth (Neh 8:1-12). In the New Testament there is no reference to our Lord having ever attended this feast in Jerusalem. Nor was this necessary, as it was equally celebrated in all the synagogues of Israel. <7>

Yet there seems some allusion to the blowing of the horn in the writings of St. Paul. We have already stated that, according to Maimonides (Moreh Nev. iii. c. 43), one of its main purposes was to rouse men to repentance. In fact, the commentator of Maimonides makes use of the following words to denote the meaning of the blowing of trumpets: 'Rouse ye, rouse ye from your slumber; awake, awake from your sleep, you who mind vanity, for slumber most heavy has fallen upon you. Take it to heart, before Whom you are to give an account in the judgment.' May not some such formula also have been anciently used in the synagogue; and may not the remembrance of it have been present to the mind of the apostle, when he wrote (Eph 5:14): 'Wherefore it is said, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!' If so, we may possibly find an allusion to the appearance of the new moon, specially to that of the seventh month, in these words of one of the preceding verses (Eph 5:8): 'For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light!'

Footnotes:
1. There is a curious and somewhat blasphemous Haggadah, or story, in the Talmud on this subject. It appears that at first the sun and moon had been created of equal size, but that when the moon wished to be sole 'ruler' to the exclusion of the sun, her jealousy was punished by diminution. In reply to her
arguments and importunity, God had then tried to comfort the moon, that the three righteous men, Jacob, Samuel, and David, were likewise to be small—when even thus the moon had the better of the reasoning, God had directed that a 'sin-offering' should be brought on the new moon, because He had made the moon smaller and less important than the sun!

2. The Talmud has this curious story in explanation of the custom that women abstain from work on New Moons—the women had refused to give their earrings for the golden calf, while the men gave theirs, whereas, on the other hand, the Jewish females contributed their ornaments for the Tabernacle.

3. In another place we have adopted the common, modern view, that this distinction only dates from the return from Babylon. But it must be admitted that the weight of authority is all on the other side. The Jews hold that the world was created in the month Tishri.

4. The two principal passages are Psalm 69:28, and Exodus 32:32; the former is thus explained: 'Let them be blotted out of the book,' which means the book of the wicked, while the expression 'of the living' refers to that of the righteous, so that the next clause, 'and not be written with the righteous,' is supposed to indicate the existence of a third or intermediate book!

5. In opposition to this, Luther annotates as follows: 'They were to blow with the horn in order to call God and His wondrous works to remembrance; how He had redeemed them—it were to preach about it, and to thank Him for it, just as among us Christ and His redemption is remembered and preached by the Gospel'; to which the Weimar Glossary adds: 'Instead of the horn and trumpets we have bells.' See Lundius, Jud. Heiligth. p. 1024, col. ii. Buxtorf applies Amos 3:16 to the blowing of the horn.

6. From the text of Rosh ha Sh. iv. 7, it distinctly appears that they were intended to be used in the synagogues. Of course, this leaves the question open, whether or not something like them was also said in the Temple. The Mishnah mentions altogether nine of these 'benedictions.'

7. But in the synagogues out of Jerusalem, the horn, not trumpets, was blown on New Year's Day.
The Day of Atonement

'But into the second (tabernacle) went the high-priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people...But Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come...by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.'— 9:7, 11, 12

Weakness of the Law: It may sound strange, and yet it is true, that the clearest testimony to 'the weakness and unprofitableness' 'of the commandment'is that given by 'the commandment' itself. The Levitical arrangements for the removal of sin bear on their forefront, as it were, this inscription: 'The law made nothing perfect'— neither a perfect mediatorship in the priesthood, nor a perfect 'atonement' in the sacrifices, nor yet a perfect forgiveness as the result of both. 'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect' (Heb 10:1). And this appears, first, from the continual recurrence and the multiplicity of these sacrifices, which are intended the one to supplement the other, and yet always leave something to be still supplemented; and, secondly, from the broad fact that, in general, 'it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins' (Heb 10:4). It is therefore evident that the Levitical dispensation, being stamped with imperfectness alike in the means which it employed for the 'taking away' of sin, and in the results which it obtained by these means, declared itself, like John the Baptist, only a 'forerunner,' the breaker—the satisfying, but, on the contrary, the calling forth and 'the bringing in of a better hope' (Heb 7:19; see marginal rendering).

The Day of Atonement: As might have been expected, this 'weakness and unprofitableness of the commandment' became most apparent in the services of the day in which the Old Testament provision for pardon and acceptance attained, so to speak, its climax. On the Day of Atonement, not ordinary priests, but the high-priest alone officiated, and that not in his ordinary dress, nor yet in that of the ordinary priesthood, but in one peculiar to the day, and peculiarly expressive of purity. The worshippers also appeared in circumstances different from those on any other occasion, since they were to fast and to 'afflict their souls'; the day itself was to be 'a Sabbath of Sabbatism' (rendered 'Sabbath of rest' in Authorized Version), while its central services consisted of a series of grand expiatory sacrifices, unique in their character, purpose, and results, as described in these words: 'He shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation' (Lev 16:33). But even the need of such a Day of Atonement, after the daily offerings, the various festive sacrifices, and the private and public sin-offerings all the year round, showed the insufficiency of all such sacrifices, while the very offerings of the Day of Atonement proclaimed themselves to be only temporary and provisional, 'imposed until the time of reformation.' We specially allude here to the mysterious appearance of the so-called 'scape-goat,' of which we shall, in the sequel, have to give an account differing from that of previous writers.

Its Names: The names 'Day of Atonement,' or in the Talmud, which devotes to it a special tractate, simply 'the day' (perhaps also in Hebrews 7:27 <1>), and in the Book of Acts 'the fast' (Acts 27:9), sufficiently designate its general object.

It took place on the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri), that is, symbolically, when the sacred or Sabbath of months had just attained its completeness. Nor must we overlook the position of that day relatively to the other festivals. The seventh or sabbatical month closed the festive cycle, the Feast of Tabernacles on the 15th of that month being the last in the year. But, as already stated, before that grand festival of harvesting and thanksgiving Israel must, as a nation, be reconciled unto God, for only a people at peace with God might rejoice before Him in the blessing with which He had crowned the year. And the import of the Day of Atonement, as preceding the Feast of Tabernacles, becomes only more striking, when we remember how that feast of harvesting prefigured the final ingathering of all nations. In connection
The Teaching of Scripture about the Day: In briefly reviewing the Divine ordinances about this day (Lev 16; 23:26-32; Num 29:11), we find that only on that one day in every year the high-priest was allowed to go into the Most Holy Place, and then arrayed in a peculiar white dress, which differed from that of the ordinary priests, in that its girdle also was white, and not of the Temple colours, while 'the bonnet' was of the same shape, though not the same material as 'the mitre,' which the high-priest ordinarily wore. The simple white of his array, in distinction to the 'golden garments' which he otherwise wore, pointed to the fact that on that day the high-priest appeared, not 'as the bridegroom of Jehovah,' but as bearing in his official capacity the emblem of that perfect purity which was sought by the expiations of that day. Thus in the prophecies of Zechariah the removal of Joshua's 'filthy garments' and the clothing him with 'change of raiment,' symbolically denoted—'I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee' (Zech 3:3,4). Similarly those who stand nearest to God are always described as arrayed 'in white' (see Eze 9:2, etc.; Dan 10:5; 12:6). And because these were emphatically 'the holy garments,' 'therefore' the high-priest had to 'wash his flesh in water, and so put them on' (Lev 16:4), that is, he was not merely to wash his hands and feet, as before ordinary ministrations, but to bathe his whole body.

Numbers 29:7-11: >From Numbers 29:7-11 it appears that the offerings on the Day of Atonement were really of a threefold kind—'the continual burnt-offering,' that is, the daily morning and evening sacrifices, with their meat- and drink-offerings; the festive sacrifices of the day, consisting for the high-priest and the priesthood, of 'a ram for a burnt-offering' (Lev 16:3), and for the people of one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year (with their meat-offerings) for a burnt-sacrifice, and one kid of the goats for a sin-offering; and, thirdly, and chiefly, the peculiar expiatory sacrifices of the day, which were a young bullock as a sin-offering for the high-priest, his house, and the sons of Aaron, and another sin-offering for the people, consisting of two goats, one of which was to be killed and its blood sprinkled, as directed, while the other was to be sent away into the wilderness, bearing 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins' which had been confessed 'over him,' and laid upon him by the high-priest. Before proceeding further, we note the following as the order of these sacrifices,—, the ordinary morning sacrifice; next the expiatory sacrifices for the high-priest, the priesthood, and the people (one bullock, and one of the two goats, the other being the so-called scape-goat); then the festive burnt-offerings of the priests and the people (Num 29:7-11), and with them another sin-offering; and, lastly, the ordinary evening sacrifice, being, as Maimonides observes, in all fifteen sacrificial animals.

According to Jewish tradition, the whole of the services of that day were performed by the high-priest himself, of course with the assistance of others, for which purpose more than 500 priests were said to have been employed. Of course, if the Day of Atonement fell on a Sabbath, besides all these, the ordinary Sabbath sacrifices were also offered. On a principle previously explained, the high-priest purchased from his own funds the sacrifices brought for himself and his house, the priesthood, however, contributing, in order to make them sharers in the offering, while the public sacrifices for the whole people were paid for from the Temple treasury. Only while officiating in the distinctly expiatory services of the day did the high-priest wear his 'linen garments'; in all the others he was arrayed in his 'golden vestments.' This necessitated a frequent change of dress, and before each he bathed his whole body. All this will be best understood by a more detailed account of the order of service, as given in the Scriptures and by tradition.

The Duties of the High-priest: Seven days before the Day of Atonement the high-priest left his own house in Jerusalem, and took up his abode in his chambers in the Temple. A substitute was appointed for him, in case he should die or become Levitically unfit for his duties. Rabbinical punctiliousness went so far as to have him twice sprinkled with the ashes of the red heifer— the 3rd and the 7th day of his week of separation— case he had unwittingly to himself, been defiled by a dead body (Num 19:13).<3>

During the whole of that week, also, he had to practice the various priestly rites, such as sprinkling the blood, burning the incense, lighting the lamp, offering the daily sacrifice, etc. For, as already stated, every part of that day's services devolved on the high-priest, and he must not commit any mistake. Some of the elders of the Sanhedrim were appointed to see to it, that the high-priest fully understood, and knew the meaning of the service, otherwise they were to instruct him in it. On the eve of the Day of Atonement the various sacrifices were brought before him, that there might be nothing strange about the services of the morrow. Finally, they bound him by a solemn oath not to change anything in the rites of the day. This was
chiefly for fear of the Sadducean notion, that the incense should be lighted before the high-priest actually entered into the Most Holy Place; while the Pharisees held that this was to be done only within the Most Holy Place itself. <4>

The evening meal of the high-priest before the great day was to be scanty. All night long he was to be hearing and expounding the Holy Scriptures, or otherwise kept employed, so that he might not fall asleep (for special Levitical reasons). At midnight the lot was cast for removing the ashes and preparing the altar; and to distinguish the Day of Atonement from all others, four, instead of the usual three, fires were arranged on the great altar of burnt-offering.

The Morning Service: The services of the day began with the first streak of morning light. Already the people had been admitted into the sanctuary. So jealous were they of any innovation or alteration, that only a linen cloth excluded the high-priest from public view, when, each time before changing his garments, he bathed— in the ordinary place of the priests, but in one specially set apart for his use. Altogether he changed his raiments and washed his whole body five times on that day, <5> and his hands and feet ten times. <6>

When the first dawn of morning was announced in the usual manner, the high-priest put off his ordinary (layman's) dress, bathed, put on his golden vestments, washed his hands and feet, and proceeded to perform all the principal parts of the ordinary morning service. Tradition has it, that immediately after that, he offered certain parts of the burnt-sacrifices for the day, viz. the bullock and the seven lambs, reserving his own ram and that of the people, as well as the sin-offering of a kid of the goats (Num 29:8-11), till after the special expiatory sacrifices of the day had been brought. But the text of Leviticus 16:24 is entirely against this view, and shows that the whole of the burnt-offerings and the festive sin-offering were brought after the expiatory services. Considering the relation between these services and sacrifices, this might, at any rate, have been expected, since a burnt-offering could only be acceptable after, not before, expiation.

The Sin-offering: The morning service finished, the high-priest washed his hands and feet, put off his golden vestments, bathed, put on his 'linen garments,' again washed his hands and feet, and proceeded to the peculiar part of the day's services. The bullock for his sin-offering stood between the Temple-porch and the altar. It was placed towards the south, but the high-priest, who stood facing the east (that is, the worshippers), turned the head of the sacrifice towards the west (that is, to face the sanctuary). He then laid both his hands upon the head of the bullock, and confessed as follows:—'Ah, JEHOVAH! I have committed iniquity; I have transgressed; I have sinned— and my house. Oh, then, JEHOVAH, I entreat Thee, cover over (atone for) the iniquities, the transgressions, and the sins which I have committed, transgressed, and sinned before Thee, I and my house— as it is written in the law of Moses, Thy servant: "For, on that day will He cover over (atone) for you to make you clean; from all your transgressions before JEHOVAH ye shall be cleansed.' It will be noticed that in this solemn confession the name JEHOVAH occurred three times. Other three times was it pronounced in the confession which the high-priest made over the same bullock for the priesthood; a seventh time was it uttered when he cast the lot as to which of the two goats was to be 'for JEHOVAH'; and once again he spoke it three times in the confession over the so-called 'scape-goat' which bore the sins of the people. All these ten times the high-priest pronounced the very name of JEHOVAH, and, as he spoke it, those who stood near cast themselves with their faces on the ground, while the multitude responded: 'Blessed be the Name; the glory of His kingdom is forever and ever' (in support of this benediction, reference is made to Deut 32:3). Formerly it had been the practice to pronounce the so-called 'Ineffable Name' distinctly, but afterwards, when some attempted to make use of it for magical purposes, it was spoken with bated breath, and, as one relates (Rabbi Tryphon in the Jerus. Talm.)<7> who had stood among the priests in the Temple and listened with rapt attention to catch the mysterious name, it was lost amidst the sound of the priests' instruments, as they accompanied the benediction of the people.

Choosing the Scape-goat: The first part of the expiatory service— for the priesthood— taken place close to the Holy Place, between the porch and the altar. The next was performed close to the worshipping people. In the eastern part of the Court of Priests, that is, close to the worshippers, and on the north side
of it, stood an urn, called Calpi, in which were two lots of the same shape, size, and material— the second Temple they were of gold; the one bearing the inscription 'la-JEHOVAH,' for Jehovah, the other 'la-Azazel,' for Azazel, leaving the expression (Lev 16:8,10,26) (rendered 'scape-goat' in the Authorised Version) for the present untranslated. These two goats had been placed with their backs to the people and their faces towards the sanctuary (westwards). The high-priest now faced the people, as, standing between his substitute (at his right hand) and the head of the course on ministry (on his left hand), he shook the urn, thrust his two hands into it, and at the same time drew the two lots, laying one on the head of each goat. Popularly it was deemed of good augury if the right-hand lot had fallen 'for Jehovah.' The two goats, however, must be altogether alike in look, size, and value; indeed, so earnestly was it sought to carry out the idea that these two formed parts of one and the same sacrifice, that it was arranged they should, if possible, even be purchased at the same time. The importance of this view will afterwards be explained.

The Goat Shown to the People: The lot having designated each of the two goats, the high-priest tied a tongue-shaped piece of scarlet cloth to the horn of the goat for Azazel— so-called 'scape-goat'— another round the throat of the goat for Jehovah, which was to be slain. The goat that was to be sent forth was now turned round towards the people, and stood facing them, waiting, as it were, till their sins should be laid on him, and he would carry them forth into 'a land not inhabited.' Assuredly a more marked type of Christ could not be conceived, as He was brought forth by Pilate and stood before the people, just as He was about to be led forth, bearing the iniquity of the people. And, as if to add to the significance of the rite, tradition has it that when the sacrifice was fully accepted the scarlet mark which the scape-goat had borne became white, to symbolize the gracious promise in Isaiah 1:18; but it adds that this miracle did not take place for forty years before the destruction of the Temple!

The Confession of Sin and the Sacrifice: With this presentation of the scape-goat before the people commenced the third and most solemn part of the expiatory services of the day. The high-priest now once more returned towards the sanctuary, and a second time laid his two hands on the bullock, which still stood between the porch and the altar, to confess over him, not only as before, his own and his household's sins, but also those of the priesthood. The formula used was precisely the same as before, with the addition of the words, 'the seed of Aaron, Thy holy people,' both in the confession and in the petition for atonement. Then the high-priest killed the bullock, caught up his blood in a vessel, and gave it to an attendant to keep it stirring, lest it should coagulate. Advancing to the altar of burnt-offering, he next filled the censer with burning coals, and then ranged a handful of frankincense in the dish destined to hold it. Ordinarily, everything brought in actual ministry unto God must be carried in the right hand— the incense in the right and the censer in the left. But on this occasion, as the censer for the Day of Atonement was larger and heavier than usual, the high-priest was allowed to reverse the common order. Every eye was strained towards the sanctuary as, slowly bearing the censer and the incense, the figure of the white-robed high-priest was seen to disappear within the Holy Place. After that nothing further could be seen of his movements.

The Mercy-seat: The curtain of the Most Holy Place was folded back, and the high-priest stood alone and separated from all the people in the awful gloom of the Holiest of All, only lit up by the red glow of the incense in the right and the censer in the left. But during this year any captivity come upon us. Yet, if captivity befell us this day or this year, let it be to a place where the law is cultivated. May it please Thee, O Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, that want come not upon us, either this day or this year. But if want visit us this day or this year, let it be due to the liberality of our charitable deeds. May it please Thee, O Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, that this year may be a year of cheapness, of fullness, of intercourse and trade; a year with abundance of rain, of sunshine, and of dew; one in which Thy people Israel shall not require assistance one from another. And listen not to the prayers of those who are about to set out on a journey.<9> And as to Thy people Israel, may no enemy exalt himself against them. May it please Thee, O Lord our God, and the God
of our fathers, that the houses of the men of Saron may not become their graves.' <10> The high-priest was not to prolong this prayer, lest his protracted absence might fill the people with fears for his safety.

The Sprinkling of the Blood: While the incense was offering in the Most Holy Place the people withdrew from proximity to it, and worshipped in silence. At last the people saw the high-priest emerging from the sanctuary, and they knew that the service had been accepted. Rapidly he took from the attendant, who had kept it stirring, the blood of the bullock. Once more he entered into the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled with his finger once upwards, towards where the mercy-seat had been, and seven times downwards, counting as he did so: 'Once' (upwards), 'once and once' (downwards), 'once and twice' and so on to 'once and seven times,' always repeating the word 'once,' which referred to the upwards sprinkling, so as to prevent any mistake. Coming out from the Most Holy Place, the high-priest now deposited the bowl with the blood before the veil. Then he killed the goat set apart for Jehovah, and, entering the Most Holy Place a third time, sprinkled as before, once upwards and seven times downwards, and again deposited the bowl with the blood of the goat on a second golden stand before the veil. Taking up the bowl with the bullock's blood, he next sprinkled once upwards and seven times downwards towards the veil, outside the Most Holy Place, and then did the same with the blood of the goat. Finally, pouring the blood of the bullock into the bowl which contained that of the goat, and again the mixture of the two into that which had held the blood of the bullock, so as thoroughly to commingle the two, he sprinkled each of the horns of the altar of incense, and then, making a clear place on the altar, seven times the top of the altar of incense. Thus he had sprinkled forty-three times with the expiatory blood, taking care that his own dress should never be spotted with the sin-laden blood. What was left of the blood the high-priest poured out on the west side of the base of the altar of burnt-offering.

The Cleansing Completed: By these expiatory sprinklings the high-priest had cleansed the sanctuary in all its parts from the defilement of the priesthood and the worshippers. The Most Holy Place, the veil, the Holy Place, the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt-offering were now clean alike, so far as the priesthood and as the people were concerned; and in their relationship to the sanctuary both priests and worshippers were atoned for. So far as the law could give it, there was now again free access for all; or, to put it otherwise, the continuance of typical sacrificial communion with God was once more restored and secured. Had it not been for these services, it would have become impossible for priests and people to offer sacrifices, and so to obtain the forgiveness of sins, or to have fellowship with God. But the consciences were not yet free from a sense of personal guilt and sin. That remained to be done through the 'scape-goat.' All this seems clearly implied in the distinctions made in Leviticus 16:33: 'And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.'

The Scape-goat: Most solemn as the services had hitherto been, the worshippers would chiefly think with awe of the high-priest going into the immediate presence of God, coming out thence alive, and securing for them by the blood the continuance of the Old Testament privileges of sacrifices and of access unto God through them. What now took place concerned them, if possible, even more nearly. Their own personal guilt and sins were now to be removed from them, and that in a symbolical rite, at one and the same time the most mysterious and the most significant of all. All this while the 'scape-goat,' with the 'scarlet-tongue,' telling of the guilt it was to bear, had stood looking eastwards, confronting the people, and waiting for the terrible load which it was to carry away 'unto a land not inhabited.' Laying both his hands on the head of this goat, the high-priest now confessed and pleaded: 'Ah, JEHOVAH! they have committed iniquity; they have transgressed; they have sinned— people, the house of Israel. Oh, then, JEHOVAH! cover over (atone for), I entreat Thee, upon their iniquities, their transgressions, and their sins, which they have wickedly committed, transgressed, and sinned before Thee— people, the house of Israel. As it is written in the law of Moses, Thy servant, saying: "For on that day shall it be covered over (atoned) for you, to make you clean from all your sins before JEHOVAH ye shall be cleansed."' And while the prostrate multitude worshipped at the name of Jehovah, the high-priest turned his face towards them as he uttered the last words, 'Ye shall be cleansed!' as if to declare to them the absolution and remission of their sins.

