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A PRACTICAL COMMENTARY
ON THE
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.
By JAMES MORISON, D.D.

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LONDON: HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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A NEW EDITION, REVISED.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

§ 1. THE CHARM OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

THERE is no *History* or *Story* in existence more charming than St. Matthew's *Memorials* or *Memoirs of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ*. A confluence of elements contributes to this charm.

The Personage portrayed is undoubtedly the principal source of the interest.

He was *the Ideal of a man*.

Even the idea of such an Ideal fascinates the imagination. But the realization of it is inexpressibly captivating. The realization took place in Jesus Christ. He was not only faultless: when viewed on the positive side of His being, as well as on the negative, He was a perfect human person. His perfection, too, was of the highest conceivable type. Not merely in regard to all those matter-of-fact details of duty which devolve on men universally, but also in regard to all the higher possibilities of moral life, that culminate in the noblest conceivable aims, and the grandest conceivable attainments and achievements, was He perfect. He was thus the most remarkable of men. In the intensest acceptation of the expression, He was *the Son of man*. As He grew up from childhood to maturity, He rose, as rapidly as the necessary limitations of human nature, in the process of development from less to greater, would admit, to the absolute climax and pinnacle of human perfectibility.

But it is not enough to say that Jesus Christ was *the ideal Son*

of man. The core of the charm, which is inherent in St. Matthew's Memoirs, is not touched by that representation.

Jesus was *the Son of God*, as well as *the Son of man*. He is *the ideal Son of God*. A 'mystery' of Godliness and Godhead was about Him and in Him. He was, as St. Matthew—echoing the magnificent nomenclature of Isaiah—expresses it, *IMMANUEL*, *GOD-WITH-US*. The Divine Father and He were "One," in a sense that would have involved blasphemy, had Jesus been no more than the ideal man. "The fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him." Such an idea, to some, may appear tinged with old-fashioned theological reverie. But it is far from being antiquated. We might as well say that goodness and God are out of date. The idea can never become obsolete. It mirrors reality. Theology and Philosophy meet together over it, and shake hands. The personality of Jesus was the point of conscious union between the Infinite and the Finite. On the plane of His complex consciousness the Infinite stooped into personal fellowship with the Finite, in order to pick up an inestimably precious nature, that had fallen as a waif into the mire. It was condescension befitting the Creator of the universe.

No wonder then that there should be imperishable charm in the faithful portraiture, however partial, of such a being as Jesus Christ. The portraiture is partial, indeed. That must be admitted. It was inevitable. Something was left for Mark to fill in. Something was left for Luke. Not a little for Paul. Not a little for John, more especially from the interior. Still more for eternity. Nevertheless much was done by Matthew; and hence the charm of his Gospel.

So much for the peculiarity that attaches to *the subject-matter* of St. Matthew's Gospel. There is, too, a charming peculiarity in *the manner* of his composition. His style is delightfully simple and unvarnished. You see through it, at a glance, to the Object beyond. There is no pigment in the wording, no luxury of diction to arrest the gaze midway. Neither is there anything mystic and mystifying, although he is dealing with things that run rapidly up, down, and out into infinity. From beginning to ending of the Memoirs all is transparency.

And then, too, there is the utter absence of diffuseness. There is no approach to prolixity: no satiety of small details. All the incidents of the biography are rapidly touched off; and, what is of no little moment, the imagination is left to enter in, with

whatever troops of graces it can command, to adjust the drapery and to fill in the background of each scene in succession.

There is nothing sensational, moreover; nothing sentimental; nothing overdone or *outré*. Everything is natural, and beautiful in simplicity.

§ 2. ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL—“ MEMORIALS ” OR “ MEMOIRS. ”

We have spoken of St. Matthew's production as *Memoirs* or *Memorials*. Justin Martyr, before the middle of the second century, employed a corresponding expression (*Ἀπομνημονεύματα*), both in his *Apology to the Roman Emperor, Antoninus Pius*,¹ and in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*.² It is, as we take it, an exceedingly appropriate representation; and of especial importance in these days, as not leading the scientifically educated mind to conjure up to itself exaggerated anticipations of scientific completeness,—anticipations which will not be realized. St. Matthew's Gospel is not a *History*, in our modern scientific acceptance of the term; and hence it would be in vain, and unfair, to attempt to trace in it a precise chronological concatenation of events, or a full display of moral and social causes and effects. Neither is it an exhaustive *Biography*. Neither is it a set of historical or biographical *Annals*. It is not even a *formal Memoir*. It is simply *Memorials*, or, if it be preferred, *Memoirs*; that is, as Johnson defines the phrase, “accounts of transactions familiarly written,” and such accounts as leave abundant scope for any number of corresponding or supplementary *Memoirs* or *Memorials* by “other hands.”

§ 3. ST. MATTHEW'S MEMOIRS AN EVANGEL OR GOSPEL.

St. Matthew's *Memoirs of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ* are emphatically an *Evangel*, or *Gospel*. They are, that is to say, *Glad Tidings*. They are so, in virtue of the subject-matter of the *Memoirs*. The relationship of the appearance of the great Personage portrayed, and of His doings, teachings, and

¹ § 66. Compare the expression in § 33, οἱ ἀπομνημονεύσαντες πάντα τὰ περὶ τοῦ Σωτήρος.

² §§ 100, 101, 102, 103, 105.

sufferings, to the present experience and future prospects of men, is such and so blissful that the writing in which the facts are narrated is emphatically *Good News*. There is no evidence however that Matthew himself designated his *Memoirs* an "Evangel." In the oldest manuscripts, such as the Sinaitic (A) in St. Petersburg, and the Vatican (B) in Rome, the word *Evangel* is wanting in the title. There is simply the elliptical expression, "According to Matthew." The ellipsis is significant. The four Gospels were considered collectively. They were regarded as a unit. They were *the one Evangel*.¹ They constituted, as it were, a single *Square* of biographical glad tidings. And, while one side of the entirety was *according to Matthew*, another was *according to Mark*, and the other two were respectively *according to Luke* and *to John*. In the first verse of St. Mark's Gospel the word *Evangel* is used in a way that is transitionally approximate to its conventional usage as a Title to the respective writings of the Evangelists,—“The beginning of the Evangel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” By the time however of Justin Martyr, and we know not how much earlier, the name *Evangels* (εὐαγγέλια), as the Title of the Evangelists' Memoirs of our Lord, had become stereotyped.²

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that our fine Anglo-Saxon word *Gospel* is a precise echo of the idea of the Greek word *Evangel*. It is the word that is employed in the respective Anglo-Saxon versions to translate the Greek term, *and most probably it would owe its origin to the natural desire of the early Anglo-Saxon preachers to reproduce to a nicety the import of the biblical term*. Its precise idea, however, has been much disputed among philologists. Some have even supposed that the original word was *Ghost-spell*; that is, the *speech or word of the (Holy) Spirit*.³ Elnathan Parr accepted this derivation, but gave both to *Ghost* and *spell* a different reference. He thought that the word means *the spell of the (human) spirit*, or, as he expressed it, “the charm of the soul.”⁴ Both of these interpretations of the word, however, are mere unfounded fancies. The original term is never written *gostspell* or *gastspell*.⁵ It is *godspell*. But it is much debated what it is that was originally meant by the

¹ See, for instance, Irenæus, *Contra Hæreses*, lib. i., cap. 17, 29. In lib. iii., cap. 11, he speaks of the *fourfold Gospel* (τετράμορφον εὐαγγέλιον).

² *Apolog.* i. § 66—αὐτῶν ἀπομνημονεύμασιν, ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια.

³ See Symson's *Lexicon Anglo-Græco-Latinum*, sub voce.

⁴ *Works*, p. 3, ed. 1632.

⁵ See Spelman's *Glossarium Archæologicum*, sub voce.

term. Dr. Adam Clarke, taking hold of the word *spell* as bearing the signification of *charm*, throws out the idea that the word may mean *God's charm*. "Very innocently might our ancestors," he says, "denominate the pure, powerful preaching of the death and resurrection of Christ, *God's charm*."¹ But this is a leap, alongside of good, godly, and ingenious Elnathan Parr, into the field of mere imagination. *The word came into use among our Saxon forefathers as a translation*. What then does it mean? Undoubtedly either *good-spell*, or *God-spell*; that is, either *good word*, or *God's word*. The Anglo-Saxon term *god* is either an adjective corresponding with our *good*, or a noun, our *God*. And hence philologists differ whether the *god* in *godspell* is *good* or *God*. Dr. Hammond² decides for *good*, and so do Junius,³ Ogilvie,⁴ and Max Müller.⁵ But Bosworth,⁶ on the other hand, and Ebenezer Thomson,⁷ and Wedgwood,⁸ decide for *God*; and so do Swinton⁹ and Skeat,¹⁰ and, apparently, old Verstegan.¹¹ Skinner hesitates between the two derivations;¹² as also Spelman, Johnson, Bailey, Richardson. E. Thomson says that at one time he thought he had "established by irrefragable arguments" the identity of *god* with *good*. But he adds: "These, plausible as they are, have been totally "annihilated upon the credit of three witnesses, not one of which "will flinch under all the cross-examination and browbeating of "which the most practised special pleader is capable: Old High "German *gotspellon* not *got-* or *got-spellon*), Icelandic *gudspiall* " (not *gödspiall*), and Anglo-Saxon *godspell* (with double *d*) of "the Ormulum. The intrinsic value of this testimony needs not, "any more than the perfect harmony of the witnesses, to be "pointed out to any one acquainted with the first principles of "Teutonic philology." We think that Mr. Thomson is both right and wrong. Undoubtedly the intrinsically ambiguous word *oscil-*

¹ Preface to the Gospel of St. Matthew.

² *Annotations on the Title of Matthew's Gospel*.

³ *Etymologicum Anglicanum*, sub voce.

⁴ *Imperial Dictionary*, sub voce.

⁵ *Science of Language*, vol. i., p. 132, ed. 1871.

⁶ *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, sub voce. See also sub voce "God."

⁷ *Vindication of TE DEUM LAUDAMUS*, pp. 80-83.

⁸ *Dictionary of English Etymology*, sub voce.

⁹ *Rambles among Words*, p. 61.

¹⁰ *Concise Etymological Dictionary*, sub voce.

¹¹ *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities*, p. 246, ed. 1673.

¹² *Etymologicum Linguae Anglicanae*, sub voce.

lated from meaning to meaning in actual usage, till at length, in multitudes of cases, the more solemn idea of *God*, in virtue of its overpowering gravity, brought the oscillation to a close. No wonder. The *evangel* is really *God's word* as well as *good news*, and it is often peculiarly important to emphasise its Divine origin. But we cannot doubt, nevertheless, that primarily the word *gospel* was a literal translation of the Greek *evangel*, and was thus *good spell*, *good word*, or *good news*. We doubt not also that the Icelandic term, as well as the old German synonyme—the loss of which to modern German Junius deplored—must have passed through a similar metamorphosis of import.

§ 4. THE PHRASE "ACCORDING TO."

The various Gospels are respectively said, in their Titles, to be *according to Matthew*, *according to Mark*, *according to Luke*, *according to John*. The import of the phrase *according to* has been not a little disputed, as is not to be wondered at, considering its essential elasticity. Faustus the Manichee, in ancient times, took advantage of its peculiarity to depreciate the value of the Gospels.¹ And some few critics in modern times, such as Eckermann and more recently Jachmann, have supposed that the phrase was employed for the very purpose of intimating that the Gospels, instead of being the compositions of the evangelists named, were simply founded on their respective memoranda or teachings. Credner supposes that the phrase was originally applied on this principle to the first and second Gospels, and then, for harmony's sake, extended to the third and fourth also, though these were regarded as the immediate compositions of Luke and John.² Credner's distinction is obviously a mere arbitrary conjecture; but the general principle that is common to him and the other critics referred to, though entirely unfounded as applied by them to their peculiar theories regarding the origin of the Gospels, yet contains within it an element of truth. *The evangelists were not the real authors of the*

¹ "A quibusdam incerti nominis viris, qui ne sibi non haberetur fides, scribentibus quae nescirent, partim apostolorum nomina, partim eorum qui apostolos secuti viderentur, scriptorum suorum frontibus indiderunt, asseverantes secundum eos se scripsisse quae scripserint." See AUGUSTIN'S *Contra Faustum*, lib. xxxii., cap. 2.

² *Einleitung in das Neue Test.* § 89, pp. 204, 205.

gospel. And to say the least of it, the phrases *Matthew's Gospel*, *Mark's*, *Luke's*, *John's*, would have been, as Delitzsch remarks,¹ ambiguous. The gospel is emphatically *God's gospel*.² God is its true Author. It is, moreover, one and the same gospel, however diversified its several phases of exhibition may be. And hence, as represented or portrayed in the delightful biographical Memoirs of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it is still God's gospel,—but God's gospel *according to St. Matthew*, and *according to St. Mark*, and *according to St. Luke*, and *according to St. John*.

The phrase indeed, *according to*, more especially in later Greek, was legitimately applicable, amid other and wider relationships,³ to *authorship*, both as regards *doings in general*,⁴ and as regards those *specific doings*, called *writings*. We read in the Second Book of the Maccabees of *the Writings and Memoranda 'according to' Nehemiah*. (Chap. ii. 13.) The expression means *the Writings and Memoranda 'of' Nehemiah*; and so it is translated, genitively, in the common English version of the Apocrypha, and in the Latin Vulgate.⁵ Epiphanius speaks of *the first book of the Pentateuch according to Moses*.⁶ Petavius was right in translating the expression, *the first book of the Mosaic Pentateuch*. The phrase seems simply to intimate *that Moses was the writer of the Pentateuch*.

It was another shade of idea, which was indicated by the Title usually assigned, by the early Christian writers, to the sacred New Testament Book of the Nazarenes and Ebionites,⁷ *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*.⁸ In this case the phrase *according to* was not intended to denote *authorship*; for some at least of the fathers who spoke of the book supposed that it was written by St. Matthew himself. It was intended to intimate that the book, besides being *claimed as their own* by the persistently Judaizing

¹ *Entstehung und Anlage der kanonischen Evangelien*, p. 7.

² See Rom. i. 1, xv. 16; 2 Cor. xi. 7; 1 Thess. ii. 2, 8, 9; 1 Tim. i. 11; 1 Pet. iv. 17.

³ Compare Acts xvii. 28, τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν, *the poets pertaining to you, your poets*; Eph. i. 15, τῆς καθ' ὑμᾶς πίστεως, *the faith pertaining to you, your faith*.

⁴ See Elsner's *Observationes*, p. 1, and his *Commentarius Critico-Philolog. in Matt.*, p. 2.

⁵ But not by Luther. He renders it, *in the times of Nehemiah*.

⁶ *De Hæresibus*, viii. § 4, ἡ πρώτη βίβλος τῆς κατὰ Μωϋσέα πεντατεύχου.

⁷ See Jerome's *Commentary* on Matt. xii. 13.

⁸ See Epiphanius, *De Hæresibus* xxix. 9, xxx. 3.

Nazarenes and Ebionites, was also *avouched by them to be the one true Gospel*. They fathered, as it were, its authenticity. It was, according to them, 'the Gospel.'

It is a different idea that is expressed in the Titles of our four evangelists. Authorship comes distinctly in. But the nature of the case seems to render it certain that the authorship did not strictly extend to 'the gospel' itself. It was confined to *the mode in which 'the gospel' was represented*.

There is thus a real difference between the expressions *the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, and *the Gospel of St. Matthew*; though both of them are *now* conventional and conventionally legitimate. The former is the original and more precise phrase, recognizing, in fine archaic fashion, a *generic element in the gospel*, that transcended Matthew's specific representations, but which he partially laid hold of and took for the warp of his Memoirs. The latter, again, *the Gospel of St. Matthew*, is a literary and ecclesiastical outgrowth from the older phrase, and exhibits the word *Gospel* in a secondary phase of import, as denoting the Biographical Memoirs of Him who is, in His own person and work, the *Sum and Substance of the gospel*. When St. Paul speaks of the gospel as "my gospel,"¹ his expression denotes something different from what we generally mean when we speak of *St. Matthew's Gospel*. It mirrors to the view a conscious spiritual rapture of appropriation.

Elsner and Valckenaer, we conclude, were wrong when they contended that the Title of the Gospel is mistakenly rendered *the Gospel according to Matthew*, and should be translated *the Gospel of Matthew*.² Principal Campbell, too, was wrong when he said that the two Titles were "synonymous, as has been evinced from the best authorities."³ Nothing more has ever been evinced than the *possibility* of synonymity. And hence Beza, though he made too much of it, had some reason to find fault with the freedom that Castellio used when he interpreted the title as meaning *the Gospel of which Matthew is the author*.⁴

¹ Rom. ii. 16, xvi. 25; 2 Tim. ii. 8. Comp. 2 Cor. iv. 3.

² "Non vertendum est, ut vulgo fieri solet, *Evangelium secundum aut juxta Matthæum*, sed *Evangelium Matthæi aut a Matthæo scriptum*."—ELSNERI *Observationes*, p. 1. Valckenaer, in kindred confidence, says of the common translation, *Perperam omnino, et contra Sermonis Græci usum*.—PROLEGOMENA, *Evang. Lucae*.

³ Notes in loc.

⁴ EVANGELIUM AUTHORE MATTHÆO.

§ 5. MATTHEW—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAME.

Matthew is a Hebrew name, of not quite certain origin. Grimm supposes that it means *Manly*, deriving it from a disused root, denoting *man* (מַטְיָהוּ).¹ Others suppose that it means *Trueman*, or *Truman*, as if the name had originally been *Amittai* (אִמִּיתַי). But it is generally supposed that, along with its synonyme *Matthias*, it was a contracted form of the old Hebrew word *Mattathias*, meaning *Theodore* or *Gift of God*. It would originally be imposed by some devout parent on a highly prized child, who was welcomed into the world with gratitude. It is not uninteresting to note that the name *Nathanael*, or *Nathaniel*, has the same import, and is indeed derived in part from the verbal root which gives the *Matth* in *Matthew*.

§ 6. WHO WAS ST. MATTHEW ?

It has been all but unanimously believed that the Matthew referred to in the Title of the Gospel is Matthew the apostle. Origen, who was born in or about A.D. 185, says in the First Book of his *Commentary* on the Gospel: "I have learned from uniform testimony concerning the Gospels (the four namely which are unchallenged, and are alone unchallenged, throughout the universal church of God), that the first was written by Matthew, formerly a tax-gatherer, but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ."² Since this testimony, or ecclesiastical tradition, to which Origen refers, and of the validity of which he was, from his large intelligence and scholarship, so excellent a judge, was everywhere uniform, it must have come down to him and his contemporaries from the very earliest period of the Christian era. It is therefore, of itself, enough and decisive on the question before us.

But if we choose to go a generation further back, we find Irenæus, as expressly as Origen, ascribing the Gospel to Matthew the apostle. The value of his testimony is enhanced by the interesting fact, recorded by himself, that in his youth he sat at the feet

¹ *Lexicon Græco-Latinum*, sub voce.

² Ὅτι ἐν παραδόσει μαθὼν περὶ τῶν τεσσάρων Εὐαγγελίων, ἃ καὶ μὴνα ἀναντιρρήτῃ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ὑπὸ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ· ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν γέγραπται τὸ κατὰ τὸν ποτε τελῶντη, ὕστερον δὲ ἀπόστολον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Ματθαίου.—Preserved, in the original Greek, in Eusebius's *History*, vi. 25.

of Polycarp, the venerable bishop of Smyrna, *who was personally acquainted with the Apostle John.* In writing to Florinus, Irenæus says: "I saw thee in Asia Minor while I was yet a boy with Polycarp." "I have still a most distinct recollection of the very spot where the blessed Polycarp sat as he discoursed, and of his exits and entrances, and of the manner of his life, and the figure of his body, and the discourses which he delivered to the congregation, and of what he told of his intercourse with John, and with the others who saw the Lord, and how he quoted their sayings and what he had heard from them concerning the Lord."¹ This Irenæus, when accumulating a variety of quotations from the Gospel according to St. Matthew, expressly ascribes them to "Matthew the apostle."²

It would be easy to pile up concurrent attestations; but it is unnecessary. Even those critics who think that the title is a mistake, and that the Gospel did not proceed from the pen of the apostle, are almost all united in their conviction that it is, nevertheless, to him that the Gospel is intentionally ascribed by whosoever adhibited the title.

The Apostle Matthew, it is generally and with good reason supposed, is the same individual who is called Levi in Mark ii. 14 and Luke v. 27. Comp. Matt. ix. 9, x. 3. The objections of Frisch,³ Michaelis,⁴ and some still later critics, to this identification of the reference of the two names, are of little consideration. It was not an uncommon thing among the Jews, on occasion of commencing a new career in life, to assume, or to get imposed by others, a new name, that was either entirely new or that had previously lain in abeyance. We have striking exemplifications of this custom in the instances of both Peter and Paul. We may, consequently, reasonably conclude that Levi, in making so complete a change in his avocation, as was involved when, from a tax-gatherer, he became an apostle of Jesus, changed on the occasion, or got changed for him, his name. He was to be, and he was, from that time thenceforward, *a new man.* Guericke identifies the etymological import of the two names *Matthew* and *Levi*; ⁵ but on fanciful grounds.

¹ Preserved by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, v. 20.

² *Contra Hæreses*, iii. 9.

³ *De Levi cum Matthæo non confundendo*, 1746.

⁴ *Einleitung*, § 130 (all the editions after the first).

⁵ *Gesamtgeschichte des Neuen Testaments*, § 14. 1.

§ 7. WAS THE WRITER OF THE GOSPEL ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE?

Why should it be doubted? "From the end of the second century onward," says Friedrich Bleek, "we find our Greek Gospel universally, and without contradiction, recognised within the church as a genuine writing of the Apostle Matthew."¹

Let the expression "our Greek Gospel," meanwhile lie in abeyance. Let us speak simply of *Matthew's Gospel*. It is certain it was recognised as the literary production of Matthew the apostle long before the time specified by Bleek. Justin Martyr, a man of high intellect and lofty character, in writing, before the middle of the second century, his *Apology for Christianity*, which he addressed to the emperor Antoninus Pius, makes express reference, as we have already seen,² to the Gospels, designating them *Memoirs*, but saying at the same time that they were called *Gospels*. He speaks of them as "those *Memoirs, written by the apostles, which are called Gospels.*"³ He tells the emperor that "on the day called Sunday, the *Memoirs of the apostles, or the Writings of the prophets, were read*" in the assemblies of the Christians. Let it be noted, on the one hand, that the *Memoirs of the apostles* were put by Justin and his Christian contemporaries on a level with the *Writings of the prophets*, and, on the other, that he recognises *apostles* as writers of *Gospels*. In his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, written most probably a year or two later, but yet before the middle of the second century, he uses a more precise and discriminative expression in referring to the *Evangelical Memoirs of the Lord*. He speaks of them as the *Memoirs which were written by our Lord's apostles and their companions.*⁴ It was known then and admitted, in Justin Martyr's time, that some of the Gospels were written by apostles, and some by companions of the apostles. Mark and Luke were admittedly only companions of apostles; and hence *Matthew must be added to John in order to justify Justin's repeatedly recurrent expression that there were Memoirs of our Lord "written by apostles."* We may safely conclude that in Justin's time it was admitted

¹ *Einleitung*, pp. 95, 96, ed. 1862.

² See §§ 2, 3.

³ οἱ γὰρ ἀπόστολοι ἐν τοῖς γενομένοις ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀπομνημονεύμασι ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια.—§ 66.

⁴ ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ἀπομνημονεύμασι ἃ φημι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐκείνους παρακολουθησάντων συντετάχθαι.—§ 103.

that *the Gospel according to Matthew* was the production of the Apostle Matthew.

There is indeed no evidence that, within the circle of the early Christian church, it was ever doubted that *Matthew's Gospel* was really Matthew's. There is still no more reason to doubt it, than there is to doubt that Virgil's *Æneid* was written by Virgil, or that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* was composed by the tinker of Elstow.

The Gospel was universally accepted as *canonical*, because it was universally accepted as *apostolical*, that is to say, as *Matthew's*.

Some modern critics however have doubted, and some have denied its apostolicity. Taking hold of a few threads and strands of real peculiarity, and neglecting or ignoring other essential elements, they have worked their way downward to a condition of absolute subjective certainty *that the Gospel according to St. Matthew could not have been written by Matthew the apostle, or by any apostle at all, or by any eye-and-ear witness of our Lord's ministry*. The entire primitive church, so far as its history is ascertainable, the church of the second, third, and fourth centuries, came, as these critics imagine, to be under a delusion on the subject of the authorship of the Gospel, and substituted, though in some wonderful way unanimously, a fancy for a fact.

What reasons, is it asked, do these critics allege in support of their conviction? Extremely insufficient ones, as we conceive. But let us look at them.

We must first of all, however, select our men, and then hear what they have to say. It would be interminable to listen to every one who has spoken. And were we, on our own discretion, to cull the objections to which we shall reply, we might be suspected of having a partiality in favour of the weaker arguments that have been adduced. We *must select our men* then, only taking care that they be really representative men, of acknowledged superiority in ability and learning, and characterized in their polemics by a spirit of comparative moderation and reverence. We are thus likely to get at the strongest reasons that have been hitherto adduced, and perhaps the strongest that can ever be advanced, in opposition to the admission of the apostolicity of St. Matthew's Gospel.

We shall not select as one of these representatives the anonymous English 'deist,' the author of the *Dissertation or Inquiry concerning the Canonical Authority of the Gospel according to Matthew*, published in 1732, to which Dr. Leonard Twells replied in his *Vindication of*

the *Gospel of St. Matthew*, published the same year, and in his *Supplement to the Vindication*, published in 1733. No writer indeed that has since appeared has excelled this anonymous critic in controversial acuteness and tact, or in reach and range of view. He was pre-eminently a master in his school, a master in the art of destructive criticism. And if he was Dr. Tindal,¹ he stood at the head of the whole party of 'deists,'² and is a kind of great-great-grandfather to many of the theological sceptics of the present day.³ He has anticipated almost all the more important arguments that have been urged and re-urged in more modern times⁴ against the authenticity and apostolical authority of St. Matthew's Gospel. But his learning is somewhat antiquated, deficient too here and there in minute exactitude; and he was, besides, an extreme man, pitching his tent as far out as possible in the direction of "the extreme left." He has hence laid himself unnecessarily open, in multitudes of unessential details, to attack and defeat.⁵

It would not be fair moreover to select, as a representative man, J. H. Scholten.⁶ For he too has taken up his position on the extreme edge of "the extreme left." He has advanced even to the front of Reville⁷ and Holtzmann,⁸ and the whole staff of critics to which they belong, and has succeeded, as he imagines, in thoroughly disentangling from one another the respective contributions of the "Proto-Mattheus," the "Deutero-Mattheus," and the "Trito-Mattheus," to the existing canonical Gospel according to Matthew. He specifies *fifty-five places*, in which the "Deutero-Mattheus" had misunderstood the "Proto-Marcus,"⁹ and *a hundred and one places*

¹ "Quem Tindalium credimus fuisse."—HOFMANN, at p. 160 of his edition of Pritius's *Introductio in Lectionem N. T.*, 1764.

² Skelton called him "the great apostle of Deism."

³ He was the author of *Christianity as Old as the Creation; or, the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, 1730.

⁴ As, for example, by Da. Schulz, Rödiger, De Wette, Lachmann, Credner, Neudecker, Strauss, Gfrörer, Wilke, Schenkel, Weiss.

⁵ He replied to Dr. Twells in a *Defence of the Dissertation or Inquiry*. Dr. Twells answered this in 1733. And then there was a *Second Defence of the Dissertation or Inquiry*, and a *Second Vindication* by Dr. Twells in 1735.

⁶ *Het Oudste Evangelie. Critisch onderzoek naar de samenstelling, de onderlinge verhouding, de historische waarde, en den oorsprong der Evangelien naar Mattheus en Marcus*, 1868.

⁷ *Études Critiques sur l'Évangile selon St. Matthieu*, 1862.

⁸ *Die Synoptischen Evangelien: ihr Ursprung und geschichtlicher Charakter*, 1863.

⁹ *Het Oudste Evangelie*, pp. 93-109.

more, in which he had made some correction or other on the "Proto-Marcus's" text.¹ This however is rather too minute dissection of the Evangelical tissue, and often runs out fritteringly into the frivolous. It is overdoing.

Let us select more moderate men. Let us take Friedrich Bleek for instance, one of the most moderate of the party; and certainly one of the ablest, acutest, most candid, and most learned of their number. He objects to the apostolicity of the Gospel on the following grounds:—

Firstly, "*Because it was certainly composed originally in Greek, not in Aramaic.*"² We agree with him in his premiss that our Greek Gospel according to Matthew was not a mere translation from an Aramaic original. It bears, in its internal texture, none of the marks of a translation. But what then? Is it therefore necessarily the case that the Hebrew or Aramaic work, to which Papias, in the second century, referred as composed by Matthew, was Matthew's *only work*,—his *Gospel* proper,—or his *Gospel* in such an exclusive sense, that no other whatsoever, emanating from his pen, such as *our present Greek Gospel*, can be legitimately regarded as his composition? Must an author never write more than one book on one and the same subject? We shall return to this topic when we come to speak of *the original language of Matthew's Gospel*. Meanwhile it is evident that a variety of reasonable possibilities lie between the premiss that Matthew's Gospel, as we possess it, was an original composition in Greek, and the conclusion that therefore it could not be the production of the Apostle Matthew.

Bleek passes on to another class of objections. He thinks, *in the second place*, that the Gospel could not be composed by any apostle, *because of the peculiar chronological reference that is made in it to the day of the month on which Jesus died*. He fancies, in short, that John and Matthew are at variance on this point, and that John is right in his date. The objection, it will be noticed, assumes that there *is* collision between Matthew's representation and John's. It takes for granted, in other words, that while Matthew, and the other two synoptic evangelists, represent the crucifixion as occurring on the 15th day of the month Nisan, John represents it as occurring on the day before, the 14th. But we have shown, in our exposition, that there is no such collision, and

¹ *Het Oudste Evangelie*, pp. 135–144.

² *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 286, ed. 1862.

consequently the objection founded on it falls to the ground. See the notes on chap. xxvi. 17, 18.

Bleek objects to the apostolicity of the Gospel, *in the third place*, because it makes no mention of our Lord's earlier 'festival journeys' to Jerusalem, referred to by John. But this objection proceeds on the assumption that it was Matthew's design to give "a full and particular account" of all that he knew regarding the Lord,—a most unwarrantable assumption, and altogether erroneous. Matthew was not writing *Biographical Annals*. He was only giving, under the impulse of a high moral aim, some brief and graphic *Biographical Sketches* of our Lord's career; but sketches, nevertheless, that were amply sufficient to photograph upon the minds of his readers the great outstanding features of the Messiah's person, and character, and teaching, and works, and wonderful decease, and still more wonderful resurrection. The particular law of selection, according to which he culled his pictorial materials, may not be easily discoverable. But law of selection there undoubtedly was.

Bleek—proceeding on the same line of objection—specifies, *in the fourth place*, our evangelist's "silence in reference to many important occurrences which are recorded by John, such as the resurrection of Lazarus, and the healing in Jerusalem of the man who was born blind," etc. The objection just amounts to this—that if an author chronicles anything, he is bound to chronicle everything; surely too sweeping a principle by far. Men must be elective. All men must. Of course biographers too. And Evangelists also,—either deliberately or instinctively. And not only is this the case; we are, in addition, at perfect liberty to suppose that, for aught that Bleek can tell, there might be good and valid reasons, not only influencing the evangelist's subjective law of selection, but likewise connecting themselves, objectively, with the Lazarus family in particular, and even, it may be, with the poor blind man, or his relatives, which made it a matter of prudence and wisdom to allow the facts connected with their history to lie meanwhile, so far as literary publication was concerned, in abeyance.

Bleek specifies, *in the fifth place*, as his next objection, "the relation of our Gospel to Luke's, in the narratives and discourses which are common to both, and which by their peculiarity prove that both had made use of some earlier evangelical writing." He adds "that the representations of Matthew, when compared with those of Luke, do not always verify themselves as the originals, but, on the contrary, seem,

as often as otherwise, to bear the marks of being the secondary or derived accounts." But what though it should be the case, we would ask, that Luke,—and let us add, Mark too,—used certain existing literary materials, which Matthew also used? What though each appropriated, so far as composition was concerned, what was already the common property of all evangelists and preachers, and the common property of the church, and of the surrounding margin of the world? What though this should have been the case? What though it actually was the case? There was no race among the evangelists for the palm of originality in composition and phraseology. They were not rival poets, aiming to be, in all that they said, "poets indeed" (*ποιηταί*) or original 'makers' and literary creators. For poets, or for writers of *belles-lettres*, to copy from one another, or to appropriate in common and at large from former poets or *littérateurs*, would be unwarrantable, in a moral point of view, and fatal to all high literary excellence. But Matthew and the other evangelists were not poets, essayists, philosophers, or *littérateurs*. They made not the least pretension to any kind of literary nicety or merit. They were heralds of glad tidings. Their one object was to photograph the Saviour in certain of His most striking moral attitudes, and in the most salient of His relations to things above, to things below, and to things around. And this, their grand moral aim, they grandly realized.

Bleek proceeds to object, *in the sixth place*, to the apostolicity of Matthew on the ground that *there is, in several places, an unlikely combination of our Saviour's sayings*. He refers to the continuous Sermon on the Mount in chapters v., vi., vii.; to the charge given to the apostles in chapter x.; to the remarks which attach themselves to the Saviour's answer to John's disciples, in chapter xi.; to the parables which are attached to the parable of the sower, in chapter xiii.; to the declarations which are connected with the answer to the question, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" in chapter xviii.; to the denunciations on the Pharisees, in chapter xxiii.; and to the eschatological discourses that are contained in chapters xxiv. and xxv. The whole force however of the objection, that is founded on these *clusterings* of our Lord's sayings, resolves itself, at bottom, into an objection to the principle of *clustering*. Yet nothing was really more appropriate to the high moral aim that animated the Evangelist than this very principle. Since he was not intending or attempting to write *Annals*, the scientific chronology of those of our

Saviour's sayings, which he reports, was in general to him, as it is in general to us, a matter of exceedingly subordinate importance. It is the sayings themselves that are of essential moment; and by giving them to us in clusters, full, large, rich, and ripe, he only augments, and intensifies for our benefit, the elements of our feast. In some cases the clustering, we doubt not, or much of it at least, was done by our Saviour Himself in re-repetitions. But in other cases it may, in all likelihood, have been the result, to a considerable extent, of the evangelist's love for grouping. In all cases however it is eminently consistent with the grand moral end which he had in view, and thus with the apostolicity of the Gospel.

Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer deserves to be ranked side by side with Bleek as one of the most moderate, and certainly as one of the most accomplished and learned adherents of the same school of criticism. He is in many respects akin, both intellectually and morally, to Bleek, and he unfortunately agreed with him in repudiating the apostolicity of *our existing Gospel according to Matthew*.¹ What are his reasons? They are as follows:

Firstly, The want of determinateness and particularity in the specification of time and place and other details of the narrations in the Gospel. This reason however assumes that it was the evangelist's aim to act as an annalist or historiographer.

Secondly, The want of that vivid delineation or description, which is the natural result of an actual intuition of things, or of direct personal observation. But surely it is not every writer, nor every inspired writer, who has, as a characteristic endowment, the talent for vividly depicting natural scenery or social scenes.

Thirdly, The want of concrete historical setting in many of the Lord's discourses and more casual remarks. But must all true reporters report the whole of the salient points in the circumstances of the speakers who deliver the speeches that are reported?

Meyer, after specifying these fancied defects, passes on to the opposite pole of objection, and adduces, as reasons for the repudiation of the apostolicity of the Gospel as we have it, certain supposed *superfluities* of things. He thinks:

Fourthly, That the introduction of the mythes or legends concern-

¹ In the first (1832) and second (1844) editions of his *Commentary* he defended the authenticity of the Gospel. His change of view came out in his third edition (in 1853) and continued thenceforward.

ing the soldiers who were set to watch the Saviour's sepulchre, and concerning the resurrection of some of the deceased saints at the time of our Lord's own resurrection, is incompatible with the idea that an apostle wrote the Gospel. "An apostle," says he, "must have known the unhistorical character of these stories." Yes, if the stories be mythes or legends. But what, if they be true? What, if it was quite natural and reasonable for the Jewish authorities to seek to have the sepulchre guarded? We see nothing unlikely in the case. And what if our Lord's resurrection was not isolated? What if it was the centre of a little resurrection circle? What then? If the occurrences in the circumference of the circle be objected to, why not object—and Meyer does not—to the occurrence in the centre? And if the occurrence in the centre were to be objected to, why not proceed to object to all manifestations of the free personality of divinity in connection with humanity? If our Saviour's miracles, either at or before His death and resurrection, be objected to, He Himself, as *par excellence* a Living Miracle, and the Miracle of miracles, should also be objected to. And when objection gets this length, then the thinker must either stop short through sheer intellectual inability to think on, or through sheer moral cowardice to go on, or else he must advance consistently in a course of further objecting till he reach the point of objecting, *in toto*, to the idea of an Infinite Agent or Personal God, or till he reach the still farther point of objecting to the idea of any Being at all of infinite self consciousness, or any other God than an Infinite Complex-of-laws. When he has reached this offshoot of thought, he must yet by-and-by come back, and show, in addition, *what was done with the body of our Saviour*, if it was really the case that there was no resurrection of it from the dead. See the note on chapter xxviii. 6.

Meyer thinks, *in the fifth place*, that the mythical introductory narratives of the first and second chapters of the Gospel¹ are, in consequence of their mythical element, evidence of a later date than that of Matthew the apostle. Yes, we say again, if these introductory narratives be mythical and absurd. But merely to assume that they are, is something entirely different from proving the reasonableness of the assumption. It is, indeed, simply to say, *I think*. And the *thinking* which is indicated, is of such a character that, if carried out legitimately, it would sweep away altogether the conviction

¹ Die sagenhaft ausgebildete Vorgeschichte.

of the fact of miracles, and the kindred conviction of their possibility.

Meyer objects, *in the sixth place*, to the apostolic date of the Gospel, on account of *the fully developed form of the history of the temptation of our Lord, as given in the fourth chapter*. He thinks that that history has grown up, in some imaginative way, out of the brief original tradition that would be current in the earliest times, and which, with a dash of mythical addition, is preserved in Mark i. 12, 13.¹ But this is merely again *to assume*, or to say—I *think*. The *thinking* involves, moreover, the arbitrary assumption, that whenever Mark recorded anything, he invariably recorded everything that he knew about it. It involves the assumption, in other words, that he never in any case condensed his narrative, and intended to condense it. Such an assumption is unwarrantable.

Meyer objects, *seventhly and most strongly*, on the ground of *the irreconcilable discrepancies between the better authenticated narratives in John's Gospel, and the narratives in Matthew's, concerning the Last Supper, the day of the Lord's death, and the appearances of our Lord after His resurrection*. But these discrepancies are all mere imaginations. We have shewn, in our exposition of the last chapters of the Gospel, that they are non-existing. A variety of standpoints are possible to the critic when engaged in the exposition of these chapters. But the respective perspectives of the two apostles are perfectly harmonious.

Meyer has one little codicil of objection. He has a theory, to the effect that Matthew borrowed somewhat from Mark; and *such borrowing*, he conceives, *is inconsistent with the assumption of apostolical independence of testimony*. But the theory adopted by Meyer of the inter-relation of Matthew's Gospel and Mark's is just one of several. And though it should be definitely adopted, it would stand in need of a variety of other theories, entirely indemonstrable, ere it would suffice to throw the slightest shade of suspicion on the date and status of either of the writers of the two Synoptic Gospels.

All these objections to the apostolicity of the Gospel are, in the end, mere mist.

We shall not proceed to consider the forms in which other

¹ Die Aufnahme des ausgebildeten Versuchsberichtes, dessen nichtentwickelte Gestalt bei Mark jedenfalls älter ist.

continental critics have presented their objections. But we would turn, for a little, to the objections that are urged against the apostolicity of the Gospel by Dr. Davidson of England.¹

I. The Gospel, he says, "contains several unhistorical and mythical elements." He specifies—

First, the opening of the graves at the expiration of Jesus, and the resurrection of some of the saints.

Secondly, the narrative respecting the setting of a watch at the sepulchre. He thinks that "the chief priests and Pharisees could not have known of Jesus saying that He would rise again after three days, because He did not foretell this in an intelligible way even to His disciples (xvi. 21)." He thinks, too, that "had the women known of the watch being set at the sepulchre, they would not have confined their attention to the rolling away of the stone and the anointing of the body." He also thinks that "the conduct of the sanhedrists is unaccountable in instructing the soldiers to spread a false report, instead of calling them to account for their delinquency." "It is not likely," he adds, "that they would have acted towards Pilate as is represented, or that he would have been satisfied with their representation."

But, first, the opening of the graves, and the resurrection of some of the saints, is *not improbable*, if Christ Himself was a miraculous Being. It is reasonable to think that if He really was, in His own complex Person, the Miracle of miracles, He would be a *centre of miraculous manifestations*.

Then, secondly, there is no improbability in supposing that some one or other of the sanhedrists had got hold of what our Saviour had said, not once merely (xvi. 21), but again (xii. 40), and again (xvii. 23), and again (xx. 19), that He would rise on the third day. We need only, for instance, to bear in mind the single fact, which would, however, be but one among many, that Judas had been closeted with some of the chief sanhedrists, and that he would, without doubt, be searchingly examined as to the professions and teachings of his Master. Our Lord's striking but mysterious sayings were evidently the subject of much public talk and speculation, even although in many cases the disciples, like others, would little understand what to make of them. See *Commentary* on chapter xxvii. 62, 63.

As to the women, there is no need and no good reason for sup-

¹ *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, 1868, vol. i., pp. 484-491.

posing that they knew anything of the guard, which would be set, not on Friday evening, when they were lingering over against the sepulchre, but on the evening of Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. See *Commentary* on chapter xxviii. 1, 2.

As to the conduct of the sanhedrists in bribing the soldiers, and promising their interest with Pilate, if the case should ever be judicially reported to him, nothing is more likely when we look at the subject from an oriental standpoint, and take with us the reasonable assumption that the whole affair was a matter of *hush* and *hush money*, and would be managed by means of some pliable steward of the high priest, or some servitor of the court, or some other confidential agent who had "his price." See *Commentary* on chapter xxviii. 11-15.

II. Dr. Davidson's second head of objections is the following,—
 "Some things are put in a wrong order, and are therefore chronologically incorrect." He specifies—

First, the Sermon on the Mount, which, he thinks, is "placed too early." "It was delivered," he adds, "not only before the immediate disciples of Jesus, but a large multitude of people assembled to hear; implying that Jesus had exercised His ministry for a considerable time, and attracted the attention of the multitude to Himself, so that their minds were prepared, to some extent, for a discourse of comprehensive and high-toned morality." Some passages of the Sermon, moreover, such as chapters v. 17 and vii. 21-24, are, as he thinks, "anticipative, as we infer from xvi. 17."

Secondly, the charge of Jesus to the twelve in chapter x. 16, etc. It is introduced, he thinks, "too soon, the disciples being told that the Son of man should come again to set up His kingdom before they had gone over the cities of Israel. Thus His second advent is announced as just at hand." "If the discourse here," he adds, "be not out of place, it is inconsistent with xxiv. 14, where the second advent is spoken of as a much later event."

But, first, we do not see why the Sermon on the Mount should be regarded as "placed too early." Even when the questions of Divinity and Inspiration are reserved, it seems enough that we should take into account the natural forecasting, or out-stretching and out-sketching, of a great and lofty mind. The presence of "the multitude" need be no surprise. Popularity does not always creep, it often leaps, into maturity. And, when intervening

difficulties are not cleared at a single bound, yet public interest frequently rises, by exceedingly rapid strides, to its acme, and especially in the case of noble preachers. Wonder and the Messianic expectations of the mass of the people—expectations that kept multitudes standing as it were on tiptoe—would operate mightily, and even precipitatingly, at the outset of the Saviour's career.

Then too, secondly, the forecasting principle accounts for the peculiarities of the charge given to the apostles. See the *Commentary* on chapter x. 16, 24. And when we take an uncontracted view of what must be meant by *our Lord's coming*, we need feel no difficulty with His statement, "*Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come*" (x. 23), or with the kindred statement in chapter xvi. 28, "*Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.*" The *Lord's coming* is necessarily manifold. It is a constant manward movement, but as it were condensing itself, phenomenally, signally, gloriously, at specific times and in specific events. See *Commentary* on chapters x. 23, xvi. 28, xxiv. 27, 30.

III. Dr. Davidson's third head of objections is stated as follows: "Things are related in a way which shows the mixture of later tradition." He specifies the twenty-fourth chapter of the Gospel, and says,—

First. "It speaks first of the destruction of Jerusalem, and, from the 29th verse, of the coming of the Messiah immediately after, which was not fulfilled. There is therefore some inaccuracy in reporting the discourse of Jesus on this occasion."

Secondly. "In like manner, the signs and wonders preceding the destruction of Jerusalem do not correspond to facts. False Messiahs did not appear then; nor did any important wars take place, as is intimated in the sixth and seventh verses of the chapter."

But, first, it is not the case that the coming of the Messiah is represented in Matthew's report as following immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. It is represented as following immediately after the tribulations that are to swoop down upon men, universally, wheresoever the moral carcase is, wheresoever the moral state is remedilessly corrupt. See *Commentary* on chapter xxiv. 28, 29.

Then, secondly, it is not the case that Matthew speaks in the

sixth and seventh verses of the chapter, of false Messiahs that were to appear, and of wars that were to happen, before the destruction of Jerusalem. His eye stretches much farther forward, and takes note of various series of phenomena that were and are to precede *the end of the current 'age.'* See the *Commentary* on verses 4-8.

IV. Dr. Davidson says, in the fourth place, "Other particulars are wrongly narrated." He specifies,—

First. Some cases of partial repetition, such as the miraculous feeding, first of five thousand persons in the wilderness, and then of four (xiv. 16-21, xv. 32-38). "One thing is doubled, as the facts are substantially the same." He thinks that "in like manner the same transaction is repeated in ix. 32-34, and xii. 22-30. The two passages are so similar that we must assume a double narrative of the same event." "A similar repetition of the same thing appears in xvi. 1, where the event in xii. 38 is re-enacted."

Secondly. "Again, Jesus is represented as riding into Jerusalem on two animals, an ass and a colt; which has arisen from misunderstanding the prophecy referred to (xxi. 2-7, compared with Zech. ix. 9)."

Thirdly. "Again in xii. 39, etc., the writer puts an erroneous interpretation of the disciples into the mouth of their Master in the 40th verse; for the allusion to the resurrection of Jesus is foreign to the original connection, as well as to the view with which the preceding and subsequent verses were spoken. Jesus did not mean that His *resurrection* was a sign to the generation then alive, but His *preaching*."

Fourthly. "The words addressed to the apostles by Jesus after His resurrection (xxviii. 19, 20) savour of a later time." He thinks, too, that the formula of baptism "into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" is "not original, and could hardly have been prescribed by Jesus Himself."

Fifthly. In xxviii. 9-20 "every appearance of the risen Saviour to the disciples in Judæa is excluded." "How could an apostle have been ignorant of Judæan manifestations? Had he known them, he could hardly have omitted all reference to them. Hence this part of the Gospel betrays an unapostolical tradition."

Sixthly. Then the temptation of our Saviour in chapter iv. "In any case, the thing which is here described did not happen as

“it is depicted. It may have a basis of fact; the narration is “certainly unapostolic.”

But these difficulties are not insuperable. For—

First, it accords with universal experience that an element of comparative sameness pervades much of human life,—sameness of incident, sameness of character, sameness of difficulties. Why should we suppose that only one crowd was fed by our Lord? If a second was fed, why should it be supposed wonderful that some of the incidents should be analogous? Again, why should it be supposed strange that on one occasion our Lord should heal a dumb demoniac, and, on another, a dumb and blind demoniac? Why should we imagine that no dumb man but one would ever be healed by our Lord? Again, what is there that should be regarded as bearing on its front evidence of historical untrustworthiness, in the report of two distinct instances in which Pharisees asked for a sign from heaven,—a curiosity sign?

Then, secondly, it is arbitrary to suppose that our Lord rode “on two animals,” when entering Jerusalem in triumph. But it is not wonderful that it should be the case, that to obtain the young animal “whereon never man sat,” the old one required to accompany it.

Then, thirdly, it is the reverse of what is unnatural to suppose that our Saviour made anticipative reference to His resurrection, as the crowning miraculous attestation of His Divine Mission. Did He not see ahead? To suppose that He referred simply to His *preaching* as a sign, would be to suppose that no real “sign” at all was to be given to the generation. The Baptist preached, and Paul preached, as well as Jesus.

Then, fourthly, what is to hinder us from supposing that our Saviour Himself was the author of the Commission as it is contained in chapter xxviii. 19, 20? Were His own views, and His aim, more contracted than those of His disciples? Why, too, should it be supposed that it was they, and not He, who realized that He is “the way to the Father,” and that therefore baptism, if into His own name when its significance was given in epitome, was yet, when its significance was explicitly unfolded, “into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”?

And, fifthly, why must Matthew be supposed to write everything that he knew? Why might he not hasten to his conclusion, if he deemed his little *Book of Memoirs* sufficiently long?

And then, sixthly, as to the temptation,—it need occasion

difficulty only to those who do not comprehend the principles of moral painting, and who consequently will insist on excluding every touch of poetry from every page of prose, or every fold of drapery from every scene that pictorially represents the real and the true.

V. Dr. Davidson's last head of objections is thus expressed: "Some things partake of a character so marvellous as to warrant their non-apostolic description."

His only specification is that of "the piece of money in a fish's mouth provided for tribute (xvii. 27)." "The miracle seems to be unnecessary, since a stater might have been procured in the usual way. Nor did Jesus ever work a miracle for Himself. Besides, it is not said that the piece of money was actually found in the month of the fish." But what though it be not said that the piece of money was actually found in the fish's mouth? Is it not sufficiently implied? It is not true, moreover, that Jesus never wrought a miracle for Himself. Did He not walk on the water, to cross the Sea of Tiberias, or to reach His disciples while crossing it? (Matt. xiv. 25.) When the inhabitants of Nazareth led Him to the brow of the hill to cast Him down headlong, did He not "pass through the midst of them and go His way"? (Luke iv. 30.) When the Jews in the temple took up stones to stone Him, did He not "hide Himself, and go out, going through the midst of them, and so passing by"? (John viii. 59.) But the miracle of the stater, just like those other miracles, was not *entirely* for Himself. It was complex in its relationship. And what more natural than the performance of such a miracle at such a time,—evincing, in the evidence of ocular fact, that He was indeed the Prince Royal of the universe, to whom all the silver and gold belonged? See the *Commentary* on the passage.

"Such," says Dr. Davidson, "are the surest evidences of non-apostolicity in the first Gospel." He does not lay stress on other evidences. "It is precarious," he says, "to rest upon phenomena which are supposed to be incorrect because they disagree with parts of the other Gospels." "It is invalid to adduce the want of graphic description in one who was an eye-witness like Matthew. Picturesque delineation does not necessarily belong to an apostle." Dr. Davidson thus sets aside some of the objections of Bleek and Meyer.

All kinds of objections, from Tindal's downward, when brought out fairly to the sunlight, and looked at on this side and on that, vanish, while we look at them, into invisibility.

§ 8. HEBREW AND GREEK ORIGINALS.

Is our present Greek Gospel a mere translation from a preceding Hebrew Gospel? or, is it an original work from the pen of the Apostle Matthew?—a much debated question, ramifying into considerable entanglements of controversy.

There can be no doubt that several of the most eminent of the ancient Fathers of the church assert very positively that it was in Hebrew that the apostle composed his Gospel. Origen, for instance, who flourished in the early part of the 3rd century. In the passage from his *Commentary on Matthew*, to which we have already referred,¹ not only does he say that “the first of the four Gospels “was written by Matthew, formerly a tax-gatherer, afterwards an “apostle of Jesus Christ,” he immediately adds, “who published it “in the Hebrew language, for the behoof of the converted Jews.”² He speaks elsewhere too in the same manner.

Eusebius had evidently the same idea. He flourished toward the close of the 3rd, and the beginning of the 4th century. He says that “Matthew, after he had preached for a time to the “Hebrews, and was about to go to others, *delivered to them*—that “is, *delivered to the Hebrews—in writing, and in the Hebrew tongue, his “Gospel, that thus he might compensate to them for the want of “his personal presence.”³ He elsewhere, in a recently recovered fragment, published by Cardinal Mai, speaks with equal, or, if possible, with greater decision to the same effect.*

Cyril of Jerusalem, who flourished toward the middle of the 4th century, is as decided. In the fourteenth Book of his *Catechesis*, eighth chapter, he says, addressing the Jews, “Why then do ye dis- “believe your own countrymen? *Matthew, who wrote the Gospel, “wrote it in Hebrew.*⁴ And Paul the Preacher was a Hebrew of “the Hebrews. So were all the twelve apostles.”

Epiphanius, a little later in the 4th century, is as decided. He says of the Ebionites: “They too receive the Gospel according to “Matthew. For, like the followers of Cerinthus, they use this “Gospel alone, and call it *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*; as

¹ P. xv.

² ἐκδεδοκῶτα αὐτὸ τοῖς ἀπὸ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ πιστεῦσαι γραμμασιν Ἑβραϊκοῖς συντεταγμένον.—Preserved in Eusebius's *Eccles. Hist.* vi. 25.

³ πατριῶ γλώττῃ γραφῆ παραδοῦς τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν εὐαγγέλιον, κ.τ.λ.—*Eccles. Hist.* iii. 24.

⁴ Ματθαῖος, ὁ γράψας τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Ἑβραϊδὶ γλώσσῃ τοῦτο ἔγραψε.

“indeed it is the case that Matthew alone, in the New Testament, made exposition and proclamation of the gospel *in the Hebrew language.*”¹ “This Matthew,” he says elsewhere, “writes the Gospel *in Hebrew*, proclaiming the good news, but tracing the Lord’s genealogy, not from the beginning, but from “Abraham.”²

Jerome, the most learned of the Latin fathers, and who flourished during the second half of the 4th century, and on into the commencement of the 5th, makes frequent statements to the same effect. In his book *On Illustrious Men*, he says: “Matthew, who is also called Levi, and who from a publican was made an apostle, was the first of the evangelists. *He composed the Gospel of Christ in Judæa, for the sake of the converted Jews, writing it in Hebrew letters and words, which Gospel was afterwards translated into Greek, but by whom is not known.* The Hebrew original, moreover, is existing to the present day in the Cæsarea Library, founded by Pamphilus the martyr. I obtained, besides, from the Nazarenes, who live in Beroëa of Syria, and who use this book, the liberty of transcribing it.”³ In the Prologue to his *Commentary on Matthew*, written A.D. 398, he repeats that “Matthew was the first of the evangelists, and that *he published the Gospel in Judæa in the Hebrew tongue,*⁴ chiefly on account of those Jews who had believed, and who had abandoned the observance of the “shadows of the law.”

It will be noticed that, in the passage quoted from the book *On Illustrious Men*, Jerome says that the Nazarenes made use of the Hebrew Matthew. It will also be noticed that he mentions that a copy of the work was preserved in the Pamphilian library at Cæsarea. These statements are proof that at the time, at least, when Jerome wrote his *Illustrious Men*, he was fully convinced that

¹ Ματθαῖος μόνος Ἑβραῖστὶ καὶ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν ἐν τῇ καινῇ διαθήκῃ ἐποιήσατο τὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἔκθεσίν τε καὶ κήρυγμα.—*Hæresis* xxx. 3.

² Οὗτος μὲν οὖν ὁ Ματθαῖος Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασι γράφει τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, καὶ κηρύττει, καὶ ἀρχεται οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, ἀλλὰ διηγείται μὲν τὴν γενεολογίαν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀβραάμ.—*Hæresis* li. 5. See also xxx. 6.

³ “Primus in Judæa propter eos qui ex circumcissione crediderant, Evangelium Christi Hebraicis literis verbisque composuit: quod quis postea in Graecum transtulerit, non satis certum est. Porro ipsum Hebraicum habetur usque hodie in Cæsariensi bibliotheca, quam Pamphilus martyr studiosissime confecit. Mihi quoque a Nazaræis, qui in Beroëa urbe Syriæ hoc volumine utuntur, describendi facultas fuit.”—*Cap.* iii.

⁴ Qui evangelium in Judæa Hebræo sermone edidit.

the Gospel, generally known as *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, was *Matthew's original Hebrew Gospel*. This is rendered still more evident,—if additional evidence were necessary,—by what he says in the third book of his *Dialogue against the Pelagians*, written in the year 415: “*In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, written in the Syro-Chaldaic language, but with Hebrew letters,—the Gospel which the Nazarenes use to the present day, and which is also the Gospel according to the Apostles, or, as most suppose, the Gospel according to Matthew, and which is preserved in the library of Cæsarea,—it is narrated,*” etc.¹

It is noteworthy, however, that in this passage, written in his old age, Jerome does not speak so positively regarding his own conviction of the identity of *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, used by the Nazarenes, and *the Hebrew Gospel according to Matthew*, as he did, three and twenty years before, in his *Illustrious Men*. He now only says that “most believe” that the two works are identical. Indeed, in his *Commentary on Matthew*, which was written just six years after his *Illustrious Men*, he speaks with the same bated breath, and makes, in addition, another rather remarkable statement. He says: “*In the Gospel, which the Nazarenes and Ebionites use, and which I lately translated into Greek from the Hebrew tongue, and which is called by most the authentic Gospel of Matthew,*”² the “man who had the withered hand is described as a mason,” etc. Not only does he here say that *the Gospel according to the Hebrews* is identified “by most” with *the authentic Gospel according to Matthew*, he mentions what is very remarkable, that he himself had some time ago translated it into Greek. He had translated it, indeed, more than six years before. For he says in the second chapter of his *Illustrious Men*, that “the Gospel, which is called *the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and which was lately translated by me both into Greek and into Latin, which also Origen frequently used, relates,*” etc. Jerome had, it seems, translated the Gospel according to the Hebrews both into Greek and into Latin. It is nothing wonderful that he should have translated it into Latin, but it is certainly remarkable that he should have

¹ “*In Evangelio juxta Hebræos, quod Chaldaico quidem Syroque sermone sed Hebraicis literis scriptum est, quo utuntur usque hodie Nazareni, secundum Apostolos, sive, ut plerique autumant, juxta Matthæum, quod et in Cæsariensi habetur bibliotheca, narrat historia.*”—*Cap. ii.*

² “*Quod nuper in Græcum de Hebræo sermone transtulimus, et quod vocatur a plerisque Matthæi authenticum.*”—*Com. on Matt. xii. 13.*

thought of translating it into Greek, if it was really the case, as so many assumed, that the common Greek Gospel, which was in every one's hands, was but a translation of that original Hebrew text. *There is evidence of some confusion here.* And the confusion gets worse confounded when we take into account, that, in the last three passages which we have quoted from Jerome, as well as in a good many others, there are quotations made from *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, which have nothing corresponding to them in our Greek Gospel, as we have it now, and as Jerome had it in his day! If our Greek Gospel be but a translation of *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, how comes it to pass that we have not got the whole of the original work translated?

And more. Jerome informs us, in his *Commentary on Matthew* (xxvii. 16), that in the text of *the Gospel according to the Hebrews* the word *Barrabbas* is interpreted as meaning *Son of their master*.¹ It would thus appear that the word in the Hebrew Gospel must have been, not *Barabba* (i.e., *son of father*), but *Barrabban* (i.e., *son of rabbi* or *rabbān*). It is a curious variety of reading. But it is more than a curiosity. Like the straw on the highway, it shows how the wind was blowing, when one or other of the Gospels was being translated, or otherwise worked up into shape. If our Greek Gospel was translated or supplemented from *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, then the Greek translator must have confounded *Barrabban*² with *Barabba*. But if, on the other hand, *the Gospel according to the Hebrews* was translated or supplemented from our Greek Gospel according to Matthew, then the Aramaic translator must have confounded *Barabba* with *Barrabban*. On whose side was the blunder likely to occur? Is the balance of probability equal in both its scales? *The balance is not equal.* It is possible to say on whose side the blunder was likely to occur. It so happens that the word *Barabba*, *Græce* *Barabbas*, though occurring in the nominative case in the two Gospels of Mark and John, *occurs in the accusative only, in all the places where it is found in Matthew* (xxvii. 16, 17, 20, 21, 26); *and, in the accusative, the word is Barrabban!* The Aramaic translator blundered in not

¹ "Iste in Evangelio, quod scribitur juxta Hebræos, *filius magistri eorum* interpretatur."

² Jerome threw in, by the way, the pronoun *their*, "son of *their* master,"—not "mistakingly" as Delitzsch supposes, but perhaps "wittily" as Schneckengerger remarks. He may have recognised in the name a reference to "their" real master—the devil.

taking note of the single *r*, and in not taking into account the final *n* as a sign of the accusative in Greek. It is, notwithstanding all the efforts of Sieffert¹ and others to make light of it,—a most valuable straw, making it manifest that our Greek Matthew was not a translation or residuum of the Gospel according to the Hebrews. If one book of the two be related to the other dependently, it must be the Hebrew Gospel according to the Hebrews which hangs on the Greek Gospel according to Matthew; not *vice versa*. There are other kindred straws of evidence manifesting this same relationship of dependence on the part of the Gospel according to the Hebrews; such straws, for instance, as the substitution of *Jehoiada* for *Barachias* in chapter xxiii. 35, an obvious attempt at emendation to remove a *prima facie* difficulty. But into these we do not enter.

But what, then, are we to make of the positive assertions of the fathers in reference to the original language employed by Matthew in the composition of his Gospel? We shall see immediately, But meanwhile, whatever be made of them, we have advanced one step in the right direction, and have now reason for demurring to the assumption that the Gospel according to the Hebrews was Matthew's original Gospel. Let this be held as a point that is gained and fixed. No doubt, the Gospel according to the Hebrews was a corrupt apocryphal Gospel, modelled to a large extent after the Gospel according to Matthew, but unskillfully patched and tinkered in its composition.

As to the assertions of the fathers regarding the Hebrew original of Matthew, we must go farther back than Jerome, Epiphanius, Cyril, Eusebius, and Origen. We must go back to Irenæus in the 2nd century. His testimony is generally adduced as decisively confirming the testimonies of the later fathers whom we have named, along with those of Gregory of Nazianz, and Chrysostom, and Augustin, who echo the statements of their more learned predecessors and contemporaries. Meyer,² for example, thus adduces it, and Tregelles;³ and, apparently, Eusebius himself.⁴ But we feel doubtful of the warrantableness of their assumption. The passage occurs in his *Contra Hæreses* (iii. 1); and, happily, the

¹ *Ueber den Ursprung des ersten kanonischen Evangeliums*, pp. 32–34.

² *Einleitung*, § 2.

³ *On the Original Language of St. Matthew's Gospel* (1850), p. 4.

⁴ *Eccles. Hist.* v. 8.

Greek original of the important part of the testimony is preserved in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*. Irenæus says: "After our Lord rose from the dead, and the apostles were clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit from on high, they were fully furnished for their work, and had perfect knowledge. So, inasmuch as they all alike had the gospel of God, they went forth to the ends of the earth, preaching the glad tidings of the grace of God, and announcing heavenly peace to men; *Matthew on his part, indeed, among the Hebrews in their own language,—and he brought out a writing of the gospel,—while Peter and Paul were preaching and laying the foundation of the church of Rome.*"¹ In the old Latin translation of this portion of Irenæus's work, and in the versions of many of the modern critics, who adduce the passage to prove that Irenæus asserts decisively the Hebrew original of Matthew's Gospel, the word *and*, as occurring before the clause *he brought out a writing of the gospel*, is omitted. We rather think that this omission is an unwarrantable liberty, and that the preceding clause, in accordance with the scope of what goes immediately before it, refers, not directly to the publication of the Gospel in writing, but to its publication by word of mouth. *While others of the apostles went elsewhere, Matthew went eastward to those who spoke Aramaic and preached to them.*² Such we conceive to be the meaning of Irenæus. Still, we do not doubt, that when he adds, *and he brought out a writing of the gospel*, he refers, by implication, to a Hebrew writing. His reference, however, to the language employed, is only by implication; and the entire state of the case will probably be best understood when we look at it in the light of what we shall learn from Papias. It is enough, meanwhile, that we note that Irenæus does not say that the apostle published "his Gospel," at the time to which reference is made. Still less does he say that he then published "his Gospel" *in Hebrew*.

We now glance at another testimony from the latter part of the 2nd century. Pantæus, a man of high intellectual culture, and a philosopher, was converted to Christ. Inflamed with

¹ Exierunt in fines terræ, ea quæ a Deo nobis bona sunt evangelizantes, et cœlestem pacem hominibus annunciantes, qui quidem et omnes pariter et singuli eorum habentes evangelium Dei; ὁ μὲν δὲ Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν, καὶ γραφὴν ἐξήνεγκεν εὐαγγελίου, τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ τοῦ Παύλου ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελιζομένων, καὶ θεμελιούντων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

² Compare what is said in the passage already quoted in p. xxxiv. from Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 24.

apostolic zeal to preach the gospel, he longed to go abroad. He went into the east, says Eusebius, on a missionary tour. While there, he met with some who were already Christians, and who had in their possession some *Gospel according to Matthew*; for Bartholomew the apostle had preceded Pantæus, and had "left," says Eusebius, "among the believing Indians, *the writing of Matthew in the Hebrew language.*"¹ Jerome mentions, in his book on *Illustrious Men* (chap. xxxvi.), that Pantæus brought this Hebrew Gospel back with him, when he returned to Alexandria.

Was it, then, the Hebrew Original of our present Gospel which Pantæus brought home? And are we thence to conclude, that the Greek Gospel was a mere translation of that Hebrew Original? Such has been the opinion of a large number of critics, comprehending the great majority of Roman Catholic writers on these subjects, and inclusive too of not a few distinguished names among Protestants, such as Grotius,² Gerhard Jo. Voss,³ Hammond,⁴ Mill,⁵ Michaelis;⁶ Dr. Adam Clarke⁷ too, and Eichhorn,⁸ in later times; and Tregelles,⁹ Ebrard,¹⁰ Cureton,¹¹ Luthardt,¹² in still later; and many others, later and earlier. Some of the ancients supposed that the translation was made by James the brother of the Lord. This is the opinion of the anonymous author of the *Synopsis of Scripture* included in the works of Athanasius;¹³ and it has been espoused—who would have thought it?—by Mill.¹⁴ We read in Theophylact's Prologue to his *Commentary on Matthew*, that John the apostle was said to be the translator? And, stranger still, Greswell, in modern times, has actually conjectured that "St. Mark translated the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, and

¹ ἀπὸ τῶν τε Ἑβραίων γράμμασι τὴν τοῦ Μαρθαίου καταλείπειν γραφήν.—*Eccles. Hist.* v. 10.

² Introduction to his *Adnotationes*.

³ *De Genere Jesu Christi*, cap. ii.

⁴ Introduction to *Annotations*.

⁵ *Prolegomena*, p. viii.

⁶ *Einleitung*, §§ 132–139.

⁷ *Preface to Matthew*.

⁸ *Einleitung*, §§ 105, 106.

⁹ *The Original Language of Matthew's Gospel*.

¹⁰ *Wissenschaftliche Kritik der Evang. Geschichte*, §§ 130–132.

¹¹ *Preface to Very Ancient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac*.

¹² *De compositione Evang. Matt.* (1861).

¹³ Vol. ii., p. 135, ed. 1861.

¹⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. viii.

wrote his own supplementary to it.”¹ In truth, if men will conjecture, there is no end to conjecturability.

We take a different view of the subject. *We do not suppose that our present Greek Gospel according to Matthew was a mere translation from a Hebrew Original.* It bears none of the marks of translation. De Wette,² Fritzsche,³ Harless,⁴ Hilgenfeld,⁵ Bleek,⁶ however much they may differ from us in other respects, are at one with us in this conviction. It was the conviction too of Cardinal Cajetan,⁷ a man who far outstripped his age, and of Erasmus also,⁸ a man still greater in many respects, but not more independent in spirit, and of Calvin, Beza, Gerhard, Lightfoot, Whitby, Wetstein, Hug, Credner, Ewald, Köstlin, Volkmar.

But what, then, are we to make of the testimonies of the fathers regarding the Hebrew Original of Matthew's Gospel? A question of the very gravest import. But let us look, ere we answer it, at the earliest and most important of all the testimonies on the subject. It has been singularly preserved in a fragment of the writings of Papias, that has itself been happily preserved by Eusebius, in his *Ecclesiastical History*.

Papias flourished in the beginning of the 2nd century. He was, says Irenæus, “a companion of Polycarp.”⁹ He became bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia.¹⁰ He had been a hearer of Aristion and John the Presbyter, personal disciples of the Lord.¹¹ He was an ardent collector of all the crumbs of information which he could pick up in reference to the teachings and sayings of the apostles and their peers. He conversed diligently with the older Christians who had seen and heard the apostles; and he was eager, as he tells us, to learn from them, “what Andrew or what Peter said, or what Philip, or Thomas, or James, or John, or Matthew,

¹ *Dissertations on the Harmony of the Gospels*, vol. i., p. 154.

² *Einleitung in die kanon. Bücher des N. Test.*, § 97.

³ *Prolegomena*, § 2. “Hoc certius nihil esse potest, quam Evangelium, de quo quærimus, græce conscriptum fuisse.”

⁴ *Fabula de Matthæo Syro-Chaldaice conscripto*, 1841.

⁵ *Die Evangelien nach ihrer Entstehung*, pp. 115–120.

⁶ *Einleitung*, pp. 272–3.

⁷ Prologue to his *Commentary on Matthew*.

⁸ *Annotaciones* on Matt. viii. 23.

⁹ Πολυκάρπου ἐταίρος. See Eusebius's *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 39.

¹⁰ Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 36.

¹¹ Ἀριστίωνος δὲ καὶ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου Ἰωάννου ἀθήκων ἐάντων φησι γενέσθαι. —Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 39.

or any other of the Lord's disciples said; and what too Aristion and John the elder, who were disciples of the Lord, say."¹ All these apostolical fragments of things, however intrinsically trifling in many instances, and though inextricably mingled in other cases with apocryphal additions, he gathered up, and then spun out elaborately in a work which he published, but which is now lost. It consisted of five Books, and was entitled, *Explanation of the Lord's Oracles*.² In the working out of this *Explanation* he manifested, as Eusebius says, extremely little judgement.³ He seems to have been a conscientious, and piously painstaking, but indiscriminative Moral Microscope.⁴ Still, as he was evidently honest, and indisputably ancient, his reports of what he had heard, when given in regard to matters of fact, are worthy of respectful consideration. He reports, then, that John the presbyter said, "Matthew indeed composed the oracles in the Hebrew dialect, and every one interpreted them as he was able."⁵ It is evidently a merely fragmentary statement, which he reports from the mouth of John the presbyter. We know not what John had said immediately before. We know not what he said after. But the fragment of his saying, which happily is thus preserved, is of great interest. It has given occasion, however, more especially among modern critics, to an endless amount of speculation and discussion.

(1) Thiersch supposed that there is, in the fragment, an explicit antithesis to some other statement, unrecorded, regarding the actual existence of the canonical Greek Gospel.⁶ But it seems to be certain that no such statement occurred, at least in the report of Papias. Otherwise Eusebius would have noted and recorded it; for he was one who assumed that the Gospel of Matthew had been originally composed in Hebrew.

(2) Many have supposed that by the expression "the Oracles," or "the Divine Sayings," John the presbyter meant *Matthew's entire*

¹ Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 39.

² Λογιῶν Κυριακῶν Ἐξηγήσεις.—Eusebius, *ut supra*.

³ Σφόδρα γὰρ τοι σμικρὸς ὦν τὸν νοῦν, ὡς ἂν ἐκ τῶν αὐτοῦ λόγων τεκμηριώμενον εἰπεῖν, φαίνεται.

⁴ See, in particular, his ridiculous idea regarding the fruitfulness of the vine in the times of the millennium, as preserved by Irenæus.—*Hæres.* v. 33.

⁵ Περὶ δὲ τοῦ Ματθαίου ταῦτ' εἶρηται· Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδι διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνεγράψατο· ἡμῆμενοι δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἠδύνατο ἕκαστος.

⁶ See Bleek's *Beiträge zur Evangelien-Kritik*, pp. 169, 170.

Gospel, as a record, not only of the Lord's sayings, but also of His doings and sufferings, and of the doings of the other individuals more or less connected with Him. This, however, is, in the circumstances an unlikely, as it is an arbitrary, interpretation of the expression. The probability is that John the presbyter referred exclusively to *the Sayings* of our Lord. It was in these *Sayings* that the whole primitive church was specially interested. It was *the words of our Lord* which riveted their chief attention. It took a very long time ere the detached *works* of our Lord were seen in their real significancy as integer parts of His one great work. Scarcely even yet are they seen in this light. It took still longer time, and a larger growth of Christian thought, ere the Work of our Lord was seen to be itself *a most glorious Oracle of God*, the Revelation of His heart and will in reference to men as sinners. For centuries the depth of the Apostle John's description of our Lord, as "the WORD of God," was unimagined, though plummetts were let down far enough into surrounding pits and abysses of thought. It was the *Sayings* of Christ, around which the primitive interest gathered. And it was to illustrate these *Sayings* that Papias composed his work. It was doubtless to these same *Sayings* that John the Presbyter referred, when he said that "Matthew composed them in the Hebrew dialect." This, the natural interpretation of the expression,—and the interpretation that has been accepted and contended for by Schleiermacher, Schneckenburger, Credner, Baumgarten-Crusius, Holtzmann, Meyer, Reville, Scholten,—is confirmed by what is reported concerning Mark in the immediately preceding context. John the presbyter says of him, that he took notes from the discourses of Peter of "the things *said and done* by the Lord," though he did not attempt to record them "in order." Neither did he make, it is added, "a symmetrical collection of *the Lord's Sayings*." In short, he did not follow Matthew's plan, but took a plan of his own.

(3) When John the presbyter added in reference to Matthew's collection of the Divine Sayings, "but every one interpreted them as he could," what did he mean? Dr. Roberts, assuming with the majority of critics, that the "interpretation" referred to was mere *translation*, finds nothing but "folly" in the statement, just as numbers of critics before him found nothing but difficulty. "What shall we make," he asks, "of *every one*? Does it refer to Jews or Gentiles? If to Jews, then why did they translate this Gospel, "when, *ex hypothesi*, it was written for them in their own language,

“just that they might need no translation? And if, on the other hand, ‘every one’ be regarded as referring to the Gentiles, then “how did it come to pass that they were *able* to translate the Hebrew “document in question?” But if, nevertheless,—Dr. Roberts continues in substance,—they did translate it, then the complete and speedy oblivion into which the various translations, as well as the original, fell, becomes, he reasons, “utterly inexplicable.”¹ He is right, we presume. It is impossible to work out a consistent and feasible idea from the statement of John the presbyter, if we start with the premiss which Dr. Roberts unnecessarily concedes,—that the “interpretation” referred to is *translation*. Ferdinand C. Baur, availing himself of the same premiss, maintains that it may be legitimately inferred, that, up to the time of Papias, no single Greek translation of the gospel so far transcended the rest as to eclipse and supersede them. He hence concludes that *the canonical Greek Gospel according to Matthew had not by that time come into existence.*² But the assumption is arbitrary and unlikely. The “interpretation” spoken of would doubtless derive its peculiarity from the fact that the work interpreted was *Oracles* only, or *Sayings* pure and simple. And we should hence conclude, with Schleiermacher and Schneckenburger, that the “interpretation” was not *translation*, but *explication*. Baur, indeed, along with others, argues that the position of the word “interpreted” side by side with the expression “in the Hebrew dialect,” makes it evident that it should be rendered *translated*. But this is to assume that the emphasis of the Presbyter’s remark turned on the expression, “the Hebrew dialect,” instead of the expression “the Oracles” or “Divine sayings.” But the emphasis, as we take it, lies on the latter expression, and the “interpretation” referred to was needed by the Hebrews themselves, who read the “Divine sayings” in their own tongue. Matthew, in his original *Hebrew Collection of the Sayings of our Lord*, did not seek to connect them with the incidents of our Lord’s life; and hence a considerable obscurity hung over many of the particular oracles. This obscurity would indeed be easily dispelled by living apostolic teachers, but it would be perplexing to others. “Every one interpreted the Sayings *as he could*.”

(4) The result of our investigation of John the presbyter’s statement, recorded by Papias,—more especially when we combine with

¹ *Discussions on the Gospels*, pp. 387–390.

² *Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien*, pp. 580–582.

it the testimonies of the succeeding patristic writers,—is, *that Matthew did write something in Hebrew for the Hebrews*. If this were denied, we should be out, without rudder, upon a sea of uncertainty. We should subvert the historic foundations on which the whole historic evidence in support of the genuineness of the New Testament writings reposes. “If,” says Sieffert, “there be anything at all firmly established, in the ancient history of the New Testament writings, this is—*that Matthew wrote in Hebrew*.”¹ We must then admit and maintain that Matthew wrote something or other,—and something that may truly be called gospel, or a *gospel*,—in the Hebrew or Aramaic language. Why should it seem incredible? Why should it seem strange that Matthew should write something specific for the Hebrew speaking Jews? Is an author bound, especially if he be an apostolic evangelist, to write only once in his life-time? Must he, if he has already written once, never write anything more about Christ for the benefit of any particular friend, or any cluster of friends, or any limited or unlimited circle of his fellow countrymen? Must an apostolic evangelist never do anything but for the world at large? May he never meet a present emergency by issuing some provisional literary work, which he may at a future time absorb and incorporate in a larger and more comprehensive publication? Why may he never act thus? Such a narrow conception is altogether artificial and unreasonable, and pregnant with latently reactive tendencies to scepticism and infidelity.

But while we must hold, as an incontrovertible historical fact, that *Matthew did write something in Hebrew for the Hebrews*, there is no reason for supposing, with Schwarz, Bengel, Olshausen, Ebrard, that it was *his fully developed Gospel* which he thus wrote. There is, on the contrary, the best of reasons for supposing that it was a mere preliminary *Collection of the Saviour's Sayings*; which Collection he afterwards incorporated in his *Gospel* proper, his *Memoirs of our Saviour's birth, life, death, and resurrection*. By taking this idea, we not only adhere to Papias's testimony to the very letter, we are also in harmony with Irenæus's testimony; and we are in harmony with what is recorded of Pantænus. We fairly account likewise, for all the subsequent testimonies of Origen, Eusebius, Cyril, Epiphanius, Jerome, and the concurrent or re-echoing testimonies of Chrysostom, Gregory Nazianzen, Augustin,

¹ *Ueber den Ursprung des ersten kanonischen Evangeliums*, p. 26.

and the succeeding fathers. We conciliate too the apparent inconsistencies that are involved in these testimonies: for Matthew's original publication was really *a Gospel*, and *the Gospel*, though only in a provisional and temporary form; and, no doubt, also, it would constitute the valuable backbone of *the Gospel of the Hebrews*, on which the Nazarenes and Ebionites, each in their own way,¹ stuck tinkeringly patch after patch, partly by the help of tradition, and partly and principally by the help of translation from the full Gospel of the apostle. The divergencies of this apocryphal Gospel from our canonical Gospel were numerous; but of course it would be the exceptional divergencies rather than the prevailing coincidences which would be specified by those fathers who, like Origen, Jerome, and Epiphanius, actually compared the one work with the other. We have thus obtained a clue to guide us through the maze of the numerous and entangled patristic testimonies regarding *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, on the one hand, and *the original language of Matthew's Gospel* or *Oracles*, on the other.

We can discover no good reason for doubting that Matthew himself composed our present Greek Gospel.

And it is not a mere translation with which Matthew has furnished us. It is an original work, absorbing and superseding the old, but bearing nevertheless, *in its groupings of the Divine Sayings*, marks, reminiscences, and survivals of the original "Oracles." The apostle would be at home, in his own unclassical way, in both the languages in which he wrote, as almost all the Jews were, more especially those who had filled or were filling public offices, and, no doubt, more particularly those who belonged to such a Gentilized district as *Galilee of the Gentiles*. All the other New Testament writers wrote in Greek. Even *the Epistle to the Hebrews* is written in Greek. Josephus, the historian, too, after having written his History in Hebrew, recomposed it in Greek, for universal circulation. No wonder that Matthew also selected Greek for his fully developed work, his work as it was to appear in the form, in which it was intended to be permanent, and to circulate throughout the world.

§ 9. INTEGRITY OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

We have found good reason for the belief that Matthew's Gospel is Matthew's. We need not, therefore, particularly consider the

¹ See Epiphanius, *Hæres.* xxix. 9; xxx. 13.

theory of those critics who maintain that the Gospel has been moulded into its present shape and full proportions by the labours of successive translators and editors. It surprises us that this "successive recension" theory should have found favour with so many critics. It is unnatural, and gratuitous. It takes cognizance, indeed, of an actually existing multiplicity of constituent factors in the Gospel as we have it, and of the fact that these factors are often inartificially combined. There is not that homogeneous unity of development and procession that would have been characteristic of a master work of imagination. Neither is there that precise jointing of dates and other details that would have been studied by a highly cultured and scientific writer of history. Thing is added to thing anecdotically, and often miscellaneously, and as if in solemn off hand talk. But the consequence is that the narrative speaks home to the heart, interesting, delighting, instructing, awing, soothing at times, and at other times arousing, but always elevating the unsophisticated reader. The Gospel is a real unity, though not inventively contrived, or artistically wrought out.

In the earlier stages of destructive criticism, exception was taken to the first and second chapters of the Gospel; and efforts were laboriously made to get them cut off, as apocryphal and mythological. An Englishman, as was usual in those times, led the way, Dr. John Williams. He made his attempt in an anonymous treatise entitled *A Free Inquiry into the Authenticity of the First and Second Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel*, 1771. Friedrich A. Stroth in Germany, and others, followed in his wake. A long controversy ensued, both in England and in Germany; but Griesbach settled it in his "Epimetron," or Appendix to his *Critical Commentary on the text of Matthew*. He showed that, so far as real evidence is concerned, there is not the shadow of a reason for suspecting the authenticity of the first two chapters, and hence, as he concludes, "we nothing doubt that these chapters were in the author's autograph, and made their appearance with the text of the Gospel, when it was originally published" (p. 55 of vol. ii.).

In the later stages of the destructive criticism, objection to the integrity of the Gospel has assumed a different and wholesale phase. Critics are no longer contented to lop off a limb here and a limb there. They drive their knife through the whole texture of the writing, and cut out deftly numerous unassimilated addi-

tions to the primitive "Oracles." They find multitudes of rather clumsily incorporated traditional paragraphs or minuter parts. We have already referred to Scholten's anatomy. Sieffert had attempted something of the same kind in 1832. Hilgenfeld in 1854 exhibited in distinct parallel columns the parts which were original and the parts which were superadded. In 1863 D'Eichthal, availing himself of the help of Hilgenfeld, printed in continuity the original parts, and then added a table of forty-four apocryphal "Annexes," arranged in ten "Categories." Reville, about the same time (1862), went still further into minutiae, and exhibited, in a synoptic table, (1) the original Oracles of Matthew; and then (2) the incorporated narratives of the original Mark, the proto-Mark; and then (3) the "traditional" additions; and last of all (4) the connecting links that had been supplied by the Canonical "Rédacteur." Many similar dissolutions and recombinations of the Gospel have been attempted; but all of them are merely imaginative.

§ 10. DATE OF PUBLICATION.

We know not when *the Gospel according to Matthew* was published; and, apparently, there is no hope of ascertaining the date *precisely*. Happily, precise information regarding the particular year would be of little practical moment.

Many dates have been fixed upon, both in ancient and modern times. Only, however, on grounds more or less conjectural. Theophylact¹ and Euthymius Zigabenus² say positively that Matthew wrote his Gospel eight years after the ascension of our Lord; that is, about A.D. 41. Gerhard J. Voss accepts this date.³ So does Wetstein.⁴ And many others, inclusive of Jones. Hartwell Horne says that Eusebius gives the same date in his *Chronicon*.⁵ But the passage of the *Chronicon* on which he founds his statement is apocryphal, and does not exist in the best manuscripts. It is omitted in the modern critical editions. Others have proposed the year 43; quite arbitrarily. Others again, 38. Townson fixes

¹ *Proemium* in Matt.

² *Proemium* in Matt., p. 14.

³ *De Genere Jesu Christi* ii. 1.

⁴ *New Testament*, vol. i., p. 223.

⁵ *Introduction*, vol. iv., p. 257, ed. 1839; or p. 411 of Tregelles's ed., 1856.

on "the beginning of 37."¹ Arbitrarily, however, and going far in the wrong direction. Roberts, going in the same direction, but more circumspectly, says, "The early publication of St. Matthew's Gospel (A.D. 37—41) appears to admit of no question."² Knowles, with little circumspection, goes back to 32.³ Mill fixes on 61.⁴ That, we presume, must be nearer the mark. Michaelis hovers near the same period. He says "about the year 60, 61, or still later."⁵ Lardner is nearly of the same mind: "I am somewhat "inclined," he says, "to the year 63, 64, or 65." "However "unwillingly," he adds, "we may admit the thought of protracting so long the writing the history of our Lord's ministry, the "circumstances of things will constrain us to acquiesce in this "season, as the most likely."⁶

It has been thought by many that Irenæus furnishes a key to the date of the Gospel in a passage we have already referred to,⁷ in which he says that "Matthew preached among the Hebrews in Hebrew, and published a writing of the Gospel, *while Peter and Paul were preaching and founding the church in Rome.*"⁸ We are disposed, however, to think that Irenæus was not intending, in this last clause, to fix the date of the publication of Matthew's Gospel. We rather suppose that, in accordance with what goes before and what comes after, he was simply indicating that while Matthew, on his part, was engaged in the east in making known the Gospel to Hebrews, Peter and Paul, on theirs, were occupied in the west, going even to Rome, and there founding that metropolitan church, that had, since then, risen to such a distinguished position.

We have no doubt that it was near the period of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, *and yet most certainly before that event*, that Matthew published his Gospel. We agree with Lardner in thinking that a considerable stretch of years is indicated by the expression "until this day" in chapters xxvii. 8, xxviii. 15. Pilate also, we presume, had long passed away. The evangelist says,

¹ *Works*, vol. i., p. 120.

² *Discussions on the Gospels*, p. 390.

³ *The Gospel attributed to Matthew*, p. 17.

⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. vii.

⁵ *Einleitung*, § 131.

⁶ *Hist. of the Apostles and Evangelists*, chap. v.

⁷ Pp. xxxix, xl.

⁸ *Adversus Hæreses* iii. 1.

“ At festival time the procurator *was wont* to release a prisoner.” He does not say, *is wont*. He is looking back to a thing of the past. Herod Antipas, too, had for long passed away; and there was no necessity, therefore, for drawing a veil over his wickedness, and the wickedness of his house, in relation to John the Baptist. Most of the individuals, whose names figure in the *Memoirs*, and whose position might have been compromised, or whose ire against the infant cause might have been inflamed, by what is narrated, had passed away. The apostles themselves and their coadjutors were melting away. The living voices, which could tell at first hand of what had actually been seen and heard and handled, would soon be silenced. The living and laboriously ‘itinerating’ Evangelists, who had seen the Lord Jesus, and drunk in the truth from His lips, were thinning in numbers, and beginning to see the end of their earthly career. Little imperfect stories, besides, of the Great Teacher’s teaching, and the Great Worker’s working, were getting into circulation. In default of better histories, they were bought up by the public with avidity. It was time that the fully equipped men should step forth, and publish, not for the present moment only, but for future generations, and for all time to come, the undiluted and unadulterated truth. Matthew was one of these, standing in the very foremost rank. The whole subject had for years been grandly maturing within his soul. He now saw through his Saviour’s teaching far more clearly than he had done at first. He could seize with ease the highest points and the widest generalizations, even in the last commission of his ascending Lord. The *Memoirs* were thus ripe within his spirit. It was time to bring them forth to the world.

That Matthew published his *Memoirs of our Lord* while Jerusalem was still standing, and while all the Jewish institutions were yet in existence, seems obvious from the way in which everything Jewish is spoken of. There is nothing that even approximates to a hint that any great change had occurred, or that Divine vengeance had actually overtaken the guilty city and the faithless people. There is nothing to suggest that the magnificent and massive temple was in ruins. There is nothing to indicate that the flight of the disciples, which the Saviour had counselled when the end was approaching (xxiv. 16-20), had actually taken place. On the contrary, just as a mist of glory hung between the eyes of the prophets and the great Messianic events of which they prophesied, so there was still, even to the eye of the evangelist, a mist and

mystery overhanging the precise time and season and mode in which "the end" of the temple, and "the end" of the Jewish polity, and "the end" of the age, would be realized. Some had been standing around the Saviour "who would not taste of death, till they should see the Son of man coming in His kingdom" (xvi. 28). The "generation was not to pass till all 'these things' had been fulfilled" (xxiv. 34). One who can discriminate essence from form, and see a little into the substrate of things, will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that in recording these prophetic declarations of our Lord, the evangelist felt that he must as yet walk entirely by faith. No doubt he "searched diligently." But he knew not exactly what was meant. He could not tell how much would take place before the existing generation passed away. Had Jerusalem, however, been already destroyed, he would have known, and most likely would have plainly indicated, that the end of the Jewish polity and the end of the age were very far indeed from being synchronous events.

§ 11. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW, AS WE HAVE IT,
NOT A FINAL 'REDACTION.'

Some suppose, as we have seen, that Matthew's Gospel was *gradually moulded* into its present form, by many successive additions and alterations from the hands of a series of 'rédacteurs.' Emendator after emendator tried "his 'prentice hand" on the work, pinning on, as best he could, his favourite bit of tradition or mythe. "The canonical Greek," says Dr. Davidson, "is only "the last redaction or edition of successive translations, in all of "which liberties with the original were freely taken."¹ But if so, how comes it to pass that we have manuscripts and versions of only the ultimate redaction? *How comes it to pass that all the churches quietly accepted 'redaction' after 'redaction,' and never said a word about it?* How comes it to pass that, although so infinitely touchy about every jot or tittle that was taught, they were not touched in the least by the freedoms that were used with the sources of their information? The whole theory of successive recensions or redactions is a pile of unjustifiable conjectures, that totters the moment it is touched, and tumbles the moment it is touched again.

¹ Introduction, vol i., p. 477.

There is one interesting incidental evidence of the publication, at a precise time, of *the full Greek Gospel according to Matthew, just as we now have it*. It consists in a strange *graphical erratum*, corresponding to a *typographical erratum* in our modern books, which must have been in the primary edition of the Gospel, and thence disseminated to every part of the world before it was possible to have it corrected. Hence it continued, in all succeeding copies, except those very few in which emendation of the text was made, on the individual responsibility of individual transcribers. We refer to chapter xxvii. 9, in which the word *Jeremiah* occurs instead of *Zechariah*. It is a manifest *graphical erratum*, arising most likely from a momentary *lapsus* on the part of the professional reader, who would be dictating to the original transcribers in the publisher's office. It is, at all events, as both Calvin and Scaliger saw, a *graphical erratum*. (See the following *Commentary* on the passage.) And *it must have been in the primary edition*, for it has held its place in all the uncial manuscripts,—one may say, in 'all' the manuscripts that have been preserved, and all the versions too. In the manuscript indeed, that is called "the queen of the cursives" (33), and in the Syriac Peshito version, the word *Jeremiah* is omitted, but evidently on the responsibility of the individual transcriber and translator. The word *Zechariah* is not inserted in its place. The *erratum* was noted by the early fathers as something remarkable. They were perplexed by it, and speculated about it: but they did not venture to tamper with the text. So careful were they not to make voluntary "redactions" by free modifications.

The *erratum* is manifest; just as much so as "*strain at*" for "*strain out*" in the Authorized English version of Matthew xxiii. 24. (See *Commentary* on the place.) Indeed, it is much more manifest. The existence, too, of the *erratum* in the primary edition is indisputable; just as *strain at* for *strain out* must have occurred, and did occur, in the "editio princeps" of 1611. Had the *erratum* not been in the primary edition, it could never have crept in afterwards, so as to be universally diffused; just as we could not suppose that *strain at* instead of *strain out* would be still occurring in all existing editions put forth by numerous independent publishers and editors, if it had not had the sanction of the primary edition.

But though the reading *Jeremiah* be, as it evidently is, an *erratum*; and though it be, as it evidently is, of now eighteen hundred years' standing; and though, throughout the greater part of these eighteen hundred years, it has been a really perplexing

cross to reverent students of the Bible: yet its presence is, by a wonderful overruling of things, the unexpected occasion of critical elucidation. It is demonstration that our present Greek Gospel is not "the last redaction or edition of successive translations, in all of which liberties with the original were freely taken." Had such liberties been regularly taken, and had such redactions been the order of the day, the *erratum* would inevitably have been rectified. No redaction by an unknown hand could have been so universally diffused, as to carry the *erratum* simultaneously everywhere. But if we should assume, that, by some miracle or other, such a diffusion actually took place, yet nothing would have hindered multitudes of bishops and elders, and others, the purchasers or possessors of the anonymous redaction, from correcting the *erratum* in their copies, so that it would not have descended into all subsequent transcripts.

Unless, in short, we assume that the *erratum* was in the primary edition, we shall never be able to account for its universal diffusion. And unless we also assume that the primary edition of the Gospel was hedged round and round, in the estimation of the Christian community everywhere, with the sacredness of apostolic authority, we shall never be able to account for the remarkable persistency of the graphical *erratum*.

§ 12. RELATION OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL TO THE OTHER TWO SYNOPTICAL GOSPELS.

There is often a remarkable identity in the phraseology of Matthew and Mark, or of Matthew and Luke, or of Luke and Mark. This identity sometimes runs on for several consecutive sentences; and yet it is frequently varied by points of minute difference. How is this peculiar inter-relationship of the three synoptical evangelists to be accounted for? Did Mark borrow from Matthew? and did Luke borrow from both Matthew and Mark? Or did Matthew borrow from Mark, and perhaps from Luke too? Or was the light reflected from one to another, on some other principle of sequence? Or was there no inter-reflection at all among the three canonical evangelists, no relationship of dependence or borrowing? Instead of such borrowing, did all three avail themselves of narratives and statements, which were common property in the church? Or, did Matthew and Mark at least, thus draw independently from one common fountain of evangelical report and phraseology?

We have remitted the discussion of this subject to its proper place: *the Introduction to the Exposition of the Gospel according to Mark*. And meanwhile we content ourselves with stating our belief that Matthew did not borrow from either Mark or Luke. As an apostle he had no need. He occupied, in the fact of his apostolical connection with his Lord, a higher vantage ground than it was possible for either of them, whatever their other advantages, to attain. It would require overwhelming evidence to support the idea that we have in Matthew the borrowed lights of Mark, or of Mark and Luke. But there is not a vestige of such evidence.

On the other hand, however, there is just as little ground for entertaining the idea that Matthew's Gospel was the original Gospel of the whole apostolical conclave, *the Gospel*, in fact, *of the twelve apostles*, Matthew being only their common secretary, amanuensis, or editor.¹ The Gospel is *the Gospel according to Matthew*; and we need not spur the Pegasus of conjecture to carry us into interminable regions of possibility. The possibilities in reference to the literary antecedents and factors of Matthew's writing are innumerable. But to us they must almost all remain for ever conjectures, and conjectures only.

§ 13. CHERUBIC SYMBOLS OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

The fathers and their mediæval followers took delight in speculating imaginatively regarding the fact that there is a *quaternion*, and *but a quaternion*, of Gospels. They scented a variety of mysteries in the fact. It is an intimation, they conceived, that the Gospel is intended to extend to the four quarters of the globe, to men everywhere. Augustin gives repeated expression to this idea.² Chrysostom has a fine poetic conception; he compares the four Gospels to a chariot and four. When the King of glory rides forth in it He receives or should receive the triumphal acclam-

¹ Townson had some such idea. See his *Works*, vol. i., pp. 68, 81, 82. It is insisted on with great earnestness, though with little evidence, other than aerial, by J. Sheridan Knowles, in his little work, *The Gospel attributed to Matthew is the Record of the whole original Apostleship*, 1855. He thinks that the composition of this Gospel was, "beyond all question," the work on which the apostles were employed in the time of the persecution referred to in Acts viii. 1. "I may defy," he says, "human ingenuity to divine any other cause which will justify the conduct of the apostles" (p. 54).

² *De Consensu Evangelistarum* i. 3; *Enarratio* in Ps. ciii., sermo iii., § 2.

ations of all peoples. The prosaic Jerome has the very same comparison.¹ It had evidently got afloat in the church and become common property. A kindred idea, but more mystic, became a still greater favourite with minds of a more speculative order. God rides upon the cherubim; and the cherubim, as represented in Ezekiel (i. 6-10), had *four faces*, and four faces *in a given order of enumeration*: the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle. *The antitypes of these cherubic faces were to be found*, it was supposed, *in the characteristics of the four evangelists*. The idea took hold of the imagination and lived on for centuries. And hence in the common artistic representations of the four evangelists, such as are to be found in many of our old Testaments, or in our modern illustrated Bibles, and which are so grandly depicted in the medallions within the spandrels of the arches which support the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, Matthew is accompanied with the first cherubic emblem as specified by Ezekiel, a man; Mark with the second, a lion; Luke with the third, an ox; and John with the fourth, an eagle. The introduction of the symbols enriched the artistic pictures, and left scope for the fancy to play. Is not Matthew the *humanitarian* evangelist? Is not the flight of John *like that of an eagle* toward heaven?² It was more difficult to find the leonine in Mark, and the bovine in Luke.

Doctors differed. And hence the eagle was sometimes, as by Irenæus for instance,³ assigned to Mark, and the lion to John! Others gave Mark the ox, and the lion to Luke!⁴ Augustin assigned the lion to Matthew, the man to Mark, the ox to Luke, and the eagle to John.⁵ But Ambrose⁶ and Jerome⁷ abode by the order of enumeration in Ezekiel. It is all, of course, a work of imagination.

¹ "Matthæus, Marcus, Lucas, et Joannes, *quadriga Domini*."—Epist. liii., § 8.

² Augustin says finely: *Joannes super nubila infirmitatis humanæ, velut aquila, volat, et lucem incommutabilis veritatis, acutissimis et firmissimis oculis cordis, intuetur*."—*Consensus Evangelist.* i., § 9.

³ *Contra Hæreses* iii. 11. See also Theophylact's *Prologue to Mark*.

⁴ So the author of the *Synopsis Scripturæ* in the works of Athanasius, vol. ii., p. 155.

⁵ *Consensus Evangelistarum* i., § 9. See also his *Tractatus in Joannis Evangelium* xxxvi., § 5.

⁶ Prologue to his *Exposition of Luke*.

⁷ Prologue to his *Commentary on Matthew*. See also his *Admonitio adv. Jovinianum* i., § 26.

§ 14. THE AIM AND PLAN OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

The general aim of the evangelist in the construction of his Gospel is manifest enough. It was twofold. It was primarily to exhibit Jesus as He really was. It was secondarily to exhibit Him as the true Messiah, who had been promised to the fathers by the prophets, and shadowed forth in the whole of the Old Testament history.

St. Matthew believed that Jesus was the Messiah come at length, the End of the long line of shadows that had moved on in procession from the days of Abraham downward, the Beginning of the grand new epoch of the world, the golden age, the age of "the kingdom of heaven." Hence the peculiarity of His Gospel, with its continual retrospects on the one hand to the Scriptures of the prophets, and its continual anticipations on the other of the good time coming.

To the evangelist's eye Jesus was, without doubt, and notwithstanding His outward lowliness of form and garb, the Son of the King of kings. (Chaps. xvii. 25; xxvi. 63, 64.) His princeliness was unmistakeable. It had been veiled, indeed, while He was visible among men; and now that He had ascended to the right hand of His Father, it was hidden, along with Himself, behind the impenetrable curtain of the heavenly Holy of holies. But it was real nevertheless. And its reality, the evangelist felt assured, would one day burst forth, with incomparable glory, upon the astonished world. (Chaps. xxiv., xxv.)

St. Matthew was sufficiently illuminated to discriminate between the sphere of the spiritual and the sphere of the material, and to see that the former was far in within the latter, and far up above it in importance. Hence in holding tenaciously by the conviction that the Messiah would victoriously deliver His people from their foes, he took along with him the high and refined idea that the worst of these foes were their own "sins." It would be therefore the special glory of Jesus, that He would victoriously "save His people *from their sins*." (Chap. i. 21.)

Jesus then, as St. Matthew looked upon Him, was not only a royal Personage, who was to extend His rule over all the regions of the earth; His rule was to be emphatically within the innermost of the realms, the realm of mind. When He "takes to Him His great name" and reigns without a rival or a rebel, He will wield His sceptre over the minds and hearts of His people. Every

thought and every feeling will yet be brought into subjection to His will. But in order to the establishment of such a spiritual government as this, it is needful that He should be the great Revealer of moral and spiritual truth, or in other words the great Prophet, who stands *before* God and speaks to men *for* God. St. Matthew saw Him to be this; and hence the large proportion of space that is assigned in His Gospel to the sayings and teachings of our Lord.

But St. Matthew saw Him to be more still, though the light which revealed this further reach of reality only tardily dawned upon his spirit. Jesus was manifested on earth that He might crown all His teachings and all His other doings with sufferings, which were at once the result of the sinful opposition of infatuated men, and the fulfilment of a higher and Divine intent. (Chap. xxvi. 37-56; xxvii. 46.) He had come to the earth in order that, in some grandly sacrificial way, His body might be broken and His blood be shed. (Chap. xxvi. 26-28.) It is in some respects the mystery of mysteries. But it is indisputable. Jesus had come to make atonement for men's sins, and give His life a ransom for their souls. (Chap. xx. 28.) Such was the Messiah as He was foreshadowed in the Old Testament history, liturgy, and prophecy. (Chap. xxvi. 54, 56.) And such was Jesus as He appeared to the eye of St. Matthew.

As to the plan of the evangelist's work, it is, as we have already said, finely free, easy, and inartificial. There is, of course, a large amount of the consecutive interlinking of historical biography. But the strict sequences of chronology are far from being rigidly adhered to. It is *Memorials* which the evangelist is engaged in composing. And hence groupings or constellations of things come frequently in, to the great intensification of the ethical influence of the narrative upon the mind of the reader. There are groupings of facts, the natural *magnalia* of the Messiah of God, though marvels and miracles to us. There are groupings of far-reaching remarks, which are often like miracles of thought, and which are certainly the germs of theology, sociology, religion, and goodness for all time to come. There are groupings of parables, which come within the amphitheatre of our vision, like Christian Muses in a troop, with hand locked in hand. They tell their tales: they paint their pictures: they chant their music: and then they retire, leaving behind them a trail of beauty that lights up for ever the whole spiritual scene. In short, the *tout ensemble* of the Memoirs has all

the effect of the highest art. The attention never wearies. The interest never flags,—the details of things are so intrinsically catching and captivating, and the range of variety is so great. And then, all through and through, the evangelist is filling up, instinctively, and as it were unconsciously, but yet with remarkable felicity, the picture of the wonderful personality of our Lord. That was the aim that dominated him. Hence it is that, without any artificiality of plan, subtle or superficial, taking effect in mutually dependent dividings and subdividings, there is nevertheless a real beginning, middle, and ending in the composition of the Gospel. There is progression from the commencement to the close. We can look as through a vista. A child can look, and wonder. So may the full grown man, if, with the loss of childishness, he have not also lost that childlikeness which is the most beautiful and healthful feature of true maturity of soul.

Delitzsch supposes that he has detected an exceedingly subtle plan in the structure of Matthew's composition. *He thinks that the evangelist's Gospel is the intentional antitype of the Law or Pentateuch of Moses.*¹ It is, he says, for the New Dispensation, what the Law or Pentateuch was for the Old. "This thought," he adds, "is the soul of Matthew's Gospel."² The Gospel, therefore, he continues, divides itself into five distinct sections, the first corresponding to Genesis, the second to Exodus, the third to Leviticus, the fourth to Numbers, and the fifth and last to Deuteronomy. The Genesis-section extends from the 1st verse of the first chapter to the 15th verse of the second. The Exodus section extends from the 16th verse of the second chapter to the close of the seventh chapter. The Leviticus section extends from the commencement of the eighth chapter to the close of the ninth. The Numbers section extends from the commencement of the tenth chapter to the conclusion of the eighteenth. The Deuteronomy section extends from the commencement of the nineteenth chapter to the end of the Gospel.

In the first and second sections Dr. Delitzsch finds some rather remarkable coincidences. "The first book of the Pentateuch," says he, "begins with the Genesis of the world and of Adam; the first book of the Gospel begins with the Genesis of Jesus Christ. The first book of the Pentateuch closes with the removal of the

¹ *Untersuchungen über die Entstehung und Anlage des Matthäus-Evangeliums*, 1853.

² *Untersuchungen*, p. 59.

“family of Jacob to Egypt, and this corresponds to the removal of “Jesus to the same country, as narrated in Matt. ii. 13-15.” In the book of the Old Testament Exodus, again, we have accounts of the slaughter of the infants by Pharaoh, and then of the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, and of the consecration of Moses, of the forty years’ sojourn and temptation of the Israelites in the wilderness, and of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. Over against these facts, we have in the New Testament Exodus, or Matt. ii. 16 to vii., an account of the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem, of the return of Jesus from Egypt, of His removal to the wilderness and His temptation there for forty days, and of the giving of the New Testament law in the Sermon on the Mount. These are striking and somewhat piquant coincidences; but they terminate here. In Leviticus we have “the laws of the priestly offerings and purifications,” and to these Delitzsch has only to oppose, in the New Testament Leviticus, or Matt. viii. and ix., “the healing of the leper, who is instructed to go and shew himself to the priest and present the offering that was appointed by Moses.” In the next pair of books, we find the parallelism in the mustering of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the appointment of the twelve apostles. And in the fifth pair, or the two Deuteronomies, he identifies what is said about divorce in one verse of the Old Testament book (xxiv. 1) with what is said in Matt. xix. 1-12. It seems to be a strain.

H. G. Ibbeken, a disciple of Ferdinand C. Baur, has, in some respects, improved on Delitzsch’s notion.¹ He agrees with Delitzsch in supposing that the key to Matthew’s Gospel is to be found in a parallelism. But the parallelism, as he apprehends, is not to be sought in any superficial and merely topical coincidence between the component parts of the Gospel as consecutively arranged, and the consecutive parts or books of the Pentateuch of Moses. It is to be sought and found, as he supposes, in a correspondence of the respective careers of Israel as the national, and of Jesus as the personal, Son of God. He conceives that it was the aim of the evangelist to institute this parallelism, and thereby to represent Jesus as the Messiah who had been promised from the time of Abraham downward. In the history of the people the evangelist saw, as Ibbeken conceives, the adumbration of the history of the person. In the history of the person, he saw the reflection and the antitypical completion of the history of the people. The “seed”

of Abraham was, as it were twofold,—a seed without, and a seed within. The one was the complement of the other; and the complementary relation of the interior to the exterior was, according to the evangelist's notion, as Ibbeken conceives it, the verification of its reality as the Seed of seeds.

In working out his idea, Ibbeken, like Delitzsch, divides the Gospel into five distinct sections. The first consists of chapters i.-vii., and contains the preliminary history of Jesus, and His first Messianic appearance. The second consists of chapters viii.-xi., and exhibits our Lord's wonder-working activity. The third is transitional, and exhibits the relation of Jesus to the Jewish Sabbath law. It consists of chapter xii. The fourth consists of chapters xiii.-xxv., and exhibits the prophetic activity of our Lord. The fifth and last extends from chapter xxvi. to the close of the book, and exhibits the history of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of our Lord. In the contents of these successive sections Ibbeken imagines that he sees the effort of the evangelist to exhibit the reflection of the national history of the Jews in the personal history of Jesus, and thus the completion of the prophetic and typical elements of the Old Testament Scriptures and history. There is an important filament of truth in the idea, and of truth that ran deep. But to imagine that the Old Testament element of the idea furnished an artificial pattern to the evangelist, which, while sitting in his mythological loom and plying his mythical shuttle, he reflectively transferred, *that his facts might correspond to his idea*, is, we conceive, to make criticism itself no better than a reverie. It makes it unreal.

There is no subtlety in the evangelist's plan. He was not inventing and scheming. He was not actuated by a desire to palm off upon his fellow men as a reality what he knew to be an unreality. He was not playing a part, or performing as on a stage. He did not feel therefore any need for any deep laid plot of composition, by which simulation and semblance might pass current among men for actual facts. There is no effort and achievement of creative genius in his Gospel. The authorship is mere mirrorship; hence its simplicity. There was sublimity indeed in the object mirrored: and Matthew saw it. There were bands of relationship between the unfolding of the character of Jesus, and things in heaven and things on earth, things in times past and things in time to come: and Matthew had glimpses of some of these bands. There were wonders of things constantly emerging from the depths of the

being of Jesus, and rolling out into observation, sometimes on the line of thought, sometimes on the line of feeling, sometimes on the line of volitional determination, and sometimes on the line of physical activity: and of these wonders Matthew was a witness. As he looked and listened he considered and believed, and spoke and wrote.

§ 15. CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL.

While it is the case that it is partly on the principle of chronological sequence, and partly on the principle of pictorial grouping, that the contents of Matthew's Gospel are adjusted, there is nevertheless, of necessity, a certain order of arrangement. This order, both in its more prominent and in its more subordinate features, may be topically exhibited as follows:—

	Chap. and Ver.
I. THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS	i. and ii.
1. His genealogy	i. 1-17
2. His birth	i. 18-25
3. The visit of the Magi	ii. 1-12
4. The flight to Egypt, and the return to the Holy Land	ii. 13-23
II. THE PREPARATORY MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST	iii. 1-12
III. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS, AND HIS CONSEQUENT INAUGURATION INTO THE PUBLIC DUTIES OF HIS MESSIANIC MINISTRY	iii. 13-17
IV. HIS PRELIMINARY MORAL TRIAL, IN CONFLICT WITH THE PRINCE OF THE POWERS OF DARKNESS	iv. 1-11
V. HIS LIFE AND LABOURS IN GALILEE AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD	iv. 12-xviii.
1. He begins to preach	iv. 12-17
2. He calls Simon and Andrew, James and John, to be His disciples	iv. 18-23
3. He "itinerates" throughout Galilee, preaching and heal- ing, and casting out demons	iv. 24
4. He becomes suddenly famous	iv. 25
5. He preaches a Sermon on the Mount, and the crowds who listened to it are amazed	v.-vii.
6. He performs a variety of wonderful works, and utters a variety of wonderful sayings	viii. 1-22
7. He goes over the sea of Tiberias to Gerasa; delivers a wild demoniac; and returns to Capernaum	viii. 23-ix. 1
8. He forgives and cures a paralytic	ix. 2-8
9. He calls Matthew the publican; eats with publicans and sinners; and defends His conduct in so doing	ix. 9-13
10. He explains why His disciples did not fast	ix. 14-17
11. He restores to life a ruler's daughter; and a woman who touched His garment is cured	ix. 18-26

	Chap. and Ver.
12. He gave sight to two blind men ; delivered a dumb demoniac ; did other wonderful works ; is maligned by the Pharisees ; preaches throughout the surrounding district, and deeply commiserates the perishing people	ix. 27-38
13. He appoints twelve apostles to assist Him in some of the details of His active ministry. He gives them their "ordination charge," unfolding to them their future, and a far future beyond	x.
14. He answers a question sent by John the Baptist, and pronounces a eulogium on the Elijah-like man	xi. 1-15
15. He bewails and reprobates the moral condition of the people round about	xi. 16-24
16. He rejoices that, while the masses were clinging to what was evil, some chose the good. He tenderly invites all to come to Himself and get rest	xi. 25-30
17. He defends His disciples for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath, and argues against the narrow and superficial notions of the Pharisees	xii. 1-13
18. The Pharisees are indignant, and a murderous hate is cherished in their hearts	xii. 14
19. He retires from the neighbourhood of His enemies, but continues His labours of love	xii. 15-23
20. The Pharisees insinuate that He works His wonders in collusion with Beelzebul ; and He vindicates Himself	xii. 24-37
21. The Pharisees ask a curiosity sign, and He rebukes them	xii. 38-45
22. His mother and brethren wish to speak to Him, and He takes the opportunity of explaining the nature of the relationship that is nearest and dearest to His heart	xii. 46-50
23. A group of parables. Their explanation. Why it was that He spake in parables	xiii. 1-53
24. The Nazarenes, the people of His own city, do not understand Him	xiii. 54-58
25. When Herod murders John the Baptist, Jesus retires, but is followed by crowds. He feeds more than five thousand in a desert place	xiv. 1-21
26. He walks on the sea of Tiberias by night to join His disciples, and does other wonders	xiv. 22-36
27. Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem take Him to task for the conduct of His disciples in eating with unwashed hands, and He exposes their own inconsistency	xv. 1-20
28. He went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and healed the daughter of the woman of Canaan	xv. 21-28
29. He feeds four thousand men, and went over the sea of Tiberias to Magdala	xv. 29, 30
30. He encounters another set of inquisitors, both Pharisees and Sadducees	xvi. 1-4
31. He warns His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees	xvi. 5-12
32. He goes into the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi, and Simon Peter bears testimony to Him as "the Christ, the	

	Chap. and Ver.
Son of God." Jesus blesses him, and invests him pro- spectively with spiritual prerogatives and honours . . .	xvi. 13-20
33. He predicts His death and resurrection; and shows that His disciples, while legitimately anticipating a glorious future, must lay their account with many intermediate trials	xvi. 21-28
34. The transfiguration	xvii. 1-13
35. More wonderworking; and the possibility and principle of true wonderworking on the part even of ordinary individuals	xvii. 14-21
36. He again predicts His death and resurrection	xvii. 22, 23
37. He pays temple dues for Peter and Himself	xvii. 24-27
38. He explains who it is that is greatest, and how His disciples should act toward one another	xviii. 1-20
39. He illustrates by a parable the duty of cherishing a forgiving spirit	xviii. 21-35
VI. HIS DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE AND JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM BY THE EASTERN SIDE OF JORDAN	xix., xx.
On the way, he takes occasion from various circumstances to give lessons :—	
1. Concerning marriage	xix. 1-12
2. Concerning little children	xix. 13-15
3. Concerning money	xix. 16-26
4. He explains the rewards that will be conferred on the apostles and His other disciples	xix. 27-30
5. He illustrates by a parable the principle on which His followers will be rewarded	xx. 1-16
6. He again predicts His violent death, and His resurrection on the third day	xx. 17-19
7. He explains that the lowliest will be the loftiest in His kingdom	xx. 20-28
8. On reaching Jericho He cures two blind men	xxii. 29-34
VII. HIS ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM. HIS TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO THE CITY. THE CRISIS OF HIS TERRESTRIAL LIFE. HIS LAST CONFLICT WITH OPPONENTS. HIS LAST WARNINGS. HIS LAST INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS DISCIPLES. HIS LAST SUPPER. HIS SOLITARY AGONY IN GETHESEMANE. HIS BETRAYAL, ARREST, TRIAL, CONDEMNATION, CRUCIFIXION, AND BURIAL	xxi.-xxvi.
1. His arrival at Bethphage, and His triumphal entry into Jerusalem	xxi. 1-11
2. He purifies the temple, and works miracles of mercy	xxi. 12-14
3. The chief priests and scribes are incensed	xxi. 15, 16
4. He stays over night in Bethany, and next morning blights a barren fig tree, and founds instruction on the fact	xxi. 17-22
5. When questioned by the chief priests and elders regarding the authority He assumed, He questions them in return, and delivers appropriate parables	xxi. 23-xxii. 14
6. His enemies try to insnare Him by a question concerning the paying of tribute to the Romans	xxii. 15-22

	Chap. and Ver.
7. Sadducees encounter Him on the doctrine of the resurrection	xxii. 23-33
8. He is questioned regarding the great commandment; and He questions His questioners regarding David's Son and David's Lord	xxii. 34-46
9. He denounces the Scribes and Pharisees	xxiii. 1-36
10. He laments over Jerusalem	xxiii. 37-39
11. He lifts here and there the curtain of the future, and lets His disciples look in	xxiv., xxv.
12. He re-predicts His crucifixion	xxvi. 1, 2
13. The chief priests, and scribes, and elders take counsel against Him	xxvi. 3-5
14. His last anointing in the house of Simon the leper	xxvi. 6-13
15. The treason of Judas	xxvi. 14-16
16. The last supper	xxvi. 17-29
17. His agony in Gethsemane	xxvi. 30-44
18. He is arrested	xxvi. 45-56
19. He is hurried before an irregular nocturnal meeting of the sanhedrin, and tried and condemned for blasphemy	xxvi. 57-68
20. Peter denies Him, and repents, and weeps bitterly	xxvi. 69-75
21. A regular meeting of the sanhedrin in the morning endorses the action of the irregular nocturnal meeting, and hands Him over to Pilate as a political offender	xxvii. 1, 2
22. The remorse and suicide of Judas	xxvii. 3-10
23. Jesus stands at the bar of Pilate, and Pilate reluctantly yields to pressure and surrenders Him to be crucified	xxvii. 11-26
24. He is mocked	xxvii. 27-31
25. He is crucified between two thieves	xxvii. 32-38
26. He is still further mocked while on the cross	xxvii. 39-44
27. There is darkness	xxvii. 45
28. He takes to Himself the language of the 22nd psalm	xxvii. 46-49
29. He expires	xxvii. 50
30. The veil of the temple is rent; graves are opened	xxvii. 51-53
31. The testimony of the Roman centurion	xxvii. 54
32. The burial; and the sealing and guarding of the tomb	xxvii. 55-66

VIII. THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY, IN FULFILMENT OF HIS REPEATED PREDICTIONS xxviii.

1. The visit of the Maries on Sunday morning to the tomb	xxviii. 1-8
2. Jesus appears to them	xxviii. 9, 10
3. The guards of the tomb are bribed by the chief priests and elders to tell a lie	xxviii. 11-15
4. Jesus meets His apostles in Galilee, and gives them their final commission to go and disciple to Himself all the nations of the earth	xxviii. 16-20

THE
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

- 1 THE book of the generation of
JESUS CHRIST,
the son of David, the son of Abraham.
2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob
-

CHAPTER I.

VER. 1. This verse is a *Title*, and might be appropriately rendered thus : GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST, SON OF DAVID, SON OF ABRAHAM. It is the heading, not of the whole Gospel, as some, such as Valdés, have supposed; nor of the first and second chapters in particular, as others, such as Olshausen and Ewald, have imagined; nor even of the entire first chapter by itself, as Fritzsche and others have contended; but simply of the genealogical table which is contained in ver. 2-17. Brameld translates it, "*A book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham,*" not noticing that the word *genealogy* contains in itself the idea that is intended to be expressed by the word *book, register, or record.* Jesus Christ: The proper name of the Great Personage whose history, in its details and varied relations, constitutes the charm of the Bible. Nast is mistaken when he says that the name would be more correctly given thus, *Jesus the Christ.* The sum and substance of the history is the essence of the glad tidings that have come from heaven, and which are yet to be everywhere proclaimed as *the glorious gospel of the grace of God.* Son of David, son of Abraham: The evangelist, standing in thought near to Jesus Christ, looks backward along the genealogical line, till his eye rests on the lofty peak of King David. Thence he looks still farther back till the genealogical view is terminated by a peak of transcendent grandeur, towering majestically above all the others in the pedigree. It is the patriarch Abraham. The designation, however, *son of Abraham,* is, so far as direct grammatical connection is concerned, to be construed with the name *David,* rather than with the name *Jesus Christ.* The two specifications do not fly forth abreast. The one succeeds the other, so that the idea is, *Genealogy of Jesus Christ, who was the son of David, who was the son of Abraham.* Luther, with mingled felicity and infelicity, renders the verse thus, *This is the genealogy of Jesus Christ, who is a son of David the son of Abraham.* No one could, in fulfilment of the Old Testament predictions, have been the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Saviour, who was not *son of David, son of Abraham.*

VER. 2. The evangelist, while looking retrogressively and ascendingly in the

begat Judas and his brethren ; 3 and Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar ; and Phares begat Esrom ; and Esrom begat Aram ; 4 and Aram begat Aminadab ; and Aminadab begat Naasson ; and Naasson begat Salmon ; 5 and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab ; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth ; and Obed begat Jesse ;

genealogical Title, takes the contrary course in the genealogy itself. Having got in thought to *Abraham* at the conclusion of the Title, he starts *from Abraham* at the commencement of the genealogy. And Jacob begat Judas and his brethren : The word *Judas* is the Grecised form of the Hebrew word *Judah*. The same word is Anglicised into *Jude* in the *Epistle of Jude*. But it is not similarly Anglicised in the case either of Judah the son of Jacob, or of Judas Iscariot, or of Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37). Jude, Judas, or Judah, was a common Hebrew name. When the evangelist, after having mentioned *Judas*, adds, *and his brethren*, the addition is simply, but enrichingly, thrown in by the way. The twelve patriarchs, of whom Judah was one, formed a complete family circle, which was dear to the recollections of every Hebrew. The brotherhood grew into a mighty confederation,—a nation. Every patriarchal brother was the head of a constituent tribe or clan.

VER. 3. We need not try to guess the motive, or motives, which induced the evangelist to introduce into our Saviour's genealogy the name of *Thamar*, the mother of the twin-sons of Judah. Neither need we speculate on that peculiar feature of the Divine arrangement which admitted of the introduction of impure elements into the theocratic pedigree of our Saviour's humanity. It is enough to know that the facts are not without their spiritual lessons. Jesus Christ has to do with sinners, even the chief. He is *the friend of sinners*. He does not disdain the guiltiest of the guilty. Indeed, in such a world as ours the guiltiest of the guilty are often wondrously inter-related with the purest, the noblest, and the best. It was and is so, emphatically, with Jesus. God has not disdained, as Chrysostom remarks, to unite as in marriage to Himself our exceedingly impure nature.

VER. 5. Salmon begat Booz of Rachab. It is said in the Old Testament that Salmon or Salma begat Booz or Boaz (Ruth iv. 21, 1 Chron. ii. 11) ; but it is not there recorded that *Rahab* was the mother of Boaz. The evangelist must thus have had access to other sources of information besides the Old Testament Scriptures. It has been supposed on chronological grounds that the *Rachab* here referred to must have been some other *Rahab* than she who is mentioned in the Book of Joshua. There can be little doubt, however, that the evangelist particularizes the mother of Boaz just because she was the well known, historical, Rahab. And perhaps Salmon may have been one of the spies whom she saved. Our Saviour came into our nature, as Chrysostom here remarks, not to be a Judge to condemn, but to be a Physician to heal. Rahab needed healing ; and she seems to have looked forward from afar to the coming of the Great Healer, and to have yearned for deliverance from heathenism and impurity. (Heb. xi. 31.) Obed begat Jesse : Of Jesse it is said in 1 Sam. xvii. 12, *the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul*. We know little more of him ; and nothing of his wife, the mother of King David. Some suppose that she was Nahash : see 2 Sam. xvii. 25 and 1 Chron. ii. 16, 17. But we know that out of 'the stem of Jesse' a rod came forth, which is 'for an ensign to the

6 and Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias; 7 and Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; 8 and Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; 9 and Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

people' and 'to which the Gentiles seek,' and will continue to seek. (Isa. xi. 1, 10.)

VER. 6. **David the king.** At this point in the pedigree the royal element comes in. And thus our Saviour, even if we keep out of view for a moment His higher nature, was of illustrious descent. He was both *David's son* and *David's Lord*. Of her *that had been the wife of Urias*: Or of *Uriah's widow*, or, as it might be still more simply rendered, of *Uriah's wife* (compare Matt. xxii. 24), that is, of Bathsheba. There is thus no attempt made to whitewash the dark spots in the pedigree. Nor are the sins of kings, and even of good kings, easily forgotten.

VER. 7. **Roboam.** *Rehoboam* in Hebrew. **Abia:** That is, *Abijam* or *Abijah*. He is called *Abijam* in 1 Kings xv., and *Abijah* in 2 Chron. xiii.

VER. 8. **Josaphat:** Or *Jehoshaphat* in the Old Testament,—a prince of whom it is recorded that he *walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim*. (2 Chron. xvii. 3.) **Josaphat begat Joram:** Or *Jehoram*, who married the daughter of Ahab, and 'wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord.' (2 Chron. xxi. 6.) He died unlamented. *They buried him, we read, in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings*. (2 Chron. xxi. 20.) **Joram begat Ozias:** Or *Uzziah*, also called *Azariah*. It is to be observed, however, that Joram begat Ozias, not immediately, but mediately. There were intermediate between Joram and Ozias the ignoble trio of Ahaziah, Joash or Jehoash, and Amaziah. (See 2 Kings viii. 24; 1 Chron. iii. 11, 12; 2 Chron. xxii. 1, 11, xxiv. 27.) Jerome says that as Joram had allied himself to the family of the nefarious Jezebel, the memory of his progeny to the third generation is blotted out, so far as the sacred genealogy is concerned. But Jerome, of course, only conjectured. Surenhusius tells us that it was a recognised principle among the Jews that nefarious names might be dropped out of view in genealogies. Doubtless; but other nefarious names are admitted into our Saviour's genealogy. There were links of iron and of brass in the line, as well as of silver and of gold. It was however a matter of no great moment,—indeed of no moment whatsoever,—that all the links should be named. It was only of moment that the real line should be preserved, and that all the links, whether held up to view or let down out of sight, should be capable of verification.

VER. 9. **Joatham:** Or *Jotham*, who *prepared*, it is said, *his ways before the Lord his God*. (2 Chron. xxvii. 6.) **Achaz:** Or *Ahaz*, of whom it is written that he *did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord, like David his father*. (2 Chron. xxviii. 1.) Then follows **Ezekias:** Or *Hezekiah*, who *did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done*. (2 Chron. xxix. 2.) He "stands," says Trapp, "betwixt his father Ahaz and his son Manasseh, as a lily between two thorns."

10 and Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; 11 and Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:

VER. 10. **Manasses:** In the Old Testament, *Manasseh*. **Josias:** Or *Josiah*, the last good king of Judah, who *did right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left.* (2 Chron. xxxiv. 2.)

VER. 11. King James's translators have attached to this verse a marginal note, "Some read *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.*" But this reading, given by 'some,' was very properly rejected by the king's translators. It is undoubtedly an interpolation, that had crept into the text from the marginal note of some ancient critic. Irenæus, in the second century, or his translator, seems to have had the interpolated text before him. It is thus a very ancient reading. It is found in the two uncial manuscripts of the Greek text which are designated by collators M and U, as also in more than thirty of the cursive manuscripts. It was admitted into the printed text of the Greek Testament by Simon Colinaeus in his edition of 1534, and by Henry Stephens in his editions of 1576 and 1584. It was also admitted by Erasmus Schmid, and appears in his posthumously published New Testament of 1658. Robert Stephens, in his celebrated folio edition of the Greek Testament, published in 1550, gave the reading in the margin. Beza approved of it for a season, and indeed introduced the clause into the first and second editions of his Latin translation, published in 1556 and 1565. Hence it was admitted into the English Geneva version; and thus it happens that it is referred to in the margin of our Authorized translation. It is however an interpolation, as we have said, and as Beza came to see. For not only is the reading unsupported by the principal manuscripts, and by the principal versions of antiquity, and by the comments of the principal fathers, it perplexes inextricably the evangelist's mnemonical division of the genealogical table into three *fourteens*. (See ver. 17.) The middle fourteen would be no longer *fourteen* but *fifteen*, were this reading correct. Who then was the Jechonias who was begotten by Josiah? He was the very *Jakim* who is referred to in the marginal note, and erroneously said to be father of Jechonias. He was otherwise called *Joakim*, and, in the Hebrew, *Jehoiakim*, as also *Eliakim*. It was the king of Egypt who changed his name into Jehoiakim from Eliakim. (2 Kings xxiii. 34.) It is the case, indeed, that he is not expressly called *Jechonias* or *Jeconiah* in the Old Testament; it is his son *Jehoiachin* who receives expressly this duplicate name. Still the names of the father and son are so exceedingly alike that it is not wonderful that they should be occasionally identified or confounded when reproduced in Greek. Jerome made this observation long ago, in his commentary on this passage. And his brethren: The appending of this clause determines, and was perhaps intended by the evangelist to determine, that the Jechonias specified was really Josiah's son Jehoiakim, and not his grandson Jehoiachin. His grandson Jehoiachin had no brethren; he had only one brother, viz. Zedekiah. (1 Chron. iii. 16.) But Jehoiakim had three brethren, Johanan, Zedekiah, and Shallum. (1 Chron. iii. 15.) About the time they were carried away to Babylon: Or, more literally, at the time of the removal to Babylon, close upon the removal to Babylon. The translation about the time is free. It was given by Luther, and thence derived into our English version. The expression *they were carried away* is historically true. But the

12 and after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; 13 and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; 14 and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; 15 and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

idea of violent deportation is veiled in the phraseology of the evangelist. The word which he employs simply means *change of abode*.

VER. 12. **And after the removal to Babylon Jechonias begat Salathiel:** We need not suppose that this Jechonias is the same Jechonias who is mentioned in the preceding verse, and who winds up the second of the three fourteens. This apparently is *Jechonias the Second*, the son of *Jechonias the First*. He is Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim. "He was," as Yardley says, "scarcely warm in his throne, having sat thereon only about three months, when the king of Babylon besieged and took Jerusalem, and carried away, not only all the best of the people, but the king himself, who from that time, for the long space of thirty-seven years, was kept a close prisoner in Babylon." (*The Genealogies of Jesus Christ*, Part i., § iii., p. 33.) Jerome of old clearly saw that the Jechonias of this verse is a different person from the Jechonias of the preceding verse. So did Ambrose, who says in his Commentary on Luke that "the history shows that there were two who bore the name of Joachim or Jechonias, father and son." Salathiel: Or *Shealtiel*. The form *Salathiel* is given in Luke iii. 27, and also in the English version of 1 Chron. iii. 17. In all other places the form *Shealtiel*, which is the proper Hebrew form, is employed. The word means, *I have asked God*. In Luke iii. 27 he is said to be the son of Neri. Here it is said that he was begotten by Jechonias. Lord Hervey contends that he could not be literally begotten by Jechonias, seeing it is said of Jechonias in Jer. xxii. 30, *Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah*. He was to be politically childless, childless so far as successorship in relation to the throne of David was concerned. He himself was to be the last (till Jesus) of the Davidic line of kings. And so he was. But it is expressly stated in 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18, that Jechonias had children, and Salathiel is among them. Salathiel must apparently, at the same time, have been heir at law to Neri of the line of Nathan; and hence Luke's statement. **And Salathiel begat Zorobabel:** Mediatly, as would appear, through *Pedaiah*. (1 Chron. iii. 18, 19.) This *Pedaiah* however had, for some unknown reason, been comparatively obscure in the line; and hence he is shaded off, and Zerubbabel is presented to view as the 'son of Shealtiel.' Perhaps *Pedaiah* had been very short-lived, so that *Shealtiel* had to stand to Zerubbabel in a father's place. If this was not the case, there was undoubtedly some other peculiarity attaching to *Pedaiah*, and comparatively veiling him from view.

VERS. 13, 14, 15. None of the names that come after that of Zorobabel, or Zerubbabel, are recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. The royal family had got sadly reduced, and crushed indeed into the deepest poverty. The axe

16 and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom

had been laid to the root of the stately tree of Jesse. It was hewn down, so that the Messiah, when He appeared, was like a rod, or shoot, or sucker, from a lowly *stub* or *stump*. (See Isa. xi. 1.)

VER. 16. And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary: It is thus the case that the genealogy exhibits the pedigree of Joseph, not of Mary; for Jesus, so far as inheritance and other human relationships were concerned, was the legal son of Joseph. He was begotten after His mother's betrothal (Luke i. 26, 27), and seeing He was not adulterously begotten, Joseph's *physical pedigree* was His *legal pedigree*. In Luke, chap. iii., Joseph is said to be the son of Heli; and from Heli the line of ancestry is traced upward to Nathan, son of David, instead of to Solomon, son of David. There is thus an apparent discrepancy between the two evangelists. There are several methods of conciliation. Gomarus, for instance, and Hottinger, and Yardley, in their respective treatises on the genealogy, as also Luther, Spanheim, Lange, Arnoldi, and many others, suppose that while Matthew's line represents the natural pedigree of Joseph, that of Luke represents the natural pedigree of Mary. Gaillard too advocates the same view. (*La Genealogie de J. Christ.*) On this theory Joseph would not be strictly the *son* but the *son-in-law* of Heli. This theory seems to do violence to Luke iii. 23. Grotius again contends that the real pedigree of Joseph, as distinguished from Mary, is given in both the genealogies, but that in Luke there is exhibited the actual physical descent, while in Matthew there is traced the line of legal succession as regards inheritance, the line of succession to the throne of Solomon and David. This view was held by Calvin too. It is ably reconciled in Lord Hervey's volume on the genealogies; but it is not easily reconciled with Matthew's use of the word *begat*, and with the fact that his genealogy *goes beyond David to Abraham*. A third view commanded the suffrages of the great body of the fathers. It is set forth in a monograph on the subject by Julius Africanus, one of the most gifted and most accomplished of the fathers. He flourished at the commencement of the third century. A considerable part of his monograph is preserved in the *Eccelesiastical History* of Eusebius. He supposes that Jacob and Heli were brothers, and that their respective fathers, Matthan and Melchi, were grandfathers to Joseph. Matthan and Melchi, he supposes, married successively the same woman, named Estha. Matthan, having first married her, begat Jacob; then, having died, his widow was married by Melchi, and as the fruit of this second marriage she gave birth to Heli. Jacob and Heli were thus uterine brothers, but on the paternal side only half brothers. Heli, in his turn, married, but died without issue; and his brother Jacob married the widow, and had by her a son, Joseph, who was truly his own son by nature, but also the son of Heli by law, of Heli to whom Jacob raised up seed. Africanus says that this theory of conciliation was in accordance with a tradition which was handed down in the line of the Saviour's relatives, the *Desposyni*, and that it was in all respects a satisfactory solution of the apparent difficulty. We think that, in substance at least, it is all that can be reasonably desired to satisfy the requirements of the case. Only it must be borne in mind that, in the text of Luke's Gospel which Africanus had before him, there were no genealogical links between Melchi and Heli; he expressly says that in Luke's list Melchi's name was the third from the last. The omitted links, it is noticeable, are likewise omitted by Eusebius in his *Questiones*

was born Jesus, who is called Christ. 17 So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

Evangelicæ ad Stephanum, as also by Ambrose in his Commentary on St. Luke, and likewise as it would appear by Irenæus, who, in his *Adversus Hæreses*, iii. 32, represents Luke's genealogy as consisting of seventy-two links instead of seventy-four. The principle of conciliation is unaffected by the diversity of reading. We have no doubt at the same time that Mary was a near relative of Joseph, and thus of royal descent, so that Joseph's lineage was in reality, in its essential elements, her lineage. Her Davidic descent is tacitly presupposed. On both sides of the house therefore, the side of the natural mother, and the side of the reputed and legal father, our Lord was the offspring of David, both by the primary line of Solomon and by the secondary line of Nathan. The two lines, after diverging for long, seem to have met in Shealtiel and Zerubbabel. They again diverged; but met ultimately in Joseph and Mary, and coalesced and effloresced in our Lord. The husband of Mary: Mary is the Anglicised form of the Greek *Maria*, and *Maria* is the Grecised form of the Aramæan *Mariam* and Hebrew *Miriam*. Of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ: That is, who bore and bears the name of Christ. In this passage, as in the first verse, *Christ* is a proper name, and not an appellative, *the Christ*. It is however, even as a proper name, delightfully significant. Our Lord was emphatically *the Anointed One, the Divinely Appointed One*.

VER. 17. For facility of remembrance the genealogical table was partitioned into three fourteens. Each of the fourteens corresponds to a great historical period, so that there is a natural basis for the trichotomy. The first fourteen comprises the age of the patriarchs and judges, the springtime of the Jewish people. The second comprises the age of the kings, the summer season and the autumn of the nation. The third comprises the period of Jewish decadence, the winter time of their political existence. It is also to be noted that *fourteen* is the duplicate of the sacred number *seven*. This fact would render the genealogical table all the more memorable. The three tessaradecades are as follows:—

FIRST.	SECOND.	THIRD.
1. Abraham.	1. Solomon.	1. Jechonias (the second).
2. Isaac.	2. Roboam.	2. Salathiel.
3. Jacob.	3. Abia.	3. Zorobabel.
4. Judas.	4. Asa.	4. Abiud.
5. Phares.	5. Josaphat.	5. Eliakim.
6. Esrom.	6. Joram.	6. Azor.
7. Aram.	7. Ozias.	7. Sadoc.
8. Aminadab.	8. Joatham.	8. Achim.
9. Naasson.	9. Achaz.	9. Eliud.
10. Salmon.	10. Ezekias.	10. Eleazar.
11. Booz.	11. Manasses.	11. Matthan.
12. Obed.	12. Amon.	12. Jacob.
13. Jesse.	13. Josias.	13. Joseph.
14. David.	14. Jechonias (the first).	14. Jesus.