The Goat Sent into the Wilderness: Then a strange scene would be witnessed. The priests led the sin-burdened goat out through 'Solomon's Porch,' and, as tradition has it, through the eastern gate, which opened upon the Mount of Olives.<11>
Here an arched bridge spanned the intervening valley, and over it they brought the goat to the Mount of Olives, where one, specially appointed for the purpose, took him in charge. Tradition enjoins that he should be a stranger, a non-Israelite, as if to make still more striking the type of Him who was delivered over by Israel unto the Gentiles! Scripture tells us no more of the destiny of the goat that bore upon him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, than that they 'shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness,' and that 'he shall let go the goat in the wilderness' (Lev 16:22). But tradition supplements this information. The distance between Jerusalem and the beginning of 'the wilderness' is computed at ninety stadia, making precisely ten intervals, each half a Sabbath-day's journey from the other. At the end of each of these intervals there was a station, occupied by one or more persons, detailed for the purpose, who offered refreshment to the man leading the goat, and then accompanied him to the next station. By this arrangement two results were secured: some trusted persons accompanied the goat all along his journey, and yet none of them walked more than a Sabbath-day's journey— is, half a journey going and the other half returning. At last they reached the edge of the wilderness. Here they halted, viewing afar off, while the man led forward the goat, tore off half the 'scarlet-tongue,' and stuck it on a projecting cliff; then, leading the animal backwards, he pushed it over the projecting ledge of rock. There was a moment's pause, and the man, now defiled by contact with the sin-bearer, retraced his steps to the last of the ten stations, where he spent the rest of the day and the night. But the arrival of the goat in the wilderness was immediately telegraphed, by the waving of flags, from station to station, till, a few minutes after its occurrence, it was known in the Temple, and whispered from ear to ear, that 'the goat had borne upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited.'

The Meaning of the Rite: What then was the meaning of a rite on which such momentous issue depended? Everything about it seems strange and mysterious— lot that designated it, and that 'to Azazel'; the fact, that though the highest of all sin-offerings, it was neither sacrificed nor its blood sprinkled in the Temple; and the circumstance that it really was only part of a sacrifice— two goats together forming one sacrifice, one of them being killed, and the other 'let go,' there being no other analogous case of the kind except at the purification of a leper, when one bird was killed and the other dipped in its blood, and let go free. Thus these two sacrifices— in the removal of what symbolically represented indwelling sin, the other contracted guilt— in requiring two animals, of whom one was killed, the other 'let go.' This is not the place to discuss the various views entertained of the import of the scape-goat. But it is destructive of one and all of the received interpretations, that the sins of the people were confessed not on the goat which was killed, but on that which was 'let go in the wilderness,' and that it was this goat— the other— 'bore upon him all the iniquities' of the people. So far as the conscience was concerned, this goat was the real and the only sin-offering 'for all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,' for upon it the high-priest laid the sins of the people, after he had by the blood of the bullock and of the other goat 'made an end of reconciling the Holy Place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar' (Lev 16:20). The blood sprinkled had effected this; but it had done no more, and it could do no more, for it 'could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience' (Heb 9:9).

The Teaching of Scripture: Thus viewed, not only the text of Leviticus 16, but the language of Hebrews 9 and 10, which chiefly refer to the Day of Atonement, becomes plain. The 'blood,' both of the bullock and of the goat which the high-priest carried 'once a year' within 'the sacred veil,' was 'offered for himself (including the priesthood) and for the errors (or rather ignorances) of the people.' In the language of Leviticus 16:20, it reconciled 'the Holy Place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar,' that is, as already explained, it rendered on the part of priests and people the continuance of sacrificial worship possible. But this live scape-goat 'let go' in the wilderness, over which, in the exhaustive language of Leviticus 16:21, the high-priest had confessed and on which he had laid 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,' meant something quite different. It meant the inherent 'weakness and unprofitableness of the commandment'; it meant, that 'the law made nothing perfect, but was the bringing in of a better hope'; that in the covenant mercy of God guilt and sin were indeed...
removed from the people, that they were 'covered up,' and in that sense atoned for, or rather that they were both 'covered up' and removed, but that they were not really taken away and destroyed till Christ came; that they were only taken into a land not inhabited, till He should blot it out by His own blood; that the provision which the Old Testament made was only preparatory and temporary, until the 'time of the reformation'; and that hence real and true forgiveness of sins, and with it the spirit of adoption, could only be finally obtained after the death and resurrection of 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' Thus in the fullest sense it was true of the 'fathers,' that 'these all...received not the promise: God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.' For 'the law having a shadow of the good things to come,' could not 'make the comers thereunto perfect'; nor yet was it possible 'that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.' The live goat 'let go' was every year a remover of sins which yet were never really removed in the sense of being blotted out—deposited, as it were, and reserved till He came 'whom God hath set forth as a propitiation...because of the passing over of the former sins, in the forbearance of God' (Rom 3:25).<13>

'And for this cause He is the mediatory of a new covenant, in order that, death having taken place for the propitiation of the transgressions under the first covenant, they which have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance' (Heb 9:15).

This is not the place for following the argument further. Once understood, many passages will recur which manifest how the Old Testament removal of sin was shown in the law itself to have been complete indeed, so far as the individual was concerned, but not really and in reference to God, till He came to Whom as the reality these types pointed, and Who 'now once at the end of the world hath been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself' (Heb 9:26). And thus did the types themselves prove their own inadequacy and insufficiency, showing that they had only 'a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things themselves' (Heb 10:1). With this also agree the terms by which in the Old Testament atonement is designated as a 'covering up' by a substitute, and the mercy-seat as 'the place of covering over.'

The Term 'la-Azazel': After this it is comparatively of secondary importance to discuss, so far as we can in these pages, the question of the meaning of the term 'la-Azazel' (Lev 16:8,10,26). Both the interpretation which makes it a designation of the goat itself (as 'scape-goat' in our Authorised Version), and that which would refer it to a certain locality in the wilderness, being, on many grounds, wholly untenable, two other views remain, one of which regards Azazel as a person, and denoting Satan; while the other would render the term by 'complete removal.' The insurmountable difficulties connected with the first of these notions lie on the surface. In reference to the second, it may be said that it not only does violence to Hebrew grammar, but implies that the goat which was to be for 'complete removal' was not even to be sacrificed, but actually 'let go!' Besides, what in that case could be the object of the first goat which was killed, and whose blood was sprinkled in the Most Holy Place? We may here at once state, that the later Jewish practice of pushing the goat over a rocky precipice was undoubtedly on innovation, in no wise sanctioned by the law of Moses, and not even introduced at the time the Septuagint translation was made, as its rendering of Leviticus 16:26 shows. The law simply ordained that the goat, once arrived in 'the land not inhabited,' was to be 'let go' free, and the Jewish ordinance of having it pushed over the rocks is signally characteristic of the Rabbinical perversion of its spiritual type. The word Azazel, which only occurs in Leviticus 16, is by universal consent derived from a root which means 'wholly to put aside,' or, 'wholly to go away.' Whether, therefore, we render 'la-Azazel' by 'for him who is wholly put aside,' that is, the sin-bearing Christ, or 'for being wholly separated,' or 'put wholly aside or away,' the truth is still the same, as pointing through the temporary and provisional removal of sin by the goat 'let go' in 'the land not inhabited,' to the final, real, and complete removal of sin by the Lord Jesus Christ, as we read it in Isaiah 53:6: 'Jehovah hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on Him.'

The Carcasses Burnt 'Outside the City': While the scape-goat was being led into the wilderness, the high-priest proceeded to cut up the bullock and the goat with whose blood he had previously 'made atonement,' put the 'inwards' in a vessel which he committed to an attendant, and sent the carcasses to be burnt 'outside the city,' in the place where the Temple ashes were usually deposited. Then, according to tradition, the high-priest, still wearing the linen garments,<14>went into the 'Court of the Women,' and read the passages of Scripture bearing on the Day of Atonement, viz. Leviticus 16; 23:27-32; also repeating by heart Numbers 29:7-11.

109
A series of prayers accompanied this reading of the Scriptures. The most interesting of these supplications may be thus summed up:—of sin with prayer for forgiveness, closing with the words, 'Praise be to Thee, O Lord, Who in Thy mercy forgivest the sins of Thy people Israel'; prayer for the permanence of the Temple, and that the Divine Majesty might shine in it, closing—'Praise be to Thee, O Lord, Who inhabitest Zion'; prayer for the establishment and safety of Israel, and the continuance of a king among them, closing—'Thanks be to Thee, O Lord, Who hast chosen Israel'; prayer for the priesthood, that all their doings, but especially their sacred services, might be acceptable unto God, and He be gracious unto them, closing with—'Thanks be to Thee, O Lord, Who hast sanctified the priesthood'; and, finally (in the language of Maimonides), prayers, entreaties, hymns, and petitions of the high-priest's own, closing with the words: 'Give help, O Lord, to Thy people Israel, for Thy people needeth help; thanks be unto Thee, O Lord, Who hearest prayer.'

**The High-priest in Golden Garments:** These prayers ended, the high-priest washed his hands and feet, put off his 'linen,' and put on his 'golden vestments,' and once more washed hands and feet before proceeding to the next ministry. He now appeared again before the people as the Lord's anointed in the golden garments of the bride-chamber. Before he offered the festive burnt-offerings of the day, he sacrificed 'one kid of the goats for a sin-offering' (Num 29:16), probably with special reference to these festive services, which, like everything else, required atoning blood for their acceptance. The flesh of this sin-offering was eaten at night by the priests within the sanctuary. Next, he sacrificed the burnt-offerings for the people and that for himself (one ram, Lev 16:3), and finally burned the 'inwards' of the expiatory offerings, whose blood had formerly been sprinkled in the Most Holy Place. This, properly speaking, finished the services of the day. But the high-priest had yet to offer the ordinary evening sacrifice, after which he washed his hands and his feet, once more put off his 'golden' and put on his 'linen garments,' and again washed his hands and feet. This before entering the Most Holy Place a fourth time on that day, <15> to fetch from it the censer and incense-dish which he had left there.

On his return he washed once more hands and feet, put off his linen garments, which were never to be used again, put on his golden vestments, washed hands and feet, burnt the evening incense on the golden altar, lit the lamps on the candlestick for the night, washed his hands and feet, put on his ordinary layman's dress, and was escorted by the people in procession to his own house in Jerusalem. The evening closed with a feast.

**The Mishnah:** If this ending of the Day of Atonement seems incongruous, the Mishnah records (Taan. iv. 8) something yet more strange in connection with the day itself. It is said that on the afternoon of the 15th of Ab, when the collection of wood for the sanctuary was completed, and on that of the Day of Atonement, the maidens of Jerusalem went in white garments, specially lent them for the purpose, so that rich and poor might be on an equality, into the vineyards close to the city, where they danced and sung. The following fragment of one of their songs has been preserved: <16>

'Around in circle gay, the Hebrew maidens see;
From them our happy youths their partners choose.
Remember! Beauty soon its charm must lose—
And seek to win a maid of fair degree.

When fading grace and beauty low are laid,
Then praise shall her who fears the Lord await;
God does bless her handiwork—, in the gate,
"Her works do follow her," it shall be said.'

**The Day of Atonement in the Modern Synagogue:** We will not here undertake the melancholy task of describing what the modern synagogue has made the Day of Atonement, nor how it observes the occasion—in view of their gloomy thoughts, that on that day man's fate for the year, if not his life or death, is finally fixed. But even the Mishnah already contains similar perverted notions of how the day should be kept, and what may be expected from its right observance (Mish. Yoma, viii). Rigorous rest and rigorous fasting are enjoined from sundown of one day to the appearance of the first stars on the next. Neither food nor drink of any kind may be tasted; a man may not even wash, nor anoint himself, nor put on his sandals. <17>
The sole exception made is in favour of the sick and of children, who are only bound to the full fast— at the age of twelve years and one day, and boys at that of thirteen years and one day, though it is recommended to train them earlier to it.<18>

In return for all this 'affliction' Israel may expect that death along with the Day of Atonement will finally blot out all sins! That is all— Day of Atonement and our own death! Such are Israel's highest hopes of expiation! It is unspeakably saddening to follow this subject further through the minutiae of rabbinical ingenuity— much exactly the Day of Atonement will do for a man; what proportion of his sins it will remit, and what merely suspend; how much is left over for after-chastisements, and how much for final extinction at death. The law knows nothing of such miserable petty misrepresentations of the free pardon of God. In the expiatory sacrifices of the Day of Atonement every kind<19> of transgression, trespass, and sin is to be removed from the people of God.

Yet annually anew, and each time confessedly only provisionally, not really and finally, till the gracious promise (Jer 31:34) should be fulfilled: 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' Accordingly it is very marked, how in the prophetic, or it may be symbolical, description of Ezekiel's Temple (Eze 40-46) all mention of the Day of Atonement is omitted; for Christ has come 'an high-priest of good things to come,' and 'entered in once into the Holy Place,' 'to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself' (Heb 9:11,12,26).

**Footnotes**

1. In that case we should translate Hebrews 7:27, 'Who needeth not on each day (viz. of atonement), as those high-priests, to offer up his sacrifices,' etc.

2. According to the Jewish view, it was also the day on which Adam had both sinned and repented; that on which Abraham was circumcised; and that on which Moses returned from the mount and made atonement for the sin of the golden calf.

3. May not the 'sprinkling of the ashes of an heifer' in Hebrews 9:13 refer to this? The whole section bears on the Day of Atonement.

4. The only interesting point here is the Scriptural argument on which the Sadducees based their view. They appealed to Leviticus 16:2, and explained the expression, 'I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat,' in a rationalistic sense as applying to the cloud of incense, not to that of the Divine Presence, while the Pharisees appealed to verse 13.

5. In case of age or infirmity, the bath was allowed to be heated, either by adding warm water, or by putting hot irons into it.

6. The high-priest did not on that day wash in the ordinary laver, but in a golden vessel specially provided for the purpose.

7. Possibly some readers may not know that the Jews never pronounce the word Jehovah, but always substitute for it 'Lord' (printed in capitals in the Authorised Version). Indeed, the right pronunciation of the word has been lost, and is matter of dispute, all that we have in the Hebrew being the letters I. H. V. H.— the so-called tetragrammaton, or 'four-lettered word.'

8. We give the prayer in its simplest form from the Talmud. But we cannot help feeling that its form savours of later than Temple-times. Probably only its substance dates from those days, and each high-priest may have been at liberty to formulate it according to his own views.

9. Who might pray against the fall of rain. It must be remembered that the autumn rains, on which the fruitfulness of the land depended, were just due.

10. This on account of the situation of that valley, which was threatened either by sudden floods or by dangerous landslips.

11. This on account of the situation of that valley, which was threatened either by sudden floods or by dangerous landslips.

12. May there be here also a reference to the doctrine of Christ's descent into Hades?

13. We have generally adopted the rendering of Dean Alford, where the reader will perceive any divergence from the Authorised Version.

14. But this was not strictly necessary; he might in this part of the service have even officiated in his ordinary layman's dress.

15. Hebrews 9:7 states that the high-priest went 'once in every year,' that is, on one day in every year, not on one occasion during that day.
16. The Talmud repeatedly states the fact and gives the song. Nevertheless we have some doubt on the subject, though the reporter in the Mishnah is said to be none other than Rabbi Simeon, the son of Gamaliel, Paul's teacher.

17. Only woollen socks are to be used—only exception is, where there is fear of serpents or scorpions.

18. Kings and brides within thirty days of their wedding are allowed to wash their faces; the use of a towel which has been dipped the previous day in water is also conceded.

19. For high-handed, purposed sins, the law provided no sacrifice (Heb 10:26), and it is even doubtful whether they are included in the declaration Leviticus 16:21, wide as it is. Thank God, we know that 'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin,' without exception.

The Sons of Zebedee Afain; Or,
Second lesson on the doctrine of Cross

The incident recorded in these sections of Matthew's and Mark's Gospels happened while Jesus and His disciples were going up to Jerusalem for the last time, journeying via Jericho, from Ephraim in the wilderness, whither they had retired after the raising of Lazarus. The ambitious request of the two sons of Zebedee for the chief places of honor in the kingdom was therefore made little more than a week before their Lord was crucified. How little must they have dreamed what was coming! Yet it was not for want of warning; for just before they presented their petition, Jesus had for the third time explicitly announced His approaching passion, indicating that His death would take place in connection with this present visit to Jerusalem, and adding other particulars respecting His last sufferings not specified before fitted to arrest attention; as that His death should be the issue of a judicial process, and that He should be delivered by the Jewish authorities to the Gentiles, to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified.

After recording the terms of Christ's third announcement, Luke adds, with reference to the disciples: "They understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." The truth of this statement is sufficiently apparent from the scene which ensued, not recorded by Luke, as is also the cause of the fact stated. The disciples, we perceive, were thinking of other matters while Jesus spake to them of His approaching sufferings. They were dreaming of the thrones they had been promised in Persia, and therefore were not able to enter into the thoughts of their Master, so utterly diverse from their own. Their minds were completely possessed by romantic expectations, their heads giddy with the sparkling wine of vain hope; and as they drew nigh the holy city their firm conviction was, "that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."

While all the disciples were looking forward to their thrones, James and John were coveting the most distinguished ones, and contriving a scheme for securing these to themselves, and so getting the dispute who should be the greatest settled in their own favor. These were the two disciples who made themselves so prominent in resenting the rudeness of the Samaritan villagers. The greatest zealots among the twelve were thus also the most ambitious, a circumstance which will not surprise the student of human nature. On the former occasion they asked fire from heaven to consume their adversaries; on the present occasion they ask a favor from Heaven to the disadvantage of their friends. The two requests are not so very dissimilar.
In hatching and executing their little plot, the two brothers enjoyed the assistance of their mother, whose presence is not explained, but may have been due to her having become an attendant on Jesus in her widowhood, or to an accidental meeting with Him and His disciples at the junction of the roads converging on Jerusalem, whither all were now going to keep the feast. Salome was the principal actor in the scene, and it must be admitted she acted her part well. Kneeling before Jesus, as if doing homage to a king, she intimated her humble wish to proffer a petition; and being gently asked, "What wilt thou?" said, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom."

This prayer had certainly another origin than the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and the scheme of which it was the outcome was not one which we should have expected companions of Jesus to entertain. And yet the whole proceeding is so true to human nature as it reveals itself in every age, that we cannot but feel that we have here no myth, but a genuine piece of history. We know how much of the world’s spirit is to be found at all times in religious circles of high reputation for zeal, devotion, and sanctity; and we have no right to hold up our hands in amazement when we see it appearing even in the immediate neighborhood of Jesus. The twelve were yet but crude Christians, and we must allow them time to become sanctified as well as others. Therefore we neither affect to be scandalized at their conduct, nor, to save their reputation, do we conceal its true character. We are not surprised at the behavior of the two sons of Zebedee, and yet we say plainly that their request was foolish and offensive: indicative at once of bold presumption, gross stupidity, and unmitigated selfishness.

It was an irreverent, presumptuous request, because it virtually asked Jesus their Lord to become the tool of their ambition and vanity. Fancies that He would yield to mere solicitation, perhaps calculating that He would not have the heart to refuse a request coming from a female suppliant, who as a widow was an object of compassion, and as a contributor to His support had claims to His gratitude, they begged a favor which Jesus could not grant without being untrue to His own character and His habitual teaching, as exemplified in the discourse on humility in the house at Capernaum. In so doing they were guilty of a disrespectful, impudent forwardness most characteristic of the ambitious spirit, which is utterly devoid of delicacy, and pushes on towards its end, reckless what offence it may give, heedless how it wounds the sensibilities of others.

The request of the two brothers was as ignorant as it was presumptuous. The idea implied therein of the kingdom was utterly wide of truth and reality. James and John not only thought of the kingdom that was coming as a kingdom of this world, but they thought meanly of it even under that view. For it is an unusually corrupt and unwholesome condition of matters, even in a secular state, when places of highest distinction can be obtained by solicitation and favor, and not on the sole ground of fitness for the duties of the position. When family influence or courtly arts are the pathway to power, every patriot has cause to mourn. How preposterous, then, the idea that promotion can take place in the divine, ideally perfect kingdom by means that are inadmissible in any well-regulated secular kingdom! To cherish such an idea is in effect to degrade and dishonor the Divine King, by likening Him to an unprincipled despot, who has more favor for flatterers than for honest men; and to caricature the divine kingdom by assimilating it to the most misgoverned states on earth, such as those ruled over by a Bomba or a Nero. The request of the brethren was likewise intensely selfish. It was ungenerous as towards their fellow-disciples; for it was an attempt to overreach them, and, like all such attempts, produced mischief, disturbing the peace of the family circle, and giving rise to a most unseemly embitterment of feeling among its members. "When the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation." No wonder; and if James and John did not anticipate such a result, it showed that they were very much taken up with their own selfish thoughts; and if they did anticipate it, and nevertheless shrank not from a course of action which was sure to give offence, that only made their selfishness the more heartless and inexcusable.
But the petition of the two disciples was selfish in a far wider view, viz. with reference to the public interests of the divine kingdom. It virtually meant this: "Grant us the places of honor and power, come what may; even though universal discontent and disaffection, disorder, disaster, and chaotic confusion ensue." These are the sure effects of promotion by favor instead of by merit, both in church and in state, as many a nation has found to its cost in the day of trial. James and John, it is true, never dreamt of disaster resulting from their petition being granted. No self-seekers and place-hunters ever do anticipate evil results from their promotion. But that does not make them less selfish. It only shows that, besides being selfish, they are vain.

The reply of Jesus to this ambitious request, considering its character, was singularly mild. Offensive though the presumption, forwardness, selfishness, and vanity of the two disciples must have been to His meek, holy, self-forgetful spirit, He uttered not a word of direct rebuke, but dealt with them as a father might deal with a child that had made a senseless request. Abstaining from animadversion on the grave faults brought to light by their petition, He noticed only the least culpable— their ignorance. "Ye know not," He said to them quietly, "what ye ask;" and even this remark He made in compassion rather than in the way of blame. He pitied men who offered prayers whose fulfillment, as He knew, implied painful experiences of which they had no thought. It was in this spirit that He asked the explanatory question: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

But there was more than compassion or correction in this question, even instruction concerning the true way of obtaining promotion in the kingdom of God. In interrogatory form Jesus taught His disciples that advancement in His kingdom went not by favor, nor was obtainable by clamorous solicitation; that the way to thrones was the via dolorosa of the cross; that the palm-bearers in the realms of glory should be they who had passed through great tribulation, and the princes of the kingdom they who had drunk most deeply of His cup of sorrow; and that for those who refused to drink thereof, the selfish, the self-indulgent, the ambitious, the vain, there would be no place at all in the kingdom, not to speak of places of honor on His right or left hand.

The startling question put to them by Jesus did not take James and John by surprise. Promptly and firmly they replied, "We are able." Had they then really taken into account the cup and the baptism of suffering, and deliberately made up their minds to pay the costly price for the coveted prize? Had the sacred fire of the martyr spirit already been kindled in their hearts? One would be happy to think so, but we fear there is nothing to justify so favorable an opinion. It is much more probable that, in their eagerness to obtain the object of their ambition, the two brothers were ready to promise anything, and that, in fact, they neither knew nor cared what they were promising. Their confident declaration bears a suspiciously close resemblance to the bravado uttered by Peter a few days later: "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended."

Jesus, however, did not choose, in the case of the sons of Zebedee, as in the case of their friend, to call in question the heroism so ostentatiously professed, but adopted the course of assuming that they were not only able, but willing, yea, eager, to participate in His sufferings. With the air of a king granting to favorites the privilege of drinking out of the royal wine-cup, and of washing in the royal ewer, He replied: "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." It was a strange favor which the King thus granted! Had they only known the meaning of the words, the two brethren might well have fancied that their Master was indulging in a stroke of irony at their expense. Yet it was not so. Jesus was not mocking His disciples when He spake thus, offering them a stone instead of bread: He was speaking seriously, and promising what He meant to bestow, and what, when the time of bestowal came - for it did come - they themselves regarded as a real privilege; for all the apostles agreed with Peter that they who were reproached for the name of Christ were to be accounted happy, and had
the spirit of glory and of God resting on them. Such, we believe, was the mind of James when Herod killed
him with the persecutor's sword: such, we know, was the mind of John when he was in the isle of Patmos
"for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Having promised a favor not coveted by the two disciples, Jesus next explained that the favor they did
covet was not unconditionally at His disposal: "But to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to
give, save to those for whom it is prepared of my Father." The Authorized Version suggests the idea that
the bestowal of rewards in the kingdom is not in Christ's hands at all. That, however, is not what Jesus
meant to say; but rather this, that though it is Christ's prerogative to assign to citizens their places in His
kingdom, it is not in His power to dispose of places by partiality and patronage, or otherwise than in
accordance with fixed principles of justice and the sovereign ordination of His Father. The words,
paraphrased, signify: "I can say to any one, Come, drink of my cup, for there is no risk of mischief arising
out of favoritism in that direction. But there my favors must end. I cannot say to any one, as I please,
Come, sit beside me on a throne; for each man must get the place prepared for him, and for which he is
prepared."

Thus explained, this solemn saying of our Lord furnishes no ground for an inference which, on first view, it
seems not only to suggest, but to necessitate, viz. that one may taste of the cup, yet lose the crown; or,
at least, that there is no connection between the measure in which a disciple may have had fellowship
with Christ in His cross, and the place which shall be assigned to him in the eternal kingdom. That Jesus
had no intention to teach such a doctrine is evident from the question He had asked just before He made
the statement now under consideration, which implies a natural sequence between the cup and the
throne, the suffering and the glory. The sacrifice and the great reward so closely conjoined in the promise
made to the twelve in Persia are disjoined here, merely for the purpose of signalizing the rigor with which
all corrupt influences are excluded from the kingdom of heaven. It is beyond doubt, that those on whom is
bestowed in high measure the favor of being companions with Jesus in tribulation shall be rewarded with
high promotion in the eternal kingdom. Nor does this statement compromise the sovereignty of the Father
and Lord of all; on the contrary, it contributes towards its establishment. There is no better argument in
support of the doctrine of election than the simple truth that affliction is the education for heaven. For in
what does the sovereign hand of God appear more signally than in the appointment of crosses? If crosses
would let us alone, we would let them alone. We choose not the bitter cup and the bloody baptism: we are
chosen for them, and in them. God impresses men into the warfare of the cross; and if any come to glory
in this way, as many an impressed soldier has done, it will be to glory to which, in the first place at least,
they did not aspire.

The asserted connection between suffering and glory serves to defend as well as to establish the doctrine
of election. Looked at in relation to the world to come, that doctrine seems to lay God open to the charge
of partiality, and is certainly very mysterious. But look at election in its bearing on the present life. In that
view it is a privilege for which the elect are not apt to be envied. For the elect are not the happy and the
prosperous, but the toilers and sufferers. In fact, they are elected not for their own sake, but for the
world's sake, to be God's pioneers in the rough, unwelcome work of turning the wilderness into a fruitful
field; to be the world's salt, leaven, and light, receiving for the most part little thanks for the service they
render, and getting often for reward the lot of the destitute, the afflicted, and the tormented. So that,
after all, election is a favor to the non-elect: it is God's method of benefiting men at large; and whatever
peculiar benefit may be in store for the elect is well earned, and should not be grudged. Does any one
envy them their prospect? He may be a partaker of their future joy if he be willing to be companion to
such forlorn beings, and to share their tribulations now.

It is hardly needful to explain that, in uttering these words, Jesus did not mean to deny the utility of
prayer, and to say, "You may ask for a place in the divine kingdom, and not get it; for all depends on what
God has ordained." He only wished the two disciples and all to understand that to obtain their requests they must know what they ask, and accept all that is implied, in the present as well as in the future, in the answering of their prayers. This condition is too often overlooked. Many a bold, ambitious prayer, even for spiritual blessing, is offered up by petitioners who have no idea what the answer would involve, and if they had, would wish their prayer unanswered. Crude Christians ask, e.g., to be made holy. But do they know what doubts, temptations, and sore trials of all kinds go to the making of great saints? Others long for a full assurance of God's love; desire to be perfectly persuaded of their election. Are they willing to be deprived of the sunshine of prosperity, that in the dark night of sorrow they may see heaven's stars? Ah me! how few do know what they ask! how much all need to be taught to pray for right things with an intelligent mind and in a right spirit!

Having said what was needful to James and John, Jesus next addressed a word in season to their brethren inculcating humility; most appropriately, for though the ten were the offended party, not offenders, yet the same ambitious spirit was in them, else they would not have felt and resented the wrong done so keenly. Pride and selfishness may vex and grieve the humble and the self-forgetful, but they provoke resentment only in the proud and the selfish; and the best way to be proof against the assaults of other men's evil passions is to get similar affections exorcised out of our own breasts. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus;": then shall nothing be done by you at least in strife or vainglory.

"When the ten heard it," we read, "they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." Doubtless it was a very unedifying scene which ensued; and it is very disappointing to witness such scenes where one might have looked to see in perfection the godly spectacle of brethren dwelling together in unity. But the society of Jesus was a real thing, not the imaginary creation of a romance-writer; and in all real human societies, in happy homes, in the most select brotherhoods, scientific, literary, or artistic, in Christian churches, there will arise tempests now and then. And let us be thankful that the twelve, even by their folly, gave their Master an occasion for uttering the sublime words here recorded, which shine down upon us out of the serene sky of the gospel story like stars appearing through the tempestuous clouds of human passion - manifestly the words of a Divine Being, though spoken out of the depths of an amazing self-humiliation.

The manner of Jesus, in addressing His heated disciples, was very tender and subdued. He collected them all around Him, the two and the ten, the offenders and the offended, as a father might gather together his children to receive admonition, and He spoke to them with the calmness and solemnity of one about to meet death. Throughout this whole scene death's solemnizing influence is manifestly on the Saviour's spirit. For does He not speak of His approaching sufferings in language reminding us of the night of His betrayal, describing His passion by the poetic sacramental name "my cup," and for the first time revealing the secret of His life on earth - the grand object for which He is about to die?

In moral significance, the doctrine of Jesus at this time was a repetition of His teaching in Capernaum, when He chose the little child for His text. As He said then, Who would be great must be childlike, so He says here, Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. In the former discourse His model and His text was an infant; now it is a slave, another representative of the mean and despicable. Now, as before, He quotes His own example to enforce His precept; stimulating His disciples to seek distinction in a path of lowly love by representing the Son of man as come not to be ministered unto, but to minister, even to the length of giving His life a ransom for the many, as He then reminded them, that the Son of man came like a shepherd, to seek and to save the lost sheep.

The single new feature in the lesson which Jesus gave His disciples at this season is, the contrast between His kingdom and the kingdoms of earth in respect to the mode of acquiring dominion, to which He directed attention, by way of preface, to the doctrine about to be communicated. "Ye know," He said, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great (provincial governors, often
more tyrannical than their superiors) exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you."

There is a hint here at another contrast besides the one mainly intended, viz. that between the harsh despotic sway of worldly potentates, and the gentle dominion of love alone admissible in the divine kingdom. But the main object of the words quoted is to point out the difference in the way of acquiring rather than in the manner of using power. The idea is this: earthly kingdoms are ruled by a class of persons who possess hereditary rank - the aristocracy, nobles, or princes. The governing class are those whose birthright it is to rule, and whose boast it is never to have been in a servile position, but always to have been served. In my kingdom, on the other hand, a man becomes a great one, and a ruler, by being first the servant of those over whom he is to bear rule. In other states, they rule whose privilege it is to be ministered unto; in the divine commonwealth, they rule who account it a privilege to minister.

In drawing this contrast, Jesus had, of course, no intention to teach politics; no intention either to recognize or to call in question the divine right of the princely cast to rule over their fellow-creatures. He spoke of things as they were, and as His hearers knew them to be in secular states, and especially in the Roman Empire. If any political inference might be drawn from His words, it would not be in favor of absolutism and hereditary privilege, but rather in favor of power being in the hands of those who have earned it by faithful service, whether they belong to the governing class by birth or not. For what is beneficial in the divine kingdom cannot be prejudicial to secular commonwealths. The true interests, one would say, of an earthly kingdom should be promoted by its being governed as nearly as possible in accordance with the laws of the kingdom which cannot be moved. Thrones and crowns may, to prevent disputes, go by hereditary succession, irrespective of personal merit; but the reality of power should ever be in the hands of the ablest, the wisest, and the most devoted to the public good.

Having explained by contrast the great principle of the spiritual commonwealth, that he who would rule therein must first serve, Jesus proceeded next to enforce the doctrine by a reference to His own example. "Whosoever will be chief among you," said He to the twelve, "let him be your servant;..." and then He added the memorable words: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

These words were spoken by Jesus as one who claimed to be a king, and aspired to be the first in a great and mighty kingdom. At the end of the sentence we must mentally supply the clause - which was not expressed simply because it was so obviously implied in the connection of thought - "so seeking to win a kingdom." Our Lord sets Himself forth here not merely as an example of humility, but as one whose case illustrates the truth that the way to power in the spiritual world is service; and in stating that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, He expresses not the whole truth, but only the present fact. The whole truth was, that He came to minister in the first place, that He might be ministered to in turn by a willing, devoted people, acknowledging Him as their sovereign. The point on which He wishes to fix the attention of His disciples is the peculiar way He takes to get His crown; and what He says in effect is this: "I am a King, and I expect to have a kingdom; James and John were not mistaken in that respect. But I shall obtain my kingdom in another way than secular princes get theirs. They get their thrones by succession, I get mine by personal merit; they secure their kingdom by right of birth, I hope to secure mine by the right of service; they inherit their subjects, I buy mine, the purchase-money being mine own life."

What the twelve thought of this novel plan of getting dominion and a kingdom, and especially what ideas the concluding word of their Master suggested to their minds when uttered, we know not. We are sure, however, that they did not comprehend that word; and no marvel, for the thought of Jesus was very deep. Who can understand it fully even now? Here we emphatically see through a glass, in enigmas.

This memorable saying has been the subject of much doubtful disputation among theologians, nor can we hope by anything that we can say to terminate controversy. The word is a deep well which has never yet
been fathomed, and probably never will. Brought in so quietly as an illustration to enforce a moral
precept, it opens up a region of thought which takes us far beyond the immediate occasion of its being
uttered. It raises questions in our minds which it does not solve; and yet there is little in the New
Testament on the subject of Christ's death which might not be comprehended within the limits of its
possible significance.

First of all, let us say that we have no sympathy with that school of critical theologians who call in
question the authenticity of this word. It is strange to observe how unwilling some are to recognize Christ
as the original source of great thoughts which have become essential elements in the faith of the church.
This idea of Christ's death as a ransom is here now. With whom did it take its rise? was the mind of Jesus
not original enough to conceive it, that it must be fathered on someone else? Another thing has to be
considered in connection with this saying, and the kindred one uttered at the institution of the supper.
After Jesus had begun to dwell much in thought, accompanied with deep emotion, on the fact that He
must die, it was inevitable that His mind should address itself to the task of investing the harsh, prosaic
fact with poetic, mystic meanings. We speak of Jesus for the moment simply as a man of wonderful
spiritual genius, whose mind was able to cope with death, and rob it of its character of a mere fate, and
invest it with beauty, and clothe the skeleton with the flesh and blood of an attractive system of spiritual
meanings.

Regarding, then, this precious saying as unquestionably authentic, what did Christ mean to teach by it?
First this, at least, in general, that there was a causal connection between His act in laying down His life
and the desired result, viz. spiritual sovereignty. And without having any regard to the term ransom, even
supposing it for the moment absent from the text, we can see for ourselves that there is such a
connection. However original the method adopted by Jesus for getting a kingdom - and when compared
with other methods of getting kingdoms, e.g. by inheritance, the most respectable way, or by the sword,
or, basest of all, by paying down a sum of money, as in the last days of the Roman Empire, its originality
is beyond dispute - however original the method of Jesus, it has proved strangely successful. The event has
proved that there must be a connection between the two things, - the death on the cross and the
sovereignty of souls. Thousands of human beings, yea, millions, in every age, have said Amen with all
their hearts to the doxology of John in the Apocalypse: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our
sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, unto Him be glory and
dominion forever." Without doubt this result of His self-devotion was present to the mind of Jesus when
He uttered the words before us, and in uttering them He meant for one thing to emphasize the power of
divine love in self-sacrifice, to assert its sway over human hearts, and to win for the King of the sacred
commonwealth a kind of sovereignty not attainable otherwise than by humbling Himself to take upon Him
the form of a servant. Some assert that to gain this power was the sole end of the Incarnation. We do not
agree with this view, but we have no hesitation in regarding the attainment of such moral power by self
sacrifice as one end of the Incarnation. The Son of God wished to charm us away from self-indulgence and
self-worship, to emancipate us from sin's bondage by the power of His love, that we might acknowledge
ourselves to be His, and devote ourselves gratefully to His services.

But there is more in the text than we have yet found, for Jesus says not merely that He is to lay down His
life for the many, but that He is to lay down His life in the form of a ransom. The question is, what are we
to understand by this form in which the fact of death is expressed? Now it may be assumed that the word
"ransom" was used by Jesus in a sense having affinity to Old Testament usage. The Greek word (????)
employed in the Septuagint as the equivalent for the Hebrew word copher (??????), about whose meaning
there has been much discussion, but the general sense of which is a covering. How the idea of covering is
to be taken, whether in the sense of shielding, or in the sense of exactly covering the same surface, as
one penny covers another, i.e. as an equivalent, has been disputed, and must remain doubtful. The theological interest of the question is this, that if we accept the word in the general sense of protection, then the ransom is not offered or accepted as a legal equivalent for the persons or things redeemed, but simply as something of a certain value which is received as a matter of favor. But leaving this point on one side, what we are concerned with in connection with this text is the broader thought that Christ's life is given and accepted for the lives of many, whether as an exact equivalent or otherwise being left indeterminate. Jesus represents His death voluntarily endured as a means of delivering from death the souls of the many; how or why does not clearly appear. A German theologian, who energetically combats the Anselmian theory of satisfaction, finds in the word these three thoughts: First, the ransom is offered as a gift to God, not to the devil. Jesus, having undoubtedly the train of thought in Psalm xlix. in His mind, speaks of devoting His life to God in the pursuit of His vocation, not of subjecting Himself to the might of sin or of the devil. Second, Jesus not only presupposes that no man can offer either for himself or for others a valuable gift capable of warding off death unto God, as the Psalmist declares; but He asserts that in this view He Himself renders a service in the place of many which no one of them could render either for himself or for another. Third, Jesus, having in mind also, doubtless, the words of Elihu in the Book of Job concerning an angel, one of a thousand, who may avail to ransom a man from death, distinguishes Himself from the mass of men liable to death in so far as He regards Himself as excepted from the natural doom of death, and conceives of His death as a voluntary act by which He surrenders His life to God, as in the text John x. 17, 18. In taking so much out of the saying we do not subject it to undue straining. The assumption that there is a mental reference to the Old Testament texts in the forty-ninth Psalm and in the thirty-third chapter of Job, as also to the redemption of the males among the children of Israel by the payment of a half-shekel, seems reasonable; and in the light of these passages it does not seem going too far to take out of our Lord's words these three ideas: The ransom is given to God (Psalm xli. 7: "Nor give to God a ransom for him"); it is given for the lives of men doomed to die; and it is available for such a purpose because the thing given is the life of an exceptional being, one among a thousand, not a brother mortal doomed to die, but an angel assuming flesh that He may freely die. Thus the text contains, besides the general truth that by dying in self-sacrificing love the Son of man awakens in the many a sense of grateful devotion that carries Him to a throne, this more special one, that by His death He puts the many doomed to death as the penalty of sin somehow in a different relation to God, so that they are no longer criminals, but sons of God, heirs of eternal life, members of the holy commonwealth, enjoying all its privileges, redeemed by the life of the King Himself, as the half-shekel offered as the price of redemption.

These few hints must suffice as an indication of the probable meaning of the autobiographical saying in which Jesus conveyed to His disciples their second lesson on the doctrine of the cross. With two additional reflections thereon we end this chapter. When He said of Himself that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, Jesus alluded not merely to His death, but to His whole life. The statement is an epitome in a single sentence of His entire earthly history. The reference to His death has the force of a superlative. He came to minister, even to the extent of giving His life a ransom. Then this saying, while breathing the spirit of utter lowliness, at the same time betrays the consciousness of superhuman dignity. Had Jesus not been more than man, His language would not have been humble, but presumptuous. Why should the son of a carpenter say of Himself, I came not to be ministered unto? servile position and occupation was a matter of course for such an one. The statement before us is rational and humble, only as coming from one who, being in the form of God, freely assumed the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death for our salvation.
The touching story of the anointing of Jesus by Mary at Bethany forms part of the preface to the history of the passion, as recorded in the synoptical Gospels. That preface, as given most fully by Matthew, includes four particulars: first, a statement made by Jesus to His disciples two days before the pass over concerning His betrayal; second, a meeting of the priests in Jerusalem to consult when and how Jesus should be put to death; third, the anointing by Mary; fourth, the secret correspondence between Judas and the priests. In Mark's preface the first of these four particulars is omitted; in Luke's both the first and the third.

The four facts related by the first evangelist had this in common, that they were all signs that the end so often foretold was at length at hand. Jesus now says, not "the Son of man shall be betrayed," but "the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." The ecclesiastical authorities of Israel are assembled in solemn conclave, not to discuss the question what should be done with the object of their dislike - that is already determined - but how the deed of darkness may be done most stealthily and most securely. The Victim has been anointed by a friendly hand for the approaching sacrifice. And, finally, an instrument has been found to relieve the priests from their perplexity, and to pave the way in a most unexpected manner for the consummation of their wicked purpose.

The grouping of the incidents in the introduction to the tragic history of the crucifixion is strikingly dramatic in its effect. First comes the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem plotting against the life of the Just One. Then comes Mary at Bethany, in her unutterable love breaking her alabaster box, and pouring its contents on the head and feet of her beloved Lord. Last comes Judas, offering to sell his Master for less than Mary wasted on a useless act of affection! Hatred and baseness on either hand, and true love in the midst.

This memorable transaction of Mary with her alabaster box belongs to the history of the passion, in virtue of the interpretation put upon it by Jesus, which gives to it the character of a lyric prelude to the great tragedy enacted on Calvary. It belongs to the history of the twelve disciples, because of the unfavorable construction which they put on it. All the disciples, it seems, disapproved of the action, the only difference between Judas and the rest being that he disapproved on hypocritical grounds, while his fellow-disciples were honest both in their judgment and in their motives. By their fault-finding the twelve rendered to Mary a good service. They secured for her a present defender in Jesus, and future eulogists in themselves. Their censure drew from the Lord the extraordinary statement, that wheresoever the gospel might be preached in the whole world, what Mary had done would be spoken of for a memorial of her. This prophecy the fault-finding disciples, when they became apostles, helped to fulfill. They felt bound by the virtual commandment of their Master, as well as by the generous redaction of their own hearts, to make amends to Mary for former wrong done, by telling the tale of her true love to Jesus wherever they told the story of His true love to men. From their lips the touching narrative passed in due course into the gospel records, to be read with a thrill of delight by true Christians to the end of time. Verily one might be content to be spoken against for a season for tulle sake of such chivalrous championship as that of Jesus, and such magnanimous recantations as those of His apostles!