The expression *unto Christ*, in the last clause of the verse, is literally *until the Christ* (ἕως τοῦ χριστοῦ). And thus the evangelist passes from the use of the

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away

word *Christ* as a mere proper name to its use as an appellative,—*until the Messiah, until, that is to say, the pre-eminently Anointed One, the highest of all kings, and the most priestly of all priests, as well as the most inspiring and inspired of all who have ever been prophets or spokesmen for God.*

VER. 18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: The word translated *birth* leads the mind a little farther back in thought than to the mere nativity. It suggests the idea of *genetic origin*. It is in fact the word *Genesis*. The evangelist is about to describe, not the genesis of the heaven and the earth, but the genesis of Him who made the heaven and the earth, and who will yet make a new heaven and a new earth. When as His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph: The older English versions, instead of the compound expression *when as*, have just the simple word *when*. The compound expression was therefore an innovation; but it is now obsolete. It means *at the time when, or during the time while*. A betrothal in oriental countries was, and is, generally a more formal and solemn engagement than we are familiar with under the same designation in Great Britain. Hence it was a maxim of Jewish law that betrothal was of equal force with marriage itself; so that faithlessness on the part of the betrothed maiden was punishable with death (Deut. xxii. 23–27). Before they came together (to live as husband and wife under one roof) she proved to be with child of the Holy Spirit. There is a fuller account of this Divine mystery in *the Gospel according to Luke*, first chapter. If our Saviour was to be Divine, it was meet that there should be some special Divine action in accomplishing the incarnation. If He was to be human too, it was meet that He should be ‘born of a woman,’ but ‘not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’ (John i. 13.) If the whole arrangement was to be in virtue of an agreement, if we may so speak, between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it was meet that the Holy Spirit should have some agency in the matter. He acted however for the Father; and thus the Father was and is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The expression *she proved to be*, or, more literally, *she was found*, implies that there were outward indications of the virgin’s peculiar condition, indications which were patent to the observation of those who were coming in contact with her.

VER. 19. But Joseph her husband (that is, *her betrothed husband*) being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example. Some have interpreted the word *just* as meaning *benignant* or *merciful*. So Grotius, and Baring in his *Dissertation* on this verse, and Kuinöl; but its real signification is simply *righteous*. It would appear that the evangelist had before his mind two distinct lines of ideas, though he does not keep them quite separate from beginning to ending of his statement. He represents Joseph as *righteous* on the one hand, so that he could not brook to take home his betrothed if she were stained; and as *merciful* on the other, *not willing to make a public example of her*. Hence the worthy man resolved to steer a middle course. Was minded to put her away *privily*: He was disposed to get the deed of betrothal privately cancelled, so that they might be mutually free. While the law invested a man who had

privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call

entered into an engagement of betrothal with power to visit his unfaithful spouse with the severest penalties (Deut. xxii. 23-27), yet of course it did not constrain him to avail himself of his power. If he felt that he could be satisfied without a public prosecution and judicial conviction and execution, then as a private member of society he had an unchallengeable *right* to dispense with his *rights*. Private members of society are not bound always to exact, though they are bound always to discharge, all their dues. There would probably be something so pure, and sweet, and elevated in the character of Mary, that Joseph, even under the influence of irritation and the deepest disappointment, would feel himself unable to entertain the idea of proceeding against her to the utmost extremity of the law. His heart would be filled with mingled surprise, sadness, and compassion.

VER. 20. But while he thought on these things,—while he was revolving in his mind (*ἐπιλογθῆντος*) the things that were connected with the alternatives of conduct that were before him,—behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream: *An angel* or *messenger*. The reference is undoubtedly to one of that peculiar class of the Lord's messengers whom we now commonly designate *angels*, but the word in the original just means *messenger*. The messenger appeared *in a dream*, that is, while Joseph was in a state of unconsciousness in relation to the material side of things. Insensibility had barred, for the time being, the gateways that communicated with the outer world, the gateways of his senses; but his mind was inwardly thrown open to spiritual agencies and influences. Influences from above did come in. A messenger of the Lord appeared. It need not seem incredible. There is kinship among spirits. Neither need it seem wonderful that the appearance of the celestial messenger should have been so unmistakable as to verify its reality to Joseph's mind. **Saying, Joseph, thou son of David:** It is assumed that Joseph knew his own relationship to the royal line, the line of the long promised Messiah. Gleams of the glorious possibilities connected with himself, and with his beloved Mary, may have often flashed through his spirit, or flitted athwart his view, filling him at once with rapture and with awe. What if the day of redemption was drawing very nigh? What if the shoot from Jesse's stump was just about to sprout? **Fear not to take to thee—to take home—Mary thy wife: Thy (betrothed) wife.** All is right. Thy longings are about to be realized; thy Messianic anticipations are about to be fulfilled, though in a way that had not entered into thy mind. **For that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit:** Instead of *begotten*, Tyndale and the Geneva have *conceived*. Wycliffe, Luther, and the Rheims, following the Vulgate, have *born*, a very awkward rendering. 'The Holy Thing' is spoken of impersonally, as in Luke i. 35. *Is of the Holy Spirit*, that is to say, is the product of the agency of the Holy Spirit. All therefore is right, and the prophecies are about to be fulfilled.

VER. 21. **And she shall bring forth a son:** Yes, virgin though she be. The 'Seed of the woman' is about to appear. The virgin has conceived, and shall bear a son. Is it not so written in the prophecies? **And thou shalt call His**

his name JESUS : for he shall save his people from their sins.

name Jesus : It is as if the angel had said, Thou shalt assume the part of a father, and give the name to the child ; JESUS, in Hebrew *יְהוֹשֻׁעַ*, or *יְהוֹשֻׁעַ*. It is, as thou knowest, an eminently significant name, *Jehovah (is our) Salvation*. It was appropriately borne by him who led your fathers of old into the holy land. By him Jehovah conferred a great salvation, and the favoured people found rest. But all that then happened is but a faint adumbration of far higher and grander realities. There is a happier land, a better rest and inheritance. There is another country, 'even an heavenly.' Your JESUS will conduct into that. In Him, far more gloriously than in any other one, will it be realized that *Jehovah saves*. He will be the true *Joshua*. For **He**—**emphatically He**—shall save **His people** from their sins : De Wette, Baumgarten-Crusius, Meyer, and others suppose that by *His people* we are to understand the *Jews*, and that when it is said *He shall save them from their sins* there is no reference to the Pauline idea of salvation. The meaning they suppose is this, *He shall deliver the Jews from that national degradation and servitude which is the penal effect of their sins*. But St. Paul did not invent his theology ; he found it in the Old Testament Scriptures. He might have found it also, though of course in very varying developments of form, circulating among the pious of the people. With the pious in all ages religion is a spiritual state and exercise, and salvation is a spiritual deliverance, stretching out and up into the illimitable. Aspiration in the direction of Infinity is inseparable from true piety. Although therefore it should have been the case, as most probably it was, that Joseph's Messianic views were in some directions confused and confined, light and darkness fitfully interblending and often strangely chasing one another, nevertheless we need not suppose that the message of the heavenly messenger was intended to fit in only to those elements of his conceptions that were tinged with the imperfections of his imagination. On the heights of his intelligence there was light gleaming from afar ; in the depths of his consciousness and conscience there was a craving immeasurably removed from the sensuous. It was to Joseph, as thus conditioned, that the angel was sent, and that the statement was made, *He shall save His people from their sins*, that is, *He shall save the subjects of His heavenly kingdom from their sins*. It is obvious from the original that the pronoun *He* (*αὐτός*) is to be understood emphatically, *He and no other*. The Revisionists bring out the emphasis thus : *For it is He that shall save His people from their sins*. There is great significance in the expression '*His people*.' The angel does not say to Joseph '*thy people*' ; nor does he say '*God's people*.' He says '*His people*.' Joseph's son was to have a people. He had a people. He was a king. His kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, was at hand. The community had been gathering together for ages. It was about to be more fully organized. It was already, and it would be still more emphatically, a *people, a nation, a holy nation*. Every citizen, every subject, would be *saved from his sins*. This expression, *saved from his sins*, or *rescued from his sins*, assumes that sins are a man's worst enemies. When a man falls into their hands he is in a most perilous condition. They are merciless ; nothing short of death will satisfy them, the utter destruction of all the elements of bliss. What shall men do then to be saved ? They cannot save themselves. Once in the power of their sins they are like Laocoon within the coils of the serpents ; their case is hopeless unless a Saviour interpose. Jesus is that Saviour. *Salvation from sin*, when theologically viewed, is *deliverance*

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God

from penalty, or from exposure to penalty. It is resolvable into pardon, justification, and glorification, and is to be distinguished from sanctification, which however is something greater still in moral moment. Nothing can transcend in ethical importance *assimilation in character to the image of God.*

VER. 22. But all this has come to pass: Chrysostom is right in supposing that it is the angel who continues to speak, and who seeks by the words of this and the following verse to remove every vestige of doubt from the mind of Joseph. Arnoldi takes the same view. On the supposition that it is the evangelist who speaks, there seems to be too little said to Joseph in explanation of Mary's condition. Unless she were 'the virgin,' no adequate relief would have been given to his perplexity. *All this, that is, all that has occurred in the case of thy Mary, has happened.* That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord, or by the Lord: there is a slight ambiguity in the English preposition of, which is not in the original (*ὅτι*). Principal Campbell employs the word *verified* in place of the word *fulfilled*. It is in some respects a good translation; but it deviates widely from the etymological and distinctive import of the evangelist's term, a term that is beautifully significant. Words of themselves are empty. They need *things to fill* them. They are useful only as vessels to convey things from mind to mind. Histories, of themselves, are words; and therefore they are empty unless there be veritable facts to fill the void. Prophecies too consist of words, but from their peculiar predictive character the words continue as it were empty, till the facts come to pass. Then the emptiness is *filled to the full*, the words are *fulfilled*. The facts, says the evangelist, came to pass *that what was spoken by the Lord might be fulfilled*. The prophetic words had been spoken because the Lord had resolved to bring to pass the facts. And hence, in the fulness of the time, the facts were brought to pass, that the prophetic words might be fulfilled. The Lord's hand was in the words; the Lord's hand was in the facts too: and it was by the Lord's hand that the harmony or correspondence of His words and works was consummated. **Through the prophet, saying:** Or *through the prophet when he says.* There was a sense in which it was the prophet who spoke; there was a sense in which it was the Lord who spoke *through the prophet*. In one plane of things we find the prophet speaking. We rise up higher, and lo it is the Lord himself who is speaking. The passage referred to is found in Isa. vii. 14.

VER. 23. Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son: The idea is not, *some virgin or other*. There is express pointing to a particular virgin. The case is singular; it is unparalleled. Whatever scope for doubt there may be regarding the flexibility of the meaning of the word for *virgin* in Isaiah's Hebrew, there is none for doubting regarding the meaning of the evangelist's term. It most definitely and distinctively means *virgin*. **And they shall call His name Emmanuel:** *They shall call*, it is a free translation of the prophet's Hebrew, and brings into view the fact of a somewhat extended recognition of the peculiarity and glory of the virgin's Offspring. *They shall call, men shall call. Emmanuel;* or as it is in the Old Testament, *Immanuel.* Which, being interpreted, is, God with us: Or *which, when interpreted, is, With us (is) God.*

with us. 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife : 25 and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son : and he called his name JESUS.

CHAPTER II.

1 NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the

The name is thus entirely and finely coincident in idea with the import of the name JESUS. The two names, though different in vocal form, are, in their ideal substrate or essence, identical. *With-us-is-God*, that is, *With-us, to-help-us, is-God, With-us, to-save-us, is-God*. The name might be given, as a motto designation, to one who was not God, just as the name *Jesus* or *Joshua* was borne by merely human persons. Emmanuel is in fact thus employed, though perhaps too presumptuously; the late king of Italy was called *Victor Emmanuel*. But in the case of Jesus the name was more than a motto designation. It was a doctrinally descriptive appellation, though there is no evidence that it was intended to be employed as a conventional proper name. Jesus was really, and in His own personality, *God-with-us, to-save-us*. The expression, *which, i.e. which name, when interpreted, is With-us-is-God*, would of course not be spoken by the angel to Joseph. It must be regarded as a parenthetical and purely philological remark, thrown in by the evangelist at the close of the angel's quotation.

VER. 24. And Joseph, being raised from his sleep (*ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου*)—from the sleep in which he was favoured with the vision of the angel—did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife : Took home his wife.

VER. 25. And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son : it is worthy of notice that in the two most ancient manuscripts of the Greek text, the Sinaitic in St. Petersburg and the Vatican in Rome, we have the simple expression, *till she brought forth a son*, instead of *till she brought forth her firstborn son*. Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort, and the English Revisionists accept and support the simple reading, supposing that the fuller expression had crept in from an early marginal note, which had been derived from Luke ii. 7, where the reading is unchallengeable. We hesitate to accept their verdict. *And knew her not* : The evangelist indicates, in beautifully modest phraseology, that Joseph had learned, from the communication made to him by the angel, that he was to look back upon Mary as united to him for higher objects than are contemplated in ordinary instances of wedlock. He was to be her human guardian, and her offspring's legal father. But she was emphatically 'the virgin,' and a very 'chosen vessel' of the Lord.

CHAPTER II.

VER. 1. Now when Jesus was born : The evangelist is about to narrate some striking events that took place after the birth of Jesus, and apparently very soon after. We cannot say however how soon. The phraseology employed does not determine the matter. And those who try to harmonize the narratives of Matthew and Luke differ considerably as to the length of time that had probably elapsed between the nativity and the visit of the *wise men from the east*. We are disposed to place the visit after the presentation in the temple, but very soon after. In Bethlehem of Judæa : a small town about six miles

days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from

from Jerusalem, south by west. It is now called *Beit-lachm* (or *Flesh-house*), and contains about three thousand inhabitants. It was called *Bethlehem of Judæa* to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in Zebulun. (Josh. xix. 15.) It is a very ancient place, and bore the name of Ephrath or Ephratah before it came into the possession of the Hebrews. (Gen. xlviii. 7.) It was the birthplace of David, as well as of David's Son and Lord. Its Hebrew name means *Bread-house*, a name derived in all probability from the fertility of its soil. It is, in another plane of things, *the House-of-Bread*. The Bread of Life has been disseminated from it, the Bread which satisfies the hunger of the soul, and which may be 'bought without money and without price.' In the days of Herod the king: Herod, surnamed the Great. For a time he bore no higher title than that of *tetrarch*; but he was ultimately elevated by Antony to the royal dignity. He was of Idumean origin. As a prince he was able and magnificent, but utterly unprincipled and most unhappy. Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem: The word translated *wise men* is *Magi* (*Mdγoi*), a word that is apparently of Median origin, though under the form *magician* it has got to be naturalised in many of the languages of Europe. In the old Median language, the Pehlvi, *mog* or *mag* meant *priest*. The Medes, as we learn from Herodotus (i. 101), were divided into six tribes, one of which was the *Magi*, corresponding to the Levites among the Hebrews, the Brahmins among the Hindoos, and the Druids among the Celts. They were a sacred caste, the councillors of the ruling classes (Herodotus, i. 120), and the spiritual advisers and guides of the great body of the people. As they belonged to a nation of fire worshippers, sun worshippers, worshippers of the elements of nature, they were peculiarly devoted to astronomical and astrological pursuits. Purvey translates the term in the passage before us *astromyens*. They were accustomed to consult the stars of heaven, that they might obtain direction regarding the affairs of earth. It was not in all respects the worst possible phase of superstition. It led them to *look up*; and as they looked they would doubtless at times be conscious of stirrings and aspirations of spirit that sought to pierce beyond the stars. In connection with their astrological engagements, the Magi became students of other elements of occult science; and hence many of them became interpreters of dreams, fortune tellers, wizards, sorcerers, necromancers; in one word, *magicians*. As such they wandered up and down among the nations, making a livelihood from their *magical* intuitions or their skill in *magical* arts. And persons of other nationalities too, who had similar proclivities or idiosyncrasies, were designated by their name. Hence Simon of Samaria, who is spoken of in the 8th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, is commonly called to this day *Simon Magus*. We know not the nationality or nationalities to which the *Magi* mentioned by the evangelist belonged. They were, he says, *from the east*. But we know not from what part of the east they came, and it is in vain to guess. Neither do we know how many of them there were, and it is in vain to guess. In the mediæval ages there was abundance of guessing on the whole subject. It was guessed that they were three in number, corresponding to the offerings mentioned in ver. 11, and corresponding to the Trinity too, and to the three great regions of the earth. It was guessed that they were three kings. It was guessed that they were the representatives of the three great families of Shem, Ham, and Japhet; and hence one of them was customarily regarded as an Ethiopian, and was painted black. In the *Scholastic*

the east to Jerusalem, 2 saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and

History of Peter Comestor, as in Bede before him, we find their very names, and in various languages too! In Latin they were named Balthazar, Caspar and Jaspas, and Melchior! In the Eastern Church again the luxuriance of guessing broke forth in a different direction; and they were supposed to have arrived in Jerusalem with a retinue of a thousand, and to have left an army of seven thousand men on the farther bank of the Euphrates! It is in vain however to put spurs into the pegasus of imaginative invention on such a subject.

VER. 2. Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews! This inquiry more literally translated is, *Where is the born King*, that is, *the newly born King, of the Jews?* Herod was not a *born king*. It was long since there had been a *born king* among the Jews. But at length there was a *born king*. Where is he? The Magi expected, no doubt, to find him in the capital city, and in the royal palace. Luther's translation of this inquiry is, *Where is the new-born King of the Jews?* For we saw His star in the east: That is, *the star that indicated His birth*. What star was that? Kepler, the astronomer, supposed that it might be a *new star*, similar to one which he noticed in 1604, and which appeared along with a remarkable conjunction of the planets Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, in the sign of the Fish, which is the astrological symbol of Judæa. "It was like the most beautiful and glorious torch." He calculated that in the year of Rome 747 a corresponding conjunction of two of the planets, Saturn and Jupiter, must have taken place, and the following year a conjunction of all the three. One or other of these years being assumed to be the true year of the Lord, the starting point of the Christian era, what if the conjunction was then accompanied by the appearance of a *new star* as in 1604? Would not that correspond with the narrative in our evangelist? Would not that be the star of the Magi? Kepler pleads his cause with great earnestness and eloquence. (*De Nova Stella; De J. C. vero anno natalitio.*) And his idea has been taken up with more or less of accuracy, and pressed, by Münter, Ideler, Alford, etc. But it is apparently scientifically at fault, and exegetically too. We conclude from ver. 9 that the star seen by the Magi was not a firmamental star in the modern and scientific acceptation of the term *star*. It was neither a fixed star, an immensely remote star, nor yet a planet revolving round our own solar centre. The Magi indeed may never have thought of the stars as distant worlds. A star, to them, would be but a celestial point of light. And such a point of light had appeared to them in the west as they scanned the skies. It had appeared to them, pointing as toward the region of Judæa, and beckoning them on. Why may it not have been a miraculous star? Jesus was the centre of a large circle of supernatural things; and this circle intersected at many points multitudes of other circles, both in nature and in human nature. Hence the preparations for His coming, not among Jews only, but also among surrounding Gentiles. Hence too the confluence of fitnesses for His appearance at the actual fulness of the time.' Hence too the concentration of marvels in and around His birth and life and death. Hence too (*why not?*) the star of the Magi. Hence too the multiplied marvels, physical, intellectual, and moral, that continued to occur, though in rarified degrees and in modified forms, in apostolic and post-apostolic circles, the circles that were most intimately connected with the time and place of our Lord's life and death. Time has advanced

are come to worship him. 3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

since the great epoch. Cycles have revolved, and we are sweeping along under full sail in a new series of circles that are not reproductions of bygone circles, and will never be produced again. Yet the original Christian impulses continue. The supernatural is still interpenetrating the natural, though in diversified forms, accommodated to the procession of the ages. The free agency of God has not ceased; the hand of His free activity is not stiffened or tied. In what way might the minds of the Magi be led to connect the appearance of the star with the birth of the King of the Jews? We are not told, and we need not pry. But we learn from ver. 12 that God was in supernatural communication with them; and thus the greatest difficulties are removed. Most likely they were pious men, whose minds had ascended from nature to nature's God. They had noted that the Lord was not dealing with themselves or with others as they deserved. He was dealing with them in mercy; He was dealing propitiously. There must be (may they not have concluded?) a propitiation. There must be already, or there will yet be, a Propitiator. They had faith in the unseen but hoped for reality. The daystar had arisen or was arising in their hearts. And likely, too, in accordance with what Suetonius, and Tacitus, and Josephus tell us of the widespread expectation of the coming Man, the coming Jew, they had heard that some great One was expected to make His appearance among the Jews. That people indeed had been greatly depressed. They had been long oppressed, chiefly under the burden of their own crimes. But a Deliverer was about to appear. Had it not been rumoured too that Balaam had prophesied of Him as the 'Star' who should 'come out of Jacob'? (Num. xxiv. 17.) He would transcend all other kings. He would be mighty to save. Would He not be willing and mighty to save them too,—even them? May we not suppose that they believed that He would? If they were Median or Persian Magi, may we not also suppose that traditions of Daniel, and of Daniel's visions and prophecies, had reached them, and stirred into heavenward aspiration the longings of their souls? Hence, perchance, it was that they were favoured with the vision of the star; and hence, perchance, they dimly understood the import of its appearance. *We saw His star in the east.* And are come to worship Him: To acknowledge *His worthship*, to do homage to Him. They could not be satisfied with blindly worshipping, as so many of their fathers had done, the sun of nature. They longed to worship the greater and more vivifying Sun, the Sun of Righteousness. They longed to bow themselves in adoration before *the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* (John i. 9.)

VER. 3. But Herod the king when he heard it: And no doubt the tidings would be speedily carried to his ears. They would run, as Archbishop Trench expresses it, "like an electric shock through the palace of the usurping Idumean." (*The Star of the Wise Men*, p. 42, ed. 1850.) Was troubled: "When we remember," says Archbishop Trench, "the recent agitations at Jerusalem through the refusal of the Pharisees, to the number of six thousand, to take the oath of allegiance to him (Josephus, *Ant.* xvii. 2: 4), with their prophecy of the divinely intended transfer of the kingdom from him and his race to a favourite of their own, we can easily understand how much less a thing would have been sufficient to terrify him than this announcement of the star and the King." And all Jerusalem with him: "The rabbinical world

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of

of Jerusalem" (Geikie); its high officials and other leading men. Many of these would be the creatures of Herod, while others might be afraid of any event that would threaten the commotions and embarrassments that are invariably incident to a change of dynasties, which so often issues in civil war. Some of the 'hidden ones,' however, like Anna and Simeon, who were already 'fighting the good fight of faith,' and 'waiting for the Consolation of Israel,' might have their hearts not troubled, but cleared and cheered and quickened into livelier expectancy and prayer.

VER. 4. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people: An extemporized council of such high, learned, and influential persons as would in his estimation be best able to give him the biblical or traditional information which he required. *All the chief priests*: one might have expected that there would have been only *one chief priest*. But the office of the high priesthood had become venal. It was too important and lucrative to be left for a very lengthened term in the hands of one individual; and hence, besides the person in actual office, there might be others, who had been his predecessors, and who continued to bear the name and in some respects the dignity. The chiefs of the twenty-four courses of priests might also be included under the designation. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14; Ezra viii. 24, x. 5; Neh. xiii. 7. Comp. 1 Chron. xxiv.) The *scribes* again were the learned men of the nation; learned especially in the letter of the Scriptures, the law. They were the men who could wield the pens of ready writers, and who took their distinctive position in society in consequence of devotement to letters. Some would transcribe the Scriptures, when copies were required. All of them would study the Scriptures, though of course with very varying degrees of intelligence and enlargement of soul. Law papers would come under their charge, secretaryships, and such cases of conscience as could be resolved only by the application of Scripture. They would be the councillors of the higher powers, the educators and spiritual advisers of the great body of the people. He inquired of them where the Christ should be born: He wished to learn from them what was the predetermined birthplace of the *Christ*. He used the customary theocratic language. He knew that there was a general expectation of the speedy appearance of some illustrious One. The inquiry of the Magi brought the idea afresh before his mind. And therefore, while he had no doubt that there was much superstition afloat on the subject, and that it was probably all a matter of superstition, yet, as there was something in the matter that touched him to the quick and troubled him, he must be wary and prudent in his procedure. He would not slap the superstition in its face, but he would take effectual measures to overreach it! Hence he pretends the assumption that there was to be a Messiah. He pretends too that he was desirous to assist the Magi in the ends they contemplated in their pious and praiseworthy pilgrimage.

VER. 5. And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: "Lo, how readily and "roundly," says Trapp, and he might have added *how soundly*, "out of the "Scriptures, they could answer to this capital question"; for it is possible to know much of the letter of Scripture, and yet to enter but little into its spirit. Indeed, if Herod had asked them which was the very central letter of *the law*;

Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of ^Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that

we doubt not that the scribes could have answered him. They would have brightened up and told him that it was the penultimate letter of the fourth word of the 42nd verse of the 11th chapter of the book of Leviticus. But as to the central idea at once of *the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms*, that was a very different matter, and perhaps very indifferent to not a few of their number. For thus it stands written by the prophet: viz. Micah, in chap. v. ver. 2.

VER. 6. The passage as it stands in Micah is as follows: *And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, small to be among Judah's thousands, out of thee shall He come forth to Me who is to be Ruler in Israel.* As it stands in the evangelist, it is reproduced, as regards the substance of its ideas, though not as regards the details of its letters. Bethlehem was really *small*; and yet it was *not small*. Both ideas are true; and both ideas are implied, read the passage as we may. Its littleness passed into greatness, in virtue of the intimacy of its connection with One who was the Greatest of the great. As regards the free and easy reproduction of the prophecy by the evangelist, the following items may be noted. And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah: In the original there is no *in the*; the expression *land of Judah* comes abruptly after the name *Bethlehem*, to designate the particular Bethlehem referred to, just as in English we say, *Newport, Shropshire*; or *Newport, Monmouthshire*. There was a Bethlehem in the territory or canton of Judah; and there was another Bethlehem in the territory or canton of Zebulun. In Micah's Hebrew the designation is effected by adding the ancient name of the place, *Bethlehem-Ephratah*. Art by no means least among the princes of Judah: Instead of *the princes of Judah*, the expression is, in Micah's Hebrew, *the thousands of Judah*. The two representations, however, are but two aspects of one reality. The tribe had been subdivided into *thousands*, or *chiliads*, corresponding to the *hundreds* of England, and over each subdivision there was a chieftain or *prince*, a *thousander* as it were, or *chiliarch*. Some *thousands*, considered as districts, would sometimes dwindle as regards population; others would increase. And hence in course of time, and just as there are more or less populous *hundreds* in England, there would be more or less populous *thousands* in Judah; and there would be *thousanders* consequently, or *princes of thousands*, who were of more or less political importance. *Bethlehem-Ephratah* was little among the thousands; its prince was little among the princes. And yet, viewed on another side, it was *not little*; it was *by no means least*. For out of thee shall come forth a Governor, a leader, a ruler, a prince; namely, *the Christ*. Wycliffe translates the word a *duk* (a duke). In the Rheims it is rendered a *capitaine*. Who shall rule Thy people Israel: Instead of the word *rule* we have in the margin the word *feed*. It was the translation of the Geneva version, because it was Beza's translation. It is strangely preferred by Archbishop Trench. But neither *feed* nor *rule* conveys the full idea of the original expression (*πομανεῖ*). That full idea is, *who shall shepherd My people Israel*, who shall at once *protect, guide, feed, and govern* or *rule* them. Michaelis, in his *Observations on Micah*, says: "Even although "there were not, in Matthew ii. 5, 6, a single word explanatory of our text, still "I should believe that the reference is to Christ, that Christ who was born

shall rule my people Israel. 7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And when they were

“under the reign of Herod. The entire thread of the prophecy of the preceding chapter leads me to Him, and to the time of His birth.”

VER. 7. Then Herod privily called the wise men: *Privily*, for he was already hatching, still more privily, his malicious plot. And inquired of them diligently: or rather, *ascertained from them accurately* (*ἠκριβώσεν παρ' αὐτῶν*). The verb denotes the exactness of the information got, rather than the diligence, or even the exactness, of the inquiry made. What time the star appeared: Literally, *the time of the appearing star*, an idiomatic expression in Greek, corresponding to our idiomatic expression in English, *the time of the appearing of the star*. Herod was already suspecting that the Magi might not return to him, and he therefore took time by the forelock, and got out of them all the information that would be needed to guide him in his privy and nefarious project.

VER. 8. And he sent them to Bethlehem: He directed them, that is to say, to go to Bethlehem. And, having done this, he added, Go and search out exactly concerning the young child, etc. That I may come and worship Him also: or, *that I too may go and do homage to Him*. Herod wished to convey to the minds of the Magi that his feelings coincided with their own, and that indeed he wished to do what they were doing. It was something, says Gualther, like the kiss of Judas (*Archetypi*, in loc.).

VER. 9. And they, having heard the king, went their way; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. From this statement we learn, in the first place, that the star which they saw when in the east had not continued to be visible to them during their journey, so that for the greater part of their way to the Holy Land they had to *walk by faith, not by sight*. We learn, in the second place, that the star was not a far distant orb, but a point of light comparatively near the earth. If God can reveal Himself supernaturally and evangelically through the ear, why should we wonder that He should also reveal Himself supernaturally and evangelically through the eye?

VER. 10. It is not improbable that, when Herod directed them to go to Bethlehem, his manner, although studiously controlled, may have excited vague suspicions and other chilling sensations. If so, their joy would be all the more intense when their hopes were reassured by the reappearance of the star. Mace contrives to lead us down into the flattest possible bathos when he translates the jubilant clause thus,—*they were extremely well pleased*.

VER. 11. And having come into the house: *The house*, for it is not reasonable to suppose that 'the Holy Family' would require to stay long in the public khan

come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be

or caravanserai where the infant Saviour was born and laid in a manger. They saw the young child with Mary His mother, and they fell down, and worshipped Him: Or, still more literally and impressively, *and, having fallen down, they worshipped Him, they did homage to Him.* And having opened their treasures, or their repositories or caskets, they presented gifts to Him,—according to the oriental custom in paying visits to royalty,—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh: Gold would be always a suitable present. Frankincense and myrrh would be used chiefly in the houses of the great, and in holy places. They were prized for the delicious fragrance which they suffused. They were gifts fit to be presented to monarchs; and it was to Jesus, as a royal child, that they were presented by the Magi. The fathers of the church thought that they could detect mysteries in the peculiar nature of the gifts. In the gold, says Origen, there is a reference to the Lord's royalty; the frankincense has reference to His Divinity; the myrrh to His decease. The number of the gifts was also a fertile source of cabalistic ingenuity to the older expositors. It symbolised the Trinity; it symbolised the triplicity of elements in the Saviour's personality; it symbolised the triad of the Christian graces, faith, hope, charity; etc., etc. But such a method of expounding is to turn the simple and sublime solemnities of Scripture into things ludicrous and grotesque. It is of moment to note that the visit of the Magi, and their reverential obeisance, and their gifts, must have had a finely confirming influence upon the faith of Joseph in reference to the perfect purity of Mary and the lofty character and destiny of her Offspring. It is also interesting to observe the initial fulfilment of those multitudinous prophecies which shine as stars in the Old Testament Scriptures, and point us to the ingathering of all peoples to the Shiloh. Happy the time when 'all kings shall fall down before Him, and all nations shall serve Him,' when 'all the families of the earth shall be blessed,' everlastingly blessed, 'in Him.'

VER. 12. Richard Ward, in his thick folio volume, entitled "*Theological, Dogmatical, and Evangelical Questions and Observations and Essays upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew, wherein about 2,650 necessary and profitable questions are discussed, and 580 special points of doctrine noted, and 550 errors confuted or objections answered; together with divers arguments whereby divers truths and true tenets are confirmed* (1640)," spends nearly three double columned pages in showing the principle on which it was right for the Magi to break the promise which they had made to Herod, that they would return to Jerusalem. But the good expositor's labour, as in almost all the rest of his book, is really labour in vain; for there is no evidence whatever that the Magi had made any promise of the kind.

VER. 13. But when they were departed, lo, an angel of the Lord, etc. There was a superhuman element throughout. Into Egypt: A place beyond Herod's

thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

jurisdiction on the one hand, and intimately and mysteriously connected on the other, and from of old, with God's evangelical dispensations. Herod will seek: Or, better, *Herod is about to seek.*

VER. 14. **By night:** It is customary in the east, when one has to make a long journey, to start early in the morning, hours before daybreak. The air is then deliciously cool; and time is gained to allow a long siesta during the heat of the day. But the expression of the evangelist would suggest that far earlier than was usual with travellers, and probably on the very night of the vision, Joseph took the young child and His mother, and set out. **Departed into Egypt:** The tradition is that Matarééh was the place to which 'the Holy Family' fled. Matarééh was in the neighbourhood of Leontopolis in the district of Heliopolis, where there had been erected 150 years before, by Onias, a fugitive priest, a magnificent Jewish temple, in imitation of that in Jerusalem. There would probably be many Jews in the locality, with whom Joseph and Mary could have pleasure in associating; for, as Lightfoot remarks, 'Egypt was now replenished with Jews above measure.' And the gifts which had been given by the Magi might be turned to good account during their compulsory sojourn in a foreign land.

VER. 15. **And was there until the death of Herod:** A period of a year or two. It is a period that is blank to us in our Saviour's history; and no doubt wisely so. Perhaps the childhood of our Lord, while immaculately free from all moral imperfections, was wonderfully like the childhood of multitudes of others, His little brothers and sisters of mankind. It would no doubt be a lovely childhood,—exquisitely quiet, thoughtful, sympathetic, responsive; eminently self evolving withal, and therefore beautifully selective and select in its reciprocity. But it was only the beginning and the budding of His development; and we have mainly to do with the flowering that came after, and the fruit. We may allow imagination to hover over the unknown period, peering, as best it can, into its own darling principles of a perfect ideal. By and by we may get to know, even as we are known. There are in existence apocryphal *Gospels of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*, in which marvellous stories are told of miracles that were wrought during the sojourn in Egypt, and after the return to the Holy Land. But the stories are apocryphal. They are unhistorical inventions; and our own imaginations need no such helps, or rather hindrances. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called My Son: The expression, *of the Lord by the prophet*, would be more literally rendered, *by the Lord through the prophet*. And the expression, *Out of Egypt I called*, or *recalled*, *My Son*. The passage quoted is found in Hos. xi. 1, *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt*. It is a historical remark regarding the people of Israel, who were God's national son,—the nation which He favoured above other nations as a father favours a son. The Lord said unto Moses,—*Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, My firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let My son go, that he*

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the

may serve Me; and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, thy firstborn (Exod. iv. 22, 23). This is the son of God to whom reference is made in Hosea, when it is said, *Out of Egypt I called My son*. In what respect then is it true that Jesus went to Egypt, stayed there for a season, and returned, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by God through the prophet, *Out of Egypt I called My son*? Various answers have been returned by expositors to this question. Many suppose that the words are quoted just in the way of mere arbitrary accommodation, like an appropriate classical quotation, or, as some shallow scoffers have represented it, like a parody. Bishop Chandier thinks that the words had become a kind of proverbial expression to denote deliverance from imminent danger, and hence their appropriateness to the circumstances of our Saviour. (*Defence of Christianity*.) Wakefield agrees with him. Pierce again imagines that the original oracle of Hosea was constructed on a principle of *parallel lines of distinct predictions*, on one of which lines, including the first clause of the last verse of the 10th chapter, and the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th verses of the 11th, the national Israel is referred to, while on the other line, including the last clause of the last verse of the 10th chapter, and the 1st verse of the 11th chapter, the Messiah is referred to. (*Dissertation on Matt. ii. 13-15*.) But such a principle of interpretation turns the prophecy into a puzzle. Eusebius conjectured that the passage quoted by the evangelist was taken, not from Hos. xi. 1, but from Balaam's prophecy in Num. xxiv. 8. (*Demonst. Evang.*, iv. 1.) Olearius is of the same opinion. (*Observat. in Matt.*) And Dr. W. L. Alexander maintains that the passage is not to be found in the Old Testament at all, but must have been some prophecy "which had been handed down by tradition among the Jews." (*Connexion of Old and New Test.*, p. 486, ed. 1841.) But all these shifts are most unsatisfactory. They are shifts, not solutions. And the real key to the evangelist's quotation seems to be found in the indubitable principle that *the whole Old Testament is but the bud of the New*. In the Old Testament, as Augustin remarked, the New Testament *lies concealed*; in the New the Old *lies revealed*. (*Questiones in Hept.*, ii. § 73, etc.) And not only so: but Israel was Israel, and God's national son, just because it included in itself Him in whom is included the true Israel, and who is the only begotten Son of God. But for this relation of pregnancy to the Christ, there never would have been any national Israel, to go down into Egypt and to be called up out of it. Abraham's Spiritual Seed was involved within his carnal seed; and hence the existence of his carnal seed, and their exodus out of Egypt. They were called out of Egypt chiefly that they might bring up with them the Seed of seeds, the Christ. Hence, when Hosea wrote the words which the evangelist quotes, the kernel of Divine idea that was within their rind or outer shell could not possibly have been fully realized, or fulfilled, if the Christ had remained in Egypt. It was necessary that He too, as well as the national Israel, should go up to Canaan. It was there that He was to achieve the mighty work in virtue of which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

VER. 16. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the Magi: *Mocked, or made sport of* (*ἐπειχθῆναι*), held up to derision. The representation is made as from Herod's own standpoint. Not being treated with the deference which he deemed his due, he regarded the conduct of the Magi as a kind of *mockery*.

wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. 17 Then

Wycliffe and many others translate the word *deceived*. Dr. Daniel Scott (*New Version of St. Matthew's Gospel*) renders it *imposed upon*; Doddridge, *deluded*; Worsley, *baffled*; Brameld, *outwitted*; all of them inadmissible translations, as may be seen at a glance by looking at the other passages where the word occurs. See Matt. xx. 19; xxvii. 29, 31, 41; etc. **All the children:** That is, *all the male children*, as is indicated by the gender of the article in the original (*πάντας τοὺς παῖδας*). **And in all the coasts thereof:** *Coasts*, that is, *confines, borders, neighbourhood*. The English word *coasts*, literally meaning *sides*, and originally applicable as much to inland as to maritime parts, has for long been confined to denote, specifically, *such lands as border on the sea*. There were no lands of that description connected with Bethlehem. **From two years old and under, according to the time which he accurately ascertained from the Magi:** Principal Campbell translates the expression thus, *From those entering the second year, down to the time whereof he had procured exact information from the Magians*. He supposes that the tyrant's orders to his minions would amount to this, "that they should kill none above twelve months old, or under six." The interpretation is, we should suppose, right in its ascending direction; at least we should hope so. But it is too restricted, we fear, in its descending limit. The tyrant would wish to make sure work, and so the mere babes, the newly born, would be sacrificed, as also all the rest of the 'innocents,' whose ages did not lift them into the class of *two-year-old* children, or *two-yearings*, as Sir Norton Knatchbull calls them. As all however who had completed one year of age became forthwith, in Jewish calculation, *children of two years*, or *two-yearings*, all such would be spared. They would be regarded as beyond range of suspicion. Even Herod, although not holding himself sensitive in the least to ethical scruples, or amenable to the dictates of conscience, would set some limit to his margin of murder. We must bear in mind the character of the man. "It was that Herod," says the historian Neander, "whose crimes, committed in violation of every natural feeling, ever urged him on to new deeds of cruelty; whose path to the throne, and whose throne itself, were stained with human blood; whose vengeance against conspirators, not satiated with their own destruction, demanded that of their whole families; whose rage was hot, up to the very hour of his death, against his nearest kindred; whose wife Mariamne, and three sons, Alexander, Aristobulus, and Antipater, fell victims to his suspicions, the last just before his death." "It was that Herod who, at the close of a blood-stained life of seventy years, goaded by the furies of an evil conscience, racked by a painful and incurable disease, waiting for death but desiring life, raging against God and man, and maddened by the thought that the Jews, instead of bewailing his death, would rejoice over it as the greatest of blessings, commanded the chief men of the nation to be assembled in the circus of Jericho, where he lay dying, and issued a secret order that after his death they should all be massacred together, so that their kindred at least should have cause to weep for his death." (*Life of Christ*, i. 3, § 20.) We need not wonder that such a tyrant should take to himself a pretty large margin, as regards the age of the innocents of Bethlehem. Macrobius, in his *Saturnalia*, ii. 4, reports

was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord

that the emperor Augustus said of Herod, "It would be better to be his *sow* than his *son*"; the sow would have had more chance of life than the son. The point of the sarcasm is realized when, in addition to the bloodthirstiness of the tyrant in relation to his sons, it is remembered that, according to the Jewish law, it was not allowed to slay the sow for food. As Bethlehem however was but a little township, we must be careful to put reins on the imagination, when thinking of the number of the little 'martyrs.' Hundreds have been thought of,—most unreasonably. And in some perfervid imaginations, the martyrological roll has mounted up from hundreds to thousands,—a number probably beyond the entire population of the place. Hence, too, we need not wonder that Josephus takes no notice of the massacre. Possibly he might not even know of it; more especially if Herod took the precaution to manage the matter as 'privily' as possible. We must bear, besides, in mind that it was nearly a hundred years after the birth of Christ ere Josephus composed his History.

VER. 17. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy, or *Jeremiah*: The passage quoted is found in chap. xxxi. 15; and the evangelist intimates that the thrillingly pathetic language of the prophet, in reference to what had happened of old in connection with Ramah, was applicable to what had happened in connection with Bethlehem. The inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah, before being finally carried off to Babylon by Nebuzaradan, were collected together, in chains, at Ramah; and thence they 'were carried away captive, in gangs' (Jer. xl. 1). When the deportation began, a shrill and piercing 'voice' was heard in Ramah, "lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning,"—a long, heart-rending wail. The prophet, in fine poetic imagery, which readily interprets itself to every susceptible spirit, represents this bitter lamentation as proceeding from "Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they were not." The impersonation is touchingly natural, inasmuch as both Ramah and Jerusalem were in the tribe of Benjamin, and Rachel was Benjamin's mother.

VER. 18. A voice was heard in Ramah; weeping and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children: It is with all the greater propriety that what was said by Jeremiah in reference to Ramah is transferred by the evangelist to Bethlehem, as Rachel's burial place is not far off (Gen. xxxv. 19). The spot is marked at the present day by what is called *Rachel's tomb*, which stands at about a mile's distance north of Bethlehem. The personality of Rachel was thus brought nigh, and she was, as it were, the mother of the Bethlehem mothers. And would not be comforted: It is better to introduce the pronoun,—and 'she' would not be comforted, 'she' was not willing to be comforted, because they are not.

VER. 19. But when Herod died: He died in the thirty-seventh year of his reign, and the seventieth of his age. He was sadly afflicted in body, and most wretched in spirit. See Josephus: *Ant.* xvii. 6: 5; *Wars*, i. 33.

appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. 21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judæa in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts

VER. 20. They are dead who sought the young child's life: Or rather, *they have died who were seeking the young child's life*. The plural is idiomatically used by the angel, not with the intention of intimating that there were more than one who sought the young child's life, but because he chooses to make his reference indeterminate or indefinite. Perhaps too there was a tacit allusion in his mind to what is said to Moses in Exod. iv. 19, *The Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt, for all the men (in the Greek, all they) are dead which sought thy life*. The same idiomatic use of the plural is common in English, at least with some people, when they have a wish to avoid a particular-reference to a given individual.

VER. 22. But when he heard—contrary to his legitimate expectation—that Archelaus was reigning—or, very literally, *that Archelaus is reigning*—in Judæa in the room of his father Herod: It was not expected that Archelaus was to succeed his father. It was only when near his decease that Herod altered his arrangement, and appointed him his successor. Some small critics have objected to the word *reigning*, as applied to Archelaus, inasmuch as he had but the title of *Ethnarch*. It is enough to reply that, under whatever title he ruled, he yet ruled supremely in Judæa, and such a rule is to all intents and purposes a reign. But more; he was not made *ethnarch* till some considerable time after his father's decease. His father, on the contrary, as we learn from Josephus, actually appointed him to be his successor in the throne. He 'granted,' we read, 'the kingdom (*τὴν βασιλείαν*) to Archelaus' (*Ant.* xvii. 8: 1). The soldiery too saluted him as king (*Ant.* xvii. 8: 2); and he forthwith proceeded to exercise all the functions of royalty, although he deemed it prudent not to assume the title explicitly till it should be confirmed by Augustus (*Ant.* xvii. 8: 4). Augustus, however, did not confirm it, but gave him the designation of *Ethnarch*. It would have been a blunder in Matthew had he represented Joseph as hearing that Archelaus was *Ethnarch*. The avoidance in the circumstances, and at that particular conjuncture, of any such designation is evidence of the historic truthfulness of the evangelist. He was afraid to go thither: Or more literally, *to go there*; for in English, as in Greek, the adverb of rest, *there*, is frequently used instead of the adverb of motion, *thither*. *He was afraid*: Because of the well-known character of Archelaus. He had all the bad qualities of his father, without the redeeming feature of exalted mental powers. He was utterly unscrupulous, and had no regard to the sanctity of human life. His tyranny became so intolerable that, after having wielded the supreme authority in Idumæa, Judæa, and Samaria for a period of nine years, he was deposed by Augustus, and banished to Vienne in Gaul. **Notwithstanding**,—or, rather, *But*—being warned of God in a dream, he withdrew into the parts of Galilee: Where Antipas, brother of Archelaus, was ruling under

of Galilee: 23 and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

the title of *Tetrarch*. He was a tyrant too, but was not so savage as Archelaus; he was more of a voluptuary.

VER. 23. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: The construction is somewhat complicated in the original, inasmuch as, instead of *in a city*, the evangelist's expression is *to or into a city*. The idea however is obvious: *And having come to or into a town called Nazareth, he settled there*. Nazareth was an insignificant Galilean town or village, never mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures or in Josephus. It lay, nestlingly, among the hills that constitute the southern ridges of Lebauon, just before they sink into the plain of Esdraelon. It derives all its significance from its connection with Christ. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene: The expression *by or through the 'prophets'* should be noted. It indicates that the evangelist is not referring to any one prediction in particular; he is rather gathering together several prophetic statements, and translating their import into the peculiarly significant phraseology of his own time and locality. *To be called a Nazarene was to be spoken of as despicable*. Galilee, in the days of the evangelist, was the Bœotia of the Jews. And the Galilean element of contemptibility was regarded as reaching its climax, or rather its bathos, its inmost and utmost intensification, in Nazareth. When Nicodemus said to the chief priests and Pharisees, *Does our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he is about?* he got cast in his teeth the scornful retort, *Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.* (John vii. 52.) And even the ingenuous Nathanael, when accosted by Philip, who said to him, *We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph,* instantaneously retorted, *Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?* (John i. 46.) So utterly despicable was Nazareth; so thoroughly did the idea suggested by the word *Nazarene* run down into the idea that is embodied in the word *despised* and *despicable*. The very name indeed of Nazareth was suggestive of insignificance; in Hebrew it meant *sprout* (*nêzer*). And, remarkable to note, this same Hebrew name, with all its inherent insignificance of import, is the designation that is prophetically given to the Messiah in Isa. xi. 1, where He is represented as a lowly *Sprout* or *Sucker* *from the stump of Jesse*. The stately tree of the great royal house had been cut down to the ground; and thus, when the Messiah appeared, He had to grow up as an humble *sprout*—a *Nêzer*—*from the roots of Jesse*. Hence when He professed to be the long promised Son and Heir of David, His profession was treated with the utmost scorn. The very fact that He grew up at the Galilean Nazareth, a town that was but as an insignificant *sprout* by the side of other towns, and that was inhabited only by insignificant people, people who were extremely poor and extremely illiterate, was sufficient reason, in the estimation of the great body of the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees, why He should be despised and rejected. Hence when it was predicted by the prophets that He should be *despised of the people, despised and esteemed not, a reproach of men, a proverb to men, a root out of a dry ground* (see Ps. xxii. 6-8; Isa. liii. 2, 3, 4; Ps. lxix. 11, 19, etc.), their prophecies were but a peculiar way of saying, *He shall be called a Nazarene*. In the fact therefore that He was

CHAPTER III.

I IN those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the

brought up at Galilean Nazareth we have at once a fulfilment of the prediction that He was to be, not a lofty branch on the summit of the Davidic tree, but as a *lowly sprout* from the roots of Jesse, and at the same time a corresponding fulfilment of all those other and kindred predictions that depict the meanness of His outward condition, and the consequent and involved contempt that was poured upon His head and broke His heart (Ps. lxxix. 19, 20). This interpretation of the evangelist's reference to *what was spoken through the prophets* is much to be preferred to the interpretation espoused by Calvin, Grotius, Wetstein and others, who suppose that in the word *Nazarene* there is a covert reference to the word *nazarite*, which means a *separated, holy, self-sacrificing one*. Jesus, it is true, was, when viewed in a lofty plane of things, a *nazarite indeed*; though, when viewed in a lower plane, He came *eating and drinking*, and acting in all such matters as men in general, and *not as a nazarite*. But whether we view Him in the one plane, or look at Him in the other, there is no connection whatsoever between the word *nazarite*, or more properly *nazirite*, and *Nazareth*. In English they are similar, but in Hebrew they are radically different.

CHAPTER III.

VER. 1. **In those days:** There is no very exact chronological reference intended. (Comp. Exod. ii. 11.) As a matter of fact the evangelist is passing over a period of nearly thirty years. But having mentioned, in the preceding words, that the holy family had settled at Nazareth, his mind runs down the line of the time that elapsed *during that period of settlement*, till it reaches the event of John's appearance in the wilderness. **John:** A Hebrew name meaning *God has dealt graciously*, and thus isomorphous with the German *Gotthold* and the Phœnician *Hannibal*. **The Baptist:** Or *the Baptizer*. He is so called by Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 5: 2). **Came:** In the original it is *comes*, that is, *makes his appearance*. The evangelist vividly depicts the past as if it were present. In thought he goes back to the scene, and is present with it, seeing what was to be seen, and hearing what was to be heard. **Preaching** (*κηρύσσω*): The word denotes that he made his appearance in the character of a *herald*. He came in the name of a royal Personage, who was himself about to make His appearance. He came making, by command, a royal proclamation. **In the wilderness of Judæa:** The common Hebrew word for *wilderness* (*סְוֵרָה*) does not suggest the idea of absolute barrenness; it denotes, on the contrary, just such unappropriated territory as affords free range for shepherds leading hither and thither their flocks for the purpose of pasturing. *The wilderness of Judæa* was the wild and thinly inhabited district of pasture land and desert that extended, says Winer, from about Tekoah, south of Jerusalem, to the Dead Sea. (*Realwörterbuch*, 'Wüste.') It was not definitely defined by strict geographical lines. 'He came into all the country about Jordan,' says Luke (iii. 3). He chose rural parts, rather than the thoroughfares of cities, for the sphere of his ministrations. He had been for some considerable time 'in the deserts' (Luke i. 80), leading an ascetic life, and communing with himself and with his God. By and by the fame of his sanctity, spiritual insight, and independence of soul had spread abroad. He did not need to go in quest of

wilderness of Judæa, 2 and saying, Repent ye: for the king-

people to listen to him; the people flocked to him in expectant and awe-stricken crowds.

VER. 2. **Repent ye** (*μετανοεῖτε*): Wycliffe, following the Vulgate, translates this expression *Do ye penaunce*. The Rheims translation is the same, *Doc penance*. Luther's corresponds (*Thut Busse*). Principal Campbell, taking a different tack, renders the word *Reform*, a translation corresponding to that of the French Geneva (*Amendez-vous*), and accepted by several expositors. Benson adopts the same idea, but prefixes to it another, *Be sorry for your sins, and amend your lives*. The translation again of the old Syriac version is *Turn ye*; and to this the Dutch versions, old and new, correspond (*Bekeert u*). Of all these translations that given by Wycliffe and the Rheims is certainly the worst, and that given in the Syriac is the best. None of them, however, is an exact reproduction of the original expression; and indeed such a reproduction, at once literal in form and conventional in spirit, is no easy matter. In English it is impossible, while yet there is nothing to hinder us from reaching a full-orbed view of the idea of the Baptist. Let us try. (1) John, acting as the herald of the coming Messiah, and carrying to its culminating point the spirit of the Old Testament dispensation, doubtless intended to call upon the people who clustered around him *to make ready for the Coming One*. His voice was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight*. (2) In calling upon the people to make ready for the Coming One, he called upon them *to mend their ways*. His herald voice would be the echo of such Old Testament voices as these: *Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings; cease to do evil; learn to do well* (Isa. i. 16, 17). *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him* (Isa. lv. 7). *Amend your ways and your doings; trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these; for if ye thoughtfully amend your ways and your doings, then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave your fathers for ever and ever* (Jer. vii. 3-7; comp. also Ezek. xviii. 21-23; Mic. vi. 7-8, etc.). Thus, in the cry to *repent*, which John rang out athwart the wilderness, there would be a call to *reformation*, to 'repentance from dead works.' Without such repentance the people could not be meet for 'the kingdom of heaven.' Only 'the pure in heart' would 'see God.' (3) In calling upon the people to amend their ways, it was inevitable that John should expatiate on the evil of the ways in which they had been running. He could not consistently urge them to good ways, without reprehending them for their bad ways; and hence his cry would be a summons to *humiliation for past waywardness and wickedness*. He would call upon them to *repent as in dust and ashes*. He would say, in the spirit of the ancient prophets, *Therefore now also, saith the Lord, turn ye to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God* (Joel ii. 12, 13). His cry would thus involve a call to the most poignant sorrow for sin. This idea of sorrow is not infrequently involved in the word employed (see Luke xvii. 4); and more particularly in its Old Testament usage (in which it corresponds to the Hebrew דָּוָה). (4) But sorrow would by no means be the most prominent idea in the Baptist's perfervid cry. Far more than sorrow was

dom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he that was spoken

needed as moral meetness for the kingdom of heaven. *Turning* was needed, *turning from their evil ways, turning and returning to God*. Undoubtedly, therefore, such *turning* would be involved in the word which bore the burden of the Baptist's summons. When he cried *Repent!* his cry must have been in substance to this effect: *Turn ye; Turn ye! Turn from all the evil of your ways; turn to goodness and to God!* (5) We are now near the point of the matter, and but one step more is needed. Not one of the expressions which we have yet got hold of is anything like an exact reproduction of the Greek term employed. They bring to view much that is *involved* in the evangelist's term, but not what it means. It means, as both Count Zinzendorf and Dr. Adam Clarke, though somewhat dimly, perceived, *Re-view, Take a new view, Change your view*. That is, as nearly as possible, the fundamental idea of the word, and consequently the starting point of its import. (See *Xen. Cyrop.*, i. 1: 3.) The Baptist, in calling on his fellow men to make ready for the coming of the great King, began at the beginning; he called upon them to *think*. The reference to the *thinking element* in our nature, the *νοῦς*, is explicit, and indeed obtrusive, in the word employed. But the cry was not simply, *Think!* It was *Think again! Take afterthought! Think back upon your ways! Re-view! Go back step by step into the details of your bygone life; connect your thought with (μετά) these details, till all that is within you is stirred and roused, and you feel ashamed, and heart-broken, and constrained to flee from your own selves to God, the propitious and forgiving God. Turn, while it is the accepted time and the day of salvation, to God! Return to God!* Such was the import of the Baptist's cry. The word involves the idea of *repentance, penitence, or true penance*; but its starting point is farther back. It involves too the idea of *reformation*; but it flashes light upon the mental process by which moral reformation is reached. If the English word *repent* had been derived, as Hinton supposed, from the French *repenser, to think again*, it would have expressed, with remarkable exactitude, the idea of the original; but it is derived from the French *se repentir*, which comes from the Latin *pœnitere*, and thus it brings into view the idea of *penitence or true penance*, an idea involved, as we have seen, in the original term, as used in the peculiar circumstances referred to, but not explicitly held up to view. For the kingdom of heaven is at hand; *It has come nigh*. The expression *the kingdom of heaven*, or more literally and Hebraistically, *the kingdom of the heavens*, is found, so far as the New Testament is concerned, in the Gospel of Matthew alone. In the other Gospels, and in the Epistles, it is replaced by the corresponding expression *the kingdom of God*; and, in certain isolated cases, we find the modified expressions *the kingdom of God's dear Son* (Col. i. 13), *the kingdom of Christ and of God* (Eph. v. 5), *the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (2 Pet. i. 11), *God's heavenly kingdom* (2 Tim. iv. 18). The kingdom referred to in all these expressions is a real kingdom, a community, that is to say, consisting of a king and his subjects. The king is God, and hence the expression '*the kingdom of God.*' But God is in Christ; and hence the kingdom is '*the kingdom of Christ and of God.*' Christ spoke of it as belonging to Himself. '*My kingdom,*' said He, '*is not of this world*' (John xviii. 36). Christ is thus the King, the '*King of kings*' (Rev. xvii. 14). In the great economy of mercy He is the Father's Vicegerent. "Behold," says Daniel, "One like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him; and there was

of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's

"given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii. 13, 14.) It was doubtless to this kingdom that John the Baptist referred. *It is at hand*, he cried; that is, *the time is at hand when it shall be established*. It is well called 'the kingdom of heaven.' Its origin is in heaven; its end is in heaven; its King is heavenly, all over; its subjects are heavenly in character and destiny; its laws are heavenly; its privileges are heavenly; its institutions are heavenly; its own culmination is in heaven, and is indeed heaven; its institutions on earth are earnest of the glory of heaven. Thus the kingdom on earth and the kingdom in heaven are one, the one kingdom of heaven. There is one side of it, or one sphere as it were, on earth, the under side or sphere: there is another side of it, another sphere, in heaven, the upper side or sphere. This kingdom has had existence, in essence, throughout all past ages and dispensations. It underlay the whole Jewish economy, which, in its forms, was a type of the heavenly reality. But when John the Baptist made his appearance in the wilderness, it was about to be inaugurated in a purer and maturer phase, by the personal appearance of the heavenly King. Hence the heraldic cry.

VER. 3. For this is he: The particle *for* introduces a statement which accounts in some respect for the singular heraldic career of John. He had a high, a heavenly, vocation. He was from of old divinely designated to his office. He knew that he was (John i. 23). The evangelist knew too; and it is the evangelist who speaks in this verse, not John himself, as Fritzsche and others suppose. Who was spoken of by Esaias the prophet: Namely in chap. xl. 3. A voice of one crying: That is, *Hark! List! a voice of one crying in the wilderness!* The prophet not only *saw* into the future from afar; he was, as it were, transported into it, so as to be present with it; and hence, in his state of ecstasy, he *heard* what was to be heard, as well as *saw* what was to be seen. He heard the herald's voice, before he saw the herald's person. It came ringing from a distance into his ears. Prepare ye the way of the Lord: In the Hebrew, *of Jahveh* or *Jehovah*, for the appearing of Jesus was indeed the appearing of Jehovah. Make His paths straight: In oriental lands, where there are imperfect highways, it was useful, on occasion of the progress of a monarch, to send out heralds to call upon the people to prepare the ways, to clear the old roads and improve them, or to make new ones. It was of course a spiritual preparation and reformation, a preparation in the heart, the mind, the character, to which John referred.

VER. 4. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair: He was an ascetic throughout, not indulging himself in any of the ordinary luxuries of life. His very dress was of the coarsest stuff. It was made of *camel's hairs*, not of those finest hairs that are woven into the soft and silky fabric called *camlet*, but of the coarsest hairs, which were worked into another kind of stuff, like sackcloth, with which tents were sometimes covered. Sir John Chardin mentions that it is customary for dervishes of the present day to wear garments of this stuff (*Harmer's Observations*, chap. xi., § 83). See chap. xi. 8. And

hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about

a leathern girdle—or *belt* or *zone*—about his loins. Dervishes, says Sir John Chardin, still use such leathern girdles. So did Elijah the Tishbite, in whose spirit John came. "He was an hairy man," a man covered with a hairy garb, "and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins" (2 Kings i. 8). And his meat—his food—was locusts and wild honey: The plainest fare that could be had. We learn from Levit. xi. 22 that there were certain kinds of locusts of which the Jews might eat, although it would probably be only the very poorest, or the most self denying, of the people who would make use of such diet. Burckhardt says: "All the Bedouins of Arabia, and the inhabitants of towns in Nedja and Hedjaz, are accustomed to eat locusts. I have seen at Medinah and Tayf locust shops, where these animals were sold by measure. In Egypt and Nubia they are eaten only by the poorest beggars. The Arabs, in preparing them as an article of food, throw them alive into boiling water with which a good deal of salt has been mixed; after a few minutes they are taken out and dried in the sun; the head, feet, and wings are then torn off, the bodies are cleansed from the salt and perfectly dried; after which process whole sacks are filled with them by the Bedouins. They are sometimes eaten broiled in butter, and they often contribute materials for a breakfast, when spread over unleavened bread mixed with butter." (*Notes on the Bedouins and Wahâbys*, vol. ii., p. 92, ed. 1831.) "Locusts," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "are not eaten in Syria by any but the Bedawin on the extreme frontiers, and it is always spoken of as a very inferior article of food, and regarded by most with disgust and loathing, tolerated only by the very poorest people. John the Baptist however was of this class, either from necessity or election. He also dwelt in the desert, where such food was and is still used; and therefore the text states the simple truth. His ordinary meat was dried locusts, probably fried in butter and mixed with honey, as is still frequently done." (*The Land and the Book*, part ii., chap. 28.) The *wild honey* which he used is supposed by some to have been a sweet vegetable exudation, or manna. This was the opinion of the ancient lexicographer Suidas (see under *ἀκρίαι*), as also of Robinson, the modern lexicographer and traveller; he translates the expression *honey dew*. Meyer inclines to the same idea. But we see no good reason for stepping aside from the simple interpretation of the phrase, the interpretation that assumes that the reference is to bee honey, found in the clefts of the rocks or in the fields. We learn from the practice of John that it is not unlawful to live a life of very great self denial, in the sphere of the animal nature, when by such self denial one is fitted, either directly or indirectly, for receiving into one's self, or for letting out upon one's neighbours, a wholesome moral influence.

VER. 5. Then went out to him: *Then*, when he had come forth publicly, sending athwart the wilderness his shrill and earnest 'cry.' **Jerusalem:** As it were *en masse*. **And all Judæa:** The inhabitants of the region round about Jerusalem. **And all the region round about Jordan:** The inhabitants of the tract of country on both sides of the Jordan, from the lake of Tiberias down to the Dead Sea. It was thus an immense area of country that vibrated to the herald cry of John. The people had for long been on the tiptoe of expectation.

Jordan, 6 and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing

There was a convergence of the signs of the times. Daniel's weeks, and other landmarks of prophetic chronology, would doubtless be extensively studied. The great Deliverer was surely at the very door. Hence the intense thrill of anticipation when John's cry came athwart the wilderness. Who is this? He is evidently some extraordinary personage. Is he the Messiah himself? Or is it Elijah? or who? The population of town and country, from far and near, poured out, as in torrents, 'to see' (chap. xi. 8, 9).

VER. 6. **And were baptized by him in Jordan:** They received from his hands a baptism which was the significant symbol of the means of purification. He did not actually purify them. He could not do that; he did not profess to be able to do that. But he could direct their attention, in a vivid, impressive, and pictorial manner, to the divinely provided means of purification. He could confer upon them the adumbrative symbol of that spiritual element, the influence of the Holy Spirit, which is the only efficacious means of human purity, and which was to be got for sinners only through that Messiah who was to come. He would stand, as we conceive, and as would be not only safe but pleasant in that sultry climate, within the margin of the river, and, as the people came down to him into the water, he would pour, or throw, or sprinkle upon them the symbolical element. Such would seem to be, and would most probably be, the action of John when he baptized. The Greek word *baptize* (*βαπτίζω*) indeed, being derived from a root (*βάπτω*) that means to *dip*, suggested, when etymologically considered, the idea of *immersion* (see Conant's *Meaning and use of 'Baptizein,' philologically and historically investigated*), or rather of *ersion* (see Dale's *Inquiry into the Meaning of the word 'Baptizo'*). And no doubt a considerable proportion of the things that needed to be purified or cleansed by men, such as 'cups and pots' and small culinary brazen vessels (Mark vii. 4), would be, in general, purified or cleansed by being *mersed*, or *merged*, or *submerged*, in water. But then, on the other hand, there were other things, such as very large brazen vessels, and couches, which could not thus be purified. And the Syriac word for *baptize* ܒܰܢܰܬܰܝܰܝܰܐ , a word far more likely to be employed by John than the Greek word, means etymologically to *cause to stand*, an idea that is almost the reverse of the etymological import of the Greek term. This etymological meaning of the Syriac word has indeed been disputed, as for instance in the *Journal of Sacred Literature*, vol. viii., p. 405; and it has been conjecturally maintained that the term must have originally meant, in its Peal conjugation, to be *immersed*. But such an original Peal meaning would seem to be an impossibility. It is a strictly *passive* meaning; and every strictly passive idea must be secondary, not primary or original. It is needless however to lay any great stress of emphasis on the original or etymological import either of the oriental or of the occidental term for baptism. When the terms were used in reference to John's religious rite, a rite that was evidently intended to be purificatory in its fundamental notion, the idea of mode, as regards the manner of relation to the purifying element, seems to have been a matter of comparative indifference, and was merged out of sight; and the remaining, and as it were defecated, idea of *purification* by whatsoever mode was what alone stood prominently out to view. That the word *baptize* did not, in its *Palestinian usage*, necessarily denote *immersion* is demonstrated by such passages as Heb. ix. 10-13; Mark vii. 4; Acts x. 44-47, xi. 15, 16.

their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees

(Comp. Judith xii. 7.) And that John the Baptist did not immerse, either in a robed or in an unrobed condition, the immense confluence of people that gathered around him in the wilderness, seems to be evidenced at once by the requirements of delicacy and decency on the part of the baptized and by the requirements of time and strength on the part of the baptizer. But whence the idea of John's baptism? What would it be that led him to baptize? Would it be the practice of baptizing proselytes from among the Gentiles? So many have thought. (See Lightfoot's *Exercitations*; and Danz's two *Dissertations in Meuschen's N. Test.* See also Bengel's *Untersuchung über das Alter der jüdischen Proselytentaufe.*) But we cannot acquiesce in this idea; although we would not dispute that there are links of interesting semi-latent relationship between the two institutions. Proselytes, however, were not baptized by another; they baptized themselves (see Schneckenburger, *über das Alter der jüdischen Proselyten-Taufe*). John's baptism was different. It was peculiar. And yet it was, by no means, a very violent innovation on oriental and Jewish ideas and customs. It was a lustration; and as such it was intended to signify, ritually and pictorially, the necessity of purification, and at the same time to point simply and sublimely to the fact that the means of real purification were divinely provided and at hand. It was just the embodiment, in significant optical symbolism, of the significant audible symbolism of the Old Testament prophets when they 'cried aloud' and said: "*Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes.*" "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give to you, and a new spirit will I put within you"; "And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." (Isa. i. 16; Zech. xiii. 1; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27.) The Baptist's baptism links itself on to these Old Testament Scriptures. He, as it were, said to the people: *It is utterly beyond my power to purify you, and make you meet for the kingdom of heaven. But I can direct you, by significant act, as well as by earnest word, to the grand efficacious means of purification, which the Messiah Himself will provide: I can baptize you with water.* Should it be asked whether or not it was probable that the little children of the people would be partakers of John's baptism, we would answer with Lightfoot, "Nor do I believe this people, that flocked to John's baptism, were so forgetful of the manner and custom of the nation, that they brought not their little children also with them to be baptized" (*Exercitations*, in loc.). Their little children needed to grow up in purity; and there was available for them the purificatory influence of the Holy Spirit. "And whereas," says Dr. Wall, "it is said of the multitudes that came to John that they were baptized by him, confessing their sins, which confession can be understood only of the grown persons, that is no more than would be said in the case of a minister of the Church of England going and converting a heathen nation. For in a short account which would be sent of his success it would be said that multitudes came and were baptized, confessing their sins; and there would need no mention of their bringing their children with them; because the converting of the grown persons was the principal and most difficult thing, and it would be supposed that they brought their children

and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them,

“of course.” (*History of Infant Baptism*, vol. i., p. 28, ed. 1836.) **Confessing their sins:** That is, *while in the act of confessing their sins*. It is thus that the Syriac version brings out the nicety of the evangelist's idea. It is implied that confession of sins was a condition of their baptism. The confession would doubtless be brief and emphatic, perhaps ejaculatory. The original word imports that it was made orally and openly.

VER. 7. But when he saw many of the Pharisees: These Pharisees were a class of Jewish religionists, who were, as a body, intensely formal; intensely self confident, self satisfied, and self sufficient; intensely sanctimonious withal, and spiritually supercilious. Their name means *Separatists*. They separated themselves from the mass of their fellows, under the idea that it became them to think and to say, *Stand aside! we are holier than you*. They were, in their own esteem, what the great Scottish poet has graphically designated ‘*the unco guid*.’ They were zealous indeed, even to the boiling point; but it was for the letter of the written law, and for certain favourite traditions which, as they imagined, explained and supplemented the written law, and for a crowd or mob of minute regulations and observances that gave them, as they conceived, a high vantage ground of spiritual superiority above all the rest of mankind. They thought little of the glory of God as God, or of the good of man as man. Their aim, in general, seems to have been to show off themselves, and feed their own complacency in themselves. **And Sadducees:** The Sadducees were another, but much smaller, party or sect of Jewish religionists. The meaning of their name is uncertain. Many writers, both rabbinical and Christian, suppose that it has reference to a certain rabbi, called Zadok, who lived about three hundred years before Christ, and who was a pupil of Antigonus of Socho, a famous master in Israel, who laid down the following maxim, “Be not like “servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward, but be like “servants who serve their master disinterestedly!” This maxim Zadok is supposed to have carried to such an extreme, that he built upon it the idea that human virtue is absolutely its own reward, so that there is no reason whatsoever to anticipate a future state of rewards and punishments. Hence he and his disciples denied the immortality of the soul. Epiphanius combines with the reference to Zadok another view of the import of the name. He says that the Sadducees took to themselves their designation from the Hebrew word for *righteousness*. Their designation would thus mean *Righteous ones, Just ones*, (צַדִּיקִים=צִדְקָה); and it would hence bring into view the prominent feature in the religious profession of the sect, *morality, rectitude of demeanour*. Geiger, again, thinks the name was derived from Zadok, the old Davidic priest (1 Kings i. 32-39, etc.), and that it denotes the hereditary aristocracy of the priestly party. (*Urschrift und Uebersetzungen der Bibel*, ii., § 1, p. 102.) But whence-soever the name and origination of the party, its members, at least at the dawn of the Christian era, were as a body thoroughly demoralized in the sphere of the inner life. They may have clung, as probably they did, to the outward sacerdotal services and the associated ceremonies of the law. But they were pre-eminently worldly, and content to be worldly wise. They were religious in consideration either of the emoluments of religious profession, or of the respectability and social standing which it conferred. Their religion was thus utterly hollow. It was not even true morality; for true morality is not *love to*

O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repent-

self, and prudent behaviour to other men so far as we can make them minister to self; it is love to God and to men. "Many of the Pharisees and Sadducees:" It is worthy of being noted that the evangelist does not say, 'Many of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.' He masses the two parties into one company. They were indeed in many respects contraries, clustering toward opposite poles of outward religionism. But in the eyes of the evangelist and of John their distinctive differences were trivial. So far as regarded inner religion, and the innermost moral peculiarity of their character, they were identical. Come to his baptism: Or more literally, *coming to his baptism.* The reading of Tischendorf is, *coming to the baptism.* He said to them, O generation of vipers: Or, *Progeny of vipers!* He looked through and through them, in a way impossible to ordinary men, and read what was in the heart of their hearts. He saw the grovelling element that cleaved to the dust. He saw the morally insidious element. There was poison too which they would not scruple, on occasion, to eject and inject. He saw it. He saw that there was in them an element of real antipathy to genuine humanity. He therefore availed himself of the authority of one who was 'a prophet' and 'more than a prophet,' and spoke out with no bated breath. *Who hath warned you? Who advised you? Who suggested to you?* It is as if he had said, It is something of a wonder to see you coming hither, along with those masses of the common people whom you so much despise. *To flee from the wrath to come:* Is it really the case that you have taken to flight that you may escape from the wrath to come? Have you really set out from your wickedness, over which the tremendous judgments of God have been gathering for so long? Are you truly in earnest? *The wrath to come: the impending wrath* is the indignation of God against persisted-in sin, that indignation that results in the infliction of penal woe. The last words of the Old Testament lift up a warning voice concerning it: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

VER. 8. *Bring forth therefore: Therefore, then,* that is, since it is the case that you are professing to have taken flight from the wrath to come, since it is the case that you are professing repentance. *Fruits: or fruit,* as the word is read in the majority of the oldest manuscripts. *Fruit, moral fruit, fruit as regards character and conduct.* *Meet for repentance:* A rather unhappy translation, as it suggests the inverted idea that in the fruit of good conduct there will be preparation for repentance. There is a marginal reading given, *answerable to amendment of life,* also a rather unhappy translation, as it confounds cause and consequence. The fruit referred to is *amendment of life;* and to represent it as *answerable to amendment of life* is to represent it as answerable to itself. The Geneva version is, *worthie amendment of life.* The adjective is befittingly rendered, but not the substantive. The expression, literally rendered, is simply *worthy of repentance,* or rather, *worthy of the repentance* (which you are professing). (See on ver. 12.) John, as it were, said to the Pharisees and Sadducees, *If your repentance be worth anything, let it be manifested by worthy character and conduct.* Webster says that Coleridge

ance: 9 and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down,

proposed *transmentation* as an English equivalent for the word translated *repentance* (note in *Genius of the Gospel*, p. 13). Trapp, nearly two centuries before, used the same term: 'Grieve for your sins, even to a *transmentation*.' But it is an utterly unwieldy translation, as well as otherwise infelicitous. How would the verb sound, *transment*? The idea suggested by *trans* is aside from the peculiarity of the original term (see under ver. 2).

VER. 9. And think not to say within yourselves: *Suppose not that you have any good reason to say within yourselves,—Be not of the opinion that ye may legitimately think in your hearts.* The expression *think to say* is, as Dr. Lightfoot remarks, "a Jerusalem phrase, to be met with everywhere in the Talmud." It need not be regarded, however, as a mere Hebraism. We have Abraham for a father: And therefore there is no fear of us, God will fulfil His promises of bliss to Abraham and his seed; Rabbi Levi said that *Abraham would sit at the gates of hell and not permit any Israelite of respectable character to enter it.* (See Wetstein, in loc.) Such would be the dream of the Pharisees. The Sadducees would have their corresponding dream. Who could or would dejudaize them? For I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham: *These stones*; he would be pointing, as he spoke, to the shingle on the banks of the Jordan. It is as if he had said, *Do not delude yourselves with the idea that God needs you, that He may fulfil His promises of blessing to Abraham's seed. His seed shall inherit the world. But God will be at no loss to provide this seed, though no account be taken of you.* We need not doubt that in the background of the Baptist's strong asseveration there was floating, more or less definitely shaped out, the idea that was subsequently unfolded in full by the apostle Paul when he said: "Know ye therefore that they which are of *faith, the same are the children of Abraham*"; "if ye be Christ's, *then are ye Abraham's seed,* and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. iii. 7, 29).

VER. 10. And now: or *But even now, But already*: It may be now or never with you. The axe is laid to the root of the trees: The idea is not that the axe is laid on, or *plied*, at the root of the trees. It is, that *the axe is lying at the root of the trees.* The woodman has, as it were, taken his position, and, while making his brief preparations, such as the adjustment of his vesture, has laid his axe at the root. The crisis time has come. Not a moment should be lost. Every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit,—literally, *which maketh not good fruit,*—is hewn down, and cast into the fire: The present tenses are graphic. The Baptist, as it were, says: *The axe is lying; but I see the mighty woodman lift it! He strikes! He strikes again! and again! Every tree that maketh not good fruit is felled! There! They are carried away! They are cast into fire! It is all over!* It is a work of judgment which the Baptist describes. In anticipating the coming of the Great King, he does not pause to contemplate the evolution of ages, and the gradual development of the new order of things, going on from century to century, and from the river to the ends of the earth. He condenses the whole series of events into a single scene, and thus sees at a glance the doom of the persistently unholy.

and cast into the fire. 11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: 12 whose

VER. 11. I indeed baptize you with water: In the original it is literally *in water*, a mode of expression which probably owed its origin to the primary import of the word *baptize*. (See under ver. 6.) But our translation, *with water*, though not so closely literal, is in English more idiomatic, inasmuch as the primary modal import of the verb is merged out of view when the word is applied to the purificatory rite performed by the Baptist. Hence Luke, in reporting the Baptist's expression, omits the *in*, and gives the phrase thus—"I baptize you *with water*" (ἅρτι instead of ἐν ἅρτι). It is to be noticed, besides, that the preposition which Matthew employs corresponds to a Hebrew preposition (בְּ), which conventionally means *with* as well as *in*. **Unto repentance:** Or rather, *into repentance*, that is, *into a state of repentance*. John, as it were, says, *I baptize you symbolically into that repentance which constitutes meetness for admission into the kingdom of heaven*. John could do no more than merely assist the people *into repentance*, by means of the symbolism of words, or by means of the symbolism of water. **But He that cometh after me,—He who is coming after me, and whose harbinger I am,—is mightier than I:** has greater power than I, to deal efficaciously with souls and with sins. **Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear:** Whose meanest servant I am not worthy to be. In great houses, it was the lowliest of slaves who brought in and put on, or took off and carried away, the master's sandals or shoes. **He shall baptize you: He;** there is emphasis in the pronoun,—*He and no other*. "Shall baptize you," whosoever you be, and whether you take the full advantage of His baptism or slight and resist its influence. **With the Holy Spirit:** That is, with the gracious purificatory Influence adumbrated by the emblematic water. It is by the baptismal influence of the Holy Spirit, as He works on and in the human spirit, that true repentance is wrought out. This baptismal influence of the Holy Spirit was prophesied of by Ezekiel of old (xxxvi. 25–27), and by Joel (ii. 28), and by others of the prophets. It had been partially poured out all along the dispensations; but it was granted in its fulness on the completion of the great propitiatory sacrifice. (John xvi. 7–11; Acts i. 5, 8, ii. 2–17; Gal. iii. 2; etc.) **And with fire:** The *with* is a supplement, and would be better omitted. Wycliffe, Sir John Cheke, and the Rheims version leave it out. The Baptist does not refer to a distinct agency, an element different from the influence of the Holy Spirit. But he adds the words *and fire*, to give a vivid description of the mighty, and mightily purificatory, influence of the Holy Spirit. This is undoubtedly the correct interpretation of the appended expression, as has been, with more or less of precision, seized by Chrysostom; by Erasmus also, and Calvin, and Beza; as also by Clarke, Benson, Alford, Glöckler, Ewald, Webster and Wilkinson, Wordsworth, and many others. Wordsworth's note is the following: "*With fire*, to purify, illumine, transform, inflame with holy fervour "and zeal, and carry upward, as Elijah was carried up to heaven in a chariot of "fire." Some have supposed that the expression refers to the *fire of punishment*. Such is the interpretation of Paulus, Neander, Meyer, and De Wette, not to specify more ancient expositors. It has drawn its origin chiefly from the 'fire unquenchable' of the next verse. But it is an unnatural exposition, introduc-

fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and

ing an element of dreadfulness, when we should expect, in consequence of the antithesis between the two baptisms, nothing but a reference to the transcendent superiority and efficacy of the Messiah's baptism in relation to repentance and all that is involved in repentance. The interpretation moreover is at variance with that partial fulfilment of the prediction which we have in Acts ii. 2-17; for, in that partial fulfilment, the fire was not punitive but purificative, kindred to the coal of fire taken from off the altar and laid upon the mouth of Isaiah of old. (Isa. vi. 5-7.)

VER. 12. Whose fan is in His hand: Another snatch of graphic representation. The Messiah appears on His threshing-floor; and He has His *fan*, or *fanner*, His *winnowing fork* or *shovel*, in His hand. He is ready for action in reference to the mingled mass that is lying around Him on the floor. We shall understand the hieroglyphic picture all the better by bearing in mind the harvest customs of the Baptist's country. Dr. Robinson describes what he saw in the plain of Jericho in 1838, thus: "Most of the fields were already reaped. The grain, as soon as it is cut, is brought in small sheaves to the threshing-floors on the backs of asses, or sometimes of camels. The little donkeys are often so covered with their load as to be themselves hardly visible; one sees only a mass of sheaves moving along as if of its own accord. A level spot is selected for the threshing-floors, which are then constructed near each other, of a circular form, perhaps fifty feet in diameter,—merely by beating down the earth hard. Upon these circles the sheaves are spread out quite thick; and the grain is trodden out by animals. Here were no less than five such floors, all trodden by oxen, cows, and younger cattle, arranged in each case five abreast, and driven round in a circle, or rather in all directions, over the floor. The sled or sledge is not here in use, though we afterwards met with it in the north of Palestine. The ancient machine with rollers we saw nowhere. By this process the straw is broken up and becomes chaff. It is occasionally turned with a large wooden fork, having two prongs, and when sufficiently trodden, is thrown up with the same fork against the wind, in order to separate the grain, which is then gathered up and winnowed." (*Researches*, vol. ii., § 10, p. 277, ed. 1841.) Dr. Horatio Hackett mentions, in reference to these oriental threshing-floors, that "the top or side of a hill is often preferred, for the purpose of having the benefit of the wind." Most of those which fell under his notice were on high ground. He also mentions that "the modern Greeks, in many of their customs, approach nearer to the oriental nations than to those of modern Europe"; and then he adds: "Not far from the site of ancient Corinth I passed a heap of grain, which some labourers were employed in winnowing. They used, for throwing up the mingled wheat and chaff, a three-pronged wooden fork, having a handle three or four feet long. Like this, no doubt, was the fan, or winnowing shovel, which John the Baptist represents Christ as bearing." (*Illustrations of Scripture*, chap. iv., pp. 105, 106, ed. 1856.) And He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing-floor: namely, by clearing out of it the rubbish of chaff and chopped straw. Plying His fan, and thus casting up against the breeze the mingled mass, the light and useless particles and fragments will be blown to the side, while the heavy and precious grain will fall and remain on the threshing-floor. The verb (*διακαθαίρει*) is beautifully significant. It represents the husbandman as beginning, so to speak, at the one side of the floor, the windward side, and prosecuting his winnowing and

gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

cleansing operation right *through* or *thorough* to the other side. And gather His wheat into the garner, or *storehouse*, or *granary*. The expression "His wheat" is noticeable. There is a sense in which the chaff too was *His*. But He did not care to retain it as a prized possession. But the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire: *The chaff*, the rubbish which had been blown to the leeward side of the floor. It was useless for any purposes of oriental husbandry or household economy; and hence it was set on fire and consumed. This way of disposing of the rubbish of the threshing-floor is common among oriental husbandmen. It is assumed, in the scene depicted by the Baptist, that the bulkier and more valuable portion of the straw had already been removed, and stowed away for the foddering of cattle, etc. This part of the process is merged out of view, as having no bearing upon the moral scene of which he was giving a hieroglyphic representation. The expression *unquenchable fire* is graphic. It denotes *fire which, when once kindled, burns so impetuously that it would be in vain to attempt to extinguish it*. And certainly, when once the exceedingly dry rubbish of the threshing-floor was set on fire, all the means available to the oriental farmer would be utterly insufficient to arrest the progress of the flames. It has been asked what we are to understand by the *fan*, and what by the *threshing-floor*, as well as what by the *wheat*, and the *chaff*, and the *garner*, and the *fire unquenchable*? But we must not fritter down the interpretation of the scene into extreme minutiae; otherwise we shall run into incongruities. We must not forget that correspondences between the type and the antitype do not require to be absolute. There would be the intention, it may be presumed, of making counterparts of only prominent points. The Baptist had in view to represent the Messiah as effecting a complete disseverance of the good and the bad among men, and assigning to each class their appropriate destiny. It would not be all men indiscriminately, it would not be all Jews indiscriminately, who would have part and lot in the *kingdom of heaven*. Only the wheat would be gathered into the garner. The rubbish would be burnt up with fire unquenchable. As to the *threshing-floor*, it represents, says Calvin, *the church*. And the church, says Trapp, is so represented "because it is usually threshed by God with the flail of affliction"! But this interpretation gives far too contracted a view of the sphere of the Messiah's operations. It proceeds, moreover, on a wrong view of the nature of the church. What then, and where, is the Messiah's threshing-floor? Its geographical boundaries might not be definitely before the Baptist's mind, and we need not debate therefore whether the reference be, as Meyer thinks, to the Holy Land, or, as Bleek and Arnoldi suppose, to the whole earth (*die Welt, die Erde überhaupt*). The smaller circle may have dimly and indefinitely expanded, before the Baptist's divinely illuminated eye, into the larger. And assuredly his prophetic description of the winnowing work of the Messiah finds the fulness of its import, whether he himself realized it or not, in the destiny of the whole of mankind. As to the instrument of winnowing, the *fan*, we need not hesitate, if we must needs define it at all, to regard it as an emblem of *that which constitutes the subject matter of the gospel*. But the emblem, though exceedingly graphic, is at the same time exceedingly imperfect, except in relation to the one idea of winnowing. When the gospel is fairly plied, it effects far more than winnowing or discrimination. It converts. It turns chaff into wheat, the rubbish of the threshing-floor into

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then

inestimably precious grain. But it discriminates too; and it is according as men turn out, when tested by the gospel, that they are fit either, on the one hand, for the garner of glory, or, on the other, for the fire that is unquenchable. It is exclusively to this separation of the two classes of men that the Baptist refers.

VER. 13. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan to John: *Then*, that is, after the occurrences narrated in the preceding verses, and while the Baptist was still prosecuting his baptismal labours at the Jordan. To be baptized of him: *in order to be baptized by him*. Jerome informs us (*Adv. Pelagianos*, iii. 2) that in the Hebrew Gospel which the Nazarenes used, and a copy of which was preserved in the library at Cæsarea, there was a clause to the following effect: *Lo, the mother of the Lord and His brethren said to Him, John the Baptist is baptizing for the remission of sins; let us go and be baptized by him. But He answered and said unto them, In what have I sinned, that I should go and be baptized by him? unless indeed it be in ignorance that I have said what I have just said*. It is an obviously apocryphal patch to the inspired narrative. And yet Le Cene has introduced it into the text!

VER. 14. But John sought to hinder Him: The verb (*δενεκώλυνε*) is in the imperfect. Note the preposition; it denotes that John was *strenuous* in his opposition; he shrank from the idea of performing such a rite on Jesus. *Saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?* That is, *I have far greater need of baptism than Thou. I need to be purified. But Thou? I see nothing of the nature of impurity in Thee*. It is implied in the Baptist's words that he had some definite knowledge of the character of Jesus. Not only would his deep insight into spirits reveal to him, as Jesus stood before him, a lofty and peerless and apparently stainless character; he was a relative of our Lord's. There was kinship between the mothers (Luke i. 36), and they had been conscious, besides, of interesting maternal inter-relations (Luke i. 43-46). The children, we may reasonably suppose, would not be reared up in utter ignorance of one another, and of the fact that there was a peculiar connection subsisting between them. When therefore it is said in John i. 33, "*and I knew Him not,*" we must suppose that the Baptist means that he did not know for certain, by Divine intimation or revelation, *that Jesus was the Messiah*, until the event referred to occurred; and it did not become him to identify, on a subject so transcendently momentous, his own private anticipations, expectations, and convictions, with absolute knowledge.

VER. 15. And Jesus answering said unto him, *Permit for the present: viz. My reception of baptism at thy hand. The future will make abundantly manifest what we respectively are. And then it may be the case that thou shalt receive from Me, and not I from thee. But yield for the present. For thus—by My reception of thy baptism, and by thine administration of it—it becometh us—Me as well as thee, and thee as well as Me—to fulfil all righteousness: To leave nothing undone which would be honouring to the seemly and significant ordinances of God. As John's baptism was not 'of men,' but 'from heaven'*

he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like

(Matt. xxi. 25, John i. 33), it became Jesus to countenance and receive it, and John to administer it. It would have been unbecoming indeed for our Lord to have submitted to it, if its symbolism had been entirely inappropriate to One who was without sin. But it was not. As the purificatory influence of the Holy Spirit is undoubtedly needed for the purity of all moral creatures, in all regions of the universe, so it was meet that it should not be wanting to the creaturely condition of our Lord. The Holy Spirit had to do with the formation of our Lord's human nature (Luke i. 35), and from that moment thenceforward His influence would never be withdrawn. The Spirit of the Lord 'rested' on Him (Isa. xi. 2). The Spirit was given to Him 'without measure' (John iii. 34). And hence the symbolism of John's baptism of water was, in its essence, thoroughly appropriate; it was the outward picture of an inward fact. Thus we need not have recourse to the poetical mysticism of Wordsworth, and some of the ancients, in reference to our Lord's baptism. 'He came to baptize water,' says Wordsworth, 'by being baptized in it.' 'He was baptized,' says Ignatius, in his *Epistle to the Ephesians* (§ 18), 'that, by His submission to the rite, He might purify the water.' 'He did not,' says Jerome, 'so much get cleansing from baptism, as impart cleansing to it.' (*Ipsc Dominus noster non tam mundatus est lavacro, quam in lavacro suo universas aquas mundavit.*—Adv. Luciferianos, § 6.) There is, however, even in these mysticisms an element of truth. Then he suffereth Him: Note the present tense.

VER. 16. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: Or from the water, as it is in the original (*ἀπὸ*). He went up *straightway*, or *directly*, perhaps in contradistinction to the general custom. The masses may have lingered for a season on the spot where their baptism was performed, praying, confessing, meditating, opening up their spirits to get the full benefit of their ablution. But Jesus, profoundly realizing that water baptism was to Him but a significant, though seemingly, form, *went up straightway from the water.* (Comp. Mark i. 10.) And lo, the heavens were opened to Him: The maturity of His human spirit was now culminating; and it was fit that the whole spirit-world,—upward, downward, and around,—should be thrown open to His view. First of all, heaven was opened to Him. And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him: This was the spiritual side of His baptism, the counterpart of the outward outpouring which He had received from John. The Spirit, in the plenitude of His powers, was henceforth to actuate His humanity; see Luke iv. 1, as connected with Luke iii. 22. And hence and henceforth His humanity would be fully furnished and equipped for the most trying portions of His work. It was *as a dove* that the Spirit descended on Him; a beautifully significant emblem. It was not *as an eagle*, says Varenius, in his delightful Dissertation on the subject (*De columba super capite Christi visa*), but *as a dove*, an animal corresponding among birds to the *lamb* among beasts. "What bird," asks Lightfoot, "so fit as a dove, which was the only fowl that was clean and allowed for sacrifice?" The Spirit is manifold in influence; but in so far as He works in Jesus, and through Jesus, His influence is dove-like. It is not only pure, but loving, gentle, mild and meek. Wheresoever there is anything of the Spirit of Jesus, there is at once the inbreathing and the outbreathing of a dove-like spirit.

a dove, and lighting upon him : 17 and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

CHAPTER IV.

1 THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness

VER. 17. **And lo a voice out of the heavens:** Addressed to Christ, but audible to John. **Saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:** Or, more literally, though not with absolute literality, *in whom I have had good pleasure* (ἡδύκνησα, see Jebb, § 404). The voice from heaven thus makes sublime reference to what was from of old. It gathered up the most interesting of the Old Testament utterances, and concentrated them all upon the head of Jesus. It is not implied that the Father had ceased to be well pleased. Everything the reverse. The Father's present action was proof of present good pleasure. But the good pleasure was not merely in the present; it was a thing from of old. The voice thus pointed Him out as the Son referred to explicitly in Psalm ii. 7, 12, etc., and implicitly in all the preceding and succeeding oracles that spoke of the Messiah. It indicated that it was in Him that the Father was, all along the dispensations, well pleased; it was in Him that, even before the dispensations, before the world was, the Father had ineffable complacency in relation to men that were to be. (Comp. John xvii. 24.) After the utterance of this voice the Messianic self consciousness of our Lord would undoubtedly expand with rapidity, both intensively and extensively, into complete maturity. That self consciousness, it must be borne in mind, would necessarily, so far as the human side of His being was concerned, be subject, in its development, to the condition of *time*. There is no reason to believe that the heavenly voice would be heard by any others but Jesus and John (John v. 37); neither is it likely that the heavenly vision of the Dove would be visible to the eyes of the bystanders. The heavens were opened, as Jerome says, not by the actual parting of the elements of nature, but to spiritual eyes (*non reseratione elementorum, sed spiritualibus oculis*). "If any doubt," says Lightfoot, "of the possibility of this, the answer may be readily given by example of Elisha's servant (2 Kings vi. 17). For the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire, and Elisha perceived them; but his servant did not, till his eyes were opened in a more special manner."

CHAPTER IV.

VER. 1. **Then was Jesus:** *Then*, that is, after the events recorded at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, after His baptism both outer and inner, His reception of the fulness of the Spirit. (Luke iv. 1.) Or we might represent it thus,—after the full realization, in His human self consciousness, of the peculiarity, and depth, and height, and vast expansiveness of His mediatorial mission; after the assurance too that was given Him of the Father's infinite interest in Himself and in His undertaking. **Led up into the wilderness:** *Led up*, from the low-lying region about Jordan, to some one or other of the desolate mountain tracts of the wilderness. We know not of course the exact locality. Tradition has fixed on a district in the neighbourhood of Jericho, which has in consequence been designated *Quarantania*, as being the scene of our Lord's *forty days' fast*. Some suppose however that, for historical and antitypical reasons, the scene of the temptation must have been about Sinai. It is needless to guess. **Of the Spirit:** Or, *by the Spirit*, that is, by the Divine Spirit

to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty

that Spirit which He had received without measure, and to whose guiding influence He had committed Himself. To be tempted of the devil: That is, for the purpose of being tempted by the devil, for the purpose of being morally tried, or put to the test, by the devil. Not only is it the case that there is a devil (see Sander's *Lehre der heiligen Schrift von Teufel*),—an invisible but mighty personal agency that is sadly complicating and perplexing human affairs by means of a subtle and widespread element of moral delusion,—it is also the case that this malicious agent and enemy is 'the prince of this world' (John xvi. 11). He is 'the god of this world' (2 Cor. iv. 4). He seems to look upon the earth as his own peculiar dominion, his hunting ground, on which he may roam about 'as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour' (1 Pet. v. 8). Perhaps he had possession of it for ages before the creation of man, and had a power of modifying much of what was then developed upon it. Perhaps he looked upon man as an intruder, and suspected that he was superinduced for the purpose of working out a higher and purer order of things. Hence perhaps his enmity in Eden. Hence perhaps his malice all along the ages, impelling him to lead men 'captive' to their destruction, by inciting them to mutual hate and hostility, and by tempting them with every conceivable bait of unhallowed and demoralizing gratification. He had all along acted as a seducer, a deceiver, and hence a liar. He is too, as the word *devil* (διάβολος) imports, a slanderer, a traducer. He is the great Calumniator; the calumniator of God Himself, calumniating Him to men; while he also calumniates men to men, and even accuses and calumniates men to God. (Job i. 7-12; Zech. iii. 1, 2; Rev. xii. 10.) He is hence the great Satan or Adversary (ἁδὲρ), the adversary at once of men and of God. It was therefore needful, if the Messiah was to deliver and save men, that He should encounter and overthrow this spiritual enemy, so that He might at length 'destroy his works' (1 John iii. 8), and reclaim the whole earth for God and for heaven, that it may be 'a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.' The first Adam, when assailed, was foiled, and fell. The Second Adam, if He would establish the new mankind upon the earth, must needs grapple with the great foe, and come off victorious. Hence the temptation of our Lord; and hence the Divine agency in conducting Him to the arena of contest. Thus we have, in the language of the title of good old Thomas Taylor's volume on the subject,—"*Christ's Combat and Conquest, or, the Lyon of the tribe of Judah vanquishing the roaring Lyon, assaulting Him in three most fierce and hellish Temptations*" (1618). It has been thought by some, such as Abraham Scultet (*Exercit. Evang.*, ii. 3), Le Clerc, Bekker, Farmer, Paulus, that it was only in a state of ecstasy, or trance, that the whole events of the temptation transpired. It is even contended that it was only in this spiritual way that the Saviour was led up into the wilderness. "Christ," says Farmer, "might be said to be carried into the wilderness by the Spirit, if He "was carried thither, by immediate revelation or miraculous illumination, in a "vision or spiritual rapture." (*Inquiry into the nature and design of Christ's Temptation*, § 3, p. 50, ed. 1765.) Appeal is made, in support of this interpretation, to such expressions as occur in Ezek. iii. 11-15, xi. 1, 24, 25, xxxvii. 1, xl. 1, 2; Rev. xvii. 3, xxi. 10, etc. But this appeal is by no means decisive or to the point; for the passages appealed to exhibit the influence of the Spirit in relation to avowed visions. We see no good reason for doubting that our Saviour was divinely moved to betake Himself for a season into some wild and

days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3
And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou

unfrequented part of the wilderness. It was well to go thither, that He might, in the power of His matured self consciousness, wind Himself up for His great work, and grapple with and surmount those initial ethical difficulties, over one or other of which all other heroes, and all other men, in all ages of the world, have stumbled to a greater or less degree, and fallen. If these initial ethical difficulties should be triumphantly surmounted, the way to victory in every other contest would be clear.

VER. 2. *And after having fasted forty days and forty nights:* Being inwardly absorbed, while unfolding Himself to Himself, and yet infolding Himself within Himself, and keeping at bay surrounding 'principalities and powers,—the rulers of the darkness of this world,—spiritual wickedness in high places' (Eph. vi. 12). Such a wonderful folding in of His unfolded self,—such a marvellous winding up of Himself within Himself,—a winding up that involved the suspending of many of the ordinary functions of the material nature, may be unintelligible to the majority of men. But it was prefigured, and in some respect paralleled, by the experience of the two most remarkable and illustrious of our Lord's predecessors, Moses and Elijah. Each of these wonderful men had a fast of forty days' duration. (See Exod. xxxiv. 28, Deut. ix. 9, 1 Kings xix. 8). Yet they were not subjected to such a spiritual besieging, on the part of the embattled hosts of darkness, as our Saviour had to endure. The number *forty* had probably some appropriate significance in connection with such fastings in the wilderness. It ran the experience of the great representative individuals, each the head of a distinct phase of theocratic dispensation, into a groove that ran parallel with the forty years' fasting of Israel as a body, while passing through the wilderness. *He was hungry:* This expression is very archaically rendered by Tyndale, *He was an hungred*. Hence King James's version. The Revisionists have followed Wycliffe's older but better translation, *He hungride,—He hungered*. In other passages however, such as chap. xii. 1 and xxv. 35, they have returned to Tyndale's antiquated rendering; unhappily. (See note on chap. xii. 1.) It would appear that in our Saviour's wrapt condition, while He was gathered into Himself, He was free from the sensation of hunger. The supremacy of the spiritual over the physical had free course for a very lengthened period.

VER. 3. *And the tempter, approaching Him, said:* Or, very literally, *and, having approached, the tempter said to Him*. We are not informed in what way, or under what guise, the tempter came; and we need not guess. Some have thought that he would come veiled as an angel of light. Others have supposed that he came as a wayfaring man. Others that he employed the agency of one of our Lord's brethren. It is imagined that, missing for so long a time their remarkable relative, they would no doubt send in quest of Him; and when the messenger came, and found Him weak from hunger, he gave, it is supposed, expression to Satan's temptation. Others have imagined that an emissary of the sanhedrin had found Him out, some scribe, or priest, or other official. This emissary, it is supposed, acted as the agent of Satan. Others have been content with less luxuriance of imagination, and have very naturally supposed that the tempter came to Jesus and addressed Him in just some such spiritual way as he comes to men in general and whispers in their hearts. The truth is

be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the

that there are various forms, within which our imagination may legitimately mould the concept, if we are determined to have it definitely moulded, or to define to ourselves some one definite mode of *coming* and *communicating*. If **Thou be the Son of God**: Or, more literally still, *If Thou be God's Son*, that is, *If Thou standest in the relation of son to God*. Principal Campbell contends that we should translate, *If Thou be a son of God*,—a translation that is not literal on the one hand, and that is misleading on the other. There is an intent of irritating in the use of the hypothetical *if*; *if it be indeed the case that what was declared by the voice at Thy baptism is true; if Thou be God's Son, God's peculiar Son*; if this be the case, why continue for a moment longer to suffer hunger? **Command that these stones be made bread**: Or, more literally, *Speak, in order that these stones may become cakes of bread,—just utter the one needful word of command*. Lightfoot says of the tempter that “he had “sped so successfully to his own mind, by a temptation about a matter of “eating, with the first Adam, that he practiseth that old manner of his trading “with the Second.” And indeed it is the case with millions, that *their prime temptation*, though multitudes of them realize it not, resolves itself into a matter of *bread*. They are under some seducing inducement or other to use *improper means to make their bread*.

VER. 4. **But He answered and said, It stands written**: These words, *It stands written*, are the first upon record that were spoken by our Lord after His entrance into His ministerial function. They are noteworthy as suggesting: “(1) That the first word spoken by Christ in His ministerial office is an assertion of the authority of Scripture. (2) That He opposeth the word of God “as the properest encounterer against the words of the devil. (3) That He “allegeth Scripture as a thing undeniable and uncontrollable by the devil “himself. (4) That He maketh the Scripture His rule, though He had the “fulness of the Spirit above measure” (*Lightfoot*). The passage which our Saviour adduces is found in Deut. viii. 3, and consists of words spoken by Moses to the Israelites in reference to the way in which they were so wonderfully supported by manna. **Man shall not live by bread alone**: Literally, *not upon bread alone will man live*. Man's life, even his physical life, is not dependent for its continuance upon bread alone. But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God: That is, *but upon whatever order or appointment God may be pleased, as universal Sovereign, to issue forth*. He has but to speak forth His will to the subject elements, material or spiritual, and some other means will suffice, as well as bread, to sustain life. The reference is not, as Calvin justly remarks, to the *word of doctrine*. “The meaning is “like this,” says Chrysostom, “God is able even by a word to nourish the “hungry man.” Jesus therefore intimated to the tempter that He would trust in God for the sustenance of His life. He was quite prepared to endure hunger, and all the other trials incident to the poorest of the sons of men. He would not be outstripped by any in physical endurance, He would not be outmanned. He was determined to live a life of self denial. And especially was He resolved that He would not wield His miraculous powers for His own sensuous gratification. He would make use of them indeed, as occasion offered,

mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

to feed thousands of others who were hungry; but He would not employ them to minister to His own necessities. He had come into the world, not to minister to Himself or to see after Himself, but to minister to others,—to seek and to save and to bless the lost children of Adam.

VER. 5. Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city: The verb translated *taketh up* (παραλαμβάνει) properly means *taketh along with*,—that is, *taketh along with himself, or conducteth*. By the *holy city* is meant Jerusalem (Luke iv. 9). It is still called *El-kuds, The holy*. And *setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple*: Or rather, *on the wing of the sanctuary*; very literally, *on the winglet of the sanctuary* (ἐπὶ τῷ πτερόνῳ τοῦ ἱεροῦ). But the word, though originally a diminutive signifying *winglet*, was often used as simply equivalent to *wing*. It is the word that is employed by the Septuagint translator to denote the *wings* of the cherubim in Solomon's temple; see 1 Kings vi. 24. What part of Herod's temple this *wing* or *winglet* was is much debated among expositors. It is certain indeed that we cannot translate the expression 'a winglet,' or 'a pinnacle.' The definite article is present in the original, as also in Hegeppus' account of the murder of James the Just (*Euseb. Hist.*, i. 23), and has been wisely reproduced by Sir John Cheke in his version. Wycliffe too has it, although his version was made from the Latin Vulgate, in which there is nothing corresponding to the article. But both Wycliffe, and Sir John Cheke, and Tyndale too, have *pinnacle* as the translation of the evangelist's term. The same translation is retained in Cranmer's Bible, and in the Geneva version, and the Rheims. It has become stereotyped, so far as great Britain is concerned, in the people's 'chamber of imagery.' It was adopted from the Vulgate (*super pinnaculum*). But certainly it conveys to modern ears a wrong architectural idea. There is no evidence that there was any part of the immense pile of the temple buildings that took the form of a pinnacle. Krebs and Fritzsche suppose that the reference is to the loftiest part of the whole complex structure,—the façade or eastern face of the central building, the temple proper, or holy place. But it seems to be certain that this façade was not peaked or pointed at all, but horizontal in its summit. So is it represented in some of the old Jewish coins. (See the Count Vogüé's *Temple de Jérusalem*, p. 139.) It is not likely therefore that it could be called *the wing*, or *winglet*, or *wing-shaped part*, of the temple. It is far more probable, as Michaelis contends, that the expression refers to one of the *side structures*, which *flanked* the sanctuary, or constituted *its outstretching wings*. This idea is approved of by many, and would doubtless have commended itself to the judgment of the great body of critics, had it not been for the presence of the definite article, which seems to indicate that there was but one wing or winglet; which was not the case. There were two *wings* or *winglets*. The temple faced the east, and was surrounded by magnificent buildings. Of these, part were in front, part were behind, and part were on the right hand as one looked east, and part were on the left hand. The right hand was south; the left hand was north. These would be the two *wings* or *winglets*. But in the form which the temple buildings had assumed in our Lord's day, the form into which they had been reconstructed under the architectural genius of Herod, there was no comparison between the magnificence and height of the southern wing and the elegance of the northern. Herod greatly enlarged the area of the temple grounds, by immense walls of solid

6 and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself

masonry raised from the bottom of the environing valley (Joseph. Wars, i. 21 : 1). And it was chiefly in the southern direction that this was practicable. At the extremity of the southern side of the area, and all along the southern margin, he erected what is called *the royal portico*. It was, says Josephus, *the most remarkable structure under the sun* (Ant. xv. 11 : 5). It was a gorgeous colonnade, consisting of a magnificent central nave with two aisles, running the whole length of the space from the eastern wall to the western. And, as Josephus expressly mentions, "while the valley of itself was very deep, and its bottom could scarcely be seen when one looked down from above, the additional "vastly high elevation of the portico was placed on that height, insomuch that "if any one looked down from the summit of the roof, combining the two "altitudes in one stretch of vision, he would be giddy, while his sight could not "reach to such an immense depth" (Ant. xv. 11 : 5). This was emphatically 'the wing' or 'winglet' of the temple. Its magnificence and astounding height threw the other wing quite into the shade. Hence, apparently, the article in the evangelist's expression. The summit of this wing, and not unlikely the eastern corner of it, where the depth was greatest, would most probably be the perilous perch which was selected by the tempter. At the present day the wall at that part is upwards of 130 feet in height; there are 80 feet of building above the present surface of the ground, and 53 feet descending through the accumulated debris. Dr. Robinson supposes that the part referred to by the evangelist would be 'the apex of Solomon's porch.' But Solomon's porch was in front of the sanctuary, not at the side; and it did not afford such a precipitous and dizzy height on which to stand. (See Count Vogüé's Reprduction of Herod's Temple, in the 16th plate of his magnificent work, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, 1864.) Michaelis also supposes that it must have been Solomon's porch that was the perch; but he seems to confound altogether *Solomon's porch* with *the royal portico*. Is it asked in what way the tempter took our Saviour to the holy city, and set Him on the dizzy height? The older expositors, and also some of the more recent, are not slow to discuss the matter. "It must necessarily be one of these two ways," says Thomas Taylor, "either Satan must "lead Him or else must carry Him." He decides for the carrying. So does Perkins in his treatise, "*The Combate betweene Christ and the Devill displayed.*" He says that "it is most likely that the devil carried the body of our Saviour throw the aire." Lightfoot is of the same opinion, and pictures the Saviour "in a mantle flying in the air." Multitudes more take the same view, inclusive of Jerome. Bagot again protests against the strange explanation, and contends that our Saviour merely "accompanied the devil to the pinnacle of the temple" (*The Temptation*, pp. 70-72, ed. 1839). But we can see no good reason for shutting ourselves up to either of the sensuous alternatives. The temptation emanated from '*spiritual* wickedness in high places,' and why may it not be conceived of as '*spiritual* in its nature? If the tempter was a spirit, and came to our Saviour spiritually, and spoke to Him spiritually, why may we not, with Olshausen, suppose that it was in a spiritual way that our Saviour was taken to the pinnacle of the temple? But if in a spiritual way, how? We need not precisely determine. It may indeed be difficult to determine. It may be difficult with some to conceive. But it suffices to hold fast by the conviction that the temptation was real. It was not a case of mere imagination. The world is twofold. It has its spiritual sphere, and it has its material sphere. The two

down : for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee : and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said

spheres wonderfully interpenetrate ; and man lives in both at one and the same moment of time.

VER. 6. **And saith to Him, If Thou be God's Son :** The tempter holds on to the declaration from on high, made at the Saviour's baptism, a declaration that had probably unfolded the infolded self consciousness of our Lord into the sublimest aspirations and resolves. The tempter as it were suggested to our Lord, when perched upon the precipitous wing of the temple, *No doubt Thou art confident that Thou art God's Son. Well ; verify Thy confidence to Thyself. Make full proof of it. It was befitting, perchance, that Thou shouldest not demonstrate Thy Divine Sonship by turning stones into bread. It was right, it was seemly, it was beautiful, to trust in Thy Heavenly Father that He would sustain Thy body by other than ordinary means. Such unwavering trustfulness is worthy of sonship and of Thyself. Trust still. Go on trusting. Thou canst not trust too much. Make full proof of Thy Sonship.* Such we may suppose to have been the diabolic preparation for the second temptation, a preparation involved in the very attitude of our Saviour on His perilous perch. **Cast Thyself down :** And trust. *Then Thou shalt have full proof of Thy Divine Sonship ; and not only Thou, but Jerusalem too. What a glorious start for an illustrious career ! What ! dost Thou hesitate ? Does Thy trust now falter and grow less ? Surely not. Cast Thyself down.* For it is written—it has been written, it stands written—that He will give His angels charge concerning thee ; and on their hands they will bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. The quotation is from Psalm xci, 11, 12. It is as if the tempter had said, *What danger can there be ? Is there not good ground for trusting in Thy Father's protecting care ? Will He not give His angels charge concerning Thee ? Why distrust ? Thou hast quoted Scripture to vindicate Thy trust in reference to sustenance without bread. It was well. There is Scripture to warrant Thy reliance in casting Thyself down from this height. If it is a promise that is applicable to every good man, much more must it be applicable to Thee, if Thou be indeed God's peculiar and Messianic Son.* Such was the temptation. It was a temptation to *presumptuous trust, trust for protection and immunity from evil, when danger is tampered with.* It is a temptation that ruins many of the more aspiring sons of men. It is felt often in reference to merely physical achievements and feats. It is felt more fatally in commercial daring and venture. But its most lamentable consequences are experienced on the field of morals. Many will insist on walking on the very edge of the precipice of over indulgence, over indulgence in insidious drinks for example, or in the gaieties of worldly society. Why should they hesitate ?—'tis thus they reason with themselves—why should they not leap at a bound through all the mere conventionalisms and wooden fences of morality ? What harm can there be in going up to the very borderland of evil, if yet one does not cross over ? This same presumptuous trust, though on another side of things, is manifested by the pious who will insist on overtaking themselves in meditations, or in prayers, or in studies, or in labours of love, when there is no imperious call for such daring and venturing. Many expositors, such as Calvin, Adam Clarke, Benson, and Grosart, and Bernard of

unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy

old, charge the tempter with wilful mutilation of the passage which he quotes, because he omits the words "to keep thee in all thy ways." "Here," says Perkins, "behold Satan's notable fraud and craft"—"he leaveth out that on which the promise is grounded of being kept by the angels." Wordsworth again says that "he ought to have added what follows against himself, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder.*" Jerome long ago said that as the psalm was not a prophecy concerning Christ Satan badly interpreted the Scripture. But all this is hypercriticism, and really amounts to a withholding from the tempter what is "his due." It is, as Erasmus remarks, a calumny of the great calumniator. The charge arises from not apprehending the real subtlety of the tempter. The passage actually quoted brings into view the tender care of God over "him who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High." It was eminently applicable to Jesus, though of course not in the way that was suggested by the tempter. The ministering angels do act by God's direction like tender nurses who, when the little one committed to their charge is learning to walk, lift him up as he comes to stony places, and bear him forward supported on their hands, lest he should dash his foot against a stone, and stumble, and be hurt and fall. The inapplicability of the passage to the case suggested by the tempter will appear on considering Christ's reply.

VER. 7. Jesus said to him, It stands written again: Viz. in Deut. vi. 16. The word *again* doubles back on the quotation from Scripture adduced by the tempter: *It stands written on the other hand.* It is as if Jesus had said,—*True there is the precious promise which you quote; but it was never intended to be of absolutely unconditional application. Its applicability to Me must be contingent on My observance of the laws or rules that are elsewhere laid down for the regulation of human life.* The sons of God are to trust in God for protection when they are in the way of their duty, but not when, without any call of duty, they recklessly choose to expose themselves to danger. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God: That is, thou shalt not presumptuously put Him to the test, and, as it were, say to Him, *If Thou desirest me to hold Thee for my God, and to worship Thee as my God, Thou must interpose with Thine omnipotence to deliver me, whensoever I choose to appeal to it or to throw myself upon it, whether I be in the way of my duty or not.* It is not thus that we are to act. We are indeed to have unwavering trust in God's omnipotent care and blessing, when we are exposed to danger in the discharge of duty. Doubtless. But it is insult and presumption to rush recklessly into danger, physical or moral, and then trust that we shall come out unscathed. On its reverse side this presumptuous trust is really presumptuous distrust. It is presumptuous distrust in relation to the wisdom or goodness of the ordinary principles of God's procedure. And hence the Israelites tempted God in Massah when they said presumptuously to Moses, *Give us water that we may drink. Wherefore is it that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?* (Exod. xvii. 1-7.) They *presumptuously* distrusted the care of God, a care that would never forsake them when in the way of their duty. In the fall of Adam and Eve there was at once *presumptuous distrust* and *presumptuous trust*; presumptuous distrust in God's lovingkindness as regards the nature of the paradisaical arrangements made, and presumptuous trust in God's lovingkindness as regards immunity from punishment, even when His paradisaical arrangements were wilfully transgressed.

God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

VER. 8. Again the devil taketh Him up—taketh Him with him—into an exceeding high mountain: *Into* or *on-to, unto*, that is, in the case before us, *to the top of*. Whether the exceeding high mountain “was Pisgah, Nebo, Horeb, or what else, is,” says Lightfoot, “but lost labour to make inquiry, because we are sure we cannot find.” “It is in vain,” says Elsner, “to name Tabor or Zion.” “The mountain,” says De Wette, is not to be found “in terrestrial geography.” It was no doubt a mountain in spirit land, as Calvin evidently believed, though he does not like to speak out determinately. **And showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them:** Luke adds “in a moment of time” (iv. 5). It was a spiritual *showing*; and hence we need not, with Olearius and Palairt, explain the *showing* as meaning merely a *description by words*. Neither need we with others suppose that the devil made use of a geographical map! (See Major’s *Scrutinium Satanicæ Cosmodizeos*, cap. ii.) Neither need we with Major suppose that he merely pointed in the direction of the various kingdoms and their glory. (*Scrutinium*, cap. xi.) Neither need we dwarf the natural idea by supposing with Kuinöl that the mountain was the mount of Olives, and that *the kingdoms of the world* were the subdivided principalities of the Holy Land. It was a wider dominion which the Jews in general desired for their Messiah. It was a wider dominion which the Messiah desired for Himself. It was a wider dominion which Satan had it in his power to confer. It was the whole Roman empire, says Lightfoot, for “if Satan had claim and “interest in any place, state, or pomp under heaven, it was in Rome and her “appurtenances.” But we may go wider still. It was no doubt the prize of the sovereignty of the whole world which the tempter held out temptingly as the price of the Saviour’s homage. By the *glory* of the kingdoms we are to understand their magnificence or grandeur, as manifested in their cities, palaces, and other adjuncts of pomp and proud array.

VER. 9. **And said to Him, All these things will I give Thee:** It is a temptation that resolves itself into the proffer of everything that could contribute to ‘the pride of (worldly) life.’ It held out an overflowing cornucopia of wealth, luxury, pomp, rank, and power. It was Satan’s masterpiece; and he has continued throughout all ages to ply it, or rather to apply slices from it, when dealing with those of mankind who are on the one hand above the fear of want, and are unaffected on the other by the honour of daring in doing, or by the higher honour still of overdoing—overdoing what is good, overdoing oneself for the promotion of what is good. It was a temptation that was craftily employed with Jesus. There was a side of His pure and elevated nature that could not but be responsive, though in a sinless manner, to the prospect of universal dominion. He would earnestly desire to reign from the river to the ends of the earth, from pole to pole. There would be something in Him that would be longing for the heathen as His inheritance and for the uttermost parts of the earth as His possession. (Pa. ii. 8.) Nothing short of this would or could satisfy the yearning of His heart, the ardent aspiration of His capacious soul. But then we must note, even as He noted, the condition on which the devil suspended his promise. **If Thou wilt fall down and worship me: Or, if Thou wilt fall down**

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

and do homage to me. (See under chap. ii. 8, 11.) Here was the superlative degree of impudency. The impudency too was coupled with an element of *brag*, that had folded up within it a *lie*. Satan promised more than he was able to assure. And yet we must bear in mind that he was, in very deed, at once *the prince and the god of this world*. His power and influence were really all but immense. And it was in consideration of the imperial extent of his power and influence that he asked *homage*. He, as it were, said to Jesus, *I am indeed the prince and god of this world. Its kingdoms and their glory are at my disposal. I could at once open up Thy way to the highest honours that a universal conqueror and a universal sovereign could desire. I could gather at once around Thee a host of devoted Jewish troops; I could pave their way for victory after victory, until at no distant period the whole Roman empire, and indeed the whole world, should be subject to Thy sway. Only abandon the wild chimera of putting down sin and making all men fanatical and holy; fall in with my way of things; let the morals of the world alone, more especially its morals in reference to God; work with me and under me, and all will go well. But if Thou refuse this offer, look out for determined opposition, for incessant persecution, for the most miserable poverty, and for every species of woe.*

VER. 10. Then saith Jesus to him, Get thee hence, Satan : *Get thee hence! begone! avaunt!* It is a 'word of indignation,' says Thomas Taylor, and 'of castigation,' and 'of dismissal.' "The Lamb of God," says Jeremy Taylor, "was angry as a provoked lion, and commanded him away, when his demands "were impudent and blasphemous." (*Life of Christ*, i. 9, § 8.) The victory is achieved. The Second Adam has not fallen and will not fall. For it stands written. Our Lord wields His favourite weapon. It is *the sword of His mouth*. It is too *the sword of the Spirit*, the sword fashioned by the Spirit, that Spirit who had descended upon our Saviour and who was abiding in Him. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve: Deut. vi. 13. *Thou shalt do homage to the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou religiously serve.* It is a free and easy translation of the original Hebrew, but true to the spirit. The Saviour in quoting the words does not mean, of course, to point out to Satan the duty of Satan. He means to point out to Satan and to Himself the duty that was devolving on Himself, *to do homage to God and to God alone.*

VER. 11. Then the devil leaveth Him: Jesus is tempted no more 'for a season' (Luke iv. 13). The devil has been victoriously resisted; and he flees. He is now a vanquished foe; he has been vanquished in the behalf of men, of all men. And whosoever takes heart from the victory of Christ, and encounters and resists the great enemy in the strength that is got from Christ, will be victorious too. The devil will flee (Jas. iv. 7). And behold angels came and ministered unto Him: As He needed. We need not be more determinate in guessing as to the particulars of this ministry.

VER. 12. A new paragraph commences with this verse, a paragraph however that is not to be connected by any close or precise chronological link with what goes immediately before, or with what is narrated in the opening chapters of *the Gospel according to John*. (Comp. John iii. 24 and iv. 1-3.) The evangelist, it

12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

must ever be borne in mind, is writing *free and easy Memorials of Christ*, not a formal *Memoir*, still less a *scientifically jointed Memoir*, and yet still less a *scientifically adjusted History*. But when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison: Or, more literally, *was delivered up*, or, as it might also be rendered, *was betrayed* (παρεδόθη). Whether this has reference to what issued in the final imprisonment of the Baptist, or whether it has reference to some previous and temporary arrest, it may be difficult or impossible to determine. (Comp. Luke iii. 19, 20; John iii. 24, iv. 1-3; Matt. xiv. 3.) So far as regards the grand moral aim of Matthew, the matter is not of any moment. He withdrew into Galilee: For what particular reason is not stated; and we need not be positive in our guesses, or even very inquisitive in our researches. Perhaps there were plots hatching to deliver Him up too (comp. John vii. 1), as having been *art and part* in John's reformatory movement, a movement that gave occasion to very free denunciation of all sorts of sins. Perhaps the commotion excited by the arrest of John was so great that it was in vain to attempt to carry out on the spot the spiritual work in which John had been so devotedly engaged, in vain to try to gather in the distracted thoughts and feelings of the people, that they might be fixed upon the great spiritual duties devolving on them, in view of the approaching establishment of the *kingdom of heaven*. We need not guess positively in reference to such matters.

VER. 13. And leaving Nazareth—whither apparently He had gone at first—He came and dwelt in Capernaum: A thriving town in our Lord's days, but not mentioned in the Old Testament. It is supposed to have been built after the exile. It has for long passed away, and its very site is now matter of dispute. "It is gone," says Dean Stanley. (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x.) The question, says Ritter, regarding its site, "can scarcely be determined with certainty." "As for traces of Capernaum," says Fergus Ferguson, "we could find none." (*Notes of Travel in Egypt and the Holy Land*, chap. xiii.) Dr. Robinson supposed that Khân Minyeh at 'Ain et-Tin is the spot on which it stood. (*Later Researches*, pp. 347-359.) Dr. Porter agrees with him (*Syria and Palestine*, p. 407). But Dr. J. Wilson supposes that Tell Hâm is the spot, and that in the word Hâm we have the concluding syllable of the ancient name *Kefr-nahum* (*Lands of the Bible*, vol. ii., pp. 143-149). So thinks Dr. W. M. Thomson (*The Land and the Book*, chap. xxiv., p. 354). And Sir Charles Wilson, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, has come to the same conclusion. (*The Recovery of Jerusalem*, pp. 375, 387.) So of late has Dr. Schaff. (*Through Bible Lands*, p. 343, and *Comm. on Matthew*, in loc.) See *Comm. on Mark*, p. 20. **Which is upon the sea coast:** The town lay on the western margin, toward the north, of the beautiful lake or 'loch' called the *sea of Galilee*, or the *sea of Tiberias*, or the *lake of Gemesaret*. See on ver. 18. **In the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:** That is, in the district in which the conterminous lands of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali met and 'marched.'

VER. 14. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Esaias the prophet, saying. The Lord's sojourn in Capernaum was brought about by an overruling

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

Divine Hand that, among other important purposes which were subserved, an oracle might receive its fulfilment, an oracle which had been uttered of old through (*did*) Isaiah the Seer. The oracle occurs in Isa. ix. 1, 2, and is in the midst of quite a cluster of Messianic predictions. The evangelist had manifestly the greatest delight in tracing the radii of Old Testament prophecy into the great Personal Centre of Divine revelation, the Saviour. The Bible it would appear had a charm for him, because, and just because, it was a *Book about the Saviour*.

VER. 15. The passage quoted is given in a somewhat abrupt and fragmentary form; but it is finely explicit geographically, clause after clause holding out its finger and pointing to the Saviour. The land of Zabulon: The description of the district specified commences topographically from the south. And the land of Nephthalim: The description now points northward. The way of the sea: A clause that is meant to draw attention to the eastern parts of both Zebulon and Naphtali, the parts lying in the direction of the Galilean sea where stood Capernaum. Beyond Jordan: That is, *The region beyond Jordan*. The description now points to the district east of the Jordan, associating it with the territory that lay west of the Galilean sea. It was easily accessible from Capernaum. Galilee of the Gentiles: That is, *Northern Galilee, a circuit of country* (for the word *galilee* means *circle* or *circuit*) in which the Jewish population was largely intermixed with Gentiles. It was a region reached by way of Capernaum. The whole territory described constituted an area that might be regarded as radiating out from Capernaum, so far as facilities of intercourse were concerned. It was an area trodden by the feet of Jesus. What is to be said of its inhabitants? See next verse.

VER. 16. The people who were sitting in darkness: That is, *The people whose characteristic it was to be sitting in darkness*. It was characteristic of the Galilean people, though by no means of them alone, *to be sitting in darkness*. Politically and socially they were *in darkness*. The gloom of adversity had settled over them; and when looked at spiritually, they were seen to be in still deeper darkness. They were altogether in the dark in reference to their highest interests and relations; and hence unhappy, inert, *sitting*. Saw great light: namely, Christ; for He is *Light, diffused Light, great Light, intense Light*, vividly illuminating belated men, shedding sunshine on them, cheering them, vivifying them, warming them, letting them see how to move and whither to go. And to them who were sitting in the region and shadow of death light did spring up: A parallelistic repetition of the former clause. *Light did spring up*, like dayspring, the dawn of a glorious day *to them who were sitting in a region of such darkness that it was indeed the region and shadow of death*. The idea of death lies on the line of darkness. In the unilluminated tomb, in the utterly dark coffin, we have the climax of both ideas realized. Death, in itself considered, envelops in *shadow* and *gloom*. The Galileans, spiritually viewed, were in the *region* of this death, and hence they were 'sitting' both 'in the region' and 'in the shadow' of 'death.' All was dark, dreary, dismal, doleful, within

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two breth-

them and around them. How gladsome in such circumstances a 'dayspring from on high.'

VER. 17. **From that time began Jesus to preach :** The reference is, in general, to the time when He resumed His residence in Galilee. **And to say, Repent ; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand :** This, the burden of our Saviour's preaching at the commencement of His public career, had been the burden of His forerunner's proclamation ; see chap. iii. 2. But His forerunner's voice had been suddenly silenced, ere yet his work was fairly completed. And hence our Lord himself took up the work at the point where John had been withdrawn from it. He thus acted for a season as His own herald. The proclamation, while pre-eminently appropriate as coming from the lips of John, was in all respects thoroughly appropriate as coming from the lips of the King himself. Although He was the King, the King of kings, it was not time for Him to assume His regal pomp and state and outward glory. He was as yet in partial disguise. And as He came to minister rather than to be ministered unto, He was willing to do the work of His arrested minister, and to call upon the people to *repent, as the kingdom of heaven was at hand.* *Repent :* that is, *change your ways, change them to what is right,—change them, beginning at the beginning of all right change, with a change of thought.* See under chap. iii. 2, 8. *For the kingdom of heaven is at hand :* A change was about to take place in God's way of dealing with sinful men. He was about to establish, in a duly organized form, a heavenly community, a peculiar theocracy, within the pale of which He would confer peculiar and most heavenly privileges. None but heavenly persons would be citizens of the community. Citizenship in it would not be ended, but only consummated, by what is generally called death. See under chap. iii. 2. In catching up the echoes of such a proclamation as this from the silenced lips of His forerunner, there was nothing in the least degree derogatory to the lofty character and mission of the Great King ; indeed, He manifested no little part of His true kingliness in condescending to become a preacher and herald and prophet.

VER. 18. **And walking by the sea of Galilee :** Or, *by the lake of Gennesaret*, on the north-western shore of which Capernaum was situated. The lake, or little inland sea, was called *the lake of Gennesaret*, or *Gennesar*, says Josephus, from the adjoining district. (*Wars*, iii. 10 : 7.) It is about five hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean. Gennesareth is the New Testament form of the Old Testament name Chinnereth, or Chinneroth, which was probably the old Canaanitish name for the lake. The Jews were accustomed to call every considerable sheet of water a *sea* ; just as the common Dutch word for lake, *meer* or *meir*, is the common Latin word for *sea* (*mare*). So too the English of old said *Windermere*, *Grasmere*, *Thirlmere*. The sea of Galilee, says F. Ferguson, "is not very different in appearance from an English or Scottish lake, unless indeed that the mountains around it are even bleaker and more barren than those in the highlands of Scotland." (*Notes of Travel*, chap. xiii.) "It is," says Dean Stanley, "about thirteen miles long, and in its broadest parts six miles wide, that is, about the same length as our own *Winandermere* (or *Windermere*), but of a considerably greater breadth. In the clearness of the

ren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a

“eastern atmosphere it looks much smaller than it is. From no point on the western side can it be seen completely from end to end; the promontory under which Tiberias stands cutting off the southern, as the promontory over the plain of Gennesareth the northern, extremity; so that the form which it presents is generally that of an oval.” (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x., p. 370.) While the lake is almost entirely surrounded by mountains, yet these mountains never dip into the water. There is always a beach of more or less breadth along the edge of the water; and north of Tiberias, in the direction of Capernaum, this beach expands into a fine fertile plain that is two or three miles broad. In this plain was situated Capernaum, where Jesus now was. He *walked*, says the evangelist, by the sea shore, wrapt up no doubt in Divine meditation, and maturing His plans of Messianic operation. He saw two brethren: Or, as we now express ourselves when we are referring to the members of a family, *two brothers*. Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother: The Saviour had seen them before. He knew them, and they knew Him. It was He indeed who had given Simon his mystic name *Cephas* or *Peter*. (See John i. 40-42.) *Simon* or *Simeon* means *Hearing* (see chap. x. 2); while *Peter*, or *Cephas*, or *Kephas*, means *Rock*, or *Piece of Rock* (see chap. xvi. 18). *Kephas* or *Kepha* is the Semitic form of the word, while *Peter* or *Petros* is the Greek form. Our Lord had seen at a glance that there was *strength* in Peter, strength which when perfected would fit him for holding a very important position at the basis of things in the kingdom of heaven. Hence the imposition of the significant name. Casting a net into the sea: for they were fishermen: It was a humble, but respectable occupation, and one well fitted to promote vigour of body, a matter of no little moment, and independence of spirit, a matter certainly of very great moment.

VER. 19. **And He saith to them, Follow Me:** Come hither and attach yourselves to Me as My ‘following,’ My followers, My disciples. I shall prepare you for a higher occupation than you are now engaged in. **And I will make you fishers of men:** I shall qualify you for operating ethically and spiritually upon men, for getting hold of the souls of men. I shall teach you to wield another kind of net than that which ye are casting into the waters, the net of Divine and evangelic truth. By means of it ye shall be able to catch men for God. How exalted the privilege! But we must not push the Saviour’s metaphor into very minute details.

VER. 20. **And they straightway left the nets, and followed Him:** They did not hesitate. They recognised the presence of a true Master, the highest of rabbis, whose will was entitled to be law. There must have been an inexpressibly interesting minglement of attraction and authority in the bearing of our Lord.

VER. 21. **And going on from thence, He saw other two brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother:** They were partners in business with Peter. (Luke v. 10.) And, like Peter, they had seen Jesus before and knew Him.

ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease

(Comp. John i. 35-40.) In a ship,—or, as it is in the original, *in the ship, in the boat*: That is, in the boat that belonged to them, in *their boat*. With Zebedee their father, mending their nets: Or, *adjusting their nets, putting their nets to rights*.

VER. 22. And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him: A secret impulse that drew their hearts, as the needle is drawn toward the pole, constrained them; and Zebedee, as would appear, offered no objection. He does not however come again upon the scene. We may picture him to ourselves as a grave and worthy and warmhearted sire, who did reverence to Jesus as he stood by, and said *the Lord bless you!* to his sons as they left him with the hired servants. (Mark i. 20.)

VER. 23. And Jesus went about throughout the whole of Galilee: Moving from place to place, that He might broaden the basis of His operations. Teaching in their synagogues: That is, in the synagogues of the Galileans. The synagogues were the places in which the people met on sabbath days for religious exercises. They were the spontaneous outgrowths of the religious life of the people, and in their turn they became the centres and sources of intensified religious activity. The Scriptures were read in them and interpreted into the common language of the country. Exhortations were delivered. Prayers were presented. In many places there were meetings on the second and fifth days of the week, as well as on the sabbath days and feast days. And, what was conducive to spiritual freedom, there was liberty of speech, controlled of course and modified by conventional conditions of propriety. In those synagogue meetings the influence of spiritual literature and oratory was supreme. And thus the synagogal institution was overtopping, in the nation, and overshadowing, and to a large extent absorbing and transforming, the other and older spiritual influence, the influence of ritualism and sacerdotalism. This predominating synagogal spirit has passed into the Christian dispensation, and has developed into a higher order of things, combining with itself the permanent element and spirit of the temple service. The perfection of spiritual life, in its social relations, will be found to be largely dependent on the due combination and balance of the spirit of the synagogue service on the one hand, and the spirit of the service of the temple on the other. And preaching the gospel of the kingdom: The good news of the kingdom of heaven, the good news that it was at hand. (See chap. iii. 2, iv. 17.) And healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease: Or, more literally, *And healing every disease, and every malady, or infirmity*. There was a universality within a certain range. See chap. ix. 35.) There was in Jesus a fulness of Divine and bliss-diffusing influence. It was ever upwelling and overflowing into all the correlated emptinesses round about. It was a fulness that had universal responses and adaptations to everything that is empty or needy in humanity. It had relations to humanity's outer or corporeal sphere, as well as to humanity's inner or spiritual sphere; and hence, under such wise conditions as it wisely pleased

among the people. 24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

Him to observe in regulating its outgoing, it overflowed into *sicknesses and diseases*, and *healed them*. Among the people: Literally, *in the people*. Jesus went about healing—in *the people*, that is, *in the individuals who composed the people*—every sickness and malady.

VER. 24. And the report of Him went forth throughout all Syria: It passed beyond the bounds of Galilee into the various outlying districts that were comprehended within the Roman province of Syria. And they brought to Him: *They*, that is, the people round about. All who were sick: All the sick; all who were ill. The word *all* is used in a popular and free and easy manner. The term does not mean *many*, or *very many*; but it is often used when only *many* or *very many* are referred to. In such cases the exceptions to absolute universality are, for the time being, shaded off out of sight. Who were afflicted with divers diseases and torments: These were one class of the unwell people brought to our Lord. Those who were demoniacs: These were another class of the unwell people. They were to a greater or less extent physically and psychically under demonic influence. (See Matt. viii. 28, etc.) In the present inter-relations, in our world, of the material and spiritual spheres of things, there are innumerable complications of evil spiritual influence, touching, at multitudinous points, what is physical, and deterioratingly modifying it. There is also indeed a mighty and mightily predominating spiritual influence that is good, angelic, and Divine; and hence the vast preponderance of the means of happiness on earth. Still there is a mixture and conflict; and the evil element manifests itself in very various ways under the very various conditions that are characteristic of different dispensations or ages, and places, and peoples, and persons. Whosoever persistently and dogmatically denies the existence of this spiritual influence is only a one-eyed investigator, and that one eye which he employs he shuts in relation to one entire hemisphere of being. Whosoever doubts its existence winks with his eye, and has not reflectively noticed, discriminated, and analysed the moral outgoings and incomings that transpire in his own spirit. And those which were lunatic: The lunatics referred to were probably those *epileptics* whose epilepsy was apparently more or less affected by *lunar* influences. "It is the case," says Dr. Mead, "that the moon has such an influence in that disease, that frequently the afflicted persons are entirely free from attacks except at new moon and full moon." (*Medica Sacra*, cap. x.) "Many observers maintain," says Feuchtersleben, "that the moon and its phases have an exciting influence on the exacerbations and fits in "psychical patients." (*Medical Psychology*, § 130: 6.) There is at least, in certain cases, some secret correspondency. And those who were paralytic: labouring under the loss or diminution of the power of voluntary motion in one or more members of the body. And He healed them: No doubt under certain all-wise conditions. There was in Jesus an inexhaustible fountain of outgoing energy, which was fed from the abysses of His personal Divinity. Its ebbings hence, and its flowings, would be under the control of His will. And one element, it would appear, of its peculiarity, though doubtless only one, was

25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judæa, and *from* beyond Jordan.

CHAPTER V.

1 AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

a curative or healing virtue. This virtue, in going forth from Him, entered rectifyingly, as occasion offered, into the disordered frames of the patients who crowded around Him; and, when it entered in, it set them free from their complaints. It was an energy that had, no doubt, relations to manifold curative elements in other persons and things; for others besides Christ are healers. But as it existed in Him it was unique.

VER. 25. And there followed Him great multitudes: So intense for a season, and intensely attractive, was the interest which His appearance, character, and works excited. From Galilee and Decapolis: A region in the north-east quarter of Palestine. It was called Decapolis because it comprehended ten cities, among which were Gerasa, Gadara, Pella, Seythopolis, etc. The inhabitants were mixed, consisting however to a preponderating extent of Gentiles. And Jerusalem, and Judæa, and from beyond Jordan: That is, *and from the district beyond Jordan*, the district that was called Peræa. It lay east of the Jordan, and was, as Josephus tells us, of larger extent than Galilee. It reached northward to Pella, and southward to the land of Moab. (*Wars*, iii. 3: 3.) Its boundaries would doubtless be somewhat indefinite.

CHAPTER V.

VER. 1. And seeing the multitudes: Or, *And when He saw the multitudes*. There is no precise chronological reference. And therefore the exact date of the delivery of the *Sermon on the Mount* is not a question that needs to be imported into the interpretation of the evangelist's *Memorials*. The agitation of the question would issue only in doubtful disputation. He went up into a mountain: In the original it is more definitely *into the mountain*, that is, *into the adjoining mountain,—into the hill, or high-land, that was at hand*. Note the *into*. 'He went up *into the sphere of the mountain*,' so that when He was *on* the mountain He was *in* its sphere, and perhaps also *in* some scooped out recess. The particular mountain or hill referred to—'the Sinai of the New Testament' (Delitzsch)—is not known, though the tradition of the Latin church has fixed upon a spot near Khân Minyeh. This eminence is called Kûrûn Hattîn, or the Horns of Hattin; and there is a plateau between its two peaks or horns which would be, it seems, a very suitable amphitheatre for a congregation. "There the last battle of the Crusaders was fought." (Schaff. See *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. ii., pp. 53-64.) And when He seated Himself, His disciples came to Him: Our Saviour, after the manner of Jewish rabbis, seated Himself ere He began to teach. It was a position of repose. After He had thus seated Himself, and thereby determined the particular spot of the eminence on which the congregation would require to assemble, *His disciples approached Him*. The reference of the term *disciples* is no doubt generic. It denotes not merely the few who constituted the innermost circle of His followers;

2 and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, 3 Blessed

but rather the constantly increasing multitude of such as took Him to be the long promised Messiah, and *who wished to be instructed by Him as to what they should do in connection with the inauguration and establishment of His kingdom.* The chosen few, such as Peter and Andrew, John and James, would doubtless come nearest His person, while yet keeping reverently at a respectful distance. The others would gather beyond, tier behind tier. In the nearest tiers there would be not a few of such as were attracted by affection and confidence. Others perhaps might be pressing themselves forward to a similar proximity under the less noble impulses of self confidence and curiosity. In the outskirts of the assembly there would be a minglement of the diffident and the distrustful, who either could not venture, or who would not choose, to occupy any other position than one afar off. It would be, when taken all in all, a heart-stirring assemblage; and when we consider the scene, the beauty of the surrounding hills, the placidity of the lake, stretching its long mirror toward the morning sun, the wavy outline of the distant mountain ranges, and the magnificence of the sky lifting its cloudless dome over all, we may well suppose that both Teacher and auditory—more especially when we consider who the Teacher was, and what charm there would be in His presence—would be animated with peculiar and deep-toned feelings of solemnity.

VER. 2. **And He opened His mouth, and taught them:** *Taught*—it was thus as a teacher, or instructor, rather than as an orator, that He spake. He was far more indeed than either orator or teacher; and He was regarded by His auditory as far more. But it was requisite that He should teach them what He wanted them to do and to be. When it is said that *He opened His mouth* the expression has been regarded by some as having a peculiar mystery in it. “Wherefore,” says Chrysostom, “is the clause added, *He opened His mouth?* “To show that in His very silence He gave instruction.” But the expression is simply graphic, giving a physical picture. It is employed by the evangelist under a sense of solemn gravity. We are led, as it were in His company, to watch, with awestruck interest, the whole of the Saviour’s preliminary deportment. He had *looked on the multitudes.* He had then *ascended* the rising ground. He had then *seated Himself.* He then *paused in solemn silence,* while His disciples gathered around Him. He then *opened His mouth,* and proceeded to teach.

VER. 3. Here commence the *beatitudes, or benedictions,*—most gracious, most delightful, most instructive utterances, embodying treasures of wisdom, consolation, and love. They constitute, as Luther remarks, ‘a fine, sweet, friendly commencement’ to the body of the discourse. They are variously numbered by expositors as seven, eight, nine. They are nine, if verses 11 and 12 be considered as a distinct and complete unit, which stands by itself at the end of the row. They are eight if the 11th and 12th verses be regarded as but the unessential expansion, or the repetitious application, of the beatitude of ver. 10. They are seven, if the numbering be regulated by the distinctions in the subject matter of the promises; for the subject matter of the promise in ver. 10 is identical with that of ver. 3. *Blessed:* That is, *Happy;* and so the word is rendered in John xiii. 17; Acts xxvi. 2; Rom. xiv. 22; 1 Cor. vii. 40; 1 Pet. iii. 14, iv. 14. The *happiness* to which it here refers is *bliss.* How beautifully appropriate, how delightfully suggestive, that the first word of our

are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

Saviour's sermon points up to *bliss!* The peculiar bliss referred to, a bliss that stretches into the far future, is explained in the appended promise. *Blessed are the poor in spirit:* The *are* is supplementary and unnecessary. The expression is a kind of exclamation, abrupt and sublime, *Happy the poor in spirit!* Some have violently connected the words *in spirit* with the word *happy:* *Happy-in-spirit the poor!* They have done this to bring the expression into unity with the corresponding expression in Luke vi. 20, *Happy the poor!* But the unity of the expressions is complete, so far as essential meaning is concerned, without any such violent disseverance. It is not poverty, absolutely considered, over which our Saviour pronounces His benison. It is *poverty in relation to the spirit.* But yet not *poverty in genius and learning,* as Fritzsche strangely supposes. Neither is it *moral poverty,* or *poverty in knowledge, holiness, and blessedness,* as Tholuck almost as strangely supposes. It would be no advantage, and would involve no blessing, to be poor in knowledge, and goodness, and happiness. Neither is the poverty that *voluntary outward poverty* which has been so highly belauded by Roman Catholic expositors and theologians. The Saviour's idea is altogether different. It is admirably expressed by the old American expositor, Blair: "Blessed are they who have withdrawn their minds, hearts, and affections from this world, and have set them on heaven; so that if they are outwardly poor they are contented, and if outwardly rich they set not their heart upon their riches, but are humble and modest, and diligent seekers of God, and bestow their wealth freely for the services of piety, charity, necessity, hospitality, conveniency, or whatsoever occasions do offer for the service of God or our neighbour; as freely indeed as if it had no place or room in their hearts at all." (*Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount*, iv.) We must bear in mind the imaginations and expectations that were rife among the Jewish people in reference to the Messiah. They hoped that under His banner they would be able to retrieve their fortunes. They hoped that He would lead them on to universal victory, so that they might spoil 'the sinners of the Gentiles,' and get from them that abundance of silver and gold that was the Lord's by right and theirs by birthright. Hence they were casting covetous eyes abroad, and conjuring up to themselves scenes of terrestrial luxury at home. Even among those who were crowding around Jesus, there might be not a few who had been charmed to His side by secret ambition in reference to future affluence. These might be wistfully and wonderingly waiting on, till, by some unexpected movement or miracle, He should assert His rightful place, and inaugurate His own glory and theirs by leading them to victory, plunder, and plenty. All such dreamers greatly needed instruction, that the downward twist of their minds might be straightened, and their affections lifted upward. Hence the keynote of the discourse: *Happy the poor in spirit!* *Happy they whose affections are not set on riches, and the indulgences that riches can procure!* *Happy they who are not ambitious to be rich, for the sake of riches, or for the sake of the pomp and luxury which riches can command!* *Happy they, whether outwardly poor or outwardly rich, in whose heart Mammon has no throne!* The Saviour's beatitude alights on the head of those who look upon 'godliness with contentment' to be 'great gain.' They are the contrasts of those 'that will be rich,' and in whose heart 'the love of money,' so prolific a root of evil, is predominant (1 Tim. vi. 6-10). For theirs is the kingdom of heaven: Herein are they happy, the kingdom of heaven

- 4 Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.
 5 Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.

belongs to them. They have part and lot in it. Its privileges are theirs. Its immunities and enjoyments are theirs. Its heavenly riches, its honour, its glory, are theirs. Even now the earnestness of these blessings form part of their experience, and by and by the everlasting fullness will be realized. (See on the expression *the kingdom of heaven*, under chap. iii. 2.)

VER. 4. **Happy they who mourn!** A beatitude that may seem to some to be startlingly paradoxical. "We are apt to think," says Matthew Henry, "*Blessed are the merry*; but Christ, who was himself a great mourner, says, *Blessed are the mourners.*" The mourning referred to springs from sympathy with God, whose will is so grievously disregarded and thwarted by men. Whosoever has this sympathy has in his heart a settled sorrow, because of the world-wide opposition to the heart's desire of God. He may not be always indeed, as Luther remarks, 'literally hanging his head, and looking sour, and never laughing,' but his heart is sad on account of sin. He has sorrow for sin *after a godly sort*; *godly sorrow* (2 Cor. vii. 9-11); sorrow for his own sins, and sorrow for the sins of others, *sighing and crying for the abominations* that are done in the midst of the earth (Ezek. ix. 4). There is but little of this sorrow in the world at large. A spirit of levity has all along been predominant in all peoples. And among the Jews, as among the Gentiles, there were but few who were taking much to heart the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There would be many, moreover, who were looking forward to a time of 'peculiarly frolicsome, jovial, carnal mirth' (Blair) in connection with the kingdom of the Messiah. Upon the top of all such imaginations the Saviour's beatitude would fall like a thunderbolt; while at the same time it is fitted to insinuate into the minds of all that life is a solemnity, and that the mirth which is allied to madness is the saddest of moral anomalies. **For they shall be comforted:** Namely, throughout the currency of the ages of ages, during which the kingdom of heaven is to last. God will be to them 'the God of consolation' (Rom. xv. 5). They shall have 'consolation in Christ' (Phil. ii. 1). The Holy Spirit will be to them an everlasting 'Comforter.' Even while on earth, they shall have earnestness of the 'everlasting consolation' (2 Thess. ii. 16), 'beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness' (Isa. lxi. 3). And in heaven 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes' (Rev. xxi. 4). "Wherefore," says Chrysostom, "if thou wouldest be comforted, mourn. And think not this a dark saying. For when God comforts, then though sorrows come upon thee by thousands like snowflakes, thou wilt surmount them all." Thou wilt be 'as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing' (2 Cor. vi. 10).

VER. 5. **Happy the meek!** There are many who, when subjected to suffering, and more especially to unjust suffering, ruthlessly inflicted, flare up into exasperation, exacerbation, and resentment. The spirit of revenge seizes hold of them. Such was the spirit that was burning in the hearts of many of the Jews in reference to the Gentiles who had subjected them; and, under its spur, they were eager to enlist under the banner of the unconquerable Messiah, that they might wreak their long-pent-up vengeance upon their oppressors. But no, said Jesus; that is not the spirit of the heavenly theocracy. *Blessed are the meek! Happy they who allow not the spirit of retaliation to live within their souls!* **For they shall inherit the earth:** They shall inherit the earth as it is to be when

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful :

it becomes, for theocratic purposes, a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The cosmical riches and enjoyments which God has so munificently provided and stored up for His moral creatures belong to the meek, and will in due time be conferred upon them. This is the real idea that underlies the 37th Psalm, from which the Saviour has drawn this particular beatitude. (See ver. 9, 11, 29.)

VER. 6. Happy they who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness ! There is no reference here, as Calvin thought, to *imputative righteousness*, as is evident for this as well as for other reasons, that the Great Teacher is not treating, in these beatitudes, of the things that belong to the sphere of justification or the sinner's title to heaven. He is treating, as Luther observed, of the things that belong to the sphere of sanctification, and that concern the sinner's ethical meetness for glory, honour and immortality. Instead of *righteousness*, Blair would read *justice*. He thus interprets the beatitude : *Blessed are they who, instead of being hungry and thirsty after their neighbours' estates, by the way of fraud and unjust conquest, desire above all things to wrong nobody ; but what they get, to get it fairly and honestly.* The interpretation, no doubt, takes up a filament of the Saviour's idea ; but it is a filament only. The *righteousness* referred to must have a far larger diameter, as is evidenced not only by the general usage of the term, but by its obvious import in the 10th and 20th verses of this chapter ; and as is still further evidenced by the fact that we read in Luke vi. 21, without any specification of the object at all, *Blessed are ye that hunger now !* That beatitude cannot mean *Blessed are ye that hunger now after fair dealing !* It must have a wider and a generic, though spiritual, reference. The *righteousness* meant then is undoubtedly *ethical righteousness in general, ethical righteousness in its higher as well as in its lower relationships*, such righteousness as is realized when both the inner and the outer attitude and demeanour of the man, at once self-ward, men-ward, and God-ward, are right. *Happy they whose chief hungering and thirsting is not for luscious viands and seductive drinks, but for righteousness !* Many of the Jews, oppressed with poverty, would be casting envious eyes upon the richly furnished tables of their Gentile superiors, and would be ready and eager to be led by the Messiah to the spoil. But no : the followers of the Messiah must hunger and thirst after something higher and holier. **For they shall be satisfied :** Their whole soul shall be replenished and strengthened and gladdened with the righteousness for which they have longed. This satisfying will be chiefly in heaven.

VER. 7. Happy the merciful ! The old Anglo-Saxon version of the word for *merciful* is *mild-heartan*, i.e. *mild-hearted*. Joseph Benson describes them thus : " the tender-hearted, compassionate, kind, and beneficent, who, being " inwardly affected with the infirmities, necessities, and miseries of their " fellow creatures, and feeling them as their own, with tender sympathy " endeavour, as they have ability, to relieve them." (*Commentary*, in loc.) Visions of severe retaliation and vengeance may have floated before the minds of many among the Jews who were eager to hail the long promised Deliverer. Similar visions may be apt to intrude themselves before the view of all who suffer wrong at the hands of their fellow men. But *Happy the merciful !* Even when there is no express consciousness of having suffered wrongfully, and thus

for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart :

no temptation to indulge in outbreaks of retaliation and revenge, there is often very explicit disregard of the woes of the unfortunate and erring. But *Happy the compassionating!* For they shall obtain compassion and mercy: Namely, from God, and throughout the lifetime of eternity. They shall be the objects of that Divine commiseration which has forgiveness in it, and not only forgiveness, but also all those other blessings which are needed to complete forgiveness.

VER. 8. *Happy the pure in heart!* Another view of the character of those who are morally meet for the enjoyment of the high privileges of the kingdom of heaven. *Happy the pure!* The clean! the holy! There is defilement in sin. *The pure in heart:* The inwardly pure. Luther draws attention to the fact that among the Jews, as afterwards among the monks, holiness was regarded as consisting, to a large extent, in a certain outward condition. The scribes and Pharisees 'made clean the *outside of the cup and of the platter*, but within were full of extortion and excess' (Matt. xxiii. 25). But '*Happy the pure in heart!*' Unless the fountain of the heart be pure, the streams of the outer life must be more or less turbid. For they shall see God; in glory. They shall have the beatific vision of God throughout eternity. Augustin employed himself much with the question, *How shall they see God?* He wrote a long letter on the subject to Paulina (*Epist.* 147), and he very properly maintains that it is not with the bodily eyes that the vision is to be enjoyed. He distinguishes finely between different modes of seeing. But we need not call in the aid of much intellectual subtlety to qualify us to form a suitable conception of the *beatific Vision*. It may suffice if we ascend only a very limited number of the rounds of the infinite ladder that enables us to command a view of the subject. One round is this, 'He that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9). He who has seen Jesus has seen something of God; and he who in glory shall see Jesus glorified will see more and still more of God. Another round is this: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, *we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is*" (1 John iii. 2). We shall see Him 'face to face,' and shall 'know even as also we are known' (1 Cor. xiii. 12). Another round is this: when we shall see Jesus as He is, and God in Jesus, we shall be in the most glorious of the presence-chambers of God. We shall be 'before the throne of God' (Rev. vii. 15, xxii. 3, 4). And when there, we shall find that 'in His presence is fulness of joy' (Ps. xvi. 11). This fulness we shall find to be flowing forth for ever from the native fulness of God's infinity, a fulness that will be for ever pouring itself forth, and yet for ever remaining inexhaustibly and infinitely full. What if the perception of this inexhaustible fulness, a perception obtained by looking steadfastly *into God* and seeing Him as He is, be one of the chief elements of everlasting bliss? What if the contemplation, with 'face unveiled,' of the infinite glory be ineffably glorious and glorifying? Are we not already, even at this initial stage of the explanation of the Saviour's words, far enough up on the ladder of observation? Is it any longer a wonder that Jesus should have said, *Happy the pure in heart! for they shall see God*. The peculiar relation of the *purity* specified to the *beatific vision* specified may be twofold. (1) Without such purity it would be unbecomingly to admit into the most glorious presence-chamber of God. (2) And without such purity the inner percipiency of the soul would be defiled and darkened.

for they shall see God. 9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God. 10 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for their's is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you

VER. 9. **Happy the peacemakers!** Another phase of the character which will meet the approbation of the King of kings in the kingdom of heaven. *Happy* they who are not only (passively) *peaceable*, but (actively) *pacific*, seeking to bring their fellow men into harmony with one another. Happy they who make it one of the earnest aims of their life to bridge the gulfs that separate class from class in society, and party from party, and individual from individual, so that mankind, at once in the larger and in the smaller circles of its groupings, may live in mutual good-will and love. **For they shall be called God's sons:** Their family likeness to God will be ultimately and universally acknowledged. They will consequently be universally owned as entitled to all the privileges of the sons and heirs of God. This delightful beatitude falls appropriately from the lips of Him who was Himself the Prince of peace. And yet it must have sounded like a clap of thunder over the hearts of some of those who were revelling in the imagination that the time had arrived when war to the bitter end was to be proclaimed against the surrounding principalities of the Gentiles.

VER. 10. **Happy they who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake!** The Saviour is looking back for the moment to such as had been persecuted in time past. Perhaps He was thinking of the treatment which John the Baptist and other kindred spirits *had received*. It was competent to Him, while uttering the beatitude, to look in the direction either of the past, or of the future, or of the present. *For righteousness' sake:* Because their voice had been lifted up for righteousness, or because in their life they had been eminently characterised by righteousness. It is, of course, the *righteousness* of the cause that makes the martyr. **For theirs is the kingdom of heaven:** See ver. 3. The series of benedictions ends, as it began, with what is inclusive of all Messianic blessings. The blessings enumerated in ver. 4-9 are but particular aspects of the bliss that is summed up in being citizens of *the kingdom of heaven*.

VER. 11. **Happy are ye:** The abrupt exclamations contained in ver. 3-10 are now wound up. The element of explicit affirmation enters into the supplementary statement of this verse; and hence the employment of the substantive verb, 'Happy *are* ye.' The Saviour would, no doubt, turn His eyes, as He uttered the words, upon His chosen disciples. Perhaps He would point to them with His hand. *Happy are ye*, namely, in relation to what is to come. See ver. 12. **When men shall revile you:** Shall reproach you, shall load you with opprobrious epithets. The Saviour seizes hold, first of all, of one of the commonest forms of persecution, a form however which it is peculiarly difficult to endure with equanimity. **And persecute you:** Having specified one of the commonest forms of persecution, He then adds the generic term, which includes all forms. Beza and others suppose that the term is used specifically to denote *prosecution* in a court of law. But the use of the term in the preceding and in the succeeding verse, as well as in the New Testament generally, is against this narrowing of the reference. **And say all manner of evil against you:** Having

falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost his

used the generic term, the Saviour's mind recurs to what is specific ; and He mentions a form of persecution that lies on one line with *reviling* or *reproaching*, namely, unscrupulous and malignant *evil speaking*, more particularly behind the back ; slander. **Falsely** : Or, more literally, *falsifying*. The margin gives it *lying*, the word that is found in Purvey's revision of Wycliffe's version. Wycliffe's own word is *leezing*. It is of unspeakable moment for the happiness of Christ's disciples that the slanders with which they are assailed be utterly without foundation so far as their conduct and character are concerned. **For My sake** : The intense consciousness of His Messiahship comes out in this expression ; and in this intense consciousness He realizes that they who might suffer *for His sake* would be suffering *for righteousness' sake*. See ver. 10. The expression moreover assumes that the Saviour's cause was not to be immediately popular in the earth. It was not to be a mere triumphal procession, and still less a sensuously triumphal progress. He forewarns His followers. He forearms His adherents.

VER. 12. **Rejoice, and be exceeding glad** : Even in the midst of your sufferings and consequent sorrows. Such gladness in connection with sadness is no impossibility ; even as there is no impossibility in having the one hand delightfully warm in consequence of being immersed in a warm element, while the other may be distressingly cold, in consequence of being immersed in a freezing element. *Be exceeding glad* : 'Leap and skip for joy,' as Trapp has it. 'Spring upward in joyful hope toward your reward in heaven,' as Stier presents it. **For great is your reward in the heavens** : The reward which is reserved for you in heaven is *much* (*πολύς*), abundant, ample, or *plenteouse*, as Wycliffe has it. It will more than compensate for all your losses and crosses. The word which is translated *reward* (*μισθός*) properly means *what is earned*, and hence *what is deserved*. It is rendered *hire* in Matt. xx. 8, Luke x. 7, Jas. v. 4 ; and *wages* in John iv. 36, 2 Pet. ii. 15. But in such a passage as the one before us it simply designates the *gracious recompence* which it is the good pleasure of the propitious and propitiator God to confer upon those who own and honour the propitiation and the Propitiator. It is His good pleasure that none who suffer for the Saviour's sake should in the long run be losers. It is His good pleasure that they should all be great and everlasting gainers. **For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you** : The prophets who preceded you, and into whose place, but on a higher plane, ye are about to step.

VER. 13. **Ye are the salt of the earth** : The Saviour continues to direct His address to the inner circle of His disciples. *Ye, My true disciples, are the salt of the earth ;—ye, who are poor in spirit, and who mourn, and are meek, and who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are merciful, and pure in heart, and peacemakers, and may yet be persecuted for righteousness' sake,—ye are the salt of the earth.* The point of transition from the exhibition of their peculiar bliss to the exhibition of their peculiar mission is found in the correspondence of their position to that of the prophets of old. What the prophets were to Israel in ancient times, that Christians in modern times are to be to the whole of mankind. *The salt of the earth* : That which is to preserve the earth from

savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A

running to absolute moral waste and loathsomeness. *The earth*, considered in its human population, is in a state of corruption. Its condition is most offensive. It is putrescent. Nothing can save the race from being dissolved in utter and most noisome ruin but the influence of Christ, exerted to a large extent through Christians. *Nothing is more useful than sun and salt* was a Latin proverb. But if the salt should have lost his savour: '*His savour*,' that is, '*its savour*,' for the pronouns *his* and *her*, as the case might be, were of old used for *its*; and indeed *its* is never employed at all in our English Bible. It occurs once, in the modern editions of the text, viz. in Lev. xxv. 5; but in the primary edition of 1611 it is *it* and not *its* that is employed. Before *its* had got itself established in our language, *it* had often to do duty in its room; as indeed it still does in the phrase *it-self*, not *its-self* (see Craik's *English of Shakespeare*, p. 93, ed. 1857). The Saviour no sooner points out to His disciples their peculiar mission in the world, than He gives them solemn warning of the woeful consequences that would ensue if they should prove unfaithful. He supposes the case of salt losing its savour; a case it seems that is realizable, at least when we occupy a point of observation that is simply popular. Maundrell, in his description of the *Valley of Salt*, at the close of his *Journey from Aleppo*, says: "Along on one side of the valley, viz. that towards Gibul, there is a small precipice about two men's lengths, occasioned by the continual taking away the salt; and in this you may see how the veins of it lie. I broke a piece of it, of which that part that was exposed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet it had perceptibly lost its savour, as in St. Matthew, chap. v." The expression *should lose its savour* means *should become insipid*. Very literally it means *should become fatuous*; for salt, with its seasoning and pungent properties, was regarded as emblematic of *wisdom* or *wit*. Wherewith shall it be salted? Salt, as Luther remarks, "is not salt for itself: it cannot salt itself." It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men: The Saviour's standpoint, in uttering these words, is, as Luther intimates, *that of the kitchen*. Salt is kept there for domestic use, in order that such things as animal food, etc., may be salted with it. But if it should lose its savour, nothing else can be done with it, at least under an oriental system of police, than to cast it out on the road, where it would be trodden under foot of men. Unlike some other wasted things, it cannot be turned to useful agricultural account (see Luke xiv. 35). So *unchristian christians*, if such beings there be, are the most useless of mortals.

VER. 14. Ye are the light of the world: Another phase of the mission of the disciples of Christ. The world is in moral darkness. Men are not seeing what they are, and whence they are, and why they are, and whither they are going. They are in the dark as to the way of true life, of true bliss. Christians are *the light of the world*, in a subordinate respect it is true, but still really. Christ Himself is "the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John i. 9, viii. 12). He is *the Sun of righteousness*. Christians, in virtue of their recipient relation to Him, are *luminaries in the world, holding forth the word of life* (Phil. ii. 15, 16). They reflect Christ's light. And

city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your

hence, in the sum total of their influence, they may be said to be *the light of the world*. By means of them light from heaven, Christ's own heavenly light, is shed upon men. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid: Or, more literally, *A city lying on the top of a hill cannot be hid*. Our Saviour may not improbably have pointed to some city within sight, crowning conspicuously some hill. Maundrell says: "May we not suppose that Christ alludes to Saphet? It stands upon a very eminent and conspicuous mountain, and is seen far and "near" (*Journey from Aleppo*, Ap. 19). Tholuck takes up the same idea. But Robinson says that "there is no evidence that any ancient city existed on the present site of Saphet" (*Biblical Researches*, vol. iii., p. 326). There seems to be no exceedingly intimate connection intended between the statement, *A city lying on the top of a hill cannot be hid*, and the immediately preceding statement, *Ye are the light of the world*. It would indeed have been well if Robert Stephens had cut the verse into two; for the second member, while having a real connection with the first, introduces a new vein of thought,—this, to wit, that such is the mission of Christians that, if they be true to it, they cannot go out of sight with their Christianity. They cannot bury their Christianity. Their presence is needed in society, their presence as Christians. Whatever therefore may be the persecutions which may befall them, they must stand to their post.

VER. 15. Neither do men light a candle,—or a lamp,—and put it under a bushel: The word rendered *bushel* is the Latin term *modius*, which was a "dry measure" nearly corresponding to the English *peck*. It was principally used for measuring corn. It seems to have been a common article of household furniture, as is indicated by the particularizing form of expression in the original, 'under the bushel,' that is, *under the corn measure (which is found, as a general rule, in every house)*. The particular corn measure referred to cannot be translated into English. Wycliffe used the word *bushel*; and his rendering kept its place in Tyndale's version and the succeeding translations. The word employed by the evangelist corresponded to the *seah* of the Hebrews. But on a candlestick: Or, more literally, *but upon the lampstand*, which was much higher than our common candlesticks, and generally stood on the floor. Note the article again: there would be in general only one lampstand in each humble house. And—when thus placed—it giveth light to all that are in the house: Christians are lighted up by God for the very purpose of giving light to all around them. See next verse.

VER. 16. Let your light so shine before men: The *so* looks backward to the illustration of the preceding verse. In the original it stands at the beginning of the clause, *Thus let your light shine before men; thus*, as the light of a lamp in a house, when the lamp is placed conspicuously on the lamp-holder. Do not hide your Christianity. Carry it about with you everywhere, modestly but bravely. That they may see your good works: *That, in order that*. While you never do an atom of work for ostentation, yet let the whole work of your life be good and Christian, whosoever may be looking on. Act out your Christianity to the full, in society, and before society, that society may get the benefit of it.

good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For

Let that benefit indeed be ever in view. The injunction is in perfect harmony with what is said in Matt. vi. 1-18, for Christianity has an outside as well as an inside, and to turn the outside in is just as wrong and inconsistent as to turn the inside out. *And glorify your Father who is in heaven : That is, And be led up in their thoughts far above yourselves to your heavenly Father, ascribing glory to Him, the glory of all that is good in you and good for them.*

VER. 17. A fresh line of thought begins here, and extends to the conclusion of the chapter. It constitutes a considerable portion of the body of the *Sermon on the Mount*. Its purport is to tighten the bands of morality upon the consciences of our Saviour's followers. The line of thought is, as we have said, fresh, and yet it has obvious filaments of connection with the introductory matter that goes before. It presents different phases of the ethical characteristics that are held forth to view in the beatitudes. And it shows in what spirit the children of the kingdom of heaven are to realize for themselves the glory of being *the salt of the earth and the light of the world*. Think not—suppose not, imagine not—that I am come,—or more literally, *that I came*, namely, into the world,—to destroy the law or the prophets : Think not that I came to relax and set aside those injunctions which are the spirit and essence of the *law or the prophets*. By the *law* He meant the original and fundamental part of the Old Testament Scriptures, the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses. By the *prophets* He meant the superadded portions of the Old Testament Scriptures, which were all written by *prophets, or holy men of old who spake in the name and under the influence of God*. The sum total of the whole Old Testament Scripture is a many-sided unity, and may thus be considered, according to circumstances, under a variety of aspects. Here it is viewed as inculcating a *lofty style of personal goodness, righteousness, or morality*. And it is indisputable that the grand aim of the whole Bible, both the Old Testament and the New, is *to make men good* (see Matt. vii. 12, xxii. 40 ; Rom. xiii. 8-10 ; Gal. v. 14). The Saviour says, “the law or the prophets.” It was at His option either to use this disjunctive expression, or to employ the conjunctive phrase “the law *and* the prophets.” If He had employed the latter He would have brought into view the oneness of the Scriptures. By using the former He brings into view the plurality and diversity of the classified writings which constitute the *volume of the book*. He had no intention of setting aside any of the principles of righteousness or true morality, whether inculcated in the *law* on the one hand, or exhibited and enforced in the *prophets* on the other. When it is said, *Imagine not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets*, it is assumed that there either were, or might be, afloat in the minds of many who were longing for the coming of the Messiah, notions that were quite antagonistic to the real aim of the Messiah. It is likely that not a few expected greater liberty in things moral, less restraint. They would especially desire a very large licence when engaged in fighting the Messiah's battles, and overthrowing the kingdoms of the Gentiles. The word rendered to *destroy* (*καταλῦσαι*) means *to loosen down, to dissolve, to abrogate or set aside ; to undo*, as Wycliffe gives it. The same translation is given, as an alternative version, in the Lindisfarne Gospels, *to undoenne*. “Think not that I will dispense with any of the rules of morality, prescribed by Moses, and explained “by the prophets” (Blair). I came not to destroy, but to fulfil (both the *law*

verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

and the prophets): To fulfil, that is, to render full obedience to those great commandments (see ver. 19) which it is the pre-eminent aim of the Scriptures to inculcate and enforce. Jesus came to render this full obedience in His own person, and also to secure that it should be rendered increasingly, and ever increasingly, in the persons of His disciples, the subjects of His kingdom. It is this latter idea that was prominently in His mind on the present occasion, as is evident from the 19th and 20th verses. He came, not to introduce licence and licentiousness into His kingdom, but to establish holiness. Some expositors suppose that the word fulfil means to supplement or perfect; and they imagine that Christ is here referring to His legislative authority. But such an interpretation of the term is at variance with verses 18 and 19, and with its use in kindred passages, such as Rom. xiii. 8, Gal. v. 14. Theophylact, among other interpretations, says that Christ fulfilled the law as a painter fills up the sketch of his picture. But it is a different full-filling that is referred to. When commandments are addressed to us, they present, as it were, empty vessels of duty, which our obedience is to fill full.

VER. 18. For verily I say unto you: *Verily, truly.* An idiomatic phrase. It is as if the Saviour had said, *For I say unto you, and mark My saying, for it embodies a very solemn truth.* Till heaven and earth pass: Or, *pass away*, as the same word is rendered in Matt. xxiv. 35, Luke xxi. 33, 2 Cor. v. 17, 2 Pet. iii. 10, Rev. xxi. 1. Coverdale's translation is 'till heaven and earth perizhe.' *Till the present cosmical system ceases to exist.* Our Saviour does not at present go farther in His reference. He does not speak of absolute perpetuity, or look indefinitely into the infinite future. But, realizing the remarkable strength and stability of the present cosmical system of things, He allows the minds of His hearers to run onward in time till they feel as it were lost in the indistinct haze of the far future, *till heaven and earth have passed away.* There can be no doubt however that our Saviour, when going down into the depth of His mind, anticipated, as every profound thinker must anticipate, a far-away time when the present cosmical system shall cease, when the heavens and the earth shall have passed away (see Matt. xxiv. 35, Mark xiii. 31, Luke xxi. 33. Comp. Ps. cii. 26 and 2 Pet. iii. 10-13). One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law: That is, *Not the least element of that system of ethical duty, which it is the essential aim of the law to promulgate, inculcate, and enforce, will be abrogated or legislatively set aside.* The Saviour uses the word law here as inclusive of the prophets. All the writings of the Old Testament that were added to the *Five Books of Moses* were but an expansion of the authoritative Divine instruction contained in the original law. The word jot, *yod*, or *iota* as it is in the Vulgate, is the name of the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Both Wycliffe and Luther, as well as Tyndale, and the Geneva, and Cheke, and our Authorized version, use the word tittle (or titel, or tytle, or titil, or tittle; Tittel, Luther). The original term denotes the extremely slight bend, turn, or point, that serves to distinguish certain similar letters in the Hebrew alphabet, which would otherwise be indiscriminated. When our Saviour says, *one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away*, He does not refer to the perpetuity of the written letters as letters. It is to the spirit, as distinguished from the letters, that He refers. His meaning is, that not the minutest element of the spirit of the Scriptures shall be abrogated. Till all be

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

fulfilled : *Till all have come to pass, Till all have been realized*, that is, till all the elements, the jots and tittles as well as the larger ingredients, of the Divine law, the Divine authoritative instruction regarding the duty of men as men, have been realized in the character of men. And when shall this consummation come to pass? It will never so come to pass as to be *passed*. It will never become a mere thing of the *past*. It must run on throughout eternity. The time will never come when men shall have so fulfilled the law of love, that for the future no more love will be required. Is it the case then that when the present heavens and earth shall have passed away some jots and tittles of the law will pass away? By no means. Our Saviour says *till*, voluntarily limiting His reference. But if He had chosen He could have gone farther forward, and have said that in the new heavens and the new earth, which are to supersede the old, there will dwell *righteousness*, which *righteousness* is the sum and substance of the law and the prophets (see 2 Pet. iii. 13). He might have said, again, that *love* shall never vanish away; and *love is the fulfilling of the law and the prophets*. (See 1 Cor. xiii. 8; and Matt. vii. 12, xxii. 37-40; Rom. xiii. 8-10; Gal. v. 14.)

VER. 19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments : *These least commandments*, these *jots and tittles* of commandments, these smallest elements of the ethical duties which are inculcated in the Scripture, and which are valid for all time. "Whosoever shall *break* one of these;" shall *break* (λύσῃ), that is, shall *loose* or *loosen*. The idea is, whosoever of the subjects of the kingdom of heaven, for it is of these only that the Saviour is speaking, shall in theory loosen the authority or obligation of one of the smallest elements of moral duty, and shall, in practice, deliberately act according to his theory. And shall *teach men so* : Shall have such confidence in his theory that he will inculcate its reception upon his fellow men, and urge upon them the reduction of it into practice. He shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven : Not 'the least' in the original, but simply 'least,' which is not so intensely strong. It is nevertheless sufficiently and very solemnly strong, and seems to intimate that if the loosening take place in reference to any of the weightier commandments, there would not be any ground for indulging the hope that the guilty individual could be numbered at all among the permanent citizens of the kingdom. Persons of *loose* principles in things moral cannot be recognised as true subjects of the kingdom of heaven, *subjects* who are *subject*. There is thus tremendous danger in tampering with even the minutest elements of moral principles. While they who loosen one of the least commandments may and will be saved, if otherwise consistently *subject*, yet it will be 'so as by fire' (1 Cor. iii. 15). They will not entirely forfeit their place in the kingdom of heaven; but the place assigned to them will be the lowest. He shall be called *least* : *Called least*, that is, *recognised as least*; recognised by all whose judgment is worthy of consideration. Christ Himself will call them least; and so will all others who agree in mind with Christ. But whosoever shall do and teach (these least commandments), the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven : Whosoever shall fill up the complement of his ethical

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,

duties, by carefully adding all the jots and tittles to the greater and weightier matters, shall be exalted in honour within the kingdom of heaven. His star shall be peculiarly lustrous.

VER. 20. For I say to you: It is as if the Saviour had said, Think it not strange that I enforce with such emphasis the observance of the jots and tittles of the commandments of Scripture, *for I say unto you* that all the goodness, or righteousness, which will be realized by the observance of these and the other commandments of God will not be more than what is needed. **Except your righteousness:** Your personal righteousness, the righteousness of your personal character. The Saviour refers to that righteousness which constitutes the sinner's moral meetness for 'glory, honour, and immortality,' not to that which constitutes the sinner's title. Calvin was undoubtedly much mistaken in supposing that our Lord here refers to His own mediatorial and imputative righteousness. **Shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees:** Which was, in general, artificial and outward, and therefore unreal. Their righteousness was, in general, a matter of profession rather than of practice. And, so far as it was a matter of practice, it consisted rather of certain superficialities and crotchets of conduct, than of full-orbed love to God and man. Such full-orbed love, though very imperfect it may be in degree, is what is needed as ethical meetness for the enjoyment of the high heavenly privileges of the kingdom of heaven. It is noticeable that the Saviour classes together *the scribes and Pharisees*. He does not say '*the scribes and the Pharisees,*' but '*the scribes and Pharisees,*' reducing them to one company. The *scribes* were the learned class in the Jewish community, the class in which the rabbis were found (see on Matt. ii. 4). Their learning was peculiarly theological. It had to do with the religion of the people. The *Pharisees* again were the highest professors of religiousness (see on Matt. iii. 7). Both they and the scribes were, numerically, a very limited class of the population. Josephus mentions that in the time of Herod the Pharisees numbered above six thousand (*Ant.*, xvii. 2: 4). But, though limited in numbers, they were mighty in moral influence among the mass of the people. And unhappily their moral influence was, in the main, perverting and deteriorating. **Ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven:** None but those who have real righteousness of character, and full-orbed in kind, are meet for the kingdom of heaven. In other words, none but the sanctified are meet. It is the glory of the gospel that it makes provision for both justification and sanctification, 'the double cure of sin.'

VER. 21. From this verse onward to the end of the chapter the Saviour gives some representative exemplifications of the way in which the righteousness of His disciples would require to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. **Ye have heard:** Or very literally, *Ye heard* (*ἤκούσατε*). It is as if the Saviour were referring to some specific discourse, which some rabbi or other had just been delivering to the people, and perhaps as a polemic against the doctrines and influence of Jesus. We need not doubt that there would be many such discussional discourses. And while the native majesty of our Lord

Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgement: 22 but I say unto you, That whoso-

would not suffer Him to descend into petty controversies, it is likely enough that several parts of the *Sermon on the Mount* owe their peculiar shaping to the peculiar nature of the representations made by His rabbinical opponents. That it was said by them of old time: Expositors have keenly debated whether in translating this clause we should use the preposition *by* or the preposition *to*. The original expression is susceptible of both translations, inasmuch as the word rendered *them of old time*, though properly a *dative*, may be taken either *datively* or *ablatively*. While in the text of our Authorized version we have *by*, in the margin we have *to*. And Wycliffe has *to*. So has Tyndale; Coverdale also; the Geneva version too; and the Rheims; and Sir John Cheke likewise. So has Luther, and the Vulgate, and the Syriac. Calvin likewise approves of *to*. He was right we imagine; though *by* was approved of by Beza in the 1582 edition of his version, and the editions which succeeded. Piscator followed in Beza's wake, and also the authors of our Authorized English version, and many others. Among the moderns, Fritzsche defends *by*, and Stier pleads for it earnestly. But the simpler and more natural translation is *to*. Meyer decides for it. It was the aim of the rabbis to suggest that the dogmas which they sought to enforce were invested with Divine authority. But as they could not aver that these dogmas taken all through were really the direct utterances of God, they veiled the origin of them in an indefinite expression, *It was said to them of old time*. To have contented themselves with the assertion, *It was said by them of old time*, would have been tantamount to an appeal to *men only, men exclusive of God*. We are thus aided in our attempt to determine the proper translation of the phrase by looking at it not as if it were simply the one half of an antithesis proposed by our Lord, but as being the carefully selected phrase of the doctors of the law, when they were wishing to affix to their traditional dogmas the seal and sanction of the highest possible authority. Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgement: *Thou shalt not murder, and whosoever shall murder shall be liable to the judgement*. By the judgement we are apparently to understand not *God's final judgement*, but the *assize*, a certain subordinate Jewish court or tribunal (Heb. י'ד). We learn from Josephus that there were such courts established in every considerable city (*Ant.*, iv. 8: 14; *Wars*, ii. 20: 3). These courts, though doubtless developed into maturity after the return from the captivity, were in harmony with the original constitution of the commonwealth; see Deut. xvi. 18, and comp. 2 Chron. xix. 5-7. It would appear that in our Saviour's time they had power to deal with even capital offences. Hence the rabbis, when cautioning their hearers against murder, reminded them that if they neglected the caution they would render themselves liable to a criminal prosecution before the tribunal, within the sphere of whose jurisdiction the crime might happen to be committed. Such was the teaching of the scribes. It was good so far as it went. But as a specimen of fundamental moral instruction in regard to *righteousness*, it was lamentably defective. Hence ver. 22.

VER. 22. But I say to you: The emphasis lies, not on *you* as distinguished from *them of old time*, but on the pronoun 'I.' The intense self-consciousness of the Messiah as the Messiah, and as realizing all the dignity of His nature and office, is condensed into the pronoun. He speaks with an authority which

ever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his

towered far above the authority which He was disposed to accord to the doctors of the law. The spirit of a *thus saith the Lord* is in His affirmation. That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause: Whosoever cherishes in his heart a feeling of malevolent irritation in reference to any one of his brethren of mankind. Anger is a certain intensified feeling of displeasure. Locke defines it as "uneasiness or discomposure of the mind, upon the receipt of any injury, with a present purpose of revenge" (*Human Understanding*, ii. 20, § 12). Johnson adopts Locke's definition. It will suffice. But the uncasiness or displeasure that is felt may be controlled either by malevolence or by benevolence. If it be controlled by benevolence, the anger is holy. It is akin to *anguish*. It is righteous. It is indignation, such as God Himself feels when He is 'angry with the wicked every day.' If it be controlled by malevolence, the anger is unholy. If it be outrageous as well as malevolent, then it is, as Seneca expresses it, a *brief madness*. The anger referred to in the passage before us is that which is too common among men, malevolent irritation. The expression *with his brother* already points to one of the Saviour's grand ideas, that every man is every other man's brother. The expression *without a cause* means *groundlessly*. It was supposed by Jerome that it was intruded into the text; and he mentions that it was not found in the best codices. It is certainly not found in the Sinaitic manuscript nor in the Vatican. Erasmus thought it spurious. So did Mill and Bengel; and so too Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Westcott-and-Hort. Tregelles also suspects it. It was probably a marginal note in some early copy, and thence admitted into the text. *Shall be in danger of the judgement: Shall be amenable to the judgement.* That is, *Shall be amenable to the subordinate judicial court referred to in the preceding verse.* The Saviour's representation is graphic, and must be interpreted, not according to the letter, but according to the spirit. His idea is that in the true doctrine of morals we must go far deeper than the doctors of the law were disposed to go. We must go down to the fountain, whence emanate outward moral acts; the voluntary state of the heart. He who cherishes malevolent irritation against a brother man is as guilty in the sight of God as is the man who is said by the rabbis to be liable to be prosecuted in the judgment. *And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca: Raca!* is to us a meaningless term; but to the Jews it must have been, when seriously employed, full of depreciatory import. Its real import is not yet quite definitely determined. Some suppose that it is connected with the Hebrew verb *rakak*, to *spit*, and that it would thus denote *contempt* or *disgust*. Theophylact makes reference to this derivation; Münster also. Augustin says that he was told by a Hebrew that the word was just a kind of interjection, expressive of indignation, a sort of untranslatable exclamation or expletive, like the Latin *hem!* (*De Sermone in Monte*, i., § 23.) Augustin's idea is no doubt the right one in the main. Whatever the original import of the word may have been, it had come to be conventionally banded about as an ungracious and ugly exclamation or expletive, banded about by such as were not careful of their words. It would be often used almost unmeaningly, like some of our odious British expletives; but, like them too, it would be capable of being more or less emphasized into bitterness of import. Jerome supposes that it is radically connected, not with *rakak*, to *spit*, but with *rek*, *empty*, and that it is thus identical with the Chaldee *Reca! Empty pate!*

brother, *Raca*, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember-

There is, in connection with this interpretation, some difficulty with the spelling or pronunciation, *a* being in place of *e*, *Raca!* in place of *Reca!* But as *Reca!* is actually used by the rabbinical writers as an ugly exclamation or expletive of the kind described (see Lightfoot and Wetstein, in loc.), an exclamation too that was not infrequently applied in the spirit of mere levity, it is not unlikely that *Raca!* was just the provincial form which it assumed in the current Galilean dialect or pronunciation. Drusius, Buxtorf, and Meyer, and indeed the great majority of good authorities, are all of opinion that the two words are identical. **Shall be in danger of the council:** *Shall be amenable to the sanhedrin*, the highest court among the Jews. It met in Jerusalem, and took cognisance of all such crimes as were too grave to be disposed of by the subordinate courts. The Saviour's idea is, that to add to the fact of malevolent feeling the further fact of expressing the feeling in cutting language involves a deeper criminality still, a criminality that reaches down into a penal desert much deeper than was fathomed by the line of the doctors of the law, even when they estimated the criminality of actual murder. **But whosoever shall say, Thou fool:** Using the word in its ethical acceptation, *Thou scapegrace!* Whosoever shall employ this, or any corresponding expression, malevolently and insultingly. It is implied that, in the current language of the people, *Fool!* was a stronger and more envenomed term than *Raca!* Whosoever shall speak words which are cruelly intended to rankle in the heart, **Shall be liable to be cast into the Gehenna of fire:** The Gehenna of fire was *the valley of Hinnom*, a deep narrow gorge to the south of Jerusalem, where, in the times of idolatry, children had been sacrificed to Molech (2 Chron. xxviii. 3, xxxiii. 6; Jer. vii. 31, xix. 2-6). It was hence formally desecrated by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10), and thence became the refuse place of the city, into which the dead bodies of criminals, the carcasses of animals, and all sorts of filth were cast. It is reported also that fires were occasionally kindled in the spot to consume the noisome substances that were collected. "From the depth and narrowness of the gorge, and perhaps its ever-burning fires, as well as from its being the receptacle of all sorts of putrefying matter and all that defiled the Holy City, it became in later times the image of the place of everlasting punishment, *where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched*" (Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*). In the passage before us the expression seems to bear, hieroglyphically, its original and physical import; the Saviour's idea being that cruel insult in language is so criminal, and so truly the essence of murder, that were it to be punished on earth as it deserves, human contrivance would be at a loss to find out a penalty that would be too severe and ignominious. No form of punishment could be severer than to be cast into the Gehenna of fire. And yet this would not be too severe for him who launches into the heart of a brother man words of insolence and insult. He commits double murder, first in his own heart, and then in the heart of his brother.

VER. 23. Therefore—that is, seeing there is so much murder in malice—if thou bring thy gift to the altar: Or, more literally, *if thou shouldst be offering thy gift upon the altar*,—if thou shouldst be engaged in presenting thy sacrifice upon the altar, namely, through the agency of the officiating priest. The

est that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge,

Saviour was speaking to Jews, and hence He draws graphically the picture of a temple scene. But the duty which He inculcates is equally applicable where there is no material altar, no professional priestly order, and no temple made with hands. **And there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee: Or, And shouldest there remember that thy brother has something against thee: Something, or sum what, as Wycliffe has it.** If thou shouldest remember, while standing at the altar, that thou hast been guilty of doing some wilful injury to thy human brother. The altar was a likely place, and the presentation of an offering upon it was a likely act, to recall to the mind offences that had been pushed aside, and almost buried out of sight, amid the bustle and the tussle of the ordinary engagements of every day life.

VER. 24. Leave there thy gift before the altar: Arrest the sacrifice. It will not, in thy present state of heart, be acceptable to God. **And go thy way:** The Saviour is drawing a picture in successive scenes. Hence this scene in particular, the departure from the temple. When we enter however into the spirit of the picture, it is not necessary to suppose that the departure must be always *on foot*. It is not geographical locomotion that is the essential thing. The heart may make the journey. **First be reconciled to thy brother:** Some critics suppose that the *first* should be joined with the preceding imperative, *First go thy way*. Chrysostom was of this opinion, and Luther too, but not Erasmus as Tholuck represents; but Meyer, and De Wette, and Alford. It is a matter of no moment. But our translators were right; and with them were Erasmus and Beza, Fritzsche also. *Be reconciled:* That is, *be thou reconciled, reconcile thyself, change thy feeling, lay aside thy ill feeling, and, if need be, make reparation and thus propitiation.* So far as thou art concerned, be *at one* again with thy brother. **And then come, and offer thy gift:** "O goodness!" exclaims Chrysostom, "O exceeding love to man! He makes no account of the honour due unto Himself, for the sake of our love toward our neighbour. *Let My service, says He, be interrupted, that thy love may continue.*" That is one view of the case; but a deeper view is this,—that *it is God's service to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.* It is our Divine mission thus to love. It is the Divine commission which is put into our hands and heart when we are sent into the world.

VER. 25. Agree with thine adversary: Literally, Be well minded toward thine adversary; be friendly toward him; act the part of a friend toward him. That however you cannot do, if, having injured him, you refuse to make reparation to him for the injury which he sustained. The Saviour here shifts His scene a little. In the two preceding verses He referred in general to any manifestation of malevolence. In this He seizes, representatively, on such a specific manifestation of malevolence as leads the injured party to become an *adversary*, that is, a *prosecutor in a lawsuit*, who is determined to recover damages. Luther strangely supposes that it is not the injured party, but the injuring, who is the *adversary*. **Quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him:** The expression is condensed and suggestive of haste. Delay not. **Lest haply the adversary deliver**

and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29 And if thy right

thee to the judge: Lest peradventure the adversary carry his threat into execution, and hand thee over to the judge. And the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison: It is scene after scene of a parabolic picture. The interpretation of the parable is not far to seek. "The application is this," says Tholuck, "Be not surprised at the urgency of My command to be reconciled; for should it be the case that you pass from this life with an unreconciled heart, the passion of which you have not repented, the wrong for which you have not atoned, will meet you as an adversary at the bar of God."

VER. 26. Verily I say to thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou have paid the uttermost farthing: Whether this last farthing ever will be paid is not a question that enters into the Saviour's representation. His representation assumes that the defender *could* make reparation; but whether he *will* or not is another question, with which this passage has really nothing to do. It is in vain therefore for Bellarmin to attempt to deduce from it the doctrine of purgatory (*De Purgat.*, i. 7). The word translated *farthing*, or *fourthing*, denotes an exceedingly small Roman coin, a *quadrans*, or fourth part of an *as*.

VER. 27. Ye heard that it was said to them of old time: Or, more simply, *Ye heard that it was said*. The phrase *to them of old time* is not repeated here in the best manuscripts and editions. It has evidently crept down from ver. 21. Thou shalt not commit adultery: It was a most important commandment, lying near the basis of social happiness and prosperity. But the scribes and Pharisees, in general, failed to see that it was intended to draw deep in its principle. They did not notice that, so far as the ethical state is concerned, something is subtended by the injunction, that stretches far down into the state of the heart.

VER. 28. But I say to you, That whosoever looketh on a woman: *Whosoever looketh*, deliberately casteth his eyes, *on a woman*, that is, on a married woman, on one who is another's wife; for our Lord is speaking specifically of adultery. At the same time, if we consider the essential principle, and thus the essential evil, of adultery, we get down to a point in which the lines of all forms of sensual impurity converge and merge. To lust after her: That is, *with the intent of lusting after her*, with the intent of encouraging impure desires in reference to her. Has committed adultery with her already in his heart: Has already acted adulterously toward her in his heart. He has in his heart perpetrated adultery on her. He has *adulterated* her. To the eye of God the essence of the crime has been committed; for it is the heart that should be kept with all diligence. And kept it may be, when we avail ourselves of the guardianship of the Lord; for, as Luther remarks, quoting the saying of some old father or worthy: *While we cannot hinder a bird flying over our head, we can well enough hinder it building its nest in our hair*.

VER. 29. And if: or better, *But if*; it is as if the Saviour had said, *Think not that I am speaking too strongly. Think not that I am imposing impossibilities*

eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife,

upon men. Difficulties there will indeed be in many cases, difficulties of self-denial. But if thy right eye offend thee, that is, if thy right eye prove a snare to thee in regard to purity. Good old Thomas Wilson, in his Christian Dictionary, correctly explains the word offend as meaning 'to minister or give occasion to sin.' Note the specification of the 'right eye,' which, like the right hand, is in general the better and more valuable of the two. The Saviour's specification of it is graphic and pointed. Pluck it out, and cast it from thee: Be decided, if this difficulty be experienced. Shrink not from the greatest self-denial. Be prepared to use the strongest measures. Cut and cauterize. Hesitate not to sacrifice everything, however valuable and dear, that is inconsistent with the maintenance of purity. Spare not even thy right eye, if the only alternatives be, either to sacrifice it, or to become impure. For it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Gehenna: The structure of the sentence is condensed and somewhat perplexed; but the idea is manifest. It is profitable for thee to suffer the loss of one of thy members, in order that (two) thy whole body may not be cast into Gehenna. The Saviour speaks in this instance of legitimate self-love. He mentions what will be profitable. His representation is pictorial. It would not be desirable to have the whole body thrown over into Gehenna (see under ver. 22). Far rather lose a member, and by and by enter into life everlasting.

VER. 30. A repetition of the idea of the preceding verse, with the specification of a different member, the right hand, the chief of human implements and instruments.

VER. 31. **But it was said:** The conjunction *But* occurs in the great body of the oldest manuscripts, the uncials, as well as in the great body of the cursives. It "whispers," says Dr. Lightfoot, "a silent objection." It conjoins what comes after with what goes before, in such a manner as to meet an evasion that might suggest itself in reference to the great law of conjugal fidelity and purity. Some might think that, whatever might be the case with others, they at least would not be chargeable with committing adultery, either in outward act or in the heart, provided they granted to their existing consorts a regular bill of divorcement, and thus cleared the way for another alliance. The Hillelites, in the time of our Lord, the disciples of Rabbi Hillel, maintained that it was allowable to divorce a wife for any reason whatsoever, if simply she did not please her husband. Whosoever would put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorcement: The recognition of a bill of divorcement formed a clause of one of the statutes given by Moses (Deut. xxiv. 1). But the liberty to divorce, when the husband found some 'uncleanness' in his wife, was permitted, as we learn from Matt. xix. 8, *because of the hardness of the hearts of the people* for whom Moses was legislating. He did not introduce the laxity of conjugal relationship. He did not originate facilities for divorce. But finding these facilities existing, and deploring the existing laxity of the conjugal tie, he did what in him lay to

let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32 but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt

tighten the tie and put hindrances in the way of divorce. He recognised the necessity of a formal and legal *bill of divorcement*; and he enacted that in the event of the divorced wife being married to another man, and thereafter either widowed or divorced again, she should never be available to her original husband. So far therefore as his statute went, it was eminently on the side, and in the interest, of conjugal constancy. But *because of the hardness of the hearts* of the people, who could not be restrained, he did *suffer them*, under the condition specified, to *put away their wives* (Matt. xix. 8). He did not however impose a law to the effect that divorce might be obtained *when a wife found no favour in her husband's eyes because he hath found some uncleanness in her*. He only introduced into one of his laws the recognition, and thus the allowance, of that *use and wont*. Deut. xxiv. 1 has been mistranslated in our Authorized version, as well as in many other versions. It should be translated thus: "When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass (as follows), *If she should not find favour in his eyes, but (if) he hath found in her some uncleanness, and (if) he write her a bill of divorcement and give it into her hand,*" etc. The conditional element runs on till ver. 4, in which alone we find the apodosis of the preamble. (See Michaelis's *Mosaisches Recht*, §§ 119, 120.)

VER. 32. But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife—or, more literally, according to the reading of the best authorities, *That every one who puts away his wife,—saving for the cause of whoredom*: Except for the reason of *whoredom*. The Saviour wisely uses the wider and generic term *whoredom* instead of the narrower and specific *adultery*, because the latter is really *whoredom and something more*, and because a transgression of chastity before marriage, and only discovered after marriage, is, though not *adultery*, yet a legitimate ground of divorce. *Causeth her to commit adultery*: In the event, namely, of her marriage to another man. She is really the wife of the man who has unrighteously put her away. *And whosoever shall marry her who is divorced committeth adultery*: Because she is really the wife of another man. The Saviour's doctrine on the subject of marriage proceeds on the assumption that *the family life*, strictly so called, is God's institution, and the only mode of sexual life that is consistent with permanent peace, purity, and prosperity in human communities, and in human society at large. Sin indeed has introduced here, as everywhere else, innumerable perplexities. Family life, originated in the midst of many moral imperfections, and often in the midst of moral recklessness, and prolonged and developed amid innumerable moral shortcomings, has not yet had fair play in our world.

VER. 33. Again ye heard that it was said to them of old time (see on ver. 21), *Thou shalt not forswear thyself*: The words here quoted from the lips of the rabbinical doctors of the law are not taken with absolute literality, like those quoted in the middle clause of ver. 21, and in ver. 27, from the Old Testament Scripture. They contain however, when taken in conjunction with

perform unto the Lord thine oaths : 34 but I say unto you, Swear not at all,—neither by heaven ; for it is God's throne : 35

the following clause, what was conceived to be the quintessence of the Divine teaching, whether conveyed through the Scripture or through tradition, regarding confirmatory appeals to God, direct or indirect. *Thou shalt not forswear thyself* : That is, *Thou shalt not forth-swear thyself, Thou shalt not swear thyself forth from the truth, Thou shalt not swear the truth forth from thyself. Thou shalt not swear to a falsehood.* And that is really the meaning of the words in Exod. xx. 7, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain* (אִשָּׁרָה, to a falsehood), as also of the words in Lev. xix. 12, *Ye shall not swear by My name falsely* (לִשְׁקֵרָה, to a falsehood). **But shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths** : Attention is here concentrated on one kind of oaths, those that are promissory, or, still more comprehensively, those that have reference to something to be done. *Be sure, said the rabbis, to perform such oaths. It is written, in Num. xxx. 2, "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond ; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth."* *It is written again, in Deut. xxiii. 21, 23, "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it." "That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform, even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth."* Such was the teaching of the rabbis. It was admirable, so far as it went. It only erred by defect. It was, as good David Dickson expresses it, a "clipped commentarie." It professed to be an exhaustive exhibition of human duty in reference to oaths ; and yet it failed to lay its hand upon one of the most odious and blasphemous of crimes. It took no notice of the enormity of sin that was involved in inconsiderate swearing. See the following verses. "This people," says Dr. W. Thomson, "are fearfully profane. Everybody curses and swears when in a passion. No people that I have ever known can compare with these Orientals for profaneness in the use of the names and attributes of God. The evil habit seems inveterate and universal." "The people now use the very same sort of oaths that are mentioned and condemned by our Lord. They swear by the head, by their life, by heaven, and by the temple, or, what is in its place, the church. The forms of cursing and swearing, however, are almost infinite, and fall on the pained ear all day long." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. xiii., p. 191.)

VER. 34. **But I say unto you, Swear not at all** : Viz. in the following ways. *On no occasion use such oaths as the following.* Such is the connection of ideas, as is evidenced by the specifications that follow. It is perhaps unfortunate that in many editions of our Authorized version, as well as in other versions and original texts (such as Tischendorf's), there should be such a strong point as a colon, or even a semicolon, after the words *Swear not at all*. It is apt to suggest that the injunction is self contained and absolute ; whereas it is only relative to what follows. Heumann would obliterate all interpunction whatsoever ; but that is swinging too far in the other direction. Bengel, Griesbach, Lachmann, and Tregelles, are right in using a comma, but only a comma. **Neither by the heaven** : A common formula of inconsiderate swearing both among Jews and among Gentiles. **For it is God's throne** : It is as if the Saviour had said, *Let it not be supposed that there is nothing dishonouring to God in such an oath ; for although God's name be not expressly uttered, there is a real refer-*

nor by the earth ; for it is his footstool : neither by Jerusalem ; for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. 37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea ; Nay, nay : for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

ence to Him. Heaven is His throne. (Isa. lxxi. 1.) Heaven is heaven because God is conspicuously there. He sits there enthroned. There would never have been an oath by heaven, had it not been for its intimate relation to God.

VER. 35. Nor by the earth : Another frequent formula of inconsiderate and profane swearing. For it is His footstool : very literally, *the footstool of His feet*. "And should be ours," says Trapp. An oath by the earth is virtually an oath by God. If there were no latent reference to God in such an oath, it would be merely irreverent nonsense. **Neither by Jerusalem :** Another formula of conversational swearing current among the Jews. For it is the city of the great King : Of God. There is irreverence therefore in the oath, irreverence that goes up to God.

VER. 36. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head : Another form of profane swearing, common among the Jews, Romans, and some other peoples. **Because thou canst not make one hair white or black :** That is, *because thou canst not make white or black one hair*. It is either an irreverently ridiculous oath, or it circuitously leads round, like the others, to God, who is the only head-maker, and hair-maker, and head and hair upholder. There is thus irreverence toward God in the oath, whether that irreverence consist in shutting Him out altogether from the oath, or in veiling the appeal to Him by following some circuitous route.

VER. 37. But let your communication be, Yea, yea ; Nay, nay : Let your talk, as the Rheims has it, or, better still, and as Wycliffe gives it, let your word (*λόγος*), your saying, your manner of speech, be *yes, yes, or no, no*, as the case may be. "Let your asseveration be by affirmation or negation, without an oath" (Meyer). The Saviour repeats the *yes* and the *no*, emphatically. Such an emphatic repetition was common among the Jews (see Buxtorf's *Thesaurus*, p. 622), and it is common among ourselves and many other peoples. It is one among several modes of emphasizing assent or dissent. Instead then of saying, *No, by heaven! yes, by my head!* and instead of using similar or still more offensive appeals, we are to content ourselves with saying *No, no, Yes, yes*, or with employing similar appropriate and becoming modes of speech. For whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil : *Cometh of evil*, or more forcibly, and as was perceived by Chrysostom, and Theophylact, and Beza, *is from the evil one*, that is, as we say, *is from beneath*. Satan has his hand in all these irreverent modes of speech. They are part of the network in which he is entangling men's souls.

The Saviour's teaching in verses 34-37 has occasioned perplexity to many tender consciences in all ages since the commencement of Christianity, and has been understood by many individuals and sects as disallowing the taking of an oath in any form or in any circumstances. Chrysostom was one of these individuals. So was Gregory of Nazianzen, who would not take an oath himself, though he allowed it to weaker Christians. Jerome too regards every kind of oath as forbidden, although he remarks that it is noticeable that our Lord, while prohibiting oaths by heaven, earth, etc., does not prohibit an oath by God. The Mennonites, the Quakers, and several Russian sects, etc., etc., deem

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 but I say unto

it unlawful to take an oath in any circumstances whatsoever. But (1) This opinion is founded on an erroneous interpretation of ver. 34, in which verse, as we have seen, the injunction *Swear not at all* is not absolute, but *relative to the specifications that follow*. (2) The forbidden oaths, which are representatively specified by our Lord and forbidden, are such as were never employed in courts of law, etc. There is no reason therefore to suppose that our Lord was referring to, and forbidding, the taking of oaths in such solemn circumstances. (3) Solemn oaths were enjoined under the Old Testament. See Exod. xxii. 11, Num. v. 19, etc. And hence we cannot suppose that they were "of the evil one." (4) God himself sometimes put Himself on oath, See Ps. cx. 4, Ezek. xxxiii. 11, Heb. vi. 13-18. (5) Jesus himself, when adjured by the high priest, accepted an oath in the customary Jewish way (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64); and we cannot suppose that His example would contradict His precept, more especially if the reason for His precept be that what is more than simple *yea* or *nay* is "of the evil one." (6) The apostle Paul makes frequent appeals to God, after the manner of an oath. See 2 Cor. i. 23, Rom. i. 9, ix. 1, etc. (7) In the book of Revelation an angel "swears by Him that liveth for ever and ever" (chap. x. 6). (8) In the nature of things it cannot be wrong to lift up the soul to God as the witness and patron and defender and avenger of truth. It cannot be wrong to appeal to God. A man who communes with God cannot help such appeals in one form or another. And an oath, as Cicero very properly and wisely explains it (*De Officiis*, iii. 29), is just "a religious affirmation" (*est enim jusjurandum affirmatio religiosa*).

VER. 38. Ye have heard that it was said (see on ver. 21), **An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth**: Such was another item of the rabbinical teaching. It was good, very good, in a certain direction, and under certain limitations. But when these limitations and the specific direction were lost sight of, the inculcation of the principle was fraught with many evils. The principle itself was scriptural. It was part and parcel of the Jewish penal code. (See Exod. xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 19, 20; Deut. xix. 21.) But then, as such, *it was intended for the guidance of judges in determining the amount of penalty that was incurred by the man who wilfully inflicted upon his neighbour a personal injury*. "Equal for equal" was the principle that regulated the penalty; a righteous principle, and one that lies at the basis of equitable retribution. The aim of the law, as Jerome remarks, was not to sacrifice a second eye, but to save both. When a man in a passion understands that he is liable to lose an eye if he takes one, he is likely, in the great majority of cases, to be so far controlled as to save both. There is thus benevolence lying at the basis of the law. There is benevolence too rising up through it. For it really puts a restraint, as Augustin remarks, on revenge. It limits the amount of retributive penalty to a correspondence with the injury inflicted; whereas the natural spirit of revenge would not readily content itself with carefully weighing out equals for equals, but would be apt to leap to the infliction of a punishment that would be twice, or thrice, or four times, or twenty times, in excess of the original injury. The law then is very far indeed from being entirely objectionable. It is, in its essence, the fundamental principle of all equitable penal retribution. And hence it was incorporated by Solon in his penal code; and it was introduced also into the primitive

you, That ye resist not evil : but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if

legislation of the Romans (*jus talionis*). The error of the rabbinical teachers lay in not explaining to the people that the principle of *eye for eye* was intended, not to encourage and foster a fiery spirit of revenge, but to discourage and repress a fiery spirit of reckless rage and outrage. They did not explain, moreover, that it was a principle which was, as Michaelis remarks (*Mosaisches Recht*, § 242), eminently fitted to promote the security of the poor, and to act as a check on the passion of masters and other superiors. Pecuniary punishments, as he observes, are not very formidable to men of opulence. "But," adds he, "when the greatest and richest man in the realm knows that if he puts out the eye of the peasant the latter has a right to insist that *his* eye be put out in return; that a sentence to that effect will actually be pronounced if the matter comes before a court; and the said punishment inflicted, without the least respect to his rank, or his noble eye being considered as one whit better than the peasant's; and that he has no possible way of saving it, but by humbling himself before the other, as deeply as may be necessary to work upon his compassion and make him relent, besides paying him as much money as he deems a satisfactory compensation for his loss; every one will be convinced that the nobleman will bethink himself before he put out any one's eye." The rabbinical teachers, overlooking the benevolent side of the statute, seem to have adduced it for the purpose of inculcating what would amount to a haughtily malevolent spirit. The statute, as it stands in Exod. xxi. 24, was addressed to judges, *Thou shalt give, thou shalt award or adjudge, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*. But the doctors of the law seem to have quoted the words as if they had run thus, *Thou shouldst rigidly exact for thyself an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*. *Be satisfied with nothing less*.

VER. 39. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: In the original it is *the evil*, that is, *the evil one*, *him who is evil*, *him who does you a personal injury*. Chrysostom supposed that it is *the devil* who is referred to; so Wakefield. But this is going too far in the personal direction. It is enough that we think of *the malicious man*. Are we then never to resist the malicious man? Yes; often, and to the utmost. But never as a mere matter of personal revenge; and it is of personal revenge for personal injury that the Saviour is speaking, and of that only. But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek: The Saviour specifies the right cheek, because He is about to speak complementively of the left, and because it would have been finical to have reversed the order, even although it be the case that, when smitten with the right hand, it is in general the left cheek that receives the blow. Turn to him the other also: Not only do not return blow for blow; and not only, in addition, bear the blow in silence, but likewise lovingly lay thyself open to another blow. Be more than non-resistant; and, in all ordinary cases, this minglement of the lofty and the lowly in thy goodness will overcome the evil of the evil one. The words of our Saviour are a graphic pictorial representation of the duty of fighting rage and enmity and hatred with the weapons of meekness and friendliness and love. It is a paramount duty; and the performance of it assimilates in character to Himself and to His Father. But His aim is altogether misapprehended when the idea is squeezed out of His phraseology, that it is wrong for magistrates to inflict pains and penalties, and wrong for governments to use arms in self

any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also. 41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. 42 Give to him that

defence or in defence of the otherwise defenceless, and wrong for private individuals to protect themselves against rogues and rascals. It is right to resist wrong, provided the resistance emanate from a right spirit and be effected in a right way. It is wrong to resist wrong in a wrong way, or from a wrong motive. It is wrong to resist wrong malevolently; but it is right to resist wrong benevolently, from love to God, from love to society, from duly regulated love to one's neighbour, or to one's family, or to one's self, or even to the evil doer himself. If all resistance of evil were wrong, then it would be wrong to resist it even by words, or entreaties, or prayers.

VER. 40. And if any man would sue thee at law and take thy coat—or, *And if any man would go to law with thee to get thy coat* (thy inner garment)—let him have thy cloak (the outer and more costly garment) also. Yield to the petty injustice; and do more than yield. Try to touch his heart; for perhaps there is a point in it somewhere that is still responsive to what is good and noble. If you are ever to get to his conscience at all, so as to do him good, it is most likely to be by the way of his heart. It is not a rule that is intended to be applied in all circumstances. It is not of unlimited application. If a man, for example, were unrighteously sneing at law half a dozen of his neighbours for the half of their entire possessions, our Saviour would never say to them, Give him, each of you, the other half too, and beggar yourselves, and starve your wives and little children.

VER. 41. And whosoever shall impress thee to go a mile, go with him two: The word that is translated *shall impress* (*ἀγγαρεύσει*) is of Persian origin (see Gesenius's *Thesaurus*, p. 23), and has reference to a postal arrangement that was much admired by the Greek historians. On the great lines of road stations were established where horses and riders were kept, for the purpose of carrying forward the royal mails, on the principle of relays. The carriers were empowered in cases of emergency to press into their service any available persons, or beasts of burden, or other means of transport. The same kind of postal arrangement was adopted by the later Greeks, and by the Romans, and has descended, in fuller development, to our own time, and is now interlacing the whole civilized world. The power of impressment, that constituted part of the original system, is what is referred to in the word which is employed by our Lord. It would sometimes be exceedingly annoying to private individuals; and no doubt petty tyrants would, in their petty dominions or demesnes, put in operation the same principle, when they had some express to forward on their own account. Impressment by such individuals would be apt to be vexatious. But, says Jesus, do more in such circumstances than is asked of thee; of course, provided it would be of avail to the carrier, and consistent with other and perhaps more imperious or important obligations. Let there be no stint in your efforts to help others, even when your help is ungraciously asked or claimed.

VER. 42. Give to him that asketh of thee: Not everything indeed, and always, for then you would have nothing to give; but still, generously, liberally, and to as great an extent as you conscientiously can. It is blessed to give. There is a double blessing, a blessing to the giver and a blessing to the receiver.

asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,

And from him that wishes to borrow of thee, turn not thou away : This is a rule that is peculiarly applicable in a primitive state of society, when articles of convenience are scarce ; when employment too for the poor is precarious ; when, moreover, there are no public institutions that make provision for the poor ; and when consequently small sums of money may be needed either in gift or on loan to prevent actual starvation, or immediate and utter destitution. Even in such a state of society as that of Great Britain, in this the nineteenth century, there are still cases in which it is a sacred duty to lend. But it never can be dutiful to lend indiscriminately and unlimitedly. As a general rule there should never be more lent, without security, than what a man can afford to lose. And in multitudes of cases it is kinder and wiser rather to *give a part* than to *lend the whole* of what is asked.

VER. 43. Ye heard that it was said (see on ver. 21), Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy : The former clause was quoted from Lev. xix. 18 ; the latter was an invention of the rabbis. It was a matter of discussion in our Saviour's time, *Who is my neighbour ?* (Luke x. 29.) Many would seem to have answered the question in a way that amounted to this, *He who is thy compatriot is thy neighbour*, or, more particularly, *He is thy neighbour who acts in a neighbourly way toward thee : He is thy neighbour who is thy friend*. And hence, when the commandment in Lev. xix. 18 was quoted, it was complemented with the antithesis, *Thou shalt hate thine enemy*. It was, in all respects, an illegitimate complement ; for, even although it be admitted, as it must be, that in the context of Lev. xix. 18 the reference of the word *neighbour* is not so indefinite as to take in *all mankind*, but was limited to their *brethren, the children of their people* (see ver. 16-18), nevertheless there was no antithesis stated or intended. And even although there had been, it would not have served the purpose of the scribes and Pharisees ; for their rule of procedure, on which our Saviour animadverted, was not intended by them to regulate their demeanour in relation to their national enemies. It was intended to be applied to their personal enemies.

VER. 44. But I say unto you, Love your enemies : The injunction does not embrace within its sweep complacency and delight in the character of our enemies. But it imposes upon us to cherish benevolence. Such benevolence toward enemies was not overlooked under the Old Testament dispensation. (See Exod. xxiii. 4, 5 ; Job xxxi. 29 ; Ps. vii. 4 ; Prov. xxiv. 17, 29, xxv. 21, 22.) Bless them that curse you : Not only love them in heart, bless them in word. Do good to them that hate you : Not only bless in word, but bless by work too. And pray for them who despitefully use and persecute you : Go above yourselves in your efforts to benefit your enemies, go up to God in their behalf. *Who despitefully use you* : That is, *who treat you contumeliously or maliciously*. "Seest thou," exclaims Chrysostom, "how many steps He has ascended, and how He has set us on the very summit of virtue ? Nay, mark it, numbering "from the beginning." The two middle clauses, however, and the expression,

and persecute you; 45 that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

who treat contumeliously, in the fourth clause, are omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and in some valuable cursives, and are hence thrown out by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort. They are supposed to have been borrowed from Luke vi. 27, 28; but the evidence on which their excision here is vindicated is scarcely sufficient.

VER. 45. That ye may be children—or, more literally, *sons*—of your Father who is in heaven: Sons indeed, express images in miniature, of your Father. (Comp. ver. 48.) For He maketh His sun to arise on evil and good alike: He confines not His lovingkindness and tender mercy to the good. He loves His enemies. The expression 'His sun' is, as Bengel remarks, a sublime appellation. God made it, and moves it, and grandly ministers to us all by means of it. And sendeth rain on the just and the unjust: Or, very literally, *and raineth on righteous and unrighteous*. Seneca had sometimes grand ethical glimpses, as when in his *De Beneficiis* he says, "If thou wouldst imitate the "gods, bestow benefits even on the ungrateful, for the sun rises even on the "wicked, and pirates have access to the seas" (L. iv., c. 26).

VER. 46. For if ye love them who love you: Or, *For should it be the case that ye love them who love you, what reward have ye?* Namely, at the conclusion of your probationary career, and in the kingdom of heaven. See ver. 12. Hence Tyndale employs the future tense, *What reward shall ye have?* Do not even the taxgatherers the same? *The taxgatherers*, or *tollers* as Sir John Cheke has it; that is, the collectors of the public revenues of the Roman empire. That part of the revenues that was derived from the taxes, or tolls, laid upon the incomes and commodities of the Jews was so obnoxious to that people that none but the most unscrupulous and irreverent of the population would accept the post of taxgatherers. (See on chap. ix. 9.) Hence these taxgatherers were not only intensely hated by the people, they were often intensely hateful in their character. Even they however, with all their hateful selfishness, loved those who loved them. And "Christianity," as Matthew Henry remarks, "is more than humanity."

VER. 47. And if ye salute your brethren only: Or, *And should it be the case that, when journeying, ye courteously and warmly salute your brethren only*. Tyndale, after Luther, translates it freely, *if ye be frendly to youre brethren onli*. Your brethren, the members of your own family circles, and your near and dear acquaintances. What do ye more than others? *What extra do ye?* Tyndale renders it, *What singular thyng doo ye?* The Geneva version is the same; and so is that of Cranmer's Bible. Do not even the taxgatherers the same? Instead of *the taxgatherers* the highest authorities read *the Gentiles* (οἱ ἔθνηκοί).

VER. 48. Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect: There is

CHAPTER VI.

1 TAKE heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them : otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

in the original an emphasis on the *ye*; *ye, in distinction from taxgatherers and Gentiles. Perfect, that is, perfect in love, and thus perfect in character. Perfect, not as regards degree, but as regards the kind of character. Perfect or complete in all those elements of moral goodness that are found in the full-orbed goodness of the heavenly Father. Be ye thus perfect. In the original it is the future indicative, and not the imperative, that is employed. Ye shall therefore be perfect; will you not? ye shall of your own free-will be perfect. It is your duty to be thus perfect. Little though ye be, it is your duty to reflect in the clear mirror of your souls a complete impression and expression of the heavenly Father's love, that love which embraces not only the good, the godly, and the grateful, but also the ungodly, the unthankful, and the rebellious.*

CHAPTER VI.

VER. 1. In verses 20-48 of the preceding chapter the Saviour has been exhibiting specimens of the higher style of righteousness which it would be needful for His subjects to cultivate. He exhibits these specimens in contrast to the teaching of certain of the popular doctors of the law. He continues, in verses 1-18 of this chapter, to work in a parallel vein of discriminating instruction, giving additional specimens of the higher style of righteousness which should be characteristic of His followers. But He contrasts this style, not so much with the popular teaching of the scribes, as with the pretentious practice of the Pharisees. *Take heed: Or rather, But take heed.* This little particle *But* is found in the Syriac versions, as well as in the very ancient Sinaitic manuscript, and in other old authorities, inclusive of the manuscript 33, "the queen of the cursives." It has been restored to the text by Tischendorf. It is as if the Saviour had said, *I have been showing you what your righteousness ought to be; BUT take heed that ye do not make a parade of it.* *That ye do not your alms:* Instead of *alms* (*ἐλεημοσύνην*), we should read, according to the margin, *righteousness* (*δικαιοσύνην*), a reading approved of, almost unanimously, by the great editors and critics. It is supported at once by the Sinaitic manuscript, and the Vatican, and Beza's, as well as by Hilary among the fathers, and Chrysostom and Jerome. The word has a general and generic reference. And the three specific forms of righteousness which are mentioned in the immediately succeeding context, almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, are included under it. *Before men, to be seen of them:* In order to be seen of them. It is needful to be righteous *before men*. See chap. v. 16. But it is not needful to make a theatrical exhibition of our righteousness, for the purpose of winning the applause of men. "Genuine goodness," says Dr. Thomas, "like real genius, is always modest. It shrinks from the platforms of display. It dislikes parade" (*Genius of the Gospel*, in loc.). *Otherwise ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven: Ye have no reward reserved for you, and awaiting you, by the side of your Father in heaven.*

2 Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 that thine alms may be in secret: and thy

VER. 2. Whosoever then thou doest alms: That is, *Whosoever thou givest charity*. The English word *alms* is a contraction of the Greek word used by the evangelist (*ἐλεημοσύνη*), and means originally *mercy*; just as *charity* originally means *love*. The word is often spelled *almsesse* in our old writers (Dutch, *Aalmoes*; German, *Allmosen*; Swedish, *Almosa*; Danish, *Almisse*; French, *Aumône*, anciently *Aumosne*; Italian, *Limosina*; Spanish, *Limosna*; Portuguese, *Esmola*: all of them different modifications of the evangelist's Greek word). Do not sound a trumpet before thee: That is, avoid everything like ostentation. The expression is metaphorical. Dr. Lightfoot says: "I have not found, "although I have sought for it much and seriously, even the least mention of a "trumpet in almsgiving" (*Exercitations*). But he need not have sought so diligently; for we may be sure that in the synagogues at least literal trumpets could not have been employed when *private* individuals were wishing to give charity. As the hypocrites do: The word *hypocrites* originally means *stage-players*; and stageplayers in ancient times played their parts with masks on their countenances. Our Lord refers to such religionists as acted a theatrical part with their religion. They put on their religion for the occasion, and even no inconsiderable part of it as a mask. They acted a fictitious part with it, and made a show of it. Indeed they did nothing else with it than use it for a show. In the synagogues and in the streets: At the stated or occasional contributions in the places of worship, and, as favourable occasions presented themselves, in the crowded streets. That they may be glorified by men: Literally, *the men*, that is, the men who are there. Verily I say to you, they have their reward: The expression *they have* is peculiarly significant in the original. It means *they have off* (*ἀρέχουσιν*), that is, they have and may now carry off with them, *they have in full*, they have, in the little paltry glorification which they receive from ignorant men who know not the heart, their reward in full, all the reward which they shall ever get. The Æthiopic translation leaps to the other side of the idea, *They have lost their reward*. It is true.

VER. 3. But when thou doest alms: The *thou* is emphatic and contrastive, as a glance at the original shows. It is, on the contrary, unemphatic in the first clause of the preceding verse, *when then thou doest alms*. Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: A graphic metaphorical representation, derived doubtless from the common practice of the fellowship and co-operation of the two hands in counting out money from the right into the left. Interrupt that fellowship of the hands for secrecy's sake. Hide your almsgiving. Hide it as much as possible, even from yourself. Turn it away from your own reflections as speedily as possible.

VER. 4. That thine alms may be in secret: Namely, as a general rule. It may sometimes be necessary, for authentication's sake, and especially when the alms has to pass through the hands of a third party, to remove a little the veil of secrecy. It is also sometimes necessary, in addition to secret almsgiving, to take, for example's sake, a public part in public contributions for humane and

Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.

charitable objects. But in all cases of pecuniary benefactions, as in all other kinds of good doing, unostentation is indispensable to nobleness and inner reality. And thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall Himself reward thee openly: *Who seeth in secret*, that is, who beholdeth in the region of secrecy whatever takes place there, from whose eye nothing, however secret, is hidden. *Shall reward thee*, with the appropriate recompense of grace. (See on chap. v. 12.) *Himself*: As distinguished from men, whose applause the hypocrites may frequently secure. *Openly*: This word seems to have crept into the text from the margin, being originally a marginal note in some ancient copy, bringing out an antithesis to the expression *in secret*. It is not found in the best of the old manuscripts (N B D); nor in the Vulgate; nor in Cureton's Syriac; and it is omitted from the text by the best critical editors, inclusive of Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, and Westcott-and-Hort. It is well that it be omitted, for it is not popular applause in the future world, any more than it is popular applause in the present, that is the motive or the aim of the true Christian's charities and charity.

VER. 5. And whosoever ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men: They love to pray conspicuously. They love, even when engaged in secret prayer, to present it in such a way that they shall get credit from men for their prayerfulness. The attitude of *standing* is specified, but not that it might be condemned as too conspicuous, for it was the common Jewish attitude in prayer. (See Mark xi. 25.) Hence too it was the common attitude in the early Christian churches. Indeed it is specified just because it was the common attitude. Its specification is simply graphic. When the Saviour mentions the *synagogues*, as well as *the corners of the streets*, as the chosen spots where the ostentatious hypocrites loved to pray, He is nevertheless referring not so much to social and public prayers as to one's own private prayers. "People," says Tholuck, "went to the synagogue not only for public worship, but, as they do in Roman Catholic churches, for private prayer." "Rabbena Asher," says Lightfoot, "hath these words: *When any one returns home in the evening from the field let him not say, I will go into my house; but first let him betake himself to the synagogue, and if he can read, let him read some thing; if he can recite the traditions, let him recite them; and then let him say over the phylacteries, and pray* (In Berac. fol. 69: 3)." The hypocritical Pharisees would probably be careful to sweep along to the synagogues, conspicuously, and with imposing appearance of solemnity, not only at the stated times of public worship, but also and punctiliously at certain other opportune times when public prayers were not to be presented. They seem moreover to have contrived, that when abroad in the city they should be at the most crowded places, and especially at the corners where two thoroughfares met, at the hours which custom, or their own particular rubric of devotion, had fixed for private prayer. In many oriental cities it is still quite common, as I have often noticed, to see devotees engaging openly in their secret prayers in the midst of the streets. Wherever they are, at their determinate hours of prayer,

Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

there they openly, and often very ostentatiously, engage publicly in their secret devotions. *That they may be seen of men: That they may appear to the men (who are there).* "This was the wind," says Trapp, "that set the windmill a-work." Verily I say to you, they have their reward: Such as it is.

VER. 6. But thou, whensoever thou prayest: Whensoever thou wouldst offer up to thy Father in heaven thy secret prayers; for it is of *secret prayer* that our Saviour is speaking. Enter into thy closet: Thy private chamber, for whatever other purpose it may be used. Such a chamber, or oratory, is for the time being a little chapel, a little house of God. And having shut thy door: And thus secreted thyself from thy fellow men, as far as possible. Chrysostom mentions very properly that such as literally thus secrete themselves, and yet reveal their engagement by the loudness of their voice, violate the spirit of the Lord's injunction. It is as ostentatious to pray *in order to be heard of men*, as it is to pray *in order to be seen of men*. Pray to thy Father who is in secret, whose presence and omnipresence is invisible, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, and who thus beholdeth thee in thy secret place, and who heareth in secret too, shall reward thee: See on chap. v. 12. It is added *openly* in our version. But there is reason to regard the word as an intrusion from an old marginal note. (See on ver. 4.)

VER. 7. But, in addition to secrecy as regards men, take heed as regards another matter, namely, the fitting mood of mind in relation to God, when engaged in praying; use not vain repetitions: 'Battering' away at God, as it were, and 'blattering' (Luther has it, *viel plappern*). 'Babble' not in prayer, in the spirit of those worshippers of Baal "who called on his name from morning even until noon, saying, *O Baal, hear us*" (1 Kings xviii. 26), or of those worshippers of Diana who "about the space of two hours cried out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*" (Acts xix. 34). As the Gentiles do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking: They think that in heaping word upon word, and persistently holding on with their speechifying, they shall secure attention and a hearing. Such multiplication of speaking is utterly in vain. "It proceedeth," as good David Dickson remarks, "from a base misconception of God." It is well observed however by Augustin that there is a great difference between *much speaking* and *much praying*. And even repetitiousness, when it is not wordiness but the expression of intensity of desire, will not be unacceptable to the Hearer of prayer. Such repetitiousness will not be immoderate. It is found in many of the psalms; and it was characteristic of our Saviour's own prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, when He again and again "prayed, saying the same words" (Matt. xxvi. 44).

VER. 8. Be not then like to them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him: Ye do not need therefore to pray in order to

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come.

give God information. The rationale of prayer is something totally different. It is the human side of intercommunion with God. It is the hallowing of desire, by carrying it up to the fountain of holiness. It is the consciousness of dependence on God. It is the uplifting of the heart of the child to the heart of the Father. It is the filial instinct expressing itself. It is that relation of harmony on the part of the human will in reference to the Divine, that makes room for the increasing bestowment of Divine blessings.

VER. 9. After this manner: After the manner of the following prayer, in which you will find no vain repetition. The *Lord's prayer* is thus a *manner* and *model* of prayer, but by no means the only form which it is lawful for Christians to employ. It may indeed be legitimately and profitably used as a form, if the spirit of formality be carefully avoided. But to suppose that the form is imperative is to misconceive from top to bottom, and from the circumference of the whole matter in to its very centre, the entire aim of the Saviour. Therefore: That is, seeing ye must not use vain repetitions as the heathens do. **Pray ye: Ye, My disciples.** The Saviour assumes that His disciples will pray, and must pray. There are no dumb children in the family of the heavenly Father, none who are dumb toward the Father. **Our Father:** Note the word *Father*. Prayer is the instinct of childhood 'crying Abba, Father.' Note the word *Our*. It includes the individual *my*, and may of course, on occasion, be legitimately replaced by *my*. But it is beautifully larger. It is comprehensive. It leads the petitioner to realize that, while he is one, he is at the same time but one, of a heavenly family. In the Old Testament the individuality of personal childhood in relation to God is in general shaded off under the more comprehensive relationship of national childhood. "Israel is My son" (Exod. iv. 22, etc.). In the New Testament, on the other hand, national unity is resolved into personal units, and God is prominently represented as the Father of persons, and especially of all such persons as, believing in the Divine propitiousness, are animated with desire to have the Divine image reflected in their moral character. **Who art in heaven:** God is high and lifted up. He is transcendently exalted. He is on earth indeed, but not confined to earth. He is in heaven too; and in heaven He manifests Himself with peculiar glory. On earth there are spots, hearts at least, and many of them, where God is not. He is not admitted. He is shut out. But in heaven He is *All in all*. God is thus, in a peculiar fulness of acceptance, *in heaven*. He is at home in heaven. And hence, in all the amplitude of His highest relations, He is *heavenly*. **Hallowed be Thy name:** The first petition. It is the expression of an emphatic desire that worthy thoughts and feelings should be maintained in reference to God. The name of God is the idea, self expressing and self expressed, by which we differentiate God to our minds from all other beings. The idea may, or may not, be uttered audibly or written visibly; but it is a name, and the Name of names. We cannot speak of God without thus naming Him. We cannot think of Him without thus naming Him. And yet how very little of the name we really know! *May Thy name be hallowed!* May it be treated as holy! *Whosoever Thou art spoken of, whosoever Thou art thought about, may it be with becoming reverence and holy awe!*

VER. 10. Thy kingdom come: The second petition. In presenting it, as in

Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. 11 Give us

presenting the first, the spirit is occupied rather with God's glory than with man's weal. Man's weal is not ignored or overlooked, but it is merged in a higher element. In the first petition the reference to God's glory is almost absolute; but in the second there is a considerable stride in the direction of what is relative to man's weal. *Thy kingdom come!* To a certain incipient extent it had come long ago. God had been reigning; and He had had subjects. At the moment that our Lord was teaching His disciples how to pray, the kingdom had come to a still greater extent, and in greater glory. The King was being wonderfully manifested in human nature; and subjects, who had been for long madly rebellious, were laying down the weapons of their rebellion, and gladly submitting themselves to the rule and will of their heavenly Sovereign. Since that time, down to our own day, the kingdom has continued to come, making inroad after inroad on the opposing kingdom of darkness and degradation and death. But far more extensive inroads are still needed, in order that the earth may be 'a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.' The heavenly kingdom has yet to come to hundreds of peoples, and hundreds of millions of hearts; hence the non-obsolescence of the petition. It will never cease to be appropriate until all things are, as a matter of fact as well as a matter of right, put under the feet of Him who is the Son of man, the Son of God, and the King of kings. The petition has obviously reference to the coming of the heavenly kingdom *on earth*, which coming, when consummated, will result in the annexation of earth to heaven. Jacob's vision will then be fully realized. Ladders will be set which will reach from earth to heaven, and angels and glorified men will ascend and descend. Then will God rest in His glory, as regards man. *Thy will be done in earth*,—or better and more literally, *on earth*, that is, *on earth also*—as in heaven: The third petition. It is still God's glory that is pre-eminently desired, but God's glory in that particular aspect of it that arises from the obedience and subjection of the heart on the part of men. It is marvellous that some expositors have imagined that the *will* here referred to is God's decretive will. Beza for instance, of whom Trapp says that this petition was the last text which he handled in life. He explains the *will* as denoting *that which God has decreed to come to pass*, as if it could be more needful to pray that this will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven, than to pray that it should be done in heaven as it is done on earth. A greater incongruity than such a prayer, when looked at from Beza's doctrinal standpoint, cannot well be imagined. It is only however in the last edition of his New Testament, the edition of 1598, that the distinguished critic gives this interpretation. In all the preceding editions he passes by the expression without comment. Calvin was assuredly right when he maintained that the *will* referred to is God's *preceptive will*. This is evidenced in particular, as he remarks, by the expression *as in heaven*. The hosts of heaven are God's ministers, *who do His pleasure* (Ps. ciii. 21).

VER. 11. Give us this day our daily bread: The fourth petition, and having reference to the petitioners' own particular wants. The succeeding petitions have likewise a reference to their own particular wants; but this begins at the beginning, the physical base of their being. The others ascend into the spiritual and moral superstructure. The word translated *daily* (ἐπιούσιον) has occasioned extreme perplexity to critics and expositors. It has been, says

this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts,

Scultet, *the torment of theologians and grammarians*. Strange to say, it is a word which is peculiar to the New Testament and to the Lord's prayer. It never occurs anywhere else. Origen could not discover the least trace of it, either among the classical writers or in the common speech of the uneducated. He came to the conclusion that it had been coined for the occasion on which it is here employed. (See his *Περὶ Ἐδόξης*, § 27.) The old Latin translation, commonly called the *Itala*, renders the word *daily*; and the rendering thence descended into Luther's version, and Tyndale's, Cheke's, the Geneva, and our present Authorized version. It had been, we presume, a rendering given in a kind of critical despair. The word cannot mean *daily*; and, if it could and did, the corresponding petition in Luke xi. 3 would be inextricably and inexplicably redundant, *Give us daily our daily bread*. Jerome speculated on the word, and substituted *supersubstantial* for *daily*, and hence *supersubstantial* is the Rheims word; and Wycliffe renders it *over other substance*. Jerome supposed that the reference is to *the Bread of Life*, the True Bread which came down from heaven when Jesus came down (John vi. 51), the superessential Bread. It is a most unlikely interpretation, introducing super-refined speculation, and extruding from the prayer that sweet childlike simplicity that so fittingly expresses itself in a petition for the Divine supply of our primary physical wants. Origen took a different view of the meaning of the peculiar and unique word; yet he held that the *bread* referred to is spiritual. So too Tertullian; and Cyril of Jerusalem; Athanasius also, and Isidore of Pelusium; Ambrose also. Augustin held that the spiritual reference must be included. Erasmus thought that a reference to physical food would be incongruous in 'so heavenly a prayer.' Olshausen is positive that the main reference must be spiritual. Stier agrees, and indeed ascends into the transcendental position of Erasmus. But all such transcendentalism is deeply to be deplored. It tends to banish religion from the affairs of every-day life; it leaves these affairs unsoftened and unblesed. Quite a large number of critics have supposed that the word means *belonging to the morrow* (from ἡ ἐπιούσα scil. *ἡμέρα*), so that the petition according to them is this, *Give us this day to-morrow's bread*. Scaliger gives this interpretation; and Salmasius, and Grotius, and Valkenaer; Wetstein too, and Wahl, Winer, Fritzsche, Heubner, Meyer, Holtzmann, Renan (*Vie de Jésus*, cap. x.), the English Revisionists, inclusive of Bishop Lightfoot (*Fresh Revision*, pp. 195-242), etc. It is, we apprehend, exegetically inadmissible; for why should we pass over in to-day's prayers the material wants of to-day? Why, in particular, should we pray that to-morrow's supply should be put into our hands to-day, when we are elsewhere commanded not to *boast of to-morrow* (Prov. xxvii. 1), and to *take no anxious thought for the morrow* (Matt. vi. 34)? What then is the probable interpretation of the word? It probably means *requisite* or *needful*; only it modestly expresses with inimitable felicity that moderate amount of supply that *just comes up to and covers* our real wants, *without overflowing into any superfluity*. The word seems to have been coined for the occasion with a rhythmic reference to another word that means *superabundant* (*περιούσιος*). Our Saviour as it were says to His disciples, *Pray not for superabundance, for superfluity. Be thankful if fulness come, and use it aright. Deal about the superfluity as the almoners of your Heavenly Father; but pray for what is within the verge of superfluity, pray for what is sufficient and convenient*. The Peshito version favours this interpretation. It renders the phrase, *the*

as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into tempta-

bread of our need, our needful bread. And the same view is taken with more or less definiteness by Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Theophylact, Euthymius Zigabenus, the *Etymologicum Magnum*, and by Beza, Maldonato, Tholuck (*Bergpredigt*, pp. 353-372, ed. 3), Arnoldi, Bleek, Alford, etc. etc. (The relation between *ἐπιούσιος* and *πρωσίσιος* is rhythmical, not etymological; and thus, in determining the radical import of *ἐπιούσιος*, we must take the line of *λέγει* instead of *ἐλπει*, and go 'back of' the conventional import of *ἡ ἐπιούσα*. *On-coming* is the radical idea.)

VER. 12. *And forgive us our debts:* The fifth petition, turning to the petitioners' spiritual wants. *Our debts*, that is, *our sins* (see Luke xi. 4), for we are *answerable* to God for our sins. When we sin there is something in our act for which we become *liable* to God. Formerly He had a claim *upon* us; now He has a claim *against* us. And it is of His own mere mercy if action be not taken by Him against us to the utmost extent of the law. Instead of the petition, *Forgive us our debts*, Apollonius of Tyana, whom some would set up as a sort of Opposition-Christ, proposed and recommended that he who would approach the Divine throne with a good conscience should pray in this way: *O ye gods, pay me my debts,—my dues* (ὦ θεοί, δοῦτέ μοι τὰ ὀφειλόμενα: *Philostratus, Vit. Apollonii*, i., § 11). And indeed there have been persons bearing the name of Christian, but not knowing what they were saying, who have avowed that they simply desired *justice* at the hand of God, and not the remission of any penalties that were due to them. *As we forgive our debtors:* That is, *like as we also forgive our debtors*. The Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts read, *Like as we 'have' also 'forgiven' our debtors*. This reading the great modern critics have adopted, and they are followed by the English Revisionists. We hesitate, in consequence chiefly of the counter evidence arising from the reading that had evidently been lying in the manuscripts that were before the earliest translators. It is assumed that all the true disciples of Christ cherish a forgiving spirit in their hearts in reference to all who have injured them. If such a spirit be absent from any heart, its absence is an infallible sign of the absence of true discipleship, of true faith in Christ (see ver. 14, 15). He who offers up this petition with an unforgiving heart virtually prays against his own forgiveness.

VER. 13. *And bring us not into temptation:* That is, *And bring us not into trial, severe trial, trial which, in virtue of its severity, is fitted to press hard upon the moral state*. The sixth petition. The words *temptation*, *tempt*, and *tempter* have now got stereotyped, to a large extent, into a meaning which has reference only to one kind of trial, trial from beneath, morally insidious trial, trial that is under the influence of malice or at least of moral evil, seductive trial. But originally *to tempt* just meant *to try*, without indicating in the least whether the aim of the trial was good or bad. Hence the indifference of the compound verb and noun *attempt*, and of the adjective *tentative* (= *temptative*). The first instance in the English Bible in which the word *tempt* occurs is Gen. xxii. 1, in which it is said that 'God did *tempt* Abraham.' This was a righteous and benevolent temptation, a holy *trial* of the strength of Abraham's faith. The Hebrew word simply means *to try*, either holily or unholily, as the case may be. There are indeed two Hebrew words which are translated *tempt*, and they are both more frequently used of righteous than of unrighteous trial.

tion, but deliver us from evil : For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

They both occur in Psalm xxvi. 2 : "*Examine* me, O Lord, and *prove* me"; holy trials or tentations. In the New Testament it is one word that corresponds to the two Hebrew words ; but, unlike the Hebrew words, it is prevaillingly used to denote evil trial. It is not however uniformly thus used. Hence we read in John vi. 6, "This Jesus said to *prove* Philip, for He Himself knew what He would do." This was a good trial, a kind of righteous tentation or temptation. We read again in Acts xvi. 7, "After Paul and Timothy were come to Mysia, they *assayed* to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not." They *assayed*, they *tried*, they *attempted*. Here the original meaning of the term is clearly seen, and it is evident that it does not denote an intrinsically bad attempt. It is used again in 2 Cor. xiii. 5, "*Examine* yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, *prove* your own selves." If the word had been uniformly translated, the injunction would have run thus : '*tempt* yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.' In Rev. ii. 2 the word receives another translation, "*Thou hast tried* them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." The same translation is given to the term in Heb. xi. 17, "Abraham, when he was *tried*, offered up Isaac." These were righteous tentations or temptings. The word then, though prevaillingly used to denote evil trials, does not of itself denote such trials alone. And in this petition of the Lord's prayer we are to understand the term *temptation* as just meaning *trial*, such as *is trial indeed to the moral principles, severely sifting trial*. The entreaty, thus, *Bring us not into trial*, is the cry of conscious moral weakness. It presupposes that in all such trials there is fire that touches the quick of moral principle. In trials, especially, of great adversity, and in trials that make exceedingly large demands on the firmness of one's faith in things unseen and eternal, there is an element that is ill to bear. Hence the appropriateness of the petition ; hence Christ's own prayer in Gethsemane. But as such trials are not necessarily evil, the prayer not to be led into them should ever be presented, as was Christ's in Gethsemane, with submission to the will of God, whether this submissiveness be formally expressed or left unexpressed. But deliver us from evil : Or, very literally, *from the evil*, that is, *from the evil one*. This personal reference is given to the expression by Origen, Chrysostom, and Theophylact ; Erasmus too, and Beza, and Fritzsche, Olshausen, Meyer, etc. It is a matter of no moment whether we regard this clause as a distinct seventh petition, or view it as an appendage of the preceding sixth. It is peculiarly related to the sixth, as another side of the blessing that is therein asked : *Lead us not into trial, lest the evil one get advantage of us in that condition ; but, whether we have to pass through peculiar trial or not, deliver us everywhere and always from the enemy of our souls*. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen : A doxology that brings into prominence some of those grand aspects of Divine things that form the ground of our encouragement and hope in presenting our petitions. But liturgically majestic as it is, there is reason to regard it as a liturgical addition to the original words of our Lord. It is omitted in the best of the old manuscripts, such as the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Cambridge. It is not found in the Vulgate version, or the Coptic, or the Arabic. It is wanting in Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nyssa, and others of the Greek fathers. It is wanting in the Latin fathers. It would appear to have been the marginal annotation of some devout possessor of an

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a

ancient codex, and thence it had crept into many other copies of the text, as also into all the Syriac versions, and the Æthiopic, Armenian, and Gothic. It is now omitted from the text by the best critical editors of the New Testament, although Scrivener pleads earnestly in behalf of its retention. (*Supplement to the Authorized Eng. Version of the N. T.*, in loc.) It is certainly more likely to have been added than to have been intentionally or unintentionally dropped out.

VER. 14. For if ye forgive men their trespasses: The Saviour turns back to the subsumption of the fifth petition, that He might fix more firmly in the minds of His hearers the necessity of cherishing a forgiving disposition. That subsumption had been floating before His mind, while He was concluding His model form of prayer, and hence He recalls attention to it by using the particle *For*. It is as if He had said, *You would note that I said, "as we forgive our debtors."* Attend particularly to these words; FOR if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you; or, still more literally, *will forgive you also*. Not that we are to suppose that the Christian's act of forgiveness is the meritorious cause of the Divine forgiveness. Far from that. But it is nevertheless an indispensable condition on his part, and is really involved germinally in that Christian 'faith' which catches the reflex of the character of Jesus, and 'worketh by love.' When a sinner indeed comes for the first time to the Saviour, it is not needful that he do this good work of forgiving his enemies, before he be pardoned and justified. It is not by any good works that he is to be forgiven and saved. It is by faith; he believes, and is immediately pardoned and justified. But thenceforward, and thence, his heart melts into love. It is sanctified. The man is sanctified. And one element of his sanctification is a forgiving spirit in relation to his enemies. This forgiving element is never absent while faith continues present. If we should suppose that in any case it were absent, and were to continue absent, then, to be consistent, we must suppose in addition that the consummation of the Divine forgiveness, in actual and abiding deliverance from the penalties due to sin, will not be experienced. Compare the parable of the two debtors in Matt. xviii. 23-35.

VER. 15. The same idea is turned round from its affirmative to its negative side, the Saviour "here giving," as Trench expresses it, "one blow more to the die, so to make the impression sharper and deeper on the minds of all." (*Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount*.)

VER. 16. Moreover when ye fast: Or, more literally, *But whensoever ye may be fasting*. But, that is, *But* now to proceed to another mode of righteousness, in which there is too often, as in almsgiving and in prayer, parade instead of piety, and semblance instead of substance. *When ye fast*: The reference is to private fasting, an extremely wholesome spiritual medicine in certain circumstances. There are some indeed, whose idiosyncrasy in physical constitution is such that they cannot, in an outward way, fast long without physical derangement, inducing mental injury and moral distress and difficulty. These persons are not called upon to engage in literal, corporeal fasting. There are others

sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where

however, in whom there is a strong tendency to physical fulness, and in whom consequently the intellectual and moral elements are apt to be overlaid and oppressed by the corporeal. To these fasting is of inestimable moment. It helps to give victory to the spirit in its contests with the flesh. In such temperaments, moreover, the therapeutic effects of frequently recurring fasts are morally important. There are multitudes of diseases which have their origin in fulness, and might have their end in fasting. They might be starved out of the system. These diseases, and more especially the gradual physical deterioration that paves the way for their ingress and growth, occasion manifold spiritual trials, which may indeed be overruled for good when they do occur, but whose absence, if they be not morally indispensable, is an unspeakable blessing. Fasting is a protest against too much feasting. And, when viewed at its inner end and in its moral bearings, its essence consists in *the affliction of the soul because of sin*. Such affliction is absolutely needed in the case of all sinners. **Be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance:** Or, *Become not, as the hypocrites, dismal in countenance: Look not sour*, as Luther has it. Do not put on grimace. **For they disfigure their faces:** They make their faces unsightly, and, as it were, unseen (*ἀφανίζουσιν*), or, as the phrase is very happily rendered in Purvey's revision of Wycliffe's translation, *Thei defacen hem silf* (they deface themselves), they obliterate for the time their true face. **That they may appear unto men to be fasting:** Their fasting would lose all its value, in their estimation, if men did not take cognisance of it, and give them due credit for it.

VER. 17. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face: Appear before men as in your usual condition. Draw not the attention of men, by any peculiarity of appearance or demeanour, to thine own secret transaction with God.

VER. 18. That thou appear not to men to be fasting, but to thy Father who is in secret: Who is present with you when all your fellow men are absent, and who is thus observant of all thy doings, when thou afflictest thy soul through self denial in thy body. **And thy Father, who beholdeth in secret, shall reward thee:** See on ver. 4. The *openly* which closes the verse in our Authorized version, and in the Greek texts of Erasmus, Stephens, and the Elzevirs, is omitted in almost all the ancient uncial manuscripts, and in more than 150 of the cursives too, and in the chief of the old versions, and in the principal fathers too. It had crept in from the margin, being originally the marginal reflection of some ancient owner of a manuscript.

VER. 19. A new thread of discourse is here taken up, though it has filaments of connection with the great bulk of what goes before. It brings to view some other aspects of the righteousness which must be characteristic of Christ's true disciples. **Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth:** Or, literally, *Treasure not up for yourselves treasures on the earth:* The injunction is very emphatically

moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

put, but it is, of course, to be understood comparatively, in its relation to the affirmative injunction of the next verse. It is cast into the same form as the corresponding injunction in John vi. 27, *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life*, an injunction which was certainly never intended to discountenance working for one's daily bread. It was intended, however, to convey emphatically the momentous truth that life spiritual, and the means of attaining and sustaining it, are immeasurably superior to life corporeal and the meat which perishes with the using. (Comp. also John xii. 44.) So as regards treasures. Treasures in heaven are inestimably more valuable than treasures on earth, and should hence be far more diligently accumulated. But while this comparative sense of the injunction is manifest, there is something that is absolutely forbidden, *worldliness of disposition, or a sordid state of heart and manner of life*. The *treasures* referred to are therefore earthly treasures; and not only earthly, but earthy. "They are," says Trapp, "but earth, and it is but upon earth that they are laid up." **Where moth and rust doth corrupt:** The *doth* may be omitted. Where moth and corrosion, and other corresponding agents and agencies of deterioration and destruction, are perpetually at work. They cause *destruction* and ultimate *disappearance*. **And where thieves break through and steal:** *Break through*, literally *dig through*. The primary reference is to the common class of oriental houses, which are in great part made of mud or clay. Wycliffe's rendering of the clause is, *and wher thewes delven out and stelen*. "Certainly," says Blair, "he lays up treasure upon earth too much, who either gets it by unfair means; or has not the heart to lay it out to supply his own occasions, and the occasions of those whom he ought to provide for; or who has his thoughts and time too much employed in the cares of this world, to the neglect of better things; or is backward and averse from works of piety, charity, and the public good; or who is discontented with his own circumstances, and envious of his neighbour's; or lastly, who, flowing in wealth already, thinks he is never to stop, but, instead of contriving liberal things for the good of his neighbours and the world, thinks only of *joining house to house, and field to field*, till he has shoved out all his neighbours from about him, and is left alone in the *midst of the land*." (*Sermon on the Mount*, vol. iii., p. 267, ed. 1740.)

VER. 20. **But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven:** *But treasure up for yourselves treasures in heaven*; treasures of valuables; of invaluable; of glory and honour coupled with immortality. Greater and greater degrees of glory and honour may be amassed by greater and greater degrees of goodness and usefulness; for the Lord loveth to reward those whose life consists of attempts to do good. **Where neither moth nor rust destroy, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:** The treasures that are in heaven are absolutely secure, and secure for ever. They are subject to no casualties, either of inward corruption or of outward violence.

VER. 21. **For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also:** This is the grand reason why the chief treasures of a man should be laid up in heaven. In

22 The light of the body is the eye : if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness !

no other way will he become heavenly minded. In no other way will his life, even while he is on earth, be a heavenly kind of thing. Where *the treasure* is, the most highly prized treasure, there will the heart be. "The heart," says Matthew Henry, "follows the treasure, as the needle follows the loadstone, or the sunflower the sun." By *the heart* we are not to understand simply *the affections*. It has a larger and more comprehensive import. It denotes *that entire spiritual element in our complex natures which is the 'heart' of our whole being*. Where our treasure is, *there will our mind be ; there will our thoughts be, and there will our affections be*. If our treasure be on earth, our minds will get doubled down, earthward. But if it be in heaven, we shall live erect and aloft. Our thoughts and feelings and aims will soar. "Christ's eagles," says Trapp, "are never in their pride till farthest off from the earth."

VER. 22. The light of the body is the eye : Or, more literally, *The lamp of the body is the eye*. The Saviour, as it were, says, in relation to His injunctions concerning treasures, *How important it is to have a right view of such things ! to have the eye of the moral nature in a sound condition ! That eye is, in its own spiritual sphere, like the eye of the body in the sphere of things corporeal ; and the eye of the body is the lamp that illumines to us the whole body*. It is by means of it that we see the various members of the body and how to use them to advantage. If therefore thine eye be single : The Saviour brings into view the possibility of two contrary conditions of the eye. It may be sound, seeing objects *singly*, and clearly, and distinctly, instead of multiplying them, as in certain unsound states, confusedly and indeterminately. *Thy whole body shall be full of light ; Shall be suffused with light, shall be radiant ; namely, to thyself*. It is illuminated to thee as by the light of thy lamp. You can see it as it is. You can see what it needs. You can see what is being done to it, and what should be done with it. Such is the benefit of a sound eye.

VER. 23. *But if thine eye be evil ; If thou hast a bad eye*. For so we are accustomed to speak, badness and goodness being relative to many standards besides that of morals. If thine eye has got to be so badly diseased that thou canst not use it as the lamp of the body. Darby's translation is unhappy, 'if thine eye be wicked.' But it was given long ago by Miles Coverdale. *Thy whole body shall be full of darkness ; Shall be dark ; namely, to thyself ; shall be enveloped to thee in darkness*. Thou wilt not be able to see it, and how to use it aright, or to protect it. *If therefore the light that is in thee is darkness—if the eye, which is virtually thy light for all the body, is darkened, and thou art left in the dark—how great the darkness ! How great thy darkness !* The other members of the body have no lamps of their own by which they may shine to thee and to themselves. They are all, relatively to thee and to themselves, unilluminated, except through the eye. The darkness of the members is thus total, when the eye is darkened. So, in relation to things spiritual and eternal. There are two alternatives. The eye of the moral nature, the eye of the mind, or heart, so far as the man's spiritual relations are concerned, may be either sound or unsound. It may be as a lamp lighted up, the kindled 'candle

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life,

of the Lord, illuminating the whole inner man; or it may be as a lamp blown out and extinguished. The man may be seeing clearly, or he may be blinded and blind. If he be blinded and blind, *how great the darkness!* even though he be a man of talent, and learning, and genius. How sad that such men should be so often blind, so that the true 'treasures' are undiscovered. How sad that the dust of the earth should be suffered to drift in upon the eye, for such a length of time and to such an extent that moral blindness ensues!

VER. 24. No man can serve two masters: Some might suppose that our Saviour was speaking too strongly concerning *laying up treasures in heaven, and not on earth*. Might not the heart divide itself between the two? It cannot be. *No man can serve faithfully two masters*, of distinct or opposite interests. For either he will hate the one and love the other; or else *vice-versa*, he will hold to the one and despise the other. In the original it is, *he will hold to one, that is, to one of the two, and despise the other*. If the case do not assume the phase of strongly marked love and hatred, there will yet be attachment and attention to one of the two, and consequent detachment and inattention in relation to the other. This detachment and inattention will spring from *contempt*, and manifest itself in *contempt*. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Mammon, or mamon, was a common word in the east, among Phœnicians, Syrians, and others, signifying (*material*) riches, or (*worldly*) wealth. Jerome tells us that it was common in the Syriac language; Augustin that it was common in the Punic. It is here personified as a kind of *god of this world*. One cannot serve both God and Gold; more especially when gold is treated as a god. One cannot serve two contrary gods. To have riches indeed, as Luther remarks, is no sin. The sin is to serve them. To be the servant of riches is idolatry. Riches, when possessed, should be put into the place of a servant to the servant of God.

VER. 25. Therefore—that is, since it is the case that ye must not be, to any extent, the servants of Mammon—I say unto you, Take no thought for your life: The expression *Take no thought* is by no means a peculiarly felicitous rendering of the original (*μη μεριμῶτε*). It suggests too prominently a state of the thinking element of our being; whereas the original phrase brings more particularly into view a state of the affections. *Take no thought*, moreover, is deficient in intensity of import. It does not reproduce the force and emphasis of the original. Tyndale's translation was in some respects superior, *Be not careful*; a translation that was retained in Cranmer's Bible, and in the Geneva version, and in the Rheims; given by Young too. It is not however unexceptionable; for the word *careful*, as opposed to *careless*, is almost always used to express a *legitimate amount of care*; and there are few injunctions more important to a man in all stages and circumstances of life than *Take care*. Yet *care* is one of those states of mind that may turn up on two sides of our being. It may turn up on the right side, or it may turn up on the left. It is legitimate and indispensable on the one side; it is wrong and hurtful on the other. It is wrong and ruinous to become the victim of care, or of cares. While it is good to be *careful*, it is bad to be *full of care*. It is *care*, in this left hand acceptation, *care* that has an element of distrust in it as regards the providence of the heavenly

what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can

Father, *care* that is allied to a spirit of discontent or that has an element of too great worldly ambition in it, it is this kind of *care* that is forbidden by our Lord. That there is a right kind of care, right hand care, recognised in the Scripture, is evident from 1 Cor. vii. 32, 34, xii. 25; 2 Cor. xi. 28; Phil. ii. 20. That there is a wrong kind of care, left hand care, carking care, is evident from this passage, and such others as Luke x. 41, Phil. iv. 6. But our word *care* is by no means an exact reproduction of the force of the original term; and hence it but imperfectly expresses the left hand state of mind that is referred to in the passage before us. The original term represents something like *distraction* of mind. (*Μέμυρα* is connected with *μερίζω*, to separate into parts; for, as Terence says, *curae animum divorce trahunt*, *Andr.* i. 5: 25, 26.) The care that is forbidden is that which is allied to a *troubled state*. (See Luke x. 41.) The expression is translated by Mace and D. Scott, *Be not solicitous*; by Wynne, *Be not over solicitous*; by Sharpe, *Be not over careful*; by Doddridge, Campbell, Worsley, Anderson, Rotherham, *Be not anxious*, a very good translation. Brameld has, *Take no anxious thought*. One of the growing meanings of our word *concern* is applicable to the case before us, *Give yourselves no concern for your life.—For your life*: That is, for the *life-principle* in your being. We could not well say *for your soul*, for the English word *soul* does not cover the same extent of meaning as the Greek term used (*ψυχή*). Is not the life (*the life-principle*) more than meat, and the body than raiment? If God gave you the greater blessings, do not distrust Him in reference to the lesser.

VER. 26. Behold the birds of the air: And take a lesson from them regarding your heavenly Father's providence. There are links of connection between you and them, even as there are links of connection between them and your heavenly Father. That they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into granaries: And yet they are not idle. In their own way they work, and work for their food. Yet,—or rather *And*,—your heavenly Father feedeth them: There is a Divine providence; observe it. There is a Divine arrangement; see that you keep yourselves in harmony with it. Are not ye of much more value than they? Why then have carking care in reference to God's providence? Note, says Matthew Henry, that "the heirs of heaven are much better than the fowls of heaven; nobler and more excellent beings, and by faith they soar higher." "We never knew," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "an earthly father take care of his fowls and neglect his children; and shall we fear this from our heavenly Father? God forbid."

VER. 27. But (*ὅτε*) which of you by taking anxious thought can add one cubit to his stature? But which of you, by never so much anxiety (see on ver. 25), can add one cubit to his stature? Note the connection of the saying, as indicated by the introductory particle. The Saviour had said, *Are ye not of much more value than the birds of the air?* Then He continues to the following effect: *Ye are indeed better and more valuable in all respects; even physically. But still ye occupy your own determinate place in the great system of your heavenly*

add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of

Father. The bounds of that place you cannot pass. You are not small and comparatively insignificant beings like birds. But on the other hand you are not giants; and although you should expend upon yourselves any possible amount of anxiety and care you could not enlarge yourselves into giants. Which of you is able, by any amount of anxious concern, to add one cubit to his stature? A large number of expositors, not seeing the proper connection of the statement with what goes before, have been puzzled to account for our Lord's reference to stature; and hence they have substituted, in their translation, *age* for *stature*. So, among many others, Hammond, Wolf, Doddridge, Wakefield, Wetstein; Rosenmüller too, and Kuinöl, Wesley, Benson, Olshausen, De Wette; Heubner also, and Tholuck, Trench, Ewald, Meyer, Wordsworth, Alford, Brown, Schaff. The word may be rendered either *age* (see Heb. xi. 11, "when she was past *age*"), or *stature* (see Luke xix. 3, "and he was little of *stature*"). But it would appear strange indeed, and incongruous, if our Lord should have spoken of adding a cubit to a man's age. One would have supposed that if He had been referring to age He would rather have used some word equivalent to *moment*, or *hour*, or *day*, or *year*. But even if He had, the saying would still be unaccountable; for it is not true that it is in all cases impossible to add to the length of life by taking care. Many "bloody and deceitful men," in consequence of not taking care, do not "live out half their days" (Ps. lv. 23). And if carelessness, in many cases, shortens, carefulness may, in some cases, lengthen one's days. If this is not admitted, then the whole medical profession is a mistake and an absurdity. The Syriac translator renders the term *stature*. So does the Vulgate. Chrysostom took it in the same meaning, and Euthymius Zigabenus; and so did Luther; Calvin too in his translation, though he evades a decision in his exposition; Beza too, and Grotius, D. Scott, Bengel, Whitby, Elsner, Fritzsche. A cubit is a measure of length, corresponding to the distance from the elbow downward. It is generally calculated at a foot and a half.

VER. 28. And concerning raiment, why take ye anxious concern? Consider the lilies of the field. Solon, to humble the pride of Cræsus, king of Lydia, referred him to the peacock. But it is in faultless taste that our Saviour turned, for His illustration, to the vegetable world, and specified *the lilies that grow wild in the fields*. "The Håleh lily," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "is very large, and the three inner petals meet above, and form a gorgeous canopy, such as art never approached, and king never sat under, even in his utmost glory. When I met this incomparable flower, in all its loveliness, among the oak woods around the northern base of Tabor, and on the hills of Nazareth, where our Lord spent His youth, I felt assured that it was to this He referred. We call it Håleh lily, because it was here that it was first discovered." (*The Land and the Book*, part ii., chap. 18.) How they grow: That is, how they expand, how they spread out (*αὐξάνουσιν*). They toil not, in general. Neither do they spin, in particular. They do not engage in any labour at all with a view to the manufacture of their own beautiful attire.

VER. 29. And yet,—or more simply, *But*—I say unto you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these: Not even Solomon, whose

these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?* 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek :) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

magnificence was historical and proverbial; not even Solomon, when having on, for his greatest state occasions, his most gorgeous robes; not even Solomon was ever arrayed with such perfection of beauty.

VER. 30. But if God so clothe the grass of the field—thus array with beauty, as with a garment, the herbage of the field—which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven: Dried grass as well as wood was frequently used for heating quickly the oriental oven. The oven referred to (the *κλίστρος*) was a kind of pot, made of clay or other material, and narrowing from the bottom upward. The dried grass or other fuel was put *inside*, so as to heat the walls of the vessel; and then the dough was put on the *outside*, and instantly baked. (Jahn's *Bib. Antiquities*, § 140.) Shall He not much more clothe you? With such raiment as is meet for you. Have you not reason to trust Him? to trust that He will command His blessing on your toiling and spinning? The Saviour knew well that, in all ordinary circumstances, raiment would not be obtained without spinning, and weaving, and other kinds of toiling. He was not less intelligent and observant than ordinary men. But He knew, far better than all other men, that *work without trust in God* is one thing, and that *work with trust in God* is another and very different thing. He knew, as no one else knew, that work, woven as it were on the warp of trust in God, is not only performed without any waste of immortal energy, but is also transformed into worth and worship. It is thus that work, however humble, becomes figured and transfigured into a thing of beauty and of bliss. O ye of little faith: Such littleness of faith, in reference to the Unseen and Divine side of things, and the unceasing interpenetration of these finer things with things seen and human, is still sadly characteristic of the great body of Christ's disciples. Hence their comparative unspirituality, their comparative unassimilation to their Lord; and the comparative impotence of their spiritual influence among their fellow men.

VER. 31. Therefore take no thought: Or, *Do not then anxiously concern yourselves.* Do not distress and distract yourselves. Beware of worldly worry. *Therefore*: since there is such a constant providential care on the part of your heavenly Father. The Saviour thus returns to the idea from which He started in ver. 25.

VER. 32. For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: The *seeking* of heathens, as a general rule, does not rise toward the 'things unseen and eternal.' They live emphatically on the earth, and for the earth. Should not Christians live above the earth? Heathens live in the present, and for the present. Should not Christians live beyond the present? Are they not pilgrims here? Is not their citizenship in heaven? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things: An additional reason, coming in after the preceding one, and encouraging Christ's disciples to divest themselves of all

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34

distrustful anxiety. *Your heavenly Father knoweth your wants, and will be ready, to the full amount that is required, to provide for you, if you be careful, in the first place, to do your duty so far as in you lies, and, in the second place, to cast all your care upon Him as to the results of your duties done.* "The vital air, the pure water, the comfortable fire, the warm garment, the cheerful light, the wholesome food, the quiet home, the welcome sleep, the grateful rotation of the seasons, and all the thousand glorious and wonderful ministrations of nature, testify that our Great Friend, conscious of our necessities, is most kind and liberal in supplying them." (Livermore.)

VEN. 33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God: The positive side of the duty that has been negatively exhibited from the 25th verse onward. The duty in its two-sidedness infolds and unfolds the principle which should regulate the proportional outgoings of our voluntary energies toward things 'unseen and eternal' on the one hand, and toward things 'seen and temporal' on the other. *Seek: search for, search out.* *First:* Let this seeking occupy the foremost place in all the daily outgoings of your voluntary activity. Let it take precedence as regards all your aims. Let it ever be *first* in the order of importance; and, as far as possible, in the order of time too, as day by day your voluntary aims are marshalled before your mind. *Seek the kingdom of God:* The kingdom of heaven, which belongs to God, and which is as yet chiefly in heaven. (See on Matt. iii. 2, vi. 10.) Christ enjoins on His disciples to continue in quest of this kingdom; to move on day by day in the straight (and strait) way that leads to it; to move on seekingly, lest their steps should miss the way or turn aside. Searching and seeking effort will be needed, and daily needed, to get to the kingdom, as it is in heaven. The direction of the road to the kingdom is inward, not outward. (Luke xvii. 20, 21.) *And His righteousness:* Not the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. v. 20), but the righteousness of God, the righteousness, that is to say, that is enjoined by God as constituting moral meetness for the kingdom of heaven, and that is also personally characteristic of God. (See Matt. v. 45, 48; and comp. Jas. i. 20.) The Saviour is not referring to the imputative righteousness, of which Paul writes so much, and which constitutes the title to the glory of the kingdom. He is giving instructions to His disciples, who were already implicitly clothed with that righteousness. He is referring to the righteousness which must be sought for daily, as ethical preparation for the kingdom of heaven. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and,* as a preparation for that, *His righteousness.* *And all these things shall be added unto you:* *All these things,* literally *these things all of them.* As much of each of them as is needed shall be added, or thrown into the bargain, as it were; and, if it would be well, they shall be added in great abundance. Both Origen and Clemens Alexandrinus record that one of the (traditional) sayings of our Lord was this: *Ask great things, and little things shall be added; ask heavenly things, and earthly things shall be added.* The idea is Christian and right. Solomon does not stand alone in the treatment which he received at the hand of God: *Because thou hast asked this thing (wisdom), and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself; nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; Behold, I have done according to thy words. Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour* (1 Kings iii. 11-13). In

Take therefore no thought for the morrow : for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

CHAPTER VII.

1 JUDGE not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what

various ways is *godliness profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come* (1 Tim. iv. 8). "Other things being equal, the good man prospers better in worldly affairs than the bad man. All the vices are expensive and losing, as all the virtues are gainful and thrifty." (Livermore.)

VER. 34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow : Or, *Do not take anxious concern then for the morrow.* The Saviour thus returns once more to the duty inculcated in ver. 25, 28, 31. He gives *line upon line, precept upon precept*, well knowing the tendency of men, and even of good men, to distrustful anxiety in reference to things that are quite beyond their control. He gives, however, His general injunction a special application to the things of the *morrow*. And the same principle is, of course, applicable to the morrow's morrow, and to the future in general. It is right to exercise forethought, and to plan in reference to the future, far and near. But it is wrong to distress ourselves about it. And it is specially wrong, and a most ungrateful distrust of our heavenly Father's care, to bear a burden of anxiety in reference to the uncertainty that may attach to the fruits, or results, of our own providential care. For the morrow will take anxious thought for the things of itself : Or, more briefly and according to the more authenticated reading, *For the morrow will take anxious thought for itself.* The *morrow* is graphically personified, and represented as *taking anxious thought or concern.* The Saviour disallows *concern, or anxious thought,* when He speaks as a Legislator : but when He speaks as a Prophet, He foresees it. And hence, speaking as an Advocate and a wise Reformer, He urges the duty of quiet trustfulness by many considerations, and does the utmost possible, in the circumstances, with the people whose interests He has at heart. Thus it is that He says that *the morrow will bring with it, when it comes, enough of anxiety, and far more than enough.* This being the case, *Why, says He, should you borrow from it into to-day any portion of its own peculiar anxiety? Why thus double your burden? Why add to the load of to-day the load that belongs to the morrow? Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof: 'The evil thereof,' the adverse element, the troublous element, the element of difficulty and trial. Every day has its element of darkness, as well as its element of light. And now and again there comes upon men, even the best of them, a very rainy day. At times too there is storm and tempest, and thunder and lightning. Every day has something of trouble in it, though day differs from day.*

CHAPTER VII.

VER. 1. Judge not : "What then?" asks Chrysostom, "Ought we not to blame them that sin?" "If this were so," he adds, "all would be lost; whether in churches, or in states, or in homes. For except the master judge the servant, and the mistress the maid, and the father the son, and friends

judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3

“one another, there will be an increase of the things of wickedness.” It is right to judge sin to be sin, and to blame it. It is right to judge whether or not men around us sin; and to blame them, when we cannot avoid the judgement that they have sinned. It is right to sit in judgement on ourselves, and to condemn our own sins. In fact, the judicial element in our nature is the judicious. And if we were without judgement, we should be things, not persons. If we were to live without the exercise of our judgement, we should be at the mercy, not only of every wind of doctrine, but also of every wave of passion. What means then our Lord? His language is epigrammatic, and derives its point from the prevalence of censorious judging among the scribes and Pharisees and others. It is in antithesis to this censorious judging, that He demands from His disciples, in this sphere of things as in others, a higher righteousness (chap. v. 20). And hence the connection of this paragraph with what goes before. *Judge not, that is, Judge not others, Judge not others in a censorious and uncharitable spirit*, as the scribes and Pharisees are too much accustomed to do (Luke xviii. 11, 12). In such censorious judging there is always malevolence. This malevolence manifests itself in a secret eagerness to find fault, and in a secret gladness to find a neighbour in a fault. The censorious person is always moreover self-conceited, imagining that he himself is above being the legitimate object of all similar judgement. He is positive too that he has penetrated the true motives of the person whom he judges. He mounts the throne of judgement as a matter of course, in his peculiar circle or circuit, and, looking down upon his auditors, passes sentence with such self-elevation, assurance, and infallibility, as implies that it would be folly, if not a crime, to dissent from his judgement. *That ye be not judged: That is, In order that ye may not be retributively judged in like manner by others.* The Saviour could have brought into play higher motives. Such higher motives He has adduced abundantly in other parts of this *Sermon on the Mount*. But it shows the breadth of His ethical grasp, that He laid His hand, as occasion required, on all legitimate motives, higher and lower. That He refers here to retributive judging *on the part of men*, and not to judging *on the part of God*, is evidenced by these considerations: (1) The balance of the sentence suggests it, “Judge not *others*, that ye be not judged *by others*.” (2) The expression in ver. 12 shows whither He had been looking in the preceding verses, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would *that men should do to you*, do ye even so to them.” (3) The kindred passage in Luke decides the matter (vi. 37, 38): “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, *shall men give into your bosom.*” There is however an important element of the judicial action of God in the retributive instincts of men. It is one of His ways of bringing the self-conceited and the censorious to His bar. He whose hand, or tongue, is against every man need not wonder that Divine providence should so balance the scales of justice that every man’s hand, or tongue, will be ultimately against him; he reaps what he sows.

VER. 2. For with what judgement ye judge ye shall be judged: In the very sentence which ye censoriously pronounce upon others, ye shall find retributively your own sentence. Your own sentence will sooner or later be turned back against yourself. And with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you (*again*): The *again* is not needed, and is omitted in almost all the important

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

authorities. Instead of *with* the preposition is *in*, and is graphic. The measure referred to is a *dry measure* (see Luke vi. 38). In the very same measure in which the censorious man metes out his judgements on others shall the judgements of others be meted out to him; just as Haman was hanged on his own gallows. Sooner or later the judgement of the wise man will verify itself, "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it" (Eccles. x. 8).

VER. 3. But why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye: *But*, that is, Even apart from the retributive judgement which will be the consequence of censorious judgement, there is another view of the case which should be taken. Let me ask then, censorious man, *Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye?* The censorious man, or fault finder, fixes his eyes, as it were staringly, on the mote that is in his brother's eye, as if he were sympathisingly sorry for him. *Mote*: or little speck of straw, chaff, or wood. No doubt there is such a mote in thy brother's eye. Every man has his failing. *But considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?* *But dost not take note of the beam that is in thine own eye?* *Beam*, a graphic and almost droll representation of a comparatively great fault. The word means a *log, joist, or rafter*. Augustin, explaining, instances, as an example, *settled hate* as compared with a passing *burst of passion*. The Saviour draws a picture, and shows how morally grotesque the conduct of the fault finder is. It is implied that the censorious judge or fault finder is, to the eye of the candid onlooker, himself characterised by some greater fault than the person whose fault he is taking such zest in pointing out. The censorious fault finder has always this greatest of all faults, he is destitute of true charity and love.

VER. 4. Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Permit me to cast out the mote that is in thine eye? How can you be guilty of such ridiculous assumption and presumption? And, lo, the beam in thine own eye! *The beam*, that is, the beam already referred to. "This," says Trapp, "is an evil disease that I have seen "under the sun, that men, and those of the better sort sometimes, hear nothing, "and talk of nothing, so willingly as they do of other men's faults."

VER. 5. Hypocrite! The censorious fault finder is a hypocrite. He professes to be sorry for the faults on which he fastens; but he is not. He professes that it is in grief that he lifts the veil; but it is really with secret chuckle and satisfaction. In his censorious fault finding, moreover, he implicitly professes to be free from the faults on which he expatiates; but he is not: and, when he analyses these faults into their primary constituents, he knows that he is not. The truly good man is never censorious. When he rebukes, or faithfully narrates what is to the disadvantage of his brother, it is in a spirit of benevolence, and with genuine grief. *Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye:* When thou hast got quit of thine own great fault, thou wilt be better able to assist thy erring brother to get rid of his lesser failing. There is a nicety in our

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Saviour's language that has been missed by Samuel Wesley, father of John Wesley, in his *History of the New Testament in verse* :—

“Why so exact and nice, fond mortal, why?
To find small motes within thy brother's eye,
Though beams within thy own thou canst not spy?
Base hypocrite! first mend thyself, and then
Thou'lt clearly see the faults of other men.”

Our Saviour does not say, *Thou shalt then see clearly the mote in thy brother's eye*. He says, “Then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.” It is the good man's aim, not to see, or gaze at, his brother's mote, but to assist him to get rid of it.

VER. 6. We learn from the close of the preceding verse that it is legitimate, in right circumstances, to assist our fellow men to get rid of their faults. It is more than legitimate; it is a high and imperative obligation imposed by the law of love. Yet, even when the inner or subjective circumstances are right, we must be discriminative as to the outer or objective. We must not indiscriminately ‘walk into’ every man with whom we come in contact, of whatever temper, and in whatever mood, and insist on him attending to his highest duties and interests. Hence this sixth verse. Give not that which is holy to the dogs: A metaphorical and proverbial counsel regarding discrimination. It is quite right to be kind to the dogs, and to throw them a piece of common flesh; but it would have been very wrong to have given them any portion of sacred meat; of a sacrifice, for instance. Such sacred meat would have had no manner of respect shown to it by the dogs. Among the Jews dogs were unclean; and, as a rule, fierce and undomesticated. In Palestine, at the present day, they prowl about at large in the cities, belonging to no one in particular, disliked and persecuted by all, but yet maintaining a precarious and semi-wild existence in consequence of the uncleanly habits of the people. They are the self appointed scavengers of the streets; and while engaged in their scavenging operations, or while lying basking in the sun, *Touch-me-not* is the outstanding feature of their character. So there is a class of men who are, in things spiritual at least, utterly regardless, unsociable, and fierce. They are under the influence of *temper*, as regards those things; and not only do they not respect things holy, they will do nothing but snarl, and growl, and bite, if you attempt, howsoever affectionately, to lay your hand upon their spirit, so as to win them to spiritual intercourse. Neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest they trample them down with their feet, and turn and tear you: For a moment they may think that the pearls are seeds, or some such edibles. But it will be but for a moment; and then, trampling them down in their rage, they will—(*obliquum meditantés ictum*, HORACE)—turn round upon you and tear you. The reference is to wild swine; for the animal was undomesticated among the Jews. There are human beings who are almost equally grovelling and fierce. Take heed how you attempt to deal with such persons in reference to their spiritual interests. It will be of no service, either to them, or to the gospel, or to yourselves, to infuriate them, or to stir within them into ebullition the swinishness of their nature. Bishop Jebb supposes that, in virtue of an *epanodos* in

7 Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : 8 for every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ?

parallelism, the last clause of the verse, and turn again and rend you, is to be connected with the first, *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs*. Tyndale had been of the same opinion ; Castellio too. Bland approves ; and Scrivener is delighted with the idea. But it is far too artificial ; and founded, besides, on a misunderstanding of the first clause.