When we consider from whom Mary's defense proceeds, we must be satisfied that it was not merely generous, but just. And yet surely it is a defense of a most surprising character! Verily it seems as if, while the disciples went to one extreme in blaming, their Lord went to the other extreme in praising; as if, in so lauding the woman of Bethany, He were but repeating her extravagance in another form. You feel tempted to ask: Was her action, then, so preeminently meritorious as to deserve to be associated with the gospel throughout all time? Then, as to the explanation of the action given by Jesus, the further questions suggest themselves: Was there really any reference in Mary's mind to His death and burial while she was performing it? Does not Jesus rather impute to her His own feeling, and invest her act with an ideal poetic significance, which lay not in it, b.it in His own thoughts? And if so, can we endorse the judgment He
pronounced; or must we, on the question as to the intrinsic merit of Mary’s act, give our vote on the side of the twelve against their Master?

We, for our part, cordially take Christ’s side of the question; and in doing so, we can afford to make two admissions. In the first place, we admit that Mary had no thought of embalming, in the literal sense, the dead body of Jesus, and possibly was not thinking of His death at all when she anointed Him with the precious ointment. Her action was simply a festive honor done to one whom she loved unspeakably, and which she might have rendered at another time. We admit further, that it would certainly have been an extravagance to speak of Mary’s deed, however noble, as entitled to be associated with the gospel everywhere and throughout all time, unless it were fit to be spoken of not merely for her sake, but more especially for the gospel’s sake; that is to say, unless it were capable of being made use of to expound the nature of the gospel. In other words, the breaking of the alabaster box must be worthy to be employed as an emblem of the deed of love performed by Jesus in dying on the cross.

Such, indeed, we believe it to be. Wherever the gospel is truly preached, the story of the anointing is sure to be prized as the best possible illustration of the spirit which moved Jesus to lay down His life, as also of the spirit of Christianity as it manifests itself in the lives of sincere believers. The breaking of the alabaster box is a beautiful symbol at once of Christ's love to us and of the love we owe to Him. As Mary broke her box of ointment and poured forth its precious contents, so Christ broke His body and shed His precious blood; so Christians pour forth their hearts before their Lord, counting not their very lives dear for His sake. Christ's death was a breaking of an alabaster box for us; our life should be a breaking of an alabaster box for Him. This relation of spiritual affinity between the deed of Mary and His own deed in dying is the true key to all that is enigmatical in the language of Jesus in speaking of the former. It explains, for example, the remarkable manner in which He referred to the gospel in connection therewith. "This gospel," He said, as if it had been already spoken of; nay, as if the act of anointing were the gospel. And so it was in a figure. The one act already done by Mary naturally suggested to the mind of Jesus the other act about to be done by Himself. "There," He thought within Himself, "in that broken vessel and outpoured oil is my death foreshadowed; in the hidden motive from which that deed proceeded is the eternal spirit in which I offer myself a sacrifice revealed." This thought He meant to express when He used the phrase "this gospel;." and in putting such a construction on Mary's deed He was in effect giving His disciples their third lesson on the doctrine of the cross.

In the light of this same relation of spiritual affinity, we clearly perceive the true meaning of the statement made by Jesus concerning Mary’s act: "In that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial." It was a mystic, poetic explanation of a most poetic deed, and as such was not only beautiful, but true. For the anointing in Bethany has helped to preserve, to embalm so to speak, the true meaning of the Saviors death. It has supplied us with a symbolic act through which to understand that death; it has shed around the cross an imperishable aroma of self-forgetting love; it has decked the Saviors grave with flowers that never shall wither, and reared for Jesus, as well as for Mary, a memorial-stone that shall endure throughout all generations. Might it not be fitly said of such a deed, She did it for my burial? Was it not most unfitly said of a deed capable of rendering so important a service to the gospel, that it was wasteful and useless? These questions will be answered in the affirmative by all who are convinced that the spiritual affinity asserted by us really did exist. What we have now to do, therefore, is to show, by going a little into detail, that our assertion is well founded.

There are three outstanding points of resemblance between Mary's "good work" in anointing Jesus, and the good work wrought by Jesus Himself in dying on the cross.

There was first a resemblance in motive. Mary wrought her good work out of pure love. She loved Jesus with her whole heart, for what He was, for what He had done for the family to which she belonged, and for the words of instruction she had heard from His lips when He came on a visit to their house. There was such a love in her heart for her friend and benefactor as imperatively demanded expression, and yet could not find expression in words. She must do something to relieve her pent-up emotions: she must get an alabaster box and break it, and pour it on the person of Jesus, else her heart will break.
Herein Mary's act resembles closely that of Jesus in dying on the cross, and in coming to this world that He might die. For just such a love as that of Mary, only far deeper and stronger, moved Him to sacrifice Himself for us. The simple account of Christ's whole conduct in becoming man, and undergoing what is recorded of Him, is this: He loved sinners. After wearying themselves in studying the philosophy of redemption, learned theologians come back to this as the most satisfactory explanation that can be given. Jesus so loved sinners as to lay down His life for them; nay, we might almost say, He so loved them that He must needs come and die for them. Like Nehemiah, the Jewish patriot in the court of the Persian king, He could not stay in heaven's court while His brethren far away on earth were in an evil case; He must ask and obtain leave to go down to their assistance. Or, like Mary, He must procure an alabaster box - a human body - fill it with the fine essence of a human soul, and pour out His soul unto death on the cross for our salvation. The spirit of Jesus, yea, the spirit of the Eternal God, is the spirit of Mary and of Nehemiah, and of all who are likeminded with them. In reverence we ought rather to say, the spirit of such is the spirit of Jesus and of God; and yet it is needful at times to put the matter in the inverse way. For somehow we are slow to believe that love is a reality for God. We almost shrink, as if it were an impiety, from ascribing to the Divine Being attributes which we confess to be the noblest and most heroic in human character. Hence the practical value of the sanction here given by Jesus to the association of the anointing in Bethany with the crucifixion on Calvary. He, in effect, says to us thereby: Be not afraid to regard my death as an act of the same kind as that of Mary: an act of pure, devoted love. Let the aroma of her ointment circulate about the neighborhood of my cross, and help you to discern the sweet savor of my sacrifice. Amid all your speculations and theories on the grand theme of redemption, take heed that ye fail not to see in my death my loving heart, and the loving heart of my Father, revealed.

Mary's "good work" further resembled Christ's in its self-sacrificing character. It was not without an effort and a sacrifice that that devoted woman performed her famous act of homage. All the evangelists make particular mention of the costliness of the ointment. Mark and John represent the murmuring disciples as estimating its value at the round sum of three hundred pence; equal, say, to the wages of a laboring man for a whole year at the then current rate of a deniers per day. This was a large sum in itself; but what is more particularly to be noted, it was a very large sum for Mary. This we learn from Christ's own words, as recorded by the second evangelist. "She hath done what she could," He kindly remarked of her, in defending her conduct against the harsh censures of His disciples. It was a remark of the same kind as that which He made a day or two after in Jerusalem concerning the poor widow whom He saw casting two mites into the temple treasury; and it implied that Mary had expended all her resources on that singular tribute of respect to Him whom her soul loved. All her earnings, all her little hoard, had been given in exchange for that box, whose precious contents she poured on the Saviors person. Hers was no ordinary love: it was a noble, heroic, self sacrificing devotion, which made her do her utmost for its object.

Herein the woman of Bethany resembled the Son of man. He, too, did what He could. Whatever it was possible for a holy being to endure in the way of humiliation, temptation, sorrow, suffering, yea, even in the way of becoming "sin" and "a curse," He willingly underwent. All through His life on earth He scrupulously abstained from doing aught that might tend to make his cup of affliction come short of absolute fullness. He denied Himself all the advantages of divine power and privilege; He emptied Himself; He made Himself poor; He became in all possible respects like His sinful brethren, that He might qualify Himself for being a merciful and trustworthy High Priest to them in things pertaining to God. Such sacrifices in life and death did His love impose on Him.

While imposing sacrifices, love, by way of compensation, makes them easy. It is not only love's destiny, but it is love's delight, to endure hardships, to bear burdens for the object loved. It is not satisfied till it has found an opportunity of embodying itself in a service involving cost, labor, pain. The things from which selfishness shrinks love ardently longs for. These reflections, we believe, are applicable to Mary. With her love to Jesus, it was more easy for her to do what she did than to refrain from doing it. But love's readiness and eagerness to sacrifice herself are most signally exemplified in the case of Jesus Himself. It was indeed His pleasure to suffer for our redemption. Far from shrinking from the cross, He looked forward to it with earnest desire; and when the hour of His passion approached, He spoke of it as the hour of His glorification. He had no thought of achieving our salvation at the smallest possible cost to Himself. His feeling was rather akin to this: "The more I suffer the better: the more thoroughly shall I realize my identity with my brethren; the more completely will the sympathetic, burden-bearing, help-bringing
instincts and yearnings of my love be satisfied." Yes: Jesus had more to do than to purchase sinners for as small a price as would be accepted for their ransom. He had to do justice to His own heart; He had adequately to express its deep compassion; and no act of limited or calculated dimensions would avail to exhaust the contents of that whose dimensions were immeasurable. Measured suffering, especially when endured by so august a personage, might satisfy divine justice, but it could not satisfy divine love.

A third feature which fitted Mary's "good work" to be an emblem of the Saviors, was its magnificence. This also appeared in the expenditure connected with the act of anointing, which was not only such as involved a sacrifice for a person of her means, but very liberal with reference to the purpose in hand. The quantity of oil employed in the service was, according to John, not less than a pound weight. This was much more than could be said to be necessary. There was an appearance of waste and extravagance in the manner of the anointing, even admitting the thing in itself to be right and proper. Whether the disciples would have objected to the ceremony, however performed, does not appear; but it was evidently the extravagant amount of ointment expended which was the prominent object of their displeasure. We conceive them as saying in effect: "Surely less might have done; the greater part at least, if not the whole of this ointment, might have been saved for other uses. This is simply senseless, prodigal expenditure."

What to the narrow-hearted disciples seemed prodigality was but the princely magnificence of love, which, as even a heathen philosopher could tell, considers not for how much or how little this or that can be done, but how it can be done most gracefully and handsomely. And what seemed to them purposeless waste served at least one good purpose. It symbolized a similar characteristic of Christ's good work as the Saviour of sinners. He did His work magnificently, and in no mean, economical way. He accomplished the redemption of "many" by means adequate to redeem all. "With Him is plenteous redemption." He did not measure out His blood in proportion to the number to be saved, nor limit His sympathies as the sinner's friend to the elect. He shed bitter tears for doomed souls; He shed His blood without measure, and without respect to numbers, and offered an atonement which was sufficient for the sins of the world. Nor was this attribute of universal sufficiency attaching to His atoning work one to which He was indifferent. On the contrary, it appears to have been in His thoughts at the very moment He uttered the words authorizing the association of Mary's deed of love with the gospel. For He speaks of that gospel, which was to consist in the proclamation of His deed of love in dying for sinners, as a gospel for the whole world; evidently desiring that, as the odor of Mary's ointment filled the room in which the guests were assembled, so the aroma of His sacrifice might be diffused as an atmosphere of saving health among all the nations.

We may say, therefore, that in defending Mary against the charge of waste, Jesus was at the same time defending Himself; replying by anticipation to such questions as these: To what purpose weep over doomed Jerusalem? why sorrow for souls that are after all to perish? why trouble Himself about men not elected to salvation? why command His gospel to be preached to every creature, with an emphasis which seems to say He wishes every one saved, when He knows only a definite number will believe the report? why not confine His sympathies and His solicitations to those who shall be effectually benefited by them? why not restrict His love to the channel of the covenant? why allow it to overflow the embankments like a river in full flood?

Such questions betray ignorance of the conditions under which even the elect are saved. Christ could not save any unless He were heartily willing to save all, for that willingness is a part of the perfect righteousness which it beloved Him to fulfill. The sum of duty is, Love God supremely, and thy neighbor as thyself; and "neighbor" means, for Christ as for us, every one who needs help, and whom He can help. But not to dwell on this, we remark that such questions show ignorance of the nature of love. Magnify. pence, misnamed by churls extravagance and waste, is an invariable attribute of all true love. David recognized this truth when he selected the profuse anointing of Aaron with the oil of consecration at his installation into the office of high priest as a fit emblem of brotherly love. There was "waste" in that anointing too, as well as in the one which took place at Bethany. For the oil was not sprinkled on the head of Aaron, though that might have been sufficient for the purpose of a mere ceremony. The vessel was emptied on the high priest's person, so that its contents flowed down from the head upon the beard, and even to the skirts of the sacerdotal robes. In that very waste lay the point of the resemblance for David. It was a feature that was likely to strike his mind, for he, too, was a wasteful man in his way. He had loved
God in a manner which exposed him to the charge of extravagance. He had danced before the Lord, for example, when the ark was brought up from the house of Obed-edom to Jerusalem, forgetful of his dignity, exceeding the bounds of decorum, and, as it might seem, without excuse, as a much less hearty demonstration of his feelings would have served the purpose of a religious solemnity.

David, Mary, Jesus, all loving, devoted beings, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, belong to one company, and come all under one condemnation. They must all plead guilty to a waste of affection, sorrow, labor, tears; all live so as to earn for themselves the blame of extravagance, which is their highest praise. David dances, and Michal sneers; prophets break their hearts for their people's sins and miseries, and the people make sport of their grief; Marys break their alabaster boxes, and frigid disciples object to the waste; men of God sacrifice their all for their religious convictions, and the world calls them fools for their pains, and philosophers bid them beware of being martyrs by mistake; Jesus weeps over sinners that will not come to Him to be saved, and thankless men ask, Why shed tears over vessels of wrath fitted for destruction?

We have thus seen that Mary's good deed was a fit and worthy emblem of the good deed of Jesus Christ in dying on the cross. We are now to show that Mary herself is in some important respects worthy to be spoken of as a model Christian. Three features in her character entitle her to this honorable name.

First among these is her enthusiastic attachment to the person of Christ. The most prominent feature in Mary's character was her power of loving, her capacity of self devotion. It was this virtue, as manifested in her action, that elicited the admiration of Jesus. He was so delighted with the chivalrous deed of love, that He, so to speak, canonized Mary on the spot, as a king might confer knighthood on the battlefield on a soldier who had performed some noble feat of arms. "Behold," He said in effect, "here is what I understand by Christianity: an unselfish and uncalculating devotion to me as the Saviour of sinners, and as the Sovereign of the kingdom of truth and righteousness. Therefore, wherever the gospel is preached, let this that this woman heath done be spoken of, not merely as a memorial of her, but to intimate what I expect of all who believe in me."

In so commending Mary, Jesus gives us to understand in effect that devotion is the chief of Christian virtues. He proclaims the same doctrine afterwards taught by one who, though last, was the first of all the apostles in his comprehension of the mind of Christ - the Apostle Paul. That glowing panegyric on charity, so well known to all readers of his epistles, in which he makes eloquence, knowledge, faith, the gift of tongues, and the gift of prophecy, do obeisance to her, as the sovereign virtue, is but the faithful interpretation in general terms of the encomium pronounced on the woman of Beth any. The story of the anointing and the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians may be read with advantage together.

In making love the test and measure of excellence, Jesus and Paul, and the rest of the apostles (for they all shared the Master's mind at last), differ widely from the world religious and orologies. Pharisees and Sadducees, scrupulous religiousists, and unscrupulous men of no religion, agree in disliking ardent, enthusiastic, chivalrous devotion, even in the most noble cause. They are wise and prudent, and their philosophy might be embodied in such maxims as these: "Be not too catholic in your sentiments, too warm in your sympathies, too keen in your sense of duty; never allow your heart to get the better of your head, or your principles to interfere with your interest." So widely diffused is the dislike to earnestness, especially in good, that all nations have their proverbs against enthusiasm. The Greeks had their μ??d?? ??a?, the Latins their Ne quid nimis; expressing skepticism in proverb-maker and proverb-quoter as to the possibility of wisdom being enthusiastic about any thing. The world is prosaic, not poetic, in temperament - prudential, not impulsive: it abhors eccentricity in good or in evil; it prefers a dead level of mediocrity, moderation, and self-possession; its model man is one who never forgets himself, either by sinking below himself in folly or wickedness, or by rising above himself, and getting rid of meanness, pride, selfishness, cowardice, and vanity in devotion to a noble cause.

The twelve were like the world in their temperament at the time of the anointing: they seem to have regarded Mary as a romantic, quixotic, crazy creature, and her action as absurd and indefensible. They objected not, of course, to her love of Jesus; but they deemed the manner of its manifestation foolish, as the money spent on the ointment might have been applied to a better purpose - say, to the relief of the
destitute - and Jesus loved nothing the less, seeing that, according to His own teaching, all philanthropic actions were deeds of kindness to Himself. And, on first thoughts, one is half inclined to say that they had reason on their side, and were far wiser, while not less devoted to Jesus than Mary. But look at their behavior on the day of their Lord's crucifixion, and learn the difference between them and her. Mary loved so ardently as to be beyond calculations of consequences or expenses; they loved so coldly, that there was room for fear in their hearts: therefore, while Mary spent her all on the ointment, they all forsook their Master, and fled to save their own wives. Whence we can see that, despite occasional extravagances, apparent or real, that spirit is wisest as well as noblest which makes us incapable of calculation, and proof against temptations arising therefrom. One rash, blundering, but heroic Luther is worth a thousand men of the Erasmus type, unspeakably wise, but cold, passionless, timid, and time-serving. Scholarship is great, but action is greater; and the power to do noble actions comes from love.

How great is the devoted Mary compared with the coldhearted disciples! She does noble deeds, and they criticize them. Poor work for a human being, criticism, especially the sort that abounds in fault-finding! Love does not care for such occupation; it is too petty for her generous mind. If there be room for praise, she will give that in unstinted measure; but rather than carp and blame, she prefers to be silent. Then observe again how love in Mary becomes a substitute for prescience. She does not know that Jesus is about to die, but she acts as if she did. Such as Mary can divine; the instincts of love, the inspiration of the God of love, teach them to do the right thing at the right time, which is the very highest attainment of true wisdom. On the other hand, we see in the case of the disciples how coldness of heart consumes knowledge and makes men stupid. They had received far more information than Mary concerning the future. If they did not know that Jesus was about to be put to death, they ought to have known from the many hints and even plain intimations which had been given them. But, alas! they had forgot all these. And why? For the same reason which makes all men so forgetful of things pertaining to their neighbors. The twelve were too much taken up with their own affairs. Their heads were filled with vain dreams of worldly ambition, and so their Master's words were forgotten almost as soon as they were uttered, and it became needful that He should tell them pathetically and reproachfully: "The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always." Men so minded never understand the times, so as to know what Israel ought to do, or to approve the conduct of those who do know.

A second admirable feature in Mary's character was the freedom of her spirit. She was not tied down to methods and rules of well-doing. The disciples, judging from their language, seem to have been great methodists, servile in their adherence to certain stereotyped modes of action. "This ointment," said they, "might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." They understand that charity to the poor is a very important duty: they know that their Master often referred to it; and they make it every thing. "Charity," in the sense of almsgiving, is their hobby. When Judas went out to betray his Lord, they fancied that he was gone to distribute what remained of the supper among some poor persons of his acquaintance. Their very ideas of well-doing appear to be method-ridden. Good works with them do not seem to be co-extensive with noble deeds of all sorts. The phrase is technical, and limited in its application to a confined circle of actions of an expressly and obviously religious and benevolent nature.

Not so with Mary. She knows of more ways of doing good than one. She can invent ways of her own. She is original, creative, not slavishly imitative. And she is as fearless as she is original. She cannot only imagine forms of well-doing out of the beaten track, but she has the courage to realize her conceptions. She is not afraid of the public. She does not ask beforehand, What will the twelve think of this? With a free mind she forms her plan, and with prompt, free hand she forthwith executes it.

For this freedom Mary was indebted to her large heart. Love made her original in thought and conduct. People without heart cannot be original as she was. They may addict themselves to good works from one motive or another; but they go about them in a very slavish, mechanical way. They have to be told by some individual in whom they confide, or more commonly, by custom or fashion, what to do; and hence they never do any good which is not in vogue. But Mary needed no counselor: she took counsel of her own heart. Love told her infallibly what was the duty of the hour; that her business for the present was not to give alms, but to anoint the person of the great High Priest.

We may learn from the example of Mary that love is, not less than necessity, the mother of invention. A great heart has fully as much to do with spiritual originality as a clever head. What is needed to fill the
church with original preachers, original givers, original actors in all departments of Christian work, is not more brains, or more training, or more opportunities, but above all, more heart. When there is little love in the Christian community, it resembles a river in dry weather, which not only keeps within its banks, but does not even occupy the whole of its channel, leaving large beds of gravel or sand lying high and dry on both sides of the current. But when the love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of her members, the church becomes like the same river in time of rain. The stream begins to rise, all the gravel beds gradually disappear, and at length the swollen flood not only fills its channel, but overflows its banks, and spreads over the meadows. New methods of well-doing are then attempted, and new measures of well-doing reached; new songs are indited and sung; new forms of expression for old truths are invented, not for the sake of novelty, but in the creative might of a new spiritual life.