VER. 7. We see from the tenor of the six preceding verses that one would need to be both good and wise in order to be of much spiritual service to one's fellow men. Who then is sufficient for these things ? Our sufficiency, as the Saviour goes on to intimate, is of God, and of God only. Hence He enjoins us to apply to God for the needed gifts and graces. Such seems to be the connection of what follows with what goes before. Ask, and it shall be given you : Ask what you need for usefulness to your fellow men, and you shall get it. When you go with recipient hearts into the presence of the Infinite Fulness, and bend lowly at the base of the Living Fountain that is ever overflowing, you will not come empty away. Seek, and ye shall find : A repetition, for emphasis' sake, of the same idea, under another phase. He that asks of God is *in quest*. He is seeking among the Infinities for what he is needing ; and when he seeks there he will not seek in vain. Knock, and it shall be opened to you : A re-repetition for still greater emphasis. *You are at a gate whose hinges never grow rusty for want of use. It will not be opened to you only after a long delay, and charity handed out to you grudgingly, as to a beggar. It will be opened instantly, and you will be invited "into the parlour,"* as Trapp expresses it, *that your petition may be most favourably considered*. Augustin once thought that there was an essential distinction between asking, seeking, and knocking (*De Sermonibus in Monte*, lib. ii., c. 21) ; but in his *Retractations* (lib. i., c. 19) he withdrew the idea.

VER. 8. A repetition of the promises of the preceding verse, cast into such a generalized form that *every one* may be encouraged to avail himself of the boon.

VER. 9. Or—if, instead of looking at the subject absolutely, you should like to look at it comparatively—what man is there of you, who if his son shall ask him for bread, will give him a stone ? Both in the original and in King James's translation the construction is somewhat perplexed, in consequence of two modes of representation being mixed up together. Livermore says that "*whom* should be *who* grammatically." But this is not quite the case, if we retain the *he* in the final clause. Our translators intended *whom* to be objective, along with *bread*, to the verb *ask* ; and so far they have exactly reproduced the original construction. Tyndale's version is free, and smoothes the perplexity, *Is there any man among you which, if his sonne axed hym bread, wolde offer him a stone ? Bread, that is a cake of bread, more like our roll, though less shapely, than our symmetrical shapen loaf. It was hence not very unlike a stone.*

VER. 10. Or if he shall ask for a fish, will he give him a serpent ? It will be noted that there is some visual resemblance between a serpent and a fish, as

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should

between a stone and a cake of bread. Hence the beauty of the illustrative comparison.

VER. 11. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: *Being evil*, consciously sinful, and, as such, deficient both in consideration and in love. *If ye know how to give*, or, more literally, *If ye know to give*, an expression that has puzzled critics. Wetstein and Rosenmüller say that it means *if ye are accustomed to give*. Palairet and Kuinöl say that the *know* has here no meaning at all, and that our Saviour's phrase just denotes this, *if ye, being evil, give*. But the expression is a compression of two distinct ideas; (1) *if ye, being evil, give gifts to your children*; and (2) *if ye know to give good gifts, if ye have sense to give what is good, and not stones for bread, and serpents for fishes*. How much more shall your Father, who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him! He has both (1) will to give, and (2) wisdom to give good things only. He will give *you*, if you ask Him, the good things that you really need, and in particular the good things that you need to fit you to do good to your fellow men. He will give you as largely as you can receive of His own Holy Spirit (Luke xi. 13). Your Father in heaven is a Father, and has a most fatherly heart. As He is the first Father, so He is the best. He is the most fatherly of all fathers.

VER. 12. Therefore all things, or *All things then*: The *then* or *therefore* refers to the scope of the eleven preceding verses. Luther supposed that the reference was to the scope of the entire sermon. Meyer takes substantially the same view, only he limits the retrogressive reference to that portion of the sermon that extends back to the 17th verse of the fifth chapter. This however is an unnatural stretch, more especially when we take the sixth chapter into account, which does not bring prominently into view the duty which we owe to *man*. But although the retrogressive reference to the *then* or *therefore* is not so great as represented by Luther and Meyer, yet the contents of the verse are indeed a sweet summing up of the teaching of a large portion of the sermon; not only of verses 1-11 of this chapter, but also of verses 14 and 15 of the sixth chapter, and of verses 7, 9, 13-48 of the fifth chapter. The Saviour, as Luther expresses it, gathers up His detailed instructions into "a little bundle, (*ein klein Bündlein*) "which every man can put into his bosom and easily carry about with him." *All things* whatsoever ye may desire that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: This is, for all practical purposes, and especially when the interests of third parties are not involved, the handiest, the readiest, and the best of all moral maxims. It is, when legitimately applied, the golden rule of all social life, the family life, commercial life, church life, national life; it is the golden rule of international prosperity. When once the rule is universally acted on, the golden age of the earth will be realized. Until it be acted on, there will be social and political confusion, and perplexity, men pulling against men, class against class, and people against people. Partial gleams of this golden maxim have shot across the minds of multitudes of moralists and thinkers; but few apparently, if any, ever expressed it, in its integrity, except Christ and such as

do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets.

have received it from His lips. We read in the Talmud that when a certain Gentile wished to be made a proselyte, he applied to Shammai, and desired that the law should be explained to him in as short a time as he could stand on one foot. The rabbi lifted the staff that was in his hand, and drove the querist from his presence. He then went to Shammai's rival, Hillel, and made the same request. Hillel replied, *Don't do to thy neighbour what is hateful to thyself.* That, said he, is the whole law. The Gentile became a proselyte (See Lightfoot and Wetstein, *in loc.*) It was a gleam ; but the light which it emitted was merely on the negative side of the golden rule. Gibbon, in declaiming against Calvin's conduct in the burning of Servetus, a really black spot in Calvin's escutcheon, says: " A Catholic inquisitor yields the same obedience which he requires ; but " Calvin violated the golden rule of doing as he would be done by ; a rule which I " read in a moral treatise by Isocrates four hundred years before the publication " of the gospel, *What stirs your anger, when done to you by others, that do not to " others.*" (*Decline and Fall*, chap. liv., note n.) It was a gleam. But Gibbon, in his zeal to pluck from the crown of Christ as many of His original gems as possible, as well as to blacken the character of one of the noblest of uninspired men, did not notice, on the one hand, that the interests of third parties were involved in Calvin's procedure ; and he overlooked, on the other, that the maxim of Isocrates has reference only to the negative side of human duty. It declares *what should not be done*, but it did not touch the positive and far more important idea of *what should be done*. Diogenes Laertius relates (lib. v., § 21) that Aristotle, when asked how we should bear ourselves toward our friends, answered, *As we would desire that they should bear themselves toward us.* It was a gleam, worthy of the greatest of Grecian thinkers ; and it has the positive element in it. But then it is a rule for our conduct only in relation to our friends. Confucius was once asked by Tsze-kung if there was one word which would serve as a rule of conduct for all the life ; he replied, *Is not reciprocity such a word ? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others* (Legge's *Religions of China*, p. 139). It was a very bright gleam, but still only declaring what '*not to do.*' There were many corresponding gleams, or gleams still brighter, in the ethical utterances of Buddha ; for, according to him, " the " motive of all our actions should be *pity or love* for our neighbour " (Max Müller's *Science of Religion*, p. 249). Seneca mentions (in his 94th *Epistle*) that there are certain maxims which, when stated, commend themselves instantly, without any process of ratiocination, even to the most uncultured minds. One of them, he says, is this, *Expect from others what you do to others.* But if this be a gleam at all, in the direction of our Lord's maxim, it is exceedingly small and remote. It merely tells us what we may look out for, not what we ought to do. Our Saviour's maxim is very different. It is not simply prudential. It covers the whole breadth of our conscience, in its man-ward direction. It is indeed just a peculiar form of the great *law of love.* And hence, when announcing it, the Saviour touches, as Zuingli remarks, the foundation of natural jurisprudence (*fundamentum juris naturalis*). Love has its seat in a living selfhood ; but it ever turns toward otherhood. It would not be true love if it were always turning round to self, and terminating on self. It would be only bastard and barbaric love, selfish love, selfishness ; and selfishness in a living self is a private opening of the heart down into the bottomless abyss. No wonder that it is insatiable,

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there

and for ever crying, like the grave, *give, give*. In love, that is truly love, self-hood goes out in quest of otherhood. This is disinterested love; love that is ready, if need be, to be self-abnegating and self-sacrificing. It is like the love of Christ Himself. He who thus loves will be sure to do to others all things whatsoever he desires that others should do to him. For this is the law and the prophets: This saying, this rule of life, is the sum, substance, and quintessence of the ethical teaching of the law and the prophets, which ethical teaching is the culminated aim of the entire system of revelation. (See on Matt. v. 17, 18.)

VER. 13. "Our dear Lord," says Luther, "has now finished His sermon, and He winds it up with sundry admonitions." Enter ye in at the strait gate,—or, more literally, and as Luther has it, *through the strait gate*. Wycliffe has it, *bi the streyt gate*; so the English Revisionists, *by the narrow gate*. "I have seen," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "these strait gates and narrow ways, *with here and there a traveller*. They are in retired corners, and must be sought for, and are opened only to those who knock; and when the sun goes down, and the night comes on, they are shut and locked. It is then too late." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. i., p. 28.) Perhaps our Lord pointed to some wicket gate that was in view. Dr. Adam Clarke says that "the words in the original are very emphatic, Enter in through *this* strait gate, *i. e.* of doing to every one *as you would he should do unto you*; for this alone seems to be the strait gate which our Lord alludes to." The Doctor however has simply imagined the emphasis of which he speaks. The expression in the original does not mean 'through *this* strait gate'; and there is no reason to suppose that our Lord was referring exclusively, or particularly, to the golden rule enunciated in the preceding verse. He reminds His hearers, *in view of all that He had been saying to them*, that there were two ways open to them, a way that leads to bliss, and a way that leads to woe. He, as it were, says to them, *See that ye choose the right way; and the right way is not that in which the multitude are walking. Enter in through the narrow gate. The straight way onward from that gate will conduct you in the right direction and to the desirable terminus. Enter in*. If any inquirers had asked the Saviour to tell them definitely and explicitly what the strait gate was, He would have answered, we doubt not, if He saw that they could disentangle multiplicity and variety of representation into their underlying unity and simplicity, and could bear the unveiled truth, *'I am the gate. My mediation is the gate.* (Comp. John x. 9, xiv. 6.) In one sense the gate was wide, wide enough to admit all. In another sense it was *strait*. Men must stoop, and be lowly, if they would enter through it. They must disencumber themselves too of all superfluous spiritual burdens. They must enter one by one, each one for himself. For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction: For. It is as if the Saviour had said, *My counsel is needed. See that ye take it; for*. The rest of the words constitute a graphic representation of the other and left hand side of things. There is a wide gate. It opens into a broad way. But the broad way leads to destruction. The idea of an enclosure, a place enclosed within a wall, lies at the basis of the representation. One might have supposed, from the spacious entrance, that the way would conduct to some magnificent home, a palace of beauty and of bliss. But no. It leads to *destruction*, to some kind of everlasting death. What may this

be which go in thereat: 14 because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

broad way be, with its wide gate? It is doubtless the way of self licence, of that self gratification which is determined to take a wide berth for itself, spurning Divine prohibitions, and laughing at the limits of a strict and narrow morality. It is the way of things that is counter to the way and will of Christ. And many there be that go in thereat,—or, more literally, *And many there are who are entering in through it.* There were many in Christ's day. There are still many. The multitude still goes that way. He who would be a Christian must still be somewhat singular in his habits and manner of life.

VER. 14. Because strait is the gate: In the margin we read, *How strait the gate!* a reading that has prevailed extensively from very remote times. It is found in many of the ancient uncial manuscripts, though neither in the Sinaitic nor in the Vatican. It is found in several of the ancient versions, inclusive of the Peshito Syriac, the Cureton Syriac, and the Harclean; the Vulgate also, and the Gothic. It has been received into the text by Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, Tregelles; but not by Tischendorf, Alford, and Tholuck. It is, to all appearance, intrinsically unlikely; and assumes an import of $\tau\acute{\iota}$ which the term never bears in any other part of the New Testament, or in any classical writing, though it became common enough in modern Greek. Nevertheless, the very difficulty of the reading pleads powerfully in its support. It is easier to suppose that $\tau\acute{\iota}$ should have been tinkeringly turned into $\delta\tau\acute{\iota}$ than that $\delta\tau\acute{\iota}$ should have been tinkeringly turned into $\tau\acute{\iota}$. We accept therefore, with Meyer, the reading *How strait the gate!* It is a co-ordinate reason, shaped in the form of an exclamation, for the counsel given at the commencement of the 13th verse. And narrowed the way which leadeth to life: How narrowed ($\tau\epsilon\theta\lambda\iota\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta$). The figure contemplated is that of 'double-dykes.' There is a path between two properties, each measured off with its wall. Both walls approach as closely and compressingly as possible to the centre of the thoroughfare, which is the public 'right of way.' The 'double-dykes' almost meet, and there is at points here and there bulging on either side, while all along loose stones have fallen down, and make the way inconvenient, so that the traveller can only painfully and with trouble pick his steps as he moves along. It leads however to life, that is, to everlasting life, to the home of everlasting bliss. Being a narrowed way, it will not admit of latitudinarianism of demeanour. Neither will it admit of accompanying parade and pomp. It would not be possible to drive along it in a coach and six. When kings would go by it they must step out of their coaches and walk. Princes and peasants must travel there on an equality. What is this narrow way? When we get down, through the envelopments of imagery, to the real base or essential substrate of the representations, we hear the voice of Jesus Himself saying, *I am the way; no man cometh to the Father, or to the Father's house, but by Me* (John xiv. 6). As the martyr Philpot said, *The cross-way is the high-way to heaven.* There is no other way. And few there be who are finding it: It is to be hoped that nowadays there are more than there were of old. And yet they are few comparatively. But "the reason," says Dean Alford, "why so many perish is not that it is so ordained by God, who will have all to come to the knowledge of "the truth, but because so few will come to Christ, that they may have life."

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil

VER. 15. Beware of false prophets: Having said that *there are few who find the strait gate*, our Saviour proceeds to warn His hearers against such as might mislead them. He uses an antique phrase, *false prophets*; but He had His eye on a class of persons who unhappily had not ceased to be, and who even yet are only out of date in a moral sense, and not so far as the chronology of facts is concerned, *false teachers*. The old *prophets* stood before God (πρό—). God was behind them. They spoke for God; they gave utterance to the will of God. Such *prophecy* was revived in New Testament times. Our Lord Himself was the Prophet of prophets. And succeeding *prophets* came, in the order of spiritual rank, immediately after *apostles* (Eph. iv. 11). In all ages indeed many true and noble souls have stood before God, and have been moved by God, and have spoken and witnessed for God and for goodness; but in all ages there have also been false prophets. There were many of them among the scribes and Pharisees. Who come to you in sheep's clothing: They come in disguise. They put on for the purpose a character which does not belong to them. They profess to belong to the flock, and to be innocent as lambs in their aims and intentions. But inwardly they are ravening wolves: *Inwardly*, under their outer covering they hide the heart of wolves. It is the old story of the wolf and the lamb. If you admit them into your confidence, and yield yourselves up to them, you will in spirit be torn to pieces.

VER. 16. From their fruits ye shall know them: Watch their conduct, watch their character. If they are bad men, unprincipled, selfish, or acting in private at variance with their professional acting in public, then pay no regard to their teaching. It was a sad inversion of the Saviour's rule that was made by Jerome, when he interpreted it thus, *Ye shall know them by their doctrines*. And yet Calvin held the same idea. He says, "under the *fruits* the kind of teaching holds the chief place." Trapp echoes the notion; he says, "*by their fruits*, that is, chiefly by their doctrines." Such an interpretation of our Saviour's rule formed the sheet anchor of the Inquisition. Happily Luther took the right view; and so did Zuingli; and so did Augustin, who says that the *fruits* referred to are the *fruits of the Spirit* mentioned in Gal. v. 22, 23. The question is, Are these fruits present? or are they absent? Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? No. Such incongruities do not occur; although in the spiritual sphere of things there are multitudes of thistle plants and thorn bushes that have figs and grapes *stuck on*. Hence occasionally you may get grapes *on* thorns and figs *on* thistles. You may occasionally get good teaching from bad men. They have learned it and stuck it on; but it is by no means the outgrowth of their own experience and character.

VER. 17. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: *Bringeth forth*, or *maketh* (ποιεῖ). The fruit that is really the produce of the good fruit tree is good, and every good fruit tree produces such fruit. Even so there is really good outcome from the inner goodness of really good men, outcome on the superficies of their life. But a corrupt tree,—or, more literally, *the corrupt tree*, the tree that is rotten at the heart and gangrened,—bringeth forth,—or maketh,—

fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?

evil fruit: Bad fruit. So every bad man, disguise himself as he may, will sooner or later bewray, to the discerning eye, his inner badness, by the outcome of his conduct on the superficies of his life.

VER. 18. A good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit, neither can a bad tree bring forth good fruit: The Saviour turns the same idea round and round. In character the outer is the outcome of the inner.

VER. 19. Every tree that bringeth not forth—that maketh not—good fruit is hewn down, and is cast into the fire: Another thread of thought in connection with the vital distinction between good character and bad. It is attached to the representation of that distinction, to enforce the ethical importance of the distinction. The bad are doomed.

VER. 20. Wherefore,—or, *Thus it is the case that*,—from their fruits ye shall know them: The Saviour returns, after His graphic illustrations, to the practical rule which He had stated in ver. 16.

VER. 21. The Saviour, in the deep self consciousness of His Divine Messiahship, looks forward through the ages to the great judgement day, when *many trees that bring not forth good fruit would need to be cast into the fire*. He says, *Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*: He is, in thought, passing through the Christian ages; and He notices many who honour Him with the lips, and acknowledge His Lordship, and address Him most orthodoxly, *Lord, Lord*; on whom however He cannot look with complacency. It is to *prophets*, or teachers, that He refers, though His language is applicable to many others besides. Many, whose lip language is thoroughly orthodox and reverential, so far as their acknowledgment of His Lordship is concerned, will yet not enter into the kingdom of heaven. *But he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven*: He whose life is a life of obedience and of love. Such a life is not, in the case of sinners, a title to heaven, but it is meekness, indispensable meekness.

VER. 22. *Many will say to Me in that day: That day, that great day, toward which all other days look forward, and in which they merge, the great judgement day. The mind of the hearer was carried forward toward that day, by the expression in the preceding verse, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Lord, Lord: The repetition expresses importunity. In the preceding verse it expresses professional zeal. Did we not prophesy in Thy name! The reference of the word prophesy is not distinctively to the prediction of future events, but to authoritative religious teaching in general. (See on ver. 15.) The prophets referred to laid down the law as to religious duty with as much unflinching peremptoriness as if they had been inspired of God. They taught too in Christ's name, or, more literally, by Christ's name, that is, by authority of Christ's name, almost as if they had obtained a monopoly of it. They assumed to be acting*

and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his

as Christ's deputies and ministers, and professed to be actuated by zeal for His glory. And by Thy name cast out demons? Acting as exorcists, casting out demons from the demoniacally possessed. Such exorcism, real or pretended, has been practised, in connection with the name of Christ, from the first century down to the present day. It is practised regularly in the church of Rome, for instance; and exceptional individuals have turned up now and again within the bosom of the church, and elsewhere, who seemed to have marvellous relations to the spirit-world, and who have certainly in some cases exerted a marvellous power in giving deliverance to spiritually or nervously afflicted persons. Occasionally too there seemed to be special scope for such exercise of exorcism, in consequence of waves of some weird kind of influence passing infectiously over entire regions, or circuits, or communities of larger or smaller extent. We need not suppose however, indeed we must not suppose, that the exorcisms referred to were, in the highest sense of the term, *miraculous*. And by Thy name do many wonderful works? The word rendered *wonderful works* (*δυνάμεις*) is translated *miracles* in Acts xix. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29; Heb. ii. 4; etc. But it certainly does not here denote such miracles as only God can perform. It literally means *powers*, and must here denote such wonderful manifestations of power as might be mistaken by the ignorant for the special operations of the finger of God, and as perhaps, in some instances, might be mistaken by the wonder-workers themselves as demonstrations that they were the spiritual favourites of God. The working of Satan is sometimes "with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. ii. 9).

VER. 23. And then will I profess to them : Or, *confess to them*. I will say with My mouth, openly before the universe, what I have always thought in My heart. I never knew you. I knew about you well enough. I knew that you professed acquaintance with Me. You used My name; but it was mere profession. You did not know Me. You knew a number of things about Me; but you did not know Me (as your Lord, and Lawgiver, and Saviour). You were not acquainted with Me. And, on My part, I had no acquaintance with you. *I never knew you* (as My disciples and servants). Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity : Ye lived and died unholy, and are unholy still. *Depart from Me*. I can no longer say to the sinful, *Come unto Me*. There are limits to Divine longsuffering and mercy.

VER. 24. The peroration here commences. Therefore *whosoever*, or, *whosoever then* : The *then* or *therefore* hooks on the peroration to what goes immediately before. Since it is the case that there is a dreadful, as well as a delightful, alternative, in reference to action in time and retribution in eternity, take heed how you act in reference to what I have been teaching. *Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine and doeth them* : Two very different items. The difference is sometimes forgotten by those who are interested hearers of interesting preachers. "The pope, bishops, kings, and all the world hear," as Luther says. But to be a *hearer of the word* is one thing; to be a *doer of the work* is another. The two things, however, go finely together, and produce delightful harmony. I will

house upon a rock : 25 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not : for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand : 27 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell : and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine : 29 for he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

liken him to a wise man : Or, as the reading is in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and in the Syriac and Vulgate versions, *shall be likened to a wise man*, that is, *shall be made like, in his experience, to a wise man*, a prudent man, a provident man (for *prudent* is just a short way of saying *provident*), a foreseeing man. **Who built his house upon a rock :** More literally, *upon the rock*, the rock as distinguished from the other foundation thought about.

VER. 25. And the rain descended : In that rushinglly inundating fashion so common in Palestine and other southern climes. **And the floods came :** The *rivers*, the *torrents*, the *freshets*, with all their fell and furious impetuosity. **And the wind blew :** In tornado style. **And beat, or fell, upon that house :** The rains and the winds dashing on together, and the waters lashing round and round. **And it fell not ;** for it had been founded on a rock : Its security had been wisely and forecastingly provided for.

VER. 26. And—not to speak of him who refuses even to hear My sayings— every one who heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house on the sand : Sand is the best of all foundations for a dwelling house where there is no chance of exposure to torrents ; but it is the worst of all where there is such exposure.

VER. 27. And great was the fall of it : The final crash was terrific. A most solemn conclusion to the sublimest of recorded sermons.

VER. 28. And it came to pass, when Jesus ended these words, the people were astonished : *The people*, or, more literally, *The crowds*. *Were astonished*, or *amazed*, as the word is sometimes rendered. They were *astounded*. **At His doctrine :** Or, more simply, *at His teaching*. It was not altogether the matter of His teaching that filled them with wonder ; it was, in particular, a nameless kind of power in the manner in which He handled His matter.

VER. 29. For He taught them : The original expression denotes *habit*. The people did not look upon His teaching as finished. He had begun indeed, and was carrying on ; but He was only as yet in the midst of His teaching work. **As one having authority :** It could not be otherwise. He had authority. He was conscious too of His authority ; for He was conscious of His Divine mission. He knew that He was the appointed Light of the world. **And not as the scribes :** Who would be often positive enough, and pertinacious enough, and assertative enough ; but who had not, and could not have, authority within the domains of reason and conscience.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. 2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him,

CHAPTER VIII.

In the three preceding chapters the evangelist has given us a specimen of the marvellous *words* which fell from the lips of the Messiah. Jesus spake as the incarnate *Wisdom of God* (1 Cor. i. 24). He spake as never man had spoken before, and as never man has spoken since. In all that He spake He was, emphatically, *the Word of God*, the exact Expression of the mind of God. In the present chapter the evangelist gives us some specimens of the equally marvellous *works* which were performed by our Lord. In performing them He acted as the incarnated *Power of God* (1 Cor. i. 24), that Power that has been working from the beginning 'hitherto,' in every domain of nature. Our Lord moved about in this lower world of ours as its true Lord; allied in nature to it, indeed, by one element of His adopted humanity; and yet not resigning His original superiority and control. He had come down to accomplish, under a special manifestation, a special moral mission that had to do with the ultimate destiny of our earth. His works, though often supernatural to us, were all natural to Him.

VER. 1. And when He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him: *Great multitudes*, or clusters of crowds (*ὄχλοι πολλοί*). They were subdivided into numerous companies.

VER. 2. And behold there came a leper: The same miracle is related in Mark i. 40-44 and Luke v. 12-14, but without any attempt at precise chronological jointing. *A leper*: A person afflicted with one of the most loathsome and incurable of diseases. Under its action, if it go on to its full development, "the hair falls from the head and eyebrows," as Dr. W. M. Thomson remarks, "the nails loosen, decay, and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up, and slowly fall away. The gums are absorbed, and the teeth disappear. The nose, the eyes, the tongue, and the palate are slowly consumed; and finally the wretched victim sinks into the earth and disappears; while medicine has no power to stay the ravages of this fell disease, or even to mitigate sensibly its tortures." (*The Land and the Book*, part iv., chap. 43.) **And worshipped Him**: Recognising His true *worthship*, and doing obeisance to Him by prostration before Him (Luke v. 12). **Saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou art able to make me clean**: The poor suppliant believed that the Great Healer stood before him. *If Thou wilt*: He realized that the Great Healer's *will* had a right to be consulted in the matter. *Thou art able to make me clean*: Every leper was *unclean* both physically and ceremonially. His leprosy was a pathological taint; and it had been selected, under the Old Testament dispensation, as the pathological representative of all those diseases which so expressively mirror, in the outer element of our complex nature, the inner spiritual disorders which threaten the life of the soul.

VER. 3. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him: If another had touched the leper, he would have contracted ceremonial defilement. But there was, as

saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Trench observes, an exception to the ordinary rule in the case of our Saviour. "These outer prohibitions held good for all, till He came, the Pure to whom all things were pure; who, incontaminable Himself, feared not the contamination of a touch; for in Him, first among men, the advancing tide of this world's evil was effectually arrested and rolled back." (*Miracles*, p. 220, ed. 1866.) Saying, I will; be thou clean: In the leper's statement, *if Thou wilt*, a supplication was modestly couching. The Saviour's *I will* is the immediate response to that unexpressed prayer. It was the language at once of sovereignty and of grace. *Be clean*, or, more literally, *be cleansed*. It is the language of conscious imperial power. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed: Not a scientific, but still a very intelligible mode of speech. The Saviour's power went instantly forth, and, interpenetrating the frame of the diseased man, vitalizingly transformed the elements of disease into the elements of health. If Jesus was Divine, there is no room for incredulity. His presence in the flesh beside the leprous man was itself the real miracle, the miracle of miracles.

VER. 4. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man: Why? There might be various reasons, inclusive probably of this, that our Saviour saw that in the meantime there was a sufficiently strong current of desire flowing through the people in the direction of physical relief. Some might be jumping rapidly to the conclusion that this marvellous control over the elements of nature might be turned to instant account, in subjugating the Romans and other enemies, and in providing His own people with all the comforts and luxuries for which their hearts had been hungering and thirsting so long, but in vain. (Comp. John vi. 13, 15, 30, 31.) There was moreover the prospect of most inconvenient and almost unmanageable thronging. The tendency did not require to be stimulated, but to be restrained and repressed. But go thy way, to Jerusalem, show thyself to the priest: To the priest who may happen for the time being to be officiating in such matters. He would be the only proper party who was authorized to effect the ceremonial cleansing. See Lev. xiv. And offer the gift that Moses commanded: *The gift*, the sacrificial gift, which was determined according to the circumstances of the healed individual. See Lev. xiv. 4, 10, 21, 22, etc. It is right that the mercy of God should be gratefully recognised. It was right too that in that outer and adumbrative court of things, which was constituted by the Jewish dispensation, there should be performed those ceremonial atonements and purifications which adumbrated what was needed for the cleansing of the spiritually leprous. For a testimony to them: *To them*, that is, to the priest and his associates,—to the priests. For a testimony, to afford them evidence of the Divine power that was now at work among the people. Trench and Alford unhappily render the expression, *For a testimony against them*.

VER. 5. The evangelist adds another specimen of our Saviour's wonderful works, the healing of the centurion's servant. The same occurrence is related, and in still further detail, by Luke, vii. 1-10. Some indeed have supposed that the narratives in the two evangelists are descriptions of two distinct miracles. They found their supposition on the fact that what is attributed to the centurion in Matthew is represented by Luke as being transacted by means of

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6 and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou

messengers. But this diversity of representation is, as Calvin remarks, "nothing" (*nihil*). "All historical narrative," says Trench, "and all the language of common life, is full of it." Matthew is not aiming at giving scientific descriptions of unessential details. He is giving us a succession of vivid tableaux in which Jesus is represented as at work. And to his eye, while engaged in painting the tableau of the scene before us, the centurion was really present with the Lord by means of his deputies. The presence of the deputies is shaded off for the moment by a particular fold of the drapery of the painting. And when He was entered into Capernaum: A thriving town, lying on the north-west shore of the sea of Tiberias; a favourite and highly favoured resort of our Lord. It is called "His own city" in chap. ix. 1. There came to Him a centurion, beseeching Him: This centurion was a Gentile (Luke vii. 9), and connected no doubt with some military station at Capernaum. The term *centurion* leads us to think of the Roman army, which was divided into legions. Every legion was subdivided into ten cohorts or bands (Acts x. 1). Every cohort contained three maniples. And every maniple consisted of two *centuries*. The *century* consisted, as is evident from the name, of one hundred men; though even when the numbers of the men came to be reduced, the name continued. There were sixty centuries in every legion. The centurion was the commander of a century. The word is rendered *hunderder* by Sir John Cheke.

VER. 6. And saying, Lord, my servant: Or, more literally, *my boy*. The word in the original is ambiguous, just like our English word *boy*. It was used sometimes of a son, and sometimes of a servant. It is translated *son* in John iv. 51, Acts iii. 13, 26. In the other passages where it occurs it is generally rendered *servant*. Here, as we learn from the word employed in Luke vii. 2 (*δούλος*), it is used in reference to a servant. And he had been no doubt a valuable and trusty servant, seeing he was so much loved and respected by his master. Lieth at home: Or, more literally, *in the house*. He *lieth*, or *has been struck down*. Sick of the palsy: Or rather, *in a paralysed condition*, utterly prostrate. Our word *palsy*, as now used, does not convey the idea intended. Grievously tormented: Racked with pain. Tyndale renders it, *grievously payned*.

VER. 7. And Jesus saith to him, I will come and heal him: There was not only the willingness of love; there was likewise the thorough self-consciousness of power. He *would* heal, and He *could* heal. He *could* heal, and He *would* heal. Whithersoever His love flew, it flew "with healing in its wings."

VER. 8. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof: The centurion had been one of those noble spirits who had burst the fetters of the prevailing polytheism, and who were worshipping the true God. He had built a synagogue for his Jewish neighbours (Luke vii. 5), and was doubtless a student of their Scriptures. He recognised in Jesus the promised Messiah, and was prostrating himself in spirit at His feet. The expression, *I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof*, is literally *I am not sufficient, or fit, in order that Thou shouldst come under my roof*.

shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. 10 When Jesus heard *it*, he

It is a compressed way of saying, *I am not such as to make it fit*—that is, I am not worthy—that *Thou shouldest put Thyself to trouble, in order that Thou mightest come under my roof*. But speak the word only,—or, more literally according to the correct reading (*λόγῳ*, not *λόγῳ*), *But just speak by a word, or by word (of mouth)*. And my boy shall be healed: I know that Thy power reaches afar off, and can work at a distance as well as near at hand.

VER. 9. For I am a man under authority: Our translators have unhappily, and no doubt inadvertently, neglected to translate a very important little particle (*καί*), meaning *and* or *also*. They have properly translated it in Luke vii. 8, "For I *also* am a man set under authority." Tyndale did not neglect this *also* in the passage before us; and hence too it is in Cranmer's Bible. It is likewise in the Geneva version (though not in the preliminary edition of 1557). It is also in the Rheims or Roman Catholic version. It is very essential. The centurion draws a comparison between our Lord's position and his own. He was *a man under authority*. He might have said, with truth, that he was a man *in authority*. But he preferred to bring more prominently into view the fact of his subordinate position. He had power indeed, but it was *authorized* and delegated power, power derived from the powers above him, such as the tribunes or *chief captains* (Acts xxi. 31) of the legion. The position of Christ was somewhat corresponding. He was sent from above. He held a commission. He was *under authority*, and therefore *in authority*. "All power—all authority—was given unto Him" (Matt. xxviii. 18). He was the Lord High Commissioner of the Sovereign of the Universe, the Chief Captain of Salvation. The centurion's conception of the position of Jesus, as *authorized* and therefore *authoritative*, is far clearer than that of many of the commentators, who suppose that a contrast is intended between the centurion's limited power and the absolute power of our Lord. Dr. Adam Clarke, for example, represents the case thus: "How much more canst Thou accomplish whatsoever Thou willest, *being under no control*." Wordsworth thus, "How much more Thou, *who hast no superior*." This is entirely and totally to gainsay the evangelist's *also*. Having under myself soldiers; and I say to this man: Or better, to *this one*. And to my servant: That is, to my *valet*, my body servant; most probably he here alludes to the boy servant who was unwell. In some such authoritative manner could Jesus signify His pleasure, just on the spot where He stood; and His pleasure would instantly be carried into effect, though it should have reference to a distant object. The centurion does not indicate the way in which, according to his conception, the behests of the Saviour might be executed, as, for instance, by the ministry of angels, or by the ministry of the elements of nature, or by the ministry of supernatural elements or forces. He merely expresses his faith in the ability of our Lord to effect with ease whatsoever it might be His pleasure to bring to pass.

VER. 10. And when Jesus heard it, He marvelled: And admired. He was filled with admiration. His wonder need not be regarded as the surprise to which ignorance is subject. There is often more in wonder than the recogni-

marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. 11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

tion of "the unexpected." There is, when its object is transcendent in excellence or glory, the element of persistent and increasing admiration. I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel: *Not even in Israel did I ever find so great faith.*

VER. 11. And I say unto you: Or rather, as Sir John Cheke renders it, *But I say unto you.* The centurion's faith was not a solitary case in Gentiledom. I say unto you That many shall come from the east and west: Many Gentiles from far distant lands. They shall *come*, says the Saviour. He does not say, *they shall go.* He realized that their movement would be in His own direction. They shall come (*so as to be with Me*). And shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: To enjoy the feast of everlasting bliss. The expression *sit down* has reference to the position at the *banqueting table.* In the original it is, *they shall recline*; because, among the Jews, as among the Romans, guests reclined on couches around the table, instead of sitting on chairs as with us. Tyndale translates the expression, *and shall rest*; Sir John Cheke, *and schal be set.*

VER. 12. But the sons of the kingdom: The Jews, who by birth were the natural heirs of the privileges of the kingdom, and who could not be disinherited but in consequence of their own wilful misconduct and unbelief. The Saviour says, *the sons*, speaking of them in the mass; not *all the sons*, for there were many exceptional cases of true faith, akin to that of the Roman centurion. Shall be cast out into outer darkness: Or, more literally, *into the outer darkness*; that is, into the darkness that surrounds the gloriously illuminated banqueting house in which the Lord's guests shall sit down. *They shall be cast out*, a painfully graphic representation. Though they present themselves, as it were, and seek to pass in by the door, yet they shall obtain no admittance. They shall be thrust out, and shut out. After it is too late for mercy there shall be *judgement without mercy.* There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth: Or, *There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth*; words that need pondering, but no paraphrasing.

VER. 13. And as thou hast believed: Or, as Sir John Cheke gives it, *as thou believedst.* Strauss will have it that the miracle here recorded is but another version of that which is narrated in John iv. 46-54. Others have entertained the same idea, but with no good reason.

VER. 14. Here follows a brief account of another miracle. It is added by the evangelist to the group, without any intention we presume of determining its precise chronological position. It is recorded by Mark in chap. i. 29-31,

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. 15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick: 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

and by Luke in chap. iv. 38, 39. And when Jesus was come into Peter's house: The house occupied by Peter and Andrew (Mark i. 29); but it here takes its designation from him who, long before the evangelist's narrative was penned, had become the more prominent of the two brothers. He saw his wife's mother: "A wife then Peter had," says Trapp. (See 1 Cor. ix. 5.) And hence the question of Ward is appropriate, "What may we say or think of the popish prohibition of priests' marriages?" Laid: That is, *confined to bed*. And sick of a fever: The Rheims translates it, *in a fitte of a fever*. It is not unworthy of notice that there is a far back etymological connection between our word *fire* (German, *Feuer*) and the Latin word *fever*. The Greek word for fire ($\pi\acute{\upsilon}\rho$) was but another form of the same root; and hence the participle used by the evangelist in the passage before us ($\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\sigma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu$). The body is *on fire* in a *fever*.

VER. 15. And He touched her hand, and the fever left her: She got instant relief. The balance of nature was instantly restored. And she arose, and ministered to them: Instead of *to them*, a great preponderance of good authorities read to *Him*. And hence this reading has been adopted by Scholz, Lachmann, Tregelles, and Tischendorf. Her gratitude overflowed to her Deliverer, who became the central object of her attentions. Her immediate ministering was evidence of her complete restoration to health.

VER. 16. And when evening was come: It is not unlikely that the evening referred to was the evening after a sabbath day. (Comp. Mark i. 21-32.) The people might regard it as inconsistent with the sanctity of the sabbath to bring their sick ones, for healing, before the sun had set. (See Matt. xii. 10; Mark iii. 2; Luke vi. 7, xiii. 14, xiv. 3; John v. 16.) They brought to Him many that were possessed with devils: Or, *that were possessed with demons,—demoniacs*; persons who had lost hold of the helm of self control, and who were, in both body and mind, steered hither and thither, without any regard to the chart of reason, by malevolent spirits. See under chap. iv. 24. Instead of *possessed with devils*, Sir John Cheke uses the one word *develled*. And He cast out the spirits with His word: Or *by a word*, by a simple word of command; for before the authority of Jesus every knee does bow of things in heaven and of things on earth, and every knee *must* bow 'of things under the earth' (Phil. ii. 10). And healed all that were sick: Out of His fulness they all received such grace as they required.

VER. 17. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses: The words quoted are found in Isa. liii. 4, and are a more literal translation of the original Hebrew than is given in our Old Testament version. The oracle from which

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he

the words are taken (Isa. lii. 13 to liii. 12) might be designated *The Gospel according to Isaiah*; and has got accumulated around it an intensely interesting literature, quite a little library of its own. It is undoubtedly *the Messiah* who is its great theme; and it was really He to whom the prophet pointed from afar, when he said, *Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses*. Our Old Testament version is, *He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows*. But the Hebrew word rendered *griefs* really means *sicknesses*, and is so rendered in almost all the other passages in which it occurs. (See Deut. vii. 15, xxviii. 59, 61; 1 Kings xvii. 17; 2 Kings xii. 14; etc.) The word rendered *sorrows* really means *pains or sufferings*, and therefore *sorrows*. It is rendered *pain* in Job xxxiii. 19, Jer. li. 8. The meanings given by Fürst are, *pain, disease, a wound, suffering, sorrow*. Does then the prophet mean that the Messiah would cure diseases? Does such an idea exhaust his meaning? It certainly does not exhaust his meaning; for in the preceding verse he has represented our Lord as *a man of sufferings, and the acquaintance of sickness*; and yet our Lord was not noted for His personal sicknesses or diseases. He proceeds too in the next verse to say that *He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities*. What then does the prophet mean? He borrows phraseology from the outer court of bodily things, to describe what takes place in the inner court of spiritual things. He represents the coming Messiah as One who appeared to him, in ecstatic vision, as *sick and sore, wounded, bruised, marred, and suffering*. But His sickness and sores and wounds and bruises and agonies and distresses were *ours*. He took them *off us*, and laid them *on Himself*. It is the great substitution that is described. The Messiah is in our room, and He is bearing what is our due for our sins. *That is the inner court of the representation, veiled in part by the materialisms of the outer court*. How then comes it that the evangelist, in the passage before us, represents the prophecy as fulfilled in the miraculous cures of the Saviour? Has he misapplied the prophet's expressions? Far from that. He has only taken, as he was entitled to do, one step up toward the summit of their full interpretation. It was indeed but one step. Yet in taking it he has taught a profound lesson. Our Lord's manifold works, when viewed from the elevation of this step, are seen to be, not disconnected fragments of things scattered at random up and down the line of His terrestrial career, hither and thither. They are parts of a magnificent whole. *His 'works' are His 'work'*. There is plurality in the unity of His work. There is unity in the plurality of His works. The life's labour of our Lord was a complex unit, like an unbroken sphere. In the centre of the whole was the great propitiation. On the superficies were the termini of innumerable radii, which touched humanity all through and through and round and round. When the Saviour healed diseases and cast out demons, He was acting on the superficies of things. But still He was acting, even then, as the Great Saviour. And He had reference, in every particular act, in detail, to the great centre of the work which He had undertaken to accomplish. Hence the words of the prophet were *fulfilled by the curative works of our Saviour, though they were still farther and more gloriously fulfilled by His Great Atoning Work. Himself took our infirmities; or, He (and no other) took our infirmities*. He took the infirmities that were on us and in us. He took them off us, to as great an extent as possible. Each of these infirmities, toward the pole of its spiritual side, was about to develop into the death which is 'the wages of sin,' while,

gave commandment to depart unto the other side. 19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. 21

toward the pole of its physical side, it was in danger of developing into that physical death which is the outer emblem of death spiritual and eternal. *And bore our sicknesses* : He delivered us from our sicknesses as far as possible ; and, in the essence of things, He laid upon Himself all the penal elements involved in them, that He might suffer them in our stead. To suppose with some that the evangelist's application of the prophet's words is fully accounted for by the mere fact of the Saviour's compassionate sympathy with the distressed sufferers, or to imagine with others that the secret of the application is found in the exhaustion of the Saviour's energy by the multiplicity of His curative labours, is but to prick the surface of things, while the whole of the glorious interior remains unprobed, unexplored, and unknown.

VER. 18. He gave commandment to depart to the other side : The eastern side of the sea of Tiberias. He needed rest. He needed retirement. He had assumed human nature with all its innocent limitations. And He was true to it. Instead, therefore, of yielding to the importunities which assailed Him, and thus prematurely draining away and squandering His human energies, He used means for their replenishment.

VER. 19. Just as He was tearing Himself away from the excited crowds of wonderers and admirers, A certain scribe came : Or, more literally, *one scribe*, that is, *a scribe*. He advanced, or stepped forward, to Jesus. The scribes were the *literati* of the Jews, the learned class, who devoted themselves to the study of letters, more especially of the sacred writings, and the traditions of the rabbis. They would be applied to, moreover, by the mass of the people to do whatever writing was requisite, in matters of law, or commerce, or ordinary correspondence. (See on chap. ii. 4.) As a class they did not stand high in the estimation of our Lord. They lost sight of the *spirit* in the *letter*. They neglected the spirit of the letter; and were outward, artificial, conceited, self indulgent, selfish. Paul asks, *Where is the scribe?* (1 Cor. i. 20) and Matthew Henry answers, "He is very seldom following Christ." "Yet," adds he, "here is one that bid pretty fair for discipleship, a *Saul among the prophets*." Indeed he had already, to some extent, ultroneously attached himself to the Great Rabbi as a follower and scholar. See the expression in ver. 21, "*another of the disciples*." And said to Him, Master : Or *Teacher* (*διδάσκαλε*) ; or *Rabbi*. I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest : Or *whithersoever Thou mayest depart* ; for the word used is the same that is rendered *depart* in the preceding verse ; *I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou mayest 'go off.'* He saw the Great Rabbi about to leave in a boat ; and, ravished with the power that had been so marvellously exerted on the crowds, and with the lofty character that beamed forth from the whole of the Saviour's bearing and demeanour, he longed to be permanently and more intimately associated.

VER. 20. And Jesus saith to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests,—or rather, *roosts*,—but the Son of man hath not where He may recline His head : Jesus saw that the (young) man did not understand the true state of the case. Like many others he was expecting the Messiah, and had doubtless

And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

been saying in his heart, *This must surely be He. How noble He is! How godlike! What esteem too He is winning! What crowds! What enthusiasm! What power He possesses even over the elements of nature! There surely cannot be any risk in attaching myself to Him. There will be material comfort immediately; and the prospect of glory and honour when He comes out in the plenitude of His power.* Such may have been his state of mind. The Saviour read it in a moment; and, in the most felicitous and dignified yet gentle manner imaginable, let him see some of the unwelcome realities of the case. *Ah, young man, the fozes have their lairs, and the birds of the air have their roosts, but the Son of man has no comfortable home to which to retire, no ample establishment, even in prospect, such as you may have been imagining.* He calls Himself the Son of man, with a reference no doubt to Daniel vii. 13. By the emphatic adoption of this emphatic designation He claimed to be the personage there spoken of, *the King of kings.* The phrase however does not mean *King of kings* or *Messiah.* It is an assertion of the true humanity of the Messianic King of kings. It intimates too, not only that He is *a true man*, but also that He is *the true man.* Humanity is normal in Him; pure and undefiled. In Him we see what man may be, and should be, and will be. The phrase moreover, as applied by Jesus to Himself, assumes that, standing as He did on a higher platform than other men, and realizing that He was the *Son of God*, He yet, in His terrestrial mission, had the greatest satisfaction and joy in identifying Himself with those whose nature He had assumed that He might be their Saviour. We know not the effect of our Saviour's remark on the heart of the scribe. Perhaps, like the young man who came running, and asked, *Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life*, he felt sad at the saying and went away grieved, not being prepared for the sacrifice which a closer fellowship would involve.

VER. 21. But another of the disciples said to Him, Lord, suffer me first to go away and bury my father: A very reasonable and becoming request, in all ordinary circumstances, if only the word *first* be omitted. As Matthew Henry remarks, "Piety to God must be preferred before piety to parents, though that is a great and needful part of our religion."

VER. 22. But Jesus said unto him, Follow Me; and leave the dead to bury their dead: We need not suppose any approximation to harshness in this reply of our Lord. There could not be such harshness, or any element of unfeelingness. We may rest assured that the Saviour read this disciple through and through, and said just what was needed in his peculiar circumstances. We know not his peculiar circumstances. But no doubt they were peculiar. Perhaps there would have been danger to his yet unripened discipleship, had he returned home into the midst of a peculiarly worldly circle. Perhaps his spiritual decision was just coming to the birth, and moments were precious. Then again, we need not imagine that his presence would be required as the chief mourner and actor at the burial of his father, or that his absence would produce confusion, or annoyance, or any want of decency and order. Perhaps he was but one of a large and unholy family circle. It may be. And then, as Chrysostom remarks, "he might need, if he went to the funeral, to proceed, after the burial, to make

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. 24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea,

“inquiry about the will, and then about the distribution of the inheritance, and “all the other things that follow thereupon; and thus,” as the *Golden-mouthed* father proceeds, “waves of things after waves, coming in upon him in succession, “might bear him very far away from the harbour of truth. For this cause “doubtless the Saviour draws him and fastens him to Himself.” And then again we must keep in mind the very solemn truth which is stated by Matthew Henry, that “many are hindered *from* and *in* the way of serious godliness, by “an over-concern for their families and relations.” The expression *Allow the dead to bury their own dead* is applicable only to an ungodly family circle, out of which a member has been snatched away by death in the midst of their ungodliness. *Their dead*, or, still more literally, *their own dead* (τοὺς ἑαυτῶν νεκροῦς). Though the survivors of the deceased were physically alive, they were yet spiritually dead. (John v. 24, Eph. ii. 1.) Sepulchral darkness and gloom were, in embryo, within their hearts. As Trapp very strongly puts it, “Their bodies were but living coffins,” with “dead souls” within.

VER. 23. The nautical incident here recorded (ver. 23–27) is narrated also by Mark (iv. 35–41) and Luke (viii. 22–25). We need not seek for its precise chronological position. The inspired writers were not solicitous about that. They did not aim in the least at following out a scientific chronology. They present us with scenes grouped together pictorially for great moral purposes. **And when He was entered into the boat:** The particular vessel, namely, that had been put in readiness for His passage, in accordance with His orders (see ver. 18). The Anglo-Saxon *Lindisfarne Gospels*, instead of the simple word *ship*, has the expression *little ship* (*lytlum scipe*). The Franciscan version of the ninth century has the word *skef*. **His disciples followed Him:** His selected and most attached disciples, whom He loved to have near Him, and who, on their part too, had no higher joy than to be beside Him. They made way for Him to enter the *skef* first, and then *followed Him*.

VER. 24. **And lo there arose a great tempest in the sea:** “A great *tempest*” (*σεισμός*), such a commotion of the marine elements as corresponds to an *earthquake*. The lake of Gennesaret, or sea of Tiberias, is subject to sudden and violent squalls and storms. Dr. W. M. Thomson says that on a certain occasion, in his experience, “The sun had scarcely set, when the wind began to “rush down toward the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly “increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning the face “of the lake was like a huge boiling caldron. The wind howled down every “wady from the north-east and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers “could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember “that the lake lies low, 600 feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked “plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds “of the Hauran, and upward to snowy Hermon; that the water-courses have “cut out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of the lake, “and that these act like gigantic *funnels* to draw down the cold winds from “the mountains. On the occasion referred to we subsequently pitched our “tents at the shore, and remained for three days and nights exposed to this “tremendous wind. We had to double-pin all the tent ropes, and frequently

devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no

of the Gothic, Armenian, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions. But as Origen does not mention that it was in any of his manuscripts, it may perhaps have got a footing in so many codices in consequence of his strongly expressed judgement that it must be *Gergesa* that is referred to. The reading of the extremely old and valuable Sinaitic manuscript is *Gazarenes*, which may be either a corrupt form of *Gerasenes* or *Gergesenes*, or a corrupt form of *Gadarenes*. The place was unknown to Greek scholars, and therefore they might be liable to mispronounce it a little. *Gadara* however was the metropolis of *Peræa*, and was otherwise well known in consequence of its far famed warm baths; and hence perhaps the introduction into the text of *Gadarenes* in place of *Gerasenes*, or *Gergesenes*, or *Gazarenes*. But it really seems impossible that *Gadarenes* be referred to. The miracle could not have taken place at *Gadara*. Dr. W. M. Thomson says: "I take for granted that *Um Keis* marks the site of *Gadara*; "and it was therefore about three hours to the south of the extreme shore of "the lake in that direction. There is first a broad plain from *Khurbet Samra* "to the *Jermuk*; then the vast gorge of this river; and after it an ascent for "an hour and a half to *Um Keis*. No one, I think, will maintain that this "meets the requirements of the sacred narratives. It is in irreconcilable "contradiction to them. It is true that a celebrated traveller, from his lofty "standpoint at *Um Keis*, overlooks all intervening obstacles, and makes the "swine rush headlong into the lake from beneath his very feet. But to do "this in fact (and the evangelists deal only in plain facts), they must have "run down the mountain for an hour and a half, forded the deep *Jermuk*, "quite as formidable as the *Jordan* itself, ascended its northern bank, and "raced across a level plain several miles, before they could reach the nearest "margin of the lake, a feat which no herd of swine would be likely to achieve, "even though they were 'possessed.' The site of the miracle therefore *was not at Gadara.*" (*The Land and the Book*, part ii., chap. 25.) There met Him two possessed with devils: Or, more literally, *possessed with demons*; two *demoniacs*, or, as the Anglo-Saxon version has it, two who had devil-sickness (*deofel-seocnyssse*); two poor unfortunate wretches, who, in both soul and body, had come in some abnormal way under the power of evil spirits. (See on chap. iv. 24.) If there be *spirit* at all, there are no doubt *spirits*. If there be *spirits* at all, there are no doubt both good spirits and evil. If there be evil spirits at all, they will no doubt be somewhere, and have some influence on things and persons around them. Why should any wonder that, on certain given conditions, they should have peculiar and peculiarly mastering and overmastering power over certain peculiar individuals, coming, as it were, between their souls and their bodies, imprisoning the former and energizing the latter? Matthew mentions *two demoniacs*; Mark and Luke make mention only of one. It would appear that one of the two had been peculiarly and pre-eminently prominent, the other being, for some reason or other, shaded off from before the thoughts of the other evangelists. Coming out of the tombs: Which are excavated in the adjoining mountain. These excavated tombs are vaulted chambers, and afford a convenient though dreary shelter and haunt to such unhappy individuals as feel impelled to forsake the society of their fellow men. Warburton, in *The Crescent and the Cross* (vol. ii., p. 352), says of himself: "On descending from these heights (viz. of Lebanon), I found myself "in a cemetery, whose sculptured turbans showed me that the neighbouring

man might pass by that way. 29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? 30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine

“village was Moslem. The silence of the night was now broken by fierce yells “and howlings, which I discovered proceeded from a naked maniac, who was “fighting with some wild dogs for a bone. The moment he perceived me, he “left his canine comrades, and bounding along with rapid strides, seized my “horse’s bridle, and almost forced him backward over the cliff, by the grip he “held of the powerful Mameluke bit.” (See Trench’s *Miracles*, § 5.) Exceeding fierce: Exceeding furious or furibund; exceeding dangerous. The word originally means *difficult*; exceeding difficult to manage, exceeding difficult to deal with. So that no man might pass by that way: *Might pass, had might to pass, was able to pass* (τοχέων παρελθεῖν). It was at the peril of one’s life to attempt to pass that way.

VER. 29. The moment the demoniacs saw the Saviour and His party, they rushed down toward Him, And behold they cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God: It was the utterance rather of the demons than of the demoniacs. It is probable that the word *Jesus* has crept in from the margin. It is not found in the best of the old uncial manuscripts. It is omitted by Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford. *Thou Son of God*: The Divine side of our Lord’s nature was perfectly apparent to the spiritual eyes that were gleaming out from behind the glaring eyeballs of the demoniacs. The Mighty Presence could not by them be mistaken. The expression, *What have we to do with Thee?* or, very literally, *What to us and to Thee?* is a peculiar idiom, but common among the Jews. It is found in Josh. xxii. 24; Jud. xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10; 1 Kings xvii. 18; 2 Kings iii. 13, ix. 18, 19; 2 Chron. xxxv. 21; Matt. xxvii. 19; Mark i. 24, v. 7; Luke iv. 34, viii. 28; John ii. 4. It conveys, according to circumstances, various shades of import; but here it is deprecatory, and means *Why interfere with us?* It indicates an anticipation of interference. *The Son of God* had become *the Son of man* that He might destroy the works of the devil; and never will He cease interfering with the devil’s emissaries, until they are everywhere driven back and overthrown. Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time? That is, *before the day of final judgement?* It would appear that there will be a coincidence of cycles at that time. The affairs of more worlds than one may then be wound up. Afterward, alas, there will be, to some, special woes. To these woes the spirits in the case before us make anticipative reference. They recognised their Judge in Jesus.

VER. 30. And there was at a distance from them an herd of many swine feeding: Unclean animals, that were an abomination to all true Jews (Lev. xi. 7, Deut. xiv. 8). The keeping of them, or the rearing of them, was strictly forbidden by the Jewish canon law, as Dr. Lightfoot shows in his *Exercitations*. The sow was held among other peoples also in abomination; as among the Egyptians, for instance. There were many persons indeed in Egypt who used its flesh; for Herodotus tells us that there was a class of swineherds. But he says: “The Egyptians esteem the hog to be an unclean animal, and that to “such a degree that, in the first place, if any one in passing by happens to “touch a pig, even with his garments, he immediately goes down to the river

feeding. 31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. 32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of

“and plunges in; and in the second place, the swineherds, though Egyptian born, are the only persons of all the inhabitants of the country who may not enter a temple. Neither will any one give them his daughter in marriage, or take to himself a wife from among them, so that the swineherds intermarry exclusively in their own class.” (*History*, ii. 47.) The abhorrence entertained by the true Jews for the flesh of swine may be judged of from what is said in Isa. lxv. 3, 4: “A people that provoketh Me to anger continually to My face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine’s flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels.” There may have been physiological reasons intertwining themselves with the statute that rendered swine’s flesh unclean; but there must likewise, we presume, have been reasons derived from certain moral associations (comp. Herodotus ii. 47), which do not now exist, at least in European countries. It is not unlikely that certain degraded classes among the Jews, and more especially such as were mixed more or less with Gentiles, paid no heed to the Mosaic interdict on the use of swine’s flesh, and hence probably the existence of the herd in the country of the Gerasenes. To this very day the country of the Gerasenes is the habitat of wild hogs. When Dr. W. M. Thomson was there the land was “everywhere ploughed up by wild hogs in search of the esculent roots upon which they live,” says he, “at this time of the year. It is a fact that these creatures still abound at this place, and in a state as wild and fierce as though they were still ‘possessed.’” (*The Land and the Book*, part ii., chap. 25.)

VER. 31. And the demons besought Him, saying, If Thou cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine: Or, according to the reading of the ancient Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and of the Vulgate and older Latin version, *send us off into the herd of swine*. Whence such a request? We are not told, and we need not anxiously conjecture. Theophylact supposes that their aim was to arrest the influence of Jesus in the locality, by stirring up the opposition of the proprietors of the flock. Perhaps there was pure malice. Perhaps too there was infatuated malice, for it is needless to suppose that they always, or even that they ever, reasoned well. Are they not always in the end outwitted? Is not Satan himself, as Jonathan Edwards expresses it, “one of the greatest fools and blockheads in the world?” (See his *Miscell. Obs. The Devil*.) Was there ever, after all, such a fool? “Sin,” says Jonathan Edwards, “is of such a nature that it strangely infatuates and stultifies the mind” (*ut supra*). The greatest sinner is the most infatuated and stultified. Young, in the last line of the 8th Book of his *Night Thoughts*, says, “Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.” He is so in some very important respects.

VER. 32. And He said unto them, Go: It may be that they knew not well what they had desired; and the Saviour, looking far farther forward, and looking around too on what would be beneficial to the delivered demoniacs, and on what would be moreover a righteous sentence and judgement in reference to the inconsistent and degraded Gerasenes, gave the permission desired. And, having come out, they went off into the swine; and behold the whole herd rushed

swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. 33 And they that kept them fled, and

down the steep into the sea, and perished in the waters. They did not plunge into the sea from an overhanging cliff. There is no such cliff. There is a narrow margin of ground between the water and the base of the steep declivity. "A great herd of swine, we will suppose," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "is feeding on the mountain. They are seized with a sudden panic, rush madly down the almost perpendicular declivity, those behind tumbling over and thrusting forward those before; and as there is neither time nor space to recover on the narrow space between the base and the lake, they are crowded headlong into the water and perish. Farther south the plain becomes so broad that the herd might have recovered and recoiled from the lake, whose domain they would not willingly invade." (*The Land and the Book*, part ii., chap. 25.) We need not doubt that the catastrophe of the herd was anticipated by our Lord. It would not take *Him* by surprise. Neither was it a mere result of the strong repugnance of the bestial nature to be overridden by the demonic. Neither is it enough for us to say, with Richard Baxter, "they were mad." The question is, Why were they permitted to go mad? There may have been manifold reasons; and, among the rest, there may have been the intent to demonstrate the fury of the evil spirits. The delivered men moreover would have, in the catastrophe, a kind of ocular evidence of the transference from themselves of the malign influence that had been oppressing them. They would thus be assured of the thoroughness of their deliverance. This would be no inconsiderable gain, arising from the loss of the swinish herd. Then too, as Dr. Doddridge remarks, "No miracles are more suspicious than pretended *dispossessions*, as there is so much room for collusion in them. But it is self evident that a herd of swine could not be confederates in any frauds. Their death therefore, in this instructive and convincing circumstance, was ten thousand times a greater blessing to mankind than if they had been slain for food, as was intended." (*Family Expositor*.) And then too the end of the matter was instinct with impressive instruction in reference to the tendency of all kinds of diabolism. As Dr. Thomas says: "Sin brutalises. It gives the soul an aptency for the *unclean*, a swineward direction. It is by no means uncommon to see human souls running into a low animalism. Through the media of worldliness, sensuality, and voluptuousness, the moral metempsychosis takes place every day; and souls transmigrate bruteward. A. has made his fortune in the city, and has retired into the aristocratic suburbs to pamper appetite and to live in luxury. He has passed the noon of life, and is gaining animalism every day. Thirty years ago he had an active intellect, fine susceptibilities; there was something like genius beaming in his looks and playing on his brow. But where in him do you see any of those mind-tints now? He is dull, coarse, plethoric. Whither is his soul gone? It has run *swineward*. Is not this A. the type of a numerous and growing class that populate the suburbs of large cities and towns? The first chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans is an illustration of the swineward tendency of souls under sin." (*Homiletical Comm. on Matthew*.) But notwithstanding this lamentable swineward tendency, how great the difference between the beast and the man! "A little nature could not accommodate a legion of devils: two men held more than could be held by two thousand swine." (Parker's *Ecce Deus*, p. 84, ed. 1867.)

went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. 34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus : and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

CHAPTER IX.

1 AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. 2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed : and Jesus seeing their faith

VER. 33. And they that fed them fled,—or, as Sir John Cheke renders it, *And the swineherds fled*,—and having gone away into the city,—viz. of Gergesa or Gersa—told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the demons : This last expression rather suggests to our modern ears the idea of calamity. The original expression is very indefinite, *and the things of the demoniacs*. The translation of Tyndale is graphic and explicit, *and what had fortun'd unto the possessed of the devyls*.

VER. 34. And behold the whole city came out to meet Jesus : There was an intense commotion, curiosity, and fear. And when they saw Him they besought Him that He would depart out of their borders : Or *out of their boundaries*. "Note," says Matthew Henry, "there are a great many who prefer their swine before their Saviour." Need we wonder that to those who persist for a whole lifetime in saying to the Saviour *Depart from us*, He should, wearied out at length, Himself say in the end, *Depart from Me*.

CHAPTER IX.

THIS ninth chapter is, to a considerable degree, a twin to the preceding eighth. It records, clusteringly, some more of the wonderful works of our Lord, mingled instructively with some more of His wonderful and gracious words. "Here," says good David Dickson, "are *noe* evidences of Christ's Divine power, authority, and love."

VER. 1. And He entered into a ship : Or, as it is in most manuscripts, and in the text of Stephens and the Elzevirs, *into the boat*. Boat is the happy translation both of Wycliffe and of the Rheims version. And crossed over : Namely, to the west side of the sea or 'loch' of Tiberias. And came into His own city : The city of His residence, viz. Capernaum. It is said in chap. iv. 13, that "leaving Nazareth, He came *and dwelt in Capernaum*." Favoured spot ! Heaven was brought nigh to it. Heaven's 'ladder' was set up in the midst of it. And yet it improved not the day of its merciful visitation. It is now gone. Like Troy, it 'was.' It is wiped out from the face of the earth ; and travellers and geographers debate as to the spot on which it stood. (See on chap. iv. 13.)

VER. 2. The miracle hereafter narrated is recorded also by Mark (ii. 3-12) and Luke (v. 18-26). And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy : A paralysed person, a paralytic. It was friendly in the friends to bring him to the Great Healer, when he could not come himself. And it is still a true office of friendship to bring sick ones to Jesus. And Jesus seeing their faith : For, as He sees all things, He *could* see, and *did* see, into the depth of

said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. 3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth. 4 And Jesus

their hearts. 'Their faith,' that is, the faith of the sick man, and of his friends who brought him. It was manifestly with the sick man's own consent, and no doubt at his own instance, that he was brought. They all, it would appear, had faith in Christ as the *Great Power of God*. Said to the paralytic, Son, be of good cheer: Or, more literally, in the reverse order, *Be of good cheer, child*. Jesus lovingly and tenderly calls him *child* (τέκνον). Doubtless he would be a mere youth; and the Saviour felt toward him in the spirit of a father. *Be of good cheer*: Or, as the word is elsewhere translated, *Be of good comfort*. *Thy sins be forgiven thee*: Or better, *Thy sins are forgiven* (if we read, that is to say, with the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and with Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort, ἀφιέρται); or, *Thy sins have been forgiven* (if we read ἀφέωνται with the received text, and Fritzsche, and Meyer, and the majority of the uncial manuscripts). Tyndale, in his 1526 edition, and Sir John Cheke, render the phrase, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*. This forgiveness was doubtless the very boon which, above all others, the young man needed and desired. Jesus was reading his heart. His affliction had been blessed to him. It had led him first to thoughtfulness; then to repentance; and now to the Saviour of sinners, who assured him of the forgiveness of his sins. Possibly too there may have been in this case a peculiar connection between the youth's sins and his sickness. The one may have been *cause*, the other *effect*. If so, his penitence would probably be all the deeper; and his joy would be all the greater, when the loving Saviour looked into his eyes, and said into his ears, and to his heart, *Thy sins are forgiven*. Take note, says Luther, of the *thy*.

VER. 3. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth: *This person blasphemeth*. Blasphemy consists in hurting the fame, good name, or reputation of another. The word is specially applied to anything said, that expresses or implies what is greatly derogatory to the character or prerogative of God. It was assumed, and justly, in the case before us, by the scandalized scribes, that it is God's prerogative to forgive sins. All sins are against God. They are against God *only* (Ps. li. 4). They may be injuries and cruelties to others, but, as sins, they are relative to *God only*. And hence God only can forgive them. The scribes were right, therefore, in this assumption. They were also right in assuming that it would be an invasion of the prerogative of God, and therefore a *blasphemy*, for any mere creature to speak in such a way as to imply that he was able to *dispense the forgiveness of sins*. But they erred in not perceiving that a Greater than Man was present in their midst.

VER. 4. And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said: Or, more literally, according to the reading of almost all the uncial manuscripts, as well as of the Vulgate and old Latin versions, *And Jesus seeing their thoughts, said*; or, *And Jesus saw their thoughts and said* (ἰδὼν). Nothing was hidden from His eyes. Nothing is hidden yet. As 'a flame of fire,' His eyes flashed their light into all darkneses. He *needed not that any should testify of man*; for *He knew what was in man* (John ii. 25). He saw the working of faith, on the one hand, in the young man and his friends; and He saw the working of unbelief, on the other,

knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? 5 For whether is easier, to say, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, *Arise, and walk*? 6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) *Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house*. 7 And he arose, and departed to his house. 8 But when the multitudes saw *it*, they marvelled,

in the scribes who were looking suspiciously on. "Lord," said Peter, "Thou knowest all things" (John xxi. 17). **Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? Wherefore? (ivari)—to what end?—for what purpose?—why? Why revolve in your hearts evil thoughts concerning Me?—Why entertain in your minds the idea that I am invading the prerogative of God, and thus casting dishonour on Him? The expression, in your hearts, does not mean in your affections, but, as so frequently in Scripture, in your minds, in the interior and spiritual element of your complex being. (See on chap. vi. 21.)**

VER. 5. For whether is easier, to say, *Thy sins are forgiven* (*ἀφιενται*, see on ver. 2). Or to say, *Arise, and walk*: He who has power and authority to say the latter, with effect, must have power and authority to say with effect the former too. It is Divine agency that is needed, and needed equally, in both cases.

VER. 6. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth—*or rather, has authority (ἐξουσιαν) on earth—to forgive sins*: It is as if He had said, The Son of man, though on earth, is yet more than of the earth. He has unique relations to heaven and to God, and is hence, in all His works on earth, acting under Infinite Authorization. *He is authorized to forgive sins*. There was no anomaly in such authorization. For, though 'in the form of man,' there was at the same time another 'form' that was really characteristic of His inner being. He was 'in the form of God.' Hence He was intrinsically fit to be the *Efficient Cause of the forgiveness of sins*. And then too it was one of the chief aims of His appearance on earth, to become, as the schoolmen would express it, the *Meritorious Cause of forgiveness*. No wonder then that He should claim to have *authority to forgive*. Then saith He to the sick of the palsy: These words the evangelist interposes, as descriptive of the turn in our Saviour's attitude and address. He turned from the scribes to the paralytic youth, and said, *Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thy house*: It was a sublime fiat, like *Let there be light*; showing forth the Divine self consciousness of the Saviour. *Take up thy bed*: Of course we are not to imagine a *four-posted bed*. The ordinary bed was a mere mat or quilt, which could be easily rolled up and carried off. A *bedstead* was a comparatively rare luxury, and is not to be thought of in such a case as the one before us.

VER. 7. And he arose and departed to his house: A living monument, both within and without, of the grace and power of the Saviour. He had experienced a 'double cure.' How elastic would be his step! How joyful would be his heart! How jubilant would be the tones that rose to heaven from the harp that was in his heart!

VER. 8. But when the multitude saw *it*, they marvelled: Or, as the word is in the oldest uncial manuscripts, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Cambridge, and in the Vulgate version too, and the still older Latin version, the *Italic* or

and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith

Itala as it is often called, and in the old Syriac, *they were afraid*. This reading is approved of by Griesbach and Fritzsche; and introduced into the text by Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf; by Alford too. It is undoubtedly the correct reading. The first sensation that struck into the hearts of the people was *fear*. They trembled as they saw in the bearing and action of Jesus something that let in upon their view a glimpse of the Infinite. *Awe* came in upon them. It was not unnatural that they should feel somewhat as Adam did when he "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden," and "was afraid" (Gen. iii. 8-10). And glorified God, who had given such power—*such authority*—unto men: The expression *who had given* is an imperfect rendering of the original participial phrase (τὸν δόντα). Our idiom does not admit of an exact reproduction. But the idea intended is somewhat to the effect that they glorified God, *the Giver of such authority,—the being whose prerogative it is to give such authority*. They glorified Him; that is, they ascribed glory and honour to Him. They magnified Him. The corresponding word in the Gothic version is, *mikilidedum*. This was the second and culminating effect produced upon their minds. *To men*: Burton supposes that this expression must mean "either for men, that is, for the good of men; or to men, that is, to one who is a man" (*Greek Testament with English Notes*, in loc.). But it does not exactly mean either; though Baumgarten-Crusius adheres to the former notion, and Kuinöl to the latter. The awestricken people were not looking at the subject, for the time being, in the spirit either of minute philosophers or of precise theologians. They were however, in the spirit of instinctive Aristotelians, looking at men *categorically*—at the *category of men*—in which category Jesus was. They praised God for giving such power and authority to *men*, to *mankind*. For the moment they blended into one conception the two notions of Jesus and of the human race.

VER. 9. The event hereafter recorded (ver. 9-13), and its concomitants, are narrated by Mark also (ii. 14-17), and by Luke (v. 27-32). And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew: The name in Mark and Luke is *Levi*, the name, no doubt, by which he commonly went, before his call to become one of the special followers of Jesus. There is no occasion for making anxious conjectures regarding the relationship of the two names. We can never precisely know. Perhaps *Matthew* was a surname, just as we read of "*John whose surname was Mark*" (Acts xii. 12); and perhaps the apostle took to it, in preference to *Levi*, after his attachment to the cause of the Saviour. Or perhaps it was Jesus Himself who imposed it, on some such principle as led Him to give the name of Peter to Simon (John i. 42). The name is beautiful at all events. It means *Gift of Jehovah*, and thus corresponds exactly to the Greek *Theodore*. It is Matthew the apostle who is here referred to, as is evident from chap. x. 3, where, in the list of the apostles, we read, *And Matthew the publican*. Neither is there any reason why we should doubt the correctness of the testimony of Christian antiquity, that it is this same Matthew who composed *the Gospel* which we are expounding. He here speaks of himself, unobtrusively, in the third person, a common custom, exemplified by Xenophon among the Greeks and Cæsar among the Romans. **Sitting at the receipt of**

unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. 10
And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold,

custom: The expression rendered *the receipt of custom* means *the tax office, the customs' office*; as it were, *the custom house*, though such an expression is apt to convey too large an idea. It is however the Rheims translation, and that of Mace, Daniel Scott, and Young. Wycliffe's translation is happy, though now antique, *tolbothe, or tolbooth*. It is Sir John Cheke's also, "sitting at y^e tolbooth," the booth or little shed at which the tolls were paid. The expression *sitting at* is, in the original, *sitting on*. The chief part of the booth would be the *bench or bank* 'on' which the officer sat. (See *Comm.* on Mark, ii. 14.) Matthew was thus, as we might express it, *a custom house officer*, or, in the language of the Romans, *a publican*. He was however in that lower grade of publicans who were called *portitores* by the Romans. They were disliked all the empire over, in consequence of the disagreeableness of their duties, and because of their right to be inquisitorial in discharging them. But the office was comparatively lucrative, and afforded to unprincipled persons scope for speculation; and hence there was no difficulty in getting individuals to fill it. These individuals however were peculiarly hated in Palestine, because, as Archbishop Thomson says, "they were the very spot where the Roman chain galled, the "visible proof of the degraded state of the nation." "As a rule," he adds, "none but the lowest would accept such an unpopular office, and thus the class "became more worthy of the hatred with which, in any case, the Jews would "have regarded it." (Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, under *Matthew*.) Had Dr. Samuel Johnson's great *Dictionary of the English Language* been then in existence, the Jews would have admired his definition of *excise*: "A hateful tax "levied upon commodities, and adjudged, not by the common judges of property, "but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid." (First ed. 1755.) See on chap. v. 46. **And He saith to him, Follow Me.** We do not need, however, to suppose that this was the first time that Matthew and the Saviour had met, or that Matthew was taken by surprise. (See on chap. iv. 18, 19.) *Follow Me*, as your spiritual Master, Teacher, and Leader. Become one of the little circle of My intimate disciples, and I shall fit you for giving to men, instead of receiving from them,—I shall fit you for honourable and elevated service in connection with the kingdom of heaven. **And he arose and followed Him:** But doubtless he immediately made, or had previously made, every requisite arrangement for leaving the affairs of his office, not in confusion, but in order. Jesus was no patron of confusion. It is the desire of both God and Jesus that all things should be done "decently and in order."

VER. 10. **And it came to pass:** Namely, by and by. **As Jesus sat at meat:** or rather, *as he sat at meat*, for it is the pronoun *he* that is in the original, and not the noun *Jesus*. It may be questioned indeed whether it is *Jesus* or *Matthew* that is referred to. Our translators assumed that it was Jesus, and hence, following the example of Erasmus, Beza, and the Geneva version, they substituted the noun *Jesus* for the pronoun *he*. Tyndale however, following in the wake of Luther, translated the expression literally, *as he sat at meate*. It was well, for it is undoubtedly Matthew who is referred to; and Jesus is referred to, for the first time, in the last clause, which, in consequence of the mistranslation of this first clause, is likewise misrendered in our Authorized version. *Sat at meate*: It is one word in the original, *reclined*, that is at table.

many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? 12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. 13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will

It was the custom of the Jews, as of the Romans, not to sit at table, but to recline on couches; and the upper part of the body, when occasion required, was raised on the left elbow, which was supported by pillows or cushions. In the house: That is, *in his house*, in Matthew's house; not in Christ's, as Fritzsche and Meyer strangely contend. When we bear in mind that Matthew himself is the narrator, we see at once how exceedingly natural it was for him to refer to himself by the pronoun *he*, and to speak of his house as *the house*. (Comp. Luke v. 29.) Behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples: Or, as it is in the original, *and sat down with Jesus and His disciples*. Jesus and His disciples are thus represented as the publican's principal guests. The others were invited to meet them. The word *sinners*, as associated with the word *publicans*, is used emphatically, somewhat as we use the term when we distinguish between *saints* and *sinners*. It probably denotes, not *Gentiles*, as Hammond and Livermore suppose, but such Jews as made little or no profession of religiousness. In almost all countries, whatever the prevailing religion, there are such persons. They are to be met with in every city, and almost every town, in Great Britain. There are plenty of them in Mahomedan and heathen countries; and undoubtedly there would be a corresponding class among the Jews. It would be in that class that the publicans had their chief associates.

VER. 11. And when the Pharisees saw it: For there would be not a few, especially of the stricter sort, who would be sufficiently ready to pry into all the doings of so mysterious a rabbi as Jesus. They said to His disciples: We are not told *when* or *where*, and we need not conjecture. *To His disciples*: They could use greater freedom with them than with the Master Himself. But the Master, nevertheless, hears and answers. Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? Or, more literally still, *with the publicans and sinners?* How very strange in a man professing to be a good man! and a rabbi too!

VER. 12. But when Jesus heard it—when He heard the question—He said unto them—turning no doubt toward the carping questioners—They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: A most felicitous answer to their cavilling query, and drawn from the admitted wisdom and wit of an established proverb. “Christ philosophizes,” says Luther. *They that are whole, they who are hale, who are in health*, they who are *unbroken* in constitution. The words *whole, hale, and health* are interestingly connected. Among whom should a physician go, if not among the sick? To whom should a Saviour come, but to sinners?

VER. 13. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: Or, *I desire mercy, and not sacrifice*. The Saviour sends them to their Bibles, referring them to a saying in Hosea vi. 6, in which they would find at once the vindication of His way of procedure and the condemnation of their own. God desires that His worshippers should honour Him rather by

have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do

imitating His character, and cherishing and manifesting compassion toward those who are either suffering, or preparing themselves for suffering by sinning, than by offering to Him thousands of bullocks and of rams. The expression "mercy, and not sacrifice" is a strong way of presenting, antithetically, the preferable method of worship; *mercy rather than sacrifice*. (Comp. John vi. 27, Matt. vi. 19.) The comparative idea is brought out in the parallelistic expression that immediately follows in Hosea, "and the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings." In certain circumstances, and under certain conditions, God wants mercy, and not sacrifice. And in all circumstances and conditions He infinitely prefers mercy and inner holiness and love to any number of outward offerings or acts of homage. "To do justice and judgement is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" (Prov. xxi. 3). *For I came not, viz. into the world. It is language appropriate to One who realized His pre-existence and the voluntary nature of His mission to the earth. The reference of the for has been disputed. It seems to look back to the imperative expression at the beginning of the verse, Go ye and learn what that meaneth. It is as if the Saviour had said, "Go and learn what that meaneth, for until you understand that, you will never understand why it is that I associate with sinners." For I came not to call the righteous but sinners: There is no article before the word righteous in the original. In our stereotyped idiom we might express the idea thus, I came not to call saints, but sinners. He as it were said, Sinners need Me. The more sinful they are, the more urgently do they need Me. I came into the world just for the sake of sinners. My mission is to them, and them alone. The Saviour leaves the Pharisees with their own thoughts on the subject. Had they acted in the same way? or were they, on the other hand, so righteous, so saintly, that they were no longer sinners? Did they need no Saviour? There is a touch of irony, as Luther remarks, in our Lord's observation (ironisat contra Phariseeos); but on the other side of the observation there is, as Luther also remarks, wonderful consolation (mirifica consolatio). Unto repentance: These words have been apparently introduced from the margin of some annotator's copy, who had made a note of the expression in Luke v. 32. They bring out, of course, the Saviour's real idea; but they are not found in the oldest uncial manuscripts (the Sinaitic and B D V Γ Δ). Nor are they found in the cursives 1 and 33 (the 'queen'). Neither are they found in the Syriac versions (the Peshito and Philoxenian), nor in the Italic, the Vulgate, the Armenian, the Æthiopic, the Gothic. They are left out by Griesbach, Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort.*

VER. 14. This verse and the three that succeed constitute a distinct section in these intensely interesting *Memoirs of our Lord*. Its subject is, *the comparative absence of fasting that was characteristic of our Lord's disciples*. Corresponding sections are found in Mark ii. 18-22, and Luke v. 33-38. Then came to Him the disciples of John: And they were in company with some of the disciples of the Pharisees, as we learn from Mark ii. 18. Indeed it is not unlikely that they may have been cunningly wrought upon, and set on edge, by these same Pharisees, or by some of their elders, or rabbis behind them, of long heads and narrow hearts; for, as Matthew Henry notes, "It is no new thing for bad men to set good men together by the ears." Saying, Why do we

we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? 15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them,

and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not? They refer of course to private fasting (see Matt. vi. 16-18), a practice very ostentatiously overdone by many of the zealous Pharisees, and regarded by them as extremely meritorious. They had regularly two fast-days every week (Luke xviii. 12), the second and fifth days; and they took occasion, on many trivial pretexs, to have other fasts besides. (See Lightfoot's *Exercitations* on this verse.) They thought that this excessive asceticism set them on a lofty pinnacle of virtue, from which they could look down upon the masses of their fellow men with spiritual disdain. John's disciples, while doubtless taking, in many respects, a different view of the moral merit of the practice, seem to have been determined not to be outdone by the Pharisees in any outward forms of self denial. They seem also to have been somewhat scandalized at the contrary conduct of the disciples of our Lord.

VER. 15. And Jesus said to them, Can the sons of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? He did not reply at all to the first part of the question proposed to Him. He leaves the reasons which actuated the Pharisees and the disciples of John in the hands of their own consciences. But He throws His ample shield over His own disciples. He calls them *the sons of the bridal chamber*. It was a Jewish expression corresponding to our *bride's men*, and denoting those who *belonged* to the bridal chamber, and who *derived* from it their peculiar character. Their peculiar character was as it were *begotten* by it. They were the chosen and intimate friends of the bridegroom. The phrase is rendered by Tyndale and Sir John Cheke *the wedding children*. Among the Jews the bridal festivity extended, in general, over seven days; and during that time the sons of the bridechamber consorted intimately with the bridegroom, and rejoiced in his joy. It was their duty indeed to commence the festivities, by conducting the bride, along with her accompanying maids, from the house of her father, to the residence of the bridegroom. Thenceforward it was a time of festal rejoicing. And, says Jesus, *Can these sons of the bridal chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? Can they?* The Saviour is not starting the philosophical question of *absolute ability*. He is referring to the practical question of *relative consistency*. Would it not be most anomalous were there to be mourning and fasting, instead of rejoicing and feasting? There is a time to be merry, as well as a time to be sad. It is worthy of being noted that Jesus compares Himself to a *bridegroom*. He thus takes up the representation of His relationship that was made by John himself, and not unlikely in the hearing of those very disciples who were now questioning Him. See John iii. 29. He also, as it were, takes home to Himself those frequent Old Testament representations which culminate in the 45th *Psalms* and the *Song of Solomon*, and which reappear so interestingly in the *Epistle to the Ephesians* (v. 22, 23) and the *Book of Revelation*. (See Rev. xix. 7-9, xxi. 9.) The church is the bride of Jesus. Jesus is the bridegroom of His believing people. The love between them is ineffable; but the wooing and the winning have been all on His side. It is added, *But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them*: The Saviour looks calmly

and then shall they fast. 16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. 17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles

forward to the time when a rude arrest would be put on the bridal festivities, and when, so far as His bodily presence was concerned, He would be removed from His bride and the sons of the bridal chamber. It is the first reference to His decease that occurs in Matthew. **And then will they fast:** Though not in the ostentatious and artificial way that was characteristic of the Pharisees. They will mourn, bitterly; though even in the heart of their mourning there will be a secret spring of joy that is 'full of glory.' In their very fasting there will be feasting, the sweet spiritual earnest and antepast of the everlasting marriage supper of the Lamb (see John xvi. 19-22).

VER. 16. **But no man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment:** The particle *But*, omitted by our translators, indicates the connection of our Saviour's saying with the prophetic statement at the close of the preceding verse. It is as if He had said, *It is true that the days will come when My disciples shall mourn and fast; but as this is their festal season, such mourning and fasting would at present be inconsistent and out of place. No one putteth a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment:* The word translated *new* (ἀγνάφον) means *unfulled*. It denotes *what has not passed through the process of fulling*, that process by which cloth is thickened and made compact, as well as cleansed. A fulling mill, says Dr. Ogilvie, is "a mill for fulling cloth by means of pestles or stampers, which beat and press it to a close and compact state, and cleanse it." (*Imperial Dictionary*.) *Unfulled cloth*, therefore, is cloth that is not only *new*, but also sure to shrink when wetted. The expression is rendered *raw cloth* in the Rheims version; *undressed cloth*, by Young and Brameld; *unscoured cloth*, by Dr. A. Clarke. In the margin of our version we have the various readings *raw*, or *unwrought cloth*. Wycliffe renders the phrase *rude cloth*. **For that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment:** When the up-filling patch (τὸ πληρωμα) shrinks, it takes along with it a margin of the old and tender robe, and the rent is made worse: Or, more literally, *a worse rent takes place*. The Saviour means, by this parabolic illustration, that, were His disciples to be mourning and fasting during their festal season, there would be incongruity and inconsistency; and such incongruity and inconsistency, moreover, as would frustrate the very end contemplated in the indirect advice of John's disciples. It would not decorate the robe of their personal righteousness. It would only deface its beauty.

VER. 17. **Neither do men put new wine into old bottles:** The *bottles* here referred to (ἀσκοί) were very different from what we are accustomed, in these days and in Great Britain, to call *bottles*. In the first place, our word *bottle* is a diminutive and means *a small vessel*. We got the word from the Spaniards, whose *bottella* and *botillo* are diminutives from *bota*. Then, in the second place, our vessels for holding wine are, if small, generally of glass; if larger, of earthenware; and if larger still, of wood, in the form of casks. But the vessels referred to by our Lord, and translated *bottles* both by Wycliffe and in our Authorized version, but *vessels* by Tyndale, were skins, which are to this day very commonly used in many parts of the East, for containing and carrying liquids. The goat-skin entire is frequently thus employed. There can be no doubt that, in Europe

break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish : but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there

too, the original *bottles*, and other larger vessels (such as the Italian *botte* and *botticella*) for holding wine, would be *skins*; and hence the connection between the words *boot* and *bottle* and *butt*. In Spanish the one word *bota* means at once a *boot*, a *leathern bottle*, and a *butt*. Our Saviour says, *men do not put new wine into old skins* : skins that had become dry, and shrivelled, and cracked. Else the bottles break: They are *rent* or *ruptured* (*ῥήγνυται*). They *burst*. (Comp. Job xxxii. 19.) When the process of the vinous fermentation proceeds, there is, by the disengagement of carbonic acid gas, such pressure from within that the unelastic old skin is riven. And the wine is spilled, and the bottles are destroyed : The wine is lost, and the bottles too. There is a double loss. But they put, as a general rule, new wine into fresh bottles, and both are preserved : For there is consistency between the condition of the vessel containing and the condition of the substance contained. It is this idea of *consistency*, or *congruity*, which the Saviour is seeking to enforce. There should be consistency, He maintains, in all our religious exercises. Religion is many sided. It has a side toward joy, and it has a side toward sorrow. Its side toward sorrow should not be incongruously thrust forward when its side toward joy is required. Its side toward fasting should not be obtrusively pushed round at the very time that its presence is required in the midst of innocent feasting. To violate the congruity which should be maintained between the forms of our religious activity and the circumstances, inner and outer, in which we are placed, is to do injury both to the religious and to the irreligious, and to religion itself. Many commentators have erred in attempting to apply too minutely the details of the illustrations of incongruity and inconsistency which are contained in this and the preceding verse. See, as a specimen, Paulus de Palacio, one of the most ingenious of men. Even Arnoldi holds that Christ actually intended to compare His disciples to an *old garment* and *old bottles* ! (*Meine Jüngern sind abgetragenen Kleidern und alten Schläuchen zu vergleichen.*) They could not stand, at that tender period of their experience, the strong effects of fasting ! The idea is itself a glaring incongruity. Theophylact mitigates the matter a trifle, though only a trifle, by saying that *the infirmity of the disciples is the old garment and the old bottles*. Alford, again, errs on the other side when he says that the new wine represents "the inner spirit and pervading principle" of the new covenant, a spirit and principle that are "too living and strong" for the weak moral frame of "the old ceremonial man." This is to forget that in Luke v. 39 our Saviour immediately adds, "No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new ; for he saith, *The old is better.*" It is not impossible that the Saviour's illustrations in these 16th and 17th verses may have been suggested to His mind by His reference, in the 15th verse, to marriage festivities. On such occasions particular attention is naturally paid to appropriate garments on the one hand ; and innocent beverages, that cheer, are not out of place on the other.

VER. 18. The interlaced miracles, which are recorded in ver. 18-26, are narrated, still more fully, by Mark (v. 22-43) and Luke (viii. 41-56). While He was speaking these things to them, behold, there came a certain ruler : Or, according to another reading approved of by Tischendorf, Meyer, and Alford, *there entered a ruler*, that is, a ruler of the *synagogue* in Capernaum. It was the

came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. 19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples. 20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: 21 for she said within

custom of the synagogues to have a plurality of rulers, or ruling office bearers, or *pastors*, or *elders*. (See Vitringa, *De Synagoga*, lib. ii., c. 11.) The individual here mentioned was one of these. His name was Jairus, as we learn from Mark and Luke. And worshipped Him: He did obeisance unto Him, acknowledging His *worship*. "Have any of the rulers believed in Him? Yes, here was one," says Matthew Henry, "a church ruler." Saying, My daughter is even now dead: Or, more literally, *My daughter just now expired*. According to Mark he said, *My daughter lieth at the point of death*. It is probable that he might employ various expressions in representing the case; and, very likely indeed, the case itself was such that he would be fairly puzzled to determine precisely whether she were dead or alive. He would use, perhaps, language to the following effect: *It seems all over with her, so far as the help of man is concerned. She is gone. So far as I could guess, life seemed to be extinct. If it be not, she must be on the very verge of dissolution.* But come, and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live: He had faith in Jesus as being possessed of superhuman resources. He looked upon Him as being the Power of God incarnated; and hence he felt assured that He could say either *Come* or *Go* both to life and to death.

VER. 19. And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples: He went unhesitatingly, in the confidence of His ability to do what was asked of Him. And He was as willing as He was able. It was the joy of His heart to go about doing good.

VER. 20. The beginning of a miracle, wrought parenthetically as it were, or by the way; for our Saviour's path was strewed by Him with blessings on the right hand and the left. A woman: In the Apoeryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* (v. 26) she is said to have been called Veronica. Eusebius mentions that she was supposed to have been a native of Cæsarea Philippi. He also mentions the tradition that, on her return home, she erected to our Saviour's memory a statue of bronze, and connected with it another of herself kneeling before her Lord. These statues, the historian says, he himself had seen. (*Ecc. Hist.*, vii. 18.) We need not doubt his veracity. But whether the statues were really erected by the woman who was healed on the streets of Capernaum, we know not, and need not be anxious to know. Who had been suffering from hemorrhage for twelve years: Most probably in some periodical manner. Came behind Him: Eager to get close to Him, and having faith in the plenitude of His power; but yet timid and shrinking from observation. And touched the hem of His garment: It was one of many ways of getting into conscious connection with the Saviour, so as to lay open the recipiency of her person to the immediate influx of His power. But perhaps she did not realize that it would be impossible for that power to go forth out of *Him*, and into *her*, in a manner that would be imperceptible to His consciousness. She may have been imagining, on the contrary, that it was radiating from Him in some semi-involitional way. Thus she may have been meditating a sort of furtive appropriation of the benefit. The word rendered *garment* is translated *cloak* in chap. v. 40; and it certainly denotes, both

herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. 22
 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said,
 Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.

there and here, the outer robe customarily worn by the Jews. It was of quadrangular shape, somewhat like our shawl or Scotch plaid, and was adjusted to the person in a variety of ways according to circumstances. It is said that the woman touched the *hem* of this garment. Many critics suppose that the word translated *hem* (*κράσπεδον*) means *tassel*, or ornamental *tuft*. This is the view taken by the lexicographers Schleusner, Bretschneider, Wahl, Robinson, Grimm, as also by Winer in his *Real-Wörterbuch*, and by Bloomfield, Meyer, and De Wette. Arnoldi objects to it, however, on account of the article, *the tassel*; for, if there were any tassel at all, there would be four. The interpretation of the critics specified is founded on a peculiar interpretation of Numbers xv. 38, 39, where the word rendered *fringes* is, in the Septuagint, the plural of the word here rendered *hem*. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they 'make *fringes* in the borders (or 'wings') of their garments, throughout their 'generations, and that they put upon the *fringe* of the borders a ribband (or 'cord) of blue (*i.e.* of sky-blue); and it shall be unto you for a *fringe*, that ye 'may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do 'them.'" It is supposed by many that what are called in our version *fringes* in the borders were *tassels* in the corners of the robe. It is probable, however, that the 'wings' of the garment were not its *corners* but its *sides*; and if so, the appendage enjoined would be of the nature of a *fringe*, or *fretted edging*. (Comp. the Septuagint version of Deut. xxii. 12, and Zech. viii. 23; also *Xen. Hist. Gr.*, iv. 6, 8.) In consequence of the injunction in Numbers, the Pharisees ostentatiously enlarged the portion referred to. See chap. xxiii. 5. And it was this same *fringe*, *edging*, *margin*, or *hem*, which the woman touched. The word *hem* was given by Wycliffe, and kept its place in all the subsequent English translations. The same term, however, is rendered *border* in chap. xxiii. 5.

VER. 21. For she said within herself, If I do but touch His garment I shall be healed: Great was her faith; though perhaps it was intertwined with some imperfect notions, which, if legitimately carried out to their full logical consequences, would have led her into serious difficulty. She was, in this respect, the type of many others. Along with true faith they hold some inconsistent views regarding the object of their faith; which views, however, they do not follow out so far as to see their antagonism to their faith. With some this logical inconsistency is a kind of happy ignoranc. With others it unhappily results in a legacy of doubt, scepticism, or infidelity, bequeathed to their future years, or to their successors in life or in office.

VER. 22. But Jesus turned Him about: He was thoroughly conscious of what had happened. It had happened because He willed it. And when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort. It is as if He had said, *Be not afraid. I am not displeas'd. And yet it would not be right for thee to take the benefit in stealth, and keep it conceal'd. Thou hast a duty to discharge to all around thee. The discharge of this duty will do thee good for ever.* The word *Daughter* was a loving and encouraging appellation. Jesus had not only the feelings of a general Friend. He had these, and more. He had too the feelings of a Brother; and more. He had the feelings of a Father also; and no doubt far more. All the finest feelings of the heart were native to His spirit. Thy faith

And the woman was made whole from that hour. 23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, 24 he said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him

bath made thee well. Her faith had been the conductor along which the Divine healing had passed into her person.

VER. 23. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house: The evangelist now recurs to the case of Jairus. And saw the minstrels: Or *pipers*, as the same word is rendered in Revelation xviii. 22. These were *flute players*, who employed mournful instrumental music, on occasion of deaths, in order to assist the 'mourning women' with their dirges, those mourning women who were 'skilful of lamentation' (Jer. ix. 17, 18; Amos v. 16). In the East there was, and is, but little repression of the feelings in mourning. There was, on the contrary, a studied outward expression of all that was inwardly felt, and very often of more than was really experienced. In many cases the outward almost superseded the inward, and professional mourners were hired to *do the mourning*. In other cases there would, of course, be a minglement of the two elements. We need not suppose, as regards the case before us, that the *pipers* were hired by Jairus's people. They may have been neighbours that were volunteering their services, though perchance with a view to ultimate *backsheesh* or pecuniary reward. Such neighbourly services in the time of mourning are quite common in the East. And the people making a noise: *The people*, or, as the word is generally translated, *the multitude*. The term denotes a *confused crowd*. They were *making a noise*: a rather feeble expression to convey the full idea of the original (*θορυβώμενον*), and to represent the deafening sounds of screaming and wailing that are customarily emitted by eastern females on occasion of a death. The word is happily rendered in Acts xvii. 5 by a phrase that has *uproar* in it. When Jesus approached the house of Jairus, He found the crowd *making an uproar of wailing*. That is the idea. But we must "note" with Matthew Henry that "the loudest grief is not alway the greatest: rivers are most noisy when they run shallow."

VER. 24. He said, Give place,—or *Withdraw*,—for the maid is not dead: *The maiden did not die*, viz. at that particular time when her friends, watching over her couch, supposed that she expired. Olshausen supposes that the phrase means that she had merely fallen into a death-like swoon. But it is from a different standpoint that we should look at the expression. Our Saviour took hold, for the moment, of the idea which was in the minds of the excited multitude, when they said to one another *It is all over. The maiden is dead*. He turned the idea back upon them thus: *It is not all over with the maiden. Her earthly career is not ended. Her burial will not require to be immediately proceeded with. It is not the case that her parents shall hear her voice no more*. His own intended miracle took the death out of her death. But *sleepeth*: Her eyes will open again, and that soon. She will speedily rise up refreshed, and run about in perfect health. (Comp. John xi. 11-15.) And they laughed Him to scorn: As too many still virtually do when some of Christ's wondrous words concerning life and death are repeated. When He says, for instance, "If a man keep My saying *he shall never see death*" (John viii. 51), many deride in their hearts, and others mock with their mouths. "They hear and jeer," as Trapp expresses it. They do not understand the meaning of the Lord; but they

to scorn. 25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. 26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on us. 28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

presumptuously assume either that His words have no depth of significance, or that they themselves have fathomed their depth and found that there is no truth at the bottom.

VER. 25. But when the crowd was thrust out. They were not in a proper state to be witnesses of the coming solemnity. Where stunning din prevails, and especially loud artificial din, there is little scope for the exercise either of reason or of devotion. He went in, and took hold of her hand, and the maid arose: A wonder! and yet no wonder. He who is *the Resurrection and the Life* had come to her side, and was radiating forth His reviving power upon her person. In the lower and material sphere of human things, as well as in the higher and spiritual sphere, He was, and is, the Fountain of life.

VER. 26. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land: The word *fame* just means *report*. Instead of the expression *the fame hereof*, or *the report hereof*, we have the more literal expression *this fame* in the margin. It is Wycliffe's translation. The Rheims and the Geneva have the corresponding but more awkward phrase, *this brute*. Tyndale modifies the idiom not unhappily, and translates the whole verse thus, *And this was noysed through out all that lande*.

VER. 27. The miracle recorded in ver. 27-31 is not mentioned by any of the other evangelists. And when Jesus passed by thence: namely, from the house of Jairus. Two blind men followed Him: It is interesting to find the two in company. Their common misfortune may have drawn them into sympathy and unity. Blindness is a far more frequent calamity in Palestine and the adjoining countries than with us. Lord Haddo, for instance, speaks of it as "the universal malady of Egypt." (*Memoir*, chap. viii.) Its frequency is attributable to various causes; as, for example, to the flying dust and sand pulverized by the sun's intense heat; to the perpetual glare of light; to uncleanness; to the effect of dews during night on those who sleep on the roof of their houses, etc. (See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, sub *Blindness*.) Crying out, and saying, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on us*: With all their blindness they discerned the extraordinary character of Jesus. They believed Him to be the Messianic Son of David, the long promised Deliverer, come at last; who could, and who would, put all things right. *Have mercy on us*: Namely, as regards our blindness.

VER. 28. And when He was come into the house—the house where He abode—the blind men came to Him: And they were freely admitted. Jesus did not at the first moment comply with their request, doubtless for wise reasons. Perhaps it was because He saw that it would be well to put the men's faith to the test. It stood the test. They persevered with their suit. And Jesus saith to them, *Believe ye that I am able to do this!* He desired to elicit a distinct confession of their faith. It might be profitable for themselves. They say unto Him, *Yea, Lord*: They regarded Him as the Fountain of light. They believed that He

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. 30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See *that* no man know it. 31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb

was given by the Lord 'to open blind eyes' (Isa. xlii. 7) in more ways than one.

VER. 29. Then touched He their eyes,—bringing Himself into sensible connection with their diseased organism,—saying, According to your faith be it done to you: The same principle holds good in the spiritual sphere of things. The power of Christ goes forth efficaciously in the experience of men, just according to their faith. "Faith," says Archbishop Trench, "is the conducting link between man's emptiness and God's fulness; and herein is all the value which it has. "It is the bucket let down into the fountain of God's grace, without which the man could never draw water of life from the wells of salvation." (*Miracles*, § 8.)

VER. 30. And their eyes were opened: The Divine power, admitted by the men's faith, did its work. And Jesus strictly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. He *peremptorily* charged them, saying, *See ye, let no one know.* It is interesting to note that He says *See ye.* It is as if He had said, *Ye are now seeing much that ye were not seeing before. See that ye make a right use of your seeing. See especially that ye employ aright the eyes of your understanding. And see to it that ye do not blaze this matter abroad.* There may have been various reasons why the Saviour laid this injunction on these particular individuals, reasons affecting both them and Him. He may have wished a period of comparative repose. He may have felt that there was a growing tendency to make too much of Him as a mere Physician of bodies. See on chap. viii. 4.

VER. 31. But they, when they departed,—viz. out of the house, see next verse,—spread abroad His fame in all that country: They *defamed* the Hym, as Wycliffe renders it, that is, they *diffamed* Him, they *diffused His fame.* They probably beguiled themselves with guesses as to the motives of His injunction. Not unlikely they fancied that it was the mere expression of a beautifully unostentatious spirit. *It is His modesty,* they would say to themselves. *But His modesty is wronging Him. We must not yield to it. We must speak out.* Hence their *diffamation.* It was really an unkind return, though not meant as such, for all His kindness. "It is very characteristic," says Archbishop Trench, "and rests on profound differences between them and us, that of Roman Catholic interpreters, almost all (I am not aware of a single exception) should rather applaud than condemn these men for not adhering strictly to Christ's commands. But among interpreters of the Reformed Church, all, so far as I know, stand fast to this, that obedience is better than sacrifice, though the sacrifice be intended for God's special honour (1 Sam. xv. 21). They see therefore, in this publishing of the miracle, in the face of Christ's prohibition, a blemish in the perfectness of their faith who thus disobeyed, a fault which was still a fault, even admitting it to have been one which only grateful hearts could have committed." (*Miracles*, § 8.)

VER. 32. But as they were going out: The reference is to the two blind men

man possessed with a devil. 33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. 34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

who had received their sight. Just as they were leaving the house where Jesus was, and in which the light had dawned on them, another party entered in. Behold they brought to Him a dumb man possessed with a demon: *A dumb man under demoniacal possession; a devilled man*, as Sir John Cheke renders the expression. His dumbness, it would appear, was not the result of merely natural causes. It did not arise from imperfection of the organs of speech. Neither was it occasioned by mere physical disorder. There were symptoms connected with it that indicated a malign agency. It is probable, as Delitzsch contends, that "the diseases which the Scripture represents as demoniacal were of an extraordinary nature, and did not coincide with the ordinary diseases of corresponding symptoms" (*Biblische Psychologie*, 2 Ab., § 16). There would, no doubt, in the case before us, be peculiar conditions, physical or mental, which invited on the one hand, and limited and modified on the other, the demoniacal influence. And when we pass to the moral sphere of things, it is true, as Trapp remarks, that "Satan still gags many to this day." (See what is said on demoniacal possession at chap. iv. 24 and viii. 28.)

VER. 33. And when the demon was cast out the dumb man spake: The evangelist does not enter into the details of the miracle. To have detailed everything that was wonderful and glorious in the works of our Lord would have been to have embarrassed himself with an affluence that was beyond the reach of arithmetically detailed narration. The same miracle seems to be referred to, and with equal brevity, in Luke xi. 14. And the crowds marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel: Such power in cases of demoniacal possession (*see next verse*), such power to give release to the most afflicted of men, had never before been manifested among the people of Israel. Our Saviour stood aloft and alone among wonderful men, without parallel or peer.

VER. 34. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out the demons through the ruler of the demons: The demons are represented as the subjects of a like-minded, like-hearted sovereign, who is the prince, at once, of the darkness of this world and of the darkness of the world beneath. The expression, *through the ruler of the demons*, is rendered by Wycliffe in the *prince of devils*. He thus reproduces with extreme literality the preposition of the Vulgate and the corresponding preposition of the original (*ἐν*). It here denotes a most intimate union and unity. The Pharisees, finding that Jesus did not, and would not, come over to their side of things, and take His place as one of the chieftains of pharisaism, were filled with spite; and they were fain to spit out against Him the most horrid and odious of insinuations: *Ah, indeed! His works 'are' very wonderful; more especially in the demon direction. They are too wonderful in truth. There must be too great intimacy where less would be better. May there not be 'art and part'? Truly it looks like it. We don't wish to be suspicious; but one cannot shut one's eyes altogether. There does seem to be some kind of black league and covenant. Depend upon it, there is, underneath all this marvelous display, a deep-laid scheme of the great enemy. And if this Jesus be not indeed that very enemy himself (see chap. x. 25), He is undoubtedly in union with him.* Such would be the dreadful insinuations and assertions of the

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Pharisees. Being masters of hypocrisy themselves, they attributed to the Saviour an intensification of their own character. They projected their own magnified shadow of sham on the Lord of Glory, and looking at Him through the lurid gloom, they thought that they detected the features of the ruler of the demons. "*In the ruler of the demons,—in oneness with him—He casteth out the demons.*"

VER. 35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages: Or, as Etheridge characteristically renders it, *He itinerated in all the cities and villages*, namely, throughout the thickly peopled district round about Capernaum. While He wisely concentrated His efforts in certain localities, so as to form centres of influence, He also, as far as was consistent with His system of centralization, diffused His personal efforts. It is well for teachers and reformers to be both centripetal and centrifugal. The expression *cities and villages* might also be rendered *towns and hamlets*. Teaching in their synagogues: That is, in the synagogues of the people who inhabited the towns and hamlets. There was, to a remarkable extent, *freedom of ministry* in the synagogues, freedom at least to minister in the way of giving exhortations. This freedom nevertheless, as was befitting and indeed indispensable, was subject to the control of the rulers or elders. (See Acts xiii. 14, 15.) As is the case with freedom in other departments of things, there would be liability to abuse. But as a rule, it is better, both in things ecclesiastical and in things political, to have considerable freedom, even though accompanied with considerable abuses, (which abuses, be it remembered, often checkmate one another,) than no freedom at all, mere passivity on the one hand and mere officialism on the other. And preaching the gospel of the kingdom: Proclaiming the good news concerning the kingdom of heaven, the good news that it was at hand, and that all might enjoy its inestimable privileges, if they would but turn from the error and evil of their ways. (See Matt. iii. 2, iv. 17.) And healing every sickness and every disease among the people: The expression *among the people* is omitted by the chief critical editors, such as Griesbach, Lachmann, Scholz, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. Its absence does not in the least impair or obscure the sense. Jesus healed *every sickness and every disease*. This does not exactly mean, as Luther, Tyndale, and Robinson interpret it, *every kind of sickness and disease*, for, as Samuel Ward remarks, "there was not at that time in the whole world, much less in the places where Christ came, some sick of all sicknesses, or all kind of sicknesses." The expression is to be taken simply and easily; Christ went about healing, without failure and without exception, the maladies, however inveterate, of all such as sought His aid, or had it sought for them, believingly. "What a beautiful delineation of character," says Livermore, "is embodied in this verse! The Greatest of all goes about doing good as the servant of all. He establishes Himself in no regal palace, or learned school, issuing thence His commands or His doctrines; surrounds Himself with no pomp and circumstance. But He mingles freely with all, is accessible and gracious to all. He dispenses the truth as freely as light and air. His sympathies are not restricted to any one class or condition of men, but He regards with interest the whole family of mankind. He heals the sick, comforts the unhappy, warns the evil, and blesses all with the visitings of mercy and hope."

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then saith he unto

VER. 36. But when He saw the crowds,—who gathered around Him everywhere,—He was moved with compassion for them: All that was within Him was stirred (*ἐσπλαγχνίσθη*) in reference to them. His yearning compassions gathered around (*περί*) them. He was Love. His love had drawn Him to the earth. It was drawing Him toward every accessible unit of mankind. And as He drew near, He pitied and yearned. Because they fainted: The marginal reading is, *were tired*. But both renderings are intended to reproduce a Greek word (*ἐκλελυμένοι*) which our translators indeed found in the Testaments which they used, but which is not found in the best manuscriptural authorities, or approved of by the great critical editors. The word which Matthew employed was a much stronger term (*ἐσκυλμένοι*); and probably it was because of its strength that some ancient copyist fancied that it must be a mistake for the weaker term which may be rendered *faint* or *tired*. It means *fleece* (to a greater or less extent), *having the fleece (or portions of it) torn off* (see Kypke's *Observationes Sacre*, in loc.), *lacerated, mangled*. There can be no doubt that this was the evangelist's word. It is found in the manuscripts \aleph B C D E F G K M S U X Γ Δ II; 1, 33; and in Basil, Chrysostom, Theophylact, etc. Mill decided for it. Bengel received it into the text; and so have Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. And were scattered: This, which was also Erasmus's rendering, and Luther's, and Tyndale's, and Beza's, does not quite express the idea conveyed by the original (*ἐρμυμένοι*). The real meaning of the Greek word is *thrown, or thrown down*. Hence it is freely rendered *lying* in the Vulgate, and in the margin of our version. But the word can only by implication mean *lying*. They were lying, because they were *thrown down*, and were unable to rise. The same word, in the active voice, is found in chap. xxvii. 5, "and He *cast down* the pieces of silver in the temple." It occurs again in chap. xv. 30, where it is likewise rendered *cast down*, but with such a reference that we must abstract the idea of violence. The term however naturally suggests violence or force. It means *to throw, to toss, to hurl*. As sheep having no shepherd: The spiritual scene, as Jesus pictured it, was melancholy. Chrysostom and Theophylact realized it more vividly than most modern expositors. The multitudes of the people were as sheep without a shepherd, scattered over a locality abounding with beasts of prey. The wolf, the bear, the lion, were prowling about, seeking whom they might devour. Many, alas, had already been devoured; and of the rest the great majority had suffered terribly. They had been chased by their enemies up and down. On this side were some with large patches of the fleece and skin rudely torn and hanging down. On that side were others run down, and tossed over, and trampled. They were lying prostrate, and utterly unable to rise. It was a saddening sight. It is the picture of the spiritual condition of unsaved sinners. As the Saviour gazed on it, He felt His compassions stirred to their depths. They had been stirred before, and hence He had come to seek and to save the lost. He was the true Shepherd of the sheep, the good Shepherd; but He needed a company of under shepherds who would have sympathy with His aims, and care for souls in somewhat of His own spirit. (See ver. 38.)

VER. 37. Then saith He to His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but

his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few; 38 pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

the labourers are few: He shifts His figure, and pictures a husbandman's scene. Wycliffe renders it, *There is moche rype corne, but fewe werkmen*. The corn was ready for the sickle. The people were ready for the gospel. If there were plenty of suitable labourers, multitudes of souls would be gathered, and safely garnered. But if reapers were not speedily got, the precious grain would be lost for ever.

VER. 38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest: *Pray ye, or Beseech ye*, as the word is commonly rendered. It denotes earnest petition, importunity. *The Lord of the harvest: The Master of the harvest*, the Lord or Master to whom the rich ripe grain belongs. Our Saviour says elsewhere, "My Father is the Husbandman" (John xv. 1), although He doubtless inwardly realized that in this matter, as in many others, His Father and He were "one." And hence we find in the immediately succeeding chapter that He Himself, but not without His Father, sent forth labourers. That He will send forth labourers into His harvest: Literally, *In order that He may thrust out labourers into His harvest*. In the first edition of his *Family Expositor* Doddridge retained in his *Paraphrase* the expression *send forth*. In his second edition he says: "I am sorry I retained our less emphatical translation. Whosoever considers the immense difficulties and oppositions which every minister of Christ's kingdom was sure to encounter, in those early days of it, will see the necessity of some unusual energy and impulse on the mind to lead any to undertake it." Does any one ask, *Why should the Lord of the harvest require to be earnestly petitioned to send out reapers into His harvest-field? Is not the field His own? Is He unwilling to have His ripe grain gathered and garnered? Do other and inferior husbandmen require to be petitioned to provide themselves with reapers for their harvest-fields? If the Lord of the harvest is unconcerned about His grain, is it likely that concern will be roused within Him by the entreaties of men?* These questions bring into view some of the difficulties that press upon minds, in certain stages of spiritual development, in reference to the duty of prayer. It is well that the subject be calmly considered. It will bear to be thoroughly scrutinized and sifted. The following hints may meanwhile suffice: (1.) We must bear in mind the *parabolic picture* which the Saviour has been drawing. Like all parables, it is an adequate representation of realities only up to a certain point. Beyond that point it fails to represent realities fairly; and if therefore it be pressed beyond that point, it will mislead. God is much more than a husbandman. Unconverted men are not standing corn. Converted men do not hold precisely the same relation to the unconverted that reapers bear to ripe grain. And hence we shall assuredly fail to understand the Saviour, unless we let our minds rise from the parabolic signs to the realities signified. (2.) It is the case that God is most desirous to have His ripe grain reaped, that is, to have those precious souls of His, that are ready for the gospel, brought under the influence of the gospel, and gathered, and garnered. God was in Jesus. He had sent Jesus. Jesus was the express Image of the Father; and the desire of Jesus was thus in reality the desire of the Father; or, if we choose to express it so, it was the perfect duplicate of the Father's desire. (3.) It was *not God's fault that there were few labourers for*

CHAPTER X.

1 AND when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he

His harvest-field at the time that Christ spoke, and before that time, and after it. He has all along been stirring up the converted to be their "brothers' keepers," and to "love their neighbours as they love themselves"; and He has been diligently sending to men His servants, the prophets, and other evangelists, "rising early and sending them" (Jer. xxv. 4). But men, both good and bad, are free agents, thus marvellously, mysteriously, and sublimely assimilated in nature to God Himself, and hence His servants have very often been very languid and remiss, and very often too they have been overborne in their labours by the multitude of false prophets and teachers, whom God never sent, but who yet insist on running, and who claim moreover to be monopolists of the work. (4.) When Christ enjoins His disciples to *petition the Lord of the harvest* to thrust out labourers, He really wishes them to have desires in reference to the harvest akin to the desires of God Himself; and hence it is that He instructs them to carry up their desires to God. It is not that He expected them to change the heart of God, so that God might be willing to get His ripe grain reaped. Far from that. Christ's own heart was really the heart of God, in its onward relation. But He wished His disciples to be themselves ready for the work. (See next chapter, ver. 1-6.) And hence His injunction is, *in part*, equivalent to this, *Beseech ye the Lord of the harvest, that He may accept you, and thrust forth you into His harvest-field.* (5) We say, *in part*, for it would be wrong to suppose that we should merely be making proffer of ourselves when we pray for an increase of gospel labourers. We are but atoms in the mighty mass. And, if our desires be God-like, they will go forth in prayers, in reference to all who constitute the mighty mass of sinful humanity. But why should they, is it asked? Are men's prayers needed? Whether they be needed or not, their desires, if God-like, *must go up to God.* In proportion as our desires are God-like, in the same proportion will they go forth in reference to men, and go up to God. But still, are they needed, it is asked, to stir up God to benevolent activity? Far from it. In their own place, nevertheless, *they are needed.* They are not needed for securing to men what is necessary for their accountability, or even for their mere salvability. No man is to that extent dependent on his fellow men. But there are innumerable blessings over and above such as are indispensable to mere salvability, which are suspended on human conditions. It was wise that this should be so. And among the innumerable relations and interlinkings of things Divine and human there is scope, in moral government, for a larger outpouring of the power of the Divine Spirit, when the conducting rods of prayer rise up into the region of Divine influences.

CHAPTER X.

VER. 1. And He called to Him His twelve disciples: The evangelist is not referring to the original calling of the twelve to be special disciples. He assumes that prior calling, though he himself does not narrate it. He has only recorded the calling of five, Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, John his brother, and Matthew. (Chap. iv. 18, 21; ix. 9.) The Saviour had however gradually gathered around Him, as into an esoteric ring, a company of twelve special disciples, 'His twelve disciples,' the number of the tribes of Israel. Having

gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James

called them to Him on the present occasion, He gave them authority over unclean spirits: We know not the formalities of the way in which this authority was conferred; or whether indeed any special formalities were employed. Perhaps our Lord breathed on them; perhaps He laid His hands upon them; perhaps He prayed over them. His action, whatever it might be, would doubtless be beautifully appropriate, a real solemnity and solemnization. *Unclean spirits: Demons.* (See chap. iv. 24, viii. 28, ix. 32.) They were characteristically *unclean* or *impure*, revelling in moral impurity, and taking pleasure in throwing it up, as in continual showers of mire and dirt, around their victims. To cast them out: Or, *so that they might cast them out.* This expression explains the intention of the Saviour in conferring the authority specified. And heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease: The construction is condensed; but the meaning is obvious, *He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and likewise (authority) to heal every disease and every malady.* The word *every* has been explanatorily rendered by our translators, *all manner of.* The same rendering was given by Luther and Tyndale. It was copied from Tyndale into the original Geneva version of 1557. But in the standard Geneva it was changed into the literal *every*, the rendering of Wycliffe and Bengel. There is no need for departing from literality in this case; although undoubtedly the word must be regarded as having reference to a limited area, a limited sphere or range of universality. The disciples got authority to heal *every* disease and *malady*, in reference to which their aid was believably invoked or desired. (See chap. ix. 35.)

VER. 2. But the names of the twelve apostles are these: This is the first instance in the New Testament in which the word *apostles* or *apostle* is found; and it is too the last in which it is found in Matthew. The word is likewise found only once in Mark (vi. 80). It means *legate*, *delegate*, *messenger*, *missionary*. Christ sent out His twelve disciples into the surrounding country as His *delegates* or *missionaries*. After His ascension they continued to act in the same capacity, but in a wider sphere. The first, Simon, who is called Peter: *The first*, or, more literally and simply, *First*, without the article, that is, *First of the twelve*. The evangelist does not proceed to say *Second*, *Third*, etc. Indeed there was no fixed *second*, or *third*, though there was, apparently (see on ver. 4, end), a fixed *fifth* (viz. Philip), and a fixed *ninth* (viz. James the son of Alphæus). The word *first* has reference to an order; though it does not exactly mean what we would designate *foremost in rank* or *authority*. The apostles were of equal rank and authority. Their office was one and the same. There was no hierarchy in the order. But, as among other equals in office, there were distinctions in character, qualifications, endowments, and position. Peter was distinguished by his character and natural endowments; and hence from the first he stood out prominent among his peers (*primus inter pares*). "Sometimes," says Dean Alford, "Peter speaks in the name of the rest (Matt. xix. 27, Luke xii. 41); sometimes he answers when all are addressed (Matt. xvi. 16, Mark viii. 29); sometimes our Lord addresses him as *principal*, even among the three favoured ones (Matt. xxvi. 40, Luke

the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddæus;

“xxii. 31); sometimes he is addressed by others as *representing the whole* (Matt. xvii. 24, Acts ii. 37). He appears as *the organ of the apostles* after our Lord's ascension (Acts i. 15, ii. 14, iv. 8, v. 29); the first speech, and apparently “that which decided the council, was spoken by him (Acts xv. 7).” The word *Peter* is Greek, and means a *piece of rock, a boulder, a stone*. The word *Simon* or *Simeon* is Hebrew, and means, not *Hearer*, as Dr. Eadie gives it in his *Biblical Cyclopædia*, but *Hearing*. Leah imposed the name on her second son, because there had been *hearing* on the part of God, *the Lord had heard*. (See Gen. xxix. 33.) And Andrew his brother: See chap. iv. 18. Peter and he made a pair. Andrew is a Greek name, suggesting the idea of *mantiness*. James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother: See chap. iv. 21. They were a noble pair, surnamed by our Lord *Sons of thunder*. (Mark iii. 17.) When they spoke to their fellow men on the things of God, it was as if a voice were heard thundering from heaven. James was early martyred, being slain by Herod “with the sword” (Acts xii. 2). John survived the rest of the apostles. He was peculiarly the *Beloved* of the Lord, the New Testament *David*. Both names, James and John, are Hebrew, the former meaning *Successor* (or, *he has caught by the heel*: Gen. xxv. 26, xxvii. 36), the latter meaning *Jehovah has been gracious*.

VER. 3. Philip and Bartholomew: A third pair. Nothing is known of Bartholomew, as he is mentioned only in the lists of the apostles. But it is, with probability, supposed that he is Nathanael, the ‘Israelite indeed’ whom Jesus saw ‘under the fig-tree, before that Philip called him’ (John i. 45-51). He had evidently been an intimate acquaintance of Philip, which may account for their pairing in the first apostolical tour. What confirms the supposition that Bartholomew was Nathanael is the fact that Nathanael appears among a cluster of the apostles, to whom the Saviour showed Himself after His resurrection. See John xxi. 1, 2. Nathanael would be his proper name. Bartholomew would be his patronymic, and meant *son of Tholomew, Tholmai, or Tolmai*. Nathanael is a fine Hebrew word, meaning *God has given*. Thomas and Matthew the publican: Another pair. Thomas was a man of marked character. “He was,” says Dean Stanley, “slow to believe, seeing all the difficulties of a case, subject “to despondency, viewing things on the darker side, and yet full of ardent love “for his Master” (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*). It is reported by tradition that he preached the gospel in Parthia or Persia, and that his remains were buried at Edessa. Chrysostom mentions his tomb at Edessa as one of the four genuine tombs of the apostles. The name *Thomas* or *Thom* is Hebrew, and means a *twin*. The corresponding Greek name is *Didymus* (John xi. 16, xxi. 2). Of Matthew we have spoken at chap. ix. 9. James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddæus: Another pair; of whom, however, little is with certainty known. As regards James, a vast amount of very intricate speculation has been expended upon the effort to determine his relationship. It has been very generally supposed, since the time of Jerome—who wrote a treatise bearing on the subject, in reply to Helvidius (*Liber de Perpetua Virginitate B. Mariæ*)—that Alphæus, his father, was the husband of that Mary who was ‘the mother of James the little and of Joses’ (Mark xv. 40), and the re-

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

puted sister of Mary the mother of our Lord (John xix. 25). It was hence believed by Jerome, and his theological successors, that he was the cousin-german of our Lord, and that he was in consequence denominated 'the Lord's brother' (Gal. i. 19). It was hence also assumed that it was he who was the most prominent of the *pillars* in the Christian community at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 9, 12). This whole tissue of assumptions, however, seems to resolve itself into an irresolvable tanglement. It is more probable that the brethren of our Lord were his step-brothers, the children of Joseph by a previous marriage. Hence the propriety of the designation 'brethren,' or *brothers*. Hence too, in all likelihood, the origin of their jealousy (John vii. 3-5). Taking this view, the view entertained by the fathers of the church down to the time of Jerome, we see no reason why we should encumber ourselves with the fixed supposition that Alphaeus must be the husband of Mary the mother of James *the little* and of Joses. Neither do we see reason for supposing that this Mary was the sister of Mary the mother of our Lord (John xix. 25). It is not likely that the two, if sisters, would be both named Mary. There were many Marias in those days, and not a few of them more or less connected with our Lord. There is no evidence that James *the little* (viz. in stature) was one of the apostles. And as regards James, the '*pillar*' in Jerusalem, there is reason to believe that, though sceptical or unbelieving in reference to our Lord's Messiahship before the crucifixion (John vii. 5), he was yet thoroughly convinced after the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7). He would naturally rise to precedence in the Christian church, partly in consequence of his near relationship to our Lord, and partly in consequence of the gravity and uprightness of his character, which, as we learn from tradition, was universally respected. He was called *the Upright*. As regards the companion of James *the son of Alphaeus*, namely *Lebbeus whose surname was Thaddæus*, he was also called *Judas* or *Jude* (Luke vi. 16, Acts i. 13, John xiv. 22). He is named *Thaddæus* by Mark (iii. 18). It is Matthew only who calls him *Lebbeus*. The expression *whose surname was Thaddæus* seems to have been originally a marginal note, that subsequently crept into the text. It is very properly left out by Tischendorf. But instead of *Lebbeus*, Lachmann, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort read *Thaddæus*, Mark's word. They are supported by the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and by the Vulgate. But Origen mentions expressly that, while *Thaddæus* was the reading in Mark, *Lebbeus* was the reading in Matthew. And unless *Lebbeus* had really been in the evangelist's autograph, it is utterly impossible to conceive how it could have got admission into the text. The meaning of the word *Lebbeus* is uncertain. If it be connected with the Hebrew word for *heart* (לֵב, and thence לֵבִי), it will mean *hearty* or *courageous*.

VER. 4. *Simon the Canaanite*: The first of the last pair. The word *Canaanite* has no reference to the land of Canaan. It would have been better to have spelled it *Cananite*, as indeed it is in the Geneva version, and in some editions of our Authorized version, though not in the 1611 edition. Luther supposed that the reference of the word is to Cana of Galilee, and hence he renders the expression *Simon of Cana*. But if that had been the meaning of the word it would have been *Cananite*, not *Canaanite*. It is, in truth, a Hebrew or Aramaic word, meaning *zealot*; and hence, in Luke vi. 15, it is translated into Greek '*Simon called Zelotes*.' In Acts i. 13 the expression is simply *Simon Zelotes*,

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 but go rather to the lost

that is, *Simon the zealot*. The *Zealots* were a political party among the Jews, who were animated with peculiar zeal for the recovery of Jewish freedom and the maintenance of all the distinctive Jewish institutions. Phinehas was the model after which they sought to mould their character (Num. xxv. 6-8). They scrupled not to take, as they had opportunity, the punishment of law-breakers into their own hands; and amid the subsequent wars that are narrated by Josephus they played a fiery and conspicuous part. Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort read *Cananean* instead of *Canaanite*. And Judas the Iscariot, who also betrayed Him: He brings up the rear, being last and least. He occupies the same concluding place in the lists of Mark and Luke. The expression *who also betrayed Him* would, however, be more literally rendered *who also delivered Him up*, for, however traitorous the deed referred to really was, the word does not, of itself, denote the treachery. The appellative term, *the Iscariot*, distinguishes him from other Judases, and in particular from the Judas who was his fellow apostle, and who was also called *Lebbæus* and *Thaddæus*. The meaning of the appellation is matter of mere conjecture. Lightfoot, proposing certain ingenious etymologies, thought that it might mean *tanner*, or *pursebearer*, or *self strangler*. But it is generally regarded as a compound term, denoting *man of Carioth* or *Kerioth*, the reference being to his native town *Karioth* or *Kerioth*, which was one of the possessions of the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 25). Sometimes the appellative designation *the Iscariot* drops the article, and becomes a kind of surname, *Judas Iscariot*. This is the form which the appellation has assumed in our current English phraseology. It will be noticed that the list of the twelve apostles consists of pairs. The names are recorded in couplets. And Mark says expressly that our Saviour "called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth *by two and two*" (vi. 7). It is also noticeable that there are *pairs of pairs*, the twelve being divided into three of these pairs of pairs, or quaternions. The first quaternion consists of Peter and Andrew, James and John. The second consists of Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew. The third consists of James the son of Alphæus and Lebbæus, Simon the Cananite and Judas Iscariot. These were real and discriminated groups; for, while variations in pairing are found in the different lists, yet in them all (Matt. x. 2-4; Mark iii. 16-19; Luke vi. 14-16; Acts i. 13) the quaternions comprise exactly the same group of individuals. In all the lists, besides, Peter is the leader of the first quaternion, Philip the leader of the second, and James the son of Alphæus the leader of the third.

VER. 5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, viz. on an evangelistic tour. And charged them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles: *Depart not in the direction of Gentiles.—Do not take any road leading to Gentile populations.* The time had not come for establishing missions to the Gentiles. A base of operations required to be secured among the Jews. Preparation had to be made within that smaller circle, for subsequent operations within the wider circle of the world at large. And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: *And do not enter into a city of the Samaritans.* The Samaritans were a hybrid population, more than semi-Gentile, occupying patches of the district of country that lay between Galilee, where the Saviour was, and Judæa, where Jerusalem

sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. 8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have

was. 'The Jews had no dealings with them' (John iv. 9). The chief component part of their ancestors had been brought from Assyria by Esar-haddon (Ezra iv. 2); but these heathen Cuthæans had no doubt been considerably mingled with resident and runaway Israelites. In olden times 'they feared Jehovah, and served their graven images' (2 Kings xvii. 24-41). But latterly, like the Jews themselves, they had renounced idolatry, and were worshippers, however ignorantly, of the one living and true God. They were abhorred by the great body of the Jews; and they repaid their haters with feelings of corresponding hatred. There is still a remnant of Samaritans, living at Shechem or Nablous, toward the base of mount Gerizim. They number only about a hundred and fifty individuals. "They do not admit," says the Rev. Ferguson, who visited them in 1862, "that their forefathers were of heathen origin, or that their worship was a mixture of Judaism and idolatry. On the contrary, they assert that they are the true Israel, and that they alone wait upon God in primitive simplicity and truth." (*Sacred Scenes*, chap. x.)

VER. 6. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: The spell of the spiritual scene which He had been recently contemplating (chap. ix. 36) is still upon the Saviour's spirit. The children of Israel were "as sheep having no shepherd." They had not merely wandered. They had nearly *perished*. That is the natural force of the word rendered *lost*. They had been chased, and bitten; thrown down, and trampled; torn, and half worried. They were lying 'panting for life' (Trapp). And if they utterly perished, the *loss* to themselves, and to Him who says "all souls are Mine," would be great. *The house of Israel* means the family, or race, or people of Israel. The "lost sheep of the house of Israel" were not merely, as Fritzsche supposes, the peculiarly immoral or criminal classes of the population (*ii ex Israelitis quorum erant contaminati mores*). They were all, without distinction or exception, who were without faith in the Messiah, and thus unconverted in heart and life. The Saviour wished His disciples to begin their evangelistic operations with these.

VER. 7. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand: They were to take up the herald cry of John the Baptist, and cause it to re-echo all around. *Preach, that is proclaim as heralds, for ye are indeed the heralds of the Great King. The kingdom of heaven is at hand: It is about to be gloriously established. The heavenly King is about to take unto Himself His great name and reign. If ye repent and be ready, He will accept of you as His subjects, and ye shall enjoy all the immunities and privileges of the heavenly society which will be found around His throne.* (See on chap. iii. 2.)

VER. 8. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: They thus got a delegated authority to work miracles of mercy within the outer court of the body, that they might afford credentials of their mission, and obtain a readier access into the inner court of men's souls. Man is both material and spiritual. The way to the spiritual is through the material. And we see in our Saviour's instructions, as well as in His own practice, the true theory of missions, both at home and abroad. We should, as a general rule, begin at the outer and lower; and go on thence to the inner and loftier. We should sympathise, as much as may be, with men's material wants, the wants

received, freely give. 9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor

which in their own estimation are most pressing, and thence stretch out the hand toward their spiritual necessities. Such is the general rule, though, in exceptional cases, multitudes are ready to receive the highest blessings at once. Freely ye have received: Or, still more literally, *ye received*, namely, at the time when I solemnly set you apart to this service. *Freely*, that is, *without money and without price*. The Rheims version is, *gratis you have received; gratis give ye*. **Freely give:** The Saviour inculcates upon His disciples not to traffic with the wonder-working powers which He had delegated to them. They were not to go about with these powers as *commercial travellers*, and sell their spiritual wares. Commerce indeed is the great pioneer of civilization. Without money making, money getting, and money giving, men would never rise above a condition of savageism. But there are some things which must not be sold and bought; and the gospel is one of them, the gospel, and its essential preliminaries and accompaniments. There is, with some, a little doubt regarding the authenticity of the clause *raise the dead*. Mill regarded it as borrowed from chap. xi. 5. Wetstein too regarded it as spurious. Adam Clarke condemned it. So does Stier. Scholz omitted it from the text. So did Alford, but in his fifth edition he restored it. Tischendorf too, though omitting it in his 1849 and 1859 editions, restored it in his eighth, and has been followed by Westcott-and-Hort, as he was preceded by Tregelles. The reading is supported by the best manuscripts, such as the Sinaitic, and B C D, and by the Vulgate version, and the older Latin. There seems to be no good reason for rejecting it.

VER. 9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses: *Provide*, that is, *for the journey*. It was the Saviour's purpose Himself to provide for them whatsoever they required. The spirit of the injunction is binding still upon missionaries and ministers of the gospel;—*the spirit of the injunction*, for, as Stier remarks, it would be the 'mere fanaticism of the letter' to impose upon missionaries and other preachers a literal obedience to the commandment. But missionaries and other ministers of the gospel are most assuredly not to spend their precious time, and expend their precious energies, in trying to get for themselves an ample provision of wealth or pelf. For this very reason, nevertheless, the people for whose behoof they labour should be considerably and sensitively careful to supply all their material wants, and to supply them too in a way, and to a degree, that are accordant with the general state of society around. The word rendered *brass* should have been translated *copper*, for the Hebrews were not acquainted with that comparatively modern alloy of copper and zinc which we call *brass*, and which is termed by the French *yellow copper* (*cuivre jaune*). There is a descending climax in the expression, *neither gold, nor silver, nor copper*. Not only would no provision of gold be required; silver itself would be unnecessary; and copper too. The word rendered *purses* means *girdles*, or *gyrdels* as it is in the Geneva of 1557, an indispensable article of dress when loose robes, which require to be gathered up for walking or for working, are worn. It was made of various substances, according to fashion, convenience, or taste. It was often a broad belt of leather, either plain or ornamented, and, if need be, either doubled by a fold or lined and pocketed inside. Sometimes it was a kind of *sash*, with natural conveniences for secreting money in its folds. In the original the expression is, *into your girdles*, that is,

brass in your purses, 10 nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. 11 And into whatsoever city or town ye

Do not provide for yourselves gold, or silver, or copper, putting the money into your girdles, so as to have it in them.

VER. 10. **NOR scrip for your journey:** Or, *Nor satchel for the road*, that is, *No travelling bag*, in which to carry provisions and other little conveniences needed in a journey. The English word *scrip* is of obscure origin. The original term (*πίρα*) denotes a leathern satchel, or knapsack, such as shepherds or travellers swung on their back or at their side, when they took with them a supply of provisions. Jesus was to be to His disciples *the Lord their provider*, and had made arrangements for their maintenance during their evangelistic tour. **Neither two coats:** Or tunics. The word designates the indispensable under robe, over which the upper robe or *cloak* was thrown. (See chap. v. 40, ix. 20.) The apostles were not to encumber themselves with a change of these, or of any other garments. Such a change would have involved the necessity of carrying with them bag and baggage, some kind of luggage, or else of burdening and oppressing themselves by wearing at one time more than was required. (See Mark vi. 9.) **Nor shoes:** that is, *nor a change of shoes or sandals*. Light-foot and Maeknight, not perceiving that an extra set of these conveniences is referred to, have supposed that plain *sandals* were allowed, but not the more comfortable and luxurious shoes. (See Mark vi. 9.) **Nor yet staves:** In the margin the variant *a staff* is given, undoubtedly the correct reading, supported by the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Cambridge manuscripts. Tischendorf has admitted it in his eighth edition. And it is too the reading of Lachmann and Tregelles. Of course Westcott-and-Hort give it. The other reading, *staves*, had been a marginal suggestion, to preserve the harmony of Matthew and Mark. In Mark vi. 8 we read that Jesus "commanded them that they should *take* (He does not say *provide*) nothing for their journey, *save a staff only*." But there is no real discrepancy, though Strauss tries to make capital of the affair. (*Life of Christ*, ii., vi., § 77.) The injunction in Mark is just equivalent to this: *Make no preparation whatever of bag and baggage for your tour; set off simply as ye are, with nothing but your staff in your hand*. The staff, as Wordsworth expresses it, "was as it were nothing." The injunction in Matthew is just equivalent to this: *Provide nothing whatsoever, with which you are at this moment unprovided, not even a staff*. If any were in the custom of using a staff, and had one then and there, let him not throw it away. If any had the habit of going about without a staff, and therefore had not one, let him not go to procure one ere he set out. **For the workman is worthy of his food:** And of the other essentials of his maintenance. And Jesus pledges Himself that His working apostles should not want what they required. He does not promise to give them princely revenues or to pamper them in the lap of luxury. But He meant them to rest assured that their "bread should be given them and their waters be sure." (Isa. xxxiii. 16.) They would have "food and raiment," and whatever else was necessary; and therewith they were to be content. (1 Tim. vi. 8.) "Every missionary," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "should make himself master of this subject." So should every minister of the gospel; and every man who has a spiritual mission from God.

VER. 11. **And into whatsoever town or hamlet ye shall enter, inquire who in it**

shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. 12 And when ye come into an house, salute it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

is worthy: *Worthy*; it is a relative term, and naturally suggests the inquiry, *worthy of what?* Here it means, *worthy of your intimacy, worthy of being associated with you in your evangelistic work, worthy of being Messianically honoured.* The apostles were thus to exercise discretion in reference to those with whom they intimately associated. A similar discretion is still needed on the part of all missionaries and ministers of the gospel. And there abide, till ye go thence: Till ye leave that locality. They were to be careful indeed, as to the character of those with whom they resided; but when once they had fixed on their abode, under the roof of some truly worthy man, they were to be content with it, even although they should subsequently ascertain that *more agreeable quarters* could be elsewhere enjoyed. They were not to cast a slight upon humble circumstances, and to move about "from house to house" (Luke x. 7), fishing for comforts.

VER. 12. **And as ye enter into the house:** Namely, of the individual who has been reported to be worthy. **Salute it:** The *house* and *household* are blended in thought. Strictly speaking, it is the *house* that is entered and the *household* that is saluted. The salutation referred to would be the customary *salaam* of the Hebrews, *Peace to you.* Originally it was intended to intimate that no hostility was to be apprehended from the person who was approaching. By and by, as the phrase got rubbed and turned about by the interminable rotation of intercourse, it would get to be, in many cases, a mere form of civility. But whenever there was deep feeling in the heart the formula would become instinct with an emphasis of utterance or of tone, that would suggest the outgoing and upgoing of genuine desire, desire for *peace* in its deeper relations, peace of heart and of conscience, peace in reference to God as well as to men. It is noteworthy that the Saviour enjoins upon His apostles to be observant of the innocent civilities of social intercourse. He would not have them neglected. He would rather have them elevated and ennobled. "A servant of the Lord," says Stier, "is truly *courteous*, for he has learned to be so in the high court of his King."

VER. 13. **And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it:** Let it settle on the household. *Let it come,* says the Saviour, using the imperative mood. It is as if He had said, It is My desire and My prayer that it come. The blessing, which in your salutation you invoke, I too invoke,—I, in whose name and by whose authority you speak and act. **But if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you:** The blessing you invoked will not be lost. There is never any waste in the outgoings of love. (*Vobis utile erit, in vanum apud eos laborasse:* LUTHER.) But the unworthy household shall not enjoy the peace which it was your desire that it should enjoy. It is My will, says Jesus, that the blessing take no effect on that house. How dreadful must be the condition of those upon whose peace the Prince of peace Himself lays an interdict! Such an interdict He lays upon all who will not welcome into their hearts the gospel of His Father's grace. "Whom He will, He hardeneth"; and we know "whom He will." It is unbelievers only.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. 15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgement, than for that city.

VER. 14. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet: For of your feet, some high authorities read *off your feet* (ἐκ τῶν ποδῶν βυσῶν), *Shake off the dust off your feet*; a symbolical act suitable to the people and the age. It was intended to signify to the unbelieving that the apostles and their Lord regarded them as unclean, and entirely responsible for their uncleanness. (See Acts xviii. 6.) When the Jews returned from heathen lands, in which they had been travelling, it was a custom, more or less prevalent, to shake off the dust from their feet, as they entered upon *the holy land*. The action intimated that they wished to carry no element of heathen defilement with them. (See *Lightfoot* and *Nork*.) It was a finely significant symbol, if observed not in haughtiness but in sadness, and if understood to be a mere symbol. The danger, of course, was not from dust on the feet, but from defilement on the life and in the heart. Every apostle was to let his impenitent countrymen know that they were "as heathen men in the sight of the Messiah," impure in the estimation of the infinitely Holy One. The spirit of the injunction runs through all the ages, and has come down to our day. Its spirit, but its spirit only. And hence a very heavy responsibility rests on that minister of the gospel who gives no intimation of any kind to the impenitent with whom he associates, that they are impure in the sight of God, and in danger of eternal separation from the good.

VER. 15. Verily I say unto you: It is as if the Saviour had said, *Mark solemnly My solemn words*. It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah: That is, for the ancient inhabitants of the land in which Sodom and Gomorrhah lay. In the day of judgement, than for that city: If it turn not from its unbelief. The Saviour thus looked forward to a great assize. He realized that men without exception, past, present, and to come, have to do with that assize. All shall be impartially judged. Sentence shall be pronounced upon each according to his real character, but taking into account the circumstances in which he had been placed. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrhah had nothing like the privileges and opportunities of the inhabitants of the towns and hamlets which the apostles were about to visit. They would be 'beaten' therefore, at the last, with comparatively 'few stripes,' while more favoured but equally impenitent peoples would incur a much severer doom.

VER. 16. At this turn in our Saviour's address to His apostles, His mind looks forward beyond their present mission. That mission was but initiatory and tentative. It was merely the forerunning earnest of their future career. Their true *apostolical work* would be by and by, after their Lord's propitiatory work had been completed. He deemed it right however, even now, as His own thoughts were shooting afar, to give them some glimpses of what would devolve upon them, and of what was awaiting them. He sowed seeds in their minds, on which the vital forces of their spirits might meanwhile be operating. In due time the seeds would germinate, and in the fulness of the time there would be blossoms of full-blown knowledge and the fruits of experience. Lo: It is as if He had said, *The curtain that veils the future is at this moment rising before*

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves : be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

My view, and, lo, I see stretching out before Me the entire apostolical career on which you are entering. I send you forth: The word that is translated *send forth* (ἀποστέλλω) is the verb which is cognate to the noun *apostle*. The Lord was inaugurating the *apostleship* of His disciples. There is emphasis too in the pronoun 'I' (ἐγώ). *It is I who send you forth. It is I who confer upon you your apostleship.* You are *My* apostles. There was thus in the Saviour the thorough self-consciousness of His Messiahship. He was acting consciously from His own centre; and He realized that the concentric circumferences of that centre were the whole Jewish people, and the world. **As sheep in the midst of wolves:** While His disciples were constituted apostles, and thus exalted to the highest attainable office and dignity connected with the kingdom of heaven upon earth, and while they were to act boldly and fearlessly in the way of shaking off the dust from their feet in reference to all who should reject their message, they were yet to bear in mind that other things than honour and authority were before them. As soon as they had done with preliminaries, and were fairly entered on their great apostolical mission, they would find that they were *as sheep in the midst of wolves*. They themselves could not and would not bite and devour. Their mission had no wolfish element in it. It never could be competent to them to persecute. But they would be persecuted. They would be *as sheep in the midst of wolves*, exposed to the malice of many who would be both able and eager to bite and fight and devour. **Become ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves:** In the original the article is prefixed to *serpents* and *doves*, thus discriminating the categories of the animals, *the serpents, the doves*. The word translated *wise* (φρόνιμοι, not σοφοί) is inadequately so rendered, especially in its present application. It rather denotes prudence in regard to one's own safety than intellectual or ethical wisdom. It refers to the serpent's real or reputed wariness or sagacity *in relation to danger*. The injunction might be rendered thus, *Become ye wary as serpents*. It is Wycliffe's rendering, *Be ye war as serpentis*, a rendering far superior to Purvey's revision, as given in Bagster's *Hexapla*, *Be ye sly as serpents*; for, as Matthew Henry observes, they were to be "not as foxes, whose cunning is to deceive others; but as serpents, whose policy is only to defend themselves, and to shift for their own safety." "In the cause of Christ," he adds, "we must be wise not to pull trouble upon our own heads." "Therefore," says Richard Baxter, "be wise to carry yourselves inoffensively and cautiously, preserving yourselves by lawful means." It is a precious injunction for a time of persecution; and indeed for all times. Good men must not recklessly throw themselves away. **And harmless as doves:** The word rendered *harmless* (ἀκέραιοι) was somewhat misunderstood by our translators, as it was also, long afterwards, by Hammond and by Bengel. They seem to have supposed that its etymological import was *unhorned*, and that thence it meant *harmless* or *inoffensive*. In the *Etymologicum Magnum* the same etymology is given, but along with another. That other represents the word as meaning, radically, *unmixed*, undoubtedly its true primary meaning. The great Henry Stephens, in his *Thesaurus of the Greek Language*, says of the former etymology, "I judge it to be plainly ridiculous." The term then means *unmixed, unadulterated, pure*, and hence, in certain applications, *without duplicity, without guile or wile*. Luther understood it aright. He renders it here *without falsity (ohne falsch)*, that is *guileless*.

17 But beware of men : for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues ;
 18 and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for

Wycliffe's translation *simple* is liable to be misunderstood. It is the version however of the Vulgate and Erasmus and Beza. Castellio's is better, *sincere*. Sir John Cheke's is worse, *plain*. While our Saviour wished His apostles to become, in the time of their need, *wary* as serpents, He did not wish them to have any serpentine *wiliness*. There was to be no deceit about them, no insincerity. They were to be ingenuous throughout, pure, truthful through and through, *as unwily as doves*. Their character was to be a beautiful mixture of *wariness* and *guilelessness*. The Saviour's *therefore* must not be overlooked. It hangs on the emphatic 'I' of the first clause. *It is I who send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves ; become ye therefore, as becometh apostles charged with My commission, wary, but qualify that wariness by dovelike guilelessness. The presence of the wolves demands that ye be wary ; the fact that ye are My apostles demands that ye be guileless.*

VER. 17. But beware of men : I have spoken of *wolves* ; I refer to men. *Beware of the men* (to whom I refer). The article is in the original. **For they will deliver you up to councils** : That is, to judicatories, larger or smaller, that were to be found in the cities and towns of the Jews, and which had power to deal with all who were suspected of having contravened the Jewish law. **And they will scourge you in their synagogues** : The ecclesiastical and civil elements were so thoroughly interblended among the Jews, that "in every synagogue," says Lightfoot, "there was a civil triumvirate," or judicatory of three. These magistrates sat in judgement on all cases that required to be treated judicially. Not unlikely, in many instances the synagogue house would be the court-house ; and when any one was convicted of an offence, or supposed offence, that rendered him liable to scourging, he would be then and there made to lie down, or bend forward, and suffer the allotted chastisement. (See Acts xxiii. 19, xxvi. 11.) In ancient times the scourge would seem to have consisted of only one thong ; but afterwards it branched out into three, and hence it was that, in all the five times when Paul was subjected to scourging, he received forty stripes *save one*, that is, thirteen applications of the three-plyed scourge. (See 2 Cor. xi. 24.) It was not lawful among the Jews to give more than forty stripes (Deut. xxv. 3) ; and hence the law would have been exceeded if there had been a fourteenth application of the multiple scourge. It will be noticed that our Saviour, unlike impostors and sanguine enthusiasts, pointed explicitly to the darkness that was at hand, as well as to the light that was beyond. He let His disciples know, unreservedly, the trials that were before them. He drew before them no fairyland pictures, to decoy them or to fascinate them. *You see what a cross you will require to bear. I would not hide it from your view*, though no doubt there is a crown above it, and a heavenly glory over-arching all. (Comp. chap. v. 11, 12.)

VER. 18. **Yea, and before governors and kings shall ye be brought** : Viz. by your persecuting countrymen. It is as if the Saviour had said, *Not only will they deliver you up to their own councils, and scourge you in their synagogues. They will proceed to still greater extremities ; and in order to get you subjected to the severest possible penalties they will bring you even before Gentile governors and kings.* By *governors* we are to understand such high officials as procurators

my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same

and proconsuls. Pontius Pilate and Felix were procurators. Sergius Paulus and Gallio were proconsuls. For My sake: Because of your connection with Me, your devotion to My person and work. For a testimony against them and the Gentiles: Or rather, For a testimony to them and the Gentiles, that is, For a testimony to the Jews and to the Gentiles. The reference of the clause is not only to the preceding part of the verse, but also to the foregoing verse. The idea is, that while men would be gratifying their bigotry and malice by subjecting the Saviour's disciples to indignities and sufferings, these very trials would be divinely overruled for the advantage and advancement of the gospel and of the kingdom of heaven. An invaluable testimony would be extracted from the crucible of persecution. God could, by His almighty power, interpose to arrest the persecutor's arm. But instead of stepping out of His way to work such miracles, He would work in another manner, before, behind, around, above, within, and bring good out of evil. It is, says Sir John Cheke, "a great comfort "to the faithful, that when they be troubled and vexed of the world, and theerbi "feer that God's word schal not go forward, but be slaundered, it cometh to pas "far contrari to theer looking to, and it is toold the more and the boldier, and "therfoor often tymes perswadeth the governors as it did in a maner King "Agrippa."

VER. 19. But when they deliver you up: Or rather, *But when they have delivered you up*. This past tense (*παράδωσαν*) instead of the present (*παράδιδωσαν*) is the reading of the manuscripts which are noted as *Ⲙ B E*, as well as of those manuscripts of the old Latin version which are noted *d f g k*. It is Lachmann's reading, and Tregelles'. It is approved of by Meyer, and adopted by Tischendorf in his eighth edition. Take no thought how or what ye should speak: *Take no thought, Do not concern yourselves, Do not distress and distract yourselves*. It is the same word that is used in chap. vi. 25 (see the note there). "Note," says Matthew Henry, "the disciples of Christ must be more thoughtful "how to do well, than how to speak well; how to keep their integrity, than how "to vindicate it." The Saviour desired that they should be perfectly calm, and filled with the delightful consciousness of unruffled peace, whatever should betide. It will be noted that He refers to both *how* and *what* they should speak. And He puts the *how* first, knowing that they might be liable to be more agitated about the manner of their apology for themselves, than about its matter. When there is the utmost confidence as regards *matter*, there is often the utmost diffidence and tremor as regards *manner*. For it shall be given you in that very hour what ye should speak (*λαλήσητε*, not *λαλήσετε*, as in the *Textus Receptus*): *It shall be given you*, namely, by the Holy Spirit. See next verse. Castellio renders the verb, *it shall be suggested to you*. Principal Campbell follows him. It is a good exegetical rendering. "What ye should speak." The Saviour here drops the reference to the *How*; for when the *matter* comes from above, it will be sure to come in its own appropriate *manner*. "To us "poor and infirm successors of the apostles," says Stier, "it is not only con- "ceded that we may meditate and even commit to memory our ordinary "discourses, but this is our incumbent duty according to the manner of our "infirmity. But when that which is predicted of the apostles shall befall us

24 The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant

of Himself as *coming* unless He had previously thought of Himself as *going*. (John iv. 2, 3, 4, 28; Matt. xxvi. 24.) But His disciples would attach exceedingly indefinite ideas both to what was meant by the *going*, and what was meant by the *coming*. So do many disciples still. And others, when they try to be precisely definite in their conceptions, may be apt to take too narrow a view. The passage before us, more especially when it is taken in connection with chap. xvi. 28, renders it evident that, intermediate between what are called Christ's first coming and His final coming, there are other comings, complementive of the first, and foreshadowing more or less broadly and vividly the last. Christ's whole being is indeed, in some respects, continually moving manward and earthward. He is not very far off. He comes to individual hearts. (John iv. 23.) He comes to churches, and walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks. (Rev. ii. 1.) Where two or three of His disciples meet together in His name, there is He in the midst of them. (Matt. xviii. 20.) He draws nigh to them who draw nigh to Him. And He comes to peoples and to persons, sometimes in the chariot of His grace, and at other times, when they have greatly abused their privileges, in the war chariot of retributive indignation, to take vengeance. Whedon, with others, contends that the Saviour here refers to His coming at His resurrection. But the experiences specified in the immediately preceding verses (16-20) were to occur, not before, but *after* that crisis. It is probable therefore that the reference is to the time of judgement which came upon the Jewish people at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. It was a time of Divine judgement. It was Christ, too, who was judging. He came to judge. He sat upon His judgement throne, and pronounced sentence of condemnation, and delivered up the guilty nation to the hands of the executioners. In thus abolishing a corrupt, effete, and infatuated Judaism, which was but as a morbid exorcense that had grown upon and absorbed the Judaism of the Bible, the Son of man removed out of the way a mass of obstacles that were hindering the establishment of His heavenly kingdom. Hence, in coming to judge, He came also to reign. On the one side of the coming there were cloud and darkness, on the other there was a pillar of light and heavenly glory.

VER. 24. At this point the Saviour allows His field of vision to open out wider before Him. He looked at His apostles, not simply as apostles, but as disciples. He looked too at His disciples in general. There was in them all an element of evangelical apostleship interpenetrating their discipleship. They all, as well as the special apostles, had, or have, an evangelical mission and ministry. And hence the Saviour's mind, at this part of His discourse, and on to the end of the chapter, takes a broad sweep, and He makes statements that were not intended to be restricted in their reference to the Twelve. The disciple is not above his master,—or, more literally, *A disciple is not above the teacher*,—nor the servant—*nor a servant*—above his lord, or master. It is a general principle, obvious to all. Discipleship and servitude are subordinate relationships. In some, and even in many, respects a pupil may be above his teacher, and a servant above his master, but in the particular relation that subsists between them the pupil and the servant are not superior, but inferior. The teacher and the master are superior. In the enunciation of this general principle Christ assumes that He was both Teacher and Master. It was His to teach, and His to command.

above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they*

VER. 25. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher. There is a peculiarity in the original expression which cannot easily be reproduced in our English idiom. It is a peculiarly condensed expression; and *aim* is referred to on the part of the disciple. The meaning is,—*It is enough for the disciple that he be, and that he aim to be, as his teacher.* If the disciple exert himself in order that he may be as his teacher, and gain his end, it is enough. Any higher aim would be unreasonable. To aim to obtain a more respectful treatment than his teacher would indicate a total misunderstanding of the relationship of a pupil. This would be specially the case if the teacher were of transcendent excellence and ability. It would be absolutely the case if the teacher were absolutely perfect. And the servant as his master: *It is enough that the servant should aim to receive as much respectful treatment as his master.* To anticipate more, to aim at getting more, would be unreasonable, if the master be noble and good. It would be peculiarly unreasonable if the Master should be the Noblest of the noble, and the Best of the good. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub: Or rather, *Beelzebub*. Such is the reading of the manuscripts, though the Peshito and the Vulgate versions have *Beelzebub*. Erasmus, Stephens, and all subsequent editors of the Greek text read *Beelzebub*. Sir John Cheke too in his English version has *Beelzeboul*; but Wycliffe, Tyndale, the Geneva, and the Rheims, read *Beelzebub*. So does Luther. All of them followed in the wake of the Vulgate; and they followed the more readily as the word *Beelzebub* was familiar to them in consequence of what is recorded in 2 Kings i. 2, 3, 16. *Baal-zebub* was the name of a tutelary deity worshipped by the Ekronites. It is supposed to mean *Fly-Lord*, the name having been probably imposed on occasion of some deliverance from a plague of flies. The Jews, in their hatred of idolatry, allowed themselves in a kind of coarse theological humour, and, changing a single letter in the word Beelzebub, gave expression to their contempt and detestation by saying *Beelzebub*, that is, *Filth-Lord*, instead of *Fly-Lord*. The humorous transmutation took hold of the popular mind and established itself; and then, by an extension of literary licence, the amended appellation was applied, in off-hand phraseology, to Satan, the chieftain of evil spirits. Meyer thinks that *Beelzebub* does not mean *Filth-Lord*, but *House-Lord*; admitting, however, that it was applied by the Jews to Satan as the *Lord of the lower regions*. He supposes that the meaning of the term is intentionally echoed by the Saviour, when He speaks of Himself as the *Master of the house*. He says that if the word had meant *Filth-Lord*, it would have been *Beelzabel* instead of *Beelzebub*. But he overlooks the fact that the depreciation of reference is sufficiently *hinted* by the change of a single letter. And he seems also to have overlooked the fact that *zebub*, or what is equivalent to *zebub* (זבוב), is as much a real Hebrew form as *zebel*. (See Buxtorf's *Talmudical Lexicon*, p. 641.) Meyer followed in the wake of the opinion of Gusset, Michaelis, Paulus, Jahn, Hitzig. Fürst too is of the same opinion. But we cannot doubt that *Filth-Lord* is the real meaning of the word; and of this opinion were Drusus, Lightfoot, Buxtorf; Wetstein too; and, in modern times, Wiener, Fritzsche, Olshausen, De Wette, and indeed the great body of recent critics. It would appear that some of the Pharisees had allowed their malice

call them of his household? 26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach

toward Jesus to reach such a pitch of fanatical heartlessness that they threw out the insinuation that most likely He was no other than the great evil spirit himself, though appearing in a garb of light. We know that they did not scruple to say to Him, "Thou hast a demon" (John vii. 20, viii. 48). They also represented Him as in league with the prince of demons,— "This fellow doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub (Beelzebub), the prince of the demons" (Matt. xii. 24). It appears from the statement before us that they occasionally overtopped their ordinary malice, and represented Him as Himself the chief of demons. Jesus represents Himself as *the master of the house, the householder*. His disciples are His *household* or *meini*, as Sir John Cheke renders it (connected with *menial*). They were 'the household of faith.' How much more shall they call them of his household? They will, with less hesitation, with greater fearlessness and wantonness, apply equivalent names to the members of the household. Many a time have the purest and noblest of Christ's disciples been treated as if they had been demons, and many a time have they been literally designated by the most diabolical names.

VER. 26. Fear them not therefore: *Fear them not*, but speak boldly the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. *Therefore*, that is, since it is the case that in suffering indignity and persecution ye are but experiencing a little of the treatment to which I Myself, your Lord and Teacher, am subjected. The bitter cup out of which you are compelled to drink is the cup which I, your Master and your Saviour, am draining to its dregs. For there is nothing covered—that has been covered—that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known: All things and all persons are pointing forward to a day of universal manifestation and revelation. The time will come when everything will be seen in its true light, and when every person shall be seen to be just what he really is. All veils shall be rent from top to bottom. Fear not therefore ungodly men. They will by and by be uncovered, and so shall you. Their true character will be exposed to view, and so will yours. All things and persons will then be correctly estimated, and the consequences for eternity will be either delightful or woeful in superlative degree.

VER. 27. What I tell you in the darkness, *that* speak ye in the light: Speak out. Unfurl your banner. Never trim as regards your mission and commission. Never be ashamed of the truth with which I have entrusted you. I have taught you it in private, that ye may go forth and proclaim it in public. And what ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops: A parallelistic repetition of the same idea. *In the ear*; literally, *into the ear*: What ye hear *spoken into the ear*, when ye come close to Me that ye may quietly learn of Me, that proclaim, as with herald voices, *upon the housetops*. The roofs of oriental houses are in general flat, and "in no point," says Phillott, "do oriental domestic habits differ more from European than in the use of the roof." (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, HOUSE.) It is a place of evening recreation. It is also often used as a sleeping place by night. At the feast of tabernacles booths were erected on the roofs of the houses. These roofs are parapeted; and if a great multitude of people were publicly congregated, there would be no place

ye upon the housetops. 28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

more convenient for a herald reaching their ears by making proclamation. It was the most public possible of pulpits. "Our Lord," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "spent most of His life in villages; and accordingly the reference here is to a custom observed only in such places, never in cities. At the present day, local governors in country districts cause their commands thus to be published. Their proclamations are generally made in the evening, after the people have returned from their labours in the field. The public crier ascends the highest roof at hand, and lifts up his voice in a long-drawn call upon all faithful subjects to give ear and obey. He then proceeds to announce, in a set form, the will of their master, and demands obedience thereto." (*The Land and the Book*, part i., chap. 3.)

VER. 28. And fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: The Saviour thus draws a sharp distinction between *body* and *soul*. Persecutors can kill only the former. The latter is beyond their reach. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in Gehenna: That is, *Fear God*, for "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. cxl. 10, Prov. ix. 10). Stier strangely supposes that our Saviour refers, not to God, but to the devil. He is extremely positive in the matter. It is with him a pet idea! "We are," he says, "as firmly persuaded that the Lord here means Satan, as of any point in all exegesis." The other opinion he "holds to be possible only as long as one fails to penetrate into the heart of the passage, as standing in its connection." Stier too often indeed confounds penetration with *his own effort to penetrate*. It would be strange, he says, if our Saviour had united in one the command to *fear God*, who casts into Gehenna, and to *trust in Him* as a merciful Father. But would it, we ask? Rather is it strange that Stier has failed to see that there is a holy fear, which is inseparable from conscious imperfection, and which thus accompanies a holy man in all his intercourse with God; although it be indeed far removed from the fear 'that hath torment.' "The conclusion of the whole matter," says Solomon, "is this, *Fear God*, and keep His commandments." Often are we enjoined in Scripture to *fear God*; never to *fear the devil*. And in Psalm cxv. 11 we read expressly, "Ye that *fear the Lord*, trust in the Lord," an injunction that exhibits that very combination of fear and trust that is regarded by Stier as incompatible. He says again that it is not the case that it is God who "destroys both soul and body in Gehenna." The soul's destruction, he says, its death, proceeds not from God. But does the expositor mean to quibble? Does he take advantage of ambiguities by not distinguishing between occasion and cause, between meritorious cause and efficient cause? Does he deny that the penalty of sin must in all cases emanate from God? "Shall there be (*penal*) *evil* in the city," or anywhere else, "and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6.) Surely it becomes God to punish sin when unrepented of. Surely it cannot be inconsistent in God to render 'the wages of death' to the impenitent sinner. "There is one lawgiver," says James, "who is able to save and to destroy" (iv. 12), and who does both save and destroy, according as men are penitent or impenitent. The *meritorious cause* of the punishment is never in God; it is always in the sinner. But on the other hand the *efficient cause* of the punishment is found in God, and God alone. It surprises us moreover that Stier did not see that if he were to sup-

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

pose Satan to be referred to he would entirely destroy the antithesis of motives contained in our Lord's injunctions: "Fear not them who 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 real power of Satan to injure the soul lies on one side with the real power of Satanic men to injure it. It is the power to tempt. But there is no ability either in Satan or Satanic men to compel compliance with temptation. Hence they cannot kill against the will. But God's power, on the other hand, is not a power to tempt. It is a power to punish those who voluntarily comply with temptation, and live and die impenitent. And when the Divine power really goes forth, it does not wait for the consent of the voluntary transgressor ere it strikes.

VER. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? The word translated *sparrows* (στρούθια) is a diminutive, *little sparrows*. The word translated *farthing* (ἀσάριον) is perhaps too much depreciated by our translation. It is quite a different word from that which receives the same translation in Matt. v. 26 (κοδράννης), and which properly denotes the *fourth part* of a unit of money, such as the Roman *as*. The term before us is supposed by some to be the Roman *as* itself. Or, more likely, it was some diminutive of the Roman *as*, a small copper coin of the Græco-Roman order, current in Palestine. If it were the *as*, it would be the tenth part of the Roman *denarius* or the Greek *drachma*. We have no real English equivalents for the ancient Roman, and Græco-Roman, and Jewish moneys. The Saviour's question is intended to bring into view the small pecuniary value of little sparrows. Two of them could be purchased for a very small copper coin. It must have been customary in the Saviour's time for the poor to use such little birds as an article of diet. "At the 'present day,'" says Tristram, "the markets of Jerusalem and Jaffa are attended 'by many fowlers, who offer for sale long strings of little birds of various species, 'chiefly sparrows, wagtails, and larks. These are also frequently sold, ready 'plucked, trussed in rows of about a dozen, on slender wooden skewers.'" (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, SPARROW.) And not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: Without your Father's permission. His providence extends even to sparrows, and to every one of them; to every living thing; to everything. He has a plan that embraces everything. It must be so, if He be infinite in thought and wisdom. But yet His plan has not fixed everything. It cannot be so, if He has allowed such a thing as will in any of His creatures.

VER. 30. But the very hairs of your head have all been numbered: Viz. by God. His providence extends to everything in you, on you, and about you. He thinks of, and takes an interest in, the minutest objects with which you have to do.

VER. 31. Fear not therefore: Your Heavenly Father knows you, and knows all about you, and has a plan in reference to you. It cannot possibly be the case that He will allow you to be losers by faithful devotedness to Me. My interests and your Heavenly Father's interests are one. "I and My Father are one." Ye are of more value than many little sparrows: If the Lord thinketh of

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. 34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth : I came not to send peace, but a

them, it must be the case that He thinketh of you. And if He thinketh of you, He will undoubtedly make the wisest possible arrangements concerning you. He will see to it that all shall be well with you. He will make all things to work together for your good. (Rom. viii. 28.)

VER. 32. Whosoever therefore will confess Me before men : *Therefore*, since it is the case that there is an all-pervading providence that will make all things work together for good to the good. *Shall confess Me* : shall make confession that *terminates in Me* (*ἐν ἐμοί*), shall acknowledge Me, by life and lip. By life, always, and in all circumstances. By lip, whenever duty calls for words as well as works. *Before men*, whether they be friendly or hostile. *Him will I too confess before My Father who is in heaven* : Him will I acknowledge, and My Father will act toward him accordingly, and graciously receive him. The Saviour speaks out of the full consciousness of the power which He had with the Father, and of the harmony of the Father's will with His own.

VER. 33. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I too deny before My Father who is in heaven : There can be no real excuse for denying Jesus, by word or by work. What though haughtiness should look down in disdain? What though mockery should open its lips and grin? Shall a man deny his nearest and dearest friend, to avoid reproach or insult? Shall a man be ashamed of Him who is peerless in goodness and glory?

VER. 34. Think not that I came to throw peace on the earth ; I came not to throw peace, but a sword : The word *throw* (*βαλεῖν*) is used in the negative clause, because the Saviour had in His mind, as the prominent idea, the word *sword* as occurring in the positive clause. And yet it is appropriate even in the negative clause. Peace is not a thing that could be *flung* upon peoples all of a sudden. It would be in vain to expect it thus. It must spring up and grow. A picture seems to have been present to our Saviour's thoughts. An indefinite multitude of people were grouped together ; and all were on the tiptoe of expectation. What is it that is about to happen? Is it the reign of peace that is just about to be inaugurated and consummated? Is there to be henceforth only unity and amity? As they muse in their hearts, and debate with their lips, lo, a sword is flung into the midst of them! Principal Campbell translates the verse thus, *Think not that I am come to bring peace to the earth. I came, not to bring peace, but a sword.* It is a translation that does justice to the substantive thought, but not to the graphic representation of the original. There is a sublime sense in which Christ came to establish the reign of universal peace. Far on among His aims, and near the end of them, was that of establishing peace. (Isa. ii. 1-4 ; Luke ii. 14.) *Peace on earth* was never indeed His last aim ; but it was near the last. Ere however this final peace can be attained, there must be 'first, purity.' And purity, if it seek to establish itself, will meet with determined opposition from impurity. Truth will meet with determined opposition from error. Benevolence, with all its gentleness, will meet with determined opposition from selfishness. There must be fighting. There will be fightings. False peace must be dissipated. "Peace upon *the earth*:" The Saviour realized

sword. 35 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. 36 And a man's

that His influence would be felt *all the world over*. The connection of this verse with what goes before may be thus represented : *I have spoken of men confessing Me, and of men denying Me. I foresee that there will be many of both classes of men. They will sometimes be found within the same family circles. And hence, although I am the 'Prince of peace,' it is yet the case that before 'My peace' shall be established in the earth I shall be the Occasion of a vast amount of dispeace.*

VER. 35. For: The Saviour proceeds to explain, analytically, in what way He had come to cast a sword upon the earth. And in His explanation His ideas mould themselves, as by instinctive recollection, into the representations of Micah vii. 6. I came to set,—in one instance,—a man at variance against his father, and,—in another instance,—a daughter against her mother, and,—in another instance,—a bride against her mother-in-law. The opposition, so far as principles are concerned, is mutual. But the enmity, the hatred, so far as persons are concerned, is on the part of the unbelieving. It is the unbelieving that rise up against the believing, and persecute them; not the believing that rise up against the unbelieving. Hence Christ is not the Cause, properly speaking, of the enmity or hatred. (*Evangelium non est causa discordiæ*: MELANCTHON.) He is merely the innocent Occasion. He is the Cause however of that peculiarity in the believing which occasions the enmity and hatred of the unbelieving. And there is thus, in the complex result, an intricate minglement of cause and occasion. Trapp says of the discord, "By accident it fell out so, thorow men's singular corruption." His idea is quite correct when looked at from his own interpretation of the word 'accident.' He means that such discord was not the essential aim or purpose of the Saviour. Alford says: "When we read in commentators that these divisions were not the purpose, "but the inevitable results only, of the Lord's coming, we must remember that "with God *results* are all *purposed*." But if results be all divinely purposed, not only will sins be all purposed, for they are all results; purposes themselves will be all purposed, for it is the case with purposes, just as truly as with sins, that they are all results, the results of certain indispensable antecedents. But to affirm that purposes must be all purposed is just equivalent to affirming that it is utterly impossible that there can ever be a purpose at all. For if purpose be essential to purpose, then purpose can never be. Arnoldi presents the subject in the following way: "The Lord did not will the discord as His final aim, "but since He must needs permit it as a means for realizing His final aim, He "willed it in the sense that *He did not nill it.*" (*Musste ihn in dem Sinne wollen, dass er ihn nicht nicht wollte.*) But *not to nill* is no more *to will*, than *not to choose* is *to refuse*. There are circumstances in which *not to choose* is *to refuse*, and *not to nill* is *to will*. The negative implies the positive, when an alternative must be decided on. But in the case before us there were things which the Saviour needed to will and willed, and things which He had no occasion to will and did not will. He willed that His disciples should be characterized by devoted allegiance to Himself and His Father, whatever should be the consequences of such allegiance. He did not will, and He did not need to will, that other men should rise up to hate and persecute them.

foes *shall be* they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me,

VER. 36. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household: Or, more literally, *And they of his own household shall be the man's foes.* (See Micah vii. 6.) Nothing goes so deep into men's hearts as love or hate to Christ and God. If Christ and God get a place at all in the human heart, it must be the place that is farthest *in*, and highest *up*. All other persons and things must be subordinate. Hence it is that if any in a household are opposed to supreme allegiance to Christ, while others love Him supremely, there must be antagonism.

VER. 37. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me: Christ must be supreme! How conscious of His peerlessness He must have been, when He claimed a throne in the heart above the places assigned to father and mother and son and daughter! What should we think of Paul, or of Peter, preferring such a claim? How different then from all mere men must our Saviour be! But let it ever be noted, that he who loves Christ more than father, mother, son, and daughter, yet loves father, mother, son, and daughter more than he who does not love Christ most. Supreme love to Christ never diminishes and eviscerates, it invariably exalts and intensifies, all other legitimate loves. *Is not worthy of Me*: Is not inwardly meet to be associated with Me in My felicity and everlasting honour and glory. He is, in the highest relation of things, *worthless*; for real *worthiness* must be estimated in relation to Christ.

VER. 38. And whosoever does not take his cross, and follow after Me, is not worthy of Me: The Saviour here, in His character of *Seer*, looks into His own future, and moulds His language accordingly. He sees the *cross* in the distance. He connects Himself with it. He comes out of Himself, as it were, to look at Himself with His cross. He sees Himself bearing His cross. The vision grows into a complex picture. His followers are bearing crosses too! And thus the heavenly procession moves on, until a point is reached where time melts into eternity, and earth is the stepping-stone to heaven. At that point there may occur what men call execution; but, looked at on at its upper side, the event is coronation and glorification. The crown surmounts the cross. But the Saviour's reference to the cross, though clear to His own spirit, must have been strangely perplexing to His disciples (comp. chap. xvi. 21, 22). What can the princely Messiah, they might be thinking, have to do with a cross, and a cross as *His cross*? He speaks too of us taking *our crosses*, and following Him! Is it to this that we are tending? What can He mean? Their perplexity would be all the greater, as the cross was not a Jewish instrument of execution. It had been introduced by the Gentiles, and was used only in the case of the most degraded criminals. Is there then to be the greatest ignominy, as well as the greatest suffering? The form of expression, *whosoever taketh not his cross*, has reference to the custom of compelling condemned criminals to take, and carry, to the place of execution, the cross on which they were to be crucified (John xix. 17). Christ's disciples must be ready to lift up the instrument of crucifixion, whether corporeal or mental, and to carry it, when the world con-

is not worthy of me. 39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 41 He that receiveth a

demns them to suffer persecution. They must, in spirit, be willing to be martyrs. Whatever be the species of crucifixion to which the enemies of the gospel condemn them, they must be willing to endure it.

VER. 39. A pair of Christian paradoxes. He that findeth his life shall lose it: Or, still more literally, *He who found his life shall lose it*. The Saviour steps forward in thought to the consummation of things, and thence looks backward to each man's past, and forward to each man's future. Hence the two tenses, *past* and *future*, *found* and *shall lose*. The pith of the paradox lies in the two sidedness of human life, its under side on earth and in time, and its upper side in heaven and throughout eternity. Whosoever prefers the former to the latter, and is determined at all hazards to conserve and enjoy the former, whatsoever may become of the latter, will lose the latter. In finding his life in the one respect, on the lesser side of things, he loses it in the other, on the greater side of things. And he who loses his life—or, more literally, *And he who lost his life*—for My sake shall find it: The counterpart paradox. He who is found at the last day to have lost his earthly life for Christ's sake shall find the heavenly and eternal life. The paradox has special applicability to martyrs. But as the essence of martyrdom is in the spirit, the paradox is true of all such as are prepared to lose for Christ's sake the earthward life, with all its present sweets. They who have this preparation of the spirit must, in the great majority of instances, part with many of the sweets. They must submit to actual loss as regards earthward life. The offence of the cross has by no means ceased. Hate to Christ and Christliness has not vanished from the earth.

VER. 40. He that receiveth you receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me: The Saviour returns from His wide circuit of reference to the special case of His apostles. Great was the dignity of their office. They represented Him, even as He represented His Father. The conscious enjoyment of such dignity was well fitted to sustain them under all the trials which might be accumulated on them. They who honoured the apostles, as apostles, would themselves be honoured. How exceedingly honourable, then, must be the office of apostleship!

VER. 41. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet: Or, very literally, *into a prophet's name*, that is, into the recognition of what is really involved in a prophet's position and dignity (see on chap. xviii. 20), having regard to what is meant by the name *prophet*. A *prophet* was *one who spoke for God*. In Old Testament times such speaking had in general, as was natural, very peculiar reference to futurities. But that futuritive or predictive element of prophecy was a mere accident of the circumstances of the times. A prophet was one who had, and spoke, the mind of God; who spoke for God. God was behind him, as it were, speaking through him or by him (see chap. vii. 15, 22). To receive a prophet then, because he was a prophet, was to do honour to God. The same honour may still be done to God, when New Testament prophets are received as prophets, and because they are prophets. Whosoever can give credentials that he really speaks the mind of God is a prophet.

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. 42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

CHAPTER XI.

1 AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of

Shall receive a prophet's reward: That is, shall receive the same reward which is conferred by God upon the prophet himself. He is equal to the prophet himself, in the honour which he does to God. It is the message of God that he respects when he respects the messenger. It is to the mind of God that the prophet and he do equal homage. And he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man—literally, *into a righteous man's name*—shall receive a righteous man's reward: He shall receive the same Divine reward that is conferred on the righteous man. He is equal with the righteous man in doing honour to righteousness.

VER. 42. And whosoever shall give to drink, unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, into the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward: When the Saviour says *these little ones*, He seems to have been pointing, or pointingly looking, toward certain individuals. And as He was speaking to the apostles themselves, it is not probable that He pointed to themselves and spoke of them in the third person. It is more probable that some young persons were near, who believed in Jesus, and loved to be near Him (Mark ix. 42. Comp. Matt. xviii. 1-6), and that He pointed to these. We may be sure that there would be something in Jesus which was unspeakably charming to the unsophisticated minds and hearts of the young, and that, wherever He went, they would gather round Him, and near Him, in groups (comp. chap. xxi. 15). That He does not refer to the apostles themselves is farther evidenced by the anticlimax of reference, a *prophet*, a *righteous man*, a *little one*. *A cup of cold water only*: The *only* must be connected with the *cup of cold water*, and not with the following expression, *into the name of a disciple*. The Saviour means, *but a cup of cold water, though it be no more than a cup of cold water*. It is a small favour; but it may be all that is possible in the circumstances, or all that is needed. *Into the name of a disciple*: The gift is of especial value when, instead of being the mere result of an instinct of amiability or kindness, it is presented out of regard to the disciple's discipleship, or as a means or mode of entering into the naming or acknowledging of the disciple's discipleship. There is then the recognition of the Master. He is honoured. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me" (Matt. xxv. 40). *His reward*: The reward which it is meet that he should receive. And this will be the reward that is due to the disciple who realizes and prizes his discipleship.

CHAPTER XI.

VER. 1. This verse should have been the last of Chap. x., instead of the first of Chap. xi. And it came to pass when Jesus had made an end of charging His

commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, 3 and said unto him, Art

twelve disciples: When He finished giving them their instructions or directions for their preliminary apostolical tour. He departed thence: Namely, from the place where He was, when giving His disciples their charge. To teach and to preach in their cities: The pronoun *their* must, apparently, hook itself on, though perhaps in an indefinite manner, to the preceding expression, *His twelve disciples*. So Euthymius Zigabenus, Beza, Fritzsche. His twelve disciples, viewed in the mass, belonged to the Galilean district, where the Saviour was 'itinerating.' It was to the cities of that district that the Saviour betook Himself in the single handed prosecution of His preparatory ministry.

VER. 2. But when John heard in the prison of the works of the Christ: The prison referred to is said by Josephus to have been Macherus, a fortress on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea (*Antiq.* xviii. 5: 1, 2). The expression *the Christ* is to be noted, or *the Messiah*, as Principal Campbell renders it. The evangelist speaks decisively regarding our Lord when about to record a message from the Baptist, which seemed to throw a doubt upon the reality of our Lord's Messiahship or Christhood. He sent two of his disciples: It is somewhat uncertain whether we should read *two of his disciples*, or *through his disciples* (*δύο* or *διὰ*). The great body of the manuscripts, uncial and cursive, read *two of his disciples*; and we know from Luke vii. 19 that it was *two of his disciples* that John did send. This reading, moreover, is given not only in Erasmus's text, and Stephens's, and the Elzevirs', but by Griesbach too, and Matthæi, and Scholz. But on the other hand the best uncial manuscripts read *through his disciples*. This is the reading of the manuscripts \aleph B C D P Z Δ . It is also the reading of the cursive manuscript 83, *the queen of the cursives*. It is the reading too of the Syriac versions, and of the Armenian and Gothic. It is also indirectly supported by those manuscripts of the old Latin version that are noted *a b c f h k*. It is, moreover, of such intrinsic peculiarity that we could scarcely expect it to have been a conjectural emendation of the other reading; whereas the other reading, being supported by Luke, might naturally arise as a conjectural emendation of this. And hence we think that *through his disciples* was the expression which was actually employed by Matthew. Mill had the same idea; and Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, have introduced the expression into their texts. The great body of modern critics approve. John then sent a message to Jesus *by his disciples*, or, as the Hebrews would express it, *by the hand of his disciples*.

VER. 3. And said unto Him, Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another? The expression, *He that should come*, or *The coming One*, was a designation of the expected Messiah. The burden of the great body of the Old Testament predictions centred in His *coming*. And as the appointed time drew nigh the interests of the people gathered intensifying around the anticipated *coming*. Hence He was currently spoken of as *the Coming One*. Or do we look for another? The verb in this expression (*προσδοκῶμεν*) may be understood in two ways, either as being in the indicative mood or as being in the subjunctive. If it be taken as in the indicative, our Authorized translation is correct, a translation supported by the Vulgate and Erasmus. But if it be taken as in the

thou he that should come, or do we look for another? 4 Jesus

subjunctive, then it may be translated, with Luther, *Should we look for another?* or *Are we to look for another?* Piscator and Bengel give the same translation. (*Sollen wir eines Andern warten?*) Tyndale's translation is, *Shall we loke for another?* Principal Campbell's is, *Must we expect another?* De Wette, Meyer, and Wordsworth approve of the subjunctive rendering; rightly, we presume. The question proposed by John has given rise to great discussions among commentators and theologians. Had John faltered in his faith? Tertullian thought that he had. And the same idea has been entertained by many modern critics, including L'Enfant, Dr. Adam Clarke, Neander, Ewald, Meyer, Webster-and-Wilkinson. The great majority, however, of the ancient fathers could not entertain such an idea; and hence they conjectured that it was not to satisfy any doubt in his own mind, but to remove all doubt from his disciples' minds, that he sent the message and the messengers to our Lord. Chrysostom was of this opinion, and contends for it at great length. Origen too gives the same interpretation; and Jerome, and Theophylact, and Euthymius Zigabenus. Calvin too, among the Reformers, strenuously maintains it. Beza agrees; and Melancthon and Zuingli before them had given the same interpretation. Among our English expositors, Hammond gives it, and Baxter, and Trapp; Whitby also, and Dr. S. Clarke, and Doddridge, Wesley, Benson, Wordsworth, etc. It is an interpretation that has sprung out of reverence for John. But, notwithstanding all that Stier has urged in its favour, it is entirely conjectural in its basis, having nothing at all in the evangelist's narrative to suggest or to support it. It does honour to the stability of John's faith and to the disinterestedness of his spirit. But it may be doubted whether it does equal honour to the simplicity of his character. Does it not throw, to some slight degree, a shade upon his ingenuousness and transparency? Why should he ask a question that suggests a doubt, if he had no doubt? Why not assure his disciples by his own testimony? Why not send them, if they remained unconvinced, to put for themselves any questions that might be rising within their spirits? We think that Dr. John Lightfoot hit upon the right interpretation. John, though one of the greatest and best of men, was not perfect. There seems to have been a trifle of impatience engendered within him by his long imprisonment. In a time of pardonable depression he seems to have brooded, dispiritedly, over the tardy progress of Messianic events. Perhaps he felt somewhat vexed that the miraculous power of Jesus was not exerted at once to put down existing tyrannies and high handed godlessness. Why were the Lord's captives allowed to remain captives still? Why was the Lord's herald kept immured from month to month in a dreary prison? Could not the prison doors be burst open? "He had heard," says Lightfoot, "that miracles of all sorts were done by Him, that the blind received their sight, the dead were raised, devils were cast out. And why therefore, among all the rest, is not John set at liberty? This scruple, as it seems, stuck with the good man, "Why do all receive benefit and comfort from Christ, but only I?" Perhaps too, as Lightfoot adds, he laboured under that dim-sightedness which attached to the disciples of Christ, and to the whole nation, concerning the Messiah's earthly kingdom and victories and triumphs, "from which how distant, alas! "was this, that His forerunner and chief minister should lie in chains!" We would thus, with Lightfoot, as also Macknight and others, attribute the message of John to a moral imperfection, rather than to an intellectual doubt on the

answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel

one hand or to a benevolent manœuvre on the other. The good man was indirectly petitioning for release, and for another style of Messianic progress.

VER. 4. Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and report to John the things which ye hear and see: Instead of a simple asseveration from His own lips, yea or nay, He refers them to such ocular and auricular demonstration as was available to them in the sphere of His labours. Works were better than words in such a case. They are often indeed the best kind of words; for just as there is a sense in which *words are works* and reveal mind and character, so there is a sense in which *works are words* and bear testimony.

VER. 5. The blind receive their sight: Or, very literally, *Blind (persons) look up*. So the verb is translated in Matt. xiv. 19; Mark vi. 41, vii. 34, viii. 24, 25; Acts xxii. 13. Tyndale renders the expression *The blynd se*. And the lame walk about: This and the former clause make a pair. So do the two following clauses, which are also connected by the conjunction *and*, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear. In our Authorized version, as well as in the Greek text given by Stephens and the Elzevirs, the fifth and sixth clauses are also paired, and paired off. But a large proportion of the best authorities insert the conjunction *and* before the fifth clause, and the dead are raised. Among these authorities are the uncial manuscripts \aleph β δ λ ρ ζ Δ . The conjunction is also given in the Syriac versions, and in the Armenian and Gothic. It is probably genuine; so that *the raising of the dead and the preaching of the gospel to the poor* are respectively and emphatically singled out and held forth as culminating and very special evidences of the Messiahship of our Lord. In the miracles specified in the first four clauses there were mirrored forth, in actual fact, such wonders as had been anticipatively referred to in Old Testament predictions (comp. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6); but in *the raising of the dead*, eminently prefigurative, as it was, of the crowning peculiarity of our Lord's spiritual mission, there was something running on indeed in the same line of the marvellous and marvellously benignant, but at the same time overtopping and transcending the most striking and emphatic of the Old Testament representations. And the poor have the gospel preached to them: The Saviour evidently refers to Isa. lxi. 1, where it is written, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek*. The word here translated *meek* (מֵיָד) properly means *oppressed, downtrodden, suffering*. Gesenius renders it *the suffering* in the passage before us (*den Leidenden*); and it is, in our Authorized version, translated *poor* in Job xxiv. 4, Ps. ix. 18, Prov. xiv. 21, Amos viii. 4. It is the glory of the gospel that it is addressed as really and as fully to the poor as to the rich, to the downtrodden as to the exalted and prosperous. Greek philosophy took little interest in the illiterate and poor. Jewish rabbis took little interest in the illiterate and poor (John vii. 49). In all ages there has been little interest taken in the really poor, other than for the purpose of using them as *tools* and *hands*, except by Christ and Christians. In the same passage of Isaiah (lxi. 1) it is farther said, *He hath sent Me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound*. Our Saviour leaves it with John himself to

preached to them. 6 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? 8 But what went ye

recall these words, and to determine the high acceptation in which they should be understood.

VER. 6. **And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me:** The word translated *offended* (*σκανδαλισθῆ*) does not mean *displeased*; but *tripped* or *stumbled*, *trapped* or *ensnared*. It is cognate to the noun that is rendered in our Authorized version sometimes *offence*, as "*rock of offence*," and sometimes *stumblingblock* (1 Cor. i. 23, Rev. ii. 14, Rom. xi. 9), and once *occasion of stumbling* (1 John ii. 10). The Saviour says, Happy is the man who shall not find in Me any stumblingblock on which his faith may trip. There is really no such stumblingblock in Christ, in His person, or in His character, or in His conduct. There is no such stumblingblock in Christianity, in Christ's Christianity. Happy is the man who does not imagine that there is. Unhappy is the man who imagines a stumblingblock, and then stumbles and falls over his own imagination. This unhappiness is, alas, the experience of myriads. They are disappointed with Christ and Christianity. They expected perhaps to find some private notions of their own in the Bible; or they expected to receive some private benefit or experience, which they do not receive; and then they stumble in their faith. Some not only stumble; they fall. Some not only fall; they never rise again.

VER. 7. **But, while they were departing:** That is, while John's disciples were departing, and while the minds of the assembled people were agitated by the question which had been publicly put, and by the answer which had been publicly given. Jesus began to say to the crowds concerning John, **What went ye out into the wilderness to behold?** (*θεάσασθαι*) What was the *spectacle* which attracted you from your homes, and drew you into the wilderness? The verb which we have translated *to behold* is different from that which is used in ver. 8 and 9 (*ἰδεῖν*), and which almost exactly corresponds to our word *see*. But both the verbs suggest that it was John himself, in his remarkable personality, rather than his message, that was the great object of interest to the crowds who flocked to the scenes of his ministry. Their wonder was kindled into a blaze regarding the living man, so exceedingly unlike all other men with whom they had come in contact. **A reed shaken with the wind?** Went ye forth to behold a feeble, fickle, undecided creature, the sport of every influence that blew on him? *Was John a man like that? Would you have gone out to behold him, if you had heard that he was of that character? Some of you may be marvelling at the question which he has now been putting by means of his disciples. But judge not harshly. There is not a man upon the earth that has less of fickleness in him than John. He was no slender, feeble reed, such as you saw in abundance by the banks of the Jordan, where he was baptizing.* Strange to say, some expositors have missed the comparison of John with a *reed*, a comparison on which our Saviour pours contempt. They imagine that the Saviour is only clearing the way, by what He says about the *reed*, for the introduction of John to view. *What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? Surely it was not the reeds that grow there in abundance? It was John.* Even Grotius,

out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses. 9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more

and Wetstein, and Fritzsche, and De Wette take this view. But how could we, on such a principle of interpretation, account for the singular noun, *a reed*? Nor could we account for the specification either of *a reed* or of *reeds*, as if that particular species of flora was the prominent object that gave character to the wilderness of Judæa. The peculiar relation, moreover, of the discourse of our Saviour to the question which John had put through his disciples, a relation that has its special link in the query before us, is lost sight of. Paulus and Fritzsche, by means of a different punctuation, give a different turn to the queries: *Why went ye out into the wilderness? To behold a reed shaken with the wind?* They punctuate the 8th and 9th verses in the same manner. Chrysostom seems to have assumed the same construction of the clauses. It is quite an allowable construction; and is somewhat favoured by Tischendorf's reading of verse 9. But on the whole we prefer the common punctuation, which assumes the common import of the interrogative pronoun, and which rivets the attention discriminatingly on John. The substantive ideas, however, are identical, whichever be the turn that is given to the interrogations.

VER. 8. But what went ye out to see? A strongly negative answer to the preceding query is assumed; and this assumption is forcibly indicated by the *But* which introduces the present query. It is as if the people had responded and said, *Far from that*. Then the Saviour says in reply, *But what then went ye out to see?* In King James's version there is a *for* before the infinitive. It is now an archaism, but nevertheless very expressive. **A man clothed in soft raiment?** A dainty man, sumptuously robed? A man given to luxurious habits? A man who shrank from mortifying his appetites? A man who had none of the stuff in him that is needful to form a martyr? Far from that, as you all know. Do not then misjudge him now. **Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses:** John would not have chosen the wilderness as the sphere of his life, and the scene of his labours, if he had been a man of that description. Neither would you have gone in the direction of the wilderness to see him.

VER. 9. But what went ye out to see? A prophet? Or, as Tischendorf, Meyer, and Westcott-and-Hort read it, *But why went ye out? To see a prophet?* (προφήτην ἰδεῖν;) This peculiar turning of the interrogations is supported by both the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts (N B), as also by Z the Dublin manuscript. It is a matter of no moment, exegetically, which of the two readings we adopt. If the order of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts should yet be found in a few other independent authorities of equal antiquity, there would be strong evidence in support of Tischendorf's and Meyer's judgement; for transcribers would, in such a case as the present, be under temptation to modify, in the way of producing harmony of arrangement rather than diversity. **Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet;** John was a *prophet*. As such he stood side by side with Elijah. He stood consciously before the invisible God, and spoke for God. God communicated with him from behind; and he gave utterance in the ears of men to the communicated ideas of God. But John, though a *prophet*, was much more than a *prophet*. The word *more* (περισσότερον) is apparently in the neuter gender. (Comp. chap. xii. 41, 42.) John was *something much more* than a prophet.

than a prophet. 10 For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than

There is thus a correspondence between the peculiar turning of the idea and the leading word of the primary query, "*What—not whom—went ye out into the wilderness to behold?*" John was *much more than a prophet*, inasmuch as he was the personal Herald of the Messiah. See next verse.

VER. 10. For: In some very important manuscripts, including **N B D Z**, this For is omitted. Lachmann, Tregelles, and Alford inclose it in brackets; and Tischendorf leaves it out altogether in his seventh and eighth editions. Westcott-and-Hort too omit it. It is a matter of no real moment whether it be retained or rejected. What follows it is, in either case, equally the proof that John was *more than a prophet*. This is he of whom it is written: Or, of whom it has been written; of whom it stands written, as Luther renders the phrase. Our Saviour refers to Malachi iii. 1. Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee. In the Old Testament form of the words the prophecy runs thus, *Behold I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me*. It is the Lord of hosts who speaks, as we find from the conclusion of the verse. He speaks of Himself as coming: "he shall prepare the way before Me." In the New Testament form of the words, as they are reproduced by the evangelist, the Lord speaks to the Lord: "which shall prepare Thy way before Thee." It is a deeply interesting variation of representation, and delightfully instructive. The Godhead is both One and More-than-one; and hence the Lord of Hosts can say either *me* or *thee*. Finding in the unity of His Divine self both personal Subject and personal Object, He can say, "I" will come, I will send "My" messenger to prepare "My" way before "Me." And yet, inasmuch as there is a real distinction of personalities, of personal Subject and Object, He can with equal truthfulness and propriety say, "Thou" the Lord will come: I will send My messenger before "Thy" face to prepare "Thy" way. Jesus tells us that John was this messenger. He was the forerunner, who prepared the way. He prepared it by calling on the people to join hand to hand, co-operatively, in order to make rough places smooth and crooked places straight. In other words, he called upon the people to make their hearts ready for the reception of the King. (See chap. iii. 2.) He was the King's herald. He introduced the Sovereign to the people. Hence he was *more than a prophet*. He not only said *He will come*: he said *He has come*; and there *He is*.

VER. 11. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: By them that are born of women we are just to understand the sons of men. The representation points in an emphatic manner to one of the sides of a very common phenomenon, which is dual in its peculiarity. There seems to be no reason for supposing, with Olshausen, that there is an intentional exception of Adam, who of course was not born of a woman. For the time being, the first man is shaded out of sight, while the race of men is looked at as a race. There hath not arisen a greater, or there hath not been raised up (viz. by God) a greater: No individual of the children of men, in any age, has been superior to John in greatness of soul. None has excelled him in magnanimity of spirit, in self denial, in disinterested and heroic devotedness to the service of God, and to

John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. 13 For all

the interests of the kingdom of God. Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he: By the least in the kingdom of heaven Jerome understands *the least of the glorified in heaven*. Chrysostom again understands *Jesus himself*. The word translated least is, in the original, *less* (*μικρότερος*). And hence Chrysostom supposes that the Saviour refers to Himself as *less than John in age, and according to the opinion of many*. Hilary took the same view of the reference of the expression; Theophylact too, and Euthymius Zigabenus. Luther also, who says that Jesus was *the least of all*, inasmuch as He made Himself the servant of all. Melancthon too, who says of Jesus, in explanation of the word *least*, that He was *the most humiliated of men* (*maxime humiliatus præ omnibus hominibus*). Fritzsche too takes the same view of the reference, and Arnoldi. It involves however an unlikely comparison on the part of our Lord; more especially when we take into account that the full expression is, "he that is less in the kingdom of God." The import of the phrase seems to be, in substance, that which is freely expressed, superlatively, in our Authorized translation, "he that is least in the kingdom of heaven." It is as if the Saviour, by a glance of His infinite intelligence, had compared each with each in the kingdom of heaven. And, as the result of this universal comparison, He sees that *the lesser of every compared pair, that is the least of all, is greater than John*. He is greater, not of course in intellect, or in magnanimity, or in nobleness of soul, or in purity or devotedness, but in privilege. He who occupies either a public or a private position in the kingdom of heaven, as it was in the fulness of the time established by Christ, has advantages that raise him to a spiritual vantage-ground far ahead of the platform of privileges enjoyed by John. Alford, Stier, and Wordsworth, strangely suppose that there is a reference to *the new birth*, as distinguishing the children of the new dispensation from the children of the old, and from John. But to imagine that *the new birth* is peculiar to any dispensation of mercy, or that there was one way of salvation and sanctification for men in one age, and another way for men in another age, is, however unwittingly, to undermine the entire foundation of religion.

VER. 12. But from the days of John the Baptist,—from the time that he commenced, and more particularly from the time that he completed, his active ministry,—until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force: "Why, who has thus taken it? tell me," asks Chrysostom; and he answers his own question thus, "All who come to it with earnestness" (*μερὰ σπουδῆς*). That however is not so certain. The representation of the Saviour is graphic, and vividly portrays the mighty movement that had its origin in the ministry of John. Ever since he raised his voice in the wilderness, and proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, men's minds, in many of the groupings of Jewish society, had been intensely excited. Multitudes thenceforward eagerly waited for the appearance of the King. They waited and wearied. They got impatient. The progress of events was too slow to satisfy them. If we compare *the kingdom of heaven* to a walled city, or to a fortress, the people referred to were like persons who were ready to force their way in, as if they were going to take it by storm. They felt as if they could not wait till

the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. 15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

the gates were thrown open. If again we compare the *precious things* of the kingdom to the *precious things* within a city or fortress thrown open, the excited multitudes, who may be regarded as pouring along the streets and ways, feel as if they could not wait till discriminate distribution should take place, till it be ascertained who is worthy to receive much, and who must be contented with little, and who must be rejected altogether. They feel as if they must pounce upon the precious things pell-mell, and seize them like plunder. Such is the picture. It is not to be supposed that the violence would be pleasing to God, or successful. We are not, with Ambrose, to exclaim *O blessed violence!* Heidegger indeed, and Bengel, as well as Chrysostom, take a corresponding view. *Violently*, however. Zeal is good; but in order that it may be 'blessed,' it requires to be *according to knowledge*. We have an illustration of misguided zeal in John vi. 15, in which we read that Jesus "perceived that the people would come and take Him by force, and make Him a king." The existence, nevertheless, of such zeal, notwithstanding its intemperance, was evidence of the mighty moral influence exerted, at once by the labours of our Lord and by the preaching of His forerunner. With all its violence, it was incomparably better than deathlike stagnation and apathy.

VER. 13. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John: For—the way was duly prepared for the effective ministry of John. The prophets kept on prophesying through the ages. Their prophesying outlived themselves, and went on. And the law, the other and prior part of Scripture, prophesied likewise in its own way. It had its own words of explicit prophecy, regarding the kingdom of heaven and the King; and, in addition to these words, and as constituting its special burden of ministry, it prophesied by all its institutions, whether they were directly or only indirectly typical of the coming order of things.

VER. 14. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, who was to come: *Elias* or *Elijah*. Elias is the Greek form of the word, Elijah its Hebrew form. *If ye will receive it*; if ye be willing to receive the information, I am willing to give it. It is the simple truth; and ye shall be blessed in knowing it. The expression implies that some are not willing to receive the truth. They are to such a degree under the influence of prepossessions, that if the truth does not jump with their preconceptions they are unwilling to face it, so as to examine its evidence impartially. "The things of the kingdom of heaven," says Dräseke, "are matter of conviction: conviction is matter of conscience: conscience is matter of freedom." (*Christus an das Geschlecht dieser Zeit*, p. 17, ed. 1819.) *This is Elijah who was to come, who was about to come*: It is as if the Saviour had said, *In John you have the fulfilment of Malachi iv. 5, BEHOLD, I WILL SEND ELIJAH THE PROPHET BEFORE THE COMING OF THE GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY OF THE LORD; and you may therefore draw your own inference regarding the Personage whose forerunner he was, and whose appearance on the earth is the beginning of the end.* John was not indeed the identical Old Testament Elijah (John i. 21). But he was the personal duplicate of Elijah. There was in him the reproduction of the spirit and power of the Old Testament prophet.

VER. 15. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear: The Lord, as Trapp

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17 and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say,

remarks, does not simply refer to "that gristle that grows upon the head," the outward ear. His reference goes farther in. And yet He does not wholly overlook the external organ. It is as if He said, *He who has at once the outer and inner organ of hearing, the corporeal and spiritual means of taking in communicated information, let him improve his opportunity and learn Divine truth. It is now brought within his reach.*

VER. 16. But,—on the other side of things, and when we turn from the consideration of the mission and majesty of John to the consideration of the conduct and character of the people around Him,—whereunto shall I liken this generation? *This generation*, that is, *the Jewish people of this age* viewed in the mass. It is like unto children sitting in the markets: The word translated *markets* is sometimes rendered *market places*. In Mark vi. 56 it is translated *streets*. Sir John Cheke renders it here *high streets*. Wycliffe renders it *cheepynge*, that is, *cheapside*, or *the place for buying and selling*. It denotes those places in, or outside of, oriental towns, in which the people were wont to gather together (*ἀγορά* connected with *ἀγορεύω*), and where provisions, refreshments, and other articles of merchandise were exposed for sale. In these places the children naturally collected, and amused themselves with their games. And calling unto their companions (*τοῖς ἐταίροις αὐτῶν*): Such we have no doubt is the correct reading. Tischendorf indeed and Tregelles give a different reading, and calling unto the others (*τοῖς ἑτέροις*), which is so far supported by many of the most valuable manuscripts. It arose from the fact that two very different Greek words received, in popular parlance, almost the same pronunciation (*ἐταίροις* and *ἑτέροις*), and hence transcribers who were writing from dictation were extremely apt to confound them. As it is the case however that the great body of the manuscripts which support the word *others*, instead of *companions*, yet insert the pronoun *their*, which Tischendorf and Tregelles omit, the insertion is evidence that *companions*, and not *others*, was Matthew's reading. We naturally say '*their companions*,' but we cannot say '*their others*.'

VER. 17. And saying, We piped unto you, and ye danced not: We made cheerful music to you on our pipes or flutes, and ye danced not, or *lipped not*, as Wycliffe translates it, that is, *leaped not*. We wailed, and ye lamented not: The Saviour refers to certain games that seem to have been common among the Jewish children; in which they imitated the rejoicings of their seniors on the one hand, such as would happen at marriages, and their wallings on the other, such as would happen at funerals. He represents a company of such children, sitting *in the sulks*; set grumbling at set. They mutually complain that the other set had not entered into their games, and performed the counterparts. When the one party offered to play at *Rejoicings*, the other insisted that *Wallings* should be the game; and *vice versa*.

VER. 18. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil,—a demon: John lived a life of extraordinary self denial, as regards the enjoyments of the senses. He was extremely abstemious, drinking no wine at all, and abstaining from all kinds of fine and finely cooked food. He kept a

He hath a devil. 19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

perpetual fast. Such asceticism was eminently needed in connection with a ministry whose first and last word was *Repent*. But it was far from being acceptable to the Jews in general, or at least to the leaders of the people. They complained loud and long regarding it, and said—He hath a demon. *Depend upon it*, they insinuated, *it is by means of some black art that he lives such a life of self denial. There is something 'uncanny' behind. There is no need for all that remarkable abstemiousness. It is suspicious. It is unsocial. If we are to have Reformers, commend us to such as come near to us, and visit our homes, and sit at our tables, and are social, like ourselves.*

VER. 19. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners: Jesus Christ had no exclusive connection with a dispensation of fasting and mourning. He belongs to all dispensations, to all ages, to universal time and universal man. And hence He did not live the life of an ascetic. He enjoyed, in their own subordinate sphere, the innocent pleasures that are put by the bounty of the Great Creator within the reach of men. He affixed by His practice the seal of His approbation upon a temperate and well regulated use of such of the inferior creatures of God as are fit for wholesome and enjoyable food and drink. He was eminently and pre-eminently social. But, though thus acting in the interests of universal man, He could not satisfy the parties who complained of John's asceticism. No. They thought, for their part, that *it was really too bad for one making such a high profession as Jesus, to be going about eating and drinking in people's houses, and even in the houses of publicans and sinners. He should have gone into the desert, and lived an abstemious life. Had He been a true Reformer, He would no doubt have been the most abstemious of men. Commend us to ascetic men for our Reformers. Let Him preach as He likes, and work pretended miracles as He may, there is something wrong. He is self indulgent, we suspect; and, being such, we need make no further investigation into His claims or His credentials.* Such was the waywardness of the 'generation,'—always dissatisfied, always complaining, always actuated by a spirit of contrariety. When John was playing, as it were, at Wailings, they insisted on having Rejoicings. When Jesus was playing, as it were, at Rejoicings, they insisted on having Wailings. Whatever was, was wrong. On the expression *Son of man*, see chap. viii. 20. On our Saviour's *friendliness* toward publicans and sinners, see chap. ix. 11–13. On *publicans*, see chap. v. 46, ix. 9. But wisdom is justified of her children: Or, more literally, *And wisdom was justified of her children*, an expression that has occasioned almost an infinity of perplexity to expositors. The *And* instead of *But* has perplexed. The '*was justified*' instead of '*is justified*' has perplexed. The expression of *her children*, or *from her children* (ἀπὸ τῶν), instead of *by her children*, has exceedingly perplexed. And then what is the *wisdom* referred to? What is the *justification* referred to? And, especially, what is the connection of the saying with what goes before? Over and above these elements of perplexity, others crop out in the fact that the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts read, not *of her children*, but *of her works* (ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς); and this reading has been received into the text by Tischendorf

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: 21 Woe

and Tregelles. It is supported by the Coptic and the Ethiopic versions, as also by the Peshito (which however is wrongly translated by Tremellius, and thence in Gutbier, and by Reusch, and Etheridge). It is mentioned too by Jerome as a various reading in the manuscripts of his day. Sir John Cheke translates the expression, *Wisdom is cleen rid from her own childern*, and explains it as meaning, *wisdom is taken away from the Jews, her children*. Elsner supposes that the saying is part of the objection of the Pharisees to our Lord's demeanour. He translates it thus, *And the doctrine is condemned by its disciples*. Chrysostom and Theophylact suppose that it is Christ Himself who is *Wisdom*; but they do not give a full explanation of the saying. Dr. Adam Clarke thinks that *the children of wisdom* are its *fruits* or *effects*, and that the apophthegm means, *Wisdom is vindicated by her works: that is, the good effects prove that the cause is excellent*. We need not specify other explications. We would interpret as follows: *And*, notwithstanding the complaints of the great body of the people, *wisdom*,—the Divine wisdom that arranged the distinctive peculiarities both of John on the one hand, and of the Son of man on the other,—*was justified, was judged to be right*, first when John came in his way, and again when the Son of man came in His way, *of her children*,—*on the part of her children*, on the part of all who were truly wise, wise in God's wisdom, seeing light in His light. *The children of the Divine wisdom* were they who derived their peculiarity, as believers, from the Divine wisdom,—that wisdom which was embodied in the Divine revelation. All these judged to be right all parts of the Divine procedure. The judgement that emanated from them (*ἀπό*) was justificatory, not condemnatory, in relation to God. They *justified God* in all His words and works. (Comp. Luke vii. 29, Rom. iii. 4.) We have no doubt that *children* is the correct reading. Not only is it the best supported externally, and especially as occurring in Luke vii. 35; it bears the stamp of internal verisimilitude. The Saviour contrasts the child-like *children of wisdom*, who were pleased with the Divine ways and justified them, with the childish *children of the generation*, who were dissatisfied, and grumbled, and condemned. The reading *works* seems to have arisen from an erroneous marginal interpretation, lying on the line of Dr. Adam Clarke's, of the meaning of the word *children*.

VER. 20. Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not: *To upbraid*, or *to reproach*. It is the same verb that is translated *reproach* in Luke vi. 22, Rom. xv. 3, 1 Tim. iv. 10, 1 Pet. iv. 14. Wycliffe renders it *to seie repreue to*, or, as it is in Purvey's revision, *to seye reproof to*, that is, *to say reproof to, to reprove*. It is a right translation in substance, only the Greek term is stronger. Sir John Cheke's version is, *to rebuuk*. It is, like Wycliffe's, a good translation; but still the original is stronger. It means *to reproach*. But, of course, the reproaching of our Saviour was without malice. Reproach is generally malicious. And hence the term has commonly associated with it the idea of malice, but not necessarily or invariably. It always denotes dissatisfaction, and the imputation of blame. But there may be tender and sorrowful reproaching, reproaching that is imbued with benevolence, that expresses regret, and that springs from wounded love. *Reproach*, as Crabb says, "is either deserved or undeserved." (*English Synonymes*, sub voce.) *Reproachful*, when applied to things, has, as one of its meanings, *de-*

unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth

servng of reproach; and consequently there must be a kind of reproach that is legitimate and just. Hence it is that we speak of *irreproachable character*, that is, of character that cannot be *legitimately or justly reproached*. In the legal terminology of the French, from whom we borrowed the term, the word *reproach* is used in reference to the legitimate exception that may be taken in court to witnesses or to evidence (*reprocher des témoins*). No idea of malice is implied. Crabb, in distinguishing *reproachful* from *abusive* and *scurrilous*, says: "The *reproachful* is sometimes warranted by the provocation; but the *abusive* and *scurrilous* are always unwarrantable. *Reproachful* language may be, and generally is, consistent with decency and propriety of speech; *abusive* and *scurrilous* language are outrages against the laws of good breeding, if not of morality. A parent may sometimes find it necessary to address an unruly son in *reproachful terms*; or one friend may adopt a *reproachful* tone to another; none however but the lowest orders of men, and those only when their angry passions are awakened, will descend to *abusive* or *scurrilous* language." (*English Synonymes*, sub voce 'Reproachful.') Christ reproached or upbraided the cities which, though enjoying the benefit of His personal ministry, yet failed to improve it. *They repented not*, that is, They did not turn in thought, and thence in affection and action, from their sinful ways, to Him who is the Great Object toward whom our thoughts, affections, and actions should be voluntarily made to tend. See chap. iii. 2.

VER. 21. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! There is *wailing* in the *woe*, though there is indignation too. It is translated *alas* in Rev. xviii. 10, 16, 19. Chorazin must have been one of the towns on the western side of the lake of Tiberias, and not far from Capernaum. Its site is now disputed. Robinson says that "in all probability" it lay, along with Bethsaida, between Capernaum and Magdala. But it is in vain, he adds, "to assign at haphazard the position of towns, every trace of whose name and site has long since been obliterated." (*Biblical Researches*, sect. xv., June 20.) Dr. W. M. Thomson, however, is convinced that the spot called Khorazy by the Arabs, or *Kerâseh* as it is given in Porter's *Syria and Palestine*, two miles north of Tell Hâm, is the real site of the ancient town. "The ruins," says Dr. Thomson, "are quite adequate to answer the demands of history; and there is no rival site." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 25.) Woe unto thee, Bethsaida: Or *Bethsaidan*, as the word is given in the best manuscripts. It was the city of Andrew and Peter and Philip. (John i. 44.) It is generally considered to have been a seaport. And Dr. W. M. Thomson is of opinion that it lay at that particular point of the lake at which the river Jordan enters it. He thinks that it was built in part on the east side of the river, and in part on the west. (*The Land and the Book*, part ii., chap. 25), so that there was Bethsaida and Bethsaida, a double Bethsaida. For if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes: As did Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah. (See Jonah iii. 6, 8.) It was customary, in Palestine and the neighbourhood, to wear sackcloth in time of mourning, and to sprinkle ashes on the person and especially on the head; as also at times to sit in the midst of ashes. Such sackcloth and ashes were regarded as the appro-

and ashes. 22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgement, than for you. 23

appropriate symbols of the utter absence and denegation of all joy and wish for enjoyment. The sackcloth was a coarse texture of a dark colour, made of goats' hair. In extreme cases it was worn next the skin. In other cases it was thrown over the inner robe. Are we sure, it may be asked, that the Tyrians and Sidonians would have repented, if they had enjoyed the privileges which were conferred on the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida? Why should we doubt it, when our Saviour says it? though at the same time there is obviously, as Calvin remarks, a peculiar rhetorical element in the representation. The Saviour's intention is, manifestly, to pourtray in vivid colours the very deep criminality of the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida. Their criminality exceeded that of the Tyrians and Sidonians. Such is the substance of the Saviour's idea. But He indicates, farther, in virtue of His Divine knowledge not only of *the future*, but also of *the futurable*, in virtue thus of His *scientia media* as the schoolmen express it, that the Tyrians and Sidonians, had they enjoyed the privilege of His presence in their midst, would not have been so insensible to the boon as the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida had been. These Tyrians and Sidonians were indeed exceedingly debased by sensual indulgences. They had been so for centuries. They were extremely corrupt and immoral. But they were not so seared and hardened in their consciences as were the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, by a constant effort to resist the spiritualizing influence of Divine institutions. Neither were their hearts so thoroughly ossified by that religious self complacency and conceit which rendered the masses of the Galileans irresponsible to the presence and purity and power of the heavenly Saviour. See on ver. 23.

VER. 22. **But I say unto you:** The word rendered *But* (*ἀλλῆ*) has somewhat puzzled translators and expositors. Webster and Wilkinson render it *moreover*. So does Sharpe. So did Bloomfield. Mace again gives it no rendering at all. Many expositors, in like manner, quietly pass the interpretation of it by, without giving note of any kind. Principal Campbell uses great freedom with it, rendering it *therefore*. Wycliffe's translation is *netheles*—the reproduction of the Vulgate (*verumtamen*). Luther's version corresponds (*doch*); also Tyndale's, *nevertheless*, a translation that kept its place in Cranmer's Bible, and in the Geneva version. The Rheims has *but nevertheless*. Sir John Cheke has simply *but*, and so has our Authorized version. *Nevertheless* is the natural translation of the term, the translation which it receives in Matt. xxvi. 39, 64; Luke xiii. 33, xviii. 8, xxii. 42; 1 Cor. xi. 11; Eph. v. 33; Phil. iii. 16. The corresponding rendering of the Revisionists is *Howbeit*. The Saviour's language is broken up under the influence of strong emotion. There are gaps in its continuity; but the inner connection of ideas is apparent enough. He as it were says, *The inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon have not witnessed the mighty works which ye have witnessed. They have not repented of their sins in sackcloth and ashes. They are moving onward to their melancholy doom. NEVERTHELESS I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgement than for you.* The Tyrians and Sidonians, while inexcusable and guilty, are not so inexcusable and guilty as ye. Their condemnation, therefore, on the great day of judgement will not be so severe as yours. This would be a startling statement to such as were fancying that the Tyrians and Sidonians were among

And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would

the most emphatic types possible of reprobates; forgetting all the time that guilt is always proportional to privilege.

VER. 23. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven: Such is the proper translation of the text which was before the eyes of the authors of our Authorized version (*ἡ ἔως τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὑψωθείσα*). That was the text of Stephens and of Beza. It is the text also of the Elzevirs, the Received Text. If it were the correct text it would represent Capernaum as *already exalted to heaven*; not simply, as Grotius supposed, in secular prosperity, because of its thriving fisheries and extensive merchandise; nor yet simply, as Stier supposed, in sinful haughtiness and pride; but, more probably, in respect of spiritual privilege, as being the chosen abode of our Lord, *the city of our Lord*. See chap. ix. 1. But there is reason to believe that the text from which our translation was made was corrupt. Stephens, in the margin of his 1550 edition, gave the true reading, *Shalt thou be exalted to heaven?* (*μὴ ἔως τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὑψώσῃ;*) a reading supported by the uncial manuscripts \aleph B C D L, and by the Vulgate version, and the Curetonian Syriac, and the Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. It was received into the text by Lachmann; and Tischendorf has followed him in his eighth edition. So have Tregelles and Alford, and Westcott-and-Hort. It is almost demonstrably the genuine reading. Our Saviour thus addressed the highly favoured Capernaum interrogatively. **And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted to heaven?** Alas, no. The form of the interrogation in Greek implies that a negative answer must be returned. **Thou shalt be thrust down to hell:** The word here translated *hell* is *Hades*. The antithesis however shows that it is hell that is really meant, that awful *nadir of woe* which is the contrary pole of the glorious *zenith of bliss*. The entire representation indeed, at once in its interrogative and in its affirmative clause, is vividly rhetorical. The units of the population of the city, each standing on a platform of distinct responsibility, are for the moment shaded off out of sight, and the city is pictured forth, in its unity, as a city. The Saviour spoke as a consummate orator. Still it is really *heaven* and *hell* that are referred to. Principal Campbell contends that the representation is entirely metaphorical. He says, "As the city of Capernaum was never literally raised to heaven, we have no reason to believe that it was to be literally brought down to hell." (*Dissertations*, vi., part ii., § 16.) But his objection to the literal acceptance of the terms is based upon the erroneous text which he had before him, and in which Capernaum is represented as *already exalted to heaven*. The words of the following verse make it evident that our Lord was not speaking metaphorically. He refers to the decisions of the final judgement. As regards the word *hell*, it is a misfortune that the profane have taken hold of it, and bandy it about with awful familiarity and levity. It is hence at times extremely difficult to dissociate it in our thoughts from blasphemous ideas; and assuredly, whenever the disciples of the Lord have occasion to utter the word, it should be spoken with deep toned solemnity and awe. (See, on the word, chap. xvi. 18.) For if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day: The Saviour steps forward in thought to the consummation of His connection with the city, and looks back on the completed sum total of His work

have remained until this day. 24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement, than for thee.

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O

and of its privileges. *Had been done in Sodom.* And why then, it has been asked by sceptics, *were they not done? Why did God withhold privileges where they would be improved, and confer them where they would be abused?* The question is applicable at once to the case of Sodom, and to the case of Tyre or Sidon. Calvin takes notice of the sceptical objection, but does not attempt to answer it. He says: "If God withholds His word from some, and allows them "to perish, while, in order to render others more inexcusable, He entreats and "exhorts them, in a variety of ways, to repentance, who shall on this account "charge Him with injustice? Let us therefore, conscious of our infirmity, "learn to regard with reverence this height." We do not object to the reverent reticence of this observation, though we might have expected the keen intellect of Calvin to have pierced farther. We object however to the assumption that the privileges enjoyed by Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum were conferred "that they might be rendered more inexcusable." It is ungracious and odious, as well as unfounded. Alford's remark on the case is as follows: "It is "not for the infidel to say, *Why were not more warnings given?* because every "act of God for the rescue of the sinner from his doom is purely and entirely of "free and undeserved grace, and the proportion of such means of escape dealt "out to men is ruled by the counsel of His will who is holy, just, and true, "and willeth not the death of the sinner, but whose ways are past our finding "out." This reply of Alford, like the reverent reticence of Calvin, is good so far as it goes. But it does not go nearly so far as was perfectly legitimate. For there was obviously the best of all reasons why the mighty works done in Capernaum and Chorazin and Bethsaida were not done in Sodom and Tyre and Sidon. It is this, It was not befitting for our Saviour to become incarnate at all times, or even at two different epochs in the history of the world. And when He did appear at a particular epoch in time, 'the fulness of the time,' it was absolutely necessary that He should live and work miracles, not everywhere, but in some one limited area or locality. The sceptical objection vanishes into thin air.

VER. 24. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement than for thee: The *But* here is the same conjunction that is employed in ver. 22. See the note on it there. The expression, *the land of Sodom*, is an instance of that figure of speech called by grammarians *metonymy of the thing containing for the thing contained*. While it is the locality that is named, it is of course the inhabitants who are meant. We have a striking instance of the same figure of speech in chap. iii. 5. Analogously, the word *cup* is sometimes used when it is *the wine in the cup* that is referred to. (See Luke xxii. 20, John xviii. 11, 1 Cor. xi. 25.)

VER. 25. At that time: Or *season*. We must not be too positive in trying to determine the particular point of time referred to, more especially as we find in Luke x. 16-20 some things interposed which are not here referred to. It is not intended that we should work out, in these matters, a scientific chronology. Compare the same expression in Matthew xii. 1, and the somewhat corresponding expression in Matthew iii. 1. Dr. Wells however goes too far into the indefinite,

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto

when he supposes that the expression spreads so wide as to embrace *the entire time of Christ's ministry in Galilee after the imprisonment of John*. Jesus answered and said: The correlate of the word *answered* is not revealed; and it is not necessary to guess anxiously concerning it. It is enough to rest assured that something had been presented, either from within or from without, to our Saviour's mind, which elicited, in a *responsive* manner, the confession which is here recorded. The fact that He Himself was gladly accepted by certain simple minded disciples, and that they recognised in Him the Messiah who was to come, had, by some means or other, been brought forcibly home to the heart of our Lord. This fact was coupled with another, that the great body of the literary and influential classes rejected His claims and despised His person. I thank Thee: Literally, *I confess to Thee; I confess to Thee My agreement with Thee, and thus I thank and praise Thee*. Wycliffe's version is *I knowleche to Thee* (I acknowledge to Thee); Tyndale's *I prayse Thee*. O Father, Lord of heaven and earth: Jesus realized His kinship to God, His peculiar nearness of kinship, His filial kinship. He recognised too His Father's greatness and universal sovereignty. His Father was *Lord of heaven and earth*, who did in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth according to His pleasure. Because: Or rather *That*, indicating the thing confessed, *Thou hiddest these things from the wise and intellectual, and revealedst them to babes*: The first clause is a stepping stone to the second. It is on the second that the Saviour's mind rests, as exhibiting the object which He really had in view when He praised His heavenly Father. He would have rejoiced still more if the wise and intellectual, as well as the babes, had recognised His character and accepted His claims. But they 'would not,' and the Saviour 'wept.' Yet He had not been rejected by all. The high and mighty indeed had almost all rejected Him. The learned, the wise ones in their own esteem, the scientific investigators of the time, the wranglers, the 'disputers of the world,' had almost unanimously rejected Him. But there were others who had welcomed Him, 'babes,' childlike but not childish souls. In their reception of Him He perceived the foundation of a superstructure that was yet to overshadow the globe. The stepping stone relationship of the first clause to the second may be illustrated by two other passages referred to by Principal Campbell. One is Romans vi. 17, *But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you*. The real object for which the apostle thanked God was not that the Romans were once the servants of sin, but that, though they once were sin's servants, they had now obeyed the heavenly doctrine which is according to godliness. The other passage is Isaiah xii. 1, which, in the original, runs thus: *O Lord, I will praise Thee, because Thou wast angry with me; Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me*. The passage is rendered however in our Authorized version, freely thus: *I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me*. If the passage before us had been rendered with the same freedom, it would have run thus: *I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that though Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent Thou hast revealed them unto babes*. There is however, be it noticed, a real agency of God in reference to the unbelieving, as well as in reference to the believing. As it is the will of God that the mind which is

babes. 26 Even so, Father : for so it seemed good in thy sight.

childlike in relation to things spiritual should be blessed with the truth regarding Jesus, and with the glad and sweet experiences that are folded up in that truth ; so it is really His will that the unchildlike should not enjoy the blessings that are in the truth concerning Jesus. The unity of the Divine will has two sides, corresponding to the two distinct classes of men. It is like the pillar of fire and of cloud between the Israelites and the Egyptians. It is bright toward the childlike. It is dark toward the unchildlike, casting a shadow of retribution over their souls. It is probable that our Saviour, in speaking of *the wise and intellectual*, referred to the great body of the rabbis and scribes and other learned individuals who had, as a general rule, the highest confidence in themselves, and who exerted the greatest political and ecclesiastical influence among the Jews. "He calls them," says Whedon, "what they called themselves, and what, for this world, they might be called." They were the *astute*, or rather, as Zuingli has it, the "astutulous" (*astutuli*). They had settled it in their minds that the Messiah must be a worldly Prince and a worldly Conqueror. And hence they saw no beauty in Jesus that they should desire Him. (Isa. liii. 2.) Calvin assuredly is wrong when he says : "I consider that Christ includes here "all who are eminent in ability and learning, without charging them with any fault ; as, on the other hand, He does not represent it to be an excellence in any one that he is a little child. For although humble persons have Christ for their Master, and the first lesson of faith is, Let no man presume on his wisdom, yet Christ does not here speak of voluntary childhood." Calvin would thus resolve both the *hiding* and the *revealing* into 'mere good pleasure.' But why should he? May not God have had reasons for His procedure? If He had, may they not be indicated in part by the phraseology of our Lord? Why may not a voluntary childlike receptivity, a willingness to make use of light, and thus to believe whatever the Father may see meet to reveal, be a reason to the Divine Mind for bestowing still more light? Why may not a contrary state of spirit, a voluntary non-receptivity in relation to things spiritual, or an unwillingness to receive implicitly the testimonies of the Father, be a reason for a diversity in the Divine procedure? May not such a moral state afford to the Divine Mind a very reasonable reason for withholding what would not be accepted and improved? Did not Jesus Himself say, "ye would not"? (chap. xxiii. 37.) When He thus spoke did He not "find fault," as well as weep? Did He not say at another time, "ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life"? (John v. 40.) Did He not "find fault," as well as mourn, when using such words? Is it not said again, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"? (John iii. 19.) Is not unwillingness to receive the light, when God sends it, a reason why many are condemned to continue in darkness? Luther thought so (*illos qui te nolunt vicissim notis*). Was not Luther right? Is not his idea reasonable? If man, who is but a little child in relation to God, will not hold up his hand to the Divine Father, that he may be led, is he wronged when he is left to walk alone? If he even reject the Divine Hand, when it is lovingly stretched down that he may take hold of it, is it wonderful that his unchildlikeness should be punished, and that, as it would not do to be divinely *dragged* to the cross and to Christ, he should be condemned to wander on in his waywardness, and to stumble, and to fall?

VER. 26. Even so, Father : Or, *Yes, Father* ; or, *Yea, Father*, the rendering of

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

28 Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden,

the Rheims version. The particle employed (*vaſ*) is generally translated *yea* in the New Testament. It is the particle that is found in chap. v. 37, "Let your communication be *yes, yes.*" It is rendered *yes* in Matt. xvii. 25, Mark vii. 28, Rom. iii. 29. The Saviour, as it were, says, "Yes, I do praise Thee, Father." He thus iterates the sentiment to which He had given expression in the preceding words. For so it seemed good in Thy sight: *I do praise Thee, Father, that (ſt) so it seemed good in Thy sight*; a good, though free, translation. A perfectly literal translation would be an impossibility, or at least an unintelligibility. Wycliffe's version is good, *so it was plesynge tofore Thee*. Tyndale's is less literal, but more facile and felicitous, *so it pleased Thee*. Nothing can well excel in felicity our Authorized translation.

VER. 27. All things were delivered to Me by My Father. The Saviour goes back in thought to the time when He received His commission. Then "all power," all authority was given to Him "in heaven and on earth" (chap. xxviii. 18). Whether therefore the Jewish rabbis and rulers received Him as the Messiah, or rejected Him, it mattered nothing to Him as regarded His real office, and authority, and ultimate supremacy. It mattered much to themselves; but their unbelief and opposition could have no effect whatsoever in depriving Him of one atom of His peerless sovereignty and glory. And no one knoweth the Son except the Father. No other one knows Him fully. It is but glimpses of His glory that others behold. Neither knoweth any one the Father, except the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son may reveal Him: Or, and he to whomsoever the Son may be pleased to make revelation. There is a combination of two distinct groups of ideas in this clause. The first is, that no one knows the Father fully except the Son. The second is, that the Son's disciples, to whom He is pleased to make revelation, have in that revelation a very glorious manifestation of the Father, so that their knowledge of the Father, though intrinsically exceedingly imperfect, is graciously added by the Saviour to His own perfect knowledge as lying on one line with it. The Son makes revelation of the Father; and thus there is a grand reciprocity of revelations on the part of the Father and the Son. We learn from the 25th verse that the Father reveals the Son. (Comp. chap. xvi. 17.) We learn from this 27th verse that the Son reveals the Father. The reciprocity is real, and not merely a rhetorical representation. The beginning is with the Father; He sends the Son and reveals Him. The completion is with the Son. When He is revealed and received, He in His turn reveals the Father. It is the law of action and reaction in the sphere of the Divine, a law that has everlasting sway in all other spheres.

VER. 28. It was the Saviour's desire that all should become His disciples, so that He might open up and reveal, for their bliss, the fulness of the Father's heart, and indeed 'the fulness of the Godhead.' Hence the intensity of His feelings in the three concluding verses of this chapter. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: He looks far beyond the circle of His disciples, and utters wonderful words. They are words

and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall

that would not only be blasphemies, but utter absurdities, in the mouth of any mere man. Suppose that Shakespeare had uttered them! or Milton, or Bacon, or Newton! or Paul, or Peter, or Moses! What a width of consciousness there must have been in the "Me," and the "I," when "all who labour and are heavy laden" are invited to come unto Him and get rest! *Come unto Me*: There must thus be *movement* on the part of the sinful soul, movement away from other Saviours and Refuges. But the emphatic word is the "Me." Move, O sinner, toward "Me." Come to "Me." *All ye that labour*: Viz. as in the yoke. See verses 29, 30. "Note diligently," says Melancthon, "the universal participle" the *All*. "It is a little word," says Trapp, "but of large extent." The Saviour compares sinners to poor, toiling, jaded animals, labouring in the yoke. They promised themselves liberty in sinning, and thought that they would have a life of frolic. It would be 'jolly' they imagined. But they deceived themselves. In giving themselves up to sin, they gave themselves up to Satan, and Satan put them under his yoke. Hence they had a hard time of it, toiling to get enjoyment. *And are heavy laden*: Not only are they toiling in the yoke; they are at the same time used as beasts of burden, to carry an almost intolerable load. Generally, yoked animals have no load laid on their back; and animals which carry loads are not yoked to draw and drag. But sin's drudges are oppressed in both ways. They are *heavy laden* at the very time that they have to *labour in the yoke*. Every sin they commit alights on their back, and increases their crushing load. And thus, in toiling with might and main and strain to get pleasure, they have for ever to carry about with them the burden of their sins, a burden that is constantly augmenting. *And I will give you rest*: Principal Campbell renders it, *and I will relieve you*; Sir John Cheke, *and I will eas you*. This latter is the version of Tyndale, and is reproduced in the Geneva. Wycliffe's version was, *and I will refreshe you*. It is repeated in the Rheims. They are all excellent.

VER. 29. **Take My yoke upon you**: We must emphasize the *My*. It is needful that men continue to work. It would not do for them to be idlers. But Christ calls upon them to enter *His service*, and to do *His work*, instead of wearing themselves out for very vanity, and for worse than vanity, in the service of sin and Satan. **And learn of Me**: Be instructed by Me how you should work, and what you should work at, and what you should work for, and whom you should work for. (I shall reveal to you *the Father*. See verse 27.) **For I am meek and lowly in heart**: By this expression the Saviour commends Himself to us rather as a Teacher than as an Exemplar. He is indeed both our Exemplar and our Teacher; but here He speaks as a Teacher, and says, *learn of Me—learn from Me—be instructed by Me*. He would be glad if He could get the masses to forsake the teaching of such as could not, with all their assumed *wisdom and prudence*, really benefit them, the high and haughty rabbis who were puffed up with their imaginary knowledge and importance. In contrast to such teachers, He was *meek and lowly in heart*, and would cause His doctrine to distil gently on the minds of His disciples, like dew upon the tender herb. Jesus still teaches; and oh how meekly and gently! He is teaching us in these very words which we are considering. **And ye shall find rest to your souls**: Take My way of it, and your work will be refreshing and joyful. The ex-

find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

CHAPTER XII.

1 AT that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the

pression describes, not only the initial but also the perpetual experience of all who enter themselves in Christ's service. Their very work refreshes them.

VER. 30. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light: While Christ will have none to be idle, while all who come to Him must come to work, to work with Him, and for Him, still their work is most delightful. *His yoke is easy; His burden is light.* The word rendered *easy* is somewhat peculiar (*χρησρός*). Sir John Cheke renders it *profitabil*, which is its primary or etymological meaning. Wycliffe renders it, alternatively, *swete* or *softe*. Purvey, in his revision, retained *softe*. The Rheims restored *sweete*. Bishop Hammond says that "it is "a yoke that any man is the better for taking on him; and if he considered it well, he would put it on of his own accord, and prefer it before liberty, or any "other service." It is everything the reverse of a *galling* yoke. It is *pleasant* and *agreeable*. The part on which it presses takes *kindly* to it. The yoke lies *kindly* on the part, for, as Matthew Henry says, it is "lined with love." There is a beautiful connection between the adjectives *kindly* and *kind*. Dr. Johnson explains *kindly* as meaning *homogeneous, congenial, kindred of the same nature*. Then he says: "The foregoing sense seems to have been originally implied by "this word; but following writers, inattentive to its etymology, confounded it "with *kind*." Yet the adjective *kind* is etymologically connected with the substantive *kind*. They who are of one *kind*, who are *kin*, are naturally *kind*. There is in their *kinship* the basis of their *kindness*. And thus it comes to pass that there is something *kind* in *kindly*. There is *kindness* in the *kindliness* of Christ's yoke. Work for Him is a *labour of love*.

CHAPTER XII.

VER. 1. The incident referred to in verses 1-8 is, with its accompaniments, narrated by Mark also (ii. 23-28), and by Luke (vi. 1-5). It is quite unnecessary to attempt to fix its chronology very precisely. At that season: The same expression that occurs in chap. xi. 25. It points, of course, to a particular time, but leaves us in uncertainty as to its limits. Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn: The word translated *corn* (*σπρόβια*) means *cornfields*, or *fields of grain*. It is translated *cornfields* in Mark ii. 23 and Luke vi. 1. The expression on the sabbath is rendered by Young on the sabbaths. It is a rendering so extremely literal as to be quite erroneous. The word is plural in the original, but it has, and was intended to have, a singular meaning. It was properly a Hebrew word, and, as such, was puzzling to Greek ears. Hence it received several shapings, when becoming Grecised. One of these reproduced the Aramaic form of the word (*סַבְּבָתַי*), which sounded to Greek ears as a plural (*σάββατα*), just on some such principle as the French word *riches*, or *richesse*, when introduced by the Normans, sounded to the ears of our Saxon forefathers as a plural, and has hence taken its place in our language as an actual plural, though having a singular meaning. (See Prov. xxiii. 5.) The plural forms of the word *sabbath*, for it had more of them than one, were accordingly often used in Greek, even although the reference were only to a

corn ; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. 3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred,

single day. *Jesus went on the sabbath through the cornfields*: Probably on His way to or from some synagogue. And hence there were with Him, or near Him, not only His disciples, but others also. **And His disciples were an hungred: Or were hungry.** Wycliffe uses the present participle, *hungrynge* (i.e. *hungring*). Purvey, in his revision of Wycliffe, employs the praterite tense of the verb, *hungriden* (i.e. *hungered*). Bishop Coverdale has *were hongrie*. Tyndale seems to have originated the somewhat awkward rendering of our Authorized version, *were an hongred*, or, as it is printed in the 1526 edition, *wer anhongred*. The *an* is, of course, the prefix that we have in such words as *a-thirst, a-foot, a-field*. It is often used in connection with present participles, as *a-hunting* or *an-hunting, a-going, a-wanting*. In *an-hungred*, or *a-hungred*, we have the prefix in connection with a past participle; just as Chaucer has *an-hanged* (i.e. *a-hanged*), equivalent to the other old forms *an-honge* and *an-hongen*. The presence of the *n* is to be attributed to the weakness of the following *h*; though it indicates, at the same time, the original form and nature of the prefix. That prefix was *on* or *in*. *A-field* is *on-* or *in-field*. *A-hunting* is *on-hunting*; *a-thirst* is *in (the state of) thirst*; and *an-hungred* or *a-hungred* is *in (the state of being) hungred*. **And began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat**: Luke adds, *rubbing them in their hands*. They ate the disintegrated grains.

VER. 2. But the Pharisees when they saw it said to Him, Behold, Thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do on sabbath: These Pharisees did not charge the disciples with stealing. They could not do that, for the following was an express Jewish law: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle into thy neighbour's standing corn" (Deut. xxiii. 25). The charge was that of a breach of the sabbath law, which forbade *working* (Exod. xx. 10). The Pharisees construed plucking the ears of corn, and rubbing them in the hand, into a *kind of working*. The plucking, in their judgement, was a kind of reaping, and the rubbing a kind of threshing. These works on the sabbath were regarded as *derivative* or implicit sabbath crimes, as distinguished from those which they designated *primary* or explicit. The primary sabbath crimes, if we may judge from the later rabbinical teaching, consisted in such acts as ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, grinding, baking, etc. (See Otho's *Rabbinical Lexicon*, sub "Sabbatum.") The derivatives, or secondaries, consisted of such acts as were like the primaries. "For example, digging is "of the same kind with ploughing; chopping of herbs with grinding; and "plucking the ears of corn with reaping." (Lightfoot's *Exercitations on Matthew*.) It was thus that, missing entirely the benevolent spirit of the sabbath law, the Pharisees, by their zeal for externalities, converted the observance of the day into an instrument of spiritual torture.

VER. 3. But He said to them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an-hungred, and they that were with him? Or, still more literally, *Did ye not read*, etc. It is as if the passage (1 Sam. xxi.) had been read that very day in the synagogue. If this was the case, then we see at once the amazing

and they that were with him; 4 how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath,

readiness with which our Lord met the objection of the Pharisees; and the reason for the peculiarity and indirectness of His line of argument. David's action was not an apparent contravention of the sabbath law, but an apparent contravention of the temple or tabernacle law. But our Lord reasons from equals to equals, or on the principle of equivalents. The temple and the sabbath were equivalent or equal in sanctity. We might freely interpret the interrogation thus, *Did ye never read, etc.*

VER. 4. How he entered into the house of God: The tabernacle, while it was at Nob. It was, as it were, the presence chamber of God. And did eat the showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests: The *showbread* was the *bread* that was kept on the golden table in the Holy Place. It consisted of twelve loaves, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel. The loaves were arranged in two "rows" or piles, and were to be renewed weekly, on the sabbath day. They were to be eaten only by the priests, and within the sanctuary (Lev. xxiv. 5-9). They were called in Hebrew *the bread of the Face*, or *the bread of the Presence*, that is, *the bread of the Divine Presence*. They were *the Presence-bread* in the *presence-chamber* of God, *the bread of God*. It was a significant and sublime symbolism, when interpreted as denoting, not the provision made for Jehovah's food (*Speise für Jehovah*, Winer's *Real-Wörterbuch*, s. v. *Schaubrodte*), but the provision which Jehovah makes for His people's food. He is the Lord their Provider. If He were hungry, He would not tell them (Ps. l. 12). It is true indeed, as Leyrer remarks (Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, "Shaubrode"), that it is said in Leviticus xxiv. 8 that the bread was "*from the children of Israel, an everlasting covenant.*" But that expression has reference, not to the import of the symbolism, but to the obligation that was laid upon the tribes to maintain the symbolism, as a standing ordinance, throughout their generations. *Showbread* was Luther's translation. It is very imperfect, but has got itself established, at once in Germany and in Great Britain. Wycliffe's translation was an awkward reproduction of the Vulgate, *loaves of propositioun*. With all its awkwardness, however, it was reproduced in the Rheims version, *loaves of proposition*. Tyndale's translation is free, *the halowed loaves* (i.e. *the hallowed loaves*). In Cranmer's Bible we have the rather peculiar plural, *the shew breades*; and in the Geneva version of 1557 we have *the shewe loaves* (or *loaves*). The *shewbread* which David got would be of course the old bread that was removed on the sabbath morning from the golden table, to make way for the fresh or 'hot' loaves. (See 1 Sam. xxi. 6.) It was fit that David should, in the circumstances, get the bread. He was *an-hungred*. It was a case of 'necessity.'

VER. 5. Or have ye not read in the law—*Did ye never read in the law*, when ye were reading your appointed portion out of the Books of Moses—how that on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? Namely, when they do the work of the temple; in removing, for instance, the old showbread, and replacing it with the 'hot' (Lev. xxiv. 8, 1 Chron. ix. 32),

and are blameless? 6 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater than the temple. 7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

and in offering up the sacrificial lambs and "the two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof" (Num. xxviii. 9). There was then real *work* done in the temple on the sabbath day. It was indeed one of the sayings of the rabbis, "There is no sabbath keeping in the temple" (Lightfoot's *Exercitations*). And thus, if all work on the sabbath profaned the sabbath, as the Pharisees maintained, the priests were guilty of continual *profanation*. The Saviour takes hold of the Pharisees' own word, when He uses the term *profaned*. He lays hold of it for the purpose of showing them that they should be somewhat more cautious in throwing out charges of profanation. (Comp. 1 Cor. i. 21.)

VER. 6. But I say to you, That in this place is *One* greater than the temple: Or rather, *But I say to you, That something greater than the temple is here*. In what is called the Received Text the word *greater* is masculine; and hence the translation of our Authorized version, *One greater*. But there can be no doubt that the true reading is neuter, *something greater* (*μεῖζον*, not *μεῖζων*). This reading is supported by the great body of the uncial manuscripts, and has been accepted into the text by all the best modern editors. Jesus refers, as is obvious, to Himself; and, in the sublime consciousness of His intrinsic and official dignity, asserts His superiority to the temple. The temple was but His Father's house; He was the Father's Son. (Comp. Heb. iii. 3-6.) His very body indeed was a nobler temple of the living God than was the temple made with hands (John ii. 19-21). And when we rise from the contemplation of the mere body to the contemplation of the living Personality, we have a nobler Temple still, a Temple in which we have the freest possible access, without the impediment of any interposing veil, to the propitiated Father. The argument of Jesus is an argument from the less to the greater. If the law of the sabbath accommodated itself yieldingly to the service of the sanctuary, much more must it accommodate itself yieldingly to the service of the Saviour.

VER. 7. But if ye knew what this is, I desire mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless: Jesus quotes from Hos. vi. 6, a favourite weapon with Him, and one that could be most effectively wielded in casting down imaginations of religiousness that were founded on a rigid observance of ritualisms or externalisms. It is mercy, or lovingkindness, or love, which is the essence of that entire hemisphere of religion which covers our duty to men. It is, too, love sublimed which is the essence of the other hemisphere of religion, the hemisphere that covers our duty in relation to God. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The genesis, and growth, and full development of this love is the sum and substance of the Divine aim in reference to man; and hence God would rather that an outward sacrifice to Himself should be suspended or superseded, than that a condition of inward mercifulness to a fellow mortal should be neglected. See on chap. ix. 13. Such an idea however, if it had not been skilfully backed by an explicit Scripture quotation, would, as Luther remarks, have been denounced by the Pharisees as a dreadful heresy. (*Haeresis horrenda fuit misericordiam præferre sacrificiis*.)

VER. 8. For the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath: Our Lord delights to call

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: 10 and, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. 11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you,

Himself *the Son of man*, realizing on the one hand the intimacy of His relation to the human race, and on the other the supremacy of His position among the individuals of the race. He is '*the Son of man*' (see chap. viii. 20). As '*the Son of man*,' He is the Lord of that sabbath which was instituted '*for man*.' He can mould and modify it as He pleases. He has a right to make what arrangements He pleases in reference to its observance, and to bind or to loose as may seem good in His sight. His authority is supreme. It does not follow however, as Zuingli contends, that we too, if in Christ, are *lords of the sabbath*. Unity in one respect is not unity in all.

VER. 9. And when He was departed thence—sooner or later afterwards—He went into their synagogue: The pronoun *their* is somewhat indefinite in its reference. The evangelist would no doubt be thinking of the Pharisees of whom he has been speaking; but in thinking of them he would not separate them, by a sharply drawn line, from the other inhabitants of the district. The incident recorded in the verses that immediately follow is also narrated by Mark (iii. 1-6), and by Luke (vi. 6-11). Their narrations, though given from somewhat different standpoints, are entirely harmonious with the narrative of Matthew.

VER. 10. And, behold, a man having a withered hand: It was *shrunk* and *dried* by some kind of atrophy. We need not conjecture the precise nature of the disease. Jerome tells us that in the apocryphal Gospel which was used by the Nazarenes and the Ebionites the man here spoken of was said to be a mason, who pleaded for a cure, that he might be able to prosecute his calling. And they asked Him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? Or, more simply, *on the sabbath?* (see ver. 1.) It was no doubt, to some extent, a question that was debated among themselves. We know at all events that in after times the rabbis strained their religious ingenuity to define the cases in which medical or medicinal appliances were legitimate on the sabbath, and to discriminate them from the cases in which such appliances were unwarrantable. (See Wake's *Christi Curatio Sabbathica Vindicata*.) They entered punctiliously into the minutest distinctions. "He that hath toothache," they said, "let him not take vinegar, to spit it out again: but he is allowed to take it, if he swallow it down. He that hath sore throat, let him not gargle with oil; but it is lawful for him to swallow down the oil, whence, if he receive a cure, it is well." (Lightfoot's *Exercitationes*.) No doubt there would be among the Jews themselves a more liberal as well as a more rigid party. But most probably the great majority in both parties would be ignorant of the true spirit of the sabbath institution in particular, as of religious service in general. That they might accuse Him: They lay on the watch and catch, that they might be able to get hold of something that would afford them a plea for accusing Him to the local judicatory as a sabbath breaker. (Comp. notes on chaps. v. 22, x. 17.) If the Master was thus suspected and persecuted, need the disciples marvel that they should be sometimes misunderstood and disliked?

VER. 11. And He said unto them, What man shall there be among you that shall

that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? 12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. 13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

have one sheep, and if this should fall into a pit on the sabbath, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? The case is very graphically put. *One sheep*, or 'oo sheep,' as Wycliffe has it, an only sheep, and thus all the more valuable to its owner. *If it should fall into a pit*, or hole of any description, such as a ditch or trench. *Will he not lay hold on it?* Will he not stoop down, as it lies helpless on its back, for that is the idea in the picture, and lay hold on it? Having laid hold on it, will he not *lift it up?* for such is the import of the word that is rendered *lift it out*. Will he not *raise it to its feet?* Our Saviour reasons from a universal concession. No man who had a sheep would plead for any other principle of procedure. At a later date indeed, as we learn from the Gemara, there were some ridiculous rabbinical refinements introduced into the popular teaching regarding what was lawful to be done for the release or preservation of animals that had fallen into pits; and cases were specified in which they might be lifted out, on the one hand, or merely assisted to walk out, on the other. But our Saviour had no occasion to deal with such super-refined cobwebs of curiosities and puzzles. He appeals to men's common sense. (See Lightfoot's *Exercitationes*; also Wake's *Curatio Sabbathica*, iii., § 8, and Danz's *Epistole to Wake*. See, too, Otho's *Lexicon Rabbinicum*, sub "Sabbatum.")

VER. 12. How much then is a man better than a sheep? The *then* refers to what is said in ver. 11, and supposed to be conceded. It is as if the Saviour had said, Since you take that one step with Me in your thoughts, take another, and ask the question, *By how much does a man differ from a sheep? by how much is he better?* It is by so much that you cannot calculate the difference. So that it is lawful to do good on the sabbath: *To do good*, to do a man a benefit, to do a man a kindness, provided of course that the doing of that kindness does not entail on the man, or on any other one, such toil, or labour, or neglect of other duties, as might be inconsistent with the beneficent spirit of the sabbath institution. Our Saviour's argument, it will be noticed, does not assume that it would be dangerous to the man to omit the deed of beneficence till the following day. It does not assume that the man is in extremity. But it assumes that if, in consistency with the claims of the sabbath, help may be given to inferior animals when in extremity, much more may it be given to men when suffering to any degree within the limit of extremity, provided of course the giving of such help does not interfere with still higher or more urgent claims. There is nothing assuredly that is more in harmony with the spirit of the sabbath than a spirit of beneficence; and such beneficence as gives relief, or rest, or ease, is preeminently sabbatical. "It is lawful," says Richard Baxter, "to prefer and do a greater duty before a less."

VER. 13. Then saith He to the man, Stretch forth thine hand: Hold it out! "A grand fiat," says Paulus de Palacio (*O vocem magnificam!*). The Saviour probably wished that all might see the change passing upon the hand. And he stretched it forth: He held it out, and thus he held it up to view. It is often assumed, in preaching, that the man's *arm* as well as *hand* was withered and

14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; 16 and charged them that they should not make him known: 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by

powerless; and it is sometimes contended that the command to stretch out the powerless arm illustrates the principle on which sinners, who are unable to believe, are yet commanded to believe. But the illustration is a mere figment. There is no ground in anything said either by Matthew, Mark, or Luke, for the assumption that the arm was powerless. And it was restored whole, as the other: It would be a sublime spectacle; and all the more when regarded as but one single gleam of glory, coming forth from the infinite fulness that was within.

VER. 14. But the Pharisees went out, and took counsel against Him, that they might destroy Him: They could not answer His reasonings. They could not even detect in His gracious works any working which they might tortuously construe into an actionable breach of the sabbath commandment; but they felt that His entire bearing and demeanour threw all their little artificial knick-knacks of religiousness into the shade. There was something in His way of looking at subjects, and something in His way of acting, both in reference to God and in reference to men, which was in diametrical antagonism to all that peculiarity and singularity of creed and character which they had been laboriously building up for themselves, but on the foundation of unchanged selfishness of soul; and hence they hated Him; and they did not repress their hatred. It grew; and at length the idea rose up from beneath, *We must get quit of such a Being. Let us destroy Him.*

VER. 15. But Jesus knew it, and departed thence: Or, as Purvey, in his revision of Wycliffe's version, gives it, *And Jhesus knewe it, and wente awai fro thennus.* The expression employed in our Authorized version, *when Jesus knew it*, is apt to suggest the idea that some time elapsed before Jesus became cognisant of the intentions of the Pharisees. But no such idea is involved in the original phrase. It is rather implied that Jesus, having, *as a matter of course*, an intuitive cognisance of what was transpiring, left the locality. And many followed Him; and He healed them all: A popular expression evidently meaning that *He healed all of them who were sick or diseased.* It is implied, however, that so large a proportion of those who followed Him stood in need of healing, that the whole multitude might, in popular representation, take their denomination from that proportion.

VER. 16. And charged them that they should not make Him known: With the greatest wisdom He wished to avoid precipitation in His movements, and in the affairs of His kingdom. The people, as a whole, were not ready to do justice to His person or to His cause; and He was content to work on for a season in comparative obscurity. He was not ambitious of notoriety, or of exciting around Himself a frenzy of popularity. He *peremptorily charged them that they should not make Him known, or manifest.* (Comp. chaps. viii. 4, ix. 30.)

VER. 17. That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet: Namely, in chap. xlii. 1-4. The evangelist recognised in that prophetic oracle a reference to the Messiah; and he assumes that the same infinite Mind

Esaias the prophet, saying, 18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgement to

which had been at work in giving the prediction was at work in securing its fulfilment. Some expositors indeed suppose that there is only an accommodation of the words of the oracle to the Messiah, and that Cyrus was the personage referred to. Saadias and Koppe take this view. Abenezra and Grotius again, and Döderlein, suppose that it is Isaiah himself who is referred to. Gesenius thinks that it is the prophets collectively who are meant. Jarchi, Rosenmüller, and Maurer think that it is the Jewish people who are described, or at least the more worthy portion of them. But all these opinions are for many reasons untenable, and the view of the Chaldee Paraphrast, and of Kimchi and Abarbanel, and the great body of Christian expositors, is manifestly the true view, that it is the Messiah who was seen by the prophet from afar, and depicted. The passage quoted is reproduced in a free and easy manner.

VER. 18. Behold My Servant, whom I have chosen: Or, more literally, *whom I chose*. It is the Divine Father who speaks; and He refers to the time when His plan for the salvation of men was formed in His mind. The word rendered *servant* is, in Greek, of ambiguous import (*παῖς*). It may either mean *child* or *servant*, being used somewhat like our word *boy*. The Hebrew word which it translates has no corresponding ambiguity. It means *servant*. But the two-sidedness of the Greek word made it peculiarly applicable to the Messiah, in whom the two relationships were combined. He was both *son* and *servant*, coming into our world, not to do His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him. My beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased: Or, more literally, *My beloved, in reference to whom My soul was well pleased*. From of old, the Father was well pleased in reference to the *Son* as undertaking a work of mediatorial service. At the moment, as it were, that the *Son* proffered to undertake the mighty work, the Father's soul was well pleased. The word *soul* is popularly ascribed to the Father. It is, for the moment, regarded as being simply the *centre of self consciousness*. Such a centre there must be in the nature or essence of the Father, as also in the nature or essence of the *Son*, and in the nature or essence of the Holy Spirit. It is probable that there was a reference to this prophecy of Isaiah, in the testimony that was uttered by the 'voice from heaven' at our Lord's baptism. (See chap. iii. 17.) If so, we see that the Greek word which represents the Hebrew word for *servant* (עֶבֶד) was then freely turned round to present its other import of *child* or *son*. I will put My Spirit upon Him: The reference is to the Divine or Holy Spirit, who has a concurrent part to act in the great work of the world's regeneration. That Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove, and abode on Him. (Matt. iii. 16.) Jesus, with unlimited reciprocity, received the fulness of His dovelike influence, at once for His own personal ministry, and for the ministry of His special commissioners and of His people at large. And He shall show judgement to the Gentiles: That is, *He shall announce judgement to the (Gentile) nations*. He shall announce to the Gentiles that He is about to establish in their midst a throne of judgement. The word *judgement* has perplexed commentators, and many of them, as at their wits' end, have freely interpreted it as meaning *the gospel*, or *laws*, or *law*, or *what is right*, or *the right doctrine*, or *the right method of worship*, or *the right way of acting*. The base of idea in all these interpretations is

the Gentiles. 19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench,

not far off the mark. But the word just means *judging*, or *judgement*; and the idea embodied in the prediction is, that it would be the aim of the Messiah, as universal Judge, to put all things to rights among all nations. The judicial function is one of the most important elements in the office of a monarch. It is in virtue of it that differences between man and man are adjusted, while the rights of all the members of the community are vindicated, so that harmony and co-operation may be secured. Without *judging* or *judgement*, society could not possibly hang together. Without *just judging* or *judgement*, there would be no real contentment, and no stable harmony and prosperity. The Messiah has announced, not to the Jews only but to the Gentiles also, to all the world, that He has come to adjust the differences that divide man from man, "and He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples; and" by and by "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. ii. 4). Thus it is the case that while there is a delightful sense in which the Messiah came not into the world "to judge the world, but to save the world" (John xii. 47), there is at the same time, and on the other side of the subject, a sublime sense in which He came into the world to judge the world, that He might ultimately save it. He came not to deal with sinful men on the ground of absolute law, and thus to condemn the world to the endurance of irretrievable penalties. But He came to deal with sinful men on the ground of His own propitiation for their sins, and thus to settle, as an arbitrator, all their differences one with another, people with people and person with person. He came to establish universal peace, amity, and brotherhood.

VER. 19. He shall not strive: In a contentious spirit, as by a species of spiritual pugnacity or wrangling. Nor cry aloud: Ostentatiously calling attention to Himself and to His message. Neither shall any one hear His voice in the streets: Bawling for notoriety. "He eschews," says Dr. Thomas, "all the miserable tricks of the candidate for popularity." (*Genius of the Gospel*, p. 260.) It is in this verse, which exhibits the meek modesty of our Lord, that the particular element is found for which the evangelist adduced the quotation.

VER. 20. A bruised reed shall He not break: "A most beautiful picture," says Luther, "of Christ's character." He will be lovingly gentle and tender toward all the weak ones among men. Has any one been roughly stricken down and trampled on? Is he lying like a bruised reed in a marsh? Jesus will not despise him, or overlook him. Jesus will not plant His footstep on the rude footprint of him who has gone before. No. He will certainly step aside, and stoop; and, putting forth His gentle hand, He will tenderly raise up again the poor feeble sorely crushed thing. And smoking flax—a smoking 'week' (or wick), as Sir John Cheke renders it—shall He not quench: Or extinguish. Has any one's candle been blown out? Has some heartless one from around, or from beneath, come in and ruthlessly snuffed it out? Has the lamp that enlivened the heart and the home been all but extinguished? Has the flame ceased to burn? Is there but a spark remaining? Jesus will be careful of that spark. He will 'stay His rough wind in the day of His east wind,' and not

till he send forth judgement unto victory. 21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb : and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. 23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? 24 But

blow severely. He will gently breathe upon the expiring hope, that it may be revived. Till He send forth judgement unto victory : The idea is that the Messiah shall persevere in His own quiet, gentle, meek, unostentatious, unobstreperous way, healing heart after heart, and adjusting difference after difference, until He shall succeed in getting His gracious arbitrativè action thrust in victoriously upon all the injustices and unrighteousnesses that alienate man from man, and men from God. With all His gentleness, Jesus has a battle to fight, with men, for men. He will continue to fight it, *throwing out* arrow after arrow at every object that opposes His aims, until victory crown His efforts. Then shall the world be at peace. Being justified by faith, every man shall have peace with God, and be at peace with all his fellow men.

VER. 21. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust : Or, according to a more probable reading of the text, *And by His name shall Gentiles hope*. By means of His name, and in virtue of all the grand realities that are represented by His name, shall the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, have hope, hope of a glorious future both for time and for eternity. The text that was before our translators had the expression, *in His name* (*ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ*). It corresponds to the text of the Septuagint version, *on His name* (*ἐντ*). But almost every uncial manuscript in existence omits the *in* : in which case it is best to translate the expression, *by His name*. Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, follow the reading of the uncial manuscripts.

VER. 22. Then was brought to Him one possessed with a demon, blind and dumb : The poor man was under demonic influence to such an extent that he had not the use of his nobler senses. The mind was in a state of siege, and its principal avenues were blockaded. Let no one marvel. There are multitudes of evil influences playing around us all, and seeking to get *in* upon us. In different circumstances and eras the modes of this evil influence vary in their manifestations and developments. (See on chaps. iv. 24, viii. 28.) And He healed him, so that the blind and dumb both spake and saw : A mirroring to the senses of the spiritual deliverances which it is the delight of Jesus to work in all places and ages.

VER. 23. And all the crowds were amazed, and said, Is this the Son of David? The form of the question expresses bewilderment and hesitation ; but hesitation nevertheless that inclined to a *negative* decision. The idea that the Wonder-worker was the Messiah, the Messianic Son of David, was forced in upon their minds ; but yet they could not entertain it. *Wonderful as this Wonder-worker is, He is not a prince. He was not born in a palace. Is He not a Nazarene? He seems not to be fit to be a great military conqueror and our king. Can it be the case that He is David's illustrious son? Surely no.* Such is the bewilderment that is expressed by the query of the multitudes. The probability of an affirmative answer was erroneously assumed by our older translators, Tyndale, and the authors of the Geneva version, and hence the *not* which they intruded into the query. This *not* was wisely omitted by King James's translators. It is not

when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. 25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: 26

found in the 1611 edition, the primary edition. Neither is it found in the four succeeding folio editions, those of the years 1613, 1617, 1634, 1640. But somehow or other it has got smuggled into our present copies. It is found in Blayney's revised edition of 1769; and long before that it cropped up occasionally and curiously. It cropped up, for example, in Bentley's 12mo edition of 1646, but it is omitted in his subsequent edition of 1648. It is found too in John Field's edition of 1657, though it had been omitted in his edition of 1653. The *not* is rightly omitted in Matt. vii. 16, xxvi. 22, 25; Mark iv. 21, xiv. 19; Luke vi. 39; etc.

VER. 24. But when the Pharisees heard it—when they heard the particulars of the miracle—they said, This fellow does not cast out the demons but by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. (See on chap. x. 25.) They recklessly and maliciously threw out the horrible idea that Jesus was acting in collusion with the devil. The expression *by Beelzebub* is literally *in Beelzebub*, that is, *in union with Beelzebub*. They affirmed that Jesus and Beelzebub were somehow or other in copartnership. They were more closely united still; they were interlocked. The one was *in* the other. Beelzebub was *in* Jesus. Jesus was *in* Beelzebub. It was the devil that they meant when they spoke of Beelzebub. (See ver. 26.) Originally indeed the word *Beelzebub* was a sarcastic parody on *Beelzebub*, the God of the Ekronites. (2 Kings i. 2, 3, 16.) *Beelzebub* means *Lord of flies*. The name had probably been given because of some deliverance from a plague. But *Beelzebub* means *Lord of filth*. The parody appeared to the Hebrew mind to be lucky, as expressing felicitously the national detestation of the idol of Ekron. Hence, after bandying it about *in gusto*, they applied it to Satan himself. (See on chap. x. 25.) And as thus applied, it is really, when the idea of literary sport is excluded, not a bad name.

VER. 25. But Jesus knew their thoughts,—in virtue of that penetrating and interpenetrating intuition that made Him the 'searcher of hearts,'—and said to them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: These are general principles which neither Pharisees, nor any others, would be disposed to call in question. So skilfully does our Lord seek for a common standing-place on which He might begin His argumentation with His opponents. Intestine animosities and divisions in kingdoms, cities, or families, tend to ruin. For a season, indeed, the existence of opposing political parties in a kingdom or city may throw a wholesome check upon official selfishness and the unbridled dominancy of a predominating class. But the necessity of parties, to act on each other as mutual checks, indicates a state of society that is already corrupt to the core, and carrying in its bosom the seeds of collapse and dissolution. These seeds will at one time or other spring up and grow to maturity, unless a national regeneration intervene. But a state of opposing political parties in a kingdom or city, parties acting and reacting constitutionally on each other, and working together for the common weal, is a totally different state from internecine enmity and civil war. It is to such enmity and war that our Saviour refers, a division against self that may

and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? 27 And if I by Beelzebub cast

be exemplified in miniature within the little community of a family circle. How sad when enmity is there, and strife, and war! How sad when daggers are in looks, and when words are thrust home to the heart like swords!

VER. 26. *And if Satan casts out Satan*: As ye allege. The word *Satan* is a Hebrew word meaning *Adversary*, and Young here renders the clause, *And if the Adversary casteth out the Adversary*. But as the evangelist himself retains the Hebrew word untranslated, it is proper for the translator of the evangelist to follow his example; more especially as the word *Satan* has, in English, become a well known proper name. Our Saviour, for the moment, identifies in argument all Satan's subordinate agents with Satan himself. Their interests are identical. He is divided against himself: Or, more literally, *He was divided against himself*; a previous division against himself must have taken place, if now he is casting out himself. How then shall his kingdom stand? Jesus admits that Satan has a kingdom. He admits that he is a king. But he is an evil king, a tyrant, and a usurper. His kingdom is a community of wretches and scoundrels and slaves. There are abundant elements of dissension and anarchy in it. Nevertheless it *stands*. And therefore it is kept for the time being by the iron rod of the tyrant on the throne.

VER. 27. *And if I by Beelzebub cast out the demons*—the Saviour here passes on to another argument, that kind of argument which logicians call *argumentum ad hominem*—by whom do your sons cast out? Therefore they shall be your judges: It has been much disputed who are meant by the expression *your sons*. Some, inclusive of Dr. Chandler, have felt so hard pressed by the phrase as to think that the Old Testament prophets are referred to. But these prophets were rather the *fathers* of those who were addressed by our Saviour than their *sons*. Chrysostom, Jerome, and Theophylact think that it is our Saviour's apostles who are referred to. But it is difficult to see on what principle our Saviour would designate them *the sons of the Pharisees*. And it is easy to see that the Pharisees would feel as little scruple in ascribing their miracles, as they felt in ascribing the miracles of their Master, to the collusive influence of Satan. We cannot hesitate to agree with Calvin when he says "I have no doubt that He means the *exorcists*." Luther took the same view. The great body of modern expositors are of the same opinion. We know from Mark ix. 38 that there were some who practised exorcism, who nevertheless did not belong to the 'following' of Jesus, although they used the name of Jesus in their efforts to cast out demons. We know also from Acts xix. 13 that there were, at a later period, "vagabond Jews, exorcists, who took upon them to call over them that had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." There were "seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, who did so" at Ephesus. (Acts xix. 14.) We know too from Josephus that there were Jewish exorcists in his day. He mentions in his *Antiquities*, viii. 3: 5, that he himself had seen "a certain man of his own people, named "Eleazer, releasing people who were demoniacal, in the presence of Vespasian, "his sons, his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers." He narrates some of the processes employed by this Eleazer, and mentions that he made use of the name of Solomon in his adjurations. In his *Wars* also (vii. 1: 3); Josephus gives some account of an herb which was said to be of use in the

out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore

casting out of demons, "which," says he, "are no other than the spirits of the wicked, that enter into such as are alive and kill them, unless some help can be obtained against them." Justin Martyr also, in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* (cap. 85) makes reference to those who were by profession Jewish exorcists, and mentions that they were often successful in their operations when they adjured in the name of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, while they were unsuccessful when they adjured simply in the name of kings or prophets or patriarchs. It would hence appear that exorcism had been, to a greater or less extent, practised among the Jews, even as it has continued to be practised by their 'apes,' as Calvin calls them, in the Roman Catholic church. Indeed, as the later Jewish exorcists often *aped* the method of our Lord's apostles, Calvin called the Roman Catholic exorcists "the apes of apes." But it is needless to jump to the conclusion that the whole system of exorcism was from top to bottom a system of mere juggling and imposture. In multitudes of cases, undoubtedly, there would be a very large amount of trick and claptrap on the one hand, and simple medicine on the other. But there would be other cases in which spirit would really operate on spirit. If there can be, in certain peculiar or predisposing circumstances physical and supra-physical, operations of demonic spirits on human spirits (see on chaps. iv. 24, viii. 28), there may also be, in connection more particularly with certain peculiar idiosyncrasies of constitution, reflex operations of a counterpart character, operations of human spirits on demonic spirits. And such operations are not necessarily confined to individuals who are eminently pure and holy. There *may* thus be exorcists, and exorcists not distinguished for Christian excellency. (See chap. vii. 22.) There have been. Perhaps there are. But as sometimes much of conscious imposture, and sometimes much of unconscious self imposition, has mingled with real peculiarity of constitution and of power, there has been a tendency on the part of investigators to resolve all into jugglery, and to deny the reactive agency of human spirits in relation to the surrounding spiritual world, supra-human and infra-human. In consequence too of this same element of imposition, as well as for another reason, there have been much blundering and bungling and in-success on the part of exorcists, ancient and modern. (Acts xix. 16.) The other reason, combining with imposture and self imposition, is simply the essential limitation and littleness of men. This occasions insuccess on some such principle as the moral influence of individuals is limited and controlled by the counter peculiarities and relative power of the other human individuals with whom they come in contact, and whom they attempt to influence. When the Saviour then says to His calumniators, *If I by Beelzebub cast out the demons, by whom do your sons cast out?* He refers to the well known fact that there were numerous adherents of their own religious profession, *sons of the pharisaic body*, who practised exorcism more or less successfully. Is it, asks our Saviour, by Beelzebub that they cast out demons? He knew that His calumniators could not make the allegation; otherwise they would be self condemned for not dealing with the delinquents by ecclesiastical process and penalties. He knew, moreover, that these exorcists were highly esteemed among the people, and regarded as being, in the main at least, earnest and devoted men, who were trying, not to oppose, but to promote, the interests of their fellow men, and not to promote, but to oppose, the interests of demons and of Satan. *Therefore they shall be your judges: Therefore, that is, Since it*

they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then

is the case that certain of the sons of your own party do practise the profession of casting out demons, and since you have never alleged, and dare not allege, that it is by Beelzebul that they are successful in their exorcisms, I shall willingly refer to their judicial decision your calumnious allegation in reference to My miracles. They will, they must, condemn it.

VER. 28. But if by God's Spirit I cast out the demons: Jesus, in casting out the demons, acted in a manner altogether different from the manner of the exorcists; even as, in healing mere bodily diseases, He acted in a manner altogether different from ordinary physicians. He spake the word, and it was done. And He was successful in cases that were utterly beyond the power of ordinary practitioners. He stood at the fountain head of power. He was in Himself, indeed, the Fount of power; and in an instant, as by the simple nod of His will, He accomplished whatsoever results He pleased. He did not need, either for intensifying His own energy or for intensifying the receptivity of His patients, to have recourse to elaborate preparations, and fumigations, and embrocations, and incantations. It was enough for Him to utter the simple word of command. He cast out demons by a direct exertion of Divine power. This Divine power was, in one respect, His own; in another respect it was the power of the Spirit; and in another respect still it was the power of the Father. The Three-in-One co-operated severally and unitedly. The power was Christ's own, inasmuch as He was Himself truly Divine. It was the power of the Spirit, inasmuch as the Spirit was always co-operatively present with Him, sustaining and replenishing His humanity. It was the power and 'finger' (Luke xi. 20) of the Father, inasmuch as in the entire scheme of mediation He represented the prerogatives of the Godhead. Then the kingdom of God has already come upon you. You have not observed it. It has not come with observation. But it has come. The King is present; and He has subjects too. The King and His subjects constitute the kingdom. "It should be particularly noted," remarks Luther, "that Christ uses the *præterite* tense of the verb."

VER. 29. The Saviour as it were says, *Or, to illustrate the case and make it plainer to your apprehension.* How can one enter into the house of the strong one. The Saviour is not speaking of strong ones in general. He is, in His mind, pointing to, and picturing forth, some one in particular. The picture is intended to represent Satan. Jesus had already entered into his house, his castle. He had effected a forcible entrance, in the interests of law and order, and at the instance of the King of kings; for Satan is a rebel, a robber, and an outlaw. **And spoil his goods:** literally, *his vessels*, his precious vessels, his vessels of silver and gold and brass and valuable earthenware, his 'vessels unto honour.' These *vessels* are specified in particular, as denoting the prized property of the strong one. Jesus, by His wonderful words and works, was already engaged in seizing, as spoil, that precious property. It was not the real property of Satan. It was stolen property. It belonged to God. And Jesus, in seizing it, was only delivering "the captives of the mighty, and the prey of the terrible one." (Isa. xlix. 24, 25.) He was recapturing the captives. **Except he first bind the strong one:** Jesus had already done this. The Stronger than the strong grappled with

he will spoil his house. 30 He that is not with me is against me ; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

the strong in the scene of the temptation (chap. iv.), and overcame him. From that time Satan has been bound. He is fettered. He has not had such unlimited scope as he had before. Such is the picture. Its interpretation is this : The effect of the appearance of Christ in our nature, and of His life, and life's work, is a mighty restraint on Satan. Formerly, Satan had almost all his own way. Now a new order of things has been initiated, and is progressing. After the propitiatory death was accomplished, Satan's influence was still further abridged, and the kingdom of heaven was more firmly established. Even then however, and even yet, there is but the beginning of the end. And then he will spoil his house : A beginning has been effected, and the work of lawful spoliation will go on.