It was love that made Mary free from fear, as well as from the bondage of mechanical custom. "Love," saith one who knew love's power well, "casteth out fear." Love can make even shrinking, sensitive women bold - bolder even than men. It can teach us to disregard that thing called public opinion, before which all mankind cowers. It was love that made Peter and John so bold when they stood before the Sanhedrim. They had been with Jesus long enough to love Him more than their own life, and therefore they quailed not before the face of the mighty. It was love that made Jesus Himself so indifferent to censure, and so disregardful of conventional restraints in the prosecution of His work. His heart was so devoted to His philanthropic mission, that He set at defiance the world's disapprobation; nay, probably did not so much as think of it, except when it obtruded itself upon His notice. And what love did for Mary, and for Jesus, and for the apostles in after days, it does for all. Wherever it exists in liberal measure, it banishes timidity and shyness, and the imbecility which accompanies these, and brings along with it power of character and soundness of mind. And to crown the encomium, we may add, that while it makes us bold, love does not make us impudent. Some men are bold because they are too selfish to care for other people's feelings. Those who are bold through love may dare to do things which will be found fault with; but they are always anxious, as far as possible, to please their neighbors, and to avoid giving of fence.

One remark more let us make under this head. The liberty which springs from love can never be dangerous. In these days many people are greatly alarmed at the progress of broad school theology. And of the breadth that consists in sceptical indifference to catholic Christian truth we do well to be jealous. But, on the other hand, of the breadth and freedom due to consuming love for Christ, and all the grand interests of His kindgom, we cannot have too much. The spirit of charity may indeed treat as comparatively light matters, things which men of austere mind deem of almost vital importance, and may be disposed to do things which men more enamored of order and use and wont than of freedom may consider licentious innovations. But the harm done will be imaginary rather than real; and even if it were otherwise, the impulsive Marys are never so numerous in the church that they may not safely be tolerated. There are always a sufficient number of prosaic, order-loving disciples to keep their quixotic brethren in due check.

Finally, the nobility of Mary's spirit was not less remarkable than its freedom. There was no taint of vulgar utilitarianism about her character. She thought habitually, not of the immediately, obviously, and materially useful, but of the honorable, the lovely, the morally beautiful. Hard, practical men might have pronounced her a romantic, sentimental, dreamy mystic; but a more just, appreciative estimate would represent her as a woman whose virtues were heroic and chivalrous rather than commercial. Jesus signalized the salient point in Mary's character by the epithet which He employed to describe her action. He did not call it a useful work, but a good, or, better still, a noble work.

And yet, while Mary's deed was characteristically noble, it was not the less useful. All good deeds are useful in some way and at some time or other. All noble and beautiful things - thoughts, words, deeds - contribute ultimately to the benefit of the world. Only the uses of such deeds as Mary's - of the best and noblest needs - are not always apparent or appreciable. If we were to make immediate, obvious, and vulgar uses the test of what is right, we should exclude not only the anointing in Bethany, but all fine poems and works of art, all sacrifices of material advantage to truth and duty; every thing, in fact, that has not tended directly to increase outward wealth and comfort, but has merely helped to redeem the world from vulgarity, given us glimpses of the far-off land of beauty and goodness, concerning which we now and then but faintly dream, brought us into contact with the divine and the eternal, made the earth
classic ground, a field where heroes have fought, and where their bones are buried, and where the moss-
grown stone stands to commemorate their valor.

In this nobility of spirit Mary was pre-eminently the Christian. For the genius of Christianity is certainly not
utilitarian. Its counsel is: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are venerable, whatsoever
things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, think of these things." All these
things are emphatically useful; but it is not of their utility, but of themselves, we are asked to think, and
that for a very good reason. Precisely in order to be useful, we must aim at something higher than
usefulness; just as, in order to be happy, we must aim at something higher than happiness. We must
make right revealed to us by an enlightened conscience and a loving pure heart our rule of duty, and then
we may be sure that uses of all kinds will be served by our conduct, whether we foresee them or not;
whereas, if we make calculations of utility our guide in action, we shall leave undone the things which are
noblest and best, because as a rule the uses of such things are least obvious, and longest in making their
appearance. Supremely useful to the world is the heroic devotion of the martyr; but it takes centuries to
develop the benefits of martyrdom; and if all men had followed the maxims of utilitarian philosophy, and
made utility their motive to action, there would never have been any martyrs at all. Utilitarianism tends to
trimming and time-serving; it is the death of heroism and self-sacrifice; it walks by sight, and not by faith;
it looks only to the present, and forgets the future; it seats prudence on the throne of conscience; it
produces not great characters, but at best petty busybodies. These things being considered, it need not
surprise us to find that the term "usefulness," of such frequent recurrence in the religious vocabulary of
the present day, has no place in the New Testament.

Four further observations may fitly close these meditations on the memorable transactions in Bethany.

I. In all the attributes of character hitherto enumerated, Mary was a model of genuinely evangelic piety.
The evangelic spirit is a Spirit of noble love and fearless liberty. It is a counterfeit evangelicism that is a
slave to the past, to tradition, to fixed customs and methods in religion. The true name for this temper
and tendency is legalism.

2. >From Christ's defense of Mary we may learn that being found fault with is not infallible evidence of
being wrong. A much-blamed man is commonly considered to have done something amiss, as the only
possible reason for his being censured. But, in truth, he may only have done something unusual; for all
unusual things are found fault with - the unusually good as well as, nay, more than, the unusually bad.
Hence it comes that Paul makes the apparently superfluous remark, that there is no law against love and
its kindred graces. In point of fact, these virtues are treated as if illegal and criminal whenever they
exceed the usual stinted niggard measure in which such precious metals are found in the world. Was not
He who perfectly embodied all the heavenly graces flung out of existence by the world as a person not to
be tolerated? Happily the world ultimately comes round to a juster opinion, though often too late to be of
service to those who have suffered wrong. The barbarians of the island of Malta, who, when they saw the
viper fastened on Paul's hand, thought he must needs be a murderer, changed their minds when he shook
off the reptile unharmed, and exclaimed, "He is a god." Hence we should learn this maxim of prudence,
not to be too hasty in criticizing if we want to have credit for insight and consistency. But we should
discipline ourselves to slowness in judging from far higher considerations. We ought to cherish a reverence
for the character and for the personality of all intelligent responsible beings, and to be under a constant
fear of making mistakes, and calling good evil, and evil good. In the words of an ancient philosopher, "We
ought always to be very careful when about to blame or praise a man, lest we speak not rightly. For this
purpose it is necessary to learn to discriminate between good and bad men. For God is displeased when
one blames a person like Himself, or praises one unlike Himself. Do not imagine that stones and sticks,
and birds and serpents, are holy, and that men are not. For of all things the holiest is a good man, and
the most detestable a bad."

3. If we cannot be Christians like Mary, let us at all events not be disciples like Judas. Some may think it
would not be desirable that all should be like the woman of Bethany: plausibly alleging that, considering
the infirmity of human nature, it is necessary that the romantic, impulsive, mystic school of Christians
should be kept in check by another school of more prosaic, conservative, and so to say, plebeian
character; while perhaps admitting that a few Christians like Mary in the church help to preserve religion
from degenerating into coarseness, vulgarity, and formalism. Be this as it may, the church has certainly
There is no need for Judases. Judas and Mary! these two represent the two extremes of human character. The one exemplifies Plato's π??τ?? µ??α??τ?? (hatefullest of all things), the other his π??τ?? ?ε??τ?? (holiest of all things). Characters so diverse compel us to believe in a heaven and a hell. Each one goeth to his and her own place: Mary to the "land of the leal;" Judas to the land of the false, who sell their conscience and their God for gold.

4. It is worthy of notice how naturally and appropriately Jesus, in His magnanimous defense of Mary's generous, large-hearted deed, rises to the full height of prophetic prescience, and anticipates for His gospel a world-wide diffusion: "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world." Such a gospel could be nothing less than world-wide in sympathy, and no one who understood it and its Author could fail to have a burning desire to go into all the world and preach it unto every creature. This universalistic touch in Christ's utterance at this time, far from taking us by surprise, rather seems a matter of course. Even critics of the naturalistic school allow its genuineness. "This word in Bethany," says one of the ablest writers on the Gospel history belonging to this school, "is the solitary quite reliable word of the last period of Christ's life concerning the world-wide career which Jesus saw opening up for Himself and His cause." If therefore the twelve remained narrow Judaists to the end, it was not due to the absence of the universalistic element in their Master's teaching, but simply to this, that they remained permanently as incapable of appreciating Mary's act, and the gospel whereof it was an emblem, as they showed themselves at this time. That they did so continue, however, we do not believe; and the best evidence of this is that the story of Mary of Bethany has attained a place in the evangelic records.

**FIRSTFRUITS OF THE GENTILES**

John 12:20-23.

This narrative presents interesting points of affinity with that contained in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, - the story of the woman by the well. In both Jesus comes into contact with persons outside the pale of the Jewish church; in both He takes occasion from such contact to speak in glowing language of an hour that is coming, yea, now is, which shall usher in a glorious new era for the kingdom of God; in both He expresses, in the most intense, emphatic terms, His devotion to His Father's will, His faith in the future spread of the gospel, and His lively hope of a personal reward in glory; in both, to note yet one other point of resemblance, He employs, for the expression of His thought, agricultural metaphors: in one case, the earlier, borrowing His figure from the process of reaping; in the other, the later, from that of sowing.

But, besides resemblances, marked differences are observable in these two passages from the life of the Lord Jesus. Of these the most outstanding is this, that while on the earlier occasion there was nothing but enthusiasm, joy, and hope in the Saviour's breast, on the present occasion these feelings are blended with deep sadness. His soul is not only elated with the prospect of coming glory, but troubled as with the prospect of impending disaster. The reason is that His death is nigh: it is within three days of the time when He must be lifted up on the cross; and sentient nature shrinks from the bitter Cut of suffering.

But while we observe the presence of a new emotion here, we also see that its presence produces no abatement in the old emotions manifested by Jesus in connection with His interview with the woman of Samaria. On the contrary, the near prospect of death only furnishes the Saviour with the means of giving enhanced intensity to the expression of His devotion and His faith and hope. Formerly He said that the doing of His Father's will was more to Him than meat; now He says in effect that it is more to Him than life. At the beginning He had seen by the eye of faith a vast extent of fields, white already to the harvest, in the wide wilderness of Gentile lands; now He not only continues to see these fields in spite of His approaching passion, but He sees them as the effect thereof - a whole world of golden grain growing out of one corn of wheat cast into the ground, and rendered fruitful of life by its own death. At the well of
Sychar. He had spoken with lively hope of the wages in store for Himself, and all fellow-laborers in the kingdom of God, whether sowers or reapers; here death is swallowed up in victory, through the power of His hope. To suffer is to enter into glory; to be lifted up on the cross is to be exalted to heaven, and seated on the throne of a world-wide dominion.

The men who desired to see Jesus while He stood in one of the courts of the temple were, the evangelist informs us, Greeks. Whence they came, whether from east or from west, or from north or from south, we know not; but they were evidently bent on entering into the kingdom of God. They had got so far on the way to the kingdom already. The presumption, at least, is that they had left Paganism behind, and had embraced the faith of One living, true God, as taught by the Jews, and were come at this time up to Jerusalem to worship at the Passover as Jewish proselytes. But they had not, it would seem, found rest to their souls: there was something more to be known about God which was still hid from them. This they hoped to learn from Jesus, with whose name and fame they had somehow become acquainted. Accordingly, an opportunity presenting itself to them of communicating with one of those who belonged to His company, they respectfully expressed to him their desire to meet his Master. "Sir," said they, "we would see Jesus." In themselves the words might be nothing more than the expression of a curious wish to get a passing glimpse of one who was understood to be a remarkable man. Such an interpretation of the request, however, is excluded by the deep emotion it awakened in the breast of Jesus. Idle curiosity would not have stirred His soul in such a fashion. Then the notion that these Greeks were merely curious strangers is entirely inconsistent with the connection in which the story is introduced. John brings in the present narrative immediately after quoting a reflection made by the Pharisees respecting the popularity accruing to Jesus from the resurrection of Lazarus. "Perceive ye," said they to each other, "how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world has gone after Him." "Yes, indeed," rejoins the evangelist in effect, "and that to an extent of which ye do not dream. He whom ye hate is beginning to be inquired after, even by Gentiles from afar, as the following history will show."

We do right, then, to regard the Greek strangers as earnest inquirers. They were true seekers after God. They were genuine spiritual descendants of their illustrious countrymen Socrates and Plato, whose utterances, written or unwritten, were one long prayer for light and truth, one deep unconscious sigh for a sight of Jesus. They wanted to see the Saviour, not with the eye of the body merely, but, above all, with the eye of the spirit.

The part played by the two disciples named in the narrative, in connection with this memorable incident, claims a brief notice. Philip and Andrew had the honor to be the medium of communication between the representatives of the Gentile world and Him who had come to fulfill the desire and be the Saviour of all nations. The devout Greeks addressed themselves to the former of these two disciples, and he in turn took his brother-disciple into his counsels. How Philip came to be selected as the bearer of their request by these Gentile inquirers, we do not know. Reference has been made to the fact that the name Philip is Greek, as implying the probability that the disciple who bore it had Greek connections, and the possibility of a previous acquaintance between him and the persons who accosted him on this occasion. There may be something in these conjectures, but it is more important to remark that the Greeks were happy in their choice of an intercessor. Philip was himself an inquirer, and had an inquirer's sympathy with all who might be in a similar state of mind. The first time he is named in the Gospel history he is introduced expressing his faith in Jesus, as one who had carefully sought the truth, and who, having at length found what he sought, strove to make others partakers of the blessing. "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses, in the law and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." The exactness and fullness of this confession speaks to careful and conscientious search. And Philip has still the inquirer's temper. A day or two subsequent to this meeting with the Greeks, we find him making for himself the most important request: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."
But why, then, does this sympathetic disciple not convey the request of the Greeks direct to Jesus? Why take Andrew with him, as if afraid to go alone on such an errand? Just because the petitioners are Greeks and Gentiles. It is one thing to introduce a devout Jew like Nathanael to Jesus, quite another to introduce Gentiles, however devout. Philip is pleased that his Master should be inquired after in such a quarter, but he is not sure about the propriety of acting on his first impulse. He hesitates, and is in a flurry of excitement in presence of what he feels to be a new thing, a significant event, the beginning of a religious revolution. His inclination is to play the part of an intercessor for the Greeks; but he distrusts his own judgment, and, before acting on it, lays the case before his brother-disciple and fellow-townsman Andrew, to see how it will strike him. The result of the consultation was, that the two disciples came and told their Master. They felt that they were perfectly safe in mentioning the matter to Him, and then leaving Him to do as He pleased.

From the narrative of the evangelist we learn that the communication of the two disciples mightily stirred the soul of Jesus. Manifestations of spiritual susceptibility, by persons who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, did always greatly move His feelings. The open-mindedness of the people of Sychar, the simple faith of the Roman centurion, the quick-witted faith of the Syro-Phoenician woman, the gratitude of the Samaritan leper, touched Him profoundly. Such exhibitions of spiritual life in unexpected quarters came upon His spirit like breezes on an ëolian harp, drawing forth from it sweetest tones of faith, hope, joy, charity; and, alas! also sometimes sad, plaintive tones of disappointment and sorrow, like the sighing of the autumn wind among Scottish pines, when He thought of the unbelief and spiritual deadness of the chosen people for whom He had done so much. Never was His heart more deeply affected than on the present occasion. No marvel! What sight more moving than that of a human being seeking after God, the fountain of light and of life! Then the spontaneity of these Greek inquirers is beautiful. It is something to be thankful for in this unspiritual, unbelieving world, when one and another, here and there, responds to God’s call, and receives a divine word which has been spoken to him. But here we have the rare spectacle of men coming uncalled: not sought after by Christ, and accepting Him offering Himself to them as a Saviour and Lord, but seeking Him, and begging it as a great favor to be admitted to His presence, that they may offer Him their sincere homage, and hear Him speak words of eternal life. They come, too, from a most unusual quarter; and, what is still more worthy to be noticed, at a most critical time. Jesus is just about to be conclusively rejected by His own people; just on the point of being crucified by them. Some have shut their eyes, and stopped their ears, and hardened their hearts in the most determined manner against Him and His teaching; others, not insensible to His merits, have meanly and heartlessly concealed their convictions, fearing the consequences of an open profession. The saying of the Prophet Esaias has been fulfilled in His bitter experience, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, ignorance, indifference, fickleness, cowardice, have confronted Him on every side. How refreshing, amidst abounding contradiction, stupidity, and dull insusceptibility, this intimation brought to Him at the eleventh hour: "Here are certain Greeks who are interested in you, and want to see you!" The words fall on His ear like a strain of sweet music; the news is reviving to His burdened spirit like the sight of a spring to a weary traveler in a sandy desert; and in the fullness of His joy He exclaims: "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." Rejected by His own people, He is consoled by the inspiring assurance that He shall be believed on in the world, and accepted by the outlying nations as all their salvation and all their desire.

The thoughts of Jesus at this time were as deep as His emotions were intense. Specially remarkable is the first thought to which He gave utterance in these words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He speaks here with the solemnity of one conscious that he is announcing a truth new and strange to his hearers. His object is to make it credible and comprehensible to His disciples, that death and increase may go together. He points out to them that the fact is so in the case of grain; and He would have them understand that the law of increase, not only in spite but in virtue of death, will hold true equally in His
own case. "A grain of wheat, by dying, becometh fruitful; so I must die in order to become, on a large scale, an object of faith and source of life. During my lifetime I have had little success. Few have believed, many have disbelieved; and they are about to crown their unbelief by putting me to death. But my death, so far from being, as they fancy, my defeat and destruction, will be but the beginning of my glorification. After I have been crucified, I shall begin to be believed in extensively as the Lord and Saviour of men."

Having by the analogy of the corn of wheat set forth death as the condition of fruitfulness, Jesus, in a word subsequently spoken, proclaimed His approaching crucifixion as the secret of His future power. "I," said He, "if I be lifted up from the earth, will I all men unto me." He used the expression "lifted up" in a double sense, partly, as the evangelist informs us, in allusion to the manner of His death, partly with reference to His ascension into heaven; and He meant to say, that after He had been taken up into glory, He would, through His cross, attract the eyes and hearts of men towards Himself. And, strange as such a statement might appear before the event, the fact corresponded to the Saviors expectation. The cross - symbol of shame! - did become a source of glory; the sign of weakness became an instrument of moral power. Christ crucified, though to unbelieving Jews a stumbling-block, and to philosophic Greeks foolishness, became to many believers the power of God and the wisdom of God. By His voluntary humiliation and meek endurance of suffering the Son of God drew men to Him in sincerest faith, and devoted reverential love.

The largeness of Christ's desires and expectations is very noteworthy. He speaks of "much fruit," and of drawing "all men" unto Him. Of course we are not to look here for an exact definition of the extent of redemption. Jesus speaks as a man giving utterance, in the fullness of his heart, to his high, holy hope; and we may learn from His ardent words, if not the theological extent of atonement, at least the extensiveness of the Atoner's good wishes. He would have all men believe in Him and be saved. He complained with deep melancholy of the fewness of believers among the Jews; He turned with unspeakable longing to the Gentiles, in hope of a better reception from them. The greater the number of believers at any time and in any place, the better He is pleased; and He certainly does not contemplate with indifference the vast amount of unbelief which still prevails in all quarters of the world. His heart is set on the complete expulsion of the prince of this world from his usurped dominion, that He Himself may reign over all the kingdoms of the earth.

The narrative contains a word of application addressed by Jesus to His disciples in connection with the law of increase by death, saying in effect that it applied to them as well as to Himself. This appears at first surprising, insomuch that we are tempted to think that the sayings alluded to are brought in here by the evangelist out of their true historical connection. But on reconsideration we come to think otherwise. We observe that in all cases, wherever it is possible, Christ in His teaching takes His disciples into partnership with Himself. He does not insist on those aspects of truth which are peculiar to Himself, but rather on those which are common to Him with His followers. If there be any point of contact at all, any sense in which what He states of Himself is true of those who believe in Him, He seizes on that, and makes it a prominent topic of discourse. So He did on the occasion of the meeting by the well; so when He first plainly announced to His disciples that He was to be put to death. And so also He does here. Here, too, He asserts a fellowship between Himself and His followers in respect to the necessity of death as a condition of fruitfulness. And the fellowship asserted is not a far-fetched conceit: it is a great practical reality. The principle laid down is this, that in proportion as a man is a partaker of Christ's suffering in His estate of humiliation shall he be a partaker of the glory, honor, and power which belong to His estate of exaltation. This principle holds true even in this life. The bearing of the cross, the undergoing of death, is the condition of fruit bearing both in the sense of personal sanctification and in the sense of effective service in the kingdom of God. In the long-run the measure of a man's power is the extent to which he is baptized into Christ's death. We must fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh for His body's sake, which is the church, if we would be the honored instruments of advancing that great work in
the world for which He was willing, like a corn of wheat, to fall into the ground and die.

Striking as this saying is, it is not to be reckoned among those which contain a distinct contribution to the doctrine of the cross. No new principle or view is contained therein, only old views restated, the views taught in the first and second lessons being combined - death a condition of life and of power. Even the very original word concerning the corn of wheat shows us no new aspect of Christ's death, but only helps by a familiar analogy to understand how death can be a means of increase. The main use of the foregoing chapter is to show us the beginnings of that Christian universalism which Jesus anticipated in speaking of Mary's act of anointing, and to serve as a foil to the chapter that follows concerning the doom of Jerusalem.