VER. 30. **He that is not with Me is against Me** : A general principle in relation to Christ, but here enunciated with a particular reference. What this particular reference is, has been disputed among expositors ; but we doubt not that Chrysostom took the right view when he applied the apophthegm to Christ's relation to Satan. He says : " Behold also a fourth refutation. For " what is My desire ? saith Jesus. To bring men to God, to teach virtue, to " proclaim the kingdom. But what is the desire of the devil and the evil " spirits ? The contrary of Mine. How then should he that gathers not with " Me, nor is at all with Me, be likely to co-operate with Me ? " Jerome takes the same view (*ad diabolum refertur*). So does Theophylact. The Saviour, as it were, says, The calumny is ridiculous. Satan is not with Me in any of My labours, or in any of My aims. He must therefore be against Me. And when ye throw out your foul allegation ye are on the very point of stumbling into the darkest of moral abysses (see next verse). The principle, *he that is not with Me is against Me*, is, however, as we have said, general in relation to Christ. It is, in fact, universal. There are no exceptions to its application. There is no neutrality possible in relation to Christ. *He that is not with Him is against Him*. There is no middle standing place between the alternatives. The reason is this : in the sphere of things moral a man must be either right or wrong. There is no middle point which he can occupy. Christ's character, office, and work, dip down into, and merge in, that which is absolutely right and absolutely good. Christ and God are one. God, and the Absolutely Right and Good in things moral, are one. God is always with the right, and against the wrong. And so is Christ. He is always and absolutely right and good, in His character, office, and work ; and the absolutely right and good are nowhere else than with Him. Whosoever consequently is with Christ is with the absolutely right. Drinking into infinite Love, he is loving in the highest sense of the term, and is right. But whosoever is not with Christ drinks from another fountain, and is away from God, from godliness, from goodness. We have the obverse side of the Saviour's maxim in Mark ix. 40. **And he that gathereth not with Me scattereth** : A parallelistic representation of the same moral maxim. Christ has come into our world to be a Gatherer in relation to men. He is the new and the true Centre of human unity. They who tend toward Him tend toward one another. They get gathered, like sheep into a fold, or like a family into a home. But selfishness divides men ; isolates them ; scatters them abroad. This selfishness is the policy of Satan.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy

VER. 31. Therefore I say unto you: *Therefore*, that is, Since it is the case that these My reasonings are incontrovertible, and since consequently the allegation that I am acting in partnership with Beelzebul is foul and false in the extreme, it becomes Me to give to My reckless calumniators a solemn and most awful warning. Every sin and blasphemy: *Sin* is the generic representation, *blasphemy* the specific. *Blasphemy* means *defamation*, or *calumniation*, or *malicious evil speaking*; one of the most heinous and odious of sins. In the Anglo-Saxon version the word is rendered *bysmor-spæc*, that is, *besmearing speech*. Shall be forgiven unto men: On the footing of mediatorial grace, or of the propitiation; provided, but only provided, a certain particular or exceptional sin or blasphemy be not committed. See next clause of the verse. Principal Campbell renders this clause *is pardonable*. It is a very free rendering, and good so far as it goes. But it does not go far enough. It does not reach to the basis of the Saviour's idea. That basis is this: All sins, howsoever numerous and howsoever aggravated, that do not culminate in or mature into the particular sin hereafter specified, shall be forgiven. Their forgiveness is not only rendered a possibility, it is secured by the absence from the soul of the particular sin and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. But the blasphemy of the Spirit: That is, *the blasphemy of which the Spirit is the object, the blasphemy against the Spirit*. What is this? There has been great diversity of opinion on the subject; and quite a little library of books has been written upon it. "Perchance," says Augustin, "no question can be asked that is of greater significance" (*forte in omnibus sanctis Scripturis nulla major quæstio, nulla difficilior, invenitur*: Sermo lxxi., § 8). Many have supposed that the sin is that which was committed by the Pharisees when they alleged that our Lord cast out demons through Beelzebul, prince of the demons. This was the opinion of "the ever memorable John Hales" of Eton (see his *Tract concerning the Sin of Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*). He says: "The speech of the Pharisees, whereby they slandered our Saviour's miracles, wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, is properly the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." He holds it "a probability that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is not committable by any Christian which lived not in the time of our Saviour." John Wesley agreed with Mr. Hales in his chief opinion. He says: "How much stir has been made about this! How many sermons, yea volumes, have been written concerning it! And yet there is nothing plainer in all the Bible. It is neither more nor less than the ascribing those miracles to the power of the devil, which Christ wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost." Adam Clarke and Benson and Barnes echo Mr. Wesley's opinion in terms almost equally decisive. Many others have contended for the same view, inclusive of Reinhard and Mosheim, as also of John Jacob Flatten, who wrote a prize essay on the subject (*Untersuchung der Preis-Frage von der Sünde wider den heiligen Geist*: 1770). So too Bloomfield, Norton, and Webster-and-Wilkinson, and, in the main, Zuingli. But there are insuperable objections to this theory. (1) The sin referred to seems rather to have been a blasphemy against the Son of man than a blasphemy against the Spirit. The element of blasphemy against the Spirit, that was in the sin, was implicit only and partial, whereas the element of blasphemy against the Son of man was explicit and complete. (2) There seems to be something arbitrary in the assumption that

against the *Holy Ghost* shall not be forgiven unto men. 32

the one unpardonable sin should be the ascription of certain of Christ's miracles to Beelzebul. Then (3) our Saviour's murderers were of the same opinion with the Pharisees referred to. They regarded Christ as an impostor and blasphemers. But yet our Saviour looked upon their sin as pardonable. He cried, on His cross, "Father, *forgive them*; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). Hence Whitby, in his dissertation *Concerning the Nature of the Sin against the Holy Ghost*, swings to the opposite pole from the opinion of Mr. Hales, and contends that the sin "neither was, nor could be, then committed, "when the Saviour spake these words, or whilst He was on earth, because the "*Holy Ghost was not yet come.*" With Whitby agree Doddridge, Macknight, and Holden. But what then is the unpardonable sin? "It is," says Calvin, "a pouring of contempt, knowingly and willingly, on the Spirit of God." Beza was of the same opinion. It is a sin, he held, that can be committed only by those who have been "once enlightened" and "made partakers of the Holy Ghost" (Heb. vi. 4). Quenstedt, and others of the Lutheran theologians, contended that none but the regenerated could be guilty of the sin. Both Lutherans and Calvinists united in insisting that the sin is possible only to such as are more or less illuminated by the Spirit. "Take away," says Gottlob Werner, the idea that the way of salvation is known, and you take away the possibility of the sin (*Disputatio de Peccato in Spiritum S.*, § 21). In most of the more modern discussions on the subject the same idea is a ruling element, although it is often expressed, not so much in theological, as in philosophical phraseology. Julius Müller, for instance, holds that the essence of the sin consists in the *hatred of what is Divine, as Divine (der Hass wider das erkannte Göttliche)*. Its form of blasphemy is the *expression of this hatred (Lehre von der Sünde: B. v.)*. Gurlitt had previously maintained that the essence of the sin is *indifference toward what is good and holy*. Grashof had maintained that its essence is something more determinate, *deliberate hatred toward what is good*. So Martin in his *Dissertation on the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*. Tholuck embraced both representations, regarding them as exhibiting different phases of the same moral obliquity, the one being more intense than the other. (The one is *heisser Brand*, the other is *kalter Brand*.) Tholuck is undoubtedly right in his comprehension, if we allow that actual *indifference to moral good* is a possibility to moral agents. We think, however, that in the very conception of moral good an imperative is implied; and this imperative must either be accepted or resisted. If not accepted, it is resisted; and when resisted volitionally, it is, and must be, hated emotionally. The maxim of our Saviour in reference to Himself, *He that is not with Me is against Me*, is emphatically applicable to that principle of principles in all moral natures on which the moral imperative rests. No middle point of indifference is possible. But what then is the unpardonable sin? Whatever it is, it is based on the presupposition of universal grace. On this presupposition alone is it possible to see that *every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men* except that which matures itself into unpardonableness by maturing itself into *blasphemy against the Spirit*. If any sin does not mature itself into this blasphemy, it does not strike its roots into the heart of the heart. It is not ineradicable. Indeed, it has not sufficient soil in which to live and thrive for ever. It *must die*. The depths of the heart have been preoccupied by the holy evangelical influence of the Spirit of God. That influence has not been shut out, but let in. The Spirit has not

And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it

been blasphemed. The *blasphemy against the Spirit* is the scornful rejection of the Spirit as the only real Revealer of the holy propitiousness of God. It is the office of the Spirit to reveal the holy propitiousness of God. It is His office to take of the things of Jesus, and to show them unto men. He who accepts the revelation accepts the heavenly tidings, and is saved. His heart gets into it the seed of everlasting bliss and goodness and glory. He who rejects the revelation, treating it as an imposture or a lie, blasphemes the Spirit as a Liar and Impostor; and thus shuts out from his heart the only 'word,' message, news, or thought of God, that could be the seed, in the sinner's heart, of everlasting bliss and goodness and glory. It is thus the case that the cause of ultimate ruin is never in any case a defect, but always in every case a defiance, of heavenly grace. The sin against the Holy Ghost is therefore, as Oettingen most justly contends, *the only cause of damnation* (see his noble treatise *De peccato in Spiritum Sanctum*, cap. v.). **Shall not be forgiven:** All sins shall be remitted, that do not ripen into the blasphemy of the Spirit, that is, that do not deepen into the rejection of the gospel. But the rejection of the gospel, or in other words, the blasphemy of the Spirit, if persevered in to the end of probation, *shall not be forgiven*. Let the conditional clause be noted, *if persevered in to the end of probation*; for that must never be mentally lost sight of. Whenever we read anything to the effect that *he who believeth shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall be condemned*, we must always, in reference to both alternatives, interpose mentally the conditional clause, *provided there be perseverance to the end of probation*. Chrysostom, consequently, was altogether mistaken in reference to the Saviour's meaning, when he said, "Blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven, no, not to those who repent"; for the real reason of the unpardonableness of the sin is just that very element of its essence which consists in the wilful and determined refusal to repent, the wilful and determined refusal to look at sin and self in the light that emanates from the Spirit of God. Augustin, hence, was entirely right when, in a practical manner, he resolved the blasphemy of the Spirit into *impenitence* (*Ipsa ergo impenitentia est Spiritus blasphemia, quæ non remittetur neque in hoc sæculo, neque in futuro*: Sermo lxxi., § 20). Let no one puzzle himself by supposing that any other sin, equally with the blasphemy of the Spirit, would debar from forgiveness, *if persevered in to the end of probation*. All other sins conceivable must either be sins of presumption and insolence, or sins of ignorance. If they be sins of presumption and insolence, they run up into the blasphemy of the Spirit. If they be sins of ignorance, then, though continuing in fact, they are repented of in principle, when sin, as sin, is repented of.

VER. 32. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: Even although he should never, while on earth, find out his error. The Saviour intimates to His calumniators that it was possible for them to think Him an impostor, and to speak against Him as such, and yet to look for the promised Messiah 'who was to come,' and to trust in the work of that promised Messiah, and thus to have faith in the holy propitiousness of God. This was a possibility; and hence if, in rejecting the Son of man, they did not proceed to reject the Spirit too, who had revealed to them that the Messiah was to come, and was to bring salvation, they would get forgiveness for the calumnious word which they had conceived in their heart and uttered with their mouth. It was a gracious possibility, giving a delightful glimpse of hope in reference to many

shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak

Jews of modern times, as well as in reference to Jews of the olden times, and in reference to many others in analogous conditions. But yet the very fact that the Saviour here refers to the subject in connection with the sin that *shall not be forgiven*, and draws a sharp line of discrimination between the two, shows that, in His apprehension, the utterers of the *word against the Son of man*, while standing apart from the utterers of the corresponding word against the Spirit of God, were yet standing on the awful brink of that state in which forgiveness would be an utter impossibility. But whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit: Our Saviour employs the language of warning. There was but a step between the rejection of Himself and the rejection of the Holy Spirit. It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor in that which is to come: The expression, *neither in this age nor in that which is to come*, seems to be just an extended way of saying *never*. (Comp. Mark iii. 29.) Strictly speaking indeed, the representation carries the mind only along the currency of the present age of the world, and then proceeds to carry it along the currency of the age that is to come. And there the mind's thought is left. It looks, but cannot see. A point of time is never found at which forgiveness comes in.

VER. 33. 'Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit: The *his* in this last clause is needlessly intruded by our translators. The literal translation is much better, *the tree is known by the fruit*. The *his* in the preceding clauses is noticeable as an archaism in our English idiom. (See on chap. v. 13.) Our Saviour uses the word *make* declaratively or judicially as equivalent to *make out* or *pronounce*. He calls upon the Pharisees to be consistent in the sentence which they pronounced concerning Himself. Either pronounce the tree to be good, and its fruit good; or pronounce it to be bad, and its fruit bad. *Don't inconsistently pronounce the tree to be bad, while you pronounce its fruit to be good. Either admit that I am good, and in partnership with the Spirit of God, since you admit that My works, such as the deliverance of demoniacs, are good: Or else, if you will maintain that I am bad, and in league with the evil spirit, be consistent, and maintain and proclaim that My works are bad too, and diabolical.* This declarative or judicial use of the word *make* is common enough. He that believeth not God *hath made Him a liar*" (1 John v. 10). "Thou, being a man, *makest Thyself God*" (John x. 23). See John viii. 53.

VER. 34. O generation of vipers! The Rheims version has it, *You vipers' broodes!* Neither translation is perfect; and it is perhaps impossible to find a perfect rendering in English. The term rendered *generation* or *brood* is plural (*γεννήματα*); but it does not suggest a *plurality of broods*. Sir John Cheke's translation is good, *offspring*. The Saviour, who could see the heart, and who was in no danger of judging erroneously or harshly, perceived in His calumniators the trail of the serpent spirit. When Goodness came into their midst, they crawled round and round it, watching maliciously their opportunity

good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. 36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

to attack it in the heel, that they might if possible inject the venom of their soul and bring it down into the dust. They were the enemies of the Son of man, and of the sons of men. How can ye, being evil, speak good things? No wonder that your words are bad and base. The heart, out of which the words proceed, is vicious to the core. No wonder that the streams are noxious; the fountain is full of poison. No wonder that your fruit is bad; the tree that bears it is corrupt. It is impossible that a man can be good outwardly who is bad inwardly. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: And "what is in the well," as Trapp says, "will be in the bucket." Even when the words of the mouth are 'smoother than butter,' and 'softer than oil,' they are really 'drawn swords,' if war and malice be in the heart. (Ps. lv. 21.)

VER. 35. The good man, out of his good treasure, bringeth forth good things; and the evil man, out of his evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things: The words of a good man correspond with the goodness that is stored in his heart, and are gracious. The words of a bad man correspond with the badness which he keeps within his heart, and are as poisoned arrows and daggers. The word *treasure* means *treasury*, or, as Sir John Cheke renders it, *storhouse*. In the first clause of the verse the expression *of the heart* is added, in our Authorized version and the Received Text, to the expression *the good treasury*. But it was not in the original text. It was the marginal note of some early possessor of the Gospel, and by and by, as it was a *good* marginal note, it crept into the text. It is wanting in all the manuscripts of great authority, and is omitted by all the great modern editors, such as Bengel, Griesbach, Matthæi, Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. Wetstein too and Mill condemned it. *Bringeth forth*: Or, more literally, *flingeth forth*. When a man speaks he not only *brings forth*, he *flings forth*, sometimes to a great distance, what he says.

VER. 36. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement: The Saviour says *idle*. He might have said *evil*. Zorn, in his *Dissertation on the word*, contends that it means *evil*. Castellio translates it *evil*. Norton translates it *vile*, and tries to vindicate the translation. Principal Campbell renders it *pernicious*. But *idle* is the proper rendering; and it is more comprehensive than *evil* or *vile*. It designates what is *not useful*. Of course, no noxious word is *useful*. It is worse than *useless*. It has *no business* in the world. It has *no legitimate work* to do. It had no business to be uttered. The Saviour had no reference, as Whedon very properly remarks, to "the pleasantries of social life," or "to the prattle of the mother to the child, or of children among themselves." Such pleasantries and prattle, if innocent, are exceedingly useful.

VER. 37. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned: One sees here the meaning of the word *justified*. It is just the

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he

opposite of *condemned*. But both *justification* and *condemnation* are judicial acts. When any one *condemns* or *justifies* he acts as a judge. He judges. If he condemns a thing, he judges it to be wrong. If he justifies it, he judges it to be right. But he neither makes it right on the one hand, nor does he make it wrong on the other. He only *makes it out* to be either right or wrong. In like manner, when a person is justified or condemned, he is judged to be right or wrong, righteous or unrighteous. The action is entirely forensic. And hence the man is not made righteous by being justified; nor is he made unrighteous by being condemned. This forensic meaning of the term *justify* is invariable in the New Testament. When it is here said that men shall be either justified or condemned, *out of their words*, at the day of judgement, there is no reference to a righteousness that can be a *sinner's title* to everlasting life and glory. The reference is exclusively to the righteousness that constitutes *moral meetness* for glorification in heaven. The righteousness which constitutes *sinful men's title* to everlasting glory can neither be found in their words nor in their works. It is the gift of God. It can be found in Christ alone. It is 'the righteousness of God' revealed in the gospel. (See Rom. i. 16, 17; iii. 21, 22.) But the righteousness which constitutes men's *moral meetness* for heavenly glory, if ever found at all, must be found in their words and works. It is holiness. It is personal goodness. (See chap. xxv. 34-40.) When the Saviour here says, *by thy 'words' shalt thou be justified*, He does not intend to oppose *words* to *works*. His thought goes deeper. The *works* may be determined from the *words*. *Words are works*; and, in the matter of moral character, they are representative of all other works. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." (Jas. iii. 2.)

VER. 38. Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him: They found occasion in what the Saviour had been saying for what they themselves were about to say. And hence what they were about to say was a kind of *answering*. *Saying, Master—or Teacher, or Rabbi—we would see a sign from Thee: We desire to see a sign from Thee; a sign, or token* as Sir John Cheke renders it, some wonderful phenomenon that would render Thy claims to our confidence indisputable. They quietly, but most wilfully and defiantly, ignored all the wonderful works that our Lord had been performing. They treated these as if they were nothing to the purpose, as if they afforded no real evidence of His heavenly mission. They as it were said, *Show us a real sign, a sign that no one can dispute*. It was no doubt some kind of *miraculous curiosity* that they wanted to see, some portent in the sky, or coming from the sky. (Comp. Luke xi. 16; Matt. xvi. 1; Mark viii. 11.) If He were Himself, for example, to soar up into the sky till He should be out of sight, and were then to come down again in the clouds of heaven; if He were to exhibit some sign like that, then, thought they, He might reasonably expect us to believe on Him! It is strange that Alford, imagining a designed antithesis between heaven and Christ Himself, should suppose that "they wished to see some decisive proof, *not from Himself*, but from heaven." The sign they wanted was, says he, "a sign, *not wrought by Him*, and so able to be suspected of magic art, but one from heaven." And yet the words of the request that was made to our Lord are most express, "We would see a sign *from Thee*."

answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of

VER. 39. But He answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign: Our Saviour saw into their hearts, and discerned the wayward and cavilling spirit that prompted them to ignore all the gracious and beneficent miracles which He had been performing, and to ask for a curiosity-miracle. He saw that even although they were to get the *curiosity-miracle* which they were so childishly fancying to themselves, they would be the first to suspect it, and to declare that it was a mere toy, and that in looking at it they were simply made the victims of an illusion. He knew well that there are *none so blind as those who will not see*. Hence He designates them plainly *an evil and adulterous generation*. They were *evil*, or, as the word is frequently rendered, *wicked*. They were not true men, true to the demands of their conscience. They were false at the core. That is the generic description of their character. Then they were also *adulterous*. That was a specific phase of their character. Webster and Wilkinson take the word literally. "It is to be understood," say they, "as a charge of sensuality, addictedness to the sins of lust." But it is far more probable, indeed certain, that it is to be understood metaphorically and spiritually. The Jewish people were united to the Lord as in a marriage relation, so far as the enjoyment of special favour and privilege was concerned; and it was their duty, not only generically as men, but also specifically and emphatically as Jews, to be faithful to the Lord and most loving and devoted. But again and again they betook themselves to other gods, and committed adultery (Jer. iii. 8, 9, v. 7, xiii. 27; Ezek. xvi. 1-63). And even when they ceased to go after idols of wood and stone, they found out other and more dangerous idols, and committed adultery with them. *Unfaithfulness to God is adultery*. He who gives the chief affections of the heart to any other object than God is an adulterer. Hence the Saviour's expression. **And there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:** It is an exceedingly condensed expression, with an element in it of intentional obscurity, but conveying something like the following ideas: *No sign at all of the kind desired, the curiosity kind, shall be given to this generation (see Mark viii. 12). It would do neither them, nor any others, any real good. Their hatred to Myself would not cease. It will not cease. I clearly foresee it. I see the end that is stretching out from these beginnings. They will utterly reject Me. They will try to get rid of Me. They will cast Me overboard. But they shall not frustrate My mission. In connection with their final efforts to ruin and destroy Me, I shall afford them a sign more wonderful by far than any of the curiosities which they long to see. I call it THE SIGN OF JONAH THE PROPHET. It will far exceed in wonderfulness what happened to Jonah; but in what happened to Jonah there is something that was somewhat analogous to it. It will be of benefit at least to Ninevite-like Gentiles. "Than which doctrine," says Dr. J. Lightfoot, "scarcely anything bit the Jewish nation more sharply."*

VER. 40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale: The word translated *whale* (*κῆτος*) does not specifically mean *whale*. Like the Latin *cetus* or *cete*, it denotes generically any large sea-monster, such as the whale, or the shark, or the large tunnies that abound in the Mediter-

man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

ranean. See Baring's *Dissertation* on the subject. Dr. W. M. Thomson is positive indeed that it was a whale. (*The Land and the Book*, i. 6, p. 69.) Dr. Adam Clarke again is quite lively in his zeal against the idea that a whale is referred to, and he pleads for a shark. "It is well known," he says, "that the throat of a whale is capable of admitting little more than the arm of an ordinary person; but many of the shark species can swallow a man whole, and men have been found whole in the stomachs of several. Besides, the shark is a native of the Mediterranean Sea; but everybody knows that whales are no produce of the Mediterranean Sea, though some have been by accident found there, as in most other parts of the maritime world; but, let them be found where they may, there is none of them capable of swallowing a man,"—even by miracle? If not, why be so positive? M. E. Guers suggests that it may have been a spermaceti whale, which, as it seems, has a wide enough throat (*Jonas Fils d'Amittai*, p. 95). But it is nowhere said in the Bible that Jonah's fish was either a shark or a whale of any kind. It is said, in the book of Jonah itself, that "the Lord had prepared a great fish" (i. 17). The expression *three days and three nights* is an elastic Hebrew idiom, representing a space of time that might indeed cover three complete days and three complete nights, but that might also shrink considerably, both at the beginning and at the ending. Originally it might denote three full days and three full nights; but in every-day usage it got rubbed down, and was freely employed if the middle day and night were complete, though only portions of the other two were added. We have in 2 Chron. x. 5, 12, a specimen of a similar elasticity in chronological language, "And he said unto them, Come again after three days." "So they came on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day." Hence too, in our English idiom, *this day eight days* and *this day se'nnight* (or *seven nights*) denote exactly the same length of time. So in French *huit jours*, just as the German *acht Tage*, the Dutch *acht dagen*, the Danish *otte Dage*, means *se'nnight*; and *fortnight* (or *fourteen nights*) is *quinze jours* or *fifteen days*. Lightfoot shows at length that it was quite in accordance with the Hebrew idiom to compute the fractional parts of the day-night as if they were wholes. So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth: An indirect prediction of His resurrection. See also John ii. 19. In that resurrection, taken with all its precursors and concomitants and consequents, was infolded for universal man the most glorious and satisfying of all Divine 'signs,' or signatures, or seals. Such is the general import and significance of the Saviour's statement. But it has been greatly disputed whether the direct reference of the prediction be to our Lord in His disembodied state, or to our Lord in His exanimated state. It is disputed, in other words, whether it is our Lord's spirit, or our Lord's body, that was to be for three days and for three nights in the heart of the earth. König, in his *Doctrine of Christ's descent into hell* (*Abschnitt*, i., § 13), contends that it must be Christ's spirit that is referred to. Meyer, Stier, Alford, Webster and Wilkinson take the same view. So of course Bellarmin, and Roman Catholic expositors in general. They all rely on the expression *the heart of the earth*, as affording support to their interpretation. It is too strong, they imagine, to denote the superficial sepulchre where the body was laid. But they seem, in the first place, to lose sight of the fact that the Saviour's expression is moulded on the strong representations of Jonah, who said that 'the earth with her bars was about him,' and that he cried 'out of the

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it : because they repented at the preaching of Jonas ; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.
 42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it : for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

belly of hades,' although as a matter of fact his spirit was not in the place of disembodied spirits ; and in the second place they fail to consider that while our Saviour's sepulchre, considered as detached, could not with propriety be represented as *the heart of the earth*, yet, considered as undetached, it formed part and parcel, just as truly as any locality deeper down, of that entire underground region which in its entirety constitutes *the heart of the earth*. We do not doubt that the Saviour makes reference to His body. (Comp. Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 23, xxvii. 63 ; Luke xxiv. 7 ; Acts ii. 24, iii. 15, iv. 10 ; 1 Cor. xv. 4 ; Rom. vi. 4, viii. 11.)

VER. 41. The men of Nineveh—or, more literally still, without the article, *men Nineveh*—shall stand up in judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: The expression *in judgement* is, in the original, *in the judgement* (see next verse). Yet Wakefield could say, "the expression by no means respects the *general judgement*." Comp. chap. xi. 22, 24. Because they repented at the preaching of Jonas ; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here : The expression *a greater than Jonah* is not masculine in the original, but neuter (*πλεῖον*), and *lo*, something greater than *Jonah is here*. Sir John Cheke's translation is, *and lo there is greater than Jonas here*. (Comp. chap. xi. 9.) How intense must have been the self consciousness of our Lord in relation to the fact of His superiority to all the prophets ! How intense too the infatuation of the Jews, hardening their hearts into insensibility in relation to their highest privilege !

VER. 42. A queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it : 'a queen of the south,' that is, 'the Queen of Sheba.' It is remarkable that the expression which is correctly rendered *in the judgement* in this verse should have been rendered without the article in the preceding verse. Tyndale has, in both verses, *at the daye of judgement*. The Rheims has *in the judgement*, in both cases. The Geneva omits the article, but then the omission is in both cases equally. In Cranmer's Bible it is *in the judgement*, in both verses. It must have been by mere oversight, or by an error of the press, that the article was originally omitted in the 41st verse. The expression rendered *shall rise up* (*ἐγερθήσεται*) is used pregnantly, as is the case also with the analogous expression which is employed in the preceding verse. The Saviour had in His mind, as Fritzsche correctly saw, the resurrection *and its inseparable consequents*. This is a much more natural view of the phrase than the view that it merely alludes to the change of posture, or of relative position, that takes place when a witness or accuser *rises up* in court, or makes his appearance. For she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and, lo, something greater than Solomon is here : The kingliness of Christ far exceeded the kingliness of Solomon ; and just as far did His wisdom tower above the wisdom of the wisest of men. Such was simple fact ; and it was no defect of modesty in our Lord to know it and to say it. We must however either assume, on the one hand, that our Lord was incomparably

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. 44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. 45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there:

greater and wiser and kinglier than the greatest and wisest and kingliest of men, or admit on the other, that the least of all the littlenesses of little men, self conceit, was to a greater degree than in any other person who ever lived a prominent feature of His character. Which alternative shall we take? The expression, *the uttermost parts of the earth*, is of course to be popularly interpreted, as uttered from the common geographical standpoint of the time. Sheba was in the southern parts of Arabia.

VER. 43. But whenever the unclean spirit is gone out from the man: The Saviour is picturing a particular case, and speaking parabolically. Hence it is that He says *the man*, that is, the particular man whom He had pictorially in His eye, as parabolically representing the generation of men who were refusing to take advantage of His ministry (see last clause of ver. 45). The parabolic representation would doubtless be suggested by the case of the demoniac referred to in ver. 22, and which had given occasion at once to the calumnious insinuation of the Pharisees, and to the vindictory remarks of our Lord. It passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth it not: It leaveth the haunts of men, disgusted perhaps with itself, and disliking to be a witness of prosperity and happiness which it could not effectually mar. It had *gone out*, because it was *cast out*. And, being thus mastered for the time, it sullenly resorts to *waterless places*, places deserted by men because there is no water there. In these places it broods moodily and maliciously over the baffling to which it has been subjected. Shall it give up its projects of hostility and malice in relation to men? Shall it "strike"? Shall it "retire" from further business? It meditates this project, and that. It tries this plan and that. *It seeketh rest, and findeth none*. "There is no repose in evil," says Dr. Thomas; "it is like the troubled sea."

VER. 44. Then it saith, I will return into my house, whence I came out: Note the demonic impudence, *my house*. It is as if it were to say, *The man was mine: perhaps I shall be able to make him mine again*. And when it is come, it findeth it empty, swept, and garnished: The house is *empty, vacant, unoccupied*. There was One Personage, indeed, who wished to occupy it; and He was eminently worthy. But He was not welcomed. He was not allowed to take possession. He was expressly and rudely refused. There was hence, as it were, a ticket hung out, *Apartments to let*. And they were *swept and garnished*, made ready for immediate occupation, and made enticing too. It was quite an inviting habitation. The broom of self righteousness had been diligently plied. Art and science and skill had been laid under contribution for the decoration of the walls, and for the accumulation of all sorts of ornaments and objects of *virtu* (though by no means of *virtue*).

VER. 45. Then goeth it, and taketh with itself seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter in and dwell there: There is more accommodation than there was before. The quarters are more commodious, and more agreeable too. There is scope, therefore, for a considerable company of demons.

and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.
47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. 48 But

The number *seven* is specified as being, with the Jews, a favourite numerical plurality (comp. Lev. iv. 6, xxvi. 18; 2 Kings v. 10; Prov. xxiv. 16; Matt. xviii. 21). And the last state of that man is worse than the first: *Is worse*, or, more literally, *becomes worse*. Such is the invariable experience of those who do not improve the special deliverances with which they are blessed. Even so shall it be also unto this evil generation: It had been demoniac; and, alas, it would be more intensely demoniac still. For a season the evil spirit was cast out by the ministry of John the Baptist, and there seemed to be the prospect of a better and sounder spiritual condition for the future (John v. 35). But when the true Guest "came to His own, His own received Him not" (John i. 11). They were still persisting in rejecting Him. He foresaw that they would persevere in their rejection. And the consequence would be that they would become more demoniac and demented than they were ever before. So will it be with other communities who improve not their seasons of spiritual deliverance. So will it be, so has it often been, with individuals. If Christ be kept out, some evil spirit or spirits will get in.

VER. 46. While He was yet speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, seeking to speak to Him: It would appear that He had been speaking in a house; hence His mother and brethren were standing *without*. It would also appear that His mother and brethren had been permitting themselves to entertain some improper solicitude concerning Him (see Mark iii. 21). They were making themselves officious, and thus interfering with the momentous work in which He was engaged. His brethren did not as yet understand Him. Not even did His mother fully comprehend Him: and hence He found it necessary, on the present occasion, as well as at the marriage in Cana of Galilee (John ii. 4), to administer such a reproof to her as would furnish a suitable check to their officiousness. So far was Mary from being absolutely *immaculate*. We need not here inquire minutely into the exact relationship of our Lord's *brethren* to Him. We do not think, with Helvidius, to whom Jerome replied, and whose opinion has been advocated by Blom and Schaf and Meyer, that they were our Lord's uterine brothers, the sons of Joseph and Mary. We should rather be disposed to acquiesce in the opinion of the primitive church, and to regard them as our Lord's half brothers, the sons of Joseph by a previous marriage. The fact that our Lord, while dying on the cross, consigned His mother to the care of John the apostle (John xix. 26, 27), seems to militate against the idea that she had, besides our Lord, other sons of her own (see on chap. x. 3).

VER. 47. And one said to Him, Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren are standing without, seeking to speak to Thee: Tischendorf, in his eighth edition of the New Testament, puts this verse within brackets, because it is omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and in some other authorities. The Revisionists and Westcott-and-Hort let it go. Its omission, however, in the manuscripts doubtless occurred in consequence of the *itacism* or the similarity

he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? 49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by

of the concluding words of the two verses. The eye of the transcriber, or of the reader who read to a company of transcribers, might thus be misled.

VER. 48. But He answered and said to him who told Him, Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? He wished to throw a most important seed thought into the minds of the whole company. In the case of our Lord emphatically, but also in the case of all men without exception, there are higher and deeper relationships than those of flesh and blood. "Propinquity of spirit," as Zuingli remarks, "far excels consanguinity."

VER. 49. And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples—not merely His apostles, but all His real disciples, His *learning-knights* as it is in the Anglo-Saxon (*leorning-cnihtas*)—and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! Christ's nearest relatives were those who were nearest to Him in spirit. They were the dearest too. They are so still. It must be so. They who are nearest to God, the Great Centre, are nearest to one another; and they are dearest to one another's hearts. There are groups, indeed, on earth; and there must be groups in heaven. The law of limitation renders such grouping necessary. In the spiritual universe, as in the material, there are multitudes of clustered constellations; and there are firmaments beyond firmaments. But Christ is the centre of all. And he who is nearest to Him, in the Divine act of loving, is nearest to His love.

VER. 50. For whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother, and sister, and mother: The material, in such a case, was, to our Saviour's view, merged in the spiritual. He who does the will of the Father, and is thus in his character an impersonation of holy love, is at once brother and sister and mother to Jesus. It is interesting to note that our Saviour does not say, "brother and sister and mother *and father*." His only Father was in a different sphere, and infinitely removed from all other relatives. He was All-and-in-all to Jesus. He should be so to us also. But since it is the case that we have, or have had, fathers on earth as well as a Great Father in heaven, we may, when thinking and feeling and speaking in our highest spiritual moods, express ourselves thus: "Whosoever doeth the will of our Father who is in heaven, the same is our brother, and sister, and mother, and father."

CHAPTER XIII.

VER. 1. On that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side: The sea referred to was the sea of Tiberias, or the lake of Genesaret, the Old Testament sea of Chinnereth or Chinneroth. On its north-western shore stood Capernaum, our Lord's "own city" (chap. ix. 1). While the lake is almost entirely surrounded by mountains, yet the mountains, says Dean Stanley,

the sea side. 2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; 4 and when

“never come down into the water, but always leave a beach of greater or less extent along the water edge” (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x., p. 377). And at Capernaum—no doubt situated on the border of the plain of *Gennesaret*, or country of *Gennesar*, as Josephus calls it (*Wars*, iii. 10: 8)—the beach would pass into prairie. There “the mountains recede inland, and leave a level plain of five miles wide, and six or seven miles long.” (*Stanley’s Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x., p. 374.)

VER. 2. And great multitudes were gathered to Him, so that He went into a boat and sat: His wonderful works, His wonderful words, His wonderful manner of life, had stirred the interest and curiosity of the masses of the people, and they flocked around Him to see and hear more. Our Lord sat in the boat, the customary position assumed by Jewish teachers, and eminently appropriate for the delivery of calm and unimpassioned instruction. See chap. v. 1.

VER. 3. And He spake to them many things in parables: Of which parables the evangelist proceeds to give seven interesting specimens. Parables vary in certain details of their development, as parables; and hence it is in vain to attempt to define precisely what a parable must be, and what consequently a parable is, as distinguished from every other mode of representation. But this, at least, is obvious, every parable is a *throwing of one thing beside another*. That is the etymological import of the word. Hence this also is obvious, every parable is a *species of allegory*. One thing is said, which of itself has a natural meaning; but on the other side of this natural meaning, and *partly veiled* by it, and *partly unveiled*, another thing is meant. The double meaning is founded on a fact of real similitude, which again is founded on a law of correspondences, which inter-relates higher things with lower, and things spiritual with things material. These correspondences are actual, though it is possible to look at them from imaginative standpoints, and thus to see them either in utter disorder or in grotesque combinations. The *fable* is a kind of parable; but there is generally in it something unnatural and grotesque. Trees perhaps, or birds, or beasts, are made to reason and speak like human beings. There is too an interesting connection between *parables* and *types*; but there is a line of demarcation. In both there is a representation of things beyond themselves. The type is *real*; the parable is *verbal*. There is too an intimate connection between *metaphors* and *parables*. Both are verbal, and verbally symbolical. But in parables the symbolism is formal, and left to stand on its own foot; whereas in metaphors it is informally assumed, wrought up, and applied. **Saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow:** The same parable is narrated by Mark (iv. 3-9) and Luke (viii. 5-8). The interpretation of the parable is given in ver. 18-23. Instead of a *sower*, it is *the sower* in the original. The Saviour pictures to His own mind, and before the minds of the people, a particular sower. No doubt He refers ultimately to Himself, the Great Teacher, who has been teaching all along the ages, and in all countries too, by means of His Spirit, and of His Spirit’s subordinate agents. He has been, from the beginning, the Great Revealer of God. He is Himself, pre-eminently and emphatic-

he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: 5 some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6 and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

ally, the 'Word' of God. Every other 'word' of God is but one out of a million of the echoes of this Word.

VER. 4. And as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured them: "Is there anything on the spot," says Dean Stanley, "to suggest the images thus conveyed? So I asked as I rode along the tract under the hillside, by which the plain of Gennesareth is approached." "The thought had hardly occurred to me, when a slight recess in the hillside, close upon the plain, disclosed at once in detail, and with a conjunction which I remember nowhere else in Palestine, every feature of the great parable. There was the undulating cornfield descending to the water's edge. *There was the trodden pathway running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent the seed from falling here and there on either side of it, or upon it; itself hard with the constant tramp of horse and mule and human foot.*" (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. xiii., pp. 425, 426.)

VER. 5. And others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: They *sprung*. At an earlier period in the development of our language, the word would have been, *They sprong*. Now it would be, *They sprang*. *The rocky places*: The reference is not to places abounding with loose stones, but to places where the solid rock projects, and over which there is but a thin and irregular layer of mould. The Rheims version is, *rockie places*. "There," says Dean Stanley, "was the rocky ground of the hillside protruding here and there through the cornfields, as elsewhere through the grassy slopes." (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. xiii., p. 426.) Such particles of grain as might chance to fall on that rocky ground would not be able to throw downward, in the process of development, a suitable proportion of vital energy. There would be no scope for elaborating depth of root. And hence the growth upward would be all the more rapid, a rushing.

VER. 6. And when the sun was risen up, they were scorched; and because they had not root, they withered away: There was no source of succulence in the solid rock; and as the blades, prematurely shot up, would be feeble, they would soon, *for lake of rotynge*, as Tyndale has it, that is, *for lack of rooting*, have their vitality exhausted under the rays of the burning sun.

VER. 7. But others fell upon the thorns; and the thorns shot up, and choked them: *Choked them*: Or, as Wycliffe has it, *strangliden hem* (that is, *strangled them*). "Every one," says Professor Horatio Hackett, "who has been in Palestine must have been struck with the number of thorny shrubs and plants that abound there. The traveller finds them in his path, go where he may." (*Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 82, ed. 1856.) They are kept in subjection by being *burned down*. "Thorns and briers," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "grow so luxuriantly here that they must be burned off always before the plough can

8 but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. 9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the

“operate.” (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 23, p. 341.) The scene that is presented in this part of the parable is not *the falling of seeds among standing thorns*, but *the falling of seeds on the subjacent thorns*, which were ready to shoot up.

VER. 8. But others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit; some an hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty: “The return,” says Trench, “of an hundred for one is not unheard of in the East, though always mentioned as “something extraordinary.” (*Parables*, p. 76, ed. 1857.) When I was at Geneva in 1855, I got from an adjoining field a single ear or spike of barley containing 276 grains. It is still in my possession. Trench, in a note, remarks that “Herodotus mentions that two hundredfold was a common return in the “plain of Babylon, and sometimes three; and Niebuhr mentions a species of “maize that returns four hundredfold.” This very year—1868, the date of the first edition of this *Commentary on St. Matthew*—a year remarkable for its heat in great Britain, it is mentioned in the newspapers that, in a field of wheat in Kent, there were many single seeds which produced, each, “thirty straws, topped with closely set and fully developed ears, which yielded between 900 and 1000 grains from a single parent seed.” (See *Daily Review*, Aug. 14, 1868.)

VER. 9. He who hath ears, let him hear: Let him take in what I have in this parable said. There is something in it worth considering. The Saviour does not however suggest, as Calvin supposes, that only some had ears, while others had not (*alios facit auritos, alios vero surdos*). He does not confine His interest to a privileged few. Good David Dickson was too narrow when he said: “The parable being proponed, our Lord careth for no more but that so many “only as should have grace to understand it shall make use of it.” The Saviour knew that He had given ears to all. But He employs an expression that was fitted and designed to arouse the spiritually torpid, and turn the thoughts of His hearers back upon the ability which they had received, and forward upon the use which they should make of it. “Of so great weight,” says Richard Baxter, “is it to understand the difference of hearers (referred to in the “parable), that it is as much as our ears and understandings are worth.”

VER. 10. And the disciples came, and said to Him, Why speakest Thou to them in parables? Their question seems to show that our Saviour had just begun this peculiar style of teaching, at least in its more fully developed form. It was, as we learn from Mark iv. 10, when “He was alone,” that the disciples asked their question. We may therefore suppose that some of the other parables were addressed to the people before the question was put. Hence the plural expression “in parables.” But the evangelist, as Calvin often remarks, did not intend to be fastidious in his chronological arrangement.

VER. 11. And He answered and said to them, To you is it given to know

mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not

the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given: The word *mysteries* is just the Greek word Anglicised. It means *privities*, as Wycliffe translates it; or *secrets*, as it is rendered by Tyndale. It is *secrets* in Cranmer's Bible too, and in the Geneva version. The word has no reference to *incomprehensibilities*, as such. It was employed by the Greeks to denote certain *secret doctrines, practices, and observances, in religion, or connected with religion*, to which none were admitted but the *initiated*, and in reference to which the initiated were laid under obligation to keep silence. There were similar mysteries among the Egyptians, Indians, Romans, and other peoples. The Saviour intimates that there are other mysteries besides. *The God of Israel, the one true and living God, has had, and still has, His mysteries.* But He has no capricious wish to debar any from participation in them. Neither does He lay the initiated under any capricious injunction and adjuration to make no revelation of their peculiarity. It was needful indeed to select of old a peculiar people, to whom to communicate and intrust the mysteries. (Ps. ciii. 7; cxlvii. 19, 20.) But even in that peculiar people it was only those who were willing to be receptive, who could be admitted, and who were admitted, to see light in His light. (Ps. xxxvi. 9.) And hence with these only was the secret of secrets. (Ps. xxv. 14; Prov. iii. 32.) The same principle runs on into the New Testament dispensation. God has opened up the way to His secrets, for all men. Jesus is "the way." He is Himself indeed the Great Revelation. But to the non-receptive,—to those who will not believe, but who blaspheme the Holy Spirit, instead of accepting Him as their teacher (Matt. xiii. 31)—Jesus is the most impenetrable of secrets. To the believing He is the Mystery-Revealer and the Mystery-Revealed. He is the "great Mystery of godliness." (Col. i. 27; 1 Tim. iii. 16.) All "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" are summed up and manifested in Him. To know Him in His person, character, and work,—in His offices, operations, influences, and relations,—is to know "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." To know Him a little is to know the mysteries a little. To know Him more and more fully is to become more and more fully initiated into Divine mysteries. But to know Him to perfection remains with the Father only, and with that Holy Spirit who "searcheth the deep things of God." Hence there is an inexhaustible infinity of secrets. And hence too, at a given point, far enough back or far enough forward, the secret things do become incomprehensibilities. To all eternity, those elements of "the secret things" that constitute the innermost mystery of the mysteries will "belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words" of the Divine commandment. (Deut. xxix. 29.) *It is given to you, says Jesus to His disciples, that is, it is a gift to you, the favour is given unto you, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: That is, to receive a full explanation of those things of My kingdom, which have been secret in the mind of the Father from eternity, but which it is now His pleasure to reveal to all who are willing to be initiated. But to them it is not given: Why? Not because Christ wished and "intended that His doctrine should be beneficial to only a few" (Calvin), but because the masses, whose minds were pre-occupied with ridiculous notions regarding the polity of the kingdom of the Messiah, could not as yet bear the full revelation of the grand evangelical realities, as they are. See next verse.*

given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 for this people's

VER. 12. For whosoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: A principle of very wide application in things moral, intellectual, and material. *Whosoever* has the right thing to begin with, has therein the right thing to go on with. Hence to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance. It is thus, for instance, that money accumulates. It is thus that knowledge is increased. It is thus that business grows, and social influence. It is emphatically thus with things spiritual, evangelical, and Christian. *Whosoever* has the right thing to begin with in these spheres of experience is in the fitting condition for going on, and getting more and more. But whosoever has not, from him shall be taken away even that he has: Whosoever has not the right thing to begin with, and thence to go on with, will by and by be deprived even of whatever else he may have. Hence failures in business on the part of many. Their businesses had no proper foundation. Hence too, in the sphere of things moral, loss of character, or gradual degeneration and degradation. Hence also the decline of the intellectual influence, and of the intellectual growth, of the ill-grounded. And hence likewise, in the sphere of things spiritual, the whirlings about of many, and their ultimate descent into scepticism, or infidelity, or fixed hostility. That which they had is taken away from them, because they had not what they should have had.

VER. 13. I therefore speak to them in parables: The *therefore* looks back to what is stated in verses 11, 12. The mass of the people *had not* what would fit them for receiving the things of the kingdom of heaven in their fulness and simplicity. And yet it was our Lord's wish to cast seed thoughts into their minds. He needed to *conceal*, and yet He wished to *reveal*. And hence *He both concealed and revealed*; that is, *He spoke in parables*. Because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand: They have indeed *power to see*, and should see; and they do see some things in the sphere of the spiritual. But they see not those things that would qualify them for understanding and appreciating full details regarding the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. They have *power to hear*; and they have heard some things spoken by the Spirit of God. But they have stopped their ears in reference to other things that are essential. Hence, says Jesus, they would not listen to Me, if I were to speak plainly to them, without parables. They do not *understand* the first principles of evangelic truth; and they are indeed so violently prejudiced against them, that they will not give them, if plainly stated, unprejudiced consideration. Hence I must veil them. And yet, in love, I will so veil them, as to stir within their hearts, if possible, the spirit of inquiry.

VER. 14. And in relation to them is being fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias—contained in chap. vi. 9, 10—which says, by hearing ye will hear, and will not understand, and seeing ye will see, and will not perceive: The expression *by hearing ye will hear* is just an intensified way of *saying ye will assuredly hear*.

heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. 17 For verily I say unto you, That many

Coverdale's translation is, *ye shall heare in dede*. The expression *seeing ye will see* is of corresponding import. In both a process is assumed and described. The acts of hearing and seeing begin, and are carried on to completion. But the main object, on which the acts should terminate, is not *perceived* or *understood*. Why? See next verse.

VER. 15. For this people's heart is waxed gross: Or rather, *was waxed gross*. Instead of *waxed gross*, Wycliffe has a fine literal translation, *enfattid*. The Geneva version is, *waxed fatte*. The language is strongly metaphorical, but most graphic. The people are represented as having been oppressed under a load of obesity in the *inner* side of their being, their *heart*, their *mental* and *moral nature*. That nature was *enfattid* with carnality. And their ears are dull of hearing: Literally, *and with their ears they heard heavily*. Their very sense of hearing was weighed down and oppressed under the load of their carnality. And their eyes they have closed: Or, more simply, *And their eyes they closed; they dozingly closed*, for such is the import of the word. The voluntary element is here brought prominently into view. Lest peradventure they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them: They willingly resigned themselves to spiritual obesity and torpor, lest they should see or hear or understand anything that would disturb them and lead to their conversion and salvation. They did not want to be converted. They did not want to be healed as God would heal them. And hence God Himself—who, as Luther emphatically urges, wished to heal (*sic patet quod voluntas sanandi praeedicatur in Deo*)—had no alternative but to let penalty stream down upon them, and complete its work. (Comp. Isa. vi. 10; John xii. 40; Rom. xi. 8, ix. 18–22.) Let the tenses of the quotation be noted. The people's heart *was enfattid* at a past period, and then *they heard heavily and dozingly closed their eyes*, lest they should be disturbed; and hence the treatment which they were at *present* receiving. The Saviour had to veil in parables the most important truths; otherwise they would not listen at all, or look at all, or consider at all. Note the expression, *understand with their heart*: The word *heart* denotes the whole *spiritual interior*, and hence has here *understanding* ascribed to it. (Comp. chap. ix. 4.) Note also the expression, *and should turn*: It is active, not passive; as it were, *and should convert (themselves)*. It is translated by Tyndale and Coverdale *and shuld tourne*. In the Geneva version it is *and should return*.

VER. 16. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear: Or, more simply, *But happy your eyes, that they see! and your ears, that they hear!* Happy ye, My disciples, who have not closed your eyes, and stopped your ears, so that you see and hear!

VER. 17. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous persons

prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 yet hath he not root in himself, but

desired to see what ye behold, and saw not; and to hear what ye hear, and heard not: Enoch, and Abraham, and the prophets strained their eyes to see My day from afar, and they caught glimpses of it; but they were glimpses merely. They strained their ears to hear from the world of glory the descending "Word of God." They heard somewhat. Utterances and echoes from afar did drop down upon their ears, and refresh their spirits. Yet it was but little that they could hear.

VER. 18. Hear ye then the parable of the sower: *Then*, since ye have unstopped your ears, and are willing to hear, and are also in the presence of One who can let you hear. *Hear the parable of the sower*, in its real inner import.

VER. 19. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom—the good news from heaven regarding the heavenly kingdom—and understandeth it not—because the mind in relation to such things has been allowed to get hardened and unimpressible—then cometh the evil one—by means it may be of a great variety of his agents, the "birds of the air" (ver. 4)—and snatcheth up that which has been sown in his heart. This is he who was sown by the way side. The phraseology is compressed and even crammed; but the meaning is obvious: *This is he who is represented in that part of the parable which refers to the seed sown by the way side.* The term *heart*, in the expression *that which was sown in his heart*, means *mind*. See on verse 15. This mind *understandeth not the word*. The "word" is not allowed to penetrate into it, so as to get a soil in which to grow. It merely lies on the surface. The mind, in relation to such things, has been a sort of highway for every passer by; and had hence got trampled into impenetrability. Some plough or other would require to be sent through it, before the seed has a chance of growing there.

VER. 20. But he who was sown upon the rocky places. The phraseology, as in the preceding verse, is compressed and crammed. But the meaning is obvious. *But he who is represented in that part of the parable which describes the seed sown on the rocky places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: Anon*, that is, *immediately, instantly*. The English word *anon* seems to be just a corrupted way of saying in *ône*, that is, in *ône* (*minute*). *One* was anciently pronounced *ône*, as in the word *atonement*. The rocky ground hearer instantly welcomes the good news of the kingdom, without taking time to count the cost of what he is about. It is a new thing, and apparently a good thing; and hence he rejoices in it. It holds out to him the desirable prospect of glory and honour in conjunction with immortality.

VER. 21. Yet hath he not root in himself: The "word" does not get rooted in the depths of his being. These depths are indeed harder and more unimpress-

dureth for a while : for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. 22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word ; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. 23 But

ible than the trodden highway ; they are rock. It is only in the most superficial element of his being that he gives reception to the gospel. But dureth for a while : That is, *but on the contrary is temporary* (ἀλλὰ πρόσκαιρος ἔστιν), or, as Wycliffe has it, *but is temporal*. He adds explanatorily, *that is, it lastith bot a litil tyme*. Calvin, in his French Commentary, gives the same translation (*temporel*), and adds the same explanation. Tyndale's version is free, but gives the meaning admirably, *and therefore dureth but a season*. Luther's version is graphic, though it goes out of the parabolic similitude, *but is fickle* (changing with the weather, *wetterwendisch*). The man is not persevering. And no wonder. The roots of the Christian life are underground, in the hidden places of the heart. And hence, if there be no scope downward for growth and development, all that is above ground, and exposed to the trying vicissitudes of the weather, must soon droop, and wither, and die. But when tribulation in general, or persecution in particular, arises because of the word, by and by he is offended : It was a great licence that was taken by our translators when they rendered the introductory conjunction (δέ) *for*. It cannot have such a meaning ; and hence the clause which it introduces does not give a reason for the temporariness spoken of in the preceding clause. It brings into view something that is at once additional to, and distinct from, what goes before. The conjunction may be rendered either *but* or *and*. Either translation may pass ; but neither is perfect ; for in English we have no particle that covers precisely the same bridge of thought that is covered by the Greek conjunction. *By and by* : That is, *immediately*. In the original it is the same word that is translated *anon* in the preceding verse. It is rendered *straightway* in Matt. iii. 16, John xiii. 32 ; *immediately* in Mark i. 12, 28, John xxi. 3 ; *forthwith* in John xix. 34. These are all the places in which the word occurs, with the exception of the preceding verse and this. In both these verses Sir John Cheke renders it *bi and bi*, while in both it is rendered by Wycliffe *anson*. *He is offended* : Or, rather, *he is stumbled*. See on chaps. v. 29, 30, xi. 6. The tribulation or persecution with which he meets is a *stumbling block* to him. He suddenly strikes upon it, and stumbles, and staggers, and falls. He did not expect such trials. He did not take them into his estimate. And now that they befall him he resolves to get free from them at any cost. "Let religion go," such is the decision of the rocky ground hearer. "He kicks up profession," says Trapp, "and may possibly prove a spiteful adversary."

VER. 22. But he that was sown into the thorns is he that heareth the word, and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. "In this case," says Trench, "the profession of a spiritual life is retained, the 'name to live' still remains ; but the life of power and 'godliness is by degrees eaten out, and has departed.'" (*Parables*, p. 74.) The leaves of profession continue, and perhaps spring up high ; but the fruit of good works is wanting. The influence of the word is choked by "the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches." Note the "*and*." The Saviour does not say *or*, referring, as Trench supposes, and Arnot after him, to the hardships of

he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good

the poor on the one hand, and then, on the other, to the glittering temptations of the rich. He is referring, though of course only in a representative manner, to the rich alone. It is they who are at once distracted by *the care of this evil age*, and also cheated by the glitter of the prizes which wealth holds out to view. They have no time, as they imagine, to devote to the activities of the Christian life. The affairs of this evil age, and the engagements and enjoyments connected with riches, spring up around their Christianity, like thick-set briars and thorns, and it remains *unfruitful*.

VER. 23. But he that was sown upon the good ground—that is, *But he who is referred to in that part of the parable that describes the seed sown on the good soil*—is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it: That is what is needed in the first place. Until the word be *understood*, no permanent moral effects can be experienced. It is not a mere glimpse of its meaning that will suffice. It must be *understood*. Who indeed beareth fruit. The expression intimates that *now at length, in this final department of the parable*, the party is reached in whom the seed of the word takes real effect unto fruit-bearing. And bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty: Or, as it might be rendered, *And yieldeth, this a hundredfold, and that sixty, and that thirty* (β, not δ, as in the *Textus Receptus*). There are thus diversities in Christian fruitfulness, varying degrees of holy effort or good-doing. So far as outward results are concerned, the variation in the degrees may depend much on innate talents and external opportunities, conditions over which the individual has little or no control. But so far as inner devotedness is concerned, the variation depends on individual willingness; and greater will be the reward and glory of him who inwardly brings forth an hundredfold than of him who stops short at thirtyfold or fifty. The parable however was not intended to stretch into that domain of things. Neither was it intended to give information regarding each man's responsibility in relation to the kind of soil which his heart presents to the word of the kingdom. There is such a responsibility; though it cannot, of course, be shadowed forth by earths and rocks and roads and thorns. The parable was not intended to teach everything. If any one should imagine that the conditions of heart represented are "permanent, immutable, and definitely fixed," we would say, in the language of Archbishop Trench, "there is no such immoral fatalism in Scripture." (*Parables*, p. 80, ed. 1857.)

VER. 24. Another parable laid He before them; That is, before the crowds of people. See verse 34. Saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened: Or rather, *was likened, was made like*, viz. in the original draft, or in the original Divine plan. The Saviour does not mean that in the following parable the kingdom of heaven is *likened by Him to something else*. If that had been His meaning, He would most likely have expressly said *is likened*, or *I will liken*. He says however *was likened, or made like*, viz. so far as regards the primary intention or desire of the Divine mind. To a man—a husbandman—who sowed good seed in his field: It will be noted that it is not said, in the proper reading of the text (σπείρωντος), *unto a man who sows*, but *unto a man who sowed*. The Saviour

seed in his field: 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26

might have used the preceding expression. Comp. verse 37. But He chooses to direct attention to a past transaction. When it is said that *the kingdom of heaven was made like to a man who sowed*, the meaning is not, that the man, in his personality, corresponded to the entirety of the kingdom of heaven. He exhausts only part of the similitude. *The man is the Son of man* (ver. 37); but the Son of man is not the kingdom of heaven. He is the King of the kingdom. The meaning is, that when we consider the man and his action we get a view of an important aspect of the Divine desire regarding the kingdom of heaven. The parabolical representation is a complete circle of similitude, embracing a considerable variety of details; but the Saviour leads the mind of the hearer into the interior of the circle at that particular point of the circumference where the *man* is referred to, who sowed good seed in his field. For the interpretation of the parable see verses 37-43.

VER. 25. **But while men slept:** *Men*, or more literally, *the men*. The reference is not to men in general, as Meyer and Alford suppose, but to the men of the husbandman's establishment in particular. The sleeping is not mentioned as if it were a condition of negligence, or in any way culpable. It is only a graphic touch in the parable, to represent the night season, the chosen time for the evil deeds of cowards and rogues. It is not referred to in the interpretation of the parable that is given in verses 37-43. But if it were requisite to assign it a spiritual counterpart, no more would be signified by it than that, in a moral system of things, opportunities do occur for the entrance of sin. Such opportunities are inevitable where freedom of will is combined, as in man, with limitation of intelligence, as well as with urgency of desire. **His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away:** *His enemy*, for he has one enemy in particular. *Tares*, or *darnel*. This, no doubt, is the plant referred to. The word used by the evangelist (*ζιζάνια*) is not a Greek word, but the Grecised form of an oriental word. It is called *zunin* in the Talmudic writers; and its common Arabic name in Palestine at the present day is *zuwân*. Its Latin name is *lolium* (*temulentum*). Jerome, who resided in Palestine, tells us that it is *lolium* that is referred to. Its fruit is "bitter," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, and "when eaten "separately, or even when diffused in ordinary bread, it causes giddiness, and "often acts as a violent emetic. In short, it is a strong soporific poison, and "must be carefully winnowed and picked out of the wheat, grain by grain, before "grinding, or the flour is not healthy." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 28, p. 421.) It has been often supposed that this darnel is a degenerate or bastard kind of wheat. The Talmudic writers were of this opinion, and the present farmers of Palestine hold confidently to the same idea. The opinion was strenuously defended by Brederod, a distinguished nobleman of the Low countries, who lived two hundred and fifty years ago (see his ingenious letter in Scultet's *Evangelical Exercitations*, ii., chap. 65), and it has been maintained in modern times by Archbishop Trench. But sound botanical science, it would appear, lays its interdict on the notion. The plants are *specifically* different. The extraordinary wantonness of the enemy's malice should be noted. It was malice "pure and simple," for it was utterly unremunerative. It was the malice of a demon. But yet, as Arnot remarks, "the same spirit that sowed "darnel among wheat at night in a cornfield of Galilee, two thousand years

But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

"ago, will set fire to a stackyard, or hamstring the horses, or shoot the over-seer from behind a hedge, in our own day, and, alas, in some parts of our own land." (*The Parables*, p. 81.)

VER. 26. But when the blade sprang up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the darnel also: The *blade*, or *grassy part* of the crop. The word employed (*χόβρος*) is generally rendered *grass*. (See Matt. vi. 30, xiv. 19; John vi. 10; 1 Pet. i. 24; Rev. viii. 7, ix. 4.) After this grassy part of the crop sprang up, and by and by fruited, then was made manifest the darnel also. Not till then. Jerome tells us that the darnel is so remarkably like the wheat in the grassy part of the plant, that it is extremely difficult, till the ear come out, to discriminate the one from the other. The testimony of Dr. W. M. Thomson is identical. After the respective plants have "headed out," he says that a child cannot mistake the one for the other: "but when both are less developed, the closest scrutiny will often fail to detect" the intruder. He adds, "I cannot do it at all with confidence." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 28, p. 420.)

VERS. 27, 28. And the servants of the householder came and said to him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? *Good seed*, seed carefully selected, clean and well winnowed, and quite free from darnel. Whence then hath it darnel? "Note," says Richard Baxter, "seeing God and His word are good, it puzzleth men to think how the church and world came to be so bad." And he said to them, An enemy did this. And the servants said to him, Wilt thou then that we should go and gather it up? It was a natural question for the servants to put, for it is customary for the farmers in Palestine to *weed* their fields of growing grain. Dean Stanley mentions, in reference to this very darnel, that he observed, in several parts, "women and children employed in picking out from the wheat the tall green stalks, still called by the Arabs *zuwân*." (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. xiii., p. 426.)

VER. 29. But he said, Nay; lest it should happen that while ye gather up the darnel, ye root up also the wheat with it: Had there been but a few stalks of darnel here and there, the servants would undoubtedly have been sent to pluck them up. But since the field was covered over with the noxious weed, so that the roots of the two species of plants were intertwined throughout, it would have been impossible to pluck up the one, without to a large extent rooting out the other.

VER. 30. Allow both to grow together until the harvest, and in the harvest time I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the darnel, and bind it into bundles, to burn

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: 32 which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

it; but collect the wheat into my granary. It was the best course that could, in the circumstances, be pursued. The crop of wheat indeed, in consequence of the profusion of the intermixed darnel, would doubtless suffer considerably, both as regards quantity, and possibly also as regards quality. No little labour, too, would be entailed on the servants. No little expense, moreover, would be incurred by the householder. But there was no alternative. Malice does succeed in doing evil; and evil is evil. It will not, however, ultimately triumph. See the interpretation of the parable in verses 37-43.

VERS. 31, 32. Another parable propounded He to them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all the seeds—which, namely, men are accustomed to sow in their fields or gardens—but when it has grown, is the greatest among herbs—or, still more literally, *is greater than the garden herbs*, that is, than the rest of the garden herbs—and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and roost in its branches. It has been disputed whether the Saviour refers to the common mustard plant, which is an annual, or to the tree *khardal*, the *Salvadora Persica* of European botanists. Dr. Royle, in his *Treatise on the Mustard-tree of Scripture*, contends that it is the *Salvadora Persica* that is referred to. “The “nature of the plant,” says he, “is to become arboreous, and thus it will form “a large shrub, or a tree, twenty-five feet high, under which a horseman may “stand, when the soil and climate are favourable. It produces numerous “branches and leaves, under which birds may and do take shelter, as well as “build their nests; and its seeds are used for the same purposes as mustard.” It is called *khardal* in Syria, and was found by Captains Irby and Mangles near the Dead Sea. They came upon it by surprise, and found its fruit, and leaves too, having a strong aromatic taste resembling mustard, and producing, when taken in sufficient quantity, precisely the same irritating sensations in the nose and eyes that are produced by mustard. They at once conjectured that it must be the mustard-tree of our parable. Trench agrees with them, and so for a time did Meyer. Dean Stanley is also disposed to agree. The tree abounds, it may also be stated, in the north-west of India, and is there called *kharjal*. And, besides, the common term in Arabic for mustard is *khardal*. It must undoubtedly, moreover, have been to this tree that Rabbi Simeon Ben Chalaphta referred when he said, as quoted by Dr. Lightfoot, “A stalk of mustard was in “my field, into which I was wont to climb, as men are wont to climb into a “fig-tree.” Dr. Hooker however is of opinion that it cannot be to the *Salvadora Persica* that the Saviour referred. There is no evidence, it seems, that the *Salvadora Persica* was common, or, taking the climate into account, could be common, in the region about the sea of Tiberias. And all the conditions of the representation in the parable are abundantly fulfilled in the *Sinapis*, or common mustard plant. Its seed is extremely small and insignificant looking. It was proverbially so among the Jews. It is not, indeed, absolutely the smallest of the seeds which are taken cognisance of by science. The Saviour was not

33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

speaking scientifically. He was speaking to the people, in the free and easy language of the people; and the mustard seed was to them the smallest of seeds, the smallest of the seeds which they were accustomed to sow in their fields and gardens. Small however as the mustard seed is, it has within it the living germ of a large and lofty growth, and hence when it has reached its maturity in favourable circumstances it is greater in height than all other garden herbs. It is in fact, relatively to them, a tree; just as, in still another plane of things, we speak familiarly of *the tree mignonette*. If there be imperfection in the representation, it attaches rather to the dimensions of the matured and ultimate growth than to the diminutive size of the seed which is the embryo of the future expanse. Our Saviour "preferred an emblem whose defect, "if defect there must be, should lie rather in the direction of inadequate representation of the end, than in the direction of inadequate representation of the "beginning" (Bruce's *Parabolic Teaching of Christ*, p. 98). *And the birds of the air*—not the large birds of course, as Lange ridiculously imagines, but the little birds—*come and settle on its branches, and even roost there*. "Of the mustard plants which I saw on the banks of the Jordan," says Dr. Hooker, "one was ten feet high, drawn up among bushes, etc., and not thicker than whipcord" (Smith's *Bible Dictionary*). "I have seen this plant," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "on the rich plain of Akkâr as tall as the horse and his rider" (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 28, p. 414). Dr. Thomson thinks, however, that it is probable that some large variety would be cultivated near Capernaum in our Saviour's day,—quite a possible supposition. We wait for more light. The lesson of the parable obviously is, That the kingdom of heaven was to be, and was, small and apparently insignificant in its beginning, though by and by, in virtue of its own inherent vitality, it was to rise into a magnitude that would overtop all rival institutions. The Jews expected that it would begin as a full grown tree; and they were scandalized at the apparent insignificance of our Lord's position and 'following.' But they did not understand the case. It was needful that the beginning should be but as a speck on the face of the earth, and that it should gradually grow by assimilative force. If there were any reference at all, in the Saviour's mind, to the pungent, fiery, penetrating, and searching properties of mustard, they were undoubtedly shaded off as altogether secondary and incidental.

VER. 33. Another parable spake He to them: The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened: In most other parts of Scripture leaven is spoken of as something that is corrupt and corrupting. Hence the Old Testament injunctions, *Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven* (Exod. xxxiv. 25),—*No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven* (Lev. ii. 11; but comp. Lev. xxiii. 17). Hence too our Saviour's injunction, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees* (Matt. xvi. 6, 11); and Paul's injunction, *Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth* (1 Cor. v. 7, 8). Leaven, in itself considered, not unnaturally represents what is sour and disagreeable. Wycliffe translates the term *sour dough*. It is called *zuurdeeg* in Dutch; and Campegius Vitringa, in his Dutch Explanation of the

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: 35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things

Parables, actually gives two distinct interpretations, in two distinct chapters, of the parable before us; one on the hypothesis that the word *leaven* is to be understood in a good sense (*in een goeden sin*); the other, on the hypothesis that it is to be understood in a bad sense (*in een quaden sin*). But when leaven was considered, not in itself, but in its *lifting* effect on bread for common use, it was not to be condemned. Neither is it. But in the little parable before us our Saviour finds in it something that is excellently adapted to represent the secretly assimilative influence of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven, when Divinely introduced into the mass of the human race, seemed for a season to be *hidden*. It *was* hidden. It did not attract observation. It does not, even yet, so far as its real spiritual essence is concerned, attract much observation. But it is operating; and it will continue to operate, silently, penetratively, diffusively, transmutatively, assimilatively, till the whole mass of mankind shall be brought under its converting influence. Then shall the kingdoms of this world be the kingdom of the King of kings, the kingdom of heaven. A *woman* took the leaven, for, as a general rule, it devolved, as it still does, upon women to bake the household bread. *And hid in three measures of meal*: Or, more literally, *And hid into three measures of flour*. She hid the leaven out of sight by mixing it *into* three measures of flour. Why *three* measures? Is there a mystery intended? So many have thought. Augustin supposed that the human race in its threefold stems is referred to, the stems of Shem, Japhet, and Ham, the three sons of Noah. Jerome and Ambrose, again, imagined a reference to the threefold constituents of human nature, the body, soul, and spirit. And the two sets of conceptions have been linked into unity, and lifted into a climax of ingenuity, by identifying the body element of human nature with Ham and his descendants, the soul element with Japhet and his descendants, and the spirit element with Shem and his descendants. But there would be no limit to these subtleties, if it were thought desirable to turn off into them. The simple reason for the specification of *three* measures would seem to be that that quantity of flour constituted a common amount of baking. Comp. Gen. xviii. 6. The *three measures* constituted an *ephah*; and the *ephah* seems to have been a common quantity for a *baking*, or a *batch*. See Jud. vi. 17, 1 Sam. i. 24. Tyndale renders the expression, *iii. peckes of meele*.

VER. 34. All these things spake Jesus to the crowds in parables; and without a parable spake He not to them: viz. at that time. Instead of *spake He not unto them*, some high authorities, inclusive of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, read, *spake He nothing to them* (*οὐδέν* instead of *οὐκ*). This reading has been accepted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort, and Alford.

VER. 35. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: viz. Asaph, in Psalm lxxviii. 2. Tischendorf, in his eighth edition of the Greek New Testament, has, in a moment of critical infatuation, introduced the word *Isaiah* into the text after the word *prophet*, because it is in the Sinaitic manuscript and some of the cursives, and because Eusebius and Jerome mention that it had been ignorantly foisted into some early copies of the Gospel. **Saying, I will open my mouth in parables**: The noun is singular in the Hebrew, a *parable*,

which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 the field is the world; the good seed are the

a parabolic discourse. The long homiletic psalm, which is thus introduced, was really parabolic in its design. One thing is said and sung for the sake of another thing. God's dealings with the children of Israel in olden times are recounted, as a warning to the children of Ephraim in the psalmist's time. **I will utter things which have been hidden from the foundation of the world:** This is the duplicative or parallelistic clause, and is a very free translation. The Hebrew might be rendered thus,—*I will pour forth riddles from of old, that is, I will utter things which have proved puzzling from of old to such as attempted to fathom the lessons involved in the Divine procedure.* It is assumed by the psalmist that there was a hidden meaning in God's ancient dealings with His people. A typical and archetypal and prefigurative element ran through the whole. The history of the dealings is one long Old Testament parable. Things long kept secret, and that were hidden indeed in the depths of the Divine Mind from before the foundation of the world, were involved in these dealings. And hence the evangelist wisely sees, in the parabolic teaching of our Lord, a real culmination of the older parabolic teaching of the psalmist. The culmination was Divinely intended, and hence the expression *that it might be fulfilled.*

VER. 36. Then Jesus left the crowds, and went into the house—where, namely, He was wont to dwell—and His disciples came to Him, saying, Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field: Or, as the Rheims translation has it, *Expound us the parable of the cockle of the field.* Sir John Cheke's translation is also graphic, *Tel us what the biword of the darnel of the field meaneth.* Sir John uses, as will be perceived, *biword* for *parable.* The term is the counterpart of the term employed in the Anglo-Saxon version, *bigspel*, that is, *byspell*, or *by-story*, a story that stands *by* or *beside* something else, which is really the great object of interest.

VER. 37. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man: The fact of the existence of the kingdom of heaven, and of the existence of subjects in it, true subjects, is to be traced to the agency of the Son of man. The kingdom is His. It was constituted by Him. And in relation to it He delighted to call Himself *the Son of man.* He delighted to realize that He belonged to earth as well as to heaven; that He was human as well as Divine; and that in Him humanity would by and by be lifted up to its true ideal platform of moral kinship with God. See on chap. viii. 20.

VER. 38. And the field is the world: That is,—The kingdom of heaven is located *on earth*, so far as the initial stage of its development is concerned. The whole world is Christ's field. It belongs to Him; and He holds it as His possession, that He may use it for the establishment of His heavenly kingdom. The expression was, in olden times, much tossed about in the Donatist controversy; the Donatists having the best of the argument, though the worst of the treatment. They insisted that the Saviour did *not* mean that *the field is the church.* Augustin insisted that He did (*Ad Donatistas post Collationem*, § 9). Even Luther and Calvin, along with troops of predecessors and successors,

children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; 39 the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41

think that the Lord here "calls *the church* His field," strangely overlooking the fact that it is *the good seed* that is *the church*. Melanethon made the same mistake. Both he and Luther were amazed when the Anabaptists, like the Donatists, contended that "the world" was not "the church." And the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom: The kingdom for the moment is personified, and represented as if it were the parent of its citizens; on some such principle as a university, or other seminary, is sometimes depicted as the *alma mater* of its pupils. It is, hence, the citizens or subjects of the kingdom who are *the good seed*. They are *good*. Their outer lives are *good*. Their inner character is *good*. Inwardly and outwardly they are obedient to the *good will* of the *good King*. The darnel, these are the sons of the evil one: They have derived their distinguishing peculiarity of character from the evil one, from Satan; and hence they are *evil*. They are not merely useless in the world. They are noxious. They not only do no good spiritually, they do much evil.

VER. 39. But the enemy that sowed them is the devil: It is by his malicious contrivance that they are intermingled with the children of the kingdom. But why, it may be asked, was there scope afforded for this malicious contrivance? Why was not Satan banished to some other region? Why was he not annihilated? Questions these, which are easily asked, but not perhaps so easily answered. Possibly however it may not be admissible to annihilate members of a moral community. What if the idea of immortality be essentially involved in the idea of morality? And, as to the question of banishment, what if Satan's connection with this part of the universe belonged inherently to the procession of the ages, as originally devised by infinite wisdom? What therefore if it be requisite to fight him on his own ground, and within his own chosen arena, his own camp? What if the contest must needs be engaged in, not with sheer and physical force, but with weapons of moral warfare? And the harvest is the end of the world: Or rather, *the end or consummation of the age*, the consummation of that age of the world during which evil is more or less rampant, and at the close of which the golden age will be inaugurated. The judgement will take place at the point of transition. And the reapers are angels: Who are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14), and to minister, in any other respect, to Him whom they worship (Heb. i. 6).

VER. 40. As therefore the darnel is—in the common practice of husbandmen—gathered up and burned with fire: The expression is still stronger in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts. It is, *burned down with fire* (*πυρὶ κατακατεται*), an expression that is in one respect the contrary, and in another the duplicate, of the expression *burned up with fire*. Tischendorf has received this reading into his eighth edition of the text of the New Testament. So shall it be in the end of this world: Or rather, *in the consummation of this age, or of the age*, as it is in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts, and in the texts of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. What shall then be? See next verse.

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid

VER. 41. The Son of man shall send forth His angels: Or, as Purvey has it, in his revision of Wycliffe, *Hise aungelis*. Note that the Saviour realizes, on the one hand, that the angels are *His* ministering servants, and on the other, that the destinies of men are held by *Him* in *His* hands. If the idea was but a fancy, who was ever so fanciful, and so fancifully deluded, as Jesus? If however it was no fancy, but based on fact, then it can be no fancy to believe in Jesus, and no fanciful delusion to trust in Him as our Saviour. And they shall gather out of His kingdom—and from a state of intermixture with those who are the true citizens and subjects—all things that offend, and them that do iniquity: By the expression *all things that offend* we are to understand *persons* rather than *things*, although the noun used is neuter in the original (*πάντα τὰ σκάνδαλα*). It is translated in the Rheims version, *al scandals*. The same translation is given in the margin of our Authorized version. Wycliffe's translation is *alle sclaudris*. Young's version is better still, *all the stumbling blocks*. The word properly denotes *that part of a trap* which, when impinged on or struck, springs up and causes the ensnarement of the animal that has come or struck against it. There are persons in the world, in close contact with Christians, whose character and conduct resemble that mechanism of the trap. They are *Snares* and *Stumbling-blocks* and moral *Traps*. Many, as they come in contact with them, are ensnared by them. It is not marvellous then that such a word should be used of persons. Christ employs it in reference to Peter (chap. xvi. 23). By and by the *man-traps* will be gathered out; and not they only, but also all *who do iniquity*. These too are criminal, though not so greatly criminal as those.

VER. 42. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: In the original it is *the furnace of fire*,—for there is only one in God's universe. Wycliffe's translation is, *the chymney of fjr*; and indeed the word *chimney* is but the Anglicised form of the Greek word used by the evangelist. There shall be the wailing and the gnashing of the teeth: In the end wickedness turns into woe. The awful phrase *the gnashing of the teeth* is rendered by Wycliffe *betyngne togidre of teeth* (*beating together of teeth*). See chap. viii. 12.

VER. 43. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father: They shall be inexpressibly glorious, because inexpressibly glorified by the infinitely glorious One, their own most loving Father. They shall no longer be eclipsed and kept in the shade by the haughtiness and hate and high handed violence of the wicked. He who hath ears, let him hear: What I have been saying concerns him, whosoever he may be; it concerns him most momentarily. See verse 9.

VER. 44. The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure: That is, *a hoard of precious things*. Sir John Cheke's version is, *an hoord of moni*. The word sometimes draws attention to the *repository* in which the precious things are laid

in a field ; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

(Matt. ii. 12, xii. 45), and sometimes, as here, to the *precious things* themselves, as contained in the repository. (See 2 Cor. iv. 7.) **Hid in a field:** Or rather, *which had been hid in the field*,—hid, not in *the house*, but in *the open field*. In ancient times, and in the East, men were generally their own bankers, and had their banks or stores in hidden spots in their houses, gardens, or outlying fields. In all times and countries, where there is political and social inquietude and insecurity, money and other precious things are hoarded, sometimes in the walls of houses, or under the floors, but more frequently in the fields. In the case of the sudden death of the owners, these treasures remain unknown, and often lie hid for ages. Hence in all countries there are frequent instances occurring of *treasure trove*. Which, when a man found, he hid: He covered it up in the spot where he accidentally discovered it. We may suppose that the field in which he found it was a rented field in which he was labouring. Or we may suppose that he was merely working in it as a hired labourer. In either case he would not be entitled to the *treasure trove*. But neither would he be bound, in all ordinary cases, so far as *natural law* is concerned, to give information to the proprietor of the field regarding the treasure which he had found. The proprietor had neither, on the one hand, engaged him at a fee to search for treasures; nor had he, on the other, in purchasing the field, purchased a right to *treasure trove by whomsoever found*. And hence the finder had a right to cover up for his own benefit what he had discovered, unless the true heirs could be found. In our own country the law regarding treasure trove was long extremely arbitrary and unjust. Treasure trove went unconditionally to the crown. But now the injustice is removed, and the finder is acknowledged to be entitled to the full value of what he finds. And for joy thereof: Or rather, *And from his joy*, that is, *And impelled by his joy*. It is as if it were said, *And in a transport of joy*. The preposition represents the *joy* as the cause of the subsequent conduct. **He goeth away and selleth whatsoever things** (so Westcott-and-Hort) **he hath, and buyeth that field:** Then would he have a full legal right, by the laws of nature and by the laws of the land where he was living, to take the full benefit of his discovery. The explanation of the parable seems to be as follows: The kingdom of heaven, so far as its high and holy and everlasting privileges are concerned, is, to many persons though not to all (see next verse), like a treasure hidden in the field. Many persons never suspect that it is in existence, or, if they admit that it is, they never think that it is so very near to them as it really is. Hence many never find it at all. In truth, they never seek for it. But others do find it, and find it as it were accidentally. They find it, *though they were not seeking for it*. (Rom. x. 20.) Some apparently casual turn of affairs brings them into contact with the gospel, and face to face with the glorious realities revealed in it. In a moment they are in a transport of joy; and, fearful lest they should be deprived of their bliss, they part with everything that was otherwise dear to them and with which it is requisite to part, that they may secure eternal life; “even as a man,” says Trench, “would willingly fling down pebbles and mosses, which hitherto he had been gathering, and with which he had filled his hands, if pearls and precious stones were offered him in their stead.” (*Parables*, p. 125.) See, for instance, the case of Colonel Gardiner, as narrated in Dr. Deedridge’s *Remarkable Passages*.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls : 46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

VER. 45. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking goodly pearls : This and the preceding parable are a natural pair. They are twins, and in many respects remarkably alike. There is however a diversity, as well as a likeness. In the former, the kingdom of heaven, *as regards its privileges*, is likened to a hidden treasure found as treasure trove. In this, the kingdom of heaven, *as regards its subjects*, is likened to a merchant who has been making search for goodly pearls. In the former the man finds what he was not seeking. In this he is seeking, in a line of things that corresponds with the "one thing needful," what he does ultimately find. The representation indicates, says Dr. Kitto, "the antiquity of a still existing oriental profession, that of "travelling jewellers, persons who deal in precious stones and pearls, and go "about seeking for opportunities of making advantageous purchases or exchanges, and taking journeys to remote countries for this purpose, and again "in another direction to find the best market for the valuables they have "secured. In the course of their operations it frequently happens that they "meet with some rich and costly gem, for the sake of obtaining which they "sell off all their existing stock, and every article of valuable property they may "possess, in order to raise the purchase money. Something similar may sometimes occur in the transactions of stationary jewellers ; but not so often as "among those who travel. Indeed, the jewellers of the East, as a body, are "perhaps the greatest travellers in the world." (*Pictorial Bible*, in loc.) The travelling jeweller of the parable, "seeking goodly pearls," represents an individual of a superior class of men, morally and spiritually considered. "He "has not been living," says Archbishop Trench, "for sensual objects. He has "not made pleasure, or gain, in the high places of the world, the end and scope "of his toils. But he has been, it may be, a philanthropist, a seeker of wisdom, "a worshipper of the beautiful in nature or in art ; one who has hoped to find "his soul's satisfaction in some one of these things." (*Parables*, p. 129.) *Goodly pearls* : Or, very literally, *beautiful pearls*. Instead of the word *goodly*, the less euphonious *good* is found in the reprint of the primary edition of 1611 that is given in Bagster's Hexapla. In the genuine copies of that edition, however, *goodly* is the reading. It is also the reading of the 1613 folio. But *good* occurs in the 1617 folio, and is moreover the reading of the Geneva version, and the Rheims, and Tyndale. It is *goodly*, again, in Cranmer's Bible ; and thence, we presume, the reading of our Authorized version. Wycliffe's version is *good margaritis*, that is, *good margarets*, for *Margaret* means *Pearl*. It is supposed to be derived from the Sanscrit *manâarîtâ*, the pure.

VER. 46. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price—or one very precious pearl,—went and sold all that he had, and bought it : Note that the verbs are in the past tense ; for it is after a man *has found* the pearl of great price, and *has gone* and *sold* all that he had, and *bought* it, that the kingdom of heaven, so far as its subjects are concerned, is like to him. The likeness is not realized *while he is merely seeking for beautiful pearls*. It is realized after he has found the inestimable jewel. There is thus in the evangelist's phraseology, as regards the 45th verse, a step backward as it were, that the narrative of the

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind : 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. 49 So shall it be at the end of the world : the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these

man's procedure might in a graphic manner begin at the beginning. The one inestimable pearl is, of course, not *the church*, as Vitrina supposes (*Verklaring van de parabolen*, p. 231), but *Christ in His fulness of blessings*; or, as it may be represented, when looked at from its other side, it is *the fulness of spiritual blessings in Christ*. Whosoever finds this parts with everything else that had put in, or that could put in, a rival claim to the affections.

VER. 47. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net : A large long *draw net*, *drag net*, or *hauling net*. It is also called a *sean* or *seine*, which indeed is a mere abbreviated form of the evangelist's term. That was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind of fish : The kingdom of heaven, in its initial and terrestrial development, is like this net, inasmuch as it encloses temporarily, within the sweep of its influence, a great variety of characters. Hypocrites and self deceivers go for a while side by side with true believers, and make profession of subjection to the Lord of the gospel.

VER. 48. Which, when it was filled, they hauled up on the beach, and sat down,—so as to do their work deliberately,—and gathered the good into vessels,—ready to be carried to the market,—but cast the bad—the *putrid*—away : It was thus but for a brief period that the good and bad were commingled in the net.

VER. 49. So shall it be at the end of the world : Or, *in the consummation of the age*, the conclusion of that long period of the world's history, during which good and evil struggle together for the mastery. See ver. 39. The angels shall come forth, and sever the evil out of the midst of the righteous : Flaming profession, intimate ecclesiastical connections, high official position, will then be of no avail. Nothing shall be veiled. The vile will be seen to be vile, and must be separated from the precious. It does not follow however, from this effectual sifting that is to take place at the consummation of the age, that no attempt should be made during the currency of the age to avoid ecclesiastical "company with fornicators, covetous, idolaters, railers, drunkards, extortioners," and other defiant enemies of goodness (1 Cor. v. 9–11). They who love Jesus are bound to withdraw ecclesiastically from such company ; and they are entitled, if they choose, and whatever anti-Donatists in ancient or in modern times may say to the contrary, to gather together in groups or little churches. And although they thus gather themselves together, they neither thereby sever themselves, nor can they by any power on earth be severed, from Christ's catholic church.

VER. 50. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be the wailing and the gnashing of the teeth : See ver. 42. Most solemn words ! before which we must stand in awe, and adore.

VER. 51. Have ye understood all these things ? They say to Him, Yes : Not that we are to suppose that they understood the things to their summits and

things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. 52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.

their depths. Who even yet has thus exhausted or comprehended them? But they saw light streaming through them. It was light from heaven; it would increase; and by and by they would be able to see more and more clearly, more and more minutely, more and more comprehensively; farther up, farther down, farther out, and farther in.

VER. 52. And He said to them, Therefore: This 'Therefore' is, says Alford, "an expression of *consequence*, but not a strong one, answering nearly to our "Well, then." Unger takes the same view of the phrase. (*De parabolis Jesu*, p. 180.) It is as if the Lord had said, Since ye do understand what I have been saying, it follows that what is true of all *scribes* who are *instructed unto the kingdom of heaven* will be verified in your experience. Every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven: Literally, *Every scribe who has been disciplined to the kingdom of heaven*; every scribe, that is to say, who has been made a disciple in relation to, or in connection with, the kingdom of heaven: see Matt. xxvii. 57, xxviii. 19; Acts xiv. 21. The Saviour assumes that in the kingdom of heaven, as it exists on earth, there will be *scribes* or *men of letters*, men who devote themselves to sacred letters, and who thus become qualified to be teachers of others, even as the scribes among the Jews were (see chap. ii. 4). Christian scribes however are perpetual *learners*, as well as *teachers*. They are *disciples*, *pupils*, *scholars*, in connection with the kingdom of heaven. They sit at the feet of the Great Teacher, and thence go out to communicate to others what they have learned for themselves. Is like a man who is an householder, who bringeth forth—flingeth forth—out of his treasure—his storehouse—things new and old, according as they may be required. A man who is really *understanding* things makes steady progress and ascends, reaching higher and still higher standpoints, and thence getting wider and still grander views. There is hence a *new* element that is ever mingling with the *old* in his ideas. He sees things in *new* relations, and yet they are the *old* things still. There is, as Grotius and Unger remark, perpetual *variety* in his views. His ideas never become obsolete and stale; they never stagnate. His mind is not a mere cistern in which the collected water may grow stagnant and unwholesome. It is a perennial wellspring, whose waters are ever living and fresh. But to be *fresh* is one thing, and to be *addicted to novel knick-knacks and spiritual curiosities* is another. It is a pity when mental energy is expended in a perpetual hunt after ingenuities, subtleties, and oddities. Such a hunt has been engaged in, and very eagerly too, by not a few interpreters of the seven parables of this chapter. They have fancied that there is a deep mystery in the number *seven*, and indeed a distinct foreshadowing of seven successive epochs in the history of the church. These epochs, as they imagine, begin with the seed-sowing time of our Saviour's personal ministry, and move onward, stage by stage, till the final separation of all that is bad from all that is good on the day of judgement. The interpreters referred to lavish ingenuity in working out this theory, and hit upon veins of interesting coincidences. But such interpretations are not only mere speculations, unsupported by any hints thrown out by our Lord Himself or by His

53 And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. 54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, inso-much that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and

apostles; they are apt, however well meant and devout, to be mischievous as well as useless. They seduce into a waste of mental energy; they beguile into interpretative straining; they bring biblical exposition into contempt with minds of massier mould; they nourish a morbid taste for spiritual and wire-drawn refinements; they lead to castles in the air, and land in mysticism, and a kind of frivolous though pious Cabbala. And, in the case before us, they rob each successive epoch in the history of the church, and of the world, of the full share of blessing that was laid up, not *for one epoch at a time*, but *for all time*, in the parabolic teaching of our Saviour. We should not be willing, as Unger remarks, to be wise in such matters beyond the wisdom of Scripture. (*Nolle sapere, ubi silent scriptores sacri. De Parabolis, p. 76.*)

VER. 53. And it came to pass, that when Jesus finished these parables, He departed thence: Having sowed the seed, He allowed it time to germinate. We have a phrase in colloquial English that almost exactly corresponds to the expression that is rendered *He departed thence*. It is, *He took Himself thence*.

VER. 54. And having come into His own country—His little *fatherland*, the territory to which His reputed father and ancestors belonged, the district of Nazareth,—He taught them in their synagogue, inso-much that they were struck with amazement, and said, Whence hath this man—or, as Wesley represents it, *Whence hath HE*—this wisdom, and the powers (which He exhibits), or the *miracles* (which He performs)? Their idea of His *wisdom* would not be very developed. It would be His charm in speaking, His manifest ability to touch many points, and to throw light on whatsoever He touched, which they would regard as astonishing *wisdom*.

VER. 55. Is not this the carpenter's son? This is the passage in which we learn the nature of Joseph's occupation. (Comp. Mark vi. 2.) He was an *artificer*, for the word *carpenter* must not be interpreted in its narrowed modern import, as distinguished from *joiner, cabinet maker, etc.* The word *carpenter* originally meant *cart maker*. But the term employed by the evangelist rather corresponds to our more general word *wright*, which properly means just a *workman*, being etymologically connected with the word *work* or *wrought*. Like the evangelist's Greek term, it would originally designate an artificer, who worked indeed in wood, but not exclusively so. "Often," says Dr. Wallace, describing his visit to Nazareth, "did we hang over the balcony of the convent, "and look into a little workshop right before us, combining the two occupations of a country smith and carpenter. All kinds of rude, rustic implements were brought to be repaired, and quite a rare medley of country jobbing in wood and iron was done in that quaint little workshop. It was a sight that had great interest for us; it linked us to the far past, and to the work-a-day life of the world's greatest Man, as we heard the ring of the anvil mingled at times with the rasping of the saw, and witnessed the townspeople bringing boxes to be mended, or the *fellahs* their rough implements of field labour." (*The Desert and the Holy Land*, chap. xiii., p. 307.) Is not His mother called Mary? A

his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things? 57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour,

common Jewish name, Mariam in Syriac, and *Miriam* in Hebrew. And His brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? Are not these their names? Do we not know them quite well? And is it not the case that there is nothing very peculiar about any of them? Instead of *Joses*, the uncial manuscripts N^a, B, C, and the two important cursives 1 and 33 the ('queen'), along with a large and influential detachment of the ancient versions, inclusive of the Latin Vulgate, read *Joseph*; and hence Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and Westcott-and-Hort have introduced it into the text; and Meyer approves. The abbreviated form of the name, *Joses*, is doubtless authentic in Mark vi. 3, but not to be introduced here. Quite a large number of uncial manuscripts read neither *Joseph* nor *Joses*, but *John*. The transcribers of these manuscripts had, in consequence of their greater familiarity with the name *John*, and their recollection of the interlinked relationship of the names *James* and *John*, assumed too readily that the reference here either was, or ought to be, to the better known name. In what sense were James and Joseph and Simon and Judas the *brethren*, or *brothers*, of our Lord? See next verse.

VER. 56. And His sisters, are they not all with us? This, and Mark vi. 3, are the only passages in which there is direct reference to Christ's *sisters*. There may be indirect reference in Matt. xii. 50 and Mark iii. 35. What was the real relationship of these *sisters* and these *brothers* to our Lord? It is a question that has been keenly debated from Jerome's day, downward. All the requirements of the case are fulfilled if we suppose, with the earliest of the Fathers, that they were the children of Joseph by a previous marriage. They would thus be *step-brothers* and *sisters*. What is recorded in John xix. 26, 27, seems to lay an interdict on the idea that Mary had, besides our Lord, other sons of her own. It is moreover a constant ecclesiastical tradition that Joseph was an old man when Mary was espoused to him. He seems to have passed away long before our Saviour commenced His public career. (See on chap. x. 3, and xii. 46.) Whence then has He all these things? He got no great education! He was not sent to the great schools in Jerusalem! No persons in this country could have taught Him, and shaped Him, and turned Him out so wonderful a rabbi, wonderful in words and wonderful in works.

VER. 57. And they were offended in Him: Or, *And they were stumbled in Him*, that is, *they were stumbled in reference to Him*. The Rheims version has it, *they were scandalized in Him*. Principal Campbell's translation is, *They were scandalized at Him*. The meaning is somewhat complex. It is to the following effect: Not knowing what to make of Him, and yet not willing to welcome Him as the Great Deliverer, they came into collision with what was Divine reality, and stumbled, and staggered, and fell, and were caught, and entangled in their thoughts, and ensnared in their prejudices. See on chap. v. 29, xi. 6, xiii. 21, 41. "Familiarity," as Richard Baxter reminds us, "breeds contempt." And then, after having quoted this proverbial wisdom of the ages, the great Puritan sagely adds, "It is no impediment to our faith that we saw not Christ's person, parentage, and education." But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without

save in his own country, and in his own house. 58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 AT that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of

honour, save in his own country, and in his own house: A proverbial saying, that has been often, though of course not invariably, exemplified. The positive part of it is always realized; a true prophet, a true thinker, a true man, will sooner or later be appreciated. Perhaps not in his earthly lifetime. Perhaps not on earth at all. But there is another lifetime besides the earthly; and in the great universe of God there are other earths and worlds and stars besides our little spot. In the expression, *and in his own house*, the Saviour seems to refer to the fact that His own brethren did not as yet believe on Him (John vii. 3-5). By and by they saw their error. See Acts i. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 5, xv. 7; Gal. i. 19.

VER. 58. And He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief: That state of moral recipiency was wanting that would have fitted them for making a right and good use of His ministrations. In their present *non-recipient* mood they would be disposed to shield themselves under the idea that there must be some black art or trick behind the wonders which they witnessed. They would be saying to one another and to themselves, "Sure He never came by all these things honestly, and in God's name" (Trapp). To have lavished words and works on minds thus conditioned would have been equivalent to sowing seeds on rocks or sprinkling water upon seas.

CHAPTER XIV.

VER. 1. At that time: Or, more literally, *In that time*. A little cycle of time was present to the thoughts of the evangelist; and within that cycle, though at what determinate point we know not, the event narrated took place. In our idiom we should bring out the same idea by giving a somewhat different turn to the expression, *about that time*. The evangelist uses the same phrase in chap. xi. 25, xii. 1. It occurs also very frequently in the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy, Kings, and Chronicles (see Deut. i. 9, 16, 18; ii. 34; iii. 4, 8, 12, 18, 21, 23; iv. 14; v. 5, etc.). Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus: Or, more literally, and as it is given both by Wycliffe and in the Rheims version, *heard the fame of Jesus*, that is, *heard the report concerning Jesus*. We might freely translate the whole verse thus, *About that time the fame of Jesus reached the ears of Herod the tetrarch*. The Herod referred to was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great by the Samaritan Malthace, one of Herod's many wives. (Joseph. *Ant.*, xvii. 1: 3.) He was by the original will of his father designated to the successorship in the kingdom; but at the eleventh hour his father cancelled that arrangement, and left the kingdom to Archelaus (Matt. ii. 22; Joseph., *Ant.* 8: 1), appointing Antipas, under the name of tetrarch, to the principality of Galilee and Perea. The word *tetrarch* properly means *prince* or *ruler of a fourth part*, and was fittingly conferred on Antipas. Archelaus obtained one half, or two fourths, of the dominions of his father, and the other two fourths were assigned to Antipas and Philip respectively. (Joseph., *Ant.* xvii. 11: 4.)

Jesus, 2 and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. 3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his

VER. 2. And he said to his servants: Those who were about him at court, and who constituted, as it were, his *ministry*, consisting, it might be, of such high officers as his treasurer, secretary, councillors, etc. This is John the Baptist—I fear it is—he has risen from the dead,—from the great body of the dead,—and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him: Or rather, *and therefore the powers are operating in him* (αὶ δυνάμεις ἐνεργοῦσιν ἐν αὐτῷ), the powers of the spiritual world, into which he had gone, and from which he has come. They are in full energetic play within his being. Wycliffe's version of the last clause is, *and therefore vertues worchen in hym*, i.e. *work in him*. It was the surmise of a guilty and superstitious spirit. "We are to consider," says Middleton, "that Herod was a Sadducee, and that he had hitherto believed neither in a resurrection nor in the agency of spirits." There is however no real ground for this opinion, not even in Mark viii. 15 when compared with Matt. xvi. 6. We may rather assume that, while caring little for true religion, the guilty prince yet felt within him, at times, the upstirring of certain grim spectres of awful invisible realities and possibilities.

VER. 3. For Herod had seized John, and bound him, and laid him up in prison: Such is the reading of the Sinaitic manuscript, and it has been adopted by Tischendorf in his eighth edition of the text (καὶ ἐν φυλακῇ ἀπέθετο). So far as the verb *laid up* or *aside* (instead of *θῆτο*) is concerned, it is generally approved of by modern critics. We learn from Josephus that the particular prison referred to was the castle of Machærus, east of the Dead Sea, on the borders of the respective dominions of Herod and Aretas his father-in-law (*Antiq.* xviii. 5: 1, 2). Because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife: Who shamefully eloped with Herod, while Philip was yet living, and while Herod's own wife was living, the daughter of the Arabian king or emir Aretas (*Antiq.* xviii. 5: 1). The relationship of the guilty pair was thus a double crime; and, on both sides of it, of double-dyed turpitude. Philip, his dishonoured brother, was not Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod by Cleopatra. Antipas could not have ventured to use such a liberty with him. He was an older Philip, who had no dominion, a son of Herod by the second Mariamne, daughter of Simon the Alexandrian, whom Herod had elevated to the high priesthood. This Philip was disinherited by his father in consequence of the treachery of his mother (*Joseph., War.* i. 30: 7); and he seems thenceforward to have resided, privately, at Rome (*Joseph., Ant.* xviii. 5: 1). It was indeed in Rome that Antipas, while his brother's guest, got inveigled in the net of the designing Herodias (*Joseph., Ant.* xviii. 5: 1). There was a strange intricacy in the whole affair. Herodias was herself the granddaughter of Herod the Great. She was the daughter of Herod's son Aristobulus, whose mother was the first Mariamne, Herod's Maccabean wife. Herodias's husband was thus her own half-uncle. And now she had eloped with another half-uncle, taking her only daughter Salome with her. She seems to have been an able, ambitious, unprincipled, but bewitching and ensnaring woman. She knew well, no doubt, that her criminal connection with Antipas would involve both her paramour and herself in accumulated sin and scandal. But "What to her were public scandal and private sin? The beautiful

brother Philip's wife. 4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. 5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday was kept,

"Maccabean princess smiled at such words. What had she to do with these Pharisees and their oral law? Was she bound by their law, or by any law, to forego her birthright of rank and state? Her husband Philip was poor; his brother Antipas was rich. One dwelt in a private station; the other reigned in the Golden House (of Tiberias). The first was nobody in the world; the other was a prince, on his way to be a king. She wished to be a queen; to stand at the head of a court; to move about the world with pomp. Hence her resolution was taken, that as Antipas was the most powerful prince of her race, she would become his queen and wife. Antipas could refuse her nothing. He knew that in carrying out her scheme he would have to put a cruel affront on his faithful wife. He felt that in wronging his wife he would rouse the old desert tiger, whose claws had been more than once felt in Sebaste and Sephoris. He was aware that even if he could dishonour his wife and defy Aretas without being ruined, he could not marry a woman who had been his brother's wife, while that brother was still alive. The law forbade it. Public feeling forbade it. All Galilee, all Samaria, all Judæa, would resent so heinous a breach of morals. He knew that his brother Archelaus had fallen from his throne through the very crime which Herodias was tempting him to commit. Yet, peering into her dark eyes, he threw himself, body and soul, into perdition." (W. Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land*, chap. xliii.)

VER. 4. For John said to him, It is not lawful for thee to have her: John had thus been unbendingly faithful to his mission as a preacher of righteousness. He did not fear the face of man; and hence he acted a very different part from that of the judges of Persia in the time of Cambyses. That madman of a monarch wished to marry his sister; and he demanded of the judges whether there were any Persian law that would sanction such a marriage. They pusillanimously answered that they could find no such law, but they found another, *That the monarch of Persia was at liberty to do whatsoever he pleased.* (*Herodotus*, iii. 31.) "It is not uncommon," says Dr. Thomas, "for men to reprove the poor and the humble in society for their offences, but it is a rare virtue to charge crime, with unflinching fidelity, upon the higher classes. The poor are lectured on all hands, and the most contemptible claptraps are adopted to catch their ear. But where are the Johns to lecture the rich and the royal, the Herods?" (*Genius of the Gospel*, in loc.)

VER. 5. And when he would have put him to death,—for "faithful rebukes," as Matthew Henry observes, "if they do not profit, usually provoke,"—he feared the multitude,—for even tyrants are under some check,—because they counted him as a prophet: *They counted him*, literally *they had him*, that is, *they held him*. There is thus a point at which our English idiom, in this matter, and the Greek idiom coalesce.

VER. 6. But when Herod's birthday was come: The custom of celebrating birthdays by festivities was not, it seems, approved of by the strict Jews. (See Nork's *Rabbinische Quellen*, in loc., and Lightfoot's *Exercitationes*.) But it was nevertheless quite an institution in the Herodian family. (See *Satires of Persius*,

the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. 7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. 8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a

v. 180; and comp. Joseph., *Ant.* xix. 7 : 1.) The daughter of Herodias : Viz. by her former husband Philip; her name was Salome. (Joseph. *Ant.*, xviii. 5 : 4.) Danced before them, and pleased Herod : The expression translated *before them* is literally, as we learn from the margin, *in the midst*, that is, *in the midst of the company*. Wycliffe's translation is, *the daughter of Erodiad lepte* (that is, *leaped*) *in the mydil*. Salome would no doubt be a very young lady, with graceful Roman manners, and gleaming, we may presume, with the perilous witchery of beauty. It was "an act of condescension and of shame," as W. H. Dixon remarks, for such a princess to dance in the midst of such a company. But it was a feminine plot. It had been schemingly contrived by her mother, in honour of Herod it is true, and for his sensuous, maudlin enjoyment, but with a view to the result that actually happened.

VER. 7. Whereupon he promised her an oath to give her whatsoever she should ask : He had no doubt been flushed with wine. The sentinels of reason would be all put off their guard.

Extravagantly pleased, the tyrant cried,

Whate'er she asked she should not be denied.—S. Wesley, *sen.*

The word *promised* properly means *confessed* (*ὁμολόγησεν*). There is a slight idea of *response* suggested by it. The monarch's liberality had been appealed to, though most probably in a tacit and indirect manner. "Salome was a princess, "stooping to the art of an alme; but having done this indecent thing, she had "gained a right to her reward; and by the custom of oriental courts she could "demand the wages of her shame." (W. H. Dixon, *The Holy Land*, chap. xliii., "Herodias.") The tipsy monarch *responded* and *consented*. He *confessed* and *professed* that he would give her whatsoever she should ask.

VER. 8. And she, being before instructed by her mother,—or rather, *being instigated by her mother*,—saith, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger : A diabolical request. Mark the *here*, that is, *in this festal hall, in the midst of these "lords and high captains" that are round about thee, O Herod*. The damsel's mother seems to have known that it would be difficult to gain her end; and impossible if time were lost. She was convinced that unless the head of the obnoxious preacher were obtained then and there, it would not be obtained at all. Herod would relent. Hence the *here*. In the English expression *John Baptist's head*, the word *Baptist* is used as if it were part and parcel of John's proper name,—his surname in fact. The original expression is *John the Baptist's head*; but in English, in consequence of frequent repetition, it had got to be abbreviated, and at length stereotyped in its abbreviation. It is *John Baptist's head* both in Wycliffe's version and in Tyndale's; in the Geneva too, and in Cranmer's Bible. But in the Rheims version it is given more correctly, *the head of John the Baptist*. *In* or *on* a charger : That is, *on a platter*; and so the word is rendered both by Tyndale and in the Geneva version. Wycliffe's translation, again, and Sir John Cheke's, is *in a dish*. It was suggested by the Latin *discus*, the word used in the Vulgate, and meaning a *disc* or *dish*. The original Greek term (*πίναξ*) meant properly a *wooden platter* or *trencher*. The English word *charger*, introduced into the text by our Authorized translators,

charger. 9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oaths' sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*. 10 And he sent, and beheaded

has now become obsolete. It was however in common use at a certain period; and it occurs eleven times in the Authorized translation of the seventh chapter of the Book of Numbers. It was used to denote a somewhat capacious platter, often made of silver, which was *charged* or *loaded* with meat at banquets or other meals; *charged*, and hence called a *charger*. *Every charger is a kind of carrier* (comp. the French *char* for *car*). Such a carrier, or charger, was the vessel on which Salome asked the price of her dancing to be presented to her. The request to have John's head *on a charger* was an intimation that the sight of it would be *a feast to her mother and herself*. It would be, as Matthew Henry expresses it, "sauce to all the other dishes." "It was reserved," he adds, "for "the third course, to come up with the rarities."

VER. 9. And the king was grieved: The *tetrarch* is freely called *king*, inasmuch as he was a sovereign within his tetrarchy. There were twinges in his conscience. After his first fury in reference to John's freedom of speech had subsided, he had learned to respect the incorruptible integrity and the moral grandeur of the man. (See Mark vi. 20.) He would feel, moreover, that a snare had been laid for him by Herodias; and he would wince. Nevertheless, for the oaths' sake: It should be *oaths'*, not *oath's*, which is a printer's or editor's error. The word is plural in the original; and there is no apostrophe at all in the primary edition of 1611, or in the succeeding folios of 1613, 1617, 1634, 1640. The clause stands thus, *for the othes sake*. Blayney in his corrected edition of 1769 has the incorrect apostrophe, *oath's*. It would appear that Herod had repeated his oath; perhaps, in the exuberance of his enthusiasm, he had re-repeated it. And them which sat at meat with him: Or, according to the Rheims version, *and them that sate with him at table*, or, more literally, *and them that reclined with him (at table)*, or more simply still, though less literally, *and the guests*. *Because of the oaths and the guests*. His honour in his guests' estimation might be at stake; for they had heard his promise; "and in all that "riotous company of courtiers and soldiers, sycophants and slaves, the Baptist "was without a friend." (W. Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land*, p. 289.) He commanded it to be given: Should he have done so? Were his oaths an absolute bar upon retraction? No doubt the original promise was the original sin. He should not have made such an unconditional promise. He made it in the spirit of a braggart and a despot. His promissory oaths were thus hatched in wickedness. But though thus hatched, was he not bound, when they were once in existence, to adhere to them? There was something good in adhering to them,—something of respect and reverence for the Divine Being, who is either explicitly or implicitly appealed to in all oaths. But there was also something appallingly bad. There was adherence to what was utterly unlawful and wicked. He had no business to peril such lives as that of John on the freak and pleasure of Salome, or on the hate of Herodias, or on any rash words of his own. It was criminal to put any lives in such peril. And he should have said to Salome: *I ought not to have made a promissory oath so exceedingly unconditional. It never occurred to me that you would ask the gift of a human head. Such a demand is beyond the scope of my intention. The head of John the Baptist is really not mine to give. Heads, as well as hearts,*

John in the prison. 11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother. 12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

13 When Jesus heard *of it*, he departed thence by ship into

and souls, belong to God. I may have power, so far as the mere implements of force are concerned, to comply with your request; but I have no authority. I too am under authority, even as you yourself. It was wrong in me to make so unconditional a promise. It would be still farther wrong, were I, because of such a promise, to do as you desire. Ask some legitimate gift, and it shall not be withheld. If Herod's oath had merely perilled valuable goods and chattels, then, though he had "sworn to his own hurt," it would have been his duty "not to change." (Ps. xv. 4.) But no oath whatsoever, and no bond whatsoever within the limits of possibility, could constitute an obligation to commit a crime. Oaths and other bonds are legitimate only in relation to things lawful. Illegitimate oaths are immoral, and should be repented of, not fulfilled.

VER. 10. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison: Note that it was Herod who did the deed, whosoever hand was employed. And, as it was a deed of assassination and murder, Herod was an assassin and a murderer.

VER. 11. And his head was brought on a charger, and given to the damsel; and she brought it—or carried it—to her mother: One would naturally suppose, from this statement, especially when it is coupled with the statement of verse 8, that John's prison must have been quite at hand. Perhaps the festivity was held in the fortress of Machærus itself, where, according to Josephus, John was imprisoned. (*Antiq.* xviii. 5: 1, 2.) "Machærus was a strong hill town, in the midst of arid wastes; a rocky plateau, on which Herod the Great had built a huge pile, half palace, half castle, to overawe the Arab tribes." (W. Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land*, p. 285.) Or, if the festivity was held in the palace, or Golden House, at Tiberias, then not improbably John had been removed to that place, as Herod might wish to have him under his own eye. Tiberias was built by Herod, and was constituted his capital city. (*Joseph., Life*, § 9.) It was named after the Roman emperor Tiberius. *The damsel*; i.e. *the little maiden*. She had not reached womanly maturity. Luther's diminutive reproduces the original admirably, *Mägdelein*. *Damsel* is the term employed in all the old English versions, with the exception of the Geneva, which gives *mayde*. The English *damsel* is just the French *demoiselle*, which is the Latin diminutive *dominicella*, and properly means *tittle lady*.

VER. 12. And his disciples came and took up the corpse and buried him: There is a graphic touch in the original, which is not easily reproduced. The expression rendered *came* means *approached*, viz. the body. It exhibits a picture of reverential deportment in relation to the mangled corpse. Note also the peculiar pronoun *him*, not *it*. And they came and told Jesus: They knew the intimate relations that had subsisted between the two; and to whom could they so appropriately go in the time of their great trial? "When anything ails "us at any time," says Matthew Henry, "it is our duty and privilege to make "Christ acquainted with it." He hears us when we speak. He sympathises too. "Weeping soul!" says Dr. Thomas, "go, and tell Jesus."

VER. 13. But when Jesus heard of it. Heard of what? Not the assassin-

a desert place apart: and when the people had heard *thereof*, they followed him on foot out of the cities. 14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. 15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude

ation of John, but the surmise to which Herod had given currency, that Jesus was John risen from the dead. (See ver. 2, and consult Patrizi *De Evangeliiis*, vol. i., p. 408.) He departed thence by ship: Or, in a boat. *Thence*, from the place where He was when the report was communicated to Him. To a desert place: "Belonging," says Luke (ix. 10), "to the city called Bethsaida." The spot was undoubtedly on the north-east side of the sea of Tiberias, farther north than Gergesa. It was in the district of Jaulan or Gaulonitis, which was beyond the principality of Herod Antipas, and in the tetrarchy of Philip. At the south-east corner of the plain of Butaiha, there is just such a desert place as will accord with all the circumstances of the evangelist's narrative. "The mountain," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "shuts down upon the lake, bleak and barren. It was doubtless desert then, as now, for it is not capable of cultivation." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 25, p. 372.) Apart: Or, *privately*. He and His disciples went *by themselves*. He left the multitudes who thronged around Him on the west side of the lake, and sought seclusion. (Comp. Mark vi. 31; Luke ix. 10.) His disciples needed rest; and so did He. His heart too would be heavy, and might be longing for an opportunity of unburdening itself. And when the people—the multitudes—heard thereof, they followed Him on foot—or *by land*—out of the cities: The adjoining cities, such as Capernaum and Chorazin. Dr. Burton strangely imagines that they "went round the south part of the lake, and crossed the Jordan near Tiberias." But to have taken such a route would have been almost as awkward as it would be to go from London to Land's End by way of John o' Groat's House.

VER. 14. And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude: Or, rather, *And when Jesus came out He saw a great crowd*. When He came out, that is to say, from His little cabin in the boat, as they approached the desert place. Comp. Mark vi. 33, 34. And He had compassion on them, and healed their sick: His compassions failed not; and never fail. Wearied as He was, and though longing intensely for seclusion, He could not tear Himself from the needy people. And "His mercy," as Trapp expresses it, was not mere "mouth-mercy." He ministered to them according to their varied necessities.

VER. 15. But when the evening was coming on: The early evening began about the ninth hour of the day, which corresponds to about three o'clock in the afternoon. "The Hebrews," says Dr. Robinson, "reckoned two evenings, viz. "the first from the ninth hour, or about three o'clock, until sunset; the other from "sunset onward." (*Lexicon*, sub voce.) The disciples came to Him, saying, The place is desert, and the time is now past: Or, more literally, *and the hour has now passed*. The phrase is idiomatic; and corresponds very nearly to our English idiomatic expression, *it is now past time*. The meaning is, *it is already too late*. It is as if the disciples had said: *The day is far spent; and indeed the fitting time for the multitudes to disperse,—if they are to pay due attention to their bodily wants,—has already gone by*. It was rather a presumptuous remark to make to our Lord. Still more so is the remark that follows,—Send

away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. 16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart: give ye them to eat. 17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. 18 He said, Bring them hither to me. 19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20 And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up of

the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages, and buy for themselves victuals.

VER. 16. The miracle that is hereafter narrated is *the only one* that is recorded by all the four evangelists. See Mark vi. 34-44; Luke ix. 12-17; John vi. 1-13. But Jesus said to them, They do not need to depart; give ye them to eat: There is an emphasis on the *ye*, the Saviour thus leading His disciples to realize their own utter inability, in order that they might by and by realize more intensely the fulness of His ability.

VER. 17. And they say to Him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes: Salted fish was the most usual accompaniment and condiment of bread. It was the common 'kitchen' (or *opsonium*) of the masses of the people.

VER. 19. And He commanded the multitudes to sit down—or recline—on the grass: At the southern base of the rocky rising ground which our Saviour sought, as a temporary retreat, there is just such a spot as was needed to constitute the multitudes' dining ground. On visiting this spot Dr. W. M. Thomson says: "On this beautiful sward, at the base of the rocky hill, the "people were seated to receive, from the hands of the Son of God, the miraculous "bread, emblematic of His body, which is the true bread from heaven." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 25, p. 372.) And He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, He blessed: Matthew Henry remarks that "He did not appoint one of His disciples to be His chaplain." He Himself invoked His Father's benediction; He invoked it with adoration and thanksgiving. In all His work on earth He acted in subordination to the will of His Father. And brake: "The Jewish loaves," says Holden, "were broad and thin, like cakes; hence we never read of *cutting*, but always of *breaking* bread." (*Christian Expositor*, in loc.) Perchance it was in the breaking that the miraculous multiplication began. We need not, however, speculate as to the *when* and the *how*. We are not informed; and though imagination could make many guesses, still guesses are but guesses. It is enough to know that omnific omnipotence was present; and, to such power, it could be no greater difficulty to produce bread for a few thousands, in an extraordinary way, than it can be to produce, in an ordinary way, food convenient for the teeming millions upon millions who are daily fed at God's universal table. The terms *ordinary* and *extraordinary*, when applied to such subjects, present but different aspects of the same infinity of power. And gave the broken and multiplied loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes: The disciples were thus taught to act as the servants of their fellow-men.

VER. 20. And they did all eat, and were filled: Or, *and were fed* (ἐχορπάσθησαν) that is, *and were satisfied*. Tyndale's version is, *and were sufficed*; the

the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. 21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23 And when he had sent the mul-

Rheims is, *and had their fil*; Wycliffe's is more picturesque still, *and weren fulfilled* (i.e. *full-filled, or filled-full*). And they took up of the fragments that remained—or, *and they took up the surplus of the broken pieces*—twelve baskets full: It is as if the twelve ministering apostles had got, each, a basket filled. Whom the Lord feeds, He feasts. He gives enough and to spare. Such baskets as are referred to, if not in the possession of the disciples themselves, would be easily obtained, for the purpose, from among the crowd, many of whom seem to have been on their way to Jerusalem to observe the passover. (John vi. 4.) The word employed by the evangelist for *baskets* (*κόφινος*), and Anglicised by Wycliffe *cofyn* or *coffin* (allied to *coffer*), denotes a well known article among the Jews, and much used by them when travelling. Juvenal mentions it, by the same name, as the invariable accompaniment of wandering Jews. (*Satires*, iii. 14; vi. 541.)

VER. 21. And they that had eaten—or, as Sir John Cheke gives it, very literally, *And the eaters*—were about five thousand men, beside women and children: The word for *children* is a diminutive, *little children*, that is, the little ones who had accompanied their mothers.

VER. 22. And straightway—after the multitudes had finished their repast—He constrained the disciples—though they were extremely reluctant to leave Him behind—to go on board the boat—the particular boat namely, in which they had come—and to go before Him to the other side: To cross over before Him. To cross over, *whither?* Toward Bethsaida, says Mark (vi. 45); toward Capernaum, says John (vi. 17). There is no discrepancy. They were evidently to keep near the shore, and thus take Bethsaida on their way to Capernaum, not knowing at what point they might require to pick up their Master, as He followed. Till He should send the multitudes away: The disciples were to go on before, *leaving Him behind until* He should succeed in getting the multitudes dispersed. It would appear that the multitudes were loath to leave His presence. They would fain then and there, as we learn from John, have “taken Him by force to make Him a king” (chap. vi. 15).

VER. 23. And when He sent the multitudes away—by formally concluding all His communications to them (see John vi. 15)—He went up into a mountain: Or, more literally, *into the mountain*, the mountain, or rising ground, at the base of which He had fed the multitudes. He went up *into* the recesses of this rising ground. The north-eastern shores of the sea of Tiberias, as compared with the north-western, abound in solitudes, and secret places suitable for secret prayer, being comparatively barren. “The lake in this double aspect,” says Dean Stanley, “is thus a reflex of that union of energy and rest, of active “labour and deep devotion, which is the essence of Christianity, as it was of the “life of Him in whom that union was first taught and shown.” (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x., p. 379.) Apart—or, privately, or by Himself—to pray: To open up, and let out, in the presence of His Father, all the longings of His

titudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit;

heart. He felt that He must for a season turn from all creatures and unbosom Himself unreservedly and undistractedly to His Father. In that unreserved unbosoming of Himself all the depths of His being would be laid open to the full and filling influx of the mind and heart and will of His Father. And when evening was come: The later evening, the second evening, or that latter end of the prolonged evening that merges in night. (See ver. 15.) He was there alone: And yet not lonely, for He was walking and talking sublimely with His Father.

VER. 24. But the boat was now in the midst of the sea tossed with waves: The word translated *tossed* (*βασανίζουρον*) is generally, in other passages, rendered *tormented*. Young happily translates it *distressed* in this passage, *distressed by the waves*. The Revisionists have adopted the translation. For the wind was contrary: A sudden gale had sprung up from the north-east and east, so that they were not able to make Bethsaida, or even Capernaum, and still less to return to the spot where they had left the Lord. "My experience," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "in this region enables me to sympathise with the disciples in their long night's contest with the wind. I spent a night in that Wady "Shukaiyif. The sun had scarcely set, when the wind began to rush down toward the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning the face of the lake was like a huge boiling caldron. The wind howled down every wady from the north-east and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. In a wind like that the disciples *must* have been driven quite across to Gennesaret, as we know they were." (*The Land and the Book*, chap. 25, p. 374.)

VER. 25. And in the fourth watch of the night: That is, within three hours of sunrise. The Jews originally divided the night into *three watches*, each consisting of four hours, which were different however in length, according to the season of the year. When they came under the power of the Romans, they frequently adopted the Roman method of computation, according to which the night was divided into *four watches*, each consisting of three hours. The fourth watch thus extended from about three to six o'clock in the morning. (See Krebs, *Observations*, in loc.) Our Saviour had consequently spent a very long time in secret communion with His Father. "Cold mountains and the midnight air witnessed the fervour of His prayer." He came to them, walking on the sea: His own sea. For He was the Lord of all the elements of nature, and could wield and control them as He pleased. In more senses than one "His way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known." (Ps. lxxvii. 19.)

VER. 26. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit: Or, as the Rheims version gives it, a *ghost*.

and they cried out for fear. 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord,

Wycliffe's translation is a *fantum*, that is, a *phantom*, a *spectre*, an *apparition*, or a *phantasm* as it is in the original (*φάντασμα*). And they cried out for fear: "A little thing," says Matthew Henry, "frightens us in a storm." "Things oft go backward," says Trapp, "ere they come forward with us." And they sometimes seem to us to be going backward when they are really coming forward. The disciples were afraid, when, if they had known better, they would have shouted for joy. They were afraid of their Friend and Deliverer. Their fear, as in so many other cases, sprang from ignorance.

VER. 27. But straightway Jesus spake to them, saying, Be of good cheer—Or, *Be of good courage*—it is I: be not afraid: He hastened to undeceive them. "The foundation of all consolation," says Gualther, "is a real knowledge of Christ, and the believing conviction that He is near us." (*Archetypi in Matt.*) The Saviour indeed had allowed a much greater trial to befall His disciples than they experienced when they were crossing the same lake to the country of the Gergesenes (chap. viii. 24, 25); but their deliverance was all the more marvellous, and must have evidenced to them, convincingly, the exhaustlessness of His resources.

VER. 28. But Peter answered Him and said: For there was ever an element of the impulsive and the impetuous in Peter. Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee on the water: Or, more literally, *on the waters*, or *watris*, as Wycliffe has it. The multitudinousness of the element was present to Peter's mind, in consequence of the rolling of the waves. When Peter said, *if it be Thou*, the *if* is not meant to convey the idea that he was still in real doubt. He had doubted. He had indeed almost lost hope. But the despair had taken flight. And the doubt had rapidly broken up, and was in the act of evanishing from his mind. The *if* is the last echo of its presence.

VER. 29. And He said, Come. And Peter went down from the boat, and walked on the waters, to come to Jesus: Or, as Tischendorf reads it, *and came toward Jesus*. Acting on the authorization of Jesus, and trusting in Jesus, looking in the direction of Jesus, looking unto Jesus, there was no danger. He whose is the sea, and whose finger adjusts and sustains all the elements of nature, is not confined to one set of elemental arrangements. He is free to re-arrange, universally or partially, as He pleases.

VER. 30. But when he beheld the wind: The expression is crowded and condensed, but is easily disentangled and understood. Peter beheld in the swelling of the waves around him the evidence of the strength of the wind. Mace, with the Received Text before him, renders the expression freely, *But finding the wind boisterous*. Tyndale rather misses the mark when he renders it, *But when he saw a mighty wind*. He was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me! In which plight of Peter, as in a sacred drama, we see graphically represented the spiritual experience of many of Christ's disciples

save me. 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land

when they are "in deep waters." As long as they look steadfastly to Jesus, their heart is strong and their footsteps are firm. But the moment that they look away, and occupy themselves with their difficulties, as viewed apart from their Strength, they tremble and begin to sink. Their sinking recalls to their mind the presence of the very present One; and hence the piercing cry, *Lord, save me!* The Lord hearkens, and hears, and delivers.

VER. 31. And immediately—mark the *immediately*—Jesus stretched forth His hand, and took hold of him, and saith to him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? *Wherefore?* literally, *unto what? to what end? for what purpose?* Surely the doubting was uncalled for and unreasonable. *O thou of little faith:* these five words are the translation of one in the original (ὀλιγόπιστος). Trapp renders it *Petty-fidian*, or *Small-faith*.

VER. 32. And when they got up into the boat, the wind ceased: The word translated *ceased* means *got wearied*. The wind had as it were *got wearied of its work*, that is, it *slackened, abated, lulled*.

VER. 33. But they that were in the boat came and worshipped Him—did obeisance to Him—saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God: Or, *Assuredly Thou art God's Son*. Wycliffe's translation is *Verily Thou art Goddis Sone*. This is the first instance in Matthew in which the Saviour is designated by men the Son of God, although it is by no means the first instance in which the designation occurs. See chaps. ii. 15, iii. 17, iv. 3, 6, viii. 29, xi. 27. By *they that were in the ship* Meyer understands *the others besides the apostles*. But there is no occasion for drawing such a line of discrimination. The expression naturally denotes all who were on board, and it is probable that all would be more or less attached disciples. They were for the moment actuated by one conviction and reverential feeling. And no wonder.

VER. 34. And when they crossed over—when the crossing of the lake was accomplished—they came into the land of Gennesaret. South of Capernaum. The reading of Tischendorf and Tregelles is slightly different, so far as words are concerned, but identical in import (*ἐπὶ τῆν γῆν εἰς Γεννησαρέτ*), *they came on the land into Gennesaret*, that is, *they ran their boat aground, by running it into Gennesaret*. They came ashore on the territory of Gennesaret, "the most sacred region of the lake," says Dean Stanley, "shall we not say of the world?" (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x., p. 382.) "Its nature is wonderful," says Josephus, "as well as its beauty." (*Wars*, iii. x. 8.) "Its fertility indeed," says Dr. Robinson, "can hardly be exceeded. All kinds of grain and vegetables are produced in abundance, including rice in the moister parts, while the natural productions, as at Tiberias and Jericho, are those of a more southern latitude. "Indeed, in beauty, fertility, and climate, the whole tract answers well enough "to the glowing, though exaggerated description of Josephus." (*Researches*, vol. iii., § 15, p. 285.)

of Gennesaret. 35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; 36 and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

CHAPTER XV.

1 THEN came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, 2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they

VER. 35. And when the men of that place recognised Him they sent into all that neighbourhood, and brought to Him all that were diseased: Or, as the Rheims version gives it, *at that were ill at ease*. To be *dis-eased* is just to be *ill at ease*, or *unwell*.

VER. 36. And they besought Him that they might only touch the border of His garment: See on chap. ix. 20. And as many as touched were made perfectly whole: Our translators have admirably rendered the concluding verb. Tyn-dale's translation is, *were made safe*; so Purvey's, *weren maad saaf*; so Wycliffe's, *been maad saaf*. The Rheims version is, *were made hole*; the Geneva, *were made whole*. They all neglect the preposition *through* or *thorough*, which is in composition with the verb, *were made thoroughly whole*. What the Lord does, He does thoroughly.

CHAPTER XV.

VER. 1. Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying: Or, according to the reading of Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort, *Then came there to Jesus from Jerusalem, Pharisees and scribes, saying*. They had probably been sent, and not unlikely either by the appointment or with the connivance of the sanhedrin, as inquisitors, to make inquiry or inquiry regarding the doctrines and demeanour of the wonderful upstart Rabbi, whose fame was ringing throughout the land.

VER. 2. Like ecclesiastical inquisitors in general, they pounced microscopically upon some little jot or tittle of a thing, in the hope of being able to make a case out of it. Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? The unwritten tradition that has been handed down from of yore? The scribes and Pharisees could not quote Scripture for the practice to which they were about to refer; but they could quote what, in their judgement, was practically quite as good and weighty, a tradition that represented the judgement of the ancients. Indeed, by a natural growth of exaggeration, *tradition* was allowed to dominate over Scripture. Things got turned upside down; and tradition became the touchstone by which the meaning of Scripture was to be determined. It was actually a saying with some that "the words of the elders are weightier than the words of the prophets." (*Hieros. Berac.*, fol. 3: 2. See Lightfoot's *Exercitations*.) For they wash not their hands when they would eat bread. Christ, it seems, had taught His disciples that there was no great religious merit in washing the clean hands before eating. Christ, no doubt, would exceed all scribes and Pharisees in the love of real cleanliness, inner and outer. But He felt constrained to lay His ban upon the imaginary virtue that was supposed to be

eat bread. 3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. 5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by

inherent in the act of removing imaginary uncleanness. It was supposed that there was a demon called Shibta, "which sits upon men's hands during night: and if any person touches his food with unwashed hands, then that demon sits upon his food, and makes it dangerous." (*Rab. Taanith*, fol. 20: 2.) "Whosoever," it was said, "hath his abode in the land of Israel, and eateth his common food with washed hands, and speaks the holy language, and recites his phylacteries morning and evening, he may rest assured that he shall obtain eternal life." (*Hieros. Schab.*, fol. iii. 4. See Lightfoot.) This was not only to overdo the good idea of cleanliness; it was to metamorphose it into a spiritual charm, and thus into a spiritual snare.

VER. 3. But He answered and said to them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Or rather, *because of your tradition? the tradition which you observe?* The *also* must be noted. It admits that there was some kind of transgression on the part of His disciples, transgression of a human injunction. But it asserts that, on the part of the scribes and Pharisees, there was transgression too, and in a far higher plane of things; and, what was of very serious significance, transgression *on account of their tradition*. The Saviour thus, as Luther remarks, meets the bolt of their question by a counterbolt, which, as it is driven home, pushes out theirs till it falls to the ground (*clavum clavo retundit*).

VER. 4. For God commanded, saying, Honour—in words and works—thy father and thy mother (see Exod. xx. 12); and, He that curseth—or *revileth*—explicitly in words, or implicitly in works—father or mother, let him die the death (see Exod. xxi. 17). The expression *let him die the death* is idiomatic, but now obsolete. It is intended to be emphatic, *let him die the death (which is the appropriate penalty of such a crime)*. The Hebrew expression is also idiomatic, and idiomatically emphatic; and so is the Greek expression, which literally means, *let him come to his end by death*.

VER. 5. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me: Or, as it would be more literally rendered, *A gift! whatsoever it may be by which thou mightest be profited out of me*. The Saviour is quoting unhallowed language that was actually in use among the disciples of the scribes and the Pharisees. *A gift!* or *Corban!* that is, *A gift to God! I vow it as a gift to God!* It was language that was, at bottom, resting upon something that in certain circumstances was good and praiseworthy. It was good and praiseworthy to dedicate some portion of one's substance to the temple service of God. It was likewise good and praiseworthy that what was thus dedicated, or vowed away, should be held as sacred, and should not be alienated from its destination and applied to ordinary personal or domestic purposes. All this was good and praiseworthy; but the scribes and Pharisees began to tamper cunningly with the words of such vows, in a way that was at once shuffling, pettifogging, ensnaring, and demoralising. They actually ruled that if a man once used the words, though it might be in a fit

me; 6 and honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.*

of passion, and even as a formula of cursing or execration, to any person whatsoever, even a brother, or a sister, or a father, or a mother, then his hands were tied so far as assisting that person was concerned. And yet, with a kind of superlatively serpentine wriggling and deceit, they ruled at the same time that the goods thus passionately vowed or gifted to God might be lawfully withheld from God, and spent in any other way that was agreeable to the rogue; only he must on no account give them, or any part of them, to the individual to whom he had used the words. If then a son, in a fit of irritation and ill nature, or in a moment of intense and unnatural selfishness, should say to his necessitous father or mother, *A gift! whatsoever it may be, whereby thou mightest be profited out of what belongs to me*, that son was bound, out of reverence for the sacred words which he had irreverently and malevolently uttered, to withhold assistance from his parent, although he was not bound to fulfil his vow to God, and to hand over the goods to the treasury of the temple. "He was not at all bound," says Lightfoot, "to dedicate his estate to sacred uses; but he was inviolably bound not to help his parent. O excellent doctrine and charity!" (*Exercitations*, ad. loc. See also, on this formula of cursing, which prevailed to a fearful extent among the Jews, Meinhard's *Dissertation*, but, above all, the long, learned, and exhaustive *Dissertation* of Louis Cappel, which is published in the appendix to his *Spicilegium post Messeni*.)

VER. 6. And honour not his father and his mother, he shall be free: The clause *he shall be free* is printed in italic, because there is nothing corresponding to it in the original. Our translators, like many of the expositors, both ancient and modern, had been puzzled how to make out the construction. But the perplexity is removed by the reading of the oldest manuscripts, the Sinaitic in St. Petersburg, the Vatican in Rome, the Ephraemi in Paris, the Beza in Cambridge. These ancient and important manuscripts omit the conjunction *and* at the beginning of the verse. It is also omitted in the best manuscripts of the old Latin version, the version that preceded the Vulgate; and it is wanting in Cureton's Syriac, and in the Coptic and Æthiopic versions. It is omitted from the text in Lachmann's edition of the New Testament, and Tregelles', and Tischendorf's eighth edition, and that of Westcott-and-Hort. Its omission we conceive to be right. Its insertion probably arose from the difficulty of understanding what was aimed at in the preceding words, a difficulty which must be felt by all who are ignorant of rabbinical literature, and rabbinical ingenuity and sophistry and irreverence. Omitting then the *and*; throwing away the gratuitous supplement, *he shall be free*; changing the semicolon at the end of verse 5, according to Stephens's enumeration of the verses, into a comma; and translating the expression *honour not*, literally, *shall not honour* (ὃ μὴ τιμῆσαι: so \aleph β γ δ ϵ ζ , 1, 13, 33, etc.), the Saviour's affirmation is obvious, *Ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, A GIFT! WHATSOEVER IT MAY BE WHEREBY THOU MIGHTEST BE PROFITED OUT OF ME, shall not, must not, honour his father or his mother.* He must not honour them practically, by providing for their necessities. He binds himself, and must hold himself bound, by the talisman-words of his vow, insincere though the vow was, to shut his hand and heart, and to keep them shut, against his parent. It was "a doctrine of devils." In our Authorized version there is unhappily the break of a new verse in the midst of the unity of the Saviour's sentence. This break was made by Robert Stephens in his edition of 1551, the first edition of the New Testament with our

Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,
8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

standard verses. But it was disapproved of by Beza, and hence in all his editions he attaches to the fifth verse the first clause of the sixth. Henry Stephens, in his two editions of 1576 and 1587, followed Beza, and deserted the footsteps of his father. The Elzevirs, in their editions, took the same course. So did Mill in England, Bengel in Germany, and Wetstein in Holland; Griesbach too, and Schott, and Knapp, and Tittmann, and Vater, and Lachmann, and Tischendorf, and Westcott-and-Hort (presumably), and indeed the great body of modern editors. It is a great improvement on Robert Stephens's division, the division of our Authorized version. But still it perplexes concordances and references, to make such variations. And the true cure for the evil is to print the text of the Testament in continuous paragraphs, and not in detached morsels like proverbs. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition: Were this clause literally translated, it would run thus, *And ye abrogated the law of God because of your tradition!* The Saviour speaks with indignation, mingling into His words a withering element of irony, which may be partly indicated to the English reader by an exclamation point at the close. The word rendered *made of none effect* means *abrogated*, or *annulled*. (See Gal. iii. 17.) But of course the scribes and Pharisees could not *really* annul or abrogate the law of God. The idea was ridiculous. Hence the irony. They could only, so far as their own conduct and teaching were concerned, act as if they had the power to effect the abrogation. *And, in giving effect to your wicked tradition, ye took upon yourselves to annul the law of God!* See next verse.

VER. 7. Ye hypocrites! The holy indignation of the Saviour is unconcealable. He knew well that it was impossible, without the most inexcusable unconscientiousness, to evade the point and pressure of the Divine law, by means of such a pitiable quirk. Well did Esaias prophesy of you—and all of similar character—saying: This passage is in chap. xxix. 13. It is quoted freely; being in the main a reproduction of the Septuagint version. It is a *prophecy*, but not quite in the English sense of that term, the mere sense of *prediction*. The word *prophet* is Greek, and denotes *one who speaks before God*, and thus *for God*; one who, in speaking to his fellow men, is *prompted from behind by God*, that God who wishes to communicate His mind to men. Those who thus spoke *fore God* and *for God* very frequently spoke *of things future*; and their utterances were consequently predictive. Indeed, the most of their *prophecies*, under the old dispensation, were *predictions*, and hence by and by, though unhappily, the word got narrowed in its reference into its present conventional import. (See chaps. vii. 22, x. 41, xi. 9.)

VER. 8. This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. This abbreviated reading is accepted by the great authorities. The fuller reading was supplemented out of the Septuagint. *Is far*, or, more literally, *holds off*, *holds itself at a distance*. The voluntary or wilful element is brought into view, and is prominent. Their worship is hypocrisy, or, at the best, self imposition. "It is," as Matthew

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: 11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

Henry remarks, "piety but from the teeth outwards." With all their conning they have failed to learn that "the power of a petition," as Trapp observes, "is not in the roof of the mouth, but in the root of the heart."

VER. 9. But in vain do they worship Me: *In vain*, that is, *to no purpose*. Such worship must go unaccepted and unrewarded. Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men: Literally, *Teaching teachings, injunctions of men*, that is, *Teaching doctrines which merely embody injunctions of men*. Such doctrines and injunctions can have no validity whatsoever. In matters of conscience, and morality, and religion, and theology, there can be no real authority but such as resolves itself into *Thus saith the Lord*.

VER. 10. And He called the crowd to Him, turning, as it were, from the scribes and Pharisees, in indignation and disgust, and said unto them: There is emphasis on the *them*. He distinguishes them from the scribes and Pharisees. Hear, and understand: Concerning that matter of the washing of hands, on which those hypocrites have been ringing their empty changes.

VER. 11. He puts His idea epigrammatically, that it might stir their thinking into activity. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: Or, rather, *the man*. He particularizes a case. But that which goeth out of the mouth, this defileth the man: *Defileth*, or *defoulith*, as Wycliffe has it. The Saviour refers of course neither to physical nor to ceremonial defilement. He refers exclusively to moral defilement, that kind of defilement that was entirely overlooked by His censors, and in the overlooking of which they entirely misunderstood the spirit and aim of the Old Testament injunctions regarding ceremonial uncleanness. The Saviour explains His apophthegm in verses 17-20.

VER. 12. Then—by and by, after a season, see Mark vii. 17—came the disciples, and said to Him, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying? Or, more literally, *when they heard the saying*, the emphatic saying into which Thou didst gather up the whole subject of dispute. They were *offended*, or rather *stumbled*. It is the same word that is used in chap. v. 29, xi. 6, xiii. 21, 57. The "saying" proved a *stumbling-block* to them. They were *scandalized* by it, as the Rheims version has it, or *sclaudrid*, as Wycliffe has it; both translations being but attempted Angloisings of the Greek term. It is a term that presents a complicated picture; and cannot be reproduced, to a nicety, in English. Here its meaning is somewhat corresponding to our idiomatic expression, *they could not get over it*. The "saying" which they could not get over, but on which they struck, and stumbled, and got caught and hurt and irritated, is not so much, we should suppose, the withering and irresistible retort contained in verses 3-9, as the condensed apophthegm which, when turning aside from the Pharisees, He addressed to the multitude, ver. 11. The Pharisees, though not directly addressed, stood by, and heard the utterance, and

13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. 14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us

determined to find heresy in it. This is the view of the reference that is taken by Euthymius Zigabenus, and Meyer, Lange, Alford, Arnoldi, etc.

VER. 13. But He answered and said, Every plant which My Heavenly Father hath not planted—or, more literally, *which My Heavenly Father planted not*—shall be rooted up: Calvin supposes that the plants referred to are persons, and such persons in particular as have not been unconditionally elected to eternal life. The Saviour's meaning, says he, is "that it is not wonderful that the doctrine of salvation should prove deadly to the reprobate, inasmuch as invariably they are carried headlong into destruction, to which they are doomed." The Saviour, says Aretius, one of Calvin's devoted followers, means *the reprobates, or those who are not of the number of the elect*. Münster and many others are of the same opinion. But it is far more likely, as Piscator saw, although he was one of Calvin's most admiring disciples, that our Saviour was referring to doctrines, *the doctrines of men*, the doctrines of the scribes and Pharisees. (See ver. 9.) Every one of these doctrines, whatsoever the power and position of those who originated them, and of those who maintain them, shall by and by be numbered with the things that were. They cannot live for ever. They will not be allowed to live. They must, they shall, be rooted up. "It is the traditions of the elders," says Theophylact, "and the commandments of men which shall be rooted up." For once Richard Ward, in the midst of his interminable platitudes, hits the nail on the head, when he expounds this verse; "John Fortune "Martyr," says he approvingly, "alleged this place of Scripture against popish ceremonies. *All things, saith our Saviour, which My Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked up by the roots*: but popish ceremonies are things not planted by God. Therefore they shall be rooted up." Luther was of the same opinion, that it is things, not persons, to which our Saviour refers (*Lehre und Werk*).

VER. 14. The Saviour, having, in the preceding verse, laid down a general principle regarding the doctrines of the Pharisees, now turns to the men. Let them alone: Trapp compares this saying with Hosea iv. 17, *Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone*, and misunderstands both passages. He imagines that in both a total Divine dereliction is threatened; as if it had been said in either place, *God will let them alone and leave them to their doom; He will no longer give commission to His Spirit to strive with their hearts*. But it is not God, but men, who are addressed in both cases; and they are simply enjoined to keep aloof from dangerous leaders or companions. *Let them alone*, or more literally still, *Leave them*. They are blind guides of the blind: and if a blind man guide a blind man, both shall fall into a pit: Sooner or later the sad catastrophe will occur. And "the falling of both together will aggravate the fall of each; for they that have thus increased each other's mutual sin will mutually exasperate each other's ruin" (Mat. Henry). And yet, while both are represented as falling, the blind guides, as Trapp remarks, "have the worst of it." They fall "undermost."