O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM! OR, DISCOURSE ON THE LAST THINGS

The few days intervening between the anointing and the Passover were spent by Jesus in daily visits to Jerusalem in company with His disciples, returning to Bethany in the evening. During that time He spoke much in public and in private, on themes congenial to His feelings and situation: the sin of the Jewish nation, and specially of its religious leaders; the doom of Jerusalem, and the end of the world. The record of His sayings during these last days fills five chapters of Matthew's Gospel - a proof of the deep impressions which they made on the mind of the twelve.

Prominent among these utterances, which together form the dying testimony of the "Prophet of Nazareth," stands the great philippic delivered by Him against the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem. This terrible discourse had been preceded by various encounters between the speaker and His inverate foes, which were as the preliminary skirmishes that form the prelude to a great engagement. In these petty fights Jesus had been uniformly victorious, and had overwhelmed His opponents with confusion. They had asked Him concerning His authority for taking upon Him the office of a reformer, in clearing the temple precincts of traders; and he had silenced them by asking in reply their opinion of John's mission, and by speaking in their hearing the parables of the Two Sons, the Vinedressers, and the Rejected Stone, wherein their hypocrisy, unrighteousness, and ultimate damnation were vividly depicted. They had tried to catch Him in a trap by an insnaring question concerning the tribute paid to the Roman government; and he had extricated Himself with ease, by simply asking for a penny, and pointing to the emperor's head on it, demanding of His assailants, "Whose is this image and superscription?" and on receiving the reply, "Cæsar's," giving His judgment in these terms: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Twice foiled, the Pharisees (with their friends the Herodians) gave place to their usual allies, the Sadducees, who attempted to puzzle Jesus on the subject of the resurrection, only to be ignominiously discomfited; whereupon the pharisaic brigade returned to the charge, and through the mouth of a lawyer not yet wholly perverted inquired, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" To this question Jesus gave a direct and serious reply, summing up the whole law in love to God and love to man, to the entire contentment of His interrogator. Then, impatient of further trifling, He blew a trumpet-peal, the signal of a grand offensive attack, by propounding the question, "What think ye of Christ, whose son is He?" and taking occasion from the reply to quote the opening verse of David's martial psalm, asking them to reconcile it with their answer. In
appearance fighting the Pharisees with their own weapons, and framing a mere theological puzzle, He was in reality reminding them who He was, and intimating to them the predicted doom of those who set themselves against the Lord's anointed.

Thereupon David's Son and David's Lord proceeded to fulfil the prophetic figure, and to make a footstool of the men who sat in Moses' seat, by delivering that discourse in which, to change the figure, the Pharisee is placed in a moral pillory, a mockery and a byword to all after ages; and a sentence is pronounced on the pharisaic character inexorably severe, yet justified by fact, and approved by the conscience of all true Christians. This anti-pharisaic speech may be regarded as the final, decisive, comprehensive, dying testimony of Jesus against the most deadly and damning form of evil prevailing in His age, or that can prevail in any age - religious hypocrisy; and as such it forms a necessary part of the Righteous One's witness-bearing in behalf of the truth, to which His disciples are expected to say Amen with no faltering voice. For the spirit of moral resentment is as essential in Christian ethics as the spirit of mercy; nor can any one who regards the anti-pharisaic polemic of the Gospel history as a scandal to be ashamed of, or a blemish to be apologized for, or at least as a thing which, however necessary at the time, propriety now requires us to treat with neglect, - a practice too common in the religious world, - be cleared of the suspicion of having more sympathy at heart with the men by whom the Lord was crucified than with the Lord Himself. Blessed is he who is not ashamed of Christ's sternest words; who, far from stumbling at those bold prophetic utterances, has rather found in them an aid to faith at the crisis of his religious history, as evincing an identity between the moral sentiments of the Founder of the faith and his own, and helping him to see that what he may have mistaken for, and what claimed to be, Christianity, was not that at all, but only a modern reproduction of a religious system which the Lord Jesus Christ could not endure, or be on civil terms with. Yea, and blessed is the church which sympathizes with, and practically gives effect to, Christ's warning words in the opening of this discourse against clerical ambition, the source of the spiritual tyrannies and hypocrisies denounced. Every church needs to be on its guard against this evil spirit. The government of the Jewish church, theoretically theocratic, degenerated at last into Rabbinism; and it is quite possible for a church which has for its motto, "One is your Master, even Christ," to fall into a state of abject subjection to the power of ambitious ecclesiastics.

Without for a moment admitting that there is any thing in these invectives against hypocrisy to be apologized for, we must nevertheless advert to the view taken of them by some recent critics of the sceptical school. These speeches, then, we are told, are the rash, unqualified utterances of a young man, whose spirit was unmellowed by years and experience of the world; whose temperament was poetic, therefore irritable, impatient, and unpractical; and whose temper was that of a Jew, morose, and prone to bitterness in controversy. At this time, we are further to understand, provoked by persevering opposition, He had lost self-possession, and had abandoned Himself to the violence of anger, His bad humor having reached such a pitch as to make Him guilty of actions seemingly absurd, such as that of cursing the fig-tree. He had, in fact, become reckless of consequences, or even seemed to court such as were disastrous; and, weary of conflict, sought by violent language to precipitate a crisis, and provoke His enemies to put Him to death.

These are blasphemies against the Son of man as unfounded as they are injurious. The last days of Jesus were certainly full of intense excitement, but to a candid mind no traces of passion are discernible in His conduct. All His recorded utterances during those days are in a high key, suited to one whose soul was animated by the most sublime feelings. Every sentence is eloquent, every word tells; but all throughout is natural, and appropriate to the situation. Even when the terrible attack on the religious leaders of Israel begins, we listen awestruck, but not shocked. We feel that the speaker has a right to use such language, that what He says is true, and that all is said with commanding authority and dignity, such as became the Messianic King. When the speaker has come to an end, we breathe freely, sensible that a delicate though
necessary task has been performed with not less wisdom than fidelity. Deep and undisguised abhorrence is expressed in every sentence, such as it would be difficult for any ordinary man, yea, even for an extraordinary one, to cherish without some admixture of that wrath which worketh not the righteousness of God. But in the antipathies of a Divine Being the weakness of passion finds no place: His abhorrence may be deep, but it is also ever calm; and we challenge unbelievers to point out a single feature in this discourse inconsistent with the hypothesis that the speaker is divine. Nay, leaving out of view Christ's divinity, and criticizing His words with a freedom unfettered by reverence, we can see no traces in them of a man carried headlong by a tempest of anger. We find, after strictest search, no loose expressions, no passionate exaggerations, but rather a style remarkable for artistic precision and accuracy. The pictures of the ostentatious, place-hunting, title-loving rabbi; of the hypocrite, who makes long prayers and devours widows' houses; of the zealot, who puts himself to infinite trouble to make converts, only to make his converts worse rather than better men; of the Jesuitical scribe, who teaches that the gold of the temple is a more sacred, binding thing to swear by than the temple itself; of the Pharisee, whose conscience is strict or lax as suits his convenience; of the whitened sepulchres, fair without, full within of dead men's bones; of the men whose piety manifests itself in murdering living prophets and garnishing the sepulchres of dead ones, - are moral daguerreotypes which will stand the minutest inspection of criticism, drawn by no irritated, defeated man, feeling sorely and resenting keenly the malice of his adversaries, but by one who has gained so complete a victory, that He can make sport of His foes, and at all events runs no risk of losing self-control.

The aim of the discourse, equally with its style, is a sufficient defense against the charge of bitter personality. The direct object of the speaker was not to expose the blind guides of Israel, but to save from delusion the people whom they were misguiding to their ruin. The audience consisted of the disciples and the multitude who heard Him gladly. It is most probable that many of the blind guides were present; and it would make no difference to Jesus whether they were or not, for He had not two ways of speaking concerning men - one before their faces, another behind their backs. It is told of Demosthenes, the great Athenian orator, and the determined opponent of Philip of Macedon, that he completely broke down in that king's presence on the occasion of his first appearance before him as an ambassador from his native city. But a greater than Demosthenes is here, whose sincerity and courage are as marvelous as His wisdom and eloquence, and who can say all He thinks of the religious heads of the people in their own hearing. Still, in the present instance, the parties formally addressed were not the heads of the people, but the people themselves; and it is worthy of notice how carefully discriminating the speaker was in the counsel which He gave them. He told them that what He objected to was not so much the teaching of their guides, as their lives: they might follow all their precepts with comparative impunity, but it would be fatal to follow their example. How many reformers in similar circumstances would have joined doctrine and practice together in one indiscriminate denunciation! Such moderation is not the attribute of a man in a rage.

But the best clew of all to the spirit of the speaker is the manner in which His discourse ends: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Strange ending for one filled with angry passion! O Jesus, Jesus! how Thou rises above the petty thoughts and feelings of ordinary men! Who shall fathom the depths of Thy heart? What mighty waves of righteousness, truth, pity, and sorrow roll through Thy bosom!

Having uttered that piercing cry of grief, Jesus left the temple, never, so far as we know, to return. His last words to the people of Jerusalem were: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." On the way from the city to Bethany, by the Mount of Olives, the rejected Saviour again alluded to its coming doom. The light-hearted disciples had drawn His attention to the strength and beauty of the temple buildings, then in full view. In too sad and solemn a mood for admiring mere architecture, He
replied in the spirit of a prophet: "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Arrived at Mount Olivet, the company sat down to take a leisurely view of the majestic pile of which they had been speaking. How different the thoughts and feelings suggested by the same object to the minds of the spectators! The twelve look with merely outward eye; their Master looks with the inward eye of prophecy. They see nothing before them but the goodly stones; He sees the profanation in the interior, greedy traders within the sacred precincts, religion so vitiated by ostentation, as to make a poor widow casting her two mites into the treasury, in pious simplicity, a rare and pleasing exception. The disciples think of the present only; Jesus looks forward to an approaching doom, fearful to contemplate, and doubtless backward too, over the long and checkered history through which the once venerable, now polluted, house of God had passed. The disciples are elated with pride as they gaze on this national structure, the glory of their country, and are happy as thoughtless men are wont to be; the heart of Jesus is heavy with the sadness of wisdom and prescience, and of love that would have saved, but can now do nothing but weep, and proclaim the awful words of doom.

Yet, with all their thoughtlessness, the twelve could not quite forget those dark forebodings of their Master. The weird words haunted their minds, and made them curious to know more. Therefore they came to Jesus, or some of them - Mark mentions Peter, James, John, and Andrew - and asked two questions: when Jerusalem should be destroyed; and what should be the signs of His coming, and of the end of the world. The two events referred to in the questions - the end of Jerusalem, and the end of the world - were assumed by the questioners to be contemporaneous. It was a natural and by no means a singular mistake. Local and partial judgments are wont to be thus mixed up with the universal one in men's imaginations; and hence almost every great calamity which inspires awe leads to anticipations of the last day. Thus Luther, when his mind was clouded by the dark shadow of present tribulation, would remark: "The world cannot stand long, perhaps a hundred years at the outside. At the last will be great alterations and commotions, and already there are great commotions among men. Never had the men of law so much occupation as now. There are vehement dissensions in our families, and discord in the church." In apostolic times Christians expected the immediate coming of Christ with such confidence and ardor, that some even neglected their secular business, just as towards the close of the tenth century people allowed churches to fall into disrepair because the end of the world was deemed close at hand.

In reality, the judgment of Jerusalem and that of the world at large were to be separated by a long interval. Therefore Jesus treated the two things as distinct in His prophetic discourse, and gave separate answers to the two questions which the disciples had combined into one, that respecting the end of the world being disposed of first.

The answer He gave to this question was general and negative. He did not fix a time, but said in effect: "The end will not be till such and such things have taken place," specifying six antecedents of the end in succession, the first being the appearance of false Christs. Of these He assured His disciples there would be many, deceiving many; and most truly, for several quack Messiahs did appear even before the destruction of Jerusalem, availing themselves of, and imposing on, the general desire for deliverance, even as quack doctors do in reference to bodily ailments, and succeeding in deceiving many, as unhappily in such times is only too easy. But among the number of their dupes were found none of those who had been previously instructed by the true Christ to regard the appearance of pseudo-Christs merely as one of the signs of an evil time. The deceivers of others were for them a preservative against delusion.

The second antecedent is, "wars and rumors of wars." Nation must rise against nation: there must be times of upheaving and dissolution; declines and falls of empires, and risings of new kingdoms on the ruins of the old. This second sign would be accompanied by a third, in the shape of commotions in the
physical world, emblematic of those in the political. Famines, earthquakes, pestilences, etc., would occur in divers places.

Yet these things, however dreadful, would be but the beginning of sorrows; nor would the end come till those signs had repeated themselves again and again. No one could tell from the occurrence of such phenomena that the end would be now; he could only infer that it was not yet.

Next in order come persecutions, with all the moral and social phenomena of persecuting times. Christians must undergo a discipline of hatred among the nations because of the Name they bear, and as the reputed authors of all the disasters which befall the people among whom they live. Times must come when, if the Tiber inundate Rome, if the Nile overflow not his fields, if drought, earthquake, famine, or plague visit the earth, the cry of the populace will forthwith be, "The Christians to the lions!"

Along with persecutions, as a fifth antecedent of the end, would come a sifting of the church. Many would break down or turn traitors; there would spring up manifold animosities, schisms, and heresies, each named from its own false prophet. The prevalence of these evils in the church would give rise to much spiritual declension. "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

The last thing that must happen ere the end come is the evangelization of the world; which being achieved, the end would at length arrive. From this sign we may guess that the world will last a long while yet; for, according to the law of historical probability, it will be long ere the gospel shall have been preached to all men for a witness. Ardent Christians or enthusiastic students of prophecy who think otherwise must remember that sending a few missionaries to a heathen country does not satisfy the prescribed condition. The gospel has not been preached to a nation for a witness, that is, so as to form a basis of moral judgment, till it has been preached to the whole people as in Christendom. This has never yet been done for all the nations, and at the present rate of progress it is not likely to be accomplished for centuries to come.

Having rapidly sketched an outline of the events that must precede the end of the world, Jesus addressed Himself to the more special question which related to the destruction of Jerusalem. He could now speak on that subject with more freedom, after He had guarded against the notion that the destruction of the holy city was a sign of His own immediate final coming. "When, then," He began, - the introductory formula signifying, to answer now your first question, - "ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains;" the abomination of desolation being the Roman army with its eagles - abominable to the Jew, desolating to the land. When the eagles appeared, all might flee for their life; resistance would be vain, obstinacy and bravery utterly unavailing. The calamity would be so sudden that there would be no time to save any thing. It would be as when a house is on fire; people would be glad to escape with their life. It would be a fearful time of tribulation, unparalleled before or after. Woe to poor nursing mothers in those horrible days, and to such as were with child! What barbarities and inhumanities awaited them! The calamities that were coming would spare nobody, not even Christians. They would find safety only in flight, and they would have cause to be thankful that they escaped at all. But their flight, though unavoidable, might be more or less grievous according to circumstances; and they should pray for what might appear small mercies, even for such alleviations as that they might not have to flee to the mountains in winter, when it is cold and comfortless, or on the Sabbath, the day of rest and peace.

After giving this brief but graphic sketch of the awful days approaching, intolerable by mortal men were they not shortened "for the elect's sake," Jesus repeated His warning word against deception, as if in fear that His disciples, distracted by such calamities, might think "surely now is the end." He told them that violence would be followed by apostasy and falsehood, as great a trial in one way as the destruction of
Jerusalem in another. False teachers should arise, who would be so plausible as almost to deceive the very elect. The devil would appear as an angel of light; in the desert as a monk, in the shrine as an object of superstitious worship. But whatever men might pretend, the Christ would not be there; nor would His appearance take place then, nor at any fixed calculable time, but suddenly, unexpectedly, like the lightning flash in the heavens. When moral corruption had attained its full development, then would the judgment come.

In the following part of the discourse, the end of the world seems to be brought into immediate proximity to the destruction of the holy city. If a long stretch of ages was to intervene, the perspective of the prophetic picture seems at fault. The far-distant mountains of the eternal world, visible beyond and above the near hills of time in the foreground, want the dim-blue haze, which helps the eye to realize how far off they are. This defect in Matthew's narrative, which we have been taking for our text, is supplied by Luke, who interprets the tribulation (?????) so as to include the subsequent long-lasting dispersion of Israel among the nations. The phrase he employs to denote this period is significant, as implying the idea of lengthened duration. It is "the times of the Gentiles" (?a???? ????)). The expression means, the time when the Gentiles should have their opportunity of enjoying divine grace, corresponding to the time of gracious visitation enjoyed by the Jews referred to by Jesus in His lament over Jerusalem. There is no reason to suppose Luke coined these phrases; they bear the stamp of genuineness upon them. But if we assume, as we are entitled to do, that not Luke the Pauline universalist, but Jesus Himself, spoke of a time of merciful visitation of the Gentiles, then it follows that in His eschatological discourse He gave clear intimation of a lengthened period during which His gospel was to be preached in the world; even as He did on other occasions, as in the parable of the wicked husbandman, in which He declared that the vineyard should be taken from its present occupants, and given to others who would bring forth fruit. For it is incredible that Jesus should speak of a time of the Gentiles analogous to the time of merciful visitation enjoyed by the Jews, and imagine that the time of the Gentiles was to last only some thirty years. The Jewish kairos lasted thousands of years: it would be only mocking the poor Gentiles to dignify the period of a single generation with the name of a season of gracious visitation.

The parable of the fig-tree, employed by Jesus to indicate the sure connection between the signs foregoing and the grand event that was to follow, seems at first to exclude the idea of a protracted duration, but on second thoughts we shall find it does not. The point of the parable lies in the comparison of the signs of the times to the first buds of the fig-tree. This comparison implies that the last judgment is not the thing which is at the doors. The last day is the harvest season, but from the first buds of early summer to the harvest there is a long interval. The parable further suggests the right way of understanding the statement: "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Christ did not mean that the generation then living was to witness the end, but that in that generation all the things which form the incipient stage in the development would appear. It was the age of beginnings, of shoots and blossoms, not of fruit and ingathering. In that generation fell the beginnings of Christianity and the new world it was to create, and also the end of the Jewish world, of which the symbol was a fig-tree covered with leaves, but without any blossom or fruit, like that Jesus Himself had cursed, by way of an acted prophecy of Israel's coming doom. The buds of most things in the church's history appeared in that age: of gospel preaching, of antiChristian tendencies, of persecutions, heresies, schisms, and apostasies. All these, however, had to grow to their legitimate issues before the end came. How long the development would take, no man could tell, not even the Son of Man. It was a state secret of the Almighty, into which no one should wish to pry.

This statement, that the time of the end is known alone to God, excludes the idea that it can be calculated, or that data are given in Scripture for that purpose. If such data be given, then the secret is virtually disclosed. We therefore regard the calculations of students of prophecy respecting the times and seasons as random guesses unworthy of serious attention. The death-day of the world needs to be hid for
the purposes of providence as much as the dying-day of individuals. And we have no doubt that God has kept His secret; though some fancy they can cast the world’s horoscope from prophetic numbers, as astrologers were wont to determine the course of individual lives from the positions of the stars.

Though the prophetic discourse of Jesus revealed nothing as to times, it was not therefore valueless. It taught effectively two lessons, - one specially for the benefit of the twelve, and the other for all Christians and all ages. The lesson for the twelve was, that they might dismiss from their minds all fond hopes of a restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Not reconstruction, but dissolution and dispersion, was Israel's melancholy doom.

The general lesson for all in this discourse is: "Watch, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." The call to watchfulness is based on our ignorance of the time of the end, and on the fact that, however long delayed the end may be, it will come suddenly at last, as a thief in the night. The importance of watching and waiting, Jesus illustrated by two parables, the Absent Goodman and the Wise and Foolish Virgins. Both parables depict the diverse conduct of the professed servants of God during the period of delay. The effect on some, we are taught, is to make them negligent, they being eye-servants and fitful workers, who need oversight and the stimulus of extraordinary events. Others, again, are steady, equal, habitually faithful, working as well when the master is absent as when they are under his eye. The treatment of both on the master's return corresponds to their respective behavior, - one class being rewarded, the other punished. Such is the substance of the parable of the Absent Goodman. Luke gives an important appendix, which depicts the conduct of persons in authority in the house of the absent Lord. While the common servants are for the most part negligent, the upper servants play the tyrant over their fellows. This is exactly what church dignitaries did in after ages; and the fact that Jesus contemplated such a state of things, requiring from the nature of the case the lapse of centuries to bring it about, is another proof that in this discourse His prophetic eye swept over a vast tract of time. Another remark is suggested by the great reward promised to such as should not abuse their authority: "He will make him ruler over all that he hath." The greatness of the reward indicates an expectation that fidelity will be rare among the stewards of the house. Indeed, the Head of the church seems to have apprehended the prevalence of a negligent spirit among all His servants, high and low; for He speaks of the lord of the household as so gratified with the conduct of the faithful, that he girds himself to serve them while they sit at meat. Has not the apprehension been too well justified by events?

The parable of the Ten Virgins, familiar to all, and full of instruction, teaches us this peculiar lesson, that watching does not imply sleepless anxiety and constant thought concerning the future, but quiet, steady attention to present duty. While the bridegroom tarried, all the virgins, wise and foolish alike, slumbered and slept, the wise differing from their sisters in having all things in readiness against a sudden call. This is a sober and reasonable representation of the duty of waiting by one who understands what is possible; for, in a certain sense, sleep of the mind in reference to eternity is as necessary as physical sleep is to the body. Constant thought about the great realities of the future would only result in weakness, distraction, and madness, or in disorder, idleness, and restlessness; as in Thessalonica, where the conduct of many who watched in the wrong sense made it needful that Paul should give them the wholesome counsel to be quiet, and work, and eat bread earned by the labor of their own hands.

The great prophetic discourse worthily ended with a solemn representation of the final judgment of the world, when all mankind shall be assembled to be judged either by the historical gospel preached to them for a witness, or by its great ethical principle, the law of charity written on their hearts; and when those who have loved Christ and served Him in person, or in His representatives, - the poor, the destitute, the suffering, - shall be welcomed to the realms of the blessed, and those who have acted contrariwise shall be sent away to keep company with the devil and his angels.
Section I. The Washing

John 13:1–11.

Up to this point the fourth evangelist has said very little indeed of the special relations of Jesus and the twelve. Now, however, he abundantly makes up or any deficiency on this score. The third part of his Gospel, which begins here, is, with the exception of two chapters relating the history of the passion, entirely occupied with the tender, intimate intercourse of the Lord Jesus with "His own," from the evening before His death to the time when He departed out of the world, leaving them behind! The thirteenth and four following chapters relate scenes and discourses from the last hours spent by the Saviour with His disciples, previous to His betrayal into the hands of His enemies. He has uttered His final word to the outside world, and withdrawn Himself within the bosom of His own family; and we are privileged here to see Him among His spiritual children, and to hear His farewell Words to them in view of His decease. It becomes us to enter the supper chamber with deep reverence. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

The first thing we see, on entering, is Jesus washing His disciples' feet. Marvellous spectacle! and the evangelist has taken care, in narrating the incident, to enhance its impressiveness by the manner in which he introduces it. He has put the beautiful picture in the best light for being seen to advantage. The preface to the story is indeed a little puzzling to expositors, the sentences being involved, and the sense somewhat obscure. Many thoughts and feelings crowd into the apostle's mind as he proceeds to relate the memorabilia of that eventful night; and, so to speak, they jostle one another in the struggle for utterance. Yet it is not very difficult to disentangle the meaning of these opening sentences. In the first, John adverts to the peculiar tenderness with which Jesus regarded His disciples on the eve of His crucifixion, and in prospect of His departure from the earth to heaven. "Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world" - how at such an hour did He feel towards those who had been His companions throughout the years of His public ministry, and whom He was soon to leave behind Him? "He loved them unto the end." Not selfishly engrossed with His own sorrows, or with the prospect of His subsequent joys, He found room in His heart for His followers still; nay, His love burned out towards them with extraordinary ardor, and His whole care was by precept and example, by words of comfort, warning, and instruction, to prepare them for future duty and trial, as the narrative here commencing would abundantly demonstrate.

The second verse of the preface alludes parenthetically to a fact which served as a foil to the constancy of Jesus: "The devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him." John would say: "Jesus loved His disciples to the end, though they did not all so love Him. One of them at this very moment entertained the diabolic purpose of betraying his Lord. Yet that Lord loved even him, condescending to wash even his feet; so endeavoring, if possible, to overcome his evil with good."

The aim of the evangelist, in the last sentence of his preface, is to show by contrast what a wondrous condescension it was in the Saviour to wash the feet of any of the disciples. Jesus knowing these things, - these things being true of Him: that "the Father had given all things into His hands" - sovereign power over all flesh; "that He was come from God" - a divine being by nature, and entitled to divine honors; "and that He was about to return to God," to enter on the enjoyment of such honors, - did as is here recorded. He, the August Being who had such intrinsic dignity, such a consciousness, such prospects - even "He riseth from supper and lath aside His garments, and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

The time when all this took place was, it would seem, about the commencement of the evening meal. The words of the evangelist rendered in the English version "supper being ended," may be translated supper
being begun, or better, supper-time having arrived; and from the sequel of the narrative, it is evident that in this sense they must be understood here. The supper was still going on when Jesus introduced the subject of the traitor, which He did not only after He had washed the feet of His disciples, but after He had resumed His seat at the table, and given an explanation of what He had just done.

That explanation will fall to be more particularly considered afterwards; but meantime it bears on its face that the occasion of the feet-washing was some misbehavior on the part of the disciples. Jesus had to condescend, we judge, because His disciples would not condescend. This impression is confirmed by a statement in Luke's Gospel, that on the same evening a strife arose among the twelve which of them should be accounted the greatest. Whence that new strife arose we know not, but it is possible that the old quarrel about place was revived by the words uttered by Jesus as they were about to sit down to meat: "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." The allusion to the kingdom was quite sufficient to set their imaginations on fire and re-awaken old dreams about thrones, and from old dreams to old feuds and jealousies the transition was natural and easy; and so we can conceive how, even before the supper began, the talk of the brethren had waxed noisy and warm. Or the point in dispute may have been in what order they should sit at table, or who should be the servant for the occasion, and wash the feet of the company. Any one of these suppositions might account for the fact recorded by Luke; for it does not require much to make children quarrel.

The expedient employed by Jesus to divert the minds of His disciples from unedifying themes of conversation, and to exorcise ambitious passions from their breasts, was a most effectual one. The very preliminaries of the feet-washing scene must have gone far to change the current of feeling. How the spectators must have stared and wondered as the Master of the feast rose from His seat, laid aside His upper garment, girt Himself with a towel, and poured out water into a basin, doing all with the utmost self-possession, composure, and deliberation!

With which of the twelve Jesus made a beginning we are not informed; but we know, as we might have guessed without being told, who was the first to speak his mind about the singular transaction. When Peter's turn came, he had so far recovered from the amazement, under whose influence the first washed may have yielded passively to their Lord's will, as to be capable of reflecting on the indecency of such an inversion of the right relation between master and servants. Therefore, when Jesus came to him, that outspoken disciple asked, in astonishment, "Lord, washest Thou my feet?" His spirit rose in rebellion against the proposal, as one injurious to the dignity of his beloved Lord, and as an outrage upon his own sense of reverence. This impulse of instinctive aversion was by no means discreditable to Peter, and it was evidently not regarded with disapprobation by his Master. The reply of Jesus to his objection is markedly respectful in tone: "What I do," He said, "thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," virtually admitting that the proceeding in question needed explanation, and that Peter's opposition was, in the first place, perfectly natural. "I acknowledge," He meant to say, "that my present action is an offence to the feelings of reverence which you rightly cherish towards me. Nevertheless, suffer it. I do this for reasons which you do not comprehend now, but which you shall understand ere long."

Had Peter been satisfied with this apologetic reply, his conduct would have been entirely free from blame. But He was not content, but persisted in opposition after Jesus had distinctly intimated His will, and vehemently and stubbornly exclaimed: "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" The tune here changes utterly. Peter's first word was the expression of sincere reverence; his second is simply the language of unmitigated irreverence and downright disobedience. He rudely contradicts his Master, and at the same time, we may add, flatly contradicts himself. His whole behavior on this occasion presents an odd mixture of moral opposites: self-abasement and self-will, humility and pride, respect and disrespect for Jesus, to whom he speaks now as one whose shoe-latchet he is not worthy to unloose, and anon as one to whom he might dictate orders. What a strange man! But, indeed, how strange are we all!

Peter having so changed his tone, Jesus found it needful to alter His tone too, from the apologetic mildness of the first reply to that of magisterial sternness. "If I wash thee not," He said gravely, "thou hast no part with me;," meaning, "Thou hast taken up a most serious position, Simon Peter, the question at issue being simply, Are you, or are you not, to be admitted into my kingdom - to be a true disciple, and to have a true disciple's reward?"
On a surface view, it is difficult to see how this could be the state of the question. One is tempted to think that Jesus was indulging in exaggeration, for the purpose of intimidating a refractory disciple into compliance with His will. If we reject this method of interpretation as incompatible with the character of the speaker and the seriousness of the occasion, we are thrown back on the inquiry, What does washing in this statement mean? Evidently it signifies more than meets the ear, more than the mere literal washing of the feet, and is to be regarded as a symbol of the washing of the soul from sin, or still more comprehensively, and in our opinion more correctly, as representing all in Christ's teaching and work which would be compromised by the consistent carrying out of the principle on which Peter's opposition to the washing of his feet by Jesus was based. On either supposition the statement of Jesus was true: in the former case obviously; in the latter not so obviously, but not less really, as we proceed to show.

Observe, then, what was involved in the attitude assumed by Peter. He virtually took his stand on these two positions: that he would admit of nothing which seemed inconsistent with the personal dignity of his Lord, and that he would adopt as his rule of conduct his own judgment in preference to Christ's will; the one position being involved in the question, Dost Thou wash my feet? the other in the resolution, Thou shalt never wash my feet. In other words, the ground taken up by this disciple compromised the whole sum and substance of Christianity, the former principle sweeping away Christ's whole state and experience of humiliation, and the latter not less certainly sapping the foundation of Christ's lordship. That this is no exaggeration on our part, a moment's reflection will show. Look first at the objection to the feet washing on the score of reverence. If Jesus might not wash the feet of His disciples because it was beneath His dignity, then with equal reason objection might be taken to any act involving self-humiliation. One who said, Thou shalt not wash my feet, because the doing of it is unworthy of Thee, might as well say, Thou shalt not wash my soul, or do aught towards that end, because it involves humiliating experiences. Why, indeed, make a difficulty about a trifling matter of detail? Go to the heart of the business at once, and ask, "Shall the Eternal Son of God become flesh, and dwell among us? shall He who was in the form of God lay aside His robes of state, and gird Himself with the towel of humanity, to perform menial offices for His own creatures? shall the ever-blessed One become a curse by enduring crucifixion? shall the Holy One degrade Himself by coming into close companionship with the depraved sons of Adam? shall the Righteous One pour His life-blood into a basin, that there may be a fountain wherein the unrighteous may be cleansed from their guilt and iniquity?" In short, incarnation, atonement, and Christ's whole earthly experience of temptation, hardship, indignity, and sorrow, must go if Jesus may not wash a disciple's feet.

Not less clearly is Christ's lordship at an end if a disciple may give Him orders, and say, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." If Peter meant anything more by these words than a display of temper and caprice, he meant this: that he would not submit to the proposed operation, because his moral feelings and his judgment told him it was wrong. He made his own reason and conscience the supreme rule of conduct. Now, in the first place, by this position the principle of obedience was compromised, which requires that the will of the Lord, once known, whether we understand its reason or perceive its goodness or not, shall be supreme. Then there are other things much more important than the washing of the feet, to which objection might be taken on the score of reason or conscience with equal plausibility. For example, Christ tells us that those who would be His disciples, and obtain entrance into His kingdom, must be willing to part with earthly goods, and even with nearest and dearest friends. To many men this seems unreasonable; and on Peter's principle they should forthwith say, "I will never do any such thing." Or again, Christ tells us that we must be born again, and that we must eat His flesh and drink His blood. To me these doctrines may seem incomprehensible, and even absurd; and therefore, on Peter's principle, I may turn my back on the great Teacher, and say, "I will not have this speaker of dark, mystic sayings for my master." Once more, Christ tells us that we must give the kingdom of God the first place in our thoughts, and dismiss from our hearts carking care for to-morrow. To me this may appear in my present mood simply impossible; and therefore, on Peter's principle, I may set aside this moral requirement as utopian, however beautiful, without even seriously attempting to comply with it.

Now that we know whither Peter's refusal tends, we can see that Jesus spake the simple truth when He said: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Look at that refusal as an objection to Christ humbling Himself. If Christ may not humble Himself, then, in the first place, He can have no part with us.
The Holy Son of God is forbidden by a regard to His dignity to become in anything like unto His brethren, or even to acknowledge them as His brethren. The grand paternal law, by which the Sanctifier is identified with them that are to be sanctified, is disannulled, and all its consequences made void. A great impassable gulf separates the Divine Being from His creatures. He may stand on the far-off shore, and wistfully contemplate their forlorn estate; but He cannot, He dare not - His majesty forbids it - come near them, and reach forth a helping hand.

But if the Son of God may have no part with us, then, in the second place, we can have no part with Him. We cannot share His fellowship with the Father, if He come not forth to declare Him. We can receive no acts of brotherly kindness from Him. He cannot deliver us from the curse of the law, or from the fear of death; He cannot succor us when we are tempted; He cannot wash our feet; nay, what is a far more serious matter, He cannot wash our souls. If there is to be no fountain opened for sin in the human nature of Emmanuel sinners must remain impure. For a God afar off is not able, even if He were willing, to purify the human soul. A God whose majesty, like an iron fate, kept Him aloof from sinners, could not even effectively forgive them. Still less could He sanctify them. Love alone has sanctifying virtue, and what room is there for love in a Being who cannot humble Himself to be a servant?

Look now at Peter's refusal as resistance to Christ's will. In this view also it justified the saying, "Thou hast no part with me." It excluded from salvation; for if Jesus is not to be Lord, He will not be Savior. It excluded from fellowship; for Jesus will have no communion with self-will. His own attitude towards His Father was, "not my will, but Thine;" and He demands this attitude towards Himself in turn from all His disciples. He will be the Author of eternal salvation, only to them that obey Him. Not that He would have us be always servants, blindly obeying a Lord whose will we do not understand. His aim is to advance us ultimately to the status of friends, doing His will intelligently and freely - not as complying mechanically with an outward commandment, but as being a law to ourselves. But we can attain that high position only by beginning with a servant's obedience. We must do, and suffer to be done to us, what we know not now, in order that we may know hereafter the philosophy of our duty to our Lord, and of our Lord's dealings with us. And the perfection of obedience lies in doing that which reverence unenlightened finds peculiarly hard, viz. in letting the Lord change places with us, and if it seem good to Him, humble Himself to be our servant.

It was a serious thing, therefore, to say, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." But Peter was not aware how serious it was. He knew not what he said, or what he did. He had hastily taken up a position whose ground and consequences he had not considered. And his heart was right, though his temper was wrong. Therefore the stern declaration of Jesus at once brought him to reason, or rather to unreason in an opposite direction. The idea of being cut off from his dear Master's sympathy or favor through his waywardness drove him in sheer fright to the opposite extreme of overdone compliance; and he said in effect, "If my interest in Thee depends on my feet being washed, then, Lord, wash my whole body - hands, head, feet, and all." How characteristic! how like a child, in whose heart is much foolishness, but also much affection, and who can always be managed by the bands of love! There is as yet a sad want of balance in this disciple's character: he goes, swinging like a pendulum, from one extreme to another; and it will take some time ere he settle down into a harmonious equipoise of all parts of his being - intellect, will, heart, and conscience. But the root of the matter is in him: he is sound at the core; and after the due amount of mistakes, he will become a wise man by and by. He is clean, and needs not more than to have his feet washed. Jesus Himself admits it of him, and of all his brother-disciples except one, who is unclean all over.

Section II. The Explanation
John xiii. 12-20.

Peter's resistance overcome, the washing proceeded without further interruption. When the process had come to an end, Jesus, putting on again His upper garment, resumed His seat, and briefly explained to His disciples the purport of the action. "Know ye," He inquired, "what I have done unto you?" Then, answering His own question, He went on to say: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then,
your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

It was another lesson in humility which Jesus had been giving "His own," - a lesson very similar to the earlier ones recorded in the synoptical Gospels. John's Christ, we see here, teaches the same doctrine as the Christ of the three first evangelists. The twelve, as they are depicted in the fourth Gospel, are just such as we have found them in Matthew, Mark, and Luke - grievously needing to be taught meekness and brotherly kindness; and Jesus teaches them these virtues in much the same way here as elsewhere - by precept and example, by symbolic act, and added word of interpretation. Once He held up a little child, to shame them out of ambitious passions; here He renews their pride, by becoming the menial of the household. At another time He hushed their angry strife by adverting to His own self-humiliation, in coming from heaven to be a minister to man's needs in life and in death; here He accomplishes the same end, by expressing the spirit and aim of His whole earthly ministry in a representative, typical act of condescension.

This lesson, like all the rest, Jesus gave with the authority of one who might lay down the law. In the very act of playing the servant's part, He was asserting His sovereignty. He reminds His disciples, when the service is over, of the titles they were wont to give Him, and in a marked, emphatic manner He accepts them as His due. He tells them distinctly that He is indeed their Teacher, whose doctrine it is their business to learn, and their Lord, whose will it is their duty to obey. His humility, therefore, is manifestly not an affectation of ignorance as to who and what He is. He knows full well who He is, whence He has come, whither He is going; His humility is that of a king, yea, of a Divine Being. The pattern of meekness is at the same time one who prescribes Himself to His followers as a pattern, and demands that they fix their attention on His behavior, and strive to copy it.

In making this demand, Jesus is obviously very thoroughly in earnest. He is not less earnest in requiring the disciples to wash one another's feet, than He was in insisting that He Himself should wash the feet of one and all. As He said to Peter in express words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me;" so He says to them all in effect, though not in words,"If ye wash not each other, if ye refuse to serve one another in love, ye have again no part with me." This is a hard saying; for if it be difficult to believe in the humiliation of Christ, it is still more difficult to humble ourselves. Hence, notwithstanding the frequency and urgency with which the Saviour declares that we must have the spirit manifested in His humiliation for us dwelling in us, and giving birth in our life to conduct kindred to His own, even sincere disciples are constantly, though it may be half unconsciously, inventing excuses for treating the example of their Lord as utterly inimitable, and therefore in reality no example at all. Even the apparently unanswerable argument employed by Jesus to enforce imitation does not escape secret criticism. "Verily, verily," saith He, "a servant is not greater than his lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." "It may," say we, "be more incumbent on the servant to humble himself than on the master, but in some respects it is also more difficult. The master can afford to condescend: his action will not be misunderstood, but will be taken for what it is. But the servant cannot afford to be humble: he must assert himself, and assume airs, in order to make himself of any consequence."

The great Master knew too well how slow men would ever be to learn the lesson He had just been teaching His disciples. Therefore He appended to His explanation of the feet-washing this reflection: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," hinting at the rarity and difficulty of such high morality as He had been inculcating, and declaring the blessedness of the few who attained unto it. And surely the reflection is just! Is not the morality here enjoined indeed rare? Are not the virtues called into play by acts of condescension and charity most high and difficult? Who dreams of calling them easy? How utterly contrary they are to the native tendencies of the human heart! how alien from the spirit of society! Is it the way of men to be content with the humblest place, and to seek their felicity in serving others? Doth not the spirit that is in us lust unto envy, strive ambitiously for positions of influence, and deem it the greatest happiness to be served, and to be exempt from the drudgery of servile tasks? The world itself does not dispute the difficulty of Christ-like virtue; it rather exaggerates its difficulty, and pronounces it utopian and impracticable - merely a beautiful, unattainable ideal.

And as for the sincere disciple of Jesus, no proof is needed to convince him of the arduousness of the task assigned him by his Lord. He knows by bitter experience how far conduct lags behind knowledge, and
how hard it is to translate admiration of unearthly goodness into imitation thereof. His mind is familiarly conversant with the doctrine and life of the Saviour; he has read and re-read the Gospel story, fondly lingering over its minutest details; his heart has burned as he followed the footsteps of the Blessed One walking about on this earth, ever intent on doing good: sweeter to his ear than the finest lyric poems are the stories of the woman by the well, the sinner in the house of Simon, and of Zaccheus the publican; those touching incidents of the little child upheld as a pattern of humility, and of the Master washing quarrelsome disciples' feet, and the exquisite parables of the Lost Sheep, the Prodigal, and the Good Samaritan. But when he has to close his New Testament, and go away into the rude, ungodly, matter-of-fact world, and be there a Christ-like man, and do the things which he knows so intimately, and counts himself blessed in knowing, alas, what a descent! It is like a fall from Eden into a state of mere sin and misery. And the longer he lives, and the more he gets mixed up with life's relations and engagements, the further he seems to himself to degenerate from the gospel pattern; till at length he is almost ashamed to think or speak of the beauties of holiness exhibited therein, and is tempted to adopt a lower and more worldly tone, out of a regard to sincerity, and in fear of becoming a mere sentimental hypocrite like Judas, who kissed his Master at the very moment he was betraying Him.

In proportion to the difficulty and the rarity of the virtue prescribed is the felicity of those who are enabled to practice it. Theirs is a threefold blessedness. First, they have the joy connected with the achievement of an arduous task. Easy undertakings bring small pains, but they also bring small pleasures; rapturous delight is reserved for those who attempt and accomplish that which passes for impossible. And what raptures can be purer, holier, and more intense than those of the man who has at length succeeded in making the mind of the meek and lowly One his own; who, after long climbing, has reached the alpine summit of self-forgetful, self-humbling love! Those who practice the things here enjoined further win for themselves the approbation of their Lord. A master is pleased when a pupil understands his lesson, but a lord is pleased only when his servants do his bidding. Christ, being Lord as well as Master, demands that we shall not only know but do. And in proportion to the peremptoriness of the demand is the satisfaction with which the Lord of Christians regards all earnest efforts to comply with His will and to follow His example. And to all who make such efforts it is a great happiness to be assured of the approval of Him whom they serve. The thought, "I am guided in my present action by the spirit of Jesus, and He approves what I do," sustains the mind in peace, even when one has not the happiness to win the approbation of his fellow-men; which is not an impertinent remark here, for it will often happen to us to please men least when we are pleasing the Lord most. You shall please many men by a prudent selfishness much more readily than by a generous uncalculating devotion to what is right. "Men will praise thee when thou dost well to thyself;" and they will wink at very considerable deviations from the line of pure Christian morality in the prosecution of self-interest, provided you be successful. Even religious people will often vex and grieve you by advices savoring much more of worldly wisdom than of Christian simplicity and godly sincerity. But if Christ approve, we may make shift to do without the sympathy and approbation of men. Their approbation is at most but a comfort; His is matter of life and death.