VER. 15. But Peter answered and said to Him, Declare—or *explain*—to us this

this parable. 16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? 17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? 18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,

parable: Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort read *the parable* instead of *this parable*. Their reading is supported by the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and is the easier reading; but for this very reason we hesitate to receive it. We cannot see that a transcriber would be induced to insert *this*, if he found simply *the*. We can easily see that he might be induced to content himself with *the*, when he reflected that the parable referred to is neither the immediately preceding similitude (ver. 14), nor that which is recorded a step farther back (ver. 13). We abide therefore by the reading of the Received Text, which is supported at once by the great body of the manuscripts and by the ancient versions. The parable referred to is the apophthegm of verse 11. The disciples called it a *parable*, as it seemed to them to conceal as well as to reveal. There was something on the other side of what was said. (See on chap. xiii. 3.) It was a mystery to them. They spoke of it as *this parable*, because it was prominent in their thoughts, and may have formed the subject of their private conversation.

VER. 16. And He said, Even yet are ye also without understanding? *Even yet*, that is, *still, up to just now (adhuc), without understanding?* or, *without discernment, or, without comprehension?* Do ye not even yet comprehend these things? Are ye still in the dark on such matters? *ye also, even ye*, who have enjoyed so many opportunities of getting into the light?

VER. 17. Perceive ye not! The *yet* in the old text is rejected by Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, and Westcott-and-Hort, on the authority of the uncials B D Z, and 1 of the cursives, as also 33 'the queen.' *Perceive ye not that whatsoever*—of an edible nature—*entereth into the mouth, goeth*—not into the spiritual and ethical part of the nature, the 'heart,' but—*into the belly*—or, as we might with some latitude express it, 'into the body,' the merely material part—and is cast out into the drain? This last expression might, in accordance with those æsthetic principles which Christianity has done so much to develop and refine, be partially veiled or otherwise modified, as for example thus, *and passeth away*. The entire verse might be freely given thus, *Perceive ye not that whatsoever goeth into the mouth passes through the body?*

VER. 18. But the things which proceed forth out of the mouth: The things which a man utters with his mouth, or utters in any kindred way; for the utterances of the mouth are but representative of the sum total of moral utterances. Come forth out of the heart: That mental and moral element of the complex nature which constitutes the *heart* of the being. And these defile the man: If they be at variance with the will of God.

VER. 19. For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts: Or rather, *evil disputings* or *reasonings*, such, for instance, as those of the scribes and Pharisees who had been captiously finding fault with our Lord's disciples. The cognate verb is almost always rendered to *reason* (chap. xvi. 7, 8; xxi. 25, etc.). In Mark ix. 33 it is rendered to *dispute*; the noun is rendered *disputings* in Phil. ii. 14.

murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. 20 These are *the things* which defile a man : but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man.

21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of

Murders, immodesties, thefts, false witness : or rather, and as Purvey has it, in his revision of Wycliffe, *false witnessings*, or *false testimonies*, *blasphemies*, or, as Sir John Cheke gives it, *il wordes*. It refers, no doubt, to *revilings*, *railings*, or *slandering*s, in relation to men ; for it is breaches of the second table of the moral law that are specified, representatively, throughout. The sins specified are mentioned in the plural because they are *specific*. Under each *species*, many particulars of very varying development fall to be classed. All these species of sins are said to come forth *out of the heart*. The *heart* is their birth-place and their cradle, the *heart*, not merely as the centre of emotion, but also as the centre of thought and volition. The *heart*, in its Biblical conception, is the inner element of the entire complexity of human nature. "It is," says Delitzsch, "the spiritual psychical innerliness of man, that innerliness being viewed in its concrete central unity, on the one hand, and according to all the sides of its dynamical activity, on the other, and its determinate ethical conditions." (*Psychologie*, iv., § 12, p. 251.) Stier finds in this verse a proof, "as strong as one would wish," of *original sin* ! On the same principle he might have found in the first clause of Matt. xii. 35 a proof, also as strong as one could wish, of *original righteousness*, as the antithesis of *original sin*.

VER. 20. To eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man : Literally, *the man*. The man's real manhood is not defiled, or *defouled*, as Wycliffe has it. He is not morally defiled ; and more particularly if the uncleanness referred to be merely conventional, imaginary, ceremonial. It would of course be an unfavourable omen of a man's moral state, if, when the opportunity of washing was afforded, he yet preferred to eat with uncleanly hands. There are filaments of connection between the outward and the inward in this matter. And there is some foundation for one of Whitefield's favourite sayings to his humbler converts, *cleanliness is next to godliness*.

VER. 21. And Jesus went thence—from the Gennesaret district, chap. xiv. 34—and withdrew to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon : The word translated *coasts* merely means *parts*, and seems here to denote *environs*. The reference is not to the *sea coasts* of Tyre and Sidon, but apparently to the parts of Galilee that bordered on the narrow strip of maritime land in which Tyre and Sidon were situated. See next verse. Tyre and Sidon were Phœnician seaports, and great commercial emporiums. They are only about twenty miles apart from one another, Tyre being the more southerly of the two. At the time of our Saviour's sojourn they were still in a comparatively flourishing condition. Strabo, who lived about the same time, only a little earlier, says of them : "Both were formerly illustrious and splendid, and are so still ; but which of the two should be called the capital of Phœnicia is a matter of dispute between them." (*Geogr.* xvi. 2 : 3.) He speaks of the great wealth of Tyre, derived from its celebrated dye, the Tyrian purple, and mentions that the dyeworks interfered with the amenity of the city as a place of residence. He says too that the houses were built in storeys, that were carried higher than even at Rome. Of Sidon, he says that it was distinguished for its schools of literature and philosophy. Pliny mentions that glass was manufactured at Sidon ; and of Tyre he says

Tyre and Sidon. 22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said,

that its entire circumference was nineteen Roman miles. (*Nat. Hist.*, v. 17.) These remarks give us some idea of what the places would be in the time of our Lord. At present they are both in a miserably degraded condition; mere villages. Tyre especially has been humbled, though its population is considerably in advance of what it was a hundred years ago. At that time Hasselquist the naturalist says of it: "None of those cities, which formerly "were famous, are so totally ruined as this, except Troy. Tyre can scarcely now "be called a miserable village, though it was formerly the queen of the sea. "There are about ten inhabitants, Turks and Christians, who live by fishing." (*Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, p. 163.) At present its population is from 3000 to 4000; and that of Sidon is about 5000.

VER. 22. And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from those borders: She came out from her place of residence within the Phœnician borders, and crossing the line into Galilee, approached our Saviour. In Mark vii. 26 she is called a *Syro-Phœnician*. Phœnicia, in which Tyre and Sidon were situated, was regarded as belonging to Canaan; and thus its inhabitants, while Phœnicians, and Syro-Phœnicians inasmuch as Phœnicia was considered as a mere appendage of Syria, were also spoken of as Canaanites, just as the English and Scots are spoken of as Britons. As such they were Gentiles, in contradistinction to Jews. The word rendered *coasts* is translated *borders* in Matt. iv. 13. The expression *from those borders* just means *from that neighbourhood*. The woman is traditionally named *Justa*. And cried,—in shrill and importunate tones,—saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David: She made her daughter's case her own, and hence said, "Have mercy on me." She had heard of the fame of Jesus. She had pondered what she heard. She had added inquiry to inquiry, until she had got to satisfy herself that He was indeed the Jewish Messiah, the world's Deliverer. Hence she addressed Him as *son of David*, the long promised son and heir of David. My daughter—who is traditionally said to have been called Bernice—is grievously vexed with a devil: Or, as Sir John Cheke gives it more literally, *is veri evel develled*; most literally, as is remarked by Schaff, the phrase would run thus, *badly demonised*. She was miserably afflicted by some demon, who had taken possession of the gateways by which her inner being communicated with, and through, her outer being. She was a pitiable demoniac. (See chaps. iv. 24; viii. 16, 28; etc.)

VER. 23. But He answered her not a word: Not because He was unwilling to speak, but because there are occasions on which silence is more eloquent and stirring to the thought than speech. Not infrequently silence is golden, while speech is 'silvern.' It was golden in this case. And His disciples, approaching, requested Him,—besought Him, urged Him, literally asked Him (*ἥρωρον*),—saying, Send her away: With the blessing which she craves. For she crieth after us: And her cry is at once distressing and annoying. The disciples did not understand the Saviour's silence.

VER. 24. But He answered and said, I was not sent but to the lost sheep of

I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs.

the house of Israel. It was necessary that there should be some limits to our Lord's personal ministry; and it was wise that these limits should be fixed at the circumference of the circle of Israel. To have spread out His ministry farther, during the brief period of His terrestrial career, would simply have been to have thinned out and weakened His influence. What might have been gained *extensively* would have been lost *intensively*. It was of primary moment that He should make sure of a foothold, on which He might plant His moral machinery for moving the world. That foothold He did secure in *the house of Israel, the household of Israel, the family of Israel*; for the whole nation was but a developed family circle. When He specifies *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, Münster and some others, squeezing something out of the expression as with dogmatic pincers, suppose that He refers to *the elect* among the Jews. It is strange that they should forget that Christ ministered to multitudes of Jews who rejected Him, and over whom He wept. Calvin, on the other hand, judiciously remarks: "He bestows the designation of *sheep of the house of Israel* "not on the elect only, but on all who were descended from the holy fathers; "for the Lord had included all in the covenant, and was promised indiscriminately to all as a Redeemer, as He also revealed and offered Himself to all "without exception." When the Saviour employs the language before us to His disciples, we need not suppose with Hase that His mind was, for the time, determinately made up not to yield to the solicitation of the Canaanite (*deren harte Behandlung nicht Prüfung, sondern ernstliche Zurückweisung seyn sollte.*—*Leben Jesu*, iii., § 95). He had formerly healed the servant of the Roman centurion (chap. viii. 5-13). And He saw the end from the beginning in all cases. It is far more probable that the words were intended for the ear of the woman, though not directly addressed to her, and that they were thus meant to elicit into her own consciousness, as into the cognisance of the disciples, the depth and fulness of her faith. See ver. 27.

VER. 25. But she came and did obeisance to Him: She prostrated herself before Him, in lowly and lovely adoration. Saying, Lord, help me! It is beautiful importunity, a fitting memento and model to all who would call on the name of the Lord. She would not let her Saviour go. And He loved that it should be so.

VER. 26. And He answered and said, It is not meet,—it is not proper (*καλόν*)—to take the children's bread, and cast it to the little dogs: Instead of the expression *It is not seemly*, Tischendorf and Meyer follow the reading of the Cambridge manuscript, *It is not right* (*οὐκ ἔξεστω*). It is a reading, however, that is insufficiently supported. The Lord seemed to repel the humble and importunate suppliant. But He only seemed. He was really drawing her out into her own consciousness and into the cognisance of His disciples. The comparison which He employs was humiliating. It was common among the Jews; and, when employed by them, it was generally the vehicle of feelings of unholty haughtiness. "By this title," says Lightfoot, "the Jews, whose first care it was to hate, to mock, and to curse all besides themselves, disgraced the "Gentiles." There was nevertheless some reason lying at the base of the desig-

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28 Then Jesus

nation. The heathens around were, in the mass, exceedingly unclean, and ferocious; barking too, incessantly, at the true God and true godliness. But our Saviour, in the case before us, refers not to the wild, fierce, filthy dogs, belonging to nobody, that prowl about oriental cities, but to little pet dogs, in which children are interested, and with which they play. Most probably there might be one or more of them, within sight, in the company of some children.

VER. 27. But she said,—in a spirit of beautiful submission, and most charming ingenuousness and ingenuity,—Assuredly, Lord; or, as it is in King James's version, *Truth, Lord*: It is the only passage in which the original term (*yal*) is translated *truth*. It is generally rendered *yea* (chaps. v. 37, xiii. 51, etc.), or *yes* (Matt. xvii. 25; Mark vii. 28; etc.); and, a few times, *even so* (Matt. xi. 26; Rev. i. 7; etc.). The woman heartily assents to the justice of the Lord's observation. She held it to be thoroughly right and true; and she thus admits that there was a sense in which she was but as a little dog in the Householder's establishment. Yet the little dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table: There is no *yet* in the original. There is in its place an expression that means, and must mean, *for even*, or *for also* (*καὶ γάρ*). The Geneva version is, *yet in deede the whelpes eate of the crommes*; but in the 1557 edition it is *for* instead of *yet*. So is it in the Rheims version, and in Craumer's Bible. In Wycliffe's version also, and Purvey's revision of Wycliffe. Tyndale however, following Luther, has *nevertheless*, instead of *for*. The substance of meaning is preserved, whichever translation be given to the connecting particle; but beyond a doubt the particle means *for*, and only *for*. And until we can heartily accept that rendering we may be sure that we have not reached the standpoint of view occupied by the noble-hearted Canaanite. All good modern critics are agreed as to this. The truth seems to be that the woman's remark *gives a reason for her cordial acquiescence in the Saviour's observation*. In other words, what follows her *for* gives a reason for her *yes*. It is as if she had said, *Yes, Lord. What Thou sayest is, and must be, right. I heartily acquiesce in it. I heartily say, Yes. For in Thine own similitude there is a real recognition of the little dogs. They must not get the children's bread. That is true. It would be wrong to take the loaf out of the children's mouth, or out of the children's hands, and throw it to the little dogs. Still the little dogs, in their own little place, are recognised by Thysel. They are not altogether overlooked in the householder's establishment. They are allowed to eat of the superfluous odds and ends, which the children do not need, and which they will not use, especially the crumbs which fall from them at table.* The woman's remark is admirable and delightful. It is full indeed of true theology and real philosophy. (1) She apprehended clearly that it was right that our Lord's personal ministry should be devoted to the Jews. (2) She apprehended as clearly that He bore a benignant relation to the Gentiles; He was not, in her opinion, a sectarian Saviour. (3) She apprehended also, clearly, that it would not in the least interfere with His ministry in relation to the Jews to put forth *by the way* His blessed energy in behalf of such suppliant Gentiles as herself. It would have been altogether different to have asked or wished Him to forsake the land of Palestine, and the people of the Jews, that He might consecrate His ministry exclusively, or even mainly, to Gentile populations. Let the expression, *their masters' table*, be noted. It is not *their master's table*, though often so

answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. 30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed

printed, as if the reference were to the householder himself. The believing Canaanite is prepared to go farther down in humility. She is a moral heroine, as Luther remarks (a *virago*, though yet but a *muliercula*). She recognises the children around the table as *the masters* of the little dogs. Hence too the diminutive expression employed. She referred to *the little dogs* which belonged to children, and which, unlike some of the larger dogs, were allowed to be present in the house with the little children.

VER. 28. Then answered Jesus, and said to her, O woman, great is thy faith: He had been all along admiring it, and bringing it out into fuller and yet fuller development. He now expresses His admiration; for, when commendation is needed, and will encourage and cheer without puffing up, it is well and wise to give it. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt: Even as thou wishest. "Note," says Matthew Henry, "great believers may have what they will." True, when we go far enough down to the real base of their will. When we thus go down, we find that *they will only the will of God*. They will and wish that only what is right, and good, and glorious for God, should be done. And her daughter was healed from that very hour: Though the Saviour's body was at a distance, His energy was at hand, for it was everywhere.

VER. 29. And Jesus—by and by—removed thence—viz. from the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon—and came near to the sea of Galilee: Or, literally, *and came beside the sea of Galilee*; that is, *He came round the country until He was once more by the side of the sea of Galilee*. He came, as we learn from Mark vii. 31, by the way of the borders of Decapolis. And He went up into the mountain, and sat there: Ascending from the shore of the lake, He sought a sequestered spot on the adjacent rising ground. On the eastern shore of the lake, "the mountain," says Dr. Robinson, "or rather *the wall of table land*, rises with more boldness than on the western shore" (*Researches*, § 15, June 19). It is hence more of "a desert place." Nowhere do the hills recede, leaving between them and the lake rich alluvial plains. There are, besides, no very special prominences or promontories. "The hills on the eastern side," says Dean Stanley, "partake of the horizontal outline which belongs to the whole "eastern barrier of the Jordan valley" (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. x., p. 370). It would be on the comparatively desert slope or rocky face of one of these hills, one of the special elevations of the continuous table land, that our Saviour sought a retreat, *and sat down*.

VER. 30. He did not long however enjoy seclusion. He could not be hidden. He was conspicuous as a city on the crown of a hill. And great crowds came to Him, having with them the lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed—or crippled—and many others—who were needing healing—and threw them down at Jesus' feet: The idiomatic expression *threw* indicates the eagerness and

them: 31 inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel. 32 Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. 33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? 34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye?

haste with which the people brought their sick ones to the Saviour's feet. The position, at His feet, was reverential and supplicatory. And He healed them: None of the cases were outside the sweep of His power. Neither were they outside the sweep of His benevolence. How glorious!

VER. 31. Inasmuch that the crowd wondered, seeing the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking about, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel: They knew that there was some special relationship between God and the children of Israel; though possibly, and probably, they would take too narrow a view of its nature. The word *seeing*, as applied to the cognisance which they took of the cures effected by our Lord, stands related to the whole cluster of clauses. Intrinsically considered, it is not so applicable to the restoration of speech as to the other miraculous phenomena specified; but it is used popularly to denote the sense-perception of the various cures effected. There would be much handling and listening, as well as looking. What a stirring scene it must have been! what multitudes of mutual felicitations and grateful ejaculations!

VER. 32. And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, I have compassion on the crowd, because they continue with Me now three days: This is now the third day that they have continued with Me. And they have nothing to eat: The supplies which they had brought with them are exhausted. And I am unwilling to send them away fasting, lest they should faint in the way: A sentiment just like what might have been expected of our Lord. His heart was ever open, His hand was ever opening, to supply bountifully the wants of men everywhere, and more especially of those who 'waited on Him.'

VER. 33. And the disciples say to Him, Whence should we have so many loaves in a wilderness—in a desert place such as this—as to feed so great a crowd? The word *feed* (*χορτάσαι*) means in the New Testament, *to feed to satisfaction*. It is translated *satisfy* in Mark viii. 4. *Feed* is Sir John Cheke's translation. *Fill* is the translation of the Rheims version. *Suffice* is the translation of Tyndale and of the Geneva version. Our Lord's disciples reverently refrained from giving utterance to any hints regarding a miraculous supply. Such hinting would not have been becoming; inasmuch as they could not take into account the full confluence of circumstances that might make it either advisable or unadvisable to feed as with manna. (See John vi. 26-36.)

VER. 34. And Jesus saith to them, How many loaves have ye? He wished to make use of the provision that was on hand; and He wished also to get the minds of His disciples gathered in, and concentrated on all the successive steps of His miracle. Hence His question, not for His own information, but for the

And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. 35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. 36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full. 38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

preparation of His disciples. During every day and every hour of their intercourse with Him, they were getting lessons at His university.

VER. 35. To sit down: Or rather, to recline (*ἀνακλιθεῖν*). See chap. xiv. 19.

VER. 36. See chap. xiv. 19. Gave thanks: It is thus quite a becoming thing to give thanks, as well as to ask a blessing, before beginning to partake of a repast. It is well for various reasons to begin to eat with a thankful heart, opening up the spirit not merely to get blessing but to give it—to bless the Lord our Provider.

VER. 37. And they all ate, and were satisfied; and they took up the surplus of the broken pieces, seven baskets full: In the corresponding miracle narrated in chap. xiv. there were *twelve* baskets of fragments, a basket, as it were, for each ministering apostle. In this there are seven, a basketful of remains, as it were, from each of the seven loaves. In both cases there is symmetry of result; and why should such symmetry have been wanting? There was nothing done at random; why should there? There was no caprice, no disorder. There was art, but no artifice, in the whole affair; and surely there is no reason why the art and contrivance should have been avoided. The baskets here specified are represented by a different word (*συνψις*) from that which is employed in chap. xiv. 20. It is the word that is employed in Acts ix. 25. It seems to have denoted a somewhat large basket. It was often used to denote a basket or hamper for holding provisions, and in particular for holding fish (see Wetstein, in loc.). The seven may have been extemporised from the shrubs that were growing around; or they may have been got from fishermen's cottages in the neighbourhood; or they may have been in the possession of some of the crowd, who had come to dispose of provisions.

VER. 38. And they that ate were four thousand men, beside women and little children: A line of distinction is drawn between the males on the one hand and the females with the associated little children on the other, a line that is now obliterated. The obliteration is due to that glorious gospel which says, in reference to all its highest privileges, "there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28). How grateful to Jesus ought females to be!

VER. 39. And He sent away the crowds, and went on board the boat—that was got ready for Him—and came into the coasts—or borders—of Magdala. There is some difficulty with this word *Magdala*. There is at the present day, north of the town of Tiberias, and at the south-eastern corner of the plain of Genesaret, a little wretched village called *Mejdel*. It now consists only of a few hovels; but it is probable that it is the degenerate representative of the ancient

CHAPTER XVI.

1 THE Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

Magdala or *Migdol*, which was known to be near Tiberias. It was one of many *Migdols* or *Magdals* (see Otho, *Lex. Rabbin.*, sub voce). The word means a tower. There would be towers, watchtowers, fortalices, or fortresses, in many districts; and, around some of these, villages would naturally spring up. Just as we write these words the tidings have reached us (April 27, 1868) that Sir Robert Napier has taken *Magdala* in Ethiopia, the fortress to which the capricious and barbaric King Theodore had retired. It is supposed that the *Magdala*, north of Tiberias, was the native place of *Mary Magdalene*. The native *Magdala* was thus well known. It is often mentioned in rabbinical books. Instead however of *Magdala*, the three most important uncial manuscripts that have as yet been discovered, the Sinaitic (S), the Vatican (B), and the Cambridge (D), read *Magadan*. This too, under the form *Magadon*, is the reading of Cureton's Syriac; and under the form of *Magedan* (or *Magidan*, or *Magadan*, or *Mageda*, or *Magedam*) it is the reading of the old Latin version, the Itala so called, and of the Vulgate, and Jerome, and Augustin. It is the reading too of the Peshito Syriac, under the form of *Magodu* or *Magado*. Hence *Magadan* has been received into the text, in place of *Magdala*, by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort. Even Grotius, in his day, supposed that it must be the true reading. And with reason, apparently. For, as *Magdala* was a well known name, there would be no inducement for transcribers, when falling in with it, to change it into the utterly unknown *Magadan*; whereas there would be inducement enough to substitute the well known *Magdala* for the utterly unknown *Magadan*. It is probable that this *Magadan* was some comparatively insignificant place, not far removed from another small and insignificant place, Dalmanutha. See Mark viii. 10. By and by, perhaps, traces may be found of both localities.

CHAPTER XVI.

VER. 1. And the Pharisees and Sadducees came. Or the words might be rendered still more literally, *And the Pharisees and Sadducees approached*. Strauss thinks that the combination of the Pharisees and Sadducees is, as regards the question of the genuineness and credibility of the narrative, a rather suspicious circumstance (*Leben Jesu*, II., viii., § 85); forgetting, in his zeal to find flaws, that it is quite common for contending parties to unite in a common prosecution, or persecution, if the craft of both be endangered. "Dogs," says Trapp, "though they fight never so fierce, and mutually intertear one another, yet if a hare run by, give over, and run after her." And tempting Him: They made an insidious attempt to get Him exposed as an impostor. Asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. They interrogated, challenged Him to exhibit to view an unmistakable sign of His heavenly mission. They seemed to insinuate that all signs on earth might be attributed to black art, or legerdemain, or demonic influence; and they intimated that nothing would satisfy them but some wonder or other coming right out of the heaven. See chap. xii. 38.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather* : for the sky is red. 3 And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to-day* : for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky ; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times ? 4 A wicked and

VER. 2. But He answered and said to them, When it is evening ye say, It will be fair weather, for the heaven is red : It is well to retain the literal translation, *heaven*, instead of *sky*, as there is a reference to the question that was insidiously asked. *It will be fair weather*, or simply, according to the abrupt and minced colloquialisms that are common regarding the weather, *Fair weather !* or, *Fine weather !* that is, *There is a prospect of fine weather to-morrow*. This prognostication was founded on *the redness of the heaven in the west*. It was a Palestinian prognostication, which may or may not be applicable to other countries. And the Saviour, in referring to it, does not intend to affix to it a seal of scientific approbation. It was enough for His purpose that the forecast was accepted by the weather-wise in Palestine. Doubtless it would, as a general rule at least, be a true forecast ; for it indicated, we presume, that in the contiguous region of the atmosphere into which the sun, on setting, was descending or had descended, there was no dense accumulation of clouds, threatening a coming storm of rain. If there had been such clouds, the sun's golden radiance would have been drunk up and intercepted ; and thus there would have been no redness of the evening sky.

VER. 3. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day : Or, a storm to-day ! that is, A storm is brewing for to-day. For the heaven is red and lowering : This word *lowering* is a fine translation, originally denoting the bringing *lower down* of the eyebrows. The original word (*στυγρᾶζω*) means *gloom*ing, allied to the Scotch *gloaming*, a fine word for the *gloom* of twilight. Wycliffe's translation of the clause is slightly astray, *for heaven shineth heavy* (or *sorrowful*) ; Tyndale's is prosaic, *because the sky is cloudy and red*, and so is Sir John Cheke's, *for the sky looketh with a darkish red*. There is a great stride of improvement in Cranmer's Bible, *for the skye is glowming reed* (red). When the morning sky is red and lowering, it is a proof, we presume, that the sun is coming from a comparatively clear region into one that is charged with a superabundance of moisture. The moisture will, in all probability, soon fall in rain. Hypocrites ! The word is on the whole probably genuine. The Saviour saw through the thin disguise of their professed desire to get a thoroughly satisfactory sign. There was no such desire. There was, on the contrary, a settled prejudication of the whole case, and consequently a settled predetermination to see something questionable in every sign that was actually given. Ye can discern the face of the sky : Ye know how to judge discriminatingly the face of the heaven. But can ye not discern the signs of the times ? Or rather, by the way of exclamation instead of interrogation, *But the signs of the times ye cannot !* The language is keenly and severely reprehensive. *Ye cannot, because ye will not. Ye cannot see, because ye will not look. Ye persist in shutting your eyes.* (Comp. chap. xiii. 15.) Had not that been the case, how could they have failed to notice that the fulness of the time had arrived ? Did not Daniel's prophecy stand pointing with its finger ? Was not the whole nation in the throes of spiritual childbirth ? Had not Elias appeared ? Was not our Lord's entire career one long series of indisputable signs that the

adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. 6 Then Jesus said unto them,

Mighty One was actually present among men as the Child born, the Son given, who had been promised of old? It is rather, however, a remarkable fact that, in addition to the doubt cast on the word *Hypocrites*, the whole of the third verse, and all of the second after the initial expression, *But He answered and said to them*, are omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, as also in the manuscripts V X I, and those that are numbered 13, 124, 147, etc. ; omitted also in the Cureton Syriac version, and in most of the manuscripts which Jerome consulted. Origen too, in his *Commentary* on the passage, begins with verse 4 and takes no notice of the intervening observations regarding the signs of the weather. Strauss thinks the observations "totally unintelligible." (*Leben Jesu*, II., viii., § 85.) The passage is bracketed both by Tischendorf and by Westcott-and-Hort. We cannot doubt, however, that it is genuine. It shines beautifully in its own light. It is difficult to conceive of a transcriber inventing it. But it is not difficult to suppose that in some very early copy it had been accidentally left out. Possibly also some early transcriber, not perceiving the congruity of the weather signs with the actual indications of the weather in his own particular locality, or not catching the Saviour's intended application, may have suspected the genuineness of the observations, and arbitrarily left them out.

VER. 4. An evil and adulterous generation,—unfaithful, like an unprincipled wife, to the God of the Israelites, the God of the conscience, the God of the gospel—seeketh a sign ; and there shall no sign—of the kind that it seeks—be given to it, but the sign of Jonas : And even it shall not be exactly of the kind that they desire. See a full explanation of this saying in chap. xii. 39, 40. Strauss thinks it improbable that our Lord should have, on two distinct occasions, made such an enigmatical reference to Jonah. (*Leben Jesu*, II., viii., § 85.) But why should it be improbable? Is it not common enough with every sensible man, as he passes along through life, to drop again and again, into correspondingly receptive minds, the same seed thoughts? And He left them, and departed: His time was too precious to be wasted in making vain attempts to convince those who were determined that they would not be convinced. Our Saviour knew that, by His own creative arrangement, He had reserved for Himself no necessitating power which He could wield at pleasure within the freedom of their wills.

VER. 5. And the disciples came to the other side : That is, to the eastern side of the lake of Gennesaret. *The disciples* only are mentioned, and not our Lord along with them, because the evangelist is looking forward to what he is about to say in the concluding part of the verse. Our Lord however was with them ; though Fritzsche strangely takes another view. See Mark viii. 13, 14. And forgot to take bread : To take a supply of bread ; literally, *to take loaves*. They had only one loaf on board the boat. (Mark viii. 14.) Meyer and Alford suppose that the meaning is, that after the disciples got to the other side *they then forgot to take thence a suitable supply for the remainder of their journey*. It is more probable however, by far, that the language is to be interpreted as

Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. 7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread. 8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? 9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took

intimating, in a free and easy manner, that *on coming to the eastern side of the lake they found that they had forgotten to bring with them from the western side such a supply of provision as was requisite.* The western side was the populated side. This is the view of the expression that is taken by both Beza and Fritzsche, both Bengel and Arnoldi.

VER. 6. And Jesus said to them, **Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees:** *Take heed,* or, very literally, *See.* His solicitude was stirred in reference to His disciples, in view of the insidious character of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the subtle way in which they attempted to get their principles introduced into ingenuous minds. The shadow of His disagreeable encounter with them, as recorded in ver. 1-4, is still resting on His spirit. He speaks of their *leaven*, for He was thinking of the strangely insinuating and assimilative influence which they were capable of exerting upon simple and unsophisticated minds.

VER. 7. And they reasoned among themselves—when they thought that they were out of earshot of the Lord—saying, *It is* because we did not take bread: They were confused, and had been blaming themselves for their negligence in forgetting to take with them a suitable supply of bread. Perhaps they spoke to one another thus: *Does our Lord mean that we are very culpable for our neglect, inasmuch as we may be obliged to provide bread from some Pharisee or Sadducee? Does He wish us to give no countenance to their loaves?* It was really the case that the rabbis had great discussions among themselves whether it was lawful to use heathen leaven, for instance, or Cuthite leaven (see Lightfoot, in loc.); and not unlikely the disciples fancied that their Great Rabbi was desirous that they should have nothing whatever to do with Pharisees or Sadducees, no, not so much as to make use of their bread.

VER. 8. *Which* when Jesus perceived: Or, more literally, and as Dr. Daniel Scott gives it, *which Jesus knowing.* The original does not imply that it was only after a while that Jesus came to the knowledge of what the disciples were saying to one another. Sir John Cheke puts it thus, *Jesus knowing this.* If we could have said *knewing*, the most literal translation would have been, *But Jesus knewing*, the act of intuitive knowledge being represented as completed before the act of speaking commenced. As however we cannot say *knewing*, we must content ourselves with some idiom that is not quite literal. The meaning is obvious,—*But as Jesus knew what they were thinking and saying, He said unto them, Why reason ye among yourselves, O ye of little faith, because ye did not bring bread—because ye did not bring loaves?* Instead of *O ye of little faith*, Sir John Cheke has, *ye smaal-faithed.*

VER. 9. Do ye not yet understand, nor remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye received? See chap. xiv. 19-21. The Saviour reminds the disciples that they *received* (ἐλάβετε) for themselves the twelve baskets of fragments which they took up (ἔραυ).

up? 10 neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 11 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 of the Sadducees? 12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he

VER. 10. **Nor** the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye received? See chap. xv. 34-38. The word for baskets in this verse is the word that is used in chap. xv. 37, and is different from the term employed in the preceding verse, and in chap. xiv. 20. Wycliffe translates it *lepīs*: Principal Campbell, *maunds*, the word, which, according to Spelman, gave rise to the designation of *Maundy Thursday*, or the Thursday when the poor got, in *maunds*, donations of provisions from the king and other lords of manors. (*Glossarium*, sub voce "Mandatium.")

VER. 11. **How** do ye not understand, that it was not concerning loaves I said to you, **Beware** of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? There is some difficulty with the text. The reading of the Received Text—Stephens's and Elzevir's—must be abandoned: instead of *προσέχειν* we must accept *προσέχετε*. So all the modern editors, inclusive of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Meyer, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort. But we would reject the conjunctive *δέ*, which all these editors insert after *προσέχετε*, and which had crept to the side of the verb in NBCL and 1, so that the clause is treated not as a quotation but as a repetition of the original warning. This wrings painfully the evangelist's phraseology. By returning to the reading of the manuscripts on which the Vulgate and the older Latin versions were founded, the reading of D, the reading too of Erasmus's 1516, 1519, 1522 editions, viz. *προσέχετε* without the *δέ*, we can account genealogically for the variant readings, and we have such a text as might be legitimately expected from the evangelist. The point of interrogation will consequently be carried forward to the close of the verse.

VER. 12. **Then** comprehended they that He did not bid them beware of the leaven of the loaves, but that He bade them beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees: Tischendorf, unduly swayed by a few ancient authorities, leaves out, in his seventh and eighth editions, the words of the loaves. We cannot doubt, however, that they were in the evangelist's text. They are supported both by external authority and by internal verisimilitude. The word *doctrine* means *teaching*, as indeed Wycliffe translates it, *techyngē*.

VER. 13. **But** when Jesus came into the parts—that is, *into the neighbourhood*—of Cæsarea Philippi: There were various inhabited places, or villages, round about Cæsarea Philippi. See Mark viii. 27. *Cæsarea Philippi*, or *Cæsarea the city of Philip*, belonged to the tetrarchy of Philip, half brother of Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great by Cleopatra. Situated in the district of Gaulonitis, at one of the sources of the river Jordan, it was near the city of Dan, or Laish, the northernmost point of the territory occupied by the Jews. It was a remarkably interesting spot, picturesquely situated at the base of a lofty cliff, which connects itself with the snow-capped Hermon, the most majestic and beautiful of all the mountains of Syria. "This ancient city," says Porter,

asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son

“occupies one of the most picturesque sites in Syria. A broad terrace on the mountain side looks out over the plain of Hûleh to the castellated heights of Hunin. Behind it rises in rugged peaks the southern ridge of Hermon, wooded to the summit. Two sublime ravines cut deeply into the ridge, having between them an isolated cone more than a thousand feet in height, crowned by the ruins of the castle of Subeibeh. On the terrace at the base of this cone lie the ruins of Cæsarea Philippi. The terrace itself is covered with oaks and olive trees, having green glades and clumps of hawthorn and myrtle here and there, all alive with streams of water and cascades. The main attraction of the place is the great fountain, the upper source of the Jordan. A cliff of ruddy limestone, nearly one hundred feet high, rises on the north side of the ruins. At its base is a cave, its mouth encumbered by a heap of debris, partly composed of broken fragments of rock, and partly of ancient buildings. From the side of this heap burst forth the waters of the fountain.” (*Hand-book for Syria and Palestine*, p. 421.) In heathen times this beautiful spot had been apparently the site of an idol temple. It is called *Panium* by Josephus, in consequence, it is supposed, of its connection during the ascendancy of the Greeks with *Pan*. On coins still preserved it bears the name of *Cæsarea Paneas*. To this day it is called *Bâniâs*. Herod the Great erected, near its picturesque grotto or fountain-cave, a marble temple to the honour of *Cæsar Augustus*. Hence the place was called *Cæsarea*. Philip extended and beautified the city, and hence it was called *Cæsarea Philippi*, and was thus distinguished from the much more important *Cæsarea* which was on the coast of the Mediterranean, north of Joppa, on the line of the great road from Tyre to Egypt. He asked—or interrogated—His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? It was, of course, not for information that He asked the question. He had a moral end in view in relation to His disciples. Times of trial were at hand; and it was fitting to elicit their faith, as contra-distinguished from the unbelief or misbelief of those around, into a fuller development within their consciousness. In some high authorities, inclusive of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts as well as the Vulgate version, the pronoun “I” is omitted, and the question of our Lord runs thus, *Whom—or who* (see on verse 15)—*do men say that the Son of man is?* Beza suspected that the “I” had been originally a mere marginal note, and that it subsequently crept into the text. He hesitated however to cashier it, and threw out for consideration whether we might not make two interrogations of the Saviour’s question, instead of one, *Whom do men say that I am? the Son of man?* Scrivener says that Le Clerc favoured the splitting of the interrogation into two (*Supplement to Matthew*, in loc.); but the truth is that Le Clerc, though somewhat inclined, in consequence of the order of the Greek words, to divide the interrogation according to Beza’s suggestion, decides that such a division would be inconsistent with the query that follows in verse 15. Le Clerc is right. It would certainly be wrong to divide the interrogation in the manner proposed, for the expression *the Son of man*, though a favourite self appellation with our Lord (see chap. viii. 20), was not distinctively Messianic in its conventional usage, as may be seen in a moment by considering its usage in the book of Ezekiel. As to whether the pronoun should be retained or rejected, it is a matter of no practical moment whatsoever. It is rejected by Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, and was long ago condemned by Mill. (*Prolegomena*, p. 121.)

of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the

VER. 14. And they said, Some, John the Baptist: Herod Antipas was of this opinion. See chap. xiv. 2. So were others. See Luke ix. 7. There was such a peculiarity about our Lord that men did not know what to make of Him; only, they were certain that He was very far indeed from being a commonplace personage. But others, Elias. See Mal. iv. 5; Matt. xi. 14, xvii. 10-13. And others,—taking in their hands a *different* cue as regards their conjectures,—Jeremias, or—indefinitely and indeterminately—one of the prophets: The idea of *difference* is suggested by the word that is translated *others* (ἄλλοι δέ). It is implied that they who thought that our Lord was John the Baptist, and they who thought that He was Elijah, belonged to one class of conjecturists; they regarded our Lord as the forerunner of the Messiah. They again who thought that He was Jeremias, or indefinitely one of the old prophets risen from the dead, belonged to a *different* class of conjecturists. He did not seem, to their idea, to be the forerunner of the Messiah. But assuredly, as they conceived, He was a most wonderful personage, altogether unlike the rest of the existing generation. Nowhere could His 'like' be found, except among the most distinguished of the olden prophets. Jeremias was specified by some because, in the estimation of the Jews, he occupied "the first place among the prophets." (See Lightfoot, in loc.) He stood on a pinnacle above Isaiah and Ezekiel, and all the rest of them. It will be noted that none of the various conjecturists, specified by the apostles, regarded our Lord as the Messiah who was to come. Some, no doubt, had gleams and hopes in that direction. But the great body of the people could not entertain the idea that He was the glorious King of kings. What was there of the kingly in His circumstances? Where were the crown, the sceptre, the throne, the princely followers, the treasures, the armies? They looked not to the inward kingliness that was radiating forth from His heart, and head, and hands, from His words and works and wonderful character.

VER. 15. He saith to them, But whom—or *who*—say ye that I am? This was the query which it was in the Saviour's heart to propose. The former was merely intended to pave the way for its introduction. Bishop Lowth says that instead of *whom* we should read *who*, inasmuch as "the word is not governed by the verb *say*, but by the verb *am*, or agrees in case with the pronoun *I*" (*English Grammar*, p. 133, ed. 1793). Principal Campbell expresses the same judgement. "If the sentence," says he, "be so construed as that the verb is in the indicative or subjunctive mood, the pronoun must be in the nominative." Scrivener approves. And Wynne, Edgar Taylor, Sharpe, Rotherham, in their respective versions, and Matthew Henry in his Commentary, and Alford in his, and Conder in his, have "who," both in this and in the 13th verse.

VER. 16. And Simon Peter answered and said; No doubt with the utmost promptitude. He did not need to take time to gather in his straggling thoughts, and to weigh them over again, one by one, in the balance of deliberation. His tongue was burning, as if a flame of fire were on it, to give utterance to the fulness of his heart. He would be realizing moreover, as he spoke, that he was giving expression not to his own sentiments only, but to the sentiments of the rest of his brethren. He was, says Chrysostom, *the mouth of the apostles*, as well as *the Coryphæus of the apostolic choir*. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the

Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in

living God : Thou art no mere prophet, no mere Elijah. John the Baptist was but Thy precursor. Of all that we feel sure. Thou art Thyself the Christ. Thou art the long promised King. We see Thy kingliness raying itself out through the garb of Thy humility and lowliness. Thou art not only *the Son of man*, though Thou art emphatically that. Thou art also *the Son of God, the Son of the living God*. We see in Thee the most vivid glimpses of something that far transcends humanity. It must be the case that God is Thy Father in a far higher sense than He is ours. Peter's confession of faith is the very essence and quintessence of all true *Confessions of Faith*. It is the *Sum and Substance of Christian Theology*. But of course we need not suppose that Peter knew the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the two reciprocating ideas (see Mark viii. 29, Luke ix. 20) to which he gave utterance. Who does ? If the ideas were Divine, if they *are* Divine, if the realities of which they were and are the ideal reflections and verbal forth-shadowings are Divine, who on earth has ever travelled round and round them, so as to comprehend them ? The expression *the living God* is delightful, and delightfully suggestive of the unwavering conviction of the apostle that God is no Unconscious Infinity. *He is a living Being, thinking, feeling, willing, acting*. In the first edition of the Authorized version (1611), as in the first Geneva version, and in the Rheims version, and Tyndale, and Wycliffe, we do not read *the Christ*, but simply *Christ*. The *the* is wanting too in the four succeeding folios of 1613, 1617, 1634, 1640. But the literal translation *the Christ* is incomparably superior. It is given in Blayney's edition of 1769.

VER. 17. And Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed art thou : That is, *Happy art thou*, the rendering of Tyndale, Sir John Cheke, and of the first Geneva version. The change in the subsequent Genevas, and in the Authorized version, to *blessed* is not an improvement. Matthew Henry puts it thus, "Peter, thou art a happy man, who thus knowest the joyful sound." Simon Barjona : That is, *Simon, son of Jona*, a solemn patronymical designation, not needing to be mystically interpreted. *Bar* means *son* ; and hence the names Bar-abbas, Bar-jesus, Bar-nabas, Bar-tholomew, Bar-timæus. For *flesh and blood* revealed it not to thee. By *flesh and blood* we are simply to understand *man or men*. It was not an expression that was coined by our Lord, and intended to embody and incarnate some mystic import. It was in common circulation among the Jews. "The Jewish writers," says Lightfoot, "use this form of speech infinite times ; and by it oppose *men to God*." Our Lord means that Peter's faith came from a far higher source than mere human opinion. It did not originate with his fellow men ; it did not originate with himself ; it was not a thing that he had invented for himself. But *My Father who is in heaven* : It was in His light that Peter saw. God flashed forth the truth, and Peter did not close his eyes that he might not see. (Comp. chap. xiii. 15.) God gave, and Peter received. The idea hence, that was in Peter's mind, came down from above into the mind of Peter. By what process ? Our Lord does not say. God's ways and means are manifold. It is enough for us meantime to know that *He is in a sufficient number of ways making revelation of His mind unto all*.

heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter,

VER. 18. And I too say unto thee: The Saviour graciously intimates that He, on His part, had joy in bearing honourable testimony regarding Peter, even as Peter, on his part, had felt a holy delight in bearing high and worthy testimony concerning his Lord. **That thou art Peter: Peter, or, A Piece-of-rock.** Such is the meaning of the Greek word *Peter* or *Petros*. It is as if the Saviour had said, *The name which I formerly gave thee is really and admirably significant. I meant it to be characteristic. It is what I meant it to be. Thou art solid. Thou art firm. Thou wilt be durable. Thou art strong. Thou art fit to occupy an important place at the very basis of the mighty structure which I have come to erect upon the earth.* See on chaps. iv. 18, x. 2. See also John i. 42. **And upon this rock will I build My church:** A saying on which an immensity of discussion has been accumulated, more especially since the dawn of the Protestant Reformation. Some of the Fathers, and also not a few modern expositors, have supposed that the *rock* referred to is Peter's confession or testimony. In Scripture however, when the word *rock* is employed metaphorically, it is always applied to *persons* and never to *things*. It may here have reference to the subject matter of Peter's confession; but assuredly it does not designate Peter's confession itself, simply as a confession. The great body of Roman Catholic theologians have contended that when the Saviour says *upon this rock* He refers to Peter, Peter in his personality; while, on the other hand, a very large proportion of controversial Protestants, inclusive of Luther and Zuingli themselves, have as eagerly contended that our Lord here refers, not to Peter, but to Himself, the Great and Peerless Personage who was the Subject matter of Peter's confession. Recently a marked preponderance of Protestant expositors, while quite repudiating the ecclesiastical pretensions which Roman Catholic theologians have erected on the basis of their interpretation, do nevertheless, in the matter of exegesis, swing round to the Roman Catholic position. They think that it is mere dogmatic prejudice to deny or to doubt that our Saviour was referring to Peter. It is "without doubt," says Fritzsche, that Jesus refers to Peter. De Wette agrees; Meyer too, and Bloomfield, Stier, Alford, Whedon; Webster and Wilkinson also, and Dr. D. Brown, etc. Episcopius, Grotius, and Cameron in their day, Le Clerc and Werenfels in theirs, Whitby and Bengel in theirs, took the same view. It is a view that may be maintained without perilling, in the least degree, any of the great principles of Protestantism. For there is no authority anywhere for the idea that Peter's peculiar and pre-eminent relationship descended, after his decease, in a given line of successors. *Such an idea is a mere imagination, a mere dogmatic castle in the air.* And even although it were not, there is no evidence to prove that the line of Peter's successors is to be found in the bishops of the church of Rome; or, indeed, that Peter was the founder of the Roman church; or that he ever occupied in connection with it the office of the bishopric. It is thus the case that the favourite Roman Catholic interpretation of our Lord's saying is ecclesiastically harmless. It does not involve, as a sequence, the primacy and pre-eminence of the bishops of Rome. But yet we feel constrained, on other grounds, to reject it. If our Saviour had been referring to Peter we should have expected Him to have said, *Thou art PETER, and upon THEE will I build My church.* Or if we shall suppose that, instead of addressing Peter directly, He designed to turn the attention of the other apostles to Peter's pre-eminence, we should have expected Him to repeat the apostle's significant name, *and upon this*

and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of

PETER, *this PETROS, this PIECE-OF-ROCK*. But He does not do this. He uses a different word, viz. *Petra*, the proper word for *Rock*, even as *Petros* properly means *Piece-of-rock* or *Stone*. (Compare the two words as used by Homer. Compare also the use of *Petros* in 2 Macc. i. 16, iv. 41, the only passages in which it occurs in the Apocrypha. It is not found at all in the canonical books of the Septuagint.) The change from *Petros, a Piece-of-rock*, to *Petra, a Rock*, is unaccountable on the hypothesis that our Lord continued His reference to the person of Peter. But it is at once accounted for, and becomes exceedingly significant, if we suppose that our Saviour designed to make a somewhat enigmatical transition from His disciple to Himself. It is well to bear in mind that the Saviour and His disciples were, at the time when this conversation took place, in the neighbourhood of Casarea Philippi. (See ver. 13.) They were thus in the immediate vicinity of some of the boldest and most picturesque of rocky scenery that is to be found in the Holy Land. There are, around, numerous projections or peaks of rock, capped with antique architectural ruins. "High on the rocky slopes above the town," says Stanley, "still lingers the name of Hazor, in the earliest times the capital of northern Palestine, 'the head of all those kingdoms.' (Josh. xi. 10.) A few rude stone blocks on a rocky eminence mark the probable site of the capital of Jabin. Hard by this height of Hazor, but commanding a nearer view of the plain, is the castle of Shubeibeh, the largest of its kind in the East, and equal in extent even to the pride of European castles at Heidelberg; built, as it would appear, in part by the Herodian princes, in part by Saracenic chiefs; famous in the days of the crusades as the residence of one of the chiefs of the Assassins, the 'old man of the mountains.' But the main centre of attraction is the higher source of the Jordan. Underneath the high red limestone cliff which overhangs the town, it bursts out." (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. xi., p. 397.) It was in the midst of this scenery of cliff, and rock, and ruined castle, and of cyclopean pieces-of-rock cut out and chiselled in immense symmetrical masses, fit for foundation stones, masses connected with buildings that had been reared in times long anterior to those of Herod, that our Saviour uttered the language we are considering. Perhaps He was standing on one of the conspicuous rocks, on which were lying, in disorder, the vast foundation blocks of some ancient fane or fortress. "We meet," says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "with heathen temples all over these mountains. Certainly no part of Syria was so given to idolatry as this region round the head-waters of the Jordan. These temples fronted the east, and were probably devoted to the worship of Baal." Proceeding northward, there are remnants of temples at various points along the slopes of Anti-Lebanon. Then on the eastern side of Būk'ah comes Baalbek, which Dr. Thomson supposes to be the Baal-gad of the Bible; and "some of the remains of which may claim," he says, "an antiquity equal to anything that even Egypt can boast." The foundation stones of the great temple there are very remarkable 'Peters,' or *Pieces-of-rock*. "The first tier above ground consists of stones of different lengths, but all about twelve and a half feet thick, and the same in width. Then come, over these, stones more than sixty-three feet long, the largest blocks perhaps that were ever placed in a wall by man. One of this class lies in the quarry," (having never been detached, and removed to its situation,) "where it can be viewed all round, and measured easily. It is fourteen by seventeen, and sixty-nine feet long!"

(*The Land and the Book*, chap. 16, pp. 232-235.) What a 'Peter' is this! What a *Piece-of-Rock*! How fit to be a foundation stone! It was perchance in view of some immense block, bearing some approximate resemblance to the Baalbek stone, that Jesus said to His disciple, *Thou art Peter! Thou art indeed a noble Piece-of-rock, divinely chiselled, and made fit to be an immovable foundation stone in the temple which I am about to erect! That temple I shall erect on the Rock of ages. Need I tell thee what it is that is the Rock of ages?* (See 1 Cor. x. 4; and comp. John ii. 19.) The designation *Rock*, or *Petra*, is never given to men in the Old Testament Scriptures. It is appropriated to Jehovah. "He is the Rock." (Deut. xxxii. 4.) "Who is a rock, save our God?" (2 Sam. xxii. 32.) "In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages." (Isa. xxvi. 4.) "God only," says the psalmist, "is my Rock." (Ps. lxii. 2.) He is "the Rock of our salvation." (Ps. xcv. 1.) He says Himself, "Is there a Rock beside Me? Yea, there is no God. I know not any." (Isa. xlv. 8.) God only, then, God in Christ, or Christ in God, is the everlasting Rock, on which the church was to be built. No other rock indeed is rationally conceivable. Peter's person, or Peter's faith, or Peter's confession, are really altogether out of the question. Our Saviour thus intended to say something of vast significance, when, after addressing Peter, and saying *Thou art a Piece-of-rock*, He added, in a retroverting way, and upon this *Rock I will build My church, inclusive of thee, Peter; inclusive of thee, in a very conspicuous position, befitting the massiveness of thy faith. Thou art not only a noble Piece-of-rock. Thou art a noble Piece of the true Rock. Thou hast been hewn from the Rock of ages, and art hence meet to form a fundamental part of the living Temple, which I am about to rear ON MYSELF, AND OUT OF MYSELF.* There was a grand ideal sense, in which Peter was, as it were, *a bit of Christ.* His Christianity was cut out of *Christ.* He was so intimately related, in spirit, to Christ, that Christ and he were "one." (John xv. 5, xvii. 23.) Peter, as a spiritual man, was just what his faith had made him. His faith in its subjectivity was but the introversion and the impress of its objectivity. All in Peter that made him to be a *christian Petros* was derived from *Christ the Petra.* It was in some such view of the Saviour's words that Augustín settled, after having for long felt difficulty in fathoming their import. (See his *Retractions*, lib. i., 21; and of his *Sermones*, No. 76, § 1; 270, § 2; 295, § 1.) Some have thought that our Saviour may have addressed Peter in Aramaic, in which language there is not a distinction of words corresponding to *Petros* and *Petra*, a *Piece-of-rock* and a *Rock*. But we have to do, not with conjectures regarding what Christ may have spoken in another language, but with the actual words that are actually ascribed to Him by the evangelist. And, as Lightfoot observes, "there is "nothing, either in the dialect of the nation or in reason, that forbids us to "think that our Saviour used the very Greek words, since such Grecisings "were not unusual in that nation." There can be little doubt that Christ and His apostles Grecised, though of course not always. (See Diodati's *Exercitatio de Christo Grace loquente.*) Webster and Wilkinson say that the language that was really employed by our Saviour is "best represented by the French "version, *que tu es PIERRE, et que sur cette PIERRE je bâtirai mon église.* "(Ostervald)." Dr. D. Brown applauds this remark, and adds that the French version exhibits "perfectly" the Saviour's "exalted play upon the word." But we are surprised that it escaped critics, so able and acute, that if their notion were correct the evangelist has failed to do justice to the Saviour's conception,

and must be blamed for needlessly, and misleadingly, *employing a diversity of terms*, when uniformity was desirable and within his reach. Le Cene and Billiet, in their respective French versions, have been more consistent than the authors of the French Geneva, and their follower Ostervald, for they have carefully distinguished the evangelist's discriminated terms, using *Pierre*, a *Stone*, for Peter or Petros, and, the one *Rocher* and the other *Roc*, a *Rock*, for Petra.

I will build My church. This is the first instance, in the New Testament, in which the word *church* (ἐκκλησία) occurs. And though so common a word in the epistles, it is found in only one other passage in the Gospels, Matt. xviii. 17. The term was often used in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, where it frequently, and indeed predominatingly, represents one, (כְּנֶסֶת) of the two Hebrew words which are so often translated *congregation* in our English version. It was apparently thus used, because its very sound suggested to the Greek translators a real or fancied etymological connection with the Hebrew term. It denoted an *assembly*. The Hebrew word denoted, simply, an *assemblage*. The children of Israel, in their collective capacity, were such an *assemblage*. They were a *congregation* of individuals bound together by the tie of kinship. They were a *community*, kept together by common duties, common rights, and common privileges, for the purpose of securing a *common-wealth*. They were hence a *commonwealth*. They were, as the Romans would have expressed it, a *civitas*. They were banded together, and bound together, by the ties of a common *citizenship*. Such was the Old Testament *congregation*. It was an adumbration of the New Testament *church*; an adumbration in several respects. For instance, (1) It was not a fortuitous mob of people; it was gathered together on the principle of affinity, of kinship. The members of the New Testament church are in like manner, though more sublimely, a real people, or nationality, an expanded family circle, a brotherhood. (2) The Old Testament congregation was a theocracy; and the church of the New Testament is emphatically theocratic. It is under the government of God. He is indeed its only Sovereign. It is the human kingdom of God. (3) The Old Testament congregation, being a theocracy, was emphatically an ecclesiastical or religious community. Its religion was its centre of attraction and its principle of cohesion. All the radii of its institutions ran into the temple service. The New Testament church, correspondingly, *is* a temple. Every member of it is a living stone in a sacred structure, a structure consecrated to the religious worship of God. Christ's church is thus pre-eminently a *church*, a religious community, consisting of those only who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. But there is another idea still that is expressed by the word *church* as used by our Saviour, and as subsequently used by His apostles. There are, as we have intimated, two words in the Hebrew Scriptures which are translated *congregation* in our English version. It is only one of these that is rendered by the Saviour's term for *church* (ἐκκλησία). The other is rendered by the somewhat analogous Greek term *synagogue* (συναγωγή); and even the term which is generally rendered *church* is often rendered *synagogue*. Each of the terms occurs scores of times in the Septuagint, though the term *synagogue* is far more frequently used than its sister term *church*. Thus the question turns up, Why has Christ selected the more uncommon word *church*, in preference to the more common word *synagogue*, to denote His community? The answer must be, Partly, no doubt, because the word *synagogue* has been laid hold of to denote the meetings and the meeting places of the Jews, for the reading of the Scriptures, and for exhortations, and prayers; but partly also because the

hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee

other word, considered both in itself and in its technical Greek usage, was suggestive of ideas which were dear to the heart of the Saviour, and of all who entered messianically into the Saviour's mind. *It properly denoted a congregation or assemblage of people called out.* It was not a fortuitous gathering of whoever happened to be, or chose to come. In its technical Greek usage it denoted *the assembly of the free citizens duly called out to transact the business of the community.* Slaves, and foreigners, and criminals, could form no part of such a congregation or *ecclesia.* In like manner Christ's church is (1) a community of free men. There are no slaves in it; and no criminals; no strangers or foreigners. It is (2) a community gathered together for a public purpose. It has been (3) gathered together by a *call.* It is divinely called out from among the mass of those who are determined to be slaves or criminals, or who are wilfully willing to remain foreigners and strangers to Christ and Christianity. Even the Old Testament congregation had been called out from among the nations. *Abraham, its Head, was called out* (Acts vii. 2, 3), *and he obeyed the call.* Hence his seed were a selected or elected people. But the New Testament church are selected or elected in a more spiritual way. They are elected or selected individually to the enjoyment of the high privileges of the community, and to the discharge of its public business in the world, when once they have responded spontaneously to the call that has been divinely addressed to them to come and be enrolled as citizens. When our Lord says to Peter, *And upon this Rock I will build My church,* He represents His church as an edifice, of which He is the Architect and the Builder. In the Ethiopic version the expression *My church* is rendered *the house of My Christians.* The kind of edifice is not specified. And indeed it could not well be, at least exhaustively. It is a house. It is a temple. (1 Cor. iii. 9-17.) But it is a city too, gathered around the central temple, and into which indeed the temple has expanded. (Eph. ii. 19-22.) It is Zion. It is Jerusalem. It is the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 2, 10), the heavenly Jerusalem. (Gal. iv. 26.) It is a place of perfect security. It is a fortress, standing high upon a Rock. It is a safe city of Refuge. Its "defence is the munition of rocks," or of what is far better and stronger than rocks.

And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: The word which is here translated *hell* is *hades*, a word of more comprehensive import than our English word *hell* in its modern conventional acceptation. We now use our English word as equivalent to *the place of future punishment, the prison house of the universe.* But of old it had, like the Greek *hades* and the Hebrew *she'ol*, a wider reference. *It denoted the realm of the dead in general, and thus the region of death and destruction.* Every one who was dead, or destroyed, was in *hades.* This region of the dead was very variously represented to the imagination of our forefathers; and, being naturally regarded as of vast extent, it received at their hands a shadowy geography or topography of its own. It was sometimes represented as subdivided into the region of the blessed and the region of the wicked and the miserable. This latter region was naturally thought of as the inferior region, the bottomless abyss. At other times no distinct partitioning of regions was thought of, and then *hades* or *hell* was regarded as just the immense receptacle of the disembodied. It was a kind of abysmal *hole, or pit, "the pit of destruction"* (Ps. lv. 23). There is a connection indeed between the words *hell* and *hole.* Compare the German *hölle.* And both *hell* and *hole*

are connected with the adjective *hollow*. Verstegan, in his chapter on "the Great Antiquity of our ancient English tongue, and the propriety, worthiness, and amplitude thereof," makes mention of both *heaven* and *hell*. He says that *heaven* or *heofen* is "as much to say as *heav-en* or *heaved-up*, to wit, the place that is elevated," and then he adds that "*hell* hath like apt appellation, as being *helled over*, that is to say, hidden or covered in low obscurity." (*Restitution of Decayed Intelligence*, chap. vii.) The word *hell*, with quite a group of kindred words, is connected with the Anglo-Saxon verb *helan*, to cover. Compare the German *hüllen*, to cover, to veil, and the old English verb to *hill* (*hill with snow*, Chaucer). This *helan*, to cover, is the root of the noun *heel*, and of the verb to *heal*. A wound is *healed* when it is *covered*. The part is re-covered, and the healed person himself is said to be *recovered*. The primary idea of *hell* then is obvious, and one need no longer wonder that it should be said of our Lord, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in *hell*" (Ps. xvi. 10, Acts ii. 31). As regards the representation before us, *And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, there is a complication of metaphors. The realm of the dead, or the region of death and destruction, is represented as an edifice with gates, a frowning fastness, rearing itself aloft as if in antagonism to life. It is personified too as if it were the conscious antagonist of the living, ever ready to open its gates for their reception, and ever seeking, as it were, to devour them, or to engulf them in the covered *hull* or *hollow* of its insatiable maw. It "enlargeth its desire" (Hab. ii. 5). It is "never satisfied" (Prov. xxx. 15). It never says "It is enough" (Prov. xxx. 16). It "enlargeth itself, and openeth its mouth without measure," that it may swallow up "men's glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and him that rejoiceth" (Isa. v. 14). Its *gates* are its *jaws*. Our Saviour means that His true church, founded on the Rock of Ages, and built on living stones, stones hewn from the very rock on which His temple and His city are reared, will never succumb to death and destruction. As He looked around him, and as He gazed into the future, He saw ruin and desolation everywhere. All idol temples either had been or would be destroyed. All cities of the unclean either had sunk into ruin, or would yet be numbered with the things that were. But the city of the living God, the temple of temples, the living temple of the living God, the general assembly and church of the first-born of the children of men, would defy for ever every agency of destruction. Neither death itself, nor Apollyon, he "who hath the power of death" (Heb. ii. 14, Rev. ix. 11), would ever be able to *prevail against it*. In explaining the expression *the gates of hades*, Eckermann (*Erklärung aller dunkeln Stellen*, vol. i., p. 95), Alford and others refer not unaptly to the modern expression, "the Sublime Porte," as meaning the Ottoman court or cabinet, and representing the entire Turkish power. And some have supposed that there is a reference to the gates of cities as being often, in the East, the seat of council. They think that the Saviour's idea is, *The councils of hell shall not prevail against the true church*. The idea is good in itself, though it is not the idea of the Saviour's phraseology. Principal Campbell supposes that the expression *the gates of hades* is just "a very natural periphrasis for *death*," inasmuch as "it is by death, and by it only, that spirits enter into *hades*." (*Dissertations*, vi. 2, § 17.) The idea is so far correct; but the line is too sharply drawn between *death* and *hades*, and a detached poetical periphrasis is substituted for a partial aspect of an awful subtended reality. According to Scripture representations, not only *hades* but death itself has *gates*. (See Job xxxviii. 17; Ps. ix. 13, cvii. 18.)

the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 20

VER. 19. I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : The Saviour now varies His standpoint of representation. He had spoken of an edifice in which Peter was to be a conspicuous foundation stone. The edifice was a temple. The scene was then varied a little ; and the edifice was a city. The scene is varied again ; the city is a kingdom. It is *the kingdom of heaven*. All the representations are significant. They are all appropriate aspects, though varied, of the grand reality. Our Lord promises to Peter *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*. As the kingdom is a city, keys are needed for the gates. The city is a fortified place, a castle, the palatial residence of the Great King. A steward of the house is required, a major-domo, (an *οικονομος*), one who may take charge not only of the keys of the gates, but of the keys of the treasure house too, and of all the storerooms of the establishment. Our Saviour intimates to Peter that he would be constituted such a steward of the house of God. He was to have great power and authority, as the prime minister of the King. Acting according to the commands of his Sovereign, he would have authority to open the gates or to shut them, to open the storehouses or to close them. His power would be, relatively to the King, administrative only. And in discharge of the functions of his high office he would at once be instructed from above by the Divine Spirit, and be assisted from around by other high officials, the other apostles. He and they unitedly would constitute the King's ministry. He would be premier. Hence it was that on the day of pentecost he took the lead and opened the gates of the kingdom to the Jews. (See Acts ii.) Hence too, when he was in Joppa, he was instructed by his Lord to open the gates of the kingdom to the Gentiles ; and he did it. (Acts x., xi., xv. 7.) Hence also in all the lists of the apostles Peter is invariably mentioned *first*. (Matt. x. 2 ; Mark iii. 16 ; Luke vi. 14 ; Acts i. 13.) He has however no successor in his premiership, just as He had no successor as a Foundation stone. The Foundation stone lasts for ever. So do all the foundation stones. So do all the living stones. They live for ever. And so the ministry of the apostles continues for ever. The laws of the King are communicated to us for ever through the ministry of His apostolic ministers. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven : The idea is grand. Whatsoever should be done on earth by Peter, in his official capacity, would be sure of being sanctioned in heaven, *because it had been really originated in heaven*. So great would be the intimacy of Peter with the King, so thoroughly would Peter's mind reflect the mind of the King, that all his official decisions and other acts would be irreversible, because accurately representing the Will that was supreme. The phrases *whatsoever thou shalt bind*, and *whatsoever thou shalt loose*, were common Hebrew expressions, having a definite and well known meaning. *To bind* meant *to forbid*, or *to declare forbidden*. *To loose* meant *to allow*, or *to declare allowable*. One might produce, says Lightfoot, "thousands of examples" from the writings of the Jews to prove that such was the meaning of the phrases in question. Out of the many instances which he specifies are the following, but having reference to petty rabbinical tomfooleries, to the specification of which an immense descent must be made : "To them that take a hot bath on the sabbath day, they bind (i.e. they forbid) washing, and they loose (i.e. they

Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many

allow) perspiring." "Rabbi Meir loosed (i.e. *permitted*) the mixing of wine and oil, to anoint a sick man on the sabbath." In view of this stereotyped import of the two contrary phrases, it is utterly unallowable to restrict the Saviour's words to any supposed discretionary authority, vested in Peter and his imaginary successors, to confer or to withhold absolution from sins. The reference is manifestly to Peter's ministerial power, in general, to make authoritative arrangements for the regulation of the affairs of the kingdom. He was to have in the kingdom of heaven the power of other prime ministers in other kingdoms. This ministerial power however was not to be confined to Peter. It was to belong to the whole cabinet. By the express will and deed of the Sovereign, it was to be shared by Peter with his fellow ministers, the other apostles; and not with them only, but, under certain modifying conditions, and so far as the *application* of principles and regulations is concerned, with all true ministers of the church, acting legitimately; and also with all true meetings of the church, or even in the church and as integrant parts of it, acting in true harmony with their own spiritual municipality. See chap. xviii. 17-20.

VER. 20. Then charged He His disciples: The rendering of Wycliffe is, *Thanne He comarundide to His disciples*. That they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ: Or rather, and more simply, according to the reading that is approved of by the chief modern editors, *That He was the Christ*. Our Saviour knew that the people, in their present state of mind, would be apt to act precipitately, and most unwisely, and suicidally. They were not as yet sufficiently prepared to understand what it was that the Christ had to do, and in what way it was that He would establish the kingdom of heaven. See on chap. viii. 4, ix. 30, xi. 12.

VER. 21. From that time forth: This is Tyndale's translation. Sir John Cheke's is, *After that*. Literally it would be, *From then*, that is, From the time that dates from the confidential and deeply solemn interview that is recorded in the immediately preceding verses. Began Jesus to show to His disciples: Bit by bit, no doubt, and as they could bear it. He had indeed, on former occasions, made reference to the same mysterious topics; but remotely, dimly, circuitously, enigmatically. See John ii. 19, iii. 14; Matt. ix. 15, xii. 40, xvi. 4. As, however, the crisis time was rapidly approaching when a sword that had long slumbered was to awake, and when the peculiar mystery of our Saviour's mission was to be unfolded in actual fact, it was wise, expedient, and requisite to prepare, systematically and definitely, as far as possible, the minds of His disciples for the maturing of the course of events. With all the preparation possible, they would still have the utmost difficulty in understanding the *whys* and *wherefores* of things, and indeed in so modifying their anticipations as to avoid a fatal collision between facts without and faith within. How that He must go to Jerusalem: The *How* may be omitted, having nothing in the original corresponding to it. The word translated *go* would be more literally rendered *go off*. Elsewhere it is generally rendered *depart*. Note the *must* (δεῖ). The word is sometimes rendered pleonastically, *must needs*. (Mark xiii. 7; John iv. 4; Acts i. 16, xvii. 3, xxi. 22.) Our Saviour *must needs go off to Jerusalem*. It behoved

things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. 22 Then Peter

Him : so the word is rendered in Luke xxiv. 46. He *ought* to go : so the word is very frequently rendered. (Matt. xxiii. 23 ; Mark xiii. 14 ; Luke xiii. 14 ; etc.) It was *necessary* that He should go : necessary for the outworking of the Divine plan : necessary for the interests of His kingdom, and for the interests of universal man. Something was to be done at Jerusalem, and endured there, that would indeed be most marvellous ; but it had been foretold from of old, and in one form or another its occurrence was inevitable and indispensable. See Matt. xxvi. 54 ; Luke xxiv. 46 ; Heb. ii. 10, viii. 3. And suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes : Our Saviour, in His representations to His disciples of the coming events which were casting their shadows before, approached gradually the culminating point of the tragedy. He intimated that, in proceeding with His Messianic work, He would be arrested, and unjustly treated, maltreated, by the highest and most venerable council in the land, the sanhedrim, or sanhedrin, composed of a certain number of *elders, chief priests, and scribes*. The number of members was limited it is supposed to seventy-one. In chap. ii. 4 two of the constituent classes composing it are specified : the *chief priests* and *scribes*. The *elders*, or lay members, are not mentioned there, probably because the question submitted by Herod for decision was purely biblical. But their influence in all ordinary affairs would be great. The word *elders*, or *presbyters*, must have been originally applied to such *elderly persons* as, in a primitive state of society, would be the appropriate representatives in council of the rest of the population. But long before the time of Christ the name had ceased to denote *age*, and had become a term of *office*. It denoted persons who were supposed to be fit, from their high or influential position in society, to form members of a *senate*. The *elders* of the sanhedrin would no doubt be the representatives of the principal families in the state. They would be as it were the *sheiks* of the people. The word *sheik* means *old man*, or *elder*. If the Saxon word *aldermen* originally meant *eldermen* or *elders*, it would present, in the combination of its primary import and its present usage, an interesting coincidence. (See Hampson's *Origines Patriæ*, chap. ii.) And be killed : We do not know the way, or the various ways, in which our Saviour would bring out this strange idea to the minds of His disciples. No doubt He would turn it wisely round, and present it in such aspects as would be best fitted to pave for it an entrance into their understandings, amid the counter accumulations of their prejudices and fond anticipations. In one way or another the death of the Messiah was an essential element in the Divine plan. And as the Divine plan required to be wrought out in the midst of the complications of human free agency, it was foreseen, and foretold from of old, and clearly perceived by our Lord Himself, that He would *be killed*. And the third day be raised up : Our Lord, in dealing with the bewildered minds of His disciples, hastens to intermingle the delightful with the doleful. It would have some effect, more especially when the radiance of the countenance or the rapture of the eye would assist them to apprehend, though in a manner exceedingly confused and indistinct, that He was saying something that was full of consolation.

VER. 22. Then : In the original it is *And*. It is so rendered by Wycliffe and Luther. Tyndale renders it *But*. It simply connects, in an easy and indefinite way, what is about to be narrated with the declaration in the preceding verse, that our Lord had begun to draw the attention of His disciples to the dark

took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 But he turned,

shadows which certain coming events were casting before. We should do injustice to the reality, were we to imagine that *in a moment or two after Peter's noble confession* our Lord abruptly said all He had to say about the tragedy that was looming in the distance; and that, *in a moment or two later*, Peter acted the part that is now about to be narrated. It is the salient points of many, and perhaps of lengthened, conversations, that alone jut up into view in the narrative of the evangelist. Peter took Him: That is, *took Him to himself, took Him aside, took Him apart*, so as to speak privately with Him. Wakefield entirely missed the evangelist's idea when he translated the clause, *Upon this Peter took Him up*. Peter's heart indeed was agitated. Strange surgings swelled within him at the mention of the gloomy ideas which had been mooted. The spray of these surgings lashed upon the picture which his imagination had been busily drawing. That picture was still fresh and madid. It was overlaid with brilliant colouring, which exhibited to the good man's fancy a bewitching minglement of glories, material and spiritual. As the broken surgings dashed upon it, there was *anguish* in the painter's spirit. There was *anger* too. He was displeased. He was chagrined. He said impetuously, and unreflectingly, within himself, *What! This will never do. It must not be!* And began to rebuke Him: He *began* impulsively, vehemently, inconsiderately, as was too often his wont. He *began*, but the gracious Lord rose up in majesty and interrupted him, not allowing him to proceed far in the improper freedom he was using, and the improper feeling he was nursing. The word translated *rebuke* (*ἐπιτιμῶν*) is imperfectly so rendered. Etymologically it is much akin to our English verb *to rate*, when used in its objurgatory acceptation. And both here, and in general in the New Testament, it means to *chide*. Peter was really, though most unreasonably, angry; and he gave way to his anger and disappointment by *chiding* his Lord. Wycliffe's translation is, *to blame*; Sharpe's is the same; Mace's, *to expostulate with*; Billiet's, *to remonstrate with*. But such translations, especially those of Mace and Billiet, are mere conjectures or the creatures of the heart. They are disallowed by the usage of the word. Saying, *Be it far from Thee, Lord*: In the margin we have, as a various reading, *Pity Thyself*. It is the translation of the Geneva version; though in the first edition, that of 1557, it was *Look to Thyself*. Tyndale's version is *Faver Thy selfe*. Young's is *Spare Thyself*. All these translations are based on a misapprehension of the original expression, which, like many corresponding phrases in modern tongues, is a fragmentary ejaculation, rising up to God: *Merciful to Thee!* or, *Gracious to Thee!* that is, *May God be gracious to Thee and avert all evil!* *Preserve Thee!* that is, *May God preserve Thee!* Such ejaculations are fitting or unfitting, becoming or unbecoming, according to the circumstances in which, and the spirit with which, they are uttered. When the ejaculation is used deprecatingly, as here, then such a translation as is given in the text of our Authorized version, though not literal, runs parallel in import, *Be it far from Thee!* or as Doddridge gives it, *God forbid!* *This shall never be to Thee: This must not be!* It would be ruinous to Thy cause. It would be a triumph to Thine enemies. It would be a death-blow to our hopes. The good man knew not, in the strange tumult of his spirit, what he was saying.

VER. 23. But He turned, and said to Peter: He *turned*, not toward Peter, as Jansen supposes; but *from him*, toward the rest of the disciples, apart from

and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan : thou art an

whom Peter had taken Him. See Mark viii. 33. He wished to indicate to Peter His displeasure. He wished also that Peter's fellow disciples should share the benefit of the rebuke. Most likely they were in sympathy with Peter, though each would be peculiarly moved according to his constitutional idiosyncrasy. **Get thee behind Me, Satan!** Be gone from before Me,—Be gone out of My sight, Satan! It is the same kind of expression that our Lord used in reference to the devil, in chap. iv. 10. And doubtless He used it here in reference to the very same tempter. *He looked for the moment through Peter, and saw behind him His old enemy, cunningly making use of the prejudices and impulsive honesty of the undeveloped apostle.* In truth it was the old temptation, back again, that was now presented through Peter, the temptation to avoid suffering, persecution, bitter hate, scorn, and murder; and instead, to erect a secular throne that would in pomp surmount all other thrones upon the earth. The Saviour's spirit was roused when He met His old foe in such circumstances, looking from behind the battlements of the loving but disconcerted heart of the chief of the apostles. Hence He spoke decidedly and strongly. It is as if He had said,—*Peter! what thou wert thoughtlessly beginning to utter comes not from thee, but from one who is behind thee, and who is using thee as his Tool. I know him well. I have met him before. I then turned My back upon him. I turn My back on him again, and on thee, whilst thou art suffering him to use and abuse thee. I speak to him by name, as he deserves. It is to him that I say, Get thee behind Me, Satan! But thou art greatly to blame for yielding to his influence. Thou hast thereby, for the time being, identified thyself with him. And hence I must speak to him through thee.* "Good men," says Richard Baxter, "ofttimes do the devil's work, though they know it not." The word *Satan* means *Adversary*; but in our Saviour's time it was used as the proper name of the great spiritual adversary at once of God and of men. Some have supposed that Jesus, overlooking the presence of the great adversary, called His apostle *a Satan*, or *a devil*. But to entertain such an idea for a moment is to misconceive, almost to infinity, the real state of the case. **Thou art an offence unto Me:** This does not mean, *Thou art offensive or disagreeable to Me.* The idea is far profounder. *Thou art My Stumbling-stone, or Thou art My Stumbling-block.* So the word is rendered in Rom. xi. 9, 1 Cor. i. 23, Rev. ii. 14. The term is translated *occasion-of-stumbling* in 1 John ii. 10. Comp. Matt. v. 29, xi. 6, xiii. 21. It means more than *obstacle*, *Beausobre* and *L'Enfant's* and *Principal Campbell's* translation; or *hindrants*, *Sir John Cheke's*. It is as if the Saviour had said,—*Thou Peter,—for I have done now with him who is behind thee,—thou Peter, in suffering thyself to give expression to such ideas, art indeed a Peter still, a Petros, a Piece-of-rock* (see ver. 18). *But thou art not, as before, a noble block lying in its right position as a massive foundation stone. On the contrary, thou art like a stone quite out of its proper place, and lying right across the road in which I must go,—lying as a stone of stumbling. Wouldst thou have Me to stumble, and to fall?* The Saviour speaks in conscious intensity of feeling. For in truth Peter had begun to give expression to the only temptation that had any real adaptability to find in His immaculate spirit something approximating a responsive chord,—something that might occasion for a moment, in the human region of His pure and purely human feeling, an actual struggle, a spiritual combat. It was the same temptation, though under a slightly different phase, that had been presented to Him, as Satan's masterpiece, in the wilderness. See

offence unto me : for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and

chap. iv. 8, 9. For thou savourest not the things of God, but the things of men : Thou savourest not. It is Tyndale's translation, and is repeated in Cranmer's Bible, and the Geneva, and the Rheims. It was given by Wycliffe too. Principal Campbell's version corresponds, Thou *relishest not*. Wycliffe added, as an alternative translation, *thou undirstondist nat* (thou understandest not); and this alternative translation is Sir John Cheke's. But both *savourest*, or *relishest*, on the one hand, and *understandest* on the other, are too partial and one-sided. The original word more comprehensively means *thou mindest, thou art minding*. (See Rom. viii. 5, xiv. 6; Gal. v. 10; Phil. ii. 2, 5, iii. 19, iv. 2; Col. iii. 2.) Peter was allowing his *mind*, both in its thoughts and in its affections, to be occupied with the *things of men*, rather than with the *things of God*. By the *things of men* we are to understand the things that are dear to the hearts of men in general. *The things of God*, on the other hand, are the things that, in our peculiar circumstances as sinners, are pre-eminently dear to the heart of God. Men would like present ease, comfort, social distinction, popular applause, wealth, splendour; and, to attain these, they are too apt to overlook their moral and spiritual necessities. But God looks to what is required for lasting and everlasting peace of conscience, rest of heart, joy of soul, glory and honour. *And, to His eye, the Cross is the way to the crown*. When Peter conferred not, as before, with flesh and blood, but let in the light that comes from above, his ideas were sublime, and they illuminated the foundations of human prosperity and bliss (see ver. 17). But when he shut out the light that was streaming down from above, and conferred with the flesh and blood of his own fond wishes and imaginations, or of the fond wishes and imaginations of the mass of his fellows, his ideas were the inversions of Divine realities, and when traced back and back, they were found to coalesce with what was emanating from beneath.

VER. 24. Then said Jesus to His disciples: *Then*, when He found, after the reproof which He had administered, that they were in a sufficiently recipient mood. *If any one is wishful to come after Me*: He, as it were, puts it in their option to start afresh. They must decide anew what they would do, as if they had never decided before; for it is well to be, time after time, taken back to first principles. *If any one of you, or if any other one anywhere, is wishful and willing to be of My 'following,' and to come in My train, whither I am going*. Jesus was bound for His kingdom. *Let him deny himself*: Very literally, *Let him abnegate himself*, that is, Let him get off from himself, by saying No to himself. It is implied that in every man's self-hood there is a strong tendency to selfishness; and hence, in resisting this selfishness, self is denied. If self were merely self, and not selfish, it would not require to be denied, or resisted, when conscience or judgement was followed. Self, in that case, would find its self-hood emphatically in conscience and judgement. The self-hood of perfectly holy beings must assert itself pre-eminently in what is right and good; and while, therefore, obedience to conscience and judgement in such persons may sometimes involve the denial of certain instinctive feelings, which are *in self*, it can never amount to the denial, crucifixion, or sacrifice of *self itself*. It is

follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world,

otherwise with sinners, whose self-hood, in things moral, is turned upside down. They must renounce themselves, and get off from themselves, by saying No to themselves, if they would go after Christ in the direction in which He has already gone. And take up his cross, and follow Me: The eye of the Saviour saw looming in the distance His own crucifixion. See ver. 21, xvii. 22, 23. He was already, in anticipation, bearing His cross to its place on Calvary. It was on His spirit; for He was "bearing the sin of the world" (John i. 29). The inward crucifixion was going on. The outward crucifixion that was in view was but the externalizing of the inward by a particular act of human cruelty and criminality. All other acts of human sin were also acts of cruelty and criminality, and were doing their crucifying work on the heart of the Saviour. *If any one will follow Christ whither He was going, and whither He has now gone, he must take up his cross, and follow Him.* He must submit, or, at least, he must be willing to submit, to crucifying opposition, and hate, and cruelty. See on chap. x. 38.

VER. 25. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: Whosoever wishes and wills to save his life, so far as its evanescent relation to things terrestrial is concerned; whosoever wishes and wills to save it thus, let come of conscience, and of the kingdom of heaven, and of the glory of Christ the King, what may;—*shall lose it* in all its higher relations, its relations to true glory, and honour, and immortality. In grasping at the shadow he shall infallibly lose the substance. But whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it: Whosoever will lose his life on earth for Christ's sake shall find it in heaven. The loss of what is finite will thus be the gain of what is infinite. Life lost down here will only disappear, to reappear in a higher form and in more propitious circumstances. And what is thus true of life, the culminating point of things, is equally true of all the things that are round about its base, rank, wealth, smiles, and all the other means and modes of happiness or bliss. What is lost down here for Christ's sake is gained with interest on high. See on chap. x. 39.

VER. 26. For: It is as if the Saviour had said, *It is right that I should make these strong representations regarding the loss of real and enduring life on the part of those who are not prepared to sacrifice their earthly life for My sake; and regarding the gain of real and enduring life on the part of those who are prepared to lose for My sake the earthly life; for what is a man profited?—Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and Westcott-and-Hort read, What shall a man be profited?* The reading is supported by the manuscripts \aleph B L, 1, 13, 33, and a few others, as well as by several of the ancient versions (which, however, may just have been free translations). The reading of the *Received Text* has a preponderance of excellent external authorities in its favour, inclusive of the Itala and Vulgate versions. It is undoubtedly to be preferred; for, internally considered, it is less likely that in such a case the future should be changed by a transcriber into the present, than that the present should be changed into the future. *A transcriber might think that there was a great present profit in gaining the whole world, though no future profit.* The present however, in the case before us, is not used in antithesis to the future. It is used absolutely; and not

and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every

relatively, as contradistinguished from either past or future. The time indicated is representative of all time, and is thus that absolute substrate of time which is appropriate for propositions that are equally valid for time past, present, and future. *What is a man profited, or advantaged*, as the word is rendered in Luke ix. 25. If he should gain the whole world, and forfeit his life: The verbs are past in tense, because, before the actual balance sheet of the soul can be made up, the gain and loss must be conceived of as entries of actual facts. The Saviour thus, in His interrogation, leads the mind to go forward in thought to the end of existence on earth in the first place, and then, in the second place, into the beginning of existence beyond the earth, existence in destiny. It is profitable to make such excursions onward, and far onward, in thought. We bring something back with us, when we return, that is fitted to do us good as long as we exist. *And forfeit his life*: The word is the same that is rendered *life* in the preceding verse. In both cases it is the *life-principle* that is referred to, the life-principle as *relatively conceived*. The man who is amerced in *eternal life* loses his life-principle in so far as its relation to eternal bliss is concerned. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? That is, *Or, after a man finds himself in eternity, and there amerced in the eternal life of his soul, what shall he give, by way of barter, to obtain for himself the forfeited eternal life?* Will he give money? will he give the world? He no longer has either the one or the other! And even though he had, they would be of no avail. The "redemption of the soul" is so "precious" that it must then "cease for ever" (Ps. xlix. 8).

VER. 27. For the Son of man shall come: Or, *For hereafter shall the Son of man come*. Compare our Authorized translation in Gal. iii. 23, 1 Tim. vi. 16, Heb. xi. 8, 2 Pet. ii. 6. The Saviour intimates that it would be utterly in vain for the man who sells his soul on earth for earth, and finishes his earthly career in cowardly unfaithfulness to his Lord, to hope to get his error rectified when he passes beyond his sphere of probation. **In the glory of His Father**: For the glory of the Father and the glory of the Son are one. (John x. 30, xvii. 5; Matt. xxvi. 64.) They are one, says Calov, scholastically, as to *quiddity*. The Son's glory, he goes on to explain, is not merely finite glory, as of a man, or an angel, or any mere creature. It is immense, infinite, Divine, and therefore the glory of the Father. It was sweetly considerate in the Saviour to lift up before the eyes of His perplexed disciples the glory that was to follow the humiliation at Jerusalem. **With His angels**: The idea is not, *with His Father's angels*. It is, *with His own angels*: for the angels are His as truly as they are the Father's. So clear, so full, was the Saviour's realization that, on the higher side of His being, He was essentially one with the Father. **And then shall He render to every one according to his works**: Then shall He retributively render to every one according to his conduct. He is competent to pass righteous sentence upon every one; and that righteous sentence He will pass, according to every one's real character. The real character resolves itself into the real doing, working, acting of the soul. He who is meet in character for bliss shall have bliss adjudged to him. He who is not meet for bliss shall be condemned. See chap. xxv. 31-46.

man according to his works. 28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

VER. 28. Verily I say to you, There are some of those standing here, who shall not taste of death until they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom: A passage that has occasioned perplexity to such as cannot distinguish spirit from letter and essence from form, or who, when they do distinguish, must have an extremely sharp line of demarcation running, as with mathematical precision, between the two. Such mathematical precision cannot be attained. It did not belong to the office of a spiritual preacher or teacher. It is inconsistent with oratory, either in the region of things secular or in the region of things sacred, more especially if the orator or teacher must speak pictorially, if he is to be listened to at all. Christ had thus to speak, and when He referred to the great realities of the spirit-world He had no alternative left, considering the minds with which He was dealing, than to point to the indistinct shadows which they were throwing athwart the world of sense. The purport of what Jesus said to His disciples we may represent to ourselves in the following manner, when we combine the view of the subject which is got from the standpoint of anticipation that was occupied by the disciples, as they were when the Lord spoke to them, with the view that is obtained from our own standpoint of history and higher hope: *Rest assured that the judgement of the world is in the hands of the Son of man, and that He shall render to every man according to his doing. I am in My humiliation just now. This humiliation is needful. It is needful for your sakes. It is needful for the sake of all men. But My glorification is at hand. And then and thenceforward I shall act as the King of kings. Not only in the end will I sit on the throne of My glory, and wind up the affairs of the universal world. Long before that period shall arrive, I shall signally manifest My royal glory. Verily I say unto you, Some of you will still be on earth when I shall manifest Myself in My royal glory.* Our Saviour refers, we doubt not, though in an indefinite way, to the establishment and extension of His kingdom, and the manifestation of Himself as the victorious King that took place, when Jerusalem and Judaism, both thoroughly corrupted to the core, were overturned. Comp. Matt. x. 23, xxiv. 34; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27. De Lyra supposes that the reference is simply to the manifestation of glory that took place in connection with our Lord's resurrection. Melancthon was of the same opinion (*puto simplicissime de resurrectione Christi intelligi*). So was Luther. Calvin too, but with sagacious outstretchings of view. Whedon's opinion corresponds. Lange also; and he thinks that in the clause about death there is an occult reference to Christ's own decease and to that of Judas. But such an interpretation of the death-clause is exceedingly unnatural. Chrysostom again, and Theophylact, and Euthymius Zigabenus, as also many modern expositors of the older school, such as Jansen, Richard Baxter, Bishop Porteous, suppose that the reference is to the transfiguration; and that the "some" refers to the fact that it was Peter, James and John alone, who then saw the Son of man in His glory. But this interpretation too is unnatural; for though the Son of man then appeared in His glory, He did not come in His kingdom. James Cappel, Wetstein, Wesley, Heubner, Alford, Arnoldi, agree in supposing a reference to what happened at, and in consequence of, the destruction of Jerusalem. So too, but with wise limitations, Jonathan Edwards. (*Notes on the Bible*, in loc.)

CHAPTER XVII.

1 AND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain

CHAPTER XVII.

"THE seventeenth chapter," says Stier, "is a principal chapter, quite complete in itself, not merely in the Gospel of Matthew, but also in the life of Christ." It contains a group of very remarkable Christological phenomena.

VER. 1. And after six days: In Luke ix. 28 the expression is, *about an eight days after*. There was evidently an interval of *about a week* between the date of the conversations recorded in the latter half of the preceding chapter, and the date of *the transfiguration on the mount*. Matthew seems to mention the number of complete days which intervened. Luke's expression again is probably intended to comprehend the marginal day *from which*, and the other marginal and fractional day *to which*, the computation extended. **Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother**: The innermost circle of the apostolical circle, the esoteric chiefs of the apostles. See chap. xxvi. 37. **Jesus taketh them**, or, as the same term is rendered in chap. xxvi. 37, **He taketh them with Him**. **And bringeth them up into an high mountain apart**: Literally, *He beareth them up, He carrieth them up*. The expression is translated in Mark ix. 2, *He leadeth them up*. The word *apart*, at the conclusion of the clause, is not to be connected in thought with the expression *an high mountain*, as if it were the evangelist's intention to depict the geographical isolation of the mountain. It is to be referred to the three disciples spoken of, who were taken up to the mountain *apart by themselves*, as Mark expresses it (chap. ix. 2).

The particular high mountain referred to cannot now be determined. Popular tradition has fixed upon Tabor, a beautiful dome of a mountain, covered with verdure to its summit, and standing *apart*, or "by itself," as Maundrell expresses it. (*Journey*, Ap. 19.) It is situated about five miles east of Nazareth, and hence at no great distance from the south-west point of the sea of Galilee. "As seen," says Dean Stanley, "where it is usually first seen by the traveller, from the north-west of the plain, it towers like a dome;" but "as seen from the east, it is like a long arched mound," rising "over the monotonous undulations of the surrounding hills, from which it stands completely isolated, except by a narrow neck of rising ground, uniting it to the mountain range of Galilee." (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. ix., p. 350.) It is, says Dr. Robinson, "the most graceful of all the mountains of Palestine." (*Researches*, vol. iii., p. 219.) As early as the fourth century it was regarded as the scene of the transfiguration. It is spoken of as such by Cyril of Jerusalem, who flourished in that century. (*Catechesis*, xii. 6.) Jerome, who died some forty years or so later than Cyril, speaks of it in corresponding terms in a passage that is referred to by Dr. Robinson. (*Epistolæ*, 46: 209.) In the sixth century it was visited by Antoninus Martyr, who mentions in his *Itinerary* that there were three churches on its summit, corresponding to the number of tabernacles projected by Peter. In the seventh century Bishop Arculf visited it, and makes mention, in the account which he dictated in Iona to Adamnan, of the same three churches. The beauty of the mountain had struck him. He speaks of its "remarkable round shape," and he describes it as "covered in an extraordinary manner with grass and flowers." (*Early Travels in the Holy Land*, p. 9,

apart, 2 and was transfigured before them: and his face did

Wright's ed.) By that time Tabor had been for long a favourite resort of Christian pilgrims, under the idea that it was the actual scene of the transfiguration. Hence, in the times of the crusades, it was a centre of interest as one of the *holy places*. The city on its summit was frequently taken and retaken. But its fortifications were razed to the ground by Melek el 'Adir, brother of Saladin; and soon afterwards, in the year of our Lord 1263, the Sultan Bibars rendered the place a complete desolation. It has continued in the same condition to the present day, though still visited and popularly regarded as the *holy Mount of the Transfiguration*. There are around and athwart its summit abundant architectural remains, which suffice to testify to the fact that it was in ancient times a *city of habitations*. Some of these remains are of very great antiquity. Indeed "a fortified city," as Dr. Robinson says, "had existed on Mount Tabor from the earliest times." (*Researches*, vol. iii., p. 221.) The historian Polybius mentions that Antiochus the Great of Syria took it by stratagem in one of his campaigns. He calls it Atabyrium, and speaks of it as situated on "a breast-like height." (*History*, v., cap. 6.) This happened about 200 years before the birth of Christ. There can be little doubt therefore that Tabor, in the time of our Lord, was crowned with some kind of town, or *city set on an hill*. (Compare Josephus, *Life*, § 37; *Wars*, ii. 20: 6. See also *Judg.* iv. 6, 12, 14.) This being the case, there is little likelihood that it could have been the actual scene of the transfiguration. It must have been fixed upon, we presume, by the early Christian pilgrims, on only imaginary grounds, and with facile faith. It was beautiful and picturesque, and "of a wonderful rotundity" as Jerome expresses it. (*Liber de Situ et Nom.*) It rose finely toward heaven. It was near the centre of the Saviour's Galilean circuit. It was likewise standing *apart*. "Its being situated in such a separate manner," says Maundrell, "has induced most authors to conclude that it must needs be that *'holy mountain*, as St. Peter styles it, which was the place of our blessed Lord's *'transfiguration.*" (*Journey*, Ap. 19.) But Dr. Lightfoot was of opinion that "most authors" were mistaken in this matter. Reland agreed with him. (*Palestina*, p. 335.) And the best judges of the present day, inclusive of Ritter and Robinson, are of Reland's opinion. Lightfoot and he supposed that the scene of the transfiguration would be one of the high mountains in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, where our Lord had been secluding Himself. (Chap. xvi. 13.) Dr. Robinson is of the same opinion, adding that in that region "there are certainly mountains enough." Dean Stanley is of the same mind, and fixes on Hermon as the probable spot. "It is impossible," he says, "to look up to its towering peaks, and not be struck with its appropriateness to the scene. High up on its southern slopes, there must," he adds, "be many a point where the disciples could be taken *apart by themselves*. Even the transient comparison of the celestial splendour with the snow, where alone it could be seen in Palestine, should not perhaps be wholly overlooked." (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. ix., pp. 399, 400.) "Standing," says Porter, "amid the ruins of Caesarea, we do not need to ask where that *high mountain* is. The ridge of Hermon rises over us; and on one or other of its wooded peaks the transfiguration took place." (*Handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 423.) It may be so. It is likely indeed. We need not however be very positive in guessing.

VER. 2. And was transfigured before them: *Transfigured*, or *transformed*,

shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

or *metamorphosed*. This last word is just the Greek verb Anglicised. *Transfigured* was Wycliffe's word. But he added, as an alternative and explanatory rendering, or *turnyd into another likenesse*. Purvey, in his revision, retained only the explanatory rendering. But Tyndale gives *transfigured*; and from his time thenceforward the word kept its place in all the English versions. It was the rendering of the Latin Vulgate, and, long before, of the Itala or Old Latin. Instead of *transfigured*, Erasmus used the still more literal word *transformed*. Calvin and Beza adopted Erasmus's word. It is the word that is employed in our Authorized version to render the evangelist's term, as used by Paul in Rom. xii. 2. In 2 Cor. iii. 18 the same term is rather feebly represented by our generic word *changed*. The change, transformation, metamorphosis, or transfiguration of our Saviour was, as Calov scholastically remarks, a change, not in the *substance*, but in the *accidents*, of His being; or, as Gerhard correspondingly puts it, not in *substance*, but in *quality*. It was a change in the form, figure, or appearance of His outward person; and is in part described in what follows. **And His face shone as the sun**: It became, that is to say, inexpressibly radiant; exhibiting, in superlative degree, something similar to that luminous glory which shone on, in, and from the face of Moses, as he communed with God in the mount, and even after he descended to the plain and mingled with the people. (Exod. xxxiv. 29-35; 2 Cor. iii. 7-18.) We need not speculate far in reference to the essential nature of this effulgence. We are but children; and on such subjects we are doubtless very little children. Our conceptions at the best will be mere figures, transfiguring the realities, not upwardly however, but downwardly into something that is far beneath their actual glory. Nevertheless, it is lawful for us to think our own little thoughts, if only we think them modestly, undogmatically, and provisionally. There were filaments of connection between Moses and Christ. There were filaments of connection between Moses and ordinary men. And what then if the radiance on the face of Moses, and of our Lord Himself, bore, though in transcendently augmented degree, some far off affinity to that lambent, or more settled, radiance which is occasionally discernible in the countenances of such as are in a state of high mental and moral exaltation, rapt it may be into ecstatic love, or into lofty fellowship with God? If in extraordinary mental and moral exaltation there is often a perceptible irradiation, is it wonderful that there should have been a very extraordinary effulgence beaming from the countenance of Moses, and a still more extraordinary glory radiating from the human face of our Lord? Heavenly beings are often represented in Scripture as radiant, their very vestments shining and glistening as light. (See Luke ii. 9, xxiv. 4; Matt. xxviii. 3; Acts i. 10, xii. 7; Rev. iii. 5.) Heaven itself is a place of light. (See Col. i. 12.) When it is opened toward earth, light streams out. (See Acts ix. 3, xxii. 6, xxvi. 13.) God Himself,—though of course phenomenally and figuratively,—is represented as "covering Himself with light as with a garment." (See Ps. civ. 2.) He "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." (1 Tim. vi. 15. Comp. Ps. lxxx. 1; Ezek. i. 4-14; Dan. vii. 9, 10, x. 6.) We must think of these subjects, however, only afar off. *They are distant, whether we imagine it or not, from our comprehension*. But of this we may rest assured, that whatsoever is characteristic of heavenliness, and of heavenly glory, must have been, to a transcendent degree, inherent in the personality of our Saviour. It may have been veiled while He was upon the

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias

earth. It must have been veiled. His humanity was a veil. But the very veil at times may have become incandescent or translucent. And His garments became white as the light: Not the face only, but the whole person seems to have become intensely effulgent, so that the radiance shone through the garments, and they *glistened like the snow* (Mark ix. 3), and were bright as *light*. The spectacle must have been transcendently grand. And no wonder. In the interior of Christ's being there must have been an infinite fulness of heavenliness, of all that constitutes the essential glory of heaven. It may be asked whether the transfiguration of the Saviour was entirely, or exclusively, for the sake of the disciples, to confirm their faith? We think not. Christ had ascended the mount for His own personal purposes. He had ascended "to pray." (See Luke ix. 28.) It was night. (Luke ix. 32, 37.) He had gone up, as was so often His wont, to spend the night in communion with His Father. When engaged in this communion, in the midst of the nocturnal darkness, all heaven was opened to Him. (See on Matt. iii. 16.) Heavenly beings, surrounding the throne of His Father, would be near Him to minister to Him, or to enter, if desired, into conscious fellowship with Him. Thus the scene around Him, though still connected with the earth, was more emphatically a thing of heaven than of earth. The terrestrial side of things, the shady side, was flooded, interpenetrated, and overpowered, by the grander things from the other side, the celestial side. It was as *our Lord prayed* that the transfiguration took place. (See Luke ix. 29.) Perhaps on other occasions, it may be on many, would the Saviour experience, so far as His own inner consciousness was concerned, the same nearness to and the same intercommunion with things heavenly. Perhaps too on these occasions there might be the same outraying from Himself of that heavenly glory that was in the heart of His own being. He Himself might enjoy the interpenetration and irradiation. Such seasons may have been His special *times of refreshing*, to nourish and to nerve His humanity for the peculiar trials that were involved in the work which He had undertaken to accomplish.

¶ VER. 3. And, behold, there appeared unto them—unto the disciples—Moses and Elias, talking with Him: Our Saviour may have desired communion with these spiritual chieftains. Doubtless He did. They may have desired communion with Him. Doubtless they did. They were emphatically the two representative men of the Jewish nation; a dumvirate, standing, when personally considered, on a pre-eminence unapproached by any others of the great men of the nation. Like our Saviour Himself, they had each had remarkable relations to things spiritual, which controlled in a wonderful manner their relations to things corporeal and earthly. (See on Matt. iv. 2.) They were the appropriate representatives of *the Law and the Prophets*: And as all the distinguishing peculiarities of *the Law and the Prophets* pointed, as with outstretched fingers, to the Messiah, and waited for their accomplishment in His person and in His work, it is not to be wondered at that Moses and Elijah should have had much in their hearts which they would like to say to Jesus, and that Jesus should have much in His heart which He would like to say to them. They talked together, as we learn from Luke (ix. 31), "of the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." *The decease*, that was the keystone of the arch of glory. The disciples might catch some of the words, and note that there was harmony between what the Lord had been saying to themselves (chap. xvi. 21), and what

talking with him. 4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here : if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses,

He was talking about with His celestial visitants. We need not speculate regarding the way in which the heavenly visitants appeared, or regarding the way in which they spoke, or regarding the way in which the disciples identified them. Some may have a difficulty in forming any conception at all on such subjects. With others the difficulty may be to select, from the various possibilities that suggest themselves, the likeliest probability. Much of the vision would be, doubtless, to the eyes that were behind the disciples' material eyes, to their spiritual eyes. It is probable too that the words heard would fall upon their spiritual ears, and that the identification of the visitants would arise from intuitive spiritual discernment. (Comp. 2 Kings vi. 17.) The fact that Moses, as well as Elijah, was one of the collocutors, is evidence that they who were on the other side of what we commonly call death are not unconscious and asleep. To dream, as even Neander does (*Life of Christ*, v. 10, § 185), that the visit of Moses and Elijah was not at all an objective reality, but a mere subjective vision in a dream, is to misconceive entirely the intent of the narrative, and to introduce inextricability and chaos into its exegesis. It is to postulate moreover that there is, in all circumstances, an utterly impassable gulf between the world of embodied spirits and the world of disembodied spirits, or else that the two worlds are extremely far apart ; both of which postulates are at variance with philosophy ; and at variance too with theology ; at variance also, and emphatically, with the Bible, and at variance likewise with incontestable fact.

VER. 4. But Peter answered and said to Jesus : Peter answered ; although there is no evidence that he was spoken to by his Lord. The expression is graphic, and presents Peter as characteristically taking upon himself to carry on as it were, though in a subordinate way, the colloquy in which the Lord had been engaged. The Lord, as we learn from Luke, had just finished His talk with Moses and Elijah. He had bidden them, so to speak, adieu for the present. They were departing, though perhaps still lingeringly looking on. And then, says Luke (ix. 33), *as they were in the act of departing from Him*, Peter, with his usual impulsive but honest forwardness, interposed, as taking part in the conversation. He did not realize apparently that the celestial visitants were actually leaving, or he imagined perhaps that they might be induced to remain if they were provided with suitable accommodation for the night. See the conclusion of the verse. *And said to Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here* : There is an emphasis on the *us*, the reference being, as Meyer correctly judges, to Peter himself and his two fellow disciples. "It is good that we, Thy disciples, are here." *It is good, It is beautiful (καλόν), It is delightful.* It is a high privilege which we are enjoying, to be in such company and in the midst of such glory. If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias : *If Thou wilt*, that is, If Thou pleasest, If it would be agreeable to Thee. It is the modest preamble to the petition that follows. *Let us make here three tabernacles, or tents, or booths*, viz. out of the brushwood that is at hand. Peter, in his semi-stupefied and bewildered state, realized that it was night ; and without taking time to consider the appropriateness or relevancy of his proposal, suggested that it might be desirable for his Lord, and His illustrious collocutors, to be provided with tents, into which they might retire for

and one for Elias. 5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

repose after their interview should be concluded. He spoke *unadvisedly*. He spoke, that is to say, before he took *advice* from his own judgement what he should say, or whether or not he should say anything. *He wist not what to say* (Mark ix. 6). *He knew not what he said* (Luke ix. 38). Instead of the expression, *Let us make*, there is a curious reading in three of the most ancient manuscripts, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Ephraemi, *I shall make* (*ποιήσω*, instead of *ποιήσωμεν*), as if Peter, in his forwardness, were ignoring his fellow disciples, and would take upon himself the whole labour or honour of erecting the booths. Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Alford, strange to say, accept this reading, and Meyer approves of it, although it is so weakly supported by manuscriptural authority, and is moreover intrinsically so unlikely, after the *us* of the preceding clause. It is at variance besides with the indubitable reading in Mark and Luke. And it is, in addition, a variety of reading that might most easily occur in rapid pronunciation or writing, more especially when we bear in mind that the pronunciation of the word would be according to the established accentuation of the Greeks. Yet Westcott-and-Hort follow in the wake of Lachmann and Tischendorf.

VER. 5. While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: *Them*,—not merely our Lord and Moses and Elijah, as some, such as Jansen and Meyer, suppose; nor merely, contrariwise, the three disciples, as Olearius and Bengel suppose; but the whole company. See Luke ix. 34. There is no good reason for assuming a limitation of relationship, or for imagining an exceedingly diminutive cloudlet. The cloud was the symbol of the all-embracing Divine Presence, which is for ever concealed, and yet for ever self-revealing and revealed. The cloud was *bright*; for the Presence was glorious; and there was no occasion for manifesting those darker aspects of its glory which exhibit the Divine displeasure. It was a time for the special manifestation of the brighter side of things, the Divine complacency. But *bright* though the cloud was, it was yet really *a cloud*; and thus, as it overarched and embraced them, it overshadowed them too. And, behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased: Or, more literally, *in whom I was well-pleased*, at the time namely when He said, *Here am I, send Me*, the time when He volunteered to undertake that great mediatorial work in which He was engaged. The Father's good pleasure had thenceforward rested on Him, and descended with Him through all the ages. Never was it intenser than at the moment when the words before us were uttered. They are the very words that were uttered at our Lord's baptism. But they bore to be repeated, and re-repeated. It would gladden the Saviour's heart to listen to them repeatedly; for love never wearies of love, or of the expression of love. But they were, on the present occasion, intended for the special benefit of the three representative disciples, as is evidenced by the words which follow. *Hear ye Him*: That is, *Listen to His instructions*. Accept them as ultimate. Accept them absolutely. They embody the very thoughts, desires, and determinations of the Divine Mind. They are not only true; they are emphatically *the truth*. "*Hear ye Him*:" "So that," as says Chrysostom, "although it be His determination to "be crucified, ye are not to resist Him." *Hear ye Him*: It is, says Melancthon,

pleased; hear ye him. 6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. 10 And his disciples

“an immutable injunction.” (*Conciones*, in loc.) It is therefore an injunction to us, and to all.

VER. 6. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid: For while on one side of things it is transcendently delightful to get near in consciousness to God, near and nearer still; yet, on another side, it is a matter of very dread solemnity to “sinful dust and ashes,” especially if the spirit be taken by surprise, and be convicted at the same time of having cherished unworthy thoughts and feelings.

VER. 7. And Jesus came: Or rather, *approached*; or, as Wycliffe renders it, *came nigh*. And touched them: How exquisitely human! How *touchingly* tender! How finely too, and with what admirable simplicity, does the evangelist *touch off* the scene! And said, Arise, and be not afraid: “He had compassion on their weakness,” says Euthymius Zigabenus, “and speedily “dissipates their fear.” How delightful to think that He is still coming near compassionately to all His disciples, and to all men, and in a sense touching them, and saying, *Be not afraid!*

VER. 8. And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one save Jesus only: The vision was ended; and other scenes were opening before their Lord and themselves.

VER. 9. And while they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no one, until the Son of man be risen from the dead: He *charged* them; or, as the word is generally rendered in the New Testament, He *commanded* them. He laid injunction on them. *The vision*; that is, *what you have seen, the sight, the spectacle*. It is translated *the sight* in Acts vii. 31. Wakefield translates it *sight* in the passage before us. It denotes *the thing seen, not the seeing of the thing seen*. It is, in other words, objective, not subjective, in import; though it is often used semi-subjectively. Principal Campbell’s translation is “*what ye have seen*.” Our English words *vision* and *sight* are ambiguous, and have to do duty, both objectively and subjectively, for two distinct ideas. The Greeks had the finely discriminated words *δραμα* and *δρασις*, which however they were not always careful finely to discriminate. Our Latin word *spectacle* would not be quite suitable in such a passage as this; for though exclusively objective in import, it is too apt to suggest the idea of a *show*. We need not guess dogmatically regarding the Saviour’s reasons for enjoining silence on His three disciples. Most likely He saw that their fellow disciples, both in the smaller esoteric circle and in the larger exoteric circle, were not yet prepared to put a right interpretation on the physical and moral marvels of the scene. Development goes on by stages. A man must learn to spell, before it is possible for him to read. The three chosen disciples themselves were evidently, to a large extent, bewildered; though they had got into their minds,

asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? 11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. 12 But I

by means of what they had seen and heard, a living seed of truth, that would afterwards germinate and grow and bring forth abundant fruit. It would grow, not merely into a wide branching tree, stretching itself aloft toward heaven, but by and by into a whole forest of such trees. We, in this nineteenth century, are sitting under their shade.

VER. 10. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? The reference of the *then* has been much debated among expositors; and, in seeking to ascertain it, we must bear in mind that it is only snatches of the conversation that are recorded. We may suppose that the disciples spoke somewhat as follows: *We shall do Thy will. We shall shut up within our hearts, and ponder there, what we have seen and heard. We shall tell no man. But what THEN will be the consequences to many? They will not know that Elijah has come. We indeed have seen him, and we thus know that he has come; though we feel surprised that his visit should have been so exceedingly evanescent. We expected at one time that he would appear among the people and do a great preparatory work. The words of the prophet Malachi (chap. iv. 5, 6) led us to entertain this expectation: and we do not yet fully understand them. The scribes are positive in asserting that Elijah will make his appearance among the people as the Messiah's forerunner. They hence argue that, be Thou what Thou mayest, Thou canst not be the Messiah, inasmuch as Elijah has not yet come. We know that they are wrong in this their judgement regarding Thee. Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel; Thou art the Christ. And Elijah has come. We have just seen him. But if we are not to say that we have seen him, and thus testify to the fact that he has come, will it be possible for the people to believe in Thee? We do not see clearly. We feel bewildered. Have we understood the prophet Malachi aright? Or are the scribes in error as regards their interpretation?*

VER. 11. And He answered and said to them, Elias indeed shall first come: It is uncertain whether the word *first* has not crept down from the preceding verse. It is omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and also in D, 1, 22, and 33 'the queen of the cursives.' Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort leave it out. It is a matter of no moment, so far as exegesis is concerned, whether it be retained or omitted. The verb which is translated *shall come* is present in the original, *cometh*; but yet the present tense is, in such a case as this, used with a *futurescint* signification. The Saviour reproduces, in a quotational way, the saying of the scribes who did not know that Elijah had already come—*Elijah cometh*. It is true. Our Saviour puts His imprimatur on the saying, not as expressing what was yet to happen, dating from the time when He was speaking, but as expressing, in an abstract way, the chronological antecedent of the advent of the Messiah. And shall restore all things: Both the *all things* and the *restoration* are to be viewed in relation to the necessary limitations of the nature of the case. Elijah was to put *all things* in readiness for the coming of the Messiah,—*all things*, that is to say, in the sphere referred to,—*all things* so far as needed. In putting all things thus in readiness, his work was to be a labour of *restoration*, or *restitution*, as the word is rendered in Acts iii. 21. It was not to be a *new thing* in the earth, a *new creation*. It lay with a Greater than he to create a new thing, to create new

say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. 13 Then the

heavens and a new earth. *Elijah was merely to bring back the state of things to their original condition.* He was not to set aside Judaism, and introduce Christianity. He was merely to restore Judaism to its original purity. And this he did, so far as it was possible for any man to do. The restoration was complete, so far as John's agency and influence were concerned. Judaism, as it sprang afresh from his preaching and practice, was pure and holy. And had it received its complement in the hearts and lives of the people at large, they would have been ready to be instantaneously enrolled as the heavenly subjects of the heavenly kingdom. Many of the rabbis babbled ridiculously about the restoration work of Elijah. They maintained that he was to restore to Israel *the pot of manna, the vial of holy oil, the vial of water, and the rod of Aaron!* (See Lightfoot's *Exercitations*, in loc.) It did not seem to occur to them that the restoration that was needed was especially in their own hearts and lives. They inverted their gaze, looking outward instead of inward; and looking outward, to boot, to the most insignificant of jots and tittles.

VER. 12. **But I say unto you that Elias is come already:** Or, very literally, *Elias came already.* The idea suggested by the preterite tense might be expressed thus, *The coming of Elias is already past.* It was the coming of John. John was Elias. He was the Repetition of Elias. His work was Elijah-work. His spirit was Elijah's spirit. Whether there will be another coming of Elijah, as contended for by Justin Martyr, Chrysostom, Augustin, Alford, and others, need not here be discussed. **And they knew him not:** The scribes, with all their pretended insight into things, and the Pharisees and people at large who gave themselves up to be led by the scribes, did not recognise him as the predicted Elijah. **But did to him whatever they listed;** Literally, *But did in him whatever they pleased.* Wycliffe gives the clause admirably, *But thei diden in hym what euer thingis thei wolden* (i.e. whatever things they would). The expression *whatever they listed* means simply *whatever they desired.* In some of the older versions, as Tyndale's and the Geneva, it is *whatever they lusted.* *Listed* is just another way of pronouncing *lusted.* The expression *in him*, "they did in him," is somewhat peculiar, but interesting, as revealing a certain philosophic standpoint of observation. Instead of *in him*, Mark has to *him* (chap. ix. 13). The two representations are perfectly harmonious, only exhibiting different standpoints of observation. The actions of the scribes and their followers were directed *toward John*, and reached him, or came to *him*. But they did not terminate on the superficies of John's being. They went *into him*, and took effect *within him*, in the most vital and sensitive part of his being. They terminated *in him*. The Saviour, ignoring for the moment Herodias and Herod, represents the scribes and their creatures as having been the principal actors in reference to John. For He knew well that, bitter as was the enmity of Herodias, and ruthless as was the tyranny of Herod, yet neither of them could have acted *in John* as they did, had they not possessed the moral support of the theological chieftains of the people. "*They did in him whatever they pleased.*" Herod was but the royal cat's-paw of *their* spiritual spite and hate. ✕ So also is the Son of man about to suffer by them: They know not Him, even as they knew not John; and what they do know of Him they hate, for it seems to run counter to their popular influence and secular interests. Thus our Saviour

disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. 16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. 17 Then Jesus answered and said, O

moved on with the clear foresight of the tragical scenes that were before Him, and tracing at the same time, with the mastery of a faultless philosophy, every act that was about to eventuate, and however far it might be removed from its fontal source, to the actual and responsible agents, the choice of whose wills set the fatal mechanism in motion. It was the scribes and their creatures who were about to imbrue their hands in His blood; not merely, or chiefly, the soldiers on the one hand or Pontius Pilate on the other.

VER. 13. Then understood the disciples that He spake to them of John the Baptist: They got a glimpse of the true state of the case. See chap. xi. 14.

VER. 14. And when they were come to the crowd, there approached Him a man, kneeling to Him: For, as Matthew Henry here notes, "Sense of misery will bring people to their knees." And saying: These words, according to Robert Stephens's standard division, belong to the next verse. They are in their right position in all Beza's Testaments, and in the Geneva version, and the Rheims. It would seem that the authors of our Authorized version had been using, at the time, some edition in which the text ran on continuously, with the notation of the verses in the margin. See for instance the Plantin edition of 1591; and compare the first Elzevir edition of 1624.

VER. 15. Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic: The word *lunatic*, which has etymologically a *lunar* element in its import, would be used, of course, popularly not scientifically. The child seems to have been subject to epilepsy; and aggravations of its disorder were periodical, in such a way and to such an extent as to suggest some mysterious relationship to the periodicity and influence of the moon. See chap. iv. 24. And sore vexed: An antique expression, which has come down from Tyndale's version. The original phrase, very literally rendered, would simply be, *and suffers badly*. For ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water: His sickness was *the falling sickness*; and his case was altogether very pitiable.

VER. 16. And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they were not able to heal him: They had received power indeed to *cast out demons* (chap. x. 8). But the power was not absolute. It could not be exerted in all possible circumstances. Its exercise was conditioned. The conditions were partly subjective or inward, and partly objective or outward. The subjective conditions had been wanting in the case before us. See ver. 20.

VER. 17. But Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation! Some suppose that in these words the Saviour launched a thunderbolt of rebuke at the head of the scribes and Pharisees who were present. See Mark ix. 14. Calvin was of this opinion, and Whitby, and Wolf; Macknight also. Others, such as Chrysostom, Theophylact, Maldonato, Grotius, suppose that it was intended, first and foremost, for the head of the child's father, and then for his friends and the

faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with

general crowd. They feel certain that, at all events, there was no reference to the baffled disciples. Hammond on the other hand, and Dr. Samuel Clarke, as also Fritzsche, Meyer, Arnoldi, suppose that it was exclusively at the disciples that the bolt was aimed; a most unlikely supposition, more especially when we take the large word *generation* into account. It is far more likely that the Saviour's exclamation had a much wider reference; a reference that embraced the disciples assuredly; glancing indeed first of all on them; but thence passing on to the whole crowd, and far beyond. The crowd, we conceive, were regarded by our Saviour as but part and parcel, and a fair representation, of the men of the *generation* at large, the generation of the Jewish people *en masse*. It was in reference to that generation, as a generation, that our Saviour's exclamation was uttered. This general reference of the exclamation, more or less correctly apprehended, has commended itself to Ewald (*Life of Christ*, chap. xxix.), and Archbishop Trench (*Miracles*, § 27), as also to Doddridge, and to Bengel before Doddridge, and to Lightfoot before Bengel, and to Cameron before Lightfoot (*Myrothecium*, in loc.), and, before them all, to Zuingli. Our Saviour having His spirit occupied with far-reaching realities, and the general interests of society in relation to the kingdom of heaven, was grieved at heart when the sadly defective spiritual state of almost all was, in a special manner, flashed in upon His view in connection with the appeal of the afflicted child's father. Abstracting His thoughts and feelings, to a large extent, from the mere individuals who were before Him, He exclaimed *O faithless and perverse generation!* *Faithless*, that is, *unbelieving*, or as Wycliffe gives it, *unbeleeful* (unbelief-ful). Wycliffe adds explanatorily, *or out of the feith*. Such is the real import of the word translated *faithless*. See John xx. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 6, vii. 12-14, xiv. 23; 2 Cor. vi. 14; 1 Tim. v. 8. Comp. also Matt. xiii. 58; Mark vi. 6, ix. 24; 1 Tim. i. 13. Indeed the primary meaning of the English word *faithless* is *unbelieving*. In olden times a man without *faith*, or without *belief in the gospel*, was regarded as a man who was not to be trusted. He was *faithless*, the opposite of *faithful* or *full-of-faith*. Our Saviour adds the word *perverse*. Wycliffe translates it *weirward* (wayward); Tyndale, *croked* (crooked). *Perverse* is the Vulgate translation. The word is very graphic in the original, meaning *twisted throughout*, *contorted*, *perverted*. The men of that generation were, in almost every element of moral life, thoroughly warped. Everything of moment in their spiritual state was turned aside from what was right. They did not think aright. They did not feel aright. They did not act aright. All that was of intrinsic moment within them was *perverted*. Hence the universal stint of blessings enjoyed by them, compared with what might have been. The privileges of the kingdom of heaven were enjoyed by but a very few; and even of these few the greater number were so stinted in faith, and so twisted in the character that grows out of faith, and thus so hampered and contracted in their moral recipiency, that the very privileges of which they were heirs had to be doled out to them in fractions, and morsels, and mere earnestings of what was to come. Hence, on the other hand, the inability of the disciples to cure the child. And hence also, on the other, the unfitness of the child's father, and of multitudes and millions of others who were all in great need of heavenly blessings, to receive the very blessings which they so much needed. *How long shall I be with you? How long? Literally, Till when?* It is, like the preceding exclamation, an expression of anguish rather than of anger. The prospect of improvement among men, in

you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. 18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto

the heavenly direction, was so exceedingly remote as to appear to be almost dreary and discouraging. It was hence, so to speak, disheartening to labour on amid such extremely stunted results. If improvement was to proceed at that slow rate, not years only, but generations, and centuries, and millenniums, would be needed ere the masses of men could be won into the kingdom of heaven. How long shall I bear with you? How long shall I endure you? That is, *How long will you continue in such a state as to try, and tax, to the utmost, the patience of My heart?* Bring him hither to Me: The verb is in the plural. *Bring ye him hither.* The Saviour addresses, not the father exclusively, but the company in general. "Bring ye him to Me." How vivid the Saviour's consciousness of unlimited power! He feared no baffling. That consciousness must have been rooted in inward almightiness.

VER. 18. And Jesus chid the demon, and it went out from him: Very literally the expression runs thus, *And Jesus chid it, and the demon went out from him.* The pronoun *it* might be translated *him*, and referred, not to the demon, but to the demoniac. Winer contends for this. (*Gram.* iii. 21, § 3.) And De Wette approves, and also Vater. And the English Revisionists in like manner. But it is much more probable that it has a proleptic or anticipative reference to the succeeding word *demon*, which had already floated in before the thought of the evangelist, but in connection with its departure from the child. Beza introduced the transposition of the pronoun and the noun into the 1565 edition of his translation, and retained it in all the subsequent editions. As to the word *chid* or *rebuked*, see on chap. xvi. 22. There was indignation in the heart of our Lord in reference to the evil spirit. And the boy was cured from that very hour: Not only *in that hour*, but *from that hour henceforward*. The cure was permanent. See Mark ix. 25.

VER. 19. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Wherefore were we unable to cast it out? "Ministers," says Mathew Henry, "who are to deal for Christ in public, have need to keep up a private communion with Him, that they may in secret inquire into the cause of their weakness and straitness in their public performances."

VER. 20. And He said to them, Because of your unbelief: Instead of *unbelief*, a considerable proportion of the most ancient authorities read *littleness of faith* (*ἀλιγοπιστίαν*). This is the reading of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and of the cursives which are numbered 1, 13, 22, 33 'the queen of the cursives,' 124, 346. It is also the reading of Cureton's Syriac, and of the Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. It is found too in Origen, Chrysostom, and Hilary. And it has hence been introduced into the text by Lachmann, Tregelles, and Tischendorf in his eighth edition, and by Alford too in his fifth, and by Westcott-and-Hort. It looks like an explanatory reading, and is on this account liable to suspicion. But then, on the other hand, it is in harmony with our Saviour's use and wont in addressing reprovably His disciples. See chap. viii. 26, xiv. 31, xvi. 8. And yet this very harmony seems to suggest a hand that

you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

busied itself in harmonizing. While again, and on the other side of the question, as Tischendorf observes, the exclamation in ver. 17 (*unbelieving*), and the illustration in the remainder of this verse (*faith as a grain of mustard seed*), seem to suggest so emphatically the idea of *unbelief* rather than that of *littleness of belief*, that one would wonder at a copyist replacing *unbelief* with *littleness-of-belief*. True. But then it would be still more wonderful that, in any marginal explanation, *unbelief* should be exegetically set over against the textual *littleness-of-belief*; while it was the most natural thing in the world to give exegetically, in the margin, *littleness-of-belief* as the doctrinal explanation of the textual word *unbelief*,—indicating that the *unbelief* attributed by our Lord to His disciples was not to be understood absolutely, but only comparatively. “Unbelief” *must have been the original reading*. The old marginal explanation, however, does bring out the Saviour’s idea. He did not mean to say that His disciples were *absolutely unbelieving*. They were not. They had *belief*. But there was also much remaining *unbelief*. The new man of belief had by no means expelled the old man of unbelief. There was, as it were, the company of two armies within them. There was conflict. And now it was *faith*, and anon it was *unbelief*, that prevailed. In the personal absence of their Lord, and more especially when they took into account the dark sayings which He had uttered in reference to certain tragical scenes that were before Him, their faith had sadly wavered. It had difficulty in maintaining its ground in the conflict. For verily I say to you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain,—pointing up no doubt to the lofty mountain on which He had been transfigured,—Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove: It is as if the Saviour had said,—*Surely you might understand well by this time that it is in Me, and in My Father above Me, that the real power is, which is to work those miracles that are the fitting authentications of My mission and of the advent of the kingdom of heaven. It is not in you. Ye are but the willing organs and instruments which My Father and I are to wield. And hence it is that you will be powerful and all-prevailing only when your moral connection with Me and My Father, your union with Me and My Father in mind and heart and will, is full and lively and strong. Faith in Me is the link of that union. As yet you know little of Me. You have only been able to catch glimpses of infinite fulness. You see the Son of man; you know little of the Son of God. Your faith hence must be, as yet, a very little thing, scarce so large as a grain of mustard seed. But little though it must be, it will, if real and in real exercise, be abundantly sufficient to accomplish all the wonderful works that will be requisite at the hands of My apostolical agents. If it be as a grain of mustard seed, it will suffice to remove mountains.* In the case, not only of apostles, but of all Christians in all ages, faith, when real and in real exercise, will suffice to accomplish all desirable moral miracles. Mountains of obstructions will be removed, mountains of prejudices, mountains of sins. As to the relative littleness of the mustard seed, see chap. xiii. 31. It is exclusively because of its littleness, and not at all because of its “vivacity and efficacy,” as Augustin, Melancthon, Münster, and others suppose, that it is here referred to. And nothing shall be impossible to you: *Nothing*, which it would be really desirable for you to do. There is a real almightiness above you; and if you are linked on to it by faith, it will work in you, and through you. “Through Christ which

21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: 23 and they shall kill him, and the third day he

strengtheneth us, we can do *all things*," all things that we need to do, all things that we should do. (Phil. iv. 13.)

VER. 21. But this kind goeth not out: That is, *This kind* of demons, of which we have had a specimen in the case that has just been before us; a kind that are peculiarly subtle, malicious, and powerful. "The phrase marks," says Trench, "that there are orders of evil spirits; that, as there is a hierarchy of heaven, so is there an inverted hierarchy of hell." Comp. chap. xii. 45. **Except by prayer and fasting:** Literally, *Except in prayer and fasting*, that is, *Except in an element of prayer and fasting*. True faith always, indeed, expresses itself in prayer, and manifests itself in self denial. But prayer and self denial are susceptible of a great variety of degrees. And the faith that would be victorious in a contest with the subtlest and most powerful of demonic agencies would need to give itself much both to prayer and to corporeal self denial. It would need to be much habituated to the double exercise of opening itself upwardly, in order to receive more and more from God, and of closing itself downwardly, in order to shut out more and more the witcheries of the god of this world. Ewald takes a strange view of this verse, turning it indeed upside down. He supposes that the expression *this kind* refers, not to such demons as the disciples had just had experience of, but to the surrounding *race* of men, with a prominent reference to the Pharisees. He imagines that the Saviour says that these men, neglecting faith, *went to work in no other way than by prayer and fasting*, and vainly thought that they were thus availing themselves of all the Divine means of spiritual strength. It is an untenable exposition, as is evident from Mark ix. 29, as well as for many other reasons. In his eighth edition of the New Testament text Tischendorf has omitted the 21st verse altogether, imagining that it has crept in from Mark ix. 29. And indeed it is not found in the original Sinaitic text, or in the Vatican manuscript, or in No. 33 'the queen of the cursives.' It is wanting too in some of the oldest manuscripts of the old Latin translation, as also in Cureton's Syriac version, and the Jerusalem Syriac, etc. We could suppose that Tischendorf is right. The 20th verse is complete, and needs no appendix of reply. Westcott-and-Hort omit the verse. The matter is not of doctrinal or exegetical moment.

VER. 22. But while they were sojourning in Galilee: Viz. on their return from the northern parts about Cæsarea Philippi. See chap. xvi. 13. Comp. also Acts v. 22, xv. 16. **Jesus said to them, The Son of man is about to be delivered up into men's hands:** He was constantly walking in the shadow of the coming event; and He knew that it was of the utmost moment to prepare, as far as possible, the minds of His disciples for the shock which was inevitable. *Into men's hands:* The expression is indefinite. *Men's.* The kind of men are not specified. But to our Saviour's own mind there must have been the realization of a melancholy antithesis. *He was Divine, and had come to bring back humanity to Divinity.* And yet, notwithstanding His Divinity and His Divine mission, He was about to be ruthlessly delivered up, as if He had been an evil doer, *into men's hands.*

VER. 23. And they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised up.

shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not

And they were exceedingly sorry : Their minds fastened on the dark side of the coming event, *they shall kill Him* ; not on the bright side beyond, *He shall be raised up*. A mist of mystery was hanging over that bright side, which their eyes did not penetrate. And yet, if their tears had but permitted them to look more steadfastly, they might have seen that even the dark side was strangely and sublimely illumined by the effulgence of that glory that was beyond. Death in one way or another was needed on the part of our incarnated Saviour. Some of the grandest ends in moral government would be subserved by it.

VER. 24. But when they were come to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple dues : For the expression has no reference to any civil tax or foreign impost. Münster, Calvin, and Beza were wrong in supposing that it was a Roman tax that was meant. Origen and Jerome had committed the same mistake. Very literally rendered, the phrase is, *they that receive the didrachms*. Every male Israelite, of good character, was expected to pay annually "to God," as Josephus expresses it (*Ant.* xviii. 9 : 1), for the behoof of His temple service, a *half shekel* or *didrachm*. This word *didrachm* (not *didrachma*, as in the margin of our Bibles) was a Greek word meaning *double-drachm*, or a *two-drachm piece*, somewhat corresponding to our *florin* or *two-shilling piece*. *Didrachma* is the plural of the word, and means *didrachms*, or *half shekels*. In the olden times of the Jewish commonwealth it was enjoined that when the census of the children of Israel was taken, every male person, above twenty years of age, should give half a shekel as an *offering unto the Lord*, a kind of *ransom for his soul*, to be devoted 'to the service of the tabernacle.' The rich were not to give more ; the poor were not to give less. The value of the soul of each was equal (*Exod.* xxx. 11-16). It was thus to be a kind of *capitation tax*. But it was not an annual *duty* or *due*. It was to be levied only when the census was taken. (See Michaelis's *Mosaïches Recht*, § 173.) In the course of time, however, it was deemed desirable that it should be levied annually. Such was the custom that prevailed in our Saviour's days, and that continued till the destruction of Jerusalem. After that, as Josephus informs us, Vespasian ordered that the *didrachm*, "which used to be paid to the temple at Jerusalem," should be paid annually to the Capitol in Rome. But though an annual contribution in the days of our Lord, it was really an *offering* or *gift*, a *voluntary assessment*, not a compulsory impost. No civil pains or penalties were incurred by such as declined to make the contribution. It was conscience money, worship money. But just because it was such, and hence paid as it were 'to God,' it was in general paid with religious faithfulness and regularity. The Pharisees, in particular, seem to have been most punctilious in the matter. The collectors of the temple dues came to Peter, and said, *Doth not your Master pay didrachms ? that is, pay temple dues ? Is it not His practice to pay temple dues ?* We know not why the collectors went to Peter, instead of going directly to our Lord. Perhaps Peter was more accessible at the time, and our Lord may have been living with him in his house ; very likely He was. Or perhaps an undefined feeling of awe restrained the collectors. Our Lord was a Mystery to them. They could not understand Him. They could not measure Him by ordinary standards. On many points, both of doctrine and of practice, He had set at nought the teachings and the customs of the Pharisees. Would He have pe-

your master pay tribute? 25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

cular notions about temple dues too? They might imagine that possibly He had, more especially as there had been many discussions between the Sadducees and Pharisees regarding the obligation to pay these annual dues. *Your master*: Literally, *your teacher*, *your rabbi*.

VER. 25. He saith, Yes: It would appear that it was known to Peter that on former occasions his Lord had paid the temple dues. And hence there was nothing wrong in Peter's answer, though he has been much blamed for it by some of the commentators. "Peter," say Webster and Wilkinson, "made this reply from a hasty zeal for his Master's honour." "Certainly he was 'over hasty,'" says Archbishop Trench. There would have been a little more reason for blaming the apostle, if his answer had pointed exclusively to the future, and had been what Calvin represents it, *He will pay (solvet: il payera)*. And when he came into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying: *Prevented* him, that is, *anticipated* him. Such is the meaning both of the Greek and of the English verb. Jesus did not wait till Peter had told Him of the application of the collectors. He needed not that Peter should tell Him. Nothing that had transpired was hidden from His cognisance. And hence, as Wycliffe translates the phrase, *Jhesus came bifore hym*, and entered at once into the merits of the case. Tyndale's version is, *Jesus spake fyrst to him*. The English word *prevent* now means to *hinder*. But originally it just meant to *come before*, in order to hinder it might be, or in order to assist, or for some other purpose. The word occurs once more, and only once, in the New Testament; and there too it has its original meaning. See 1 Thess. iv. 15. It occurs frequently, with the same signification, in the Old Testament, as in Psalm cxix. 147, "I *prevented* the dawning of the morning, and cried." The adjective *prevenient* still retains its primary import. Our Lord was, as it were, *prevenient* with Peter, and said, **What thinkest thou, Simon? He familiarly used the familiar name of the apostle.** I wish to put a case to you, Simon. **The kings of the earth, from whom do they receive custom or tribute?** The word here rendered *tribute* is quite different from the term employed in the preceding verse, and so rendered by King James's translators. It is the Latin word *census*, and here denotes either *poll* or *property* tax. It is with sufficient propriety rendered *tribute*, which is Wycliffe's word; but he adds alternatively, *or rent*. Tyndale renders it *poll money*. In Cranmer's Bible it is rendered *toll*. The Rheims version simply Anglicises the Latin term, *cense*. The other term, here employed by our Saviour, is a curious word in Greek, but is with sufficient propriety rendered *custom*, though in such a case the word *custom* is not to be distinguished of course, as in modern English, from *excise*. It denoted *all taxes levied on commodities*, whether imported or exported, or neither exported nor imported. It has a derivate which occurs frequently in the New Testament, the word that is rendered *publicans*, that is, *tax gatherers*. **From their sons or from strangers?** The word *strangers* is far from being felicitous in this connection. It was Tyndale's word, and kept its place in the succeeding versions. Wycliffe uses a corresponding term, but now at least, still more infelicitous, *alyenys* (aliens). He added however, alternatively and explanatorily, *or other mennys sonis* (other men's sons), a very good

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. 27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and

explanation, if accepted freely. We say 'freely,' for there is nothing in the original to suggest the idea of *sons*. The word is rendered *other men* in 2 Cor. x. 15, 1 Tim. v. 22; and such would be an unexceptionable rendering here also, *From their sons, or from other men*; or, as Hammond gives it in his paraphrase, *from other folks*; or simply, as Principal Campbell gives it, *from others*. The word denotes, in such a connection as this, not such *strangers* as are *foreigners*, but such individuals as belong to other families, whether or not they be really strangers to the royal family.

VER. 26. And when he said, *From strangers*, Jesus said to him, *Therefore the sons are free*: It follows therefore that the sons are free from obligation to contribute. They are *exempted*, as Principal Campbell freely renders the word. Such is the general principle. Our Saviour leaves Peter to make the particular application; which is obvious enough, and of deep doctrinal significance. Jesus was a King's Son. He was the Son of the King of heaven. He was the Son of God. Peter himself had but recently declared it, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God* (chap. xvi. 16). And hence, since the *didrachms*, or *temple dues*, were an offering, or contribution, or assessment, *paid to God*, the Son of God should not be held liable to contribute. *Our Saviour thus claims to be the Prince-royal of the universe*. The temple was His Father's house on earth. It could not be that His Father would wish Him to be assessed. Such is the Saviour's reasoning. It is missed entirely by all such as imagine that the *didrachms* referred to were a civil tax going to the Roman emperor. It is missed also by all such as do not recognise that the temple in Jerusalem was one of the palaces of the King of heaven. It is missed likewise by all such as imagine that Peter and the other apostles, and the other Jewish Christians too, and even all Christians—to all of whom, in a sense, the designation *sons of God* belongs—are, as really as Himself, included by Jesus in His logical conclusion. The inclusion of some or all of these Christian connections of Christ is contended for by Paulus (*Commentar. in loc.*), Ewald (*Life of Christ, in loc.*), Lange (*Commentary, in loc.*), Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis, ii. 1: 77*), and others; but on mistaken grounds. The plural word *sons* occurs in the statement of the general principle from which our Lord leaves Peter to deduce the particular application intended.