The third element in the felicity of the man who is not merely a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the perfect law of Christ, is that he escapes the guilt of unimproved knowledge. It is a religious commonplace that to sin against light is mortal sin. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." And, of course, the clearer the light the greater the responsibility. Now, in no department of Christian truth is knowledge clearer than in that which belongs to the department of ethics. There are some doctrines which the church, as a whole, can hardly be said to know, they are so mysterious, or so disputed. But the ethical teaching of Jesus is simple and copious in all its leading features; it is universally understood, and as universally admired. Protestants and Papists, Trinitarians, Socinians, and Deists, are all at one here. Happy then are they, of all sects and denominations, who do the things which all know and agree in admiring; for a heavy woe lies on those who do them not. The woe is not indeed expressed, but it is implied in Christ's words. The common Lord of all believers virtually addresses all Christendom here, saying: "Ye behold the sunlight of a perfect example; ye have been made acquainted with a high and lovely ideal of life, such as pagan moralists never dreamed of. What are ye doing with your light? Are ye merely looking at it, and writing books about it, and boasting of it, and talking of it, meanwhile allowing men outside the pale of the church to surpass you in humane and philanthropic virtue? If this is all the use you are making of your knowledge, it will be more tolerable for pagans at the day of judgment than for you."
Having made the reflection we have been considering, Jesus followed it up with a word of apology for the tone of suspicion with which it was uttered, and which was no doubt felt by the disciples. "I speak not," He said, "of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." The remark may be thus paraphrased: "In hinting at the possibility of a knowledge of right, unaccompanied by corresponding action, I have not been indulging in gratuitous insinuation. I do not indeed think so badly of you all as to imagine you capable of deliberate and habitual neglect of known duty. But there is one among you who is capable of such conduct. I have chosen you twelve, and I know the character of every one of you; and, as I said a year ago, after asking a question which hurt your feelings, that one of you had a devil, so now, after making a suspicious reflection, I say there is one among you whose character illustrates negatively its meaning; one who knows, but will not do; who puts sentiment in place of action, and admiration in place of imitation; one who, having eaten bread with me as a familiar friend, will repay me for all my kindness, not by loving obedience, but by lifting up his heel against me." The infirmity of sincere disciples Jesus could patiently bear with: but the Judas-character - in which correct thinking and fine sentiment are combined with falseness of heart and practical laxity, in which to promise is put in place of performance, and to utter the becoming word about a matter is substituted for doing the appropriate deed - such a character His soul utterly abhorred.

Who can doubt that it was not in vain that sincere disciples had been so long in the society of One who was so exacting in His ideal, and that they really did strive in after years to fulfil their Master's will, and serve one another in love?

**LESSON ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE CROSS**


The Lord's Supper is a monument sacred to the memory of Jesus Christ. "This do in remembrance of me." In Bethany Jesus had spoken as if He desired that Mary should be kept in remembrance in the preaching of His Gospel; in the supper chamber He expressed His desire to be remembered Himself. He would have Mary's deed of love commemorated by the rehearsal of her story; He would have His own deed of love commemorated by a symbolic action, to be often repeated throughout the ages to the end of the world.

The rite of the Supper, besides commemorating, is likewise of use to interpret the Lord's death. It throws important light on the meaning of that solemn event. The institution of this symbolic feast was in fact the most important contribution made by Jesus during His personal ministry to the doctrine of atonement through the sacrifice of Himself. Therefrom more clearly than from any other act or word performed or spoken by Him, the twelve might learn to conceive of their Master's death as possessing a redemptive character. Thereby Jesus, as it were, said to His disciples: My approaching passion is not to be regarded as a mere calamity, or dark disaster, falling out contrary to the divine purpose or my expectation; not as a fatal blow inflicted by ungodly men on me and you, and the cause which is dear to us all; not even as an evil which may be overruled for good; but as an event fulfilling, not frustrating, the purpose of my mission, and fruitful of blessing to the world. What men mean for evil, God means for good, to bring to pass to save much people alive. The shedding of my blood, in one aspect the crime of wicked Jews, is in another aspect my own voluntary act. I pour forth my blood for a gracious end, even for the remission of sins. My death will initiate a new dispensation, and seal a new testament; it will fulfil the purpose, and therefore take the place, of the manifold sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual, and in particular of the Paschal lamb, which is even now being eaten. I shall be the Paschal Lamb of the Israel of God henceforth; at once protecting them from death, and feeding their souls with my crucified humanity, as the bread of eternal life.

These truths are very familiar to us, however new and strange they may have been to the disciples; and we are more accustomed to explain the Supper by the death, than the death by the Supper. It may be useful, however, here to reverse the process, and, imagining ourselves in the position of the twelve, as
witnesses to the institution of a new religious symbol, to endeavor to rediscover therefrom the meaning of
the event with which it is associated, and whose significance it is intended to shadow forth. Let us, then,
take our stand beside this ancient monument, and try to read the Runic inscription on its weather-worn
surface.

1. First, then, we perceive at once that it is to the death of Jesus this monument refers. It is not merely
erected to His memory in general, but it is erected specially in memory of His decease. All things point
forward to what was about to take place on Calvary. The sacramental acts of breaking the bread and
pouring out the wine manifestly look that way. The words also spoken by Jesus in instituting the Supper
all involve allusions to His death. Both the fact and the manner of His death are hinted at, by the
distinction He makes between His body and His blood: "This is my body," "This is my blood." Body and
blood are one in life, and become separate things only by death; and not by every kind of death, but by
one whose manner involves blood-shedding, as in the case of sacrificial victims. The epithets applied to
the body and the blood point at death still more clearly. Jesus speaks of His body as "given" - as if to be
slain or "broken" in sacrifice, and of His blood as "shed." Then, finally, by describing the blood about to be
shed as the blood of a new testament, the Saviour put it beyond all doubt what He was alluding to. Where
a testament is, there must also be the death of the testator. And though an ordinary testator may die an
ordinary death, the Testator of the new testament must die a sacrificial death; for the epithet new implies
a reference to the old Jewish covenant, which was ratified by the sacrifice of burnt-offerings and peace
offerings of oxen, whose blood was sprinkled on the altar and on the people, and called by Moses "the
blood of the covenant."

2. The mere fact that the Lord's Supper commemorates specially the Lord's death, implies that that death
must have been an event of a very important character. By instituting a symbolic rite for such a purpose,
Jesus, as it were, said to His disciples and to us: "Fix your eyes on Calvary, and watch what happens there.
That is the great event in my earthly history. Other men have monuments erected to them because they
have lived lives deemed memorable. I wish you to erect a monument to me because I have died: not
forgetful of my life indeed, yet specially mindful of my death; commemorating it for its own sake, not
merely for the sake of the life whereof it is the termination. The memory of other men is cherished by the
celebration of their birthday anniversaries; but in my case, better is the day of my death than the day of
my birth for the purpose of a commemorative celebration. My birth into this world was marvelous and
momentous; but still more marvelous and momentous is my exit out of it by crucifixion. Of my birth no
festeive commemoration is needed; but of my death keep alive the memory by the Holy Supper till I come
again. remembering it well, you remember all my earthly history; for of all it is the secret, the
consummation, and the crown."

But why, in a history throughout so remarkable, should the death be thus singled out for commemoration?
Was it its tragic character that won for it this distinction? Did the Crucified One mean the Supper which
goes by His Name to be a mere dramatic representation of His passion, for the purpose of exciting our
feelings, and eliciting a sympathetic tear, by renewing the memory of His dying sorrows? So to think of
the matter were to degrade our Christian feast to the level of the pagan festival of Adonis,

Whose annual wound in Lebanon The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day.

Or was it the foul wrong and shameful indignity done to the Son of God by the wicked men who crucified
Him that Jesus wished to have kept in perpetual remembrance? Was the Holy Supper instituted for the
purpose of branding with eternal infamy a world that knew no better use to make of the Holy One than to
nail Him to a tree, and felt more kindness even for a robber than for Him? Certainly the world well
deserved to be thus held up to reprobation; but the Son of man came not to condemn sinners, but to save
them; and it was not in His loving nature to erect an enduring monument to His own resentment or to the
dishonor of His murderers. The blood of Jesus speaketh better things than that of Abel.
Or was it because His death on the cross, in spite of its indignity and shame, was glorious, as a testimony
to His invincible fidelity to the cause of truth and righteousness, that Jesus instructed His followers to keep
it ever in mind, by the celebration of the new symbolic rite? Is the festival of the Supper to be regarded as
a solemnity of the same kind as those by which the early church commemorated the death of the
martyrs? Is the Coenâ Domini simply the natalitia of the great Protomartyr? So Socinians would have us
believe. To the question why the Lord wished the memory of His crucifixion to be specially celebrated in His church the Racovian Catechism replies: "Because of all Christ's actions, it (the voluntary enduring of death) was the greatest and most proper to Him. For although the resurrection and exaltation of Christ were far greater, these were acts of God the Father rather than of Christ." In other words, the death above all things deserves to be remembered, because it was the most signal and sublime act of witness-bearing on Christ's part to the truth, the glorious copestone of a noble life of self-sacrificing devotion to the high and perilous vocation of a prophet.

That Christ's death was all this is of course true, and that it is worthy of remembrance as an act of martyrdom is equally true; but whether Jesus instituted the Holy Supper for the purpose of commemorating His death exclusively, principally, or at all as a martyrdom, is a different question. On this point we must learn the truth from Christ's own lips. Let us return, then, to the history of the institution, to learn His mind about the matter.

3. Happily the Lord Jesus explained with particular clearness in what aspect He wished His death to be the subject of commemorative celebration. In distributing to His disciples the sacramental bread, He said, "This is my body, given, or broken, for you;" thereby intimating that His death was to be commemorated because of a benefit it procured for the communicant. In handing to the disciples the sacramental cup, He said, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, shed (for you and) for many for the remission of sins;" thereby indicating the nature of the benefit procured by His death, on account of which it was worthy to be remembered.

In this creative word of the new dispensation Jesus represents His death as a sin-offering, atoning for guilt, and purchasing forgiveness of moral debt. His blood was to be shed for the remission of sins. In view of this function the blood is called the blood of the new testament, in apparent allusion to the prophecy of Jeremiah, which contains a promise of a new covenant to be made by God with the house of Israel, - a covenant whose leading blessing should be the forgiveness of iniquity, and called new, because, unlike the old, it would be a covenant of pure grace, of promises unclogged with legal stipulations. By mentioning His blood and the new covenant together, Jesus teaches that, while annulling, He would at the same time fulfil the old, in introducing the new. The new covenant would be ratified by sacrifice, even as was the old one at Sinai, and remission of sin would be granted after blood-shedding. But in bidding His disciples drink the cup, the Lord intimates that after His death there will be no more need of sacrifices. The sin-offering of blood will be converted into a thank-offering of wine, a cup of salvation, to be drunk with grateful, joyful hearts by all who through faith in His sacrifice have received the pardon of their sins. Finally, Jesus intimates that the new covenant concerns the many, not the few - not Israel alone, but all nations: it is a gospel which He bequeaths to sinners of mankind.

Well may we drink of this cup with thankfulness and joy; for the "new covenant" (new, yet far older than the old), of which it is the seal, is in all respects well ordered and sure. Well ordered; for surely it is altogether a good and God-worthy constitution of things which connects the blessing of pardon with the sacrificial death of Him through whom it comes to us. It is good in the interests of righteousness: for it provides that sin shall not be pardoned till it has been adequately atoned for by the sacrifice of the sinner's Friend; and it is just and right that without the shedding of the Righteous One's blood there should be no remission for the unrighteous. Then this economy serves well the interest of divine love, as it gives that love a worthy career, and free scope to display its magnanimous nature, in bearing the burden of the sinful and the miserable. And yet once more, the constitution of the new covenant is admirably adapted to the great practical end aimed at by the scheme of redemption, viz. the elevation of a fallen, degraded race out of a state of corruption into a state of holiness. The gospel of forgiveness through Christ's death is the moral power of God to raise such as believe it out of the world's selfishness, and enmities, and baseness, into a celestial life of devotion, self-sacrifice, patience, and humility. If by faith in Christ be understood merely belief in the opus operatum of a vicarious death, the power of such a faith to elevate is more than questionable. But when faith is taken in its true scriptural sense, as implying not only belief in a certain transaction, the endurance of death by one for others, but also, and more especially, hearty appreciation of the spirit of the deed and the Doer, then its purifying and ennobling power is beyond all question. "The love of Christ constraineth me;" and "I am crucified with Christ," as the result of such faith.
How poor is the Socinian scheme of salvation in comparison with this of the new covenant! In that scheme, pardon has no real dependence on the blood of Jesus: He died as a martyr for righteousness, not as a Redeemer for the unrighteous. We are forgiven on repenting by a simple word of God. Forgiveness cost the Forgiven no trouble or sacrifice; only a word, or stroke of the pen signing a document, "Thus saith the Lord." What a frigid transaction! What cold relations it implies between the Deity and His creatures! How vastly preferable a forgiveness which means a giving for, and costs the Forgiven sorrow, sweat, pain, blood, wounds, death - a forgiveness coming from a God who says in effect: "I will not, to save sinners, repeal the law which connects sin with death as its penalty; but I am willing for that end to become myself the law's victim." Such a forgiveness is at once an act of righteousness and an act of marvelous love; whereas forgiveness without satisfaction, though at first sight it may appear both rational and generous, manifests neither God's righteousness nor His love. A Socinian God, who pardons without atonement, is destitute alike of a passionate abhorrence of sin and of a passionate love to sinners.

Jesus once said, "He loveth much who hath much forgiven him." It is a deep truth, but there is another not less deep to be put alongside of it: we must feel that our forgiveness has cost the Forgiven much in order to love Him much. It is because they feel this that true professors of the catholic faith exhibit that passionate devotion to Christ which forms such a contrast to the cold intellectual homage paid by the Deist to his God. When the catholic Christian thinks of the tears, agonies, bloody sweat, shame, and pain endured by the Redeemer, of His marred vision, broken heart, pierced side, lacerated hands and feet, His bosom burns with devoted love. The story of the passion opens all the fountains of feeling; and by no other way than the via dolorosa could Jesus have ascended the throne of His people's hearts.

The new covenant inaugurated by Christ's death is sure as well as orderly. It is reliably sealed by the blood of the Testator. For, first, what better guarantee can we have of the good-will of God? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us." Looking at the matter in the light of justice, again, this covenant is equally sure. God is not unrighteous, to forget His Son's labor of love. As He is true, Christ shall see of the travail of His soul. It cannot be otherwise under the moral administration of Jehovah. Can the God of truth break His word? Can the Judge of all the earth permit one, and especially His own Son, to give Himself up, out of purest love, to sorrow, and pain, and shame, for His brethren, without receiving the hire which He desires, and which was promised Him - many souls, many lives, many sinners saved? Think of it: holiness suffering for righteousness' sake, and yet not having the consolation of doing something in the way of destroying unrighteousness, and turning the disobedient to the obedience of the just; love, by the impulse of its nature, and by covenant obligations, laid under a necessity of laboring for the lost, and yet doomed by the untowardness, or apathy, or faithlessness of the Governor of the universe to go unrewarded; love's labor lost, nobody the better for it, things remaining as before: no sinner pardoned, delivered from the pit and restored to holiness; no chosen people brought out of darkness into marvelous light! Such a state of things cannot be in God's dominions. The government of God is carried on in the interest of Holy Love. It gives love free scope to bear others' burdens: it arranges that if she will do so, she shall feel the full weight of the burden she takes upon her; but it also arranges, by an eternal covenant of truth and equity, that when the burden has been borne, the Burden-bearer shall receive His reward in the form He likes best - in souls washed, pardoned, sanctified, and led to everlasting glory by Himself as His ransomed brethren or children.

The principle of vicarious merit involved in the doctrine that we are pardoned simply because Christ died for our sins, when looked at with unprejudiced eyes, commends itself to reason as well as to the heart. It means practically a premium held out to foster righteousness and love. This offered premium carried Jesus through His heavy task. It was because, relying on His Father's promise, He saw the certain joy of saving many before Him, that He endured the cross. It is the same principle, in a restricted application of it, which stimulates Christians to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of their Lord. They know that, if they be faithful, they shall not live unto themselves, but shall benefit Christ's mystic body the church, and also the world at large. If the fact were otherwise, there would be very little either of moral fidelity or of love in the world. If the moral government of the universe made it impossible for one being to benefit another by prayer or loving pains, impossible for ten good men to be a shield to Sodom, for the elect to be a salt to the earth, men would give up trying to do it; generous concern about public wellbeing
would cease, and universal selfishness become the order of the day. Or if this state of things should not ensue, we should only have darkness in a worse form: the inscrutable enigma of Righteousness crucified without benefit to any living creature, - a scandal and a reproach to the government and character of God. If, therefore, we are to hold fast our faith in the divine holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, we must believe that the blood of Jesus doth most certainly procure for us the remission of sins; and likewise, that the blood of His saints, though neither available nor necessary to obtain for sinners the blessing of pardon before the divine tribunal - Christ's blood alone being capable of rendering us that service, and having rendered it effectually and once for all - is nevertheless precious in God's sight, and makes the people precious among whom it is shed, and is by God's appointment, in manifold ways, a source of blessing unto a world unworthy to number among its inhabitants men whom it knows not how to use otherwise than as lambs for the slaughter.

4] The sacrament of the Supper exhibits Christ not merely as a Lamb to be slain for a sin-offering, but as a Paschal Lamb to be eaten for spiritual nourishment. “Take, eat, this is my body.” By this injunction Jesus taught the twelve, and through them all Christians, to regard His crucified humanity as the bread of God for the life of their souls. We must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man spiritually by faith, as we eat the bread and drink the wine literally with the mouth.

In regarding Christ as the Bread of Life, we are not to restrict ourselves to the one benefit mentioned by Him in instituting the feast, the remission of sins, but to have in view all His benefits tending to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. Christ is the Bread of Life in all His offices. As a Prophet, He supplies the bread of divine truth to feed our minds; as a Priest, He furnishes the bread of righteousness to satisfy our troubled consciences; as a King, He presents Himself to us as an object of devotion, that shall fill our hearts, and whom we may worship without fear of idolatry.

As often as the Lord’s Supper is celebrated we are invited to contemplate Christ as the food of our souls in this comprehensive sense. As often as we eat the bread and drink the cup we declare that Christ has been, and is now, our soul’s food in all these ways. And as often as we use this Supper with sincerity we are helped to appropriate Christ as our spiritual food more and more abundantly. Even as a symbol or picture — mysticism and magic apart — the Holy Supper aids our faith. Through the eye it affects the heart, as do poetry and music through the ear. The very mysticism and superstition that have grown around the sacraments in the course of ages are a witness to their powerful influence over the imagination. Men’s thoughts and feelings were so deeply stirred they could not believe such power lay in mere symbols; and by a confusion of ideas natural to an excited imagination they imputed to the sign all the virtues of the things signified. By this means faith was transferred from Christ the Redeemer, and the Spirit the Sanctifier, to the rite of baptism and the service of the mass. This result shows the need of knowledge and spiritual discernment to keep the imagination in check, and prevent the eyes of the understanding from being put out by the dazzling glare of fancy. Some, considering how thoroughly the eyes of the understanding have been put out by theories of sacramental grace, have been tempted to deny that sacraments are even means of grace, and to think that institutions which have been so fearfully abused ought to be allowed to fall into desuetude. This is a natural re-action, but it is an extreme opinion. The sober, true view of the matter is, that sacraments are means of grace, not from any magic virtue in them or in the priest administering them, but as helping faith by sense, and still more by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit, as the reward of an intelligent, sincere, believing use of them.

This, then, is what we have learned from the monumental stone. The Lord’s Supper commemorates the Lord’s death; points out that death as an event of transcendent importance; sets it forth, indeed, as the ground of our hope for the pardon of sin; and finally exhibits Christ the Lord, who died on the Cross, as all to us which our spirits need for health and salvation — our mystic bread and wine. This rite, instituted by Jesus on the night on which He was betrayed, He meant to be repeated not merely by the apostles, but by His believing people in all ages till He came again. So we learn from Paul: so we might have inferred, apart from any express information. An act so original, so impressive, so pregnant with meaning, so helpful to faith, once performed, was virtually an enactment. In performing it, Jesus said in effect: “Let this become a great institution, a standing observance in the community to be called by my Name.”

The meaning of the ordinance determines the Spirit in which it should be observed. Christians should sit down at the table in a spirit of humility, thankfulness, and brotherly love; confessing sin, devoutly
thanking God for His covenant of grace, and His mercy to them in Christ, loving Him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in His own blood, and who daily feedeth their souls with heavenly food, and giving Him all glory and dominion; and loving one another — loving all redeemed men and believers in Jesus as brethren, and taking the Supper together as a family meal; withal praying that an ever-increasing number may experience the saving efficacy of Christ’s death. After this fashion did the apostles and the apostolic church celebrate the Supper at Pentecost, after Jesus had ascended to glory. Continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Would that we now could keep the feast as they kept it then! But how much must be done ere that be possible! The moss of Time must be cleared away from the monumental stone, that its inscription may become once more distinctly legible; the accumulated débris of a millennium and a half of theological controversies about sacraments must be carted out of sight and mind; the truth as it is in Jesus must be separated from the alloy of human error; the homely rite of the Supper must be divested of the state robes of elaborate ceremonial by which it has been all but stifled, and allowed to return to congenial primitive simplicity. These things, so devoutly to be wished, will come at last, — if not on earth, in that day when the Lord Jesus will drink new wine with His people in the kingdom of His Father.