VER. 27. But that we may not cause them to stumble: Or, as Wycliffe gives it, *that we sclaudre nat hem*, that is, that we scandalize them not. See, on the word, chap. xi. 6, xiii. 21, 57, xv. 12. The Saviour was anxious not to put a stumbling block in the way of the collectors, leading them to cherish erroneous and dishonouring views regarding His real character; to think perhaps that He was opposed to the temple service, or that He was churlish in His disposition; or even that in His heart, the true state of which is often revealed by money transactions, He was irreverent toward God. The Saviour associates Peter with Himself, saying *we*. He assumes that Peter, after seeing the real state of the case, would be prepared to defend, as legitimate and right, his Lord's view, and consequently his Lord's "freedom." He would in such a matter be forward to share with his Lord any moral responsibilities that might be incurred. And hence he too, as well as his Lord, would have to do with the scandalizing of the collectors. Go to the sea: The adjoining sea of Galilee, or

take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

lake of Tiberias, on the margin of which Capernaum was situated. See on chap. iv. 18. **And cast an hook:** Or, as anglers might now say, *throw a line*. This is the only place in the New Testament in which a fish hook, or *angle*, and fishing with a fish hook, are referred to. In all other places net fishing only is spoken of. **And take up the fish that first cometh up:** Or, as anglers still speak, *that first rises* (viz. from the depths below). Our Lord could look into all that was going on in these depths. He could too control the movements of all the animated creatures that were there. Indeed, without Him they could not move at all. They could neither have had, nor have held, their being. **And when thou hast opened his mouth—its' mouth** (see on chap. v. 13) —**thou shalt find a stater**, a Greek silver coin, of the value of two *didrachms*, or a *Jewish shekel*. It was thus exactly the double of what was needed for payment of the temple dues on the part of our Lord. **That take, and give to them for Me and thee:** The *for* is a peculiar word in the original (*dvri*). It may mean, *over against*. *Give the stater to the collectors, to be set, in their books, over against Me and thee*. This makes good sense; only there is nothing in the original corresponding to the phrase *to be set*. And hence it is likely, as many modern expositors, such as Meyer, Trench, and Alford maintain, that the preposition is to be interpreted as meaning *in place of*. (See Matt. ii. 22, v. 38, xx. 28; Luke xi. 11; Rom. xii. 17; etc.) If so, it is probably used with allusion to the original design of the contribution, as explained in Exodus xxx. 12-16. The contribution was "atonement money," "an offering unto the Lord, to make atonement for the soul," "a ransom for the soul unto the Lord." The sum was small indeed; but it was none the less significant as a recognition of the *suzeraineté* or lordship of Jehovah. It reminded the giver that the soul, the life, had not only belonged to God originally, and still belonged to Him, but had been forfeited too, and was retained and enjoyed by the possessor only as a matter of grace. It was held in *fief*. This was true of Peter. It is true of all men everywhere. And as the Saviour had come into the sinner's room, and had undertaken the sinner's liabilities, there was a sublime sense in which it was true of Him too. His human life was His Father's, and might be recalled at the pleasure of His Father. *It was forfeited because of our sins*.—Why did our Lord provide His temple dues in a miraculous way? We need not anxiously guess. But we need not gratuitously assume absolute poverty at that particular time. May He not have desired to reimpress upon the mind of Peter that He was *the Son of the King*, and that, as such, He had the fulness of the earth, the fulness of the King's treasury, at His command? Why did He provide Peter's temple dues as well as His own? Again we need not anxiously guess. And again we need not gratuitously assume the absolute poverty of Peter. May not the Lord have wished, in view of coming wants, to impress upon His disciple's mind that all his necessities, so long as he faithfully walked in the way of his duty as a true disciple and servant, would be bountifully supplied? Need we refute Paulus's grotesque parody of interpretation on the words, *when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a stater*? He thinks that it means, *when thou hast opened its mouth, and hast thus taken out the hook, thou shalt then sell the fish and get for it a stater!* The idea, forged with such painful ingenuity in order to get quit of the higher idea of miracle, is almost a

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2 And Jesus

miracle of pitiful and petty paltering with things grave and solemn. A man incomparably greater in soul than Paulus, though incomparably less in learning, Jonathan Edwards, draws a most grotesque inference from this incident. He says that it "signifies that ministers of the gospel should receive of the temporal things of those that they preach the gospel to, whose souls they catch for Christ; for they are the fish of which gospel ministers are the fishers." (*Notes on the Bible*, in loc.) It lies on the line of these grotesque ideas to refer to the humorous mediæval mythology connected with this miracle. "A popular idea," says Moule, in his *Heraldry of Fish*, "assigns the dark marks on the shoulders of the haddock to the impression left by St. Peter with his finger and thumb, when he took the tribute money out of the fish's mouth at Capernaum; but the haddock certainly does not now exist in the seas of the country where the miracle was performed. The dory, called St. Peter's fish in several countries of Europe, contests with the haddock the honour of bearing the marks of the apostle's fingers, an impression transmitted to posterity as a perpetual memorial of the miracle. The name of the dory is hence asserted to be derived from the French *adoré, worshipped*." (See Trench's *Miracles*, § 28.) Absurd as this is, it is not, by the least hairbreadth of degree, more absurd than the other absurdities referred to. It only goes outward into fun, while the idea of Edwards goes upward into piety, and the idea of Paulus goes downward into profanity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VER. 1. At the same time: An inexact translation of the original expression. Wycliffe gives it literally and correctly, *In that hour*. There is no reason why we should suppose that the specification is too precise. The disciples approached Jesus, saying, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? The *then* is omitted in our Authorized version, as in all the preceding English versions. But its presence is not without significance. It indicates that there had been some previous ventilation on the subject. We know from Mark ix. 33 that there had. Thus Matthew's "then," abrupt and apparently unconnected with what goes before, and indeed really unconnected with what goes topically before, is proof, in the first place, that his *Memorials of our Lord's Life* are mere Memorials, consisting, to a large extent, of delightfully inartificial snatches and sketches of biography and colloquy. It is also, in the second place, beautiful incidental evidence of the harmony of these *Memorials* with the Memorials of the other evangelists. Note the verb *is*, "who is greatest?" It does not mean "who is at present greatest?" The time element is in abeyance; and the verb is, in the main, intended to be simply the *copula of existence*, connecting the subject and predicate of the proposition. If the time element had been emphatically before the evangelist's mind, he would probably have used an expression corresponding to Luke's, "who should be greatest" (ix. 46). He would have said, Who shall be greatest, or, Who is to be greatest when the long expected kingdom is set up? Who is to be the king's Prime Minister? The adjective translated *greatest* is only *greater* in the original. But it idiomatically means *greatest*; yet greatest, not so much in the sense of occupying the summit of a

called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom

series of gradations, but rather in the sense of being *greater than all the rest*. It does not suggest, though it does not deny, a gradation or hierarchy of honours.

VER. 2. And He called to Him a little child, and set him in the midst of them: This little child, according to Nicephorus and Symeon Metaphrastes, was the far famed Ignatius, who subsequently became bishop of Antioch, and was martyred at Rome in A. D. 107. But the tradition has no real pillar of history on which to rest. The very act of setting the little child in the midst of the disciples was a parable to the eye, a silent kind of eloquence, that was eminently fitted to abash and instruct them. "The child," says Chrysostom, "I suppose to have been a very young child. For such a little child is completely free from folly and the mania for glory, and from envy, and contentiousness, and all such "passions." Such a child would be characterized by a "sweet simplicity" of humility.

VER. 3. And said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye turn—from that spirit of personal ambition—and become as the little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven: The faithfulness of the Great Master to His disciples is noticeable. He assures them that genuine humility is indispensable as ethical meetness for the employments and enjoyments of the kingdom of heaven. Hence, to get far up in that kingdom, it would be necessary to go far down in self abnegation and humility. To *ascend* far, it would be needful to *descend* proportionally far.

VER. 4. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven: *Therefore*, since it is the case that admission into the kingdom of heaven is conditioned, so far as ethical meetness is concerned, on childlike humility of spirit. *Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child is humble*; that is, whosoever shall be, by act of free will, entirely humble in spirit. (Read *ταπεινώσει*, not *ταπεινώσῃ*). The little child, as Laurentius Valla remarks, does not humble himself, but is humble. The man however has to humble himself. And whosoever humbles himself so far as to be entirely humble, like a little child, *the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven*: He is greater than all those who are only partially humble, whatever be their talents or terrestrial rank. He verifies the Christian paradox, and *descends upward*. It is the abnegation, and not the exaltation, of self, that is the measure of elevation in the kingdom of heaven. "True greatness of ministers," says David Dickson, in his own peculiar Doric, "stands not in being "one over another in majority of power, but in humility and farnesse from "seeking a prelacy or prehemence over their brethren."

VER. 5. And whose shall receive one such little child: The Saviour has answered the question proposed to Him in verse 1; and has answered it in such a way as to put the real moral primacy within the reach of each. He now takes up another thread of thought, that has an intimate and interesting connection with what He had been saying. Whosoever appreciates childlike lowliness, *when he meets it in others*, appreciates Christianity and Christ.

of heaven. 5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were

Whosoever shall receive—into his home and into his heart—*one such little child*; even *one such, whether literally or only morally a little child*. Our Saviour had reference, we doubt not, to both phases of childhood. That He refers to literal childhood may be inferred from Luke ix. 48; and so Bengel, De Wette, Arnoldi. But such a reference, though real, would be only bridging the way for His far more important reference to moral or spiritual childhood. See the next versæ. Let it not seem strange that the two references should be blended. There is a point at which the realities referred to coalesce, a point at which the literal child is as truly dear to the heart of God as the spiritual child, and dear because of the ingenuous lowliness and moral loveliness of childhood. In *My name*: Literally, *Upon My name*, upon the ground or footing of My name; that is, in consideration of Me, out of regard or respect for Me. The *name of Christ* would be nothing to us apart from Christ Himself. *But, contrariwise, Christ Himself would be next to nothing to us apart from His name*. His name is the distinctive shaping that our thought takes to itself, when we differentiate Him in our minds from all other objects of thought. If we did not name Him to ourselves in some way or other, we could never know Him. To receive a child then, literal or spiritual, *in Christ's name*, is to receive him *for Christ's sake*. He, says our Saviour, who thus receives a little child, *receives Me*: he welcomes Me. His act comes over, morally, to Me, and terminates on Me. See chap. xxv. 40.

VER. 6. But whoso shall cause one of these little ones who believe on Me to stumble: Or, *to be morally insnared*. For the meaning of the word, see chaps. v. 29, 30, xi. 6, xiii. 21, xvii. 27. *Whosoever shall cause to err, in thought or in conduct, one of these little ones who believe on Me*. The Saviour is now looking at another aspect of childhood,—its simplicity. In consequence of this simplicity, many who believe in Him are liable to be imposed upon. Having no artifice in themselves, they are unsuspecting in reference to others. They readily confide. But for this very reason they are in danger of being led astray by designing individuals. *Who believe in Me*: Literally, *who believe unto or into Me*, that is, whose believing comes out *unto* Me as its object, and penetrates *into* Me, taking hold of what I really am in the interior of My being, taking hold of Me as their Lord, and their God, and their Saviour. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck: Literally, *It is advantageous to him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck*; very literally, *in order that (iva) a great millstone, etc.* There is an awful and august irony in the literal expression. It is assumed that he who leads astray one of Christ's little ones had an end in view. He contemplated some advantage or other. *Let it be so!* says our Saviour. *Advantage! Let him have the paltry advantage which he seeks. It is an advantage with a tremendous disadvantage coming behind. The Spiritual Wickedness which is impelling him to seek the imagined advantage has a terrific aim beyond. And thus, poor infatuated creature, he is advantaged,—is he? If he be, it is in order that a millstone may be hanged about his neck!* Such is the graphic force of the Saviour's idea, when His expression is resolved into its constituent elements. But the idea itself is admirably expressed in the freeness of our Authorized

hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs

version. *A millstone*: In the Saviour's expression there is an adjective, a *large millstone*. But the word for *large* is peculiar and graphic (*δυσκός*). It literally means *belonging to a donkey*. The Saviour refers to a millstone much larger than such as were moved by the hand in the oriental *querns*. He refers to such a stone as asses were employed to turn, a *donkey-stone*. Hence Wycliffe renders the expression before us, a *myln stoon of assis*. Trapp supposes that the reference is to *the nether millstone*. Erasmus leaned, though hesitatingly, in the same direction. Principal Campbell, on the other hand, translates the expression *an upper millstone*, and says that Phavorinus thus interprets it. But Phavorinus only says that the word *ass* was (in certain circumstances) a name for *the upper millstone*. The name was given, because in the larger mills the ass did the work of grinding, by turning the upper stone. It ought to be undoubted that the reference before us is to the perforated upper stone. **And that he were drowned in the depth of the sea**: Or, *and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea*. The word translated *drowned* means *ingulphed*. It is somewhat uncertain whether the primary reference of the word be to the man, or, as Wakefield and Sharpe suppose, to the millstone with the man attached. On the whole it seems better to regard the millstone as appended to the doomed man, than to represent the man as appended to the stone as his doom. Either representation is, as it were, sensational. But the Saviour was desirous of giving an intensely impressive conception of the criminality of such as take advantage of the simplicity that is characteristic of the little ones in the heavenly family.

VER. 7. Woe to the world! It is not the language of denunciation, but of lamentation. The Saviour is not here inculcating *the world*, but bewailing it. He looks through many ages; and, as He looks, He sees all along the vista, and stretching far and wide on the right hand and on the left, *the greatest conceivable damage inflicted on the world by the unfaithfulness of the church*. He mourns over what He sees. He mourns for the world, for the world at large; for He loved the world. The interjection translated *woe* is rendered *alas* in Rev. xviii. 10, 16, 18. **Because of offences, or insurrements**; Literally, *From the scandals*, that is, in substance of meaning, *from the stumbling-blocks*. Compare chap. xvi. 23, and also xiii. 41. "The scandals," says Chrysostom, "are the hindrances in the right way." The Saviour, as He looks through the ages, sees multitudes arrested by these 'hindrances,' and stumbling, and falling. They are spiritually scandalized and *insnared*. The word *scandal* primarily means *a trap-stick, or that in a trap which springs when struck, and insnares the animal that strikes it*. Scandalized men may be, and are, in danger of running their head into a-noose-of-a-notion that Christianity is a formality, and need not be attended to, or else that they themselves may be Christian sufficiently by attending to some religious technicalities. **For it must needs be that the insurrements come**: *The insurrements or scandals*, namely, that were foreseen by the Saviour. Note the *for*. It is as if the Saviour had said, *I speak of the scandals as about to be; I speak of the damage they will do; for it must needs be that the scandals come*. Alas, they are inevitable. *It must needs be*: Or, *There is a necessity*. The necessity, of course, is not absolute; otherwise it would be insuperable; and the scandals would be ultimately

be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet

Divine, and therefore not to be deplored. They would be really good. Whatsoever is absolutely necessary is resolvable either into Divine essence or into Divine will. No one consequently would be to blame. But the necessity referred to is conditional. It is necessity 'upon a supposition,' or that is occasioned by a contingency. It is occasioned by the contingency of sin. And, as Archbishop Bramhall remarks, "the essence of sin consists in this, that one commits that which he might avoid." (*Defence of true Liberty from antecedent and extrinsical necessity*, p. 132, ed. 1655.) But when professing Christians, in the exercise of the freedom of their wills, commit grossly inconsistent sins, it is inevitable that the world be scandalized. When sins come freely or contingently, scandals come necessarily or inevitably. But woe to the man through whom the insnaring scandal cometh: The necessity that steps in and puts hindrances in the way of the world, when professing Christians wilfully step out to commit flagrant inconsistencies, does not in the least degree diminish their accountability. They are accountable for *all the evil effects* which, according to the Divine constitution of things, accrue to society around from *their evil acts*. Woe to them! Alas for them! Their case is pitiable! "Whence are evils?" asks Chrysostom. "From willing and not willing. But whence the willing and not willing? From ourselves." "For if they were of necessity, Jesus would not have said, *Woe to the man through whom the scandal comes.*"

VER. 8. But if thy hand or thy foot insnare thee: Or, *cause thee to stumble*. See on verse 6. The Saviour here takes up a new, but intimately connected thread of thought; a thread of which He had made use in His *Sermon on the Mount* (chap. v. 29, 30), but which He did well, as a great and earnest instructor, to repeat and re-repeat. "It is no fault," says Richard Baxter, "to say the same thing often," more especially if it be an unwelcome and neglected truth which needs line upon line to impress it. Our Saviour had spoken of professing Christians giving occasion to *others* to stumble. But when they thus give occasion, they have already, and previously, and most wilfully, given occasion of stumbling to *themselves*. Ere they taught others to stumble, they have themselves stumbled, by allowing something near and dear to their heart to insnare them. They have done something, it may be with their *hand*, it may be with their *foot*, or it may be with some other appurtenance of themselves, nearer or more remote, but at all events with their *head* and their *heart*, which they ought not to have done, and which is of malign influence upon themselves and upon others. What should they now do? *Cut it off*: Or, as Wycliffe has it, *kitt it off*; or, as Tyndale has it, *cut him off*. And cast it from thee. It is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt—this is better—than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the everlasting fire: There is a minglement of two constructions in the words, and hence our supplementary word 'better,' or as Rotherham renders it, *more comely*. The word translated *good* means primarily *beautiful* or *comely* (καλῶν). The expression *everlasting fire* has the article, *the everlasting fire*; and the correlative expression *life* has likewise the article, *the*

to be cast into everlasting fire. 9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. 11 For the

life, that which is emphatically and pre-eminently life, life in glory. "Jesus does not say these things," says Chrysostom, "of limbs. Far from it. But of friends, of relations, whom we hold in the rank of necessary members." But this also is too limited an interpretation. Things and habits, as well as persons, may be as dear to us and precious as either hand or foot.

VER. 9. The same idea repeated for emphasis' sake, with the specification of another member. It is good for thee to enter into life one-eyed—better—than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire: See on chap. v. 21 and 22. *The Gehenna of fire* is rendered by Sir John Cheke *the helpit of fjir* (the hell-pit of fire). "Is not this an hard saying?" asks John Wesley. "Yes," he replies, "if thou take counsel with flesh and blood."

VER. 10. The Saviour returns to the idea of the sixth verse. **Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones:** *Take heed*, or *See*, as it is in the original. *These little ones*: He is referring to spiritual little ones, to such believers in Himself as are characterized by childlike simplicity of character. Addressing not merely His personal disciples, but looking beyond them, by a perfect 'second sight,' and down through the ages, and thus speaking for all time, He warns against the sin of *contempt of the little ones*. It was a much needed warning. It is still much needed. Never indeed was there an age when it was more needful to take it home to the bosom and the conscience, than the present. A haughty contempt for the poor and the weak, and for the spiritually rich and strong too, the morally noble, if not 'of our set' or sect, is one of the prominent features of multitudes of ecclesiastical personages in the present day. So low have the lofty become. So low, because they would not be lowly. **For I say unto you that their angels in heaven do always behold the face of My Father who is in heaven:** *Their angels*, not their own 'spirits after death,' as Webster and Wilkinson suppose, but their guardian angels, who, while they continue on earth, minister for their good and guidance, as much as men's peculiar circumstances and the Divine constitution of things will permit. It is a delightful idea; and as reasonable as it is delightful. (Comp. Acts xii. 15; Heb. i. 14; and Ps. xxxiv. 7, xci. 11, 12.) But whether it were delightful or not, it is here authenticated by the Saviour's solemn asseveration, *I say to you*. *Their angels in heaven*: Such is the proper order of the words, not *in heaven their angels*. The idea is, *their angels whose home is in heaven*. *Do always behold the face of My Father in heaven*: That is, Do always enjoy the high honour of free personal access to My Father, when they have business at court (see 1 Kings x. 8). They are highly honoured of My Father; and hence the little ones, who are their wards, cannot be fit objects of contempt. The imagery of the representation is borrowed from oriental courts, and has its parallelisms, more or less, in all royal courts. Only the favoured have free access to the presence of royalty (comp. Esth. i. 14, and Matt. v. 8, Heb. xii. 14). Meyer supposes that it is the higher orders of angels that are referred to.

Son of man is come to save that which was lost. 12 How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone

Chrysostom was of the same opinion. Wesley too. But wrongly. There is no reference here to the hierarchical idea. (See Hofmann's *Schriftbeweis*, vol. i., pp. 286-300.) All the holy angels have free access to the throne. When they are engaged in discharging their ministries, we must not conceive of their relations to space and time by the measure of our peculiar experiences, the forms of our peculiar empiricism.

VER. 11. For the Son of man came to save that which is lost: This verse was supposed by Griesbach to be a marginal import from Luke xix. 19; and has been omitted in the texts of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort. It is wanting in some very high diplomatic authorities, inclusive of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and of those that are noted L, 1, 13, 33 'the queen of the cursives.' It is wanting in the Sahidic version, and the Jerusalem Syriac, and in some important manuscript copies of the Coptic and Æthiopic versions. But still these omissions have no right whatever to outweigh the great body of manuscripts, uncial and cursive, along with the Vulgate version, and the old Latin, and the Peshito Syriac, the Philoxenian Syriac, and the Cureton Syriac, and the Armenian and Æthiopic versions. The omission might be accidental. Or it might arise from a difficulty of seeing the connection indicated by the ratiocinative *for*. The introduction of verse 12 moreover is too abrupt, if verse 11 be left out. We doubt not that the verse is genuine. *For*: It introduces, not directly as Meyer supposes, but indirectly, a co-ordinate reason for the injunction *not to despise the little ones*. It introduces directly a reason for the interest that the angels take in the little ones. He who is the Lord of the angels took a prior interest in them. They were among the lost whom He came to save. *That which is lost*: Or, *The lost thing*. The Saviour, as it were, sums up the individuals of the human race into a unity. Humanity, as a whole, was lost. Individual men, as belonging to the category of humanity, belong to the category of *the lost thing*. *Lost*: The word in the original (*ἀπολωλός*) is strong, *the utterly undone thing, the perished thing, the thing which has been destroyed*. See Matt. xii. 14, xxi. 41; Mark i. 24, iii. 6; 1 Cor. x. 10; James iv. 12; 2 Pet. iii. 6, 9; Jude 11. Men have been utterly undone by sin. Their well-being has been utterly destroyed. The destruction would have been final and irretrievable, and their case utterly hopeless, had not an omnipotent Deliverer interposed.

VER. 12. How think ye? Or rather, *What think ye?* as Sir John Cheke renders the phrase, and as it is rendered by our translators in the other passages where it occurs. See Matt. xvii. 25, xxi. 28, xxii. 17, 42, xxvi. 66; John xi. 56. The Saviour invites His disciples to enter independently into community of thought with Himself, and judge of the case which He proposes for consideration. In the case proposed the Saviour accounts for His own mission into our world, and for the Father's interest in all the lost, however 'little' and apparently insignificant. If any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them has wandered away, does he not leave the ninety and nine on the mountains—where they are feeding safely—and go—into the ravine of the shadow of death—and seek that which is gone astray? Robert Stephens, in his

astray? 13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. 14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

various editions, disconnects by a comma the expression *on the mountains* from the expression *the ninety and nine*, and connects it with the following expression, *and go*. His son Henry approved of this method of connection (*Preface to his 1576 edition of the New Testament*). Beza too; and hence it got a footing in the Geneva version, though not in the forerunner edition of 1557; and thence it was established in our Authorized version. Erasmus Schmid decides strongly for the same interpunction. The great Erasmus, however, connects the words as we have done; and Luther too, and Tyndale. The reading has the support of the Vulgate and the Syriac. There is reason to believe that the conjunction *and* (*καί*) comes, in the original, after the expression *on the mountains* (see Tregelles). And if so Stephens's punctuation must be abandoned. The difficulty which the Stephenses felt, the difficulty regarding the relation of a verb of rest to the preposition (*with the accusative*), disappears when we remember that the word translated *leave* (*ἀφείς*) does by no means necessarily denote rest. It implies motion. It etymologically means to *send off*; and its force in the case before us might be represented thus, *Does he not let go the ninety and nine upon the mountains? Does he not leave the ninety and nine to go, or wander about, upon the mountains?*

VER. 13. And if so be that he find it—if it should come to pass that he find it, mark the contingency—verily I say unto you, that he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray: Not that at bottom he prefers to recover one, rather than retain ninety-nine. Very far from it. In the calm depth of his soul there is a settled satisfaction in the possession of the ninety-nine, *which is ninety-nine times deeper than the emotion which is stirred into activity by the recovery of the one*. But the feeling, though deeper, is not so stirred in consciousness. It has none of the waves of tumult that play upon the surface of the mental sea when *rejoicing* is excited. Thus it is that the rejoicing is greater over the lost one found, than over the ninety and nine that were not lost.

VER. 14. So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish: On the contrary, it is His will and wish that they all should be saved. They are precious in His estimation. He loves and values them. How inconsistent then would it be in any of His people to despise them! or to neglect to make loving efforts to recover them, if they should go astray! The Saviour does not here say, though it is implied, that the Father will 'rejoice' over the recovery of lost souls. He contents Himself with a lower representation of the case. *The Father has no will or wish that they should be lost*. The representation is more indefinite still in the original. The expression is, *There is not will in presence of your Father, to the effect that one of these little ones should perish*. For the moment God's will is distinguished from His personality; and He is represented as having before Him a variety of wills, or wishes, or desires, which He might entertain. But among them all there is not one that has within it an aim or purpose (*ἔρα*) that one of the little ones should be destroyed. If any of these little ones should perish, it is against His will.

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will

VER. 15. There is at this point a transition to another aspect of the duty of Christ's disciples in relation to one another. In what goes before they are warned against *inflicting wrong*, more particularly upon those who are most exposed to suffer injury, the Little Ones, the Weak Ones; here they are instructed how to act *when themselves subjected to wrong*. But if thy brother should sin against thee: *Thy brother*, that is, thy Christian brother, whether weaker or stronger. See ver. 17. *Should sin against thee*: The expression *against thee* is wanting in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and in 1, 22, 234 of the cursives; as also in the Sahidic version. Lachmann has omitted it from his text, and Tischendorf too in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort. On insufficient grounds, as we conceive, whether the case be viewed externally or internally. Comp. ver. 21; and also Luke xvii. 3. Even had the expression been omitted, it would be needful to supply it mentally; for we might not otherwise know that our brother had sinned; or, on the other hand, we might know of the sinnings of so many brethren that it would be utterly impossible for us to take in hand to deal with each individual case. Nevertheless the emphasis is on the word *sin*, not on the phrase *against thee*. It is the *sin* of our brother that is to excite our solicitude, not our *suffering* in consequence of it. His sin is against God, still more than it is against us. Indeed, in the highest plane of things it is "against God only" (Ps. li. 4). All sin, as sin, is relative to God only; though, as unkindness, it may be relative to men also, or to other creatures. The sin here referred to is such as has a manward aspect of unkindness, and, let us suppose, of very great and injurious unkindness. Go, reprove him: *Reprove* is Wycliffe's word; but he gives, as an alternative rendering, a word that would be exceedingly inappropriate in our modern idiom, *snýbbe*, that is, *snib* or *snub*. Sir John Cheke gives *rebuuk*. It was Tyndale that originated our Authorized version, *tell him his faute*. It is implied that there should be an effort to convince and convict within the sphere of his self consciousness. See John viii. 9, 46; 1 Cor. xiv. 24; Tit. i. 9. *Between thee and him alone*: Between thee and him *by himself*, for such is the import of the expression. Let the case be dealt with *under four eyes*, as the Germans express it (*unter vier Augen*). If he should hear thee: If he should listen to thy expostulation, and admit its force. If he should yield to the evidence of his guilt, which thou adducest, when thou seekest lovingly to convince and convict him. Or, as Chrysostom freely explains the phrase, "If he should condemn himself, if he should be persuaded that he has done wrong." *Thou hast gained thy brother*: Or, very literally, *Thou didst gain thy brother*, that is, when thou wentest to him. Thou hast gained him by taking that private loving method of dealing with him. *Gain* is the word that is given in the Rheims version. *Won* is Wycliffe's word, and Tyndale's too, and Sir John Cheke's. It is given also in the Geneva version. Both are admirable renderings. If the erring brother is convicted and convinced, he is *gained*. He is not only reclaimed to a sense of duty, and won back to goodness and to God; his recovery is a great and gainful reward, as Heidegger appropriately explains it, to the brother whom he had injured. (*Magnum habebis operæ pretium, lucrum fratris.*) The injured brother *wins far more than he had lost* by the injury which he sustained. He has *gained his brother*; not indeed for

not hear *thee*, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the

his self aggrandisement, but for the glory of God and the weal of his brother's soul.

VER. 16. But if he will not listen to thy remonstrance, take along with thee one or two more: "Men," says John Wesley wisely, "whom he esteems and loves";—such men if possible. The word that is translated *more* is an adverb that means *yet, still, further*; and in the original it does not succeed, but precedes, the expression *one or two*; take along with thee *yet one or two*, or, as Tyndale gives it, *then take yet with thee one or two*. The Saviour's meaning is not, *take one or two more than thyself*, or, *in addition to thyself*. The *yet* has reference not to the number of persons, but to the continuation of the case. *Do not abandon the case, and throw off thy brother, at this stage. Make another effort, and let it too be as private as possible.* Sir John Cheke's version corresponds to Tyndale's, *taak iet oon or ij with the*. The phrase *one or two* need not be rigidly interpreted, and restrained to *only either one or else two, and no more*. No doubt it is elastic, and means, as in popular parlance, *one, two, or so*. See next clause, in which it is assumed that there may be *three* witnesses as well as *two*. That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: The Saviour thus makes use of an Old Testament principle of jurisprudence (Deut. xix. 15), an obvious common-sense maxim of natural justice. The expression, *in the mouth of two or three witnesses*, if very literally rendered, would be, *on mouth of two witnesses or three*, that is, on the declaration or testimony of two or more witnesses. *Every word*, that is, *everything alleged*, or every matter, as the corresponding Hebrew word is rendered in Deut. xix. 15. The same term is translated *thing* in Luke ii. 15. Comp. Luke i. 37, Acts v. 32. It is translated *thing* by Tyndale in the passage before us, as also by Luther and Beza; and *matter* or *mater* in Cranmer's Bible; and, correspondingly, by Count Zinzendorf (*Handel*).

VER. 17. And if he should decline to hear them: The Geneva version is, *And if he will not vouchsafe to hear them*. It is assumed by our Lord that the case in hand is not a matter of doubtful dispute, but a clear case of indisputable sin. Tell it to the church: Speak to the church. "Our Lord's hearers," say Webster and Wilkinson, "would understand Him to mean the particular synagogue of which the parties were members." But this is most unlikely, for the Saviour has deliberately gone out of His way to avoid the employment of the word *synagogue*. He had moreover already spoken of His church universal (see chap. xvi. 18); and in that church universal, His own special community, when once it is widely extended, there must be contained multitudinous groupings, or churches in detail. Our Saviour may have again and again referred to such subjects in His many communications with His disciples. And then too there was already a *called-out community* around His person, a church (see on chap. xvi. 18). We must be careful, however, to bear in mind that in the words before us, as in the preceding paragraph, the Saviour was looking down through the ages, and speaking for all time. *The church*: Wycliffe's form of the word is *chirche*. The Lindisfarne Anglo-Saxon Gospels has *cirice*. (German, *Kirche*; Danish, *Kirke*; Dutch, *Kerk*; Scotch, *Kirk*.) Assuredly the Saviour's expression does not mean, as an expression, *the office-bearers of the church*; so that Chrysostom was wrong when he interpreted the phrase as meaning *the session*

church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed

(*τοῦτέστι τοῖς προαδελφούσιν*). Cameron too contends that it means *the eldership* (*Myrothecium*, in loc.); and John Wesley *assumes* that it does. But the expression just means *the church*. And yet, on the other hand, it determines nothing as to the arrangements which the church might be at liberty to make for the profitable, seemly, and efficient transaction of its discipline and other business. If the church choose to act, in certain relations, by means of representatives, who are responsible to their constituents, its action in this representative way is still its action, and its judicatory is really approached for judgement when its appointed representatives, acting representatively, are approached. Our Lord's expression, in truth, has nothing to do with the determination of the most suitable form of church government; that form which, in the circumstances, is, or may be, most in accordance with the will of the great Head of the church. But if he decline to hear the church also—when wishing to deal lovingly with him regarding his indisputable sin—let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican: See chap. v. 46, 47. No longer recognise him as a Christian. Recognise him as a man indeed, an erring man, whose soul, notwithstanding his error, is of inestimable value to himself and to his God. Act still lovingly and winningly toward him. Compassionate him. Respect him. But bear in mind that it is absolutely necessary to draw the line of demarcation between Christian and unchristian. Let him be to thee a *heathen* and a *publican*: Literally, *the heathen* or *the Gentile* and *the publican*. The article is used generically, and thus this is one of the cases in which the definite representation comes practically round to the indefinite. John Wesley, referring to the entire instructions given in these 15th, 16th, and 17th verses, says solemnly and strikingly, "If this be the way to take, in what land do the Christians live?"

VER. 18. Verily I say to you: It is as if the Saviour had said, *You will be warranted to treat the impenitent brother in the way which I have indicated, as a heathen and a publican, for I solemnly assure you.* *Whatsoever things ye may bind on the earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever things ye may loose on the earth shall be loosed in heaven:* See on chap. xvi. 19. The general principle is here employed in view of a particular application, *Whatsoever in the matter of Christian fellowship ye may disallow (or bind) on the one hand; or allow (or loose) on the other hand.* The Saviour is speaking to His apostles, and the words therefore were primarily applicable to them, when they acted officially and legitimately as apostles and as Christians. But it is indisputable that, while our Saviour was speaking to His apostles, He was not speaking of them alone, or for them alone. He was speaking for His church, and for His churches, in all ages. He was speaking for all time. His words assure us, therefore, that when any true church (see on chap. xvi. 18) acts as a true church in matters of discipline, or in any other matters with which it has legitimately to do, and does not turn its keys in the wrong way, its decisions are in harmony with the will of the Lord of the church. They reflect on the earth the foregone determinations of God in heaven. The prerogative therefore which in chap. xvi. 19 was conferred on Peter representatively is here formally extended to all his fellow apostles; but to them also representatively. It is a prerogative which

in heaven. 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

belongs to the church, as the church; and it is shared by every individual church, if a true church, and acting truly as a true church. The reason is stated in ver. 20.

VER. 19. Again I say to you: A solemn repetition, under another form, of the prerogative that is asserted in the preceding verse. That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask: *If even two of you.* It is not great numbers which God regards in such matters, or that are needful to constitute a true church. It is not essential that the groupings of Christ's true believers be immense corporations. It is difficult indeed, in immense corporations, to secure that there shall be a preponderance, or even a majority, of true believers. *Shall agree on earth:* That is, even while on the earth, and while encompassed therefore and encumbered with manifold imperfections. *As touching any thing that they shall ask:* A happy translation of an expression that is crowded and somewhat compressed or crushed in the original. It is *anything*, mark. It is *everything* (*ἅπαστα*) that may be legitimately asked. Comp. Mark xi. 24; John xii. 13, xv. 7; 1 John v. 14. It shall be done for them of My Father who is in heaven: Literally, *It shall come to pass to them from My Father who is in heaven.* Or, *it shall be given them:* Tyndale's version. Or, *they shall have it of My Father:* the version in Cranmer's Bible. Whatsoever true believers in Jesus truly ask shall be done. Such was the promise of old. It is fulfilled every day; for when we go down to that which is subtended by all the petitions of true believers, and subtended too as the essential thing, we find that they really ask *only that God's own will should be done.* The substrate of every one of their prayers, without exception, is that what is meet for God's own glory, and for Christ's glory, and for the best interests of men and of the Great Universe, should be done.

VER. 20. Here follows the reason why the true prayers of Christ's true disciples, in churches assembled, or in smaller groups not technically named *churches*, are always heard and answered; and why consequently their legitimate acts of public or more private discipline are always the reflections of the decisions of heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together—that is, who have been gathered together—in My name: The expression rendered in My name is, in the original, *unto or into My name* (*εἰς τὸ ἔμὸν ὄνομα*). The idea is grand. Christ's name—or Christ Himself as *intercommunicatively* spoken of, or thought about, or believed in—is the centre of attraction throughout Christendom; and not only in the one great sphere, but likewise in all the lesser subordinate spheres. Hence when two Christians meet, as Christians, they not only draw near to one another, they draw near in consciousness to Christ, or to and into the name of Christ. It is Christ, or His name, that is the real meeting place of their spirits. It is Christ, or His name, that is the point toward which they tend from their different directions, *unto* which they come, *into* which they enter, and *in* which they feel spiritually near to each other. The nearer they get to the absolute centre, the nearer they get to one another. When they get *unto* the name of Christ they do not halt there. They do not linger outside the

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. 23 Therefore is

name. They go *in*. They are gathered in groups *into His name*, and are thus gathered *in His name*. Not indeed in the empty name. The name of Christ, without Christ Himself, would be nothing but a sound, or the inward echo of an outward sound. But then, on the other hand, Christ Himself without His name, without a mental differentiation of Him from all other objects, would be *as nothing to us* (see on ver. 5). **There am I in the midst of them:** The Saviour, it will be observed, does not say, *There shall I be*. He might have used that expression, and it would have conveyed a sublime truth. Comp. Exod. xxv. 22. But He uses a still sublimer mode of representation, and one that is nearer the absolute truth. Where two or three are gathered together *unto*, and *into*, and *in the name of Christ*, there Christ *is* in the midst of them, *for He was there before them, and they but drew near to Him*. He, in His consciousness, is beside them, and in union with them (*conjunctissimus, præsentiſſimus*: Heidegger); and so far as they really come near to Him in their consciousness, He fills the vessels of their minds and hearts with His own wish and will. Hence the certainty that their prayers, *in that which is the real prayer of the prayers*, will be answered (ver. 19). Hence too the certainty that what they really bind or loose on earth will be bound or loosed in heaven (ver. 18). It is almost superfluous to add that the Saviour's words, in this 20th verse, would be eviscerated of all real heart and substance if He were not really omnipresent and Divine. He must, in making such a promise, have realized that He was everywhere.

VER. 21. Then Peter approached Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? A somewhat complicated interrogation, but sufficiently obvious in import. Tyndale disentangles it thus, *Master, howe ofte shall I forgeve my brother, yf he synne agaynst me?* The question was a favourite subject of casuistry in the schools of the Jewish rabbis. Till seven times? Or, as Luther gives it freely, *Is seven times sufficient?* Peter had begun to see farther than the rabbis; and hence he was persuaded that there must be a greater enlargement of the forgiving spirit than was inculcated in their schools. He *doubles* the numerical amount that had been generally fixed upon, "supposing," says Chrysostom, "that he was proposing something great." "He thought," says Lightfoot, "that he had measured out, by these words, a large charity, being, in a manner, double to that which was prescribed in the schools." "*They pardon a man once, that sins against another; a second time they pardon him; a third time they pardon him; but a fourth time they do not pardon him.*" (See Lightfoot and Wetstein, in loc.)

VER. 22. Jesus saith to him, I do not say to thee, Until seven times: No, that is not My rule. Large as thou deemest it, Peter, it is far too little. But, **Until seventy times seven:** That is, *Until seventy seven times*, as is evident from a comparison of the Septuagint and Hebrew expressions in Gen. iv. 24. Jerome however thought that the Saviour's expression means, *Until seventy times seven times*, that is, as he remarks, *Until four hundred and ninety times*. Theophylact took the same view. And Erasmus too; and Le Fèvre; Luther also, and Tyndale, who renders the expression *seventy tymes seventymes*. The Geneva version gives the same rendering; and so does the Rheims. But Sir

the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten

John Cheke gives the right translation, *seventee and seven tijms*. Origen and Augustin too count correctly, and the majority of modern critics. But, so far as the *spirit* of our Saviour's answer is concerned, both enumerations are right; for He, as it were, says to Peter, *Don't count the number of times. Let them be unnumbered, and, if need be, innumerable*. He means, says Chrysostom, "not a fixed number, but *indefinitely, continually, always*. For just as *ten thousand times* means *often*, so here too." "It does not look well," says Matthew Henry, "to keep count of the offences done against us by our brethren." If a brother indeed very frequently transgresses in a flagrant manner, he may lose the confidence of his brethren; either their confidence as regards his profession in general, or their confidence as regards some elements of his character. This is inevitable; and their conduct will be regulated accordingly. But they must never cherish a feeling of animosity and malice in reference to him, or push him out beyond the reach of their sympathy or benevolence.

VER. 23. Therefore: That is, since there must not be any stint in the forgiving disposition of My disciples. The kingdom of heaven—in its relation to this matter—is likened: Or literally, *was likened, was assimilated, was made like*, namely, when its project or protocol was drawn divinely up. (See chap. xiii. 24, and comp. chap. vii. 24, 26.) But if the kingdom of heaven *was then likened, it is now like*; so that Sir John Cheke's translation is perfect, *The kingdom of heaven therefor is lijk*. So is Luther's (*ist gleich*); and Beza's (*simile est*); and Ultramaré's (*ressemble*). But Zinzendorf has missed the mark (*wird verglichen*). Unto a certain king, literally *to a man a king, which would take account of his servants*: Or rather, *Who wished to settle accounts with (uerd) his servants*, such of them namely as had "moneys" of his to account for. Purvey's revision of Wycliffe's translation is better than that of the Authorized version, *that wolde rekyne with hise seruauntis* (i.e. *that would reckon with his servants*). It is God the Father, of course, who is represented by *the man the king*. He was the first, and He will be the last, of monarchs.

VER. 24. And when he began to reckon one was brought to him, who owed ten thousand talents: This 'servant' or 'minister' must have been some high functionary of state, who manipulated the revenues of provinces. He represents the sinner, every sinner. The debt for which every sinner is accountable, or liable to God, is *enormous*. It is not easy to determine exactly what was the value of the Hebrew talent. It contained 3000 shekels of the sanctuary (comp. Exod. xxx. 13, xxxviii. 25-28; and Josephus, *Ant.* iii. 6: 7), and is supposed by some to have corresponded exactly to the Greek Æginetan talent, which exceeded the common Attic commercial talent. This common Attic talent is estimated by Bæckh as equivalent to 1375 German thalers. Taking the German thaler as equivalent to 3s. sterling, a single Attic talent would amount to a little above £200; so that *ten thousand talents* would be about ten thousand times that sum, or something more than £2,000,000 sterling, an immense sum, more especially in those ancient times, when the relation of bullion to commodities was such that the prices of commodities in bullion were far smaller relatively than now, with our vast importations of gold from *the new world* (America) and from *the newer than the new* (Australia). This immense sum,

thousand talents. 25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hun-

almost baffling ordinary conception, represents the sinner's spiritual debt or guilt.

VER. 25. But forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay: He had wrongfully lost or licentiously squandered his sovereign's money. His lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children, and all that he had, and payment to be made: The drapery of this part of the parable is borrowed from those common customs of olden times, in accordance with which a man and his family, as well as his effects, were liable to be brought to the hammer to pay for his debts. The idea behind the drapery is that the man deserved to suffer the extreme penalty of the law for his enormous defalcations. That extreme penalty would have involved indescribable and incalculable distress, as it were millions of pains and pangs.

VER. 26. The servant therefore fell down: *Therefore*, i.e. because he heard the commandment of his lord. And worshipped him: Did most humble obeisance to him. Saying, Have patience with me—bear with me for a time—and I will pay thee all: A part of the parable, as Zuingli remarks, that has no counterpart in the application. (*Hic, similitudo non quadrat.*) It was never intended to have a counterpart. It belongs to the incidental parabolic drapery (or, as Brouwer expresses it, “ad narrationis ornatum pertinet”: *De Parabolis Jesu Christi*, p. 176). “Be not finical,” says Euthymius Zigabenus, “about the incidental details of the parable.” (τὰλλα μὲν τῆς παραβολῆς μὴ περιεργάζου.)

VER. 27. And the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him: Or, *set him at liberty, let him go, released him.* The word is translated *set at liberty* in Acts xxvi. 32, Heb. xiii. 23. It is rendered *let go* in Luke xxiii. 22; John xix. 12; Acts iii. 13, iv. 21, 23, v. 40, xvi. 35, 36; etc. And it is rendered *release* in Luke xxiii. 16, 17, 18, 20, 25; John xviii. 39, xix. 10, 12; etc. The man may not have been literally bound or fettered. But he would be under guard at least, and virtually a prisoner. Tyndale has *loosed*, indicating a pronunciation of the verb *loosed*, which is still common in some parts of the country. And forgave him the debt: Remitted to him the debt. The parable does not tell us on what ground. Certainly it was not on the ground of the meritoriousness of the man's penitence or penance (*per penitentiae satisfactionem*), as Hugo de Sancto Victore represents it in his delightful book on *The Bible Allegories* (lib. x., cap. 69). The parable leaves the imagination free to conjecture manifold considerations that might have weighed with the man's lord. It was not the design of our Saviour, at this particular conjuncture, to teach the meritoriousness of His own mediation or propitiation.

VER. 28. But that very servant went out—from his Lord's presence—and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him a hundred pence: *Pence*, or *pens* as Wycliffe has it; a corruption or condensation of *pennies*. The *pennies* referred

dred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. 29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. 32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 33 shouldst not thou also have had

to were silver pennies or Roman *denarii*, the standard Roman coin, just as the *penny* was the standard Anglo-Saxon coin. The silver penny referred to, the *denarius*, was considerably less in value than our *shilling* sterling. And thus the sum owing to the released servant by his fellow-servant was considerably less than £5 sterling; how exceedingly small, when compared with the sum which he himself had owed! And he seized him by the throat: He throttled him. The verb for *throttled* is rendered *choked* in Mark v. 13. The cognate adjective is rendered *strangled* in Acts xv. 20, 29. How savage the spirit! "What doest thou, O man?" exclaims Chrysostom. "Dost thou not perceive that thou art taking thyself back, thrusting, as it were, the sword against thyself, and recalling thy lord's sentence and gift?" Saying, Pay me that thou owest: Or, according to the more correct but difficult reading (omitting *me*, and giving *et* τ instead of δ τ), the reading of Griesbach and Scholz, as well as of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort, *Pay, if thou owest aught!* The expression does not mean, as Paulus supposes, that the creditor was after all uncertain whether or not the debt was still owing. Neither was it chosen because, as Fritzsche imagines, it expresses with "Greek urbanity," in an indirect way, the fact of indebtedness. It would no doubt be an idiom, and have some gruff conventional force.

VER. 29. His fellow-servant therefore fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. The sum due was not so great as to lay an interdict upon the hope of recovering it in full.

VER. 30. And he would not; but—on the contrary—went and cast him into prison—to be confined there—till he should pay the debt: The picture of utter selfishness is complete. All men, all beings whatsoever, inclusive of God Himself, would be of value to such a man's heart only in so far as they could be turned into *his* ministers and menials.

VER. 31. When therefore his fellow-servants saw what was done—or, according to Tischendorf's reading, *what was being done* ($\gamma\upsilon\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$), or *what was going on*; so Weizsäcker, *was vorgien*—they were exceedingly sorry, and came and told their lord—or made their lord aware of—all that was done: This last item of the parable has no definite counterpart in the application. The infinite Lord needs no one's telling, as a means of obtaining information.

VER. 32. Then his lord called him into his presence, and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou besoughtest me, viz. to pity you and have patience with you for a season. You humbled yourself, and entreated my favour at my feet.

VER. 33. Oughtest not thou also to have pitied thy fellow-servant, even as I

compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? 34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. 35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

pitied thee? Was not moral obligation laid upon thee to this effect? My forgiveness was not intended by me to be a final thing, with no consequences to be attached to it. It was intended to be a means to an ulterior moral end. Why overlook that end? Why ingulf all favours, as if thou wert to be their burial-place?

VER. 34. And his lord was wroth: The emotions of his heart, under the impulse of a noble benevolence, were impelled into antagonism to the man's antagonism to all that was good and noble. And delivered him to the tormentors, to be kept in prison and there punished, till he should pay all that was due to him: The man's lord, be it noted, was not only his creditor, but also his sovereign; and it is in his capacity of sovereign that he now acts. He inflicts condign punishment on his guilty subject. Instead of *tormentors*, Tyndale and the Geneva version have *jaylers*, an unwarrantable mitigation of the import of the original word, but reproduced by many critics, such as Grotius, Rosenmüller, Kuinöl, Oltramare. When we turn our mind to the application of the parable, we do not need to think of *arbitrary torments*. It would be very wrong to do so. But there is no shadow of reason why we should suppose that there will be no torments of the conscience and the consciousness. Even on earth there are many tormenting pangs, which are the penal consequences of sins. The *till* in the last clause of the verse is not intended to throw any light upon the duration of future punishment. "The papists," says Calvin, "are very ridiculous in trying to elicit from it the fire of purgatory."

VER. 35. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do to you: Instead of *heavenly Father*, Principal Campbell has *celestial Father*, an outrage on good taste. The also of King James's version is redundant after *likewise*, and has nothing corresponding to it in the original. Tyndale has it not. But it had crept into Cranmer's Bible, and had thence apparently been reproduced in our Authorized version. It is wanting in the Geneva. If ye forgive not from your hearts every one his brother: *From your hearts*,—mark that. The expression *their trespasses*, at the close of the verse in King James's version, is omitted in most of the best manuscripts and versions, and by the best modern editors. It may, or it may not, be considered as a mere marginal note. Its omission or retention is a matter of no doctrinal or practical or exegetical moment. The parable itself is of transcendent doctrinal and practical moment. It does not teach us, certainly, that a forgiving and loving spirit is the meritorious cause of the Divine forgiveness and love. Such an idea would be, as it were, turning heaven and earth upside down. But it does teach us that there is no ethical fitness for heaven in the heart of him who on earth is unsympathising, unforgiving, and unkind. The man who is loving and compassionate only to himself is utterly unlovely and unholy. He has nothing of heavenliness in him. See Matt. vi. 14, 15. It is also noticeable that the parable stands on the assumption that the Divine forgiveness may be forfeited. During terrestrial probation, all the blessings which are peculiar to the kingdom of heaven are enjoyed provisionally. And, at any point of the preparatory career, free agency is free to come in, and

CHAPTER XIX.

1 AND it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan; 2 and great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

to turn out what is essential to the enjoyment of these blessings. It often brings in much that is from self or from beneath. And hence the mottled character of many who have 'named the name of Christ.' Hence declensions, and backslidings; stumblings too, and fallings, and fallings away. When God forgives, He does not compel the forgiven to forgive. He does not even necessitate them, by 'philosophical necessitation,' to forgive. He mightily influences them indeed. He brings to play upon their consciences, and their judgements, and their hearts, the mightiest moral motives to induce them to be forgiving. But still He leaves their free agency intact. They are free to forgive or not to forgive. Alas, they often fail to forgive and be good! Faith sometimes fades; or it turns aside from its transcendent object, and peddles with insignificances. If it fade away or turn aside altogether, if it die, if it be extinguished and its fruits cease, then the Divine forgiveness, that had been conditionally conferred and provisionally continued, is withdrawn. If the backsliding is not healed, the forgiveness is never restored. The wicked servant is at last delivered over to those retributive tormentors, which in the world to come rise up from within, and crowd in from around.

CHAPTER XIX.

VER. 1. And it came to pass, that when Jesus finished these discoursings: But how soon after, it was no part of the purpose of Matthew to particularize. He departed from Galilee: Whither He had descended from the region about Cæsarea Philippi. See on chap. xvii. 22, 24. His work in Galilee was closed. His face was set toward Jerusalem. And came into the coasts of Judæa: The frontiers, confines, or border lands, of Judæa. The word is always rendered *coasts* in our Authorized version, except in Matt. iv. 13, where it is translated *borders*. It has no specific reference to *maritime borders*; and indeed the English word *coasts* was, in its ancient and original usage, equally unspecific. It simply denoted, generically, *costal regions*, or localities at the *side* of a territory. Beyond the Jordan: That is, on the eastern side of the Jordan. He did not go through the province of Samaria, which lay between Galilee and Judæa on the western side of the Jordan; but He went through the province of Peræa on the eastern side of the river.

VER. 2. And great crowds followed Him: Or, as Wycliffe gives it graphically, *And manye companyes of men sueden hym* (i.e. *sued*, pursued, followed Him). And He healed them there: *There*, that is, in the region of Peræa. His fame preceded and accompanied Him; and hence the sick were brought to Him in crowds. *He healed them*. He bore in, mightily and lovingly, on the physical side of distressed human nature; the more, as He had at that time but few openings for His heavenly influence on the other or spiritual side of men. He had come indeed 'to heal *all* the wounds of the world,' but the spiritually wounded were keeping aloof from Him in suspicion.

3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? 4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and

VER. 3. And,—on some occasion or other, while in that region,—the Pharisees approached Him, tempting Him—or, trying Him—and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? Or, as Tyndale renders the last clause, *for all manner of causes*. In Cranmer's Bible it is, *for any manner of cause*. In Purvey's revision of Wycliffe it is, *for any cause*. All of these are good translations; the Authorized being the most literal. The question was not put for information; but captiously, with the hope of getting hold of some doctrinal point or other, on which to override His pure moral influence in society. The question was the bait of a *temptation*. (Comp. chap. xvi. 1.) The tempters took advantage, for the occasion, of a dispute that was agitated between the rabbinical schools of Hillel and Shammai. Hillel, who had been deceased for about twenty years, but who, while he lived, occupied the very pinnacle of rabbinical influence, held that a man might lawfully divorce his wife for any reason whatsoever that might render her distasteful to him. Josephus seems to have been a Hillelite, both in theory and in practice. (See *Ant.* iv. 8: 23; *Life*, § 76.) Shammai, on the other hand, contended that divorce was permissible only in case of unchastity on the part of the wife. The controversy centred in the interpretation of the expression translated 'some uncleanness' in Deut. xxiv. 1; and no doubt the laxer doctrine of Hillel would be the more popular view of the subject among the morally latitudinarian portion of the population. Our Saviour's querists would be anxious to find out whether the great Galilean Rabbi would take part with the Hillelites, or defend the stricter position of the Shammites. Perhaps they expected that, whatever position He might assume, they would be able to make capital of it for annoying Him, or getting Him somehow or other entangled or put down.

VER. 4. And He answered and said, Did ye never read, that He who made them at the beginning: Or, very literally, *that He who made from the beginning*, that is, *who made men from the beginning*. It is a compressed expression, with two distinct elements informally welded. Were they separated, they would stand thus: (1) *who made (man) at the beginning*, (2) *who has continued to make (men) from the beginning*. Elsner, Hombergk, Fritzsche, Meyer, and some others, detach the expression *from the beginning*, and connect it with what follows. Wrongly; for it is not the case that we read, in the Old Testament, the words that God "*from the beginning* made man, male and female." See next clause. Made them male and female: Or, better still, and more literally, and quotationally, "*Male and female made He them.*" The words are an exact quotation from the Septuagint version of Gen. i. 27: "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; *male and female created He them.*"

VER. 5. And said: Namely, through Adam. It is *He-who-made-man*, that is the nominative to *said*; for though the words about to be quoted were uttered by Adam (Gen. ii. 24), they were really inspired by God. They came from God. They embody, not Adam's opinion, conjecture, or imagination, but God's own marital law for universal man. For this cause shall a man leave father and

they twain shall be one flesh? 6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. 7 They say unto him, Why

mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh: One of the most important enunciations, as regards sociology and practical ethics, in the whole Bible. *For this cause*: the reference is not to what precedes in Matthew, but to what is stated in the preceding verse in Genesis regarding the very peculiar and organic relationship subsisting between man and woman, a relationship that resolves itself into a living unity of counterparts. Man and woman are respectively the physical and psychical complements of one another. *Shall a man leave father and mother*: a more powerful attraction draws him off; off, not so far as esteem, and reverence, and benevolence are concerned, but so far as reciprocative intimacy is concerned. And what is thus true of man is equally true of woman. *And shall cleave to his wife*: Or, more literally, *And shall be united to his wife*, or, *And shall be joined*, or *conjoined*, to his wife. Comp. the rendering of the verb in 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17. The translation of our Authorized version is a reproduction rather of the Hebrew than of the Greek. The Greek term, literally and etymologically, means *shall be agglutinated*, or as it were, *glued*. And Erasmus, in his version, actually gives here this very word (*agglutinabitur*). Calvin follows him; and Beza; as also Piscator, in his Latin version though not in his German; and Erasmus Schmid. The word strongly expresses the utmost possible adhesiveness of intimacy. *They twain*, or literally, *the two*: an expression that is wanting in the Hebrew original, and hence also in the English version of Gen. ii. 24, but that is found in the Samaritan Pentateuch, as well as in the Septuagint. It is rendered by Beza *they who had been two*; rather unhappily, for not only is such a rendering more than a rendering, it does not make provision for bridging between the past and the future. It introduces a gulf instead. For if the man and his wife were two, only in the past; and if they are to become one, only in the future; what are they in the present? *Shall be one flesh*. Literally, *Shall be into one flesh*, that is, *Shall be blended into one flesh*, or, so to speak, *shall become one body* (see 1 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. v. 28-31). The union, in respect of intimacy, is somewhat akin to the union between Christ and His church (Eph. v. 22-33; and comp. Ps. xlv. and Song of Songs.)

VER. 6. So that they are, in their relation to each other, no more two, but one flesh: Or "oo flesh," as Wycliffe has it. The two are united into one. The duality is merged in unity. It is always so, when the ideal of the relationship is realized. The *parties* are *parts of each other*. They are, in subserviency to the greatest moral ends in society, so inter-related as to be like the two halves of a whole. What therefore God has joined together,—or literally, *What therefore God yoked together*,—let not man put asunder: Note the *What*. It is significant. It is the neuter singular of the relative, *The-thing-which*, or, as Wycliffe has it, *That thing that*. The Saviour's mind is thinking of the consummated union, and thus of the completed unity. Note that it is *God* who is said to yoke together the united twain. True marriages are thus made in heaven. Whenever marriage is as it ought to be, it is a Divine hand that ties the knot. *Let not man put asunder*: Let not man undo the work of God. Are then all existing matrimonial alliances in accordance with the will of God? That follows not. See verse 8.

VER. 7. They—the Pharisaic querists namely—say unto Him, Why then did

did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say

Moses command to give a bill of divorcement and to put her away? See Deut. xxiv. 1-4. The *her* is omitted in some of the best manuscripts, and by most of the ancient versions. It is wanting in Mark x. 4. The querists had been of Hillelite views. But they put the case rather too strongly nevertheless; for the expression to which they refer occurs only in one of the conditional clauses of the Mosaic statute, and does not enjoin divorcement on any condition whatsoever. (See on chap. v. 31.) It merely assumes that divorcement might take place, and for other reasons apparently than conjugal infidelity. It might take place because of some "uncleanness," real or imaginary, in a wife. In this assumption, the statute indeed so far sanctions the divorcement of which it speaks, but it does not enjoin it. It indirectly enjoined, however, that when separation was resolved on, it should be effected by means of a formal legal document; and thus it made provision, as far as practicable, for delaying the act of separation, giving time for a change of mind, and for protecting, after the act was consummated, the interests of the weaker party. A bill of divorcement was drawn up in some such style as the following: "On this, the — day of the week, the — day of the month of —, in the year — from the creation of the world, or the year — according to the computation common in this locality, I, A —, son of B, and residing in C, or by whatsoever other name or designation I may be known, do hereby, of my own free will, and without any compulsion or constraint, relinquish, dismiss, and divorce thee, D, my wife, daughter of E, and residing in F, or by whatsoever other name thou, or thy parents, or thy place of residence may be known; I relinquish, dismiss, and divorce thee, so that from this time forth thou art in thine own power, and at thine own disposal, so far as I am concerned, and mayest be married to whomsoever thou pleasest, without let or hindrance from me. So thou art free to all men. Let this be to thee a true bill of separation, an assertion of thy freedom, and a deed of divorce from me, according to the law of Moses and of Israel. G, son of H, witness. J, son of K, witness." (See Surenhusii *Mishna*, Pars iii. *Prefatio*, and pp. 324, 325.)

VER. 8. He saith to them, Moses, because of your hardness of heart, suffered you to put away your wives: *Suffered you*, that is, *permitted you*, *gave you leave*, *gave you licence*, *gave you liberty*. The word receives these various translations in different places of our Authorized version. See Acts xxvi. 1; Heb. vi. 3; John xix. 38; Mark v. 13; Acts xxi. 40, xxvii. 3. Moses gave the political liberty referred to. Our Saviour so far, therefore, agreed with the Hillelites in their interpretation of the political statute. Moses gave the liberty, because he had no alternative. The moral state of the people did not admit of a higher style of statute. And hence all that he could do was to let in, as far as was practicable, a high and holy moral element to restrain the actual political licence, in the actually existing polity. Ideal politics, or politics ideally perfect, were out of the question in the circumstances of the Jewish people. They are still out of the question in the circumstances of any people on the face of the earth. Ideally perfect politics are inapplicable to all but ideally perfect peoples, or peoples who are approximating ideal perfection. The ancient Israelites were

unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery : and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

very far indeed from this condition. They were in many respects exceedingly undeveloped in moral character ; and no available power or motive could have induced them to leap at a bound, and *en masse*, into moral perfection. Hence the politics of Moses, like the politics of every other legislator who legislates for actually existent peoples, were merely provisional, and necessarily partial. There was in them indeed, as there should be in all politics, a constant aspiration toward the eternally true, and right, and good, a rising up toward the Divine. But they actually consisted, to a large extent, of mere aims and claims in relation to what was absolutely right ; of mere checks and counterpoises in relation to what was absolutely wrong ; and thence, all through, of admitted compromises between what the people had been or were, and what they were morally bound to be. Nothing higher is practicable or possible in politics, if there is actual society on the one hand, consisting of men who are exceedingly sinful, and if there is to be on the other actual forbearance with these men, notwithstanding their exceeding sinfulness. It was because of the *hard heartedness* of the people, and not because of any absolute right, or rightness, that Moses permitted divorce. The people were to a large extent ethically hard or callous, insensible to high delicacy and duty. Their hardened hearts were irresponsible to the claims of the highest moral goodness and beauty. The very part in them that should have been peculiarly soft and sensitive was peculiarly indurated. It was in vain, therefore, to make an opposite condition of moral being an essential condition of political existence. Had the attempt been made, universal violation of the laws, or universal extermination of the people, would have been the result. The polity could not have stood for a single day. If then a perfect marital law had been insisted on, it would have been unworkable. The dissatisfied husbands, as Euthymius Zigabenus naively remarks, would have killed their wives ; and then the necessity of political compromise would have been simply transferred into another department of the polity. The utmost that Moses could do, in the circumstances, was to put restraints on divorce, and to render it as favourable as was practicable, by superadded regulations, to the interests of the weaker party. But from the beginning it was not so : In marriage, as originally conceived, no such laxity or looseness of relationship was contemplated.

VER. 9. But I say to you : There is imperial authority, and imperial self-consciousness, in this *I say*. The Speaker realizes that He has a right to legislate in reference to the most fundamental relationships of society. Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for unchastity, and shall marry another, committeth adultery : Or still more literally, and according to the most correct reading, the reading too of the first printed edition, the Complutensian, *Whosoever shall put away his wife, not ($\mu\eta$, not $\epsilon\lambda\ \mu\eta$) on the ground of unchastity, and shall marry another, committeth adultery*, or as Tyndale, following Luther, has it, *breaketh wedlock*. The Saviour does not explicitly assume that such cases shall happen. But should they happen, the actual moral result, so far as heavenly politics are concerned, *is* as He states it. Are then the annoyances arising from the disparity of dispositions, from disagreeable habits, from weakness and disease, or from dislike and alienation, to be endured ? Why not ? Why was not the possibility of such incompatibilities and annoyances anticipated ?

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry. 11 But he said unto

Why were not the needful steps taken to avert them? It is not Christ, or God, who produces them. They have been sinfully introduced within the sphere of the Divine institution. But if desertion take place, what then? It certainly perplexes the relationship; but the desertion may not be final. And then too desertion of the heart may take place within the walls of the family home; and what then? Neither form of desertion is to be attributed to Christ or to God. But is it not hard to be subjected to such hardships? It is. All hardships are hard; and such hardships are peculiarly hard. But it is not Christ, or God, who is responsible for them. It is sin: and sin is opposition to God and to Christ. But what, asks Grotius, if a wife try to poison her husband, or to kill his children? It is very hard indeed. But Christ is not to blame. And a severer measure than divorce would then be demanded; a more fundamental law would come into play. The whole of politics, indeed, is perplexed by sin. Emphatically so is the marriage relation. *God's law on the subject has never got fair play in society.* And no political checks and counterpoises and reliefs will ever succeed in making all things connected with it smooth, sweet, and right, so long as sin is rampant. But still less would perplexity be obliterated by the repeal of God's law. It would only be intensified into infinite chaos. And whoso marrieth her who is put away committeth adultery; It is not quite certain that this clause has not crept in from the margin, having been transferred, first of all, by some very ancient possessor of a manuscript, to the margin, from Matt. v. 32 and Luke xvi. 18. Tischendorf omits it from his last edition, under the sanction of considerable authorities. So do Westcott-and-Hort. It is of no doctrinal or exegetical moment, whether it be omitted or retained. It is but the reverse side of the moral result that is presented to view in the preceding clause. The poor divorced woman is really, according to God's institute, a wife still, and if married by another, he *advouthereth*, as Sir John Cheke has it, or he "doeth commyt advoutry," as Tyndale expresses it. It is thus not one perplexity merely that is the result of sin. It is perplexity upon perplexity.

VER. 10. The disciples say unto Him, If the case of the man be so with his wife: *The case*; in the original, *the cause*. It is the same word that is found at the close of ver. 3, and cannot merely mean *case, relationship, condition, or matter*. The idea is, *If the cause of the man with the woman is so*. It is a compressed way of saying, *If in the relation of the man with the woman the one only legitimate CAUSE of separation is as Thou hast stated*. If no other ground of divorce is admissible. It is not good to marry: It is not expedient, it is not advantageous, for a man to marry. The disciples, from their peculiar Jewish standpoint, looked chiefly, if not exclusively, at the interests of *the man*. But the same difficulty may, of course, be as legitimately mooted on the side of *the woman*. In both cases, marriage always involves a liability to unpleasant and trying contingencies. The estate of wedlock is by no means what it would have been, had sin been absent.

VER. 11. But He said to them, All men cannot receive this saying: A rather ambiguous proposition, logically considered. But its meaning is obvious, *Not all men can receive this saying*. Such indeed is the literal rendering of the words. *Not all men*: Very far from that; not very many, indeed. The expression is an instance of that figure of speech, or mode of saying a thing, which

them, All men cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given. 12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born

grammarians call *litotes*, the opposite of *hyperbole*. It understates the reality. (Compare 1 Cor. i. 26.) Yet it does not mean *none*, as Bengel supposes (*non omnes valet nulli*). It means *not many*; even as the expression *not many* in 1 Cor. i. 26 means *very few*. It is as if the Saviour had said: *True, so far. It is expedient in some respects, and indeed in many, not to marry. Not a few inconveniences, annoyances, difficulties, and trials would thus be avoided. But then that is only one side of the case. And it is by no means all men who could easily, or wisely, receive this saying as the rule of their life, and reduce it to practice. This saying: The saying, namely, of the disciples; or rather, their saying as virtually reiterated and partially accepted by our Lord, accepted to the extent indicated above. Not all men can receive: The word translated can receive (χωρῶσθαι) properly means, make room for, or have room for. Hence it came to mean, can hold, can take in, can receive. The idea is not that few can take into their intelligence, as an intelligible object of thought, or as a thing to be understood, the inexpediency in many respects of marrying. The reference is not thus to a matter of mere intellection; it is to a matter affecting one's own manner of social life. The idea is that few can receive into their mind the conviction that, all things considered, it would be inexpedient for them to marry. The Saviour, as it were, says to His disciples: When you concluded, from My remarks regarding the sanctity of the marriage relation, that it is not expedient to marry, your conclusion was partial. Hence it was partly right; and it is partly wrong. In some respects it is inexpedient to marry. Sin has sadly marred the operation of the heavenly institution. But the inexpediencies are not all on one side. It is very far from being the case that they are all on that side. The great majority of men ought to marry. Marriage is a duty which they owe to themselves, and to others. And if wisely and holily entered into, many and ineffable will be the blessings that will mingle with, and mitigate, the inevitable trials. The disciples were right, in so far as they perceived that marriage, amid abounding sin, can never prove a fairy land of unalloyed bliss. They were wrong, in so far as they did not consider, as good David Dickson expresses it, "the incommodities of an unmarried life." Save they to whom it is given: Or, more literally, But they to whom it has been given. That is, but they only to whom it has been Divinely given, as a matter of peculiar constitution. Only these can receive, as a maxim for the regulation of their own particular procedure, that it is not expedient to marry. Euthymius Zigabenus, and many others, mistake the Saviour's idea. They suppose that He refers to a gift of God, which may be obtained in answer to prayer. "Ask," says Euthymius, "and it shall be given you; but ask fervently, perseveringly, and as it ought to be asked." The Saviour refers to something farther back. He does not say to whom it shall be given; or even, to whom it is given. He says to whom it has been given. (*Quibus enim non est datum, aut nolunt, aut non implent quod volunt*: Augustin, *De Gratia et Lib. Ar.*, cap. iv., § 7.)*

VER. 12. This verse contains observations which the Saviour would not have made, in all probability, had He been speaking in such a country as Great Britain, and in the nineteenth century of His own era. Thanks to the ineffable purity of His heavenly teaching, there is, even in the midst of all the grossness that still abounds, a delicacy of sentiment in British society that wonderfully contrasts with the moral state that was characteristic of the Jews, and of the

from *their* mother's womb : and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men : and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray : and the disciples

surrounding peoples, at the time that He himself lived on earth, and breathed His purifying Spirit upon men. For there are eunuchs, who were so born from their mother's womb : The Greek word *eunuch* properly means a *keeper of the bed-chamber* ; and in great houses in the East it was, and still is, customary to have persons appointed to that office, who were themselves incapable of marriage. Tyndale renders the word, in this verse, not *eunuchs*, but *chaste*. And there are eunuchs, who were made eunuchs of men : Sometimes as a punishment ; and sometimes just as a matter of trade and parental economy, or of servile arrangement, to supply the situations which were open to eunuchs, and to eunuchs alone, in the East. And there are eunuchs, who made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake : The reference here is not exclusively, or perhaps even chiefly, to literal mutilation, but to perfect moral restraint, and entire self denial in the direction of marriage. (See Schöttgen's *Horæ Hebraicæ*, in loc.) Origen misunderstood the Saviour's reference, and maimed himself. He that is able to receive, let him receive : Sir John Cheke's version is, *He that can hold this, let him hold it*. He that is able to make room in his being for the pure practice of entire self denial, let him make room for it. But let him, *in the first place*, see to it that he do not thereby turn his spirit into a furnace of unhallowed desires, or a chamber of impure imagery. Let him, *in the second place*, see to it that he do not bind himself by a vow for the unknown future. Let him, *in the third place*, see to it that his aim be high and holy ; that it be for the sake of advancing the interests of the kingdom of heaven. When the Saviour says in the preceding clause, *for the kingdom of heaven's sake*, He does not mean, as Arnoldi supposes, "to make sure of the kingdom of heaven for oneself" (*um sich das Himmelreich zu sichern*). That would be but a small elevation of motive. It might be mere selfish and selfishness, only stretching, long headedly, into eternity. The meaning is, *to be of service in the kingdom of heaven ; to live and labour for its establishment and advancement*. R. Dickinson's free translation of this verse is as follows : *For there are persons of subdued desire by natural constitution ; and there are those who were rendered impotent by men ; and there are others who have practised self restraint in the cause of the kingdom of heaven*.

VER. 13. Then were there brought to Him little children, that He might put His hands on them, and pray : And pray ; that is, and bless them, and invoke on them a blessing from the Divine Father. There would be, in the appearance and demeanour of Jesus, not merely the evidence of transcendent sanctity, but also such a radiation of kindness, and tenderness, and love, that little children would instantly take to Him, and all true motherly mothers too, and such fatherly fathers as were not sophisticated by the demon of prejudice. *The children would like to be touched by Him*. It would be delightful to them to feel His hand upon their heads, as He invoked a blessing on them. (See Gen. xlviii. 14.) And mothers would instinctively be delighted too. But the disciples rebuked them : They chid the little children, as with unsteady steps they pressed near to the Centre of attraction. They chid too those who brought the children. (See

rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom

Mark x. 13.) They chid them all back, and would no doubt address both parties, now directing their remarks to the one class and now to the other: *Keep off there! Keep off, you children! Be considerate, mothers! Why trouble ye the Rabbi with your children? Don't you see that there are scribes and doctors of the law to be attended to! He has more than enough to do, without wasting His precious time on children.*

VER. 14. But Jesus said, Suffer little children: In the original it is, *the little children*, the little children that were there. *Suffer* them; that is, *Let them alone. Let go the little children. Let them come. Off your hands!* The disciples had evidently put forth their hands to restrain the concourse. The word here rendered *suffer* is often rendered *leave*. (Matt. iv. 20, 22; etc.) It means *leave alone*. It is rendered *let alone* in Mark xiv. 6, xv. 30; Luke xiii. 8; John xi. 48, xii. 7. It is rendered *let go* in Mark xi. 6, John xviii. 8. *Suffer* is scarcely the proper term. The Saviour does not ask His disciples' sufferance. Neither does He ask them to condescend to the little ones. *Permit*, too, is not strong enough. Jesus was speaking authoritatively, though no doubt with mild authority. Sir John Cheke's version is admirable, *Let thees childern aloon. And forbid them not*: Literally, *And hinder them not*. So the word is rendered in Luke xi. 52, Acts viii. 36. *To come to Me*: These words are to be connected closely with the immediately preceding expression *hinder them not*, but not with the foregoing expression; and hence it is an error in punctuation to insert a comma after *and hinder them not*, as if *to come unto Me* were to be co-ordinately connected with the two clauses. This comma is properly omitted in the primary edition of 1611. *For of such is the kingdom of heaven*: That is, *For to such the kingdom of heaven belongs. The kingdom of heaven is looked at, for the moment, on the side of its privileges. The privileges, the blessings, the joys, the glories, the honours of the kingdom of heaven belong to such. Such, that is, such little children as these.* This is certainly the most natural interpretation of the reference of the *such*. It is Melancthon's, and Gualther's, and Bengel's, and Heidegger's; Matthew Henry's too, and Dr. Adam Clarke's, and De Wette's (*Es liegt nothwendig in der Handlung Jesu, dass er sich über die Kinder selbst aussprechen muss*). Meyer, however, objects to it, and says that "the kingdom of heaven cannot belong to little children as *such*. See chap. v. 3-16." Hence he would, with many others, interpret the *such* as referring to those *who, in voluntary character, are like little children*. The evangelist "does not say," remarks Euthymius Zigabenus, "*of these is the kingdom of heaven, but of such, that is, of those who imitate the simplicity of these.*" But (1) the word *such* does not naturally exclude a demonstrative reference to the children themselves. (Comp. Matt. ix. 8; Luke ix. 9, xiii. 2; John iv. 23, viii. 5, ix. 16; Acts xxii. 22; Rom. i. 32, ii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. v. 1, 5, 11, xvi. 16; 2 Cor. iii. 12, x. 11, xii. 2, 3, 5; Gal. v. 21, 23; etc.) Then (2) it does not naturally point to persons who were merely *like* to children. It is only once translated *like* in the New Testament, Acts xix. 25, and there freely and inexactly, and indeed improperly. Beausobre and L'Enfant, and Le Clerc, therefore, totally err when they translate the expression before us thus, "for it is to those *who resemble them* that the kingdom of heaven pertains." The same error is committed by De Sacy, Le Cene, Rilliet, Oltamare, in their respective versions.

of heaven. 15 And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

Then (3) it is not the case that little children are incapable of belonging to the Kingdom of heaven. In all earthly kingdoms there are little children; and why should there be none in the heavenly? Little children must be under some spiritual sceptre or other, as soon as they exist. Some one must reign over them, and have a right to them. They must be either in the kingdom of darkness, or in the kingdom of light and of heaven. In which of the two shall we say? If they should die while little children, they must go somewhither; either upwardly or downwardly. Whither? Some king or other must claim them and accord to them the rights and privileges of incipient citizenship. There can be no doubt that they belong to God and His Christ. And indeed it is this fact, that they do belong to God's heavenly kingdom, which constitutes one of the fundamental distinctions that discriminate *the kingdom of heaven*, properly so called, from *the church*, properly so called. It is true indeed, as is indicated by Meyer, that the developed traits of moral character which distinguish the full grown subjects of the kingdom of heaven are not present in little children. But then it is equally true that there is the absence of the character of those who are traitors, rebels, and enemies. And assuredly the favour of their natural Sovereign, the King of kings, will not be denied them until it be morally forfeited. Then (4) it is altogether unnatural to suppose that our Saviour had no interest in the little children themselves, but was exclusively interested, as De Lyra seems to suppose, and Erasmus and others, in older persons of childlike character. Can we suppose that His state of mind, if really unfolded, might have been thus expressed? *Hinder not these little ones from coming unto Me. True, I have no interest in them whatsoever. I am interested only in adults. I have to do as a Sovereign only with adults. My kingdom has no real little children in it. I am not their King. I have no claim on them; and no care of them; and no favours to confer on them. I have no place for them in My kingdom. But yet they are living and lively pictures of the persons in whom I am interested. They serve as mirrors to reflect that character of My subjects which is pleasing in My sight; and by this association of ideas I feel so far interested in them. It is impossible to suppose that our Saviour thought and felt in this manner. His interest in the little children was real, and for their own sakes. It was primary; not merely secondary, and because of the childlikeness of His subjects. If they who are like little children belong to the kingdom of heaven, why should we for a moment doubt that the little children themselves belong to the kingdom? Doubtless they all do. And if that change which men call death happen to them while they are still little children, we may rest assured that it will be to the little ones *life everlasting*. They will not be shut out from the higher province of the kingdom of heaven, when they are snatched away from the lower. Calvin supposes that the expression of *such* embraces, in its reference, both the little children themselves and the childlike adults. So Beza and Zuingli, and Trapp, Martin, Doddridge, Benson, and others. Hofmann also takes the same view. (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, p. 177.) There is not the shadow of objection to the view on doctrinal grounds. But, exegetically, it makes a tangle of the expression.*

VER. 15. And He laid His hands on them: He laid His hands on their heads, and blessed them. He did not merely bless the grown up persons who were like them. He blessed the little ones themselves. He blessed them in prayer for them. See verse 13. He lifted up His loving desires for them into con-

16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?
 17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there*

scious unison with the loving desires of the heart of His Father. Thus we are assured that both Father and Son loved and love the little ones that were there, and all other little ones. And departed thence: After He had completed His far-reaching teaching concerning marriage and occasional celibacy, by adding to it His deep-reaching teaching concerning little children.

VER. 16. And, lo, one approached Him and said, Good Master: The word translated *Master* means *Teacher*, or *Doctor*, or *Rabbi*. The complimentary word *good* prefixed to it was probably inserted in the margin out of Mark (x. 17) and Luke (xviii. 18); and thence in subsequent transcriptions it would come to be read and copied as part of Matthew's own text. It is omitted in the very important manuscripts N B D L, 1, 22; also in the Æthiopic version. And, what is of great weight, Origen, in his *Commentary on Matthew*, omits it. And not only so; he notes expressly, as regards the entire passage (verses 16 and 17) the diversities of reading in the somewhat fuller texts of Mark and Luke. The word should undoubtedly be left out. Griesbach strongly suspected it; and it has been left out by Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Westcott-and-Hort. What good shall I do that I may have eternal life? The question was no doubt honestly put. The rich young man, for such he was (Matthew Henry calls him a *hopeful young gentleman*), spoke out of the fulness of his heart. He was in earnest. He felt that in his youth, and rank, and varied possessions, he had not enough to satisfy the hunger of his heart. He was lifting his eyes toward heaven and eternal life; and, sighing for such higher things, he wished to know what good he would be required to do, how good he would require to become, that he might secure them. Possibly his mind was not discriminating, with nice theological precision, between *title* to eternal glory and *moral meetness* for its enjoyment. Yet doubtless he would be realizing, to some extent at least, that he needed not only atonement and pardon, but, in addition, personal righteousness. How much would be required? That was the purport of his question, *What good must I do?* The question was not necessarily, as Trapp represents it, "a piece of natural popery." It is a question which, in one shape or another, every true Protestant *must* propose.

VER. 17. But He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? This is the reading of Mark (x. 18) and Luke (xviii. 19), a reading which had originally been quoted, by some harmonist, in the margin of Matthew's Gospel, and which thence crept into the text and overlaid Matthew's own reading, which in reality preserves to us another part of our Saviour's remarks to the 'young gentleman.' Matthew's own reading, as exhibited in the manuscripts N B D L, 1, 22, is, *Why askest thou Me concerning the good?* (*τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ;*) This, the true reading, is also exhibited in the Old Latin translation, and in the Vulgate; in Cureton's Syriac too, and the Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. It is likewise expressly noted as Matthew's reading by Origen in his *Commentary*. The great modern critics are agreed in accepting it. The Saviour's question has somewhat the appearance of a repulse. But it was really intended to break a certain remaining incrustation of self elevation and self sufficiency which were characteristic of the young man. The Saviour, as we learn from Mark and Luke, had said to him, *Why callest thou Me good?* And

is none good but one, *that is*, God : but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. 18 He saith unto him, Which ? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, 19 Honour thy father and *thy* mother : and, Thou shalt

now He adds, *Why askest thou Me concerning the good ?* Why come to Me with a question regarding the supreme good ? Why expect Me to be able to give direction on such a subject ? Are you prepared, whatever the true answer to your query may be, meekly to receive it and conscientiously to act according to it ? The emphasis is by no means entirely on the *Me* (*με*, not *ἐμε*). It is chiefly on the expression *concerning the good*. If you wish to know *about the good*, you must rise inquiringly to God. There is none good but one, *that is*, God : Or rather, according to the reading of the manuscripts \aleph B D L, 1, 22, and of Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort, *One there is who is Good* (*εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθός*). One is emphatically good, One is supremely good, One is the supreme Good. Our Saviour refers of course to God ; though, in the remark quoted by Matthew, the words *that is God* are marginal and spurious. See Mark x. 18, Luke xviii. 19. *He who is the Supreme Good for the whole universe is God. And hence that which is the supreme good for every moral creature to do and to be must be learned from God, must be found in the will of God.* The Saviour is not removing the ascription of true Divinity from Himself as Rostaing supposes (*Revelation de la Revelation*, tome ii., p. 494). He is simply directing the young man to the Being whose will exhibits the supreme good for man. But if thou desirest to enter into life—if thou desirest to enter into the true life, into that which is emphatically life (*εἰς τὴν ζωὴν*), into eternal life and glory—keep the commandments : The Saviour catches the prevailing idea in the young man's mind, and lays down the law regarding moral meekness for the enjoyment of eternal life and glory. Personal righteousness is required. (See Matt. v. 6, 20 ; Rom. ii. 13 ; Jas. ii. 24, 26.) And the personal righteousness which is required consists of obedience to the moral commandments of God.

VER. 18. He saith to Him, Which ? Which Divine commandments do you refer to ? The word translated *which* (*ποίας*) refers to the quality rather than to the quantity or individuality of the commandments. Young translates it "What kind ?" It is as if the inquirer had said, *You must doubtless have a special reference to very high and difficult commandments. I should like to know of what kind they are.* He little thought of the depth of reach that was beneath his very feet, or of the breadth and length of reach that went out in all directions around. He was dreaming of far off peculiarities. And Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness : In the original the neuter article (*τῶ*) is inserted after the expression *Jesus said*, and before the specification of the commandments. It is a kind of fingerpost, pointing to what follows. It might be translated with Rotherham, *the following*—.

VER. 19. Honour thy father and thy mother, and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself : In this last clause the Saviour arrests His specification of particulars, and gives the summation of them all, so far as the second table of the moral law is concerned. Our Saviour confines Himself to the second table of the moral law, because, on the one hand, the tables imply one another, at

love thy neighbour as thyself. 20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? 21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go

least in their practical relation to men as men; and because, on the other, He wished to fasten conviction on the conscience of the amiable youth in reference to those very duties in which he thought himself unimpeachable. Even in the lower sphere of ethics, in the sphere of the things that are man-ward, the young man was woefully deficient in "goodness." Prepared he might be to acknowledge his deficiency in the God-ward direction of things, but doubtless he little dreamed that he was a defaulter in relation to his fellow men.

VER. 20. The young man saith to Him, All these things I have observed; what lack I yet? It is too strong in Jerome to say that "he lied." (*Mentitur adulescens.*) But he was certainly looking at the mere letter of the individual precepts instead of realizing the living spirit that animated them all, and which demands more than the mere outward avoidance of the crimes specified. He lost sight of the grand summation of duty with which our Saviour wound up His specification of particular commandments. And hence, instead of looking into the moral essence of the spirit that was actuating him, the state of his heart, he looked back to the details, in piecemeal, of his outward demeanour in his past life. It is because of this peculiar mental standpoint that he said, *All these things I have observed.*

VER. 21. Jesus said to him, If thou desirest to be perfect: If thou desirest to be characterized by full-orbed "goodness," such "perfection" as is fulfilled in love, such "perfection" as assimilates to God, and makes meet for everlasting glory. It is not, of course, metaphysical perfection to which our Saviour is referring. It is not even absolute moral perfection. Such absolute perfection is infinite. He refers to that degree of relative moral perfection that is attainable by finite moral creatures. See chap. v. 48. Go: That is, *Go thy way.* So the word is frequently rendered, as in Matt. v. 24, viii. 4, 13; Mark ii. 11, x. 52. It is rendered *Get thee hence* in chap. iv. 10. *Sell that thou hast:* Or, *Sell thy possessions, Sell thy property.* An injunction that is certainly not binding upon all; for if all were to sell there would be none to buy. Hence we may rest assured that compliance with the injunction is not, in all cases, necessary to the attainment of evangelical perfection. Indeed there is no condition of life more thoroughly instinct with temptations, and therefore more thoroughly antagonistic to the attainment of moral perfection, than absolute pauperism. But the amiable young man was, with all his amiability, in extreme spiritual peril, in consequence of his peculiar state of heart. The Saviour read it at a glance, and perceived that there was one fetter that was enslaving him, the inordinate love of this present world and its possessions. Hence he was not loving his God with all his soul, on the one hand; neither was he, on the other, loving his neighbour as he loved himself. There was in his case it seems but one way of snapping the fetter; and therefore the Saviour said to him, *Sell thy possessions.* Roman Catholic expositors err in regarding our Saviour's words as a mere *counsel of perfection*, which pointed out the road to *supererogatory goodness.* And thus their doctrine of the peculiar merit of *voluntary poverty*, while no doubt having an element in it of what is good and noble, is yet on the whole a baseless fabric, which is ever toppling over on those who try to act according to it. The Saviour's words are certainly not a mere 'counsel.'

and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come and follow me. 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful : for he had great possessions.

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

They are an injunction or command. Neither were they intended to point out to the young man a pathway to a *higher holiness than could be attained by obedience to the moral law*. They were intended simply to clear for him his way to the fulfilment of the moral law. They were not, as Calvin correctly says, *an addition to the moral law, but the probing and discovering of a concealed vice* (*ça a este pour sonder et decouvrir un vice caché*). Hence Dr. Samuel Clarke is off the mark when he supposes "that our Saviour does not seem to have bidden the young man sell his estate, as a thing absolutely necessary to "his being a *good man*; but only as a thing necessary at that time to his being a "preacher of the gospel." It is "false," says Dr. Thomas Cartwright, "that any man can climb a higher stair of perfection than is attained unto by keeping of the law." (*Confutation of Rhemist Glosses on the N. T.*, in loc.) And give to the poor : It was not enough simply to rid himself of his possessions. He must seek to bless with them his needful fellow men. It was in true love to man, as man, as well as in love to God, that he was deficient. And thou shalt have treasure in heaven : Thou shalt not be a loser by thy liberality. Every penny expended by thee will be "lent to the Lord," and will by and by be returned to thee with usury. Thou shalt be graciously rewarded with everlasting glory. The hope of this glory was a becoming motive, though by no means the loftiest of all possible motives. (See chap. v. 29.) And come follow Me : Come, and I shall make use of thee in the noblest of all engagements; while I shall be careful to provide at the same time for all thy minor wants in such a way as shall be at once suitable to thy condition and satisfactory to thy purest desires. *It is not enough for perfection, says Jerome, that riches be despised, the Saviour must be followed.*

VER. 22. But when the young man heard what He said, he went away sorrowful : It is not said that he was angry. He did not regard the Lord as insulting him. His conscience was touched, and he felt that the Lord had laid His hand on the very spot in his soul that was morbid, and morbidly sensitive. But he was grieved; for meanwhile, at least, he was not prepared for the sacrifice enjoined. It is one of the greatest difficulties in the world to do exactly the right thing with riches. For he was one who had great possessions : Or, more literally, with Luther, *many possessions*. He was, as Weizsäcker renders the phrase, *sehr begütert, very wealthy*.

VER. 23. But Jesus said to His disciples, Verily I say to you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven : *Hardly*, that is, *with difficulty*. Tyndale's version of the saying is, *yt is harde for a ryche man to enter into the kyngdome of heaven*. "Who ever heard," exclaims Paulus de Palacio, "such theology? It was unknown," he adds, "to the Stoics. It was unknown to the Platonics. It was unknown to the Peripatetics." It is true theology, nevertheless. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to deal conscientiously with riches, that is, to *keep a good conscience and be rich*. It is easy to be rich and honest, in the human plane of things. But to take up

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into

riches to the higher plane, in which the will and wish of God are recognised and adopted as the rule of life, and consequently as the rule of giving and of keeping, is one of the severest possible tests to which the human heart can be subjected. (*Periculosissima res est habere divitias*: Zuingli.) *Happy is the man of opulence who does not shrink from ascending to that platform.* He has learned the true secret of happiness, as well as the true nature of holiness and of usefulness.

VER. 24. And again I say to you: The idea requires stroke upon stroke to impress it. There is danger of the mind wishing to get too speedily from under it. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle—or, according to the German representation, *through the ear of a needle*—than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God: A graphic and striking way of representing a very great difficulty. So far indeed as the letter of the representation is concerned, the language is hyperbolic, as is the case with multitudes of popular graphic expressions. (*Dificultatem exaggerat*: Melancthon.) This fine pictorial boldness of representation has, however, proved a stumbling-block to some prosaic souls; and hence they have contended that our Saviour is representing an absolute impossibility. Even Lange is of this opinion; and thus he has to tamper with another part of the phraseology, the expression *a rich man*, and force upon it an exaggerated meaning, which involves a greater hyperbole of exegesis than that which he seeks to avoid. He has to make it mean *a man whose god is gold*. Others have turned the word for camel, *camēlos*, into *camilos*, that it might signify *a cable*: which seemed to them to reduce the hyperbole: or else they have regarded the word *camēlos* as itself bearing the meaning of *cable*. Theophylact and Euthymius Zigabenus mention this opinion; and Castellio acts upon it in his version. Heubner too assumes that the word means *a rope of camel's hair*. But there is no evidence that *camēlos* ever meant *cable*. And as for *camilos*, it seems to have been a word coined for the nonce, invented out of the difficulty which was prosaically felt in the Saviour's saying before us. We have no higher authority for it than Suidas and the scholiast on Aristophanes. And yet M. Roustaing, writing "mediumistically," as he avers, and *at the dictation of Matthew himself and the other evangelists*, gives the expression alternatively thus, "a camel or a cable"! (*un chameau ou un câble*.) Matthew, it seems, is now, according to M. Roustaing, in doubt as to the meaning of his own language! (*Les Évangiles expliqués par les Évangélistes*, tome ii., p. 596.) Lord Nugent, in his *Lands Classical and Sacred*, i. 326, gives another interpretation to the expression. He says: "We were proceeding through a double gateway, such as is seen in so many of the old eastern cities, and even in some of the modern; one wide-arched road, and another narrow one by the side, through the latter of which persons on foot generally pass, to avoid the chance of being jostled or crushed by the beasts of burden coming through the main gateway. We met a caravan of loaded camels thronging the passage. The drivers cried out to my two companions and myself, desiring us to betake ourselves for safety to the gate with the smaller arch, calling it *Es Summ el Kayût*, the hole or eye of the needle. If, (as on inquiry since I am inclined to believe,) this name is applied, not to this gate in Hebron only, but generally in cities where there is a footway entrance by the side of the larger one, it may

the kingdom of God. 25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

“perhaps give an easy and simple solution of what in the text (Mark x. 25) “has appeared to some to be a strained metaphor; whereas that of the “entrance gate, low and narrow, through which the sumpter camel cannot be “made to pass unless with great difficulty, and stripped of all the encumbrances of his load, his trappings, and his merchandise, may seem to illustrate “more clearly the foregoing verse, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter “into the kingdom of God!*” (See Kitto’s *Pictorial Bible*, in loc.) It is not likely, however, that our Saviour referred to this side gate. For (1) the moral difficulty represented would be too feebly illustrated. The difficulty would appear too slight. (2) Unless the Saviour had been standing near such a side gate, or pointing to it, His reference would have been obscure, inasmuch as the expression does not naturally denote such a gateway, and does naturally denote just the eye of a needle. (3) The hyperbole is but transferred; for why should a side gateway be hyperbolically designated *the eye of the needle*? If there be any consideration to legitimate the designation, that very consideration will legitimate, at first hand, the Saviour’s graphic application of the proverb. (4) The phrase, says Lightfoot, was “used in the schools, to intimate a thing very unusual and very difficult.” It was a fine bold proverbial sort of phrase. Lightfoot gives instances from the rabbinical writers of the corresponding expression, *an elephant going through the eye of a needle*.

VER. 25. But when the disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? For it is not the rich only who are tempted to inordinate affections in relation to riches, and the things which riches can acquire. The poorest of the poor may have, and very often have, the very same temptations, and the very same inordinate affections. The world may be as much in the heart of the poor man who longs to get its honours and pleasures, as in the heart of the rich man who longs to keep hold of them, or to get more and more of them. It is not needful that a man be wallowing in actual wealth, before he is able to wallow in *the love of money*, which is to such an extent *the root of evil*. Hence the anxious inquiry of the disciples. John Mills, in his *Three Months’ Residence at Nablus*, says of the Arabs, and of the whole people of Palestine and of the East generally: “The first and most prominent of all their traits of character is *the love “of money*. It is sometimes said,” he adds, “that Mammon is only worshipped in commercial countries; but this is a great mistake. He is a “universal god. He has too many devotees at home; but none of the “human race seem more devout in his service than the Arabs,” and the other peoples in Palestine. “To obtain money, they will work—but not “too hard, and beg, and lie, and pilfer,—in fact, they will do anything “and everything.” “So deep is the love of money that honourable transactions are all but unknown amongst them.” (Pages 165, 166.) Who then can be saved (from final and irretrievable woe, from the wrath to come), when almost all are such ardent worshippers of the golden god?

VER. 26. But Jesus looking on them—fixing His eyes on them lovingly, earnestly, penetratingly; not only that He might arouse and concentrate their attention, but also that they, on their part, looking back into His heart through His eyes, might realize how profoundly He felt what He was about to utter—

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible.

27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee ; what shall we have there-

said to them, With men this is impossible : That is, *On the part of men, and so far as their power and resources are concerned, salvation is an utter impossibility.* The expression *with men* does not mean, as Fritzsche supposes, *in the judgement of men.* The Saviour knew well that men in general were not judging or thinking that riches made it difficult to be saved. That judgement was a Divine thought. In the demonstrative *this* there is a reference to the salvation of *men in general.* The Saviour is not now referring to rich men only. His remark is in answer to the query, *Who then can be saved?* No man anywhere, He replies, could be saved, if his salvation depended on men. Man is far too bad to be thus saved. He is, by a long way, too far gone in creature worship, in Mammon worship, in selfishness, in sin, to be thus saved. Every sin, indeed, has made an impassable gulf between him and salvation. Let him, now that he is a sinner, exert himself to the utmost of his ability ; let him bemoan himself as he may ; let him perform what penances he may ; let him effect what reformations he may ; let him study morals, and practise politics as he may ; all will be utterly unavailing to save. The Saviour is touching on the fundamental element of evangelical truth,—*Man cannot be a saviour to himself ; Men cannot be saviours to one another.* But with God all things are possible : What is utterly impossible to men is possible to God. Not only can He create a world for men. Not only can He create men to inhabit the world, men bearing the impress of His own image. He can do what is far more wonderful and difficult ; He can save men, after they have sinned, and thus succeeded in blurring within their hearts and lives the lineaments of His own moral likeness. He can remake them. He can make them meet for everlasting glory, and lift them up into it ; and He can effect all this without doing violence to any principle of rectitude, or inflicting injury on any interest of moral government. Our Saviour is indefinitely and covertly pointing at, and asserting, the possibility of propitiation for sin, and the consequent possibility of the justification, sanctification, and everlasting glorification of sinners.

VER. 27. Then answered Peter, and said to Him : There was a relation of *responsiveness* in Peter's remark, at once to our Lord's observations regarding the spiritual difficulty occasioned by riches, and to the conduct of the young man who seemed unwilling to part with his worldly possessions. *Lo, we have forsaken all :* *We*, Peter speaks in the name of his fellow apostles as well as of himself. *All :* In the original the word is neuter, *all things.* *We have forsaken all,* or *We have left all.* So the verb is translated in chap. iv. 20, 22. They had abandoned their secular callings, and thus denied themselves to the prosecution of those businesses by means of which worldly possessions might be acquired. They had not indeed so much to give up as the young man ; but what they had, they gave entirely up. *And followed Thee :* See chap. iv. 20, 22. We attached ourselves to Thy person, both outwardly and inwardly. *What shall we have therefore?* Or, more literally, *What then shall be to us ?* Then, in consequence of our compliance with Thy will, and our surrender of our earthly all. Peter has been taken to task, and severely blamed, by doctrinal and practical expositors, for proposing such a question.

fore? 28 And Jesus said unto them, 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. 29

And there certainly is something in it that abundantly bewrays his spiritual imperfection. There was too great eagerness for reward. Arnot somewhat plainly says, "his eye was on the main chance." But still there was transparency of character, and ingenuousness, manifested by the question which he put. And then too it must be borne in mind that regard to reward is right in its own place; although, assuredly, its place ever has been, and must for ever be, as it deserves to be, in a very subordinate sphere of moral motives. See chap. v. 3-12, 29.

VER. 28. And Jesus said to them: He addressed the disciples in general, for He saw that Peter had expressed not his own mind only, but the mind of his brethren too. Verily I say to you, That ye which have followed Me: Or, still more literally, *ye who followed Me*. In the regeneration: Calvin connects these words with the preceding expression, supposing that they refer to the new order of things which was inaugurated by the first advent of our Lord. In harmony with this method of connection, we have in Erasmus's editions of the text a comma after the expression *in the regeneration*, but none before it. The same punctuation is given in Stephens's 1546 edition, and in his fine folio of 1550. But in his 1549 and 1551 editions he reverses the position of the comma, putting it before, not after, the expression. The Elzevirs follow these editions; and so too most succeeding editors. There can be no doubt that they are right. The expression should be connected with what comes after, and not with what goes before. By the *regeneration* our Lord refers, not to the resurrection as such (an opinion entertained by Theophylact, Euthymius Zigabenus, and Palairot); and still less to the new birth of sinners who believe the gospel (an opinion entertained, strange to say, by Paulus, it had a charm for him because it was strange); nor yet to the resurrection of *our Lord* (an opinion entertained by Elsner and Whedon); but to the glorious "restitution of all things," when there shall be "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (See Acts iii. 21, 2 Pet. iii. 13.) This glorious restitution will be like a *second Genesis* of the world. It will be a *new creation*, a *cosmical re-generation*. It will be, as Tyndale renders the expression, *the second generation*; viz. of the heavens and the earth, or of the earth in relation to the heavens. Compare Gen. ii. 4. When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of His glory: Elevated far and for ever above His condition of humiliation; having no veil upon His royalty. He shall reign there from the river to the ends of the earth, and from pole to pole. See Psalm lxxii. *The throne of His glory* is the throne on which He will display His glory, as the kingliest of kings. Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones: Ye shall be His royal assessors. See Luke xxii. 29, 30; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. i. 6, v. 10. Your humiliation, like His, will be ended; and ye shall be exalted to your appropriate royal dignity. Ye shall have risen from the cross to the crown. *Ye shall sit*, that is, *ye shall take your seats, upon twelve thrones*: But what of Judas? The Saviour's promise was conditional. Compare Mark xvi. 16. It was conditioned on real *following*, and perseverance in it. If Judas should fail, his place could and would be supplied. It was true possessors of discipleship, as distinguished from mere professors, who were to inherit the promise. Judging the twelve tribes of Israel: We see here the rela-

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my

tion between the number of the apostles and the number of the tribes of Israel. But the tribes of Israel were but provisionally isolated. They were really the first fruits and representatives of all the other tribes of mankind, "all the families of the earth." See Gen. xii. 3, xxviii. 14; Ps. lxxii. 17; Acts iii. 25; Rom. iv. 11, 17; Gal. iii. 8, 14. In the regeneration, the whole inhabitants of the earth shall be Israel, Israelites indeed, the true Israel, the peculiar people of God, the holy nation, the new mankind, the true Jews who are Jews inwardly. (See Rom. ii. 28, 29.) *Judging*: Performing the greatest and noblest function of royalty; adjusting, cooperatively with Christ, all those relations of man to man, on which peace, prosperity, and bliss depend. See Isa. ii. 4; Matt. xii. 8, 20. Such is the highest normal aim of the judicial function. The condemnation of the finally impenitent will be the least part of the judging that is here referred to. (See 1 Cor. vi. 2.) It may be indispensable. It will be indispensable. Christ, the supreme Judge, will not shrink from the painful duty; and when His sentence goes forth, it will elicit the responsive accessory verdict of all the good and true. But the judging here referred to is the judicial element that is essential to reigning. He who would reign well must *judge*, and *judge wisely*.

VER. 29. And every one who has forsaken houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands: In the preceding verse there is specific reference to the apostles; in this the reference is widened out to a larger circle of followers. It embraces all those who, in their hearts, are ready to renounce, if need be, all earthly possessions and friendships, for Christ's sake. There is considerable diversity, in the manuscripts and versions, as regards the arrangement of some of the clauses. In some authorities the word *houses* comes last instead of first; Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Alford read it so. Again, in the Vatican and Cambridge manuscripts, and some other authorities, the clause *or wife* is omitted altogether; and of this omission Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and Westcott-and-Hort approve. But in a case like the present such variations are of no exegetical moment. The principle enunciated by our Lord is unaffected. For My name's sake: Because of attachment to Me. The Saviour knew that they could not have this attachment apart from His *name*. They could not love Him, or even know Him, if they did not mentally discriminate Him; and mental discrimination is inward naming. When the mental discrimination is expressed to others, the naming, whether audible or visible, simply passes from the inward to the outward. (See chap. xviii. 20.) Shall receive a hundredfold: Instead of a *hundredfold* it is *manifold* (πολλαπλασιονα) in the Vatican manuscript, as also in that manuscript in Paris which is labelled L; and in the Sahidic version, and the Jerusalem Syriac. Origen too, and Eusebius, and Cyril of Alexandria read *manifold*. Lachmann adopted the reading into the text; and so Tischendorf, and Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort. Meyer and Alford approve. But unadvisedly, we presume. It is as easy, to say the least, to suppose that such a reading might be originally a generic explanation, in the margin, of the specific *hundredfold* found in the text, as it is to suppose that *hundredfold*, the undisputed reading in Mark x. 30, was at first put marginally over against Matthew's *manifold*, and then by-and-by drawn into the text, till it superseded the original reading. We believe that *hundredfold* was Matthew's word. It is

name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

supported by the Sinaitic, the Ephraemi, and the Cambridge manuscripts (that is N C D), and all the rest of the uncials, with the two exceptions specified, as well as by the whole body of the cursive manuscripts; and by the Italic, Vulgate, and Coptic versions, as also by the Peshito, Philoxenian, and Curetonian Syriac. It is true however that *hundredfold* just means *manifold*; only it is more specifically graphic. The believer who loses friends or possessions for Christ's sake will receive in return, even in this life, manifold more in kind, though on a higher plane. See Mark x. 30; and compare Matt. xii. 47-50. He shall receive *in kind*, or at least, as Matthew Henry remarks, *in kindness*. He shall be far richer in friendships of the noblest description, and in all the conditions of weal or of wealth that are fitted to make friendships delightful. "Cent. for cent. is great profit," says Matthew Henry. "What then is a hundred to one?" But the subject must be looked at, not from below, but from above. The emperor Julian, poor soul, looked at it from beneath, and emitted some small ill-favoured jests over his own conception. And shall inherit eternal life: That will be the crowning consummation of reward, and glory, and bliss.

VER. 30. Barnes would have begun a new chapter with this verse. But inaccurately; for it is very closely connected with what goes immediately before, and is indeed intended to throw a modifying light on the expectations that might be stirred in the disciples' minds by the promises of verses 28 and 29. But many who are first shall be last, and many last shall be first: A far-reaching apophthegm, more especially in its relation to things social. It is often verified in earthly as well as in heavenly society. Our Saviour, as it were, says to His disciples: *Take heed to yourselves, that ye do not form exaggerated notions of the blessings and honours which are awaiting such of you as are My true followers. There will be abundance of blessing and honour for all. But do not think too much of relative superiority to others, and of posts of glory that will exalt you above your spiritual brethren of other places and other times. You may be apt to misunderstand such subjects. You are apt. But while all who are good shall be glorious, there may be many who will be as glorious as you. Some of them may be more glorious. You are indeed My first personal followers; but some, who will come after you, may equal or excel you. And even although they should not achieve and sacrifice so much, absolutely, as you, for My name and My cause, yet the fault may not be theirs; and hence their reward may not be inferior to yours. Do not then be too confident, or too anxious, in reference to relative superiority in reward.* See the parable of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

THE first sixteen verses of this chapter spring directly out of the last verse of the preceding chapter, and terminate with a repetition of the same apophthegm, an apophthegm of truly fontal significance. The paragraph contains a deeply instructive parable, which many however have found it difficult to interpret. It is, says Unger, "sufficiently difficult" (*De Parabolis*, p. 115). "The parable," says Trench, "stands only second to that of the *Unjust Steward*, if

CHAPTER XX.

1 FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is an* householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vine-

indeed second, in the difficulties which beset it" (*Parables*, ix., p. 162). Honest Neander found it so difficult in its setting, that he actually felt persuaded that it is "joined to the words that precede and follow by a merely accidental link of connection" (*Leben Jesu*, § 241). A variety of monographs have been written upon it; but see in particular Löffler's, one of the most scholarly and masterly of exegetical dissertations. (*Specimen exegeseos sacræ in Explanazione Parabolæ de Patrefamilias et Operariis in Vineâ*: 1726.) Löffler was a relative of Leibnitz, and had in him a loftiness and breadth of intellect, combined with a peculiar faculty of microscopic investigation, that reminds one occasionally of his uncle.

VER. 1. For: The Saviour gives a reason for the apophthegm with which the last chapter concludes. His reason unfolds itself in an illustrative parable. The kingdom of heaven is like a man that is a householder: Or, as Wycliffe has it, *an husband man*. In the actions of this man, actions about to be detailed, we shall find a rough-sketch representation of some important spiritual peculiarities of the kingdom of heaven. As to the expression *kingdom of heaven*, see chap. iii. 2. As to the phrase, *a man, a householder*, see chap. xiii. 24, 27. Who went out early in the morning: Literally, *with the dawn*. A grave difficulty has been imagined, and multitudes of ingenuities have been devised, in reference to this *going out in the morning*. Whence and whither did God *go out*, it has been asked, God who filleth immensity? It is enough to reply, in the first place, that it is not said that God went out. And then, in the second place, when we come to the application of the parable, it will be enough that we find some outgoing of Divine energy, and wisdom, and love. To hire labourers into his vineyard: The *into* is to be accounted for on the principle of a pregnant use of the word *hire*. The labourers were to be *hired* that they might go into the vineyard.

VER. 2. And when he agreed with the labourers for a penny a day: Or, as Purvey, in his revision of Wycliffe's version, gives it, *And whanne the covenant was maad with werk men, of a peny for the dai*. If the article *the* had been inserted before *werk men*, this translation would have been, in more respects than one, superior to our own. The expression rendered *of a peny*, or *for a penny*, is literally *out of a penny*, and intimates that the agreement with the workmen arose *out of* the demand on the one hand, and the promise on the other, of a penny the day. It is *the day*, not *a day*, in the original, for there is no necessary or prominent reference to a succession of days. The *peny* specified was a silver penny, the Roman *denarius*, of about the same value as the Attic *drachm*. It somewhat corresponded to our *shilling*, and constituted, in our Saviour's time, what was regarded as good hire for a day's work. (Comp. Tobit v. 14.) It was, as Wetstein remarks, the pay of a Roman soldier in the time of Tiberius. The denarius was the chief silver coin of the Romans, both in the time of the commonwealth and in the time of the empire. It was equivalent originally to ten Roman 'asses,' and hence its name. But afterwards it was worth sixteen 'asses.' It was translated *penny* in the old Anglo-Saxon

yard. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place, 4 and said unto them ; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and

versions, and by Wycliffe, and by almost all succeeding translators down to the time of our Authorized version, because the principal piece of money current among our Anglo-Saxon forefathers was a small silver coin called a *penig*, *pæning*, *pening*, or *penny*. He sent them into his vineyard : To do their ' *denig*,' as it is called in some parts of Scotland, their *day's work*.

VER. 3. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market place: The third hour of the day corresponded to our common breakfast hour. The Jewish day began with the rising of the sun, and ended with sunset. It always consisted of twelve hours, whether the day was at its longest, as in midsummer, or at its shortest, as in midwinter. Hence the hours varied a little in length at the different seasons of the year ; and thus *the third hour*, the conclusion of the first quarter of the day, would correspond to our nine o'clock a.m. The *market place* was the place of general rendezvous for such as wished to hire or to be hired, as also for loiterers in general, and fruit sellers, and dealers in refreshments, etc. It was sometimes in the heart of a town or hamlet, and sometimes in its outskirts. Morier, in his *Second Journey through Persia*, p. 265, speaks thus of the market place of Hamadan: " Here we observed every morning, before the sun rose, that a numerous band of " peasants were collected with spades in their hands, waiting to be hired for " the day, to work in the surrounding fields. This custom struck me as a most " happy illustration of our Saviour's parable, particularly when, passing by the " same place late in the day, we still found others standing idle, and remem- " bered His words *Why stand ye here all the day idle?* as most applicable ; for, " on putting the very same question to them, they answered us, *Because no man " hath hired us.*" (See *Trench's Parables*, p. 171.) *And saw others standing idle: Others*, who were yet willing to work.

VER. 4. And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you : They do not ask, like Peter and his peers (chap. xix. 27), how much they were to receive, and he does not inform them. They do not bargain like the first workmen (ver. 2). The husbandman allows them to trust him that he would not take any undue advantage of them ; and they trust him. And they went their way : This clause, according to R. Stephens' division of the verses, belongs to ver. 5. It would certainly have been better had Stephens assigned it the place which it occupies in our Authorized English version.

VER. 5. And again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise : *Likewise*, like as he had dealt with those whom he found at the third hour. They too, like their predecessors of the third hour, did not bargain for a certain amount of hire. The sixth and ninth hours, respectively, would be the commencement of the third and fourth quarters of the day, corresponding somewhat to our twelve and three o'clock.

VER. 6. And about the eleventh hour—one hour before the conclusion of the day—he went out, and found others standing idle : There is some doubt whether

saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive. 8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more;

the word *idle* belonged to Matthew's autograph. It is wanting in the manuscripts \aleph B D L, 33, and in many of the Old Latin manuscripts; as also in the Vulgate version, and Cureton's Syriac, and the Sahidic, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions. Mill long ago condemned it as an addition to the inspired text; and his judgement has been very generally approved of. It is a matter of no practical or exegetical moment whether the word be omitted or retained. And saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? We do not need to suppose, and, so far as the parabolic picture is concerned, we should not suppose, that the husbandman had previously offered them employment, which they had declined. At the earlier hours of the day they might have been at some neighbouring market place, or possibly at some part of the extensive market place to which the husbandman had resorted, where they had no opportunity of meeting with him.

VER. 7. They say to him, Because no one hired us: They were wishful to work, and wanted to be engaged. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right ye shall receive: The last clause, *and whatsoever is right ye shall receive*, is omitted by most of the authorities which omit the word *idle* in the preceding verse, and it is left out by the chief modern editors. It was regarded by Griesbach as of very doubtful authority. Beyond all question, however, it exhibits what must at least be mentally supplied in reading the parable.

VER. 8. But when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard: The proprietor, or 'laird' as it were, of the vineyard. The word 'lord' has now risen into a higher platform of usage. Saith to his steward: Or overseer. The word corresponds to the Latin *procurator*, which is Wycliffe's word here. Sir John Cheke has alternatively *depute* or *balie*. Call the labourers, and pay them their wages: The expression denotes the particular remuneration which the husbandman had resolved to give to all the workmen. Beginning from the last until the first: That is, *Beginning with the last* company, and going on, paying set by set, *until the first* come forward and receive their stipulated wages. The lord of the vineyard had an end in view in reversing the natural order in the distribution of 'the pay.' He wished to teach a lesson to 'the first' which he knew they needed to learn.

VER. 9. And when they came who had entered on their work about the eleventh hour, they received each a penny: No doubt to their very great surprise and admiration. What a bountiful master! He does not content himself with bare justice! He indulges in great generosity! He knows that it was not our fault that we had not been engaged earlier, and he allows his compassions to flow over upon us!

VER. 10. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more;

and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13

and they too received each a penny: Or, *the penny apiece*, as it stands in the manuscripts \aleph C L N Z, 33, a reading that has been adopted by Tischendorf and Tregelles. It is more likely however that the article here was the ingenious addition of some ancient possessor of the Gospel, who had pleasure in giving emphasis, in the margin, to *the inevitable penny*. Either reading is admirably graphic; but it is more probable that the emphatic article would be marginally added by a reader than that it should be subtracted.

VER. 11. But when they received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house: The expression *the goodman of the house* is Tyndale's; and descended from him into the Bishops' Bible, and the original Geneva version of 1557, and thenceforward into the Rheims and our Authorized version. In the standard Geneva the expression is, *the master of the house*. In the original it is just the same word that is translated *householder* in ver. 1. *Goodman* was originally a familiar appellation of a husband, having for its counterpart the expression *goodwife*. It is still a custom in some parts of the country for husbands and wives to use these complimentary appellations, both when speaking of, and when speaking to, one another. *Murmured*: Or, *grumbled*. Wycliffe's translation is *grutcheden*, that is, *grudged*, which originally signified *grumbled*.

VER. 12. Saying, These last have wrought but one hour: Or, literally, *These last made one hour*, that is, in English idiom, they *made out one hour*, or, as workpeople in some districts of our country express it, they *put in one hour*. A corresponding idiomatic use of the word *make* occurs in Acts xv. 33, xviii. 23, xx. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 25; Jas. iv. 13. It is also a Latin idiom. Our English translators took another, but less likely, view of the import of the verb. Grimm however, and Wahl, and Fritzsche, and Bolten support it, as well as Drusius and Grotius, all great names. In the margin a different explication of the word is proposed, an explication suggested by Henry Stephens in his *Thesaurus*, and for which Isaac Casaubon contends. (*Note in Nov. Test.*) When duly sifted, it just amounts to the explication we have given. There was a reason, as Löfler remarks, for the peculiar expression. It is to be found in the depreciatory view of the case that was taken by the murmurers. "I think I see 'them,'" says Löfler in a sprightly mood, "first casting their eyes on the 'eleventh hour labourers, and then turning toward the master of the vineyard, 'and as it were saying, *Their work is not worthy of being called work; it was a 'mere consumption of a little time, an hour.'*" And thou madest them equal unto us, who bore the burden of the day, and the scorching heat: Such is the proper relation of the two concluding clauses, a relation lost in our version, but preserved by Wycliffe. By *the burden of the day* is meant *the weight of the day's work*. By *the scorching heat*, or *burning heat*, as the word is rendered in Jas. i. 11, is meant that intense heat of the sun during the midday hours which, in such a country as Palestine, renders outdoor labour peculiarly trying, oppressive, and exhausting. Workmen who live in so temperate a climate as that of Great Britain can have but little conception of the furnace-like fervour of heat to which workmen in Palestine are exposed when the sun is overhead. The

But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take *that* thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what

eleventh hour workmen would be employed only in 'the cool of the day,' the comparatively delightful coolness of the approaching evening.

VER. 13. But he replied to one of them—the individual, no doubt, who had been spokesman for the rest—and said, Friend: An excellent idiomatic translation of the original term. It is *companion* in the Greek, or *comrade*. It is here an appellation of condescension and benevolence, such as was suitable for a superior to employ to an inferior, when speaking benevolently, yet reprehendingly. (Comp. chap. xxii. 12, xxvi. 50.) Heubner gratuitously supposes that it is spoken ironically. I do thee no wrong: Why then blame me? There may be occasion for special gratitude on the part of the other workers. But occasion there can be none for dissatisfaction and grumbling on thy part. Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? It is as if he had said, *Wast thou not careful to get a fixed arrangement with me? Was not a penny the very sum which thou thyself wast desirous to bind me to? I was heartily willing to give it. I have not changed in my willingness.*

VER. 14. Take that thine is, and go thy way: *Take*, or *Take up*, for such is the import of the word. And such is the translation which it frequently receives in our Authorized version. See chap. ix. 6, xiv. 12, 20, xv. 37, xvi. 24, xvii. 27. The word suggests that the wages of the labourer had been laid down for his acceptance, and had been left lying while he was engaged in expressing his grumbling. *That thine is*: Or *thy own*, as Dr. Daniel Scott renders it; or, as the English Revisionists give it, *that which is thine*; that is, *the stipulated wages, to which, as one of the original labourers, thou art entitled in virtue of the contract.* The husbandman recognises the grumbler's right of property in the penny that had been earned. *And go thy way*: "A fearful sentence," says Trapp. But the worthy and ingenious expositor only imagined the fearfulness, by an effort of solemn exegetical ingenuity. The expression simply means, *Go thy way home* (where thou mayest rest and enjoy the benefit of thy wages). But it is my pleasure to give to this last, even as to thee: Howsoever much thou mayest grumble. Scrivener strangely renders the initial particle, *For*. Still more strangely have our Authorized translators omitted to give it any rendering at all. *It is my pleasure to give*. The word expresses *pleasure*, in the primary emotional acceptance of the term *pleasure*. *It pleases me to give*. Not that the volitional idea of *determination* is excluded. The word denotes *will* as well as *wish*, but yet by no means *will* more emphatically than *wish*. (Comp. Matt. vii. 12, ix. 13, xii. 38, xv. 28; Mark ix. 35; Luke v. 39, x. 24, xx. 46.) While the *will*-idea was not absent, the *wish*-idea was prominent and gave colour and character to the *will*-idea. The two elements went interblendingly together. But the unity of the two took its denomination from the strength in consciousness of that element which in general is of peculiar potency in human decisions. *It is my wish (and will) to give unto this last, even as unto thee.*

VER. 15. Or is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? The *Or* was omitted by our translators. But it is significant. The husbandman wishes to shut up the grumbler to an inward acknowledgement of the error of his grumbling; and hence he seeks to shut out his grumbling from every

I will with mine own ? Is thine eye evil, because I am good ?

fastness into which it might betake itself. If the grumbler persisted in objecting to the act of the husbandman, then he must be prepared, if he would be consistent, to object to the general principle under which the particular act was ruled and comprehended, *that it is lawful for a man to do what he pleases in his own affairs*. Hence the *Or*. It is as if the husbandman had said, *Or, if you object to my action in this particular case, are you prepared to carry your objection, consistently, still farther, and to deny that it is lawful for me to do as I wish and choose in my own affairs ? With mine own* : Literally, *In my own*, or, *In the things that are mine*. Sir John Cheke's version is, *in mijn own matters*, a very good translation. Luther's translation was less accurate, *with mine own* ; and hence Tyndale's, and the Geneva, and our Authorized version. The husbandman's question was admirably pertinent, as proposed from the standpoint which was occupied both by himself and by the grumblers. His rights, in his own particular sphere in society, were perfectly definite ; and so were the rights of the grumblers. His money was his own, and not theirs. They had no right to find fault with him for giving as much of it as he pleased to whomsoever he pleased. But when property is looked at from a higher standpoint, and in relation to a higher sphere, it is not the absolute possession of any creature. And hence no creature has an absolute right to do with his property as he pleases. He is bound to consult the pleasure of the Original and Absolute Proprietor. In the case again of this Absolute Proprietor Himself, the question of lawfulness, in relation to His disposal of what is His own, does not, strictly speaking, come in at all. As Original Proprietor, He is not under law. There is no one above Him to be His lawgiver. But yet His will, being will, is merely will, and is hence as truly under an imperative as is the will of any of His creatures, the imperative of His own infinite conscience. No moral being whatever can have a right to be capricious in will. Even an Infinite Being can have no right to do anything that is wrong. To advocate for Him such a right is, in thought, to extinguish within Him, or to ignore in relation to Him, that moral constitution which is the basis of His highest glory. It is impossible to conceive that even God could ever have a right to shut out His own infinite intelligence, and infinite heart, from their legitimate play upon His infinite will. And hence we have no right to suppose that, in those spheres of operation in which there is scope for the play of reason or of love, God ever did, or ever will do, anything at the instance of *mere will*. In all such spheres of operation, He wills to do only what His infinite reason commends to His choice, or what His infinite reason and love, combined, agree in commending. Or is thine eye evil ? Another alternative (?) is undoubtedly the correct reading, and not *et*, as in Stephens). If thou hast nothing to object to the general principle, *that it is lawful for me to do what I please in mine own affairs*, is it the case that thou canst allow thyself to object to my beneficence *because thine eye is evil ?* The *evil eye* here referred to is the *envious eye*, the eye that grudges another's good fortune. It is not in the eye, it is true, that envy has its seat. It lives in the heart. But, when not skilfully schooled, and kept below, by highly elaborated manners, it does mount to the face and look unblushingly out of the eye. Hence the very word. It is the abbreviated English form of the Latin *invidia* ; and the Latin *invidia* suggests, as Lord Bacon remarks, " an ejaculation or irradiation of the eye." (*Essays*.) It denotes such a *looking-in*, with lurid glances, upon another's elevation or superiority, as involves as it were a

thrusting-in of stilettoes of desire. "It is the vilest affection," says Lord Bacon, "and the most depraved; for which cause, it is the proper attribute of the devil." Because I am good: Good in the particular way of being beneficent toward those who seemed, at first sight, to be less fortunate than thyself. But might not the husbandman, it may be asked, have been equally good or beneficent to those labourers who had borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat? If good in virtue of what he did, would he not have been better if he had extended his beneficence, and, when lavish at any rate of his liberality, had given some special acknowledgement or present to those who had performed the largest share of his work? Such questions arise from a misunderstanding of the occasion of the parable. Peter and his fellow apostles were wishing, not only sufficiency, but eminence and pre-eminence, in reward. (Chap. xix. 27.) They were disposed also to found a claim for this pre-eminence on the ground that they had attached themselves to the Lord from the beginning, and had continued with Him all through His career. The Lord graciously signifies to them that their reward would be great. He would be liberal. But was not their desire for pre-eminence but the reverse side of an envious spirit, a spirit that would dislike to see others as fortunate as themselves? Would it have been right to gratify that spirit? Limburg Brouwer supposes, correctly, that it was the design of the parable to put a check upon such selfishness. (*De Parabolis J. Christi*, p. 258.) It might not be the fault of Luther, for instance, that he was not an apostle. Why, then, should Peter grudge that Luther's reward should be as great as his own? It might not be 'Poor Joseph's' fault that he did less work for the Lord than Calvin. Would it then be becoming in Calvin to grudge that Poor Joseph's reward should be as great as his own? If the crucified thief was born and brought up among thieves and scoundrels, and never had heard a kindly word spoken to him by human lips till Jesus Himself addressed him, might not his guilt, while unquestionable and inexcusable, be yet no greater than that of many who have never stolen, but yet have often sinned? And might not the work which, after his conversion, he did in his heart for Christ, have appeared to the eye of Him who sees roots as well as fruits, to be quite as honourable and noble as the fully unfolded work of a Wesley or a Chalmers? Who shall say, Nay? Who then shall object that the thief too should receive his penny? Not Wesley assuredly. Not Chalmers assuredly. Not Poor Joseph, nor Calvin, nor Luther, nor Paul, nor Peter, nor any noble soul. While the lord of the parable is a little sovereign in his sphere, and had a right to do with his own as he pleased, and actually did just as he pleased, we need not for a moment imagine that we honour him by supposing that his pleasure was capricious. It does not detract from his glory to suppose that he had the best of reasons for his good pleasure. May he not have seen the tendency to selfishness on the part of the first labourers? May he not have known that any addition to the penny would have been misunderstood and misused? May he not have known, besides, that if the other labourers got less, they and those depending on them would be severely pinched? and that too without any peculiar fault on their part. Such conjectures are indeed only conjectures. But they are as legitimate on the one hand, and certainly as honouring to the character of the lord of the vineyard on the other, as is the entirely gratuitous conjecture that the husbandman had no good reason at all for his good pleasure. When the parable is applied to the Lord of all, we can rest contentedly in His good pleasure, without knowing the underlying reasons that justify it, just because it is His; just because, that is to say, it is the pleasure of One who is

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last : for many be called, but few chosen.

infinitely wise and good, and whose pleasure therefore is sure to be infinitely good and wise. He is "too wise to err, too good to be unkind."

VER. 16. So the last shall be first, and the first last : These words are not put by the Lord into the mouth of the husbandman. They are His own application of the parable. He, as it were, says to His disciples, *Thus you have, in the parable which I have just been delivering, an illustration of what I meant when I said (chap. xix. 30) BUT MANY WHO ARE FIRST SHALL BE LAST, AND LAST WHO SHALL BE FIRST. Let the idea sink into your mind, and form the theme of frequent efforts of meditation.* We are not, with Heumann and Scholten (*De Parabolis*, pp. 270, 271), to take the apophthegm absolutely as if it meant, *the last shall in all cases be first, and the first in all cases shall be last.* The meaning, as is manifested at once by the nature of the case, and by the form of expression in chap. xix. 30, evidently is, *In many cases the last shall be first, and the first last.* In many cases the last shall be as the first, and the first shall be as the last. Such is Löffler's key to the expression. In other cases the last shall ascend above the first, and the first shall descend below the last. The apophthegm is, in itself, susceptible of manifold applications. But when viewed in the particular application which the Saviour had in hand, it indicates that, so far as the enjoyment of the everlasting honours or rewards of the kingdom of heaven is concerned, the first disciples of our Lord were not to take for granted that they would be exalted above all their successors. Some of these successors might be made equal to them. Some might even rise above them. Mere priority in the time element of things, or in the quantity element of work, could afford no valid ground for presuming on superior reward. When we rise above the particular sphere of ideas with which the illustrative parable deals, *the quality element of character comes into account.* But the parable itself does not lift us into this sphere. It leaves us simply in the sphere of the negative ideas, that the time consumed in working, and the quantity of work performed, do not determine absolutely the amount of glory that shall be enjoyed. Chrysostom supposed that the calling of the workmen at different *hours* has reference to the different periods of life at which men may be converted,—childhood, youth, manhood, matured manhood, old age. Jerome gave the preference to the same idea. It is too the interpretation of Euthymius Zigabenus. Origen again, followed by Zuingli, Heumann, and many others, imagined that there is a reference to the successive ages of the world, in some such way as the following : the first period extending from Adam to the time of the flood ; the second, from the time of the flood to Abraham ; the third, from Abraham to Moses ; the fourth, from Moses to Christ ; the last, from Christ to the end of the world. Löffler again supposes that the first call of the husbandman has reference to the time of John's ministry ; the second, to the time of Christ's own ministry ; the third, to the time immediately succeeding our Lord's ascension ; the fourth, to the calling of the Samaritans (Acts i. 8) ; and the fifth, to the calling of the Gentiles. Schramm, again, in his *Monograph on the Parable*, supposes the morning call to refer to the time of the ministry of John, Jesus, the apostles, and their early successors ; the third hour he refers to the time of Constantine ; the sixth, to the time of the Waldenses ; the ninth, to the time of Wycliffe ; and the eleventh, to the time of Luther and Calvin. It is needless to specify other imaginative interpretations of the hours in particular, or of the parable in

general. Its applicabilities are almost infinite; and so are the applicabilities of the apophthegm which it illustrates. But is there *grumbling* in heaven? The idea has been a great stumbling-block to many. But the stumbling-block is only imaginary. The grumbling is all on earth, even as the scene of the parable is. Our Lord only wishes to throw into His disciples' minds the thought that it would be a most unseemly thing, were they to be cherishing in their hearts such a desire of pre-eminence as would render His parabolic picture a true picture of their character in that particular. In parables, as Chrysostom wisely remarks, one must not be too curious in giving explanations of every circumstance. When the scope is seized, or 'reaped' as he expresses it, there must be care not to overdo the application of the details (*μηδὲν πολυπραγμονεῖν περαιτέρω*). To overdo in this respect would be to undo. "If 'one,' says Calvin, "should try to discuss with nicety all the details of this parable, his curiosity would be trifling." For many be called, but few chosen: Calvin seems to have suspected that these words had been somehow or other added to the evangelist's autograph. (*A quibusdam inseritur sententia, multi vocati, pauci electi.*) Strange to say, his judgement has the support of two of the most important manuscripts in existence. The words are wanting in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, as also in the Parisian L and the Dublin Z. They are wanting too in the Sahidic and Coptic versions; and in a few other subordinate authorities. Tischendorf in his 1849 edition omitted them, supposing that they had been inserted from Matt. xxii. 14, where they are unquestionably authentic. In his 1859 edition he restored them to the text, under the idea that it is difficult to imagine how they could come to be intruded. Meyer had and has the same idea. But in Tischendorf's eighth edition he has once more rejected them. Westcott-and-Hort approve. With considerable reason, to all appearance. It looks as if the words were the marginal annotation of some early possessor of a manuscript, who imagined, erroneously, that when our Saviour said, *So the last shall be first, and the first last*, He meant that the first would be excluded altogether from the heavenly reward. The same view has been taken of the apophthegm by Gualther, Jansen, Trapp, Dickson; and by Trench too, who says of *the first*, "yet we may say, their reward vanishes in their hand." Hence, in agreement with the ancient annotator, he would interpret the Saviour's idea thus: "Many are called to work in 'God's vineyard; but few retain that temper of spirit, that humility, that entire submission to the righteousness of God, that utter denial of any claim 'as of right on their own part, which will allow them in the end to be partakers 'of His reward.'" (*Parables*, p. 184.) If however the words of our received text be genuine, and if there be any vital connection between their import and the import of the preceding parable, or of the apophthegm that is illustrated by the parable, then we must take Bengel's view of the terms *called* and *chosen*, and suppose that they refer, not to the two classes of the ultimately unsaved and the ultimately saved, but to a distinction into two sections of the one class of the saved. The *chosen*, says he, are "the most excellent of the saved," *the choice ones*, as it were. Wells gives the same interpretation: "Of the *many* that be "called into the church, there are but *few* in comparison that show such true "zeal for the honour and service of God as to deserve to be of the number of "those that are *chosen* to be rewarded with the first or higher degrees of "happiness and glory." Wall took the same view, and was referred to by Bengel. Long before them Gomarus, of Synod-of-Dort notoriety, pleaded for the same interpretation. (*Explicatio loci Matt. xx. 1-17.*) Olearius agrees,

17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, 18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, 19 and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock,

and Wolf, and Köcher, and Barnes. So does Arnot, who says: "The *called* and "the *chosen* are both true disciples of Christ, and heirs of eternal life; and yet "there is some distinction between them. *Chosen* must here mean, what it did "sometimes mean in ancient times, and does often mean still, *the best of their "kind.*" (*The Parables*, ix., p. 216.)

VER. 17. And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem: He was on His last journey to the Holy City, going by the way of Peræa, on the east side of the Jordan. See chap. xix. 1. He took the twelve disciples apart, and in the way said to them. He was going up, with them, to the feast of the passover; and there would doubtless be thronging multitudes, before and behind, journeying on the same errand. In general, the Saviour's little group would get mixed with the crowd; but at times, and for specific purposes, they would cluster together by themselves. At a particular turn in the tide of things, or in the inner tides of the Saviour's own thoughts and feelings, He detached, as we learn from the paragraph before us, the little circle of His chosen followers, and spoke to them apart, as in the succeeding verses. The verb translated *took* means *took to (Himself)*.

VER. 18. Lo, we are going up to Jerusalem: It was thus that the Saviour paved the way, in a beautiful artless manner, for the grave communication He was about to make. Note the expression *going up*. The city of Jerusalem lies near the centre of a broad mountain ridge, which extends from the great plain of Esdraelon on the north to the frontier of the Arabian desert on the south. The ridge attains its greatest elevation about six hours' journey south of Jerusalem, near the city of Hebron. It is there upwards of 3000 English feet above the level of the sea. The highest point of the city of Jerusalem is between 2300 and 2400 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. (*Thrupp's Ancient Jerusalem*, chap. i.) And the Son of Man shall be delivered up to the chief priests and scribes: He does not say by whom; but He is desirous that His disciples should be, as far as possible, forewarned and forearmed. Hence He gave them line upon line on the subject, here a little and there a little. Comp. chap. xvi. 21. As to the *chief priests* and *scribes*, see chap. ii. 4. They should have been the foremost to welcome Him, for in religious and social privileges they were 'the first.' But morally they were 'the last.' And they shall condemn Him to death: The full panorama of His future, till death and beyond it, till the end of the world and beyond it, stood revealed to His eyes. His eyes indeed were as 'flames of fire,' illuminating the scenes on which they gazed; and it was in His own light that He looked and saw. But, though foreseeing all, yet He shrank not from the doom that was awaiting Him.

VER. 19. And shall deliver Him up to the Gentiles: To put their sentence of condemnation into execution. Instead however of simply saying so, the Saviour gives a picture of the process which the Roman authorities would pursue. Hence the triplicity of the immediately succeeding representation. To mock, and to scourge, and to crucify: Acts involving a triple series of agonies, agonies that would be intense in the ratio of the sensitiveness of the nature.

and to scourge, and to crucify *him*; and the third day he shall rise again.

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. 22

It was part of the barbarism of the age to ascend to the act of crucifixion by the stepping stones of mockery and scourging. The ruthlessness of the mob party of the people, the 'roughs,' was gratified by the wanton infliction of such preliminary sufferings. And on the third day He shall be raised up: The Saviour hastens to relieve the darkness of the immediate prospect, by letting in upon the minds of His disciples the day-dawn of the glory that was to follow. It would however be only to a very small degree that they would be able to realize to themselves what He meant. See Luke xviii. 34.

VER. 20. Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached Him: Viz. Salome. Comp. Matt. xxvii. 56 with Mark xv. 40. With her sons: James and John, the *sons of thunder*, possessing apparently fine deep toned voices of commanding power. In Mark's account (x. 35-45) they only are referred to as acting in what is about to be recorded, their mother being shaded out of view. We may hence conclude that the proposal for pre-eminence emanated from themselves, and not from her. They only availed themselves of her mediation, misunderstanding their Lord's affection for her, and supposing perhaps, in some indefinite way, that there was a weak point somewhere in His heart which might be sensitive to her gentle influence. *Worshipping*: That is, *Doing obeisance*, prostrating herself, with her sons, into an attitude of reverential supplication. And begging a certain thing from Him: She would probably present her petition in some such way as the following, *Lord, I have a favour to beg of Thee.*

VER. 21. But He said unto her, What wilt thou? That is, What is it that thou desirest? We see here the emotional element that is prominent in the verb which is so frequently translated by our English word *will*. See on the 14th verse. She saith to Him, Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom: The expression rendered *Grant that* (*εἰρή ἴνα*) means literally *Say, or Speak, in order that*. Salome desired that the Lord should utter a word of authority on the subject, in order that all disputings among the disciples might be foreclosed, and her sons' future pre-eminence secured. The expression, *the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left*, would be, more literally, *one on Thy right hand and one on Thy left*. There is no article in the original before the twofold *one*. And if there be not, in the true reading, which is somewhat doubtful (see Tischendorf), a double *thy*, the single *thy* is certainly so placed that it belongs equally to the *right* and to the *left*. In *Thy kingdom*: Salome was probably expecting, like so many others, that the Lord was about to establish His kingdom 'with observation' and in worldly pomp. She wished that her two sons might have precedence of all other high officials around the throne, and might, while at table for example, have the chief places of honour assigned to them. The first place of honour was the right hand of the sovereign; the second, the left hand. See Josephus, *Ant.* vi. 11: 9.

But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They

VER. 22. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye are asking: Ye: The Lord understood that Salome had been but a maternal mouthpiece to the ambitious desires of her sons, and hence He makes His reply direct to themselves. *Ye do not know what is involved in the petition which ye have just been preferring.* Much was involved in it that concerned their duty, as well as their honour. Much that concerned the most fiery trials. Much that had reference to the rights and privileges of others, whose interests were to be taken into account as well as their own. Of the much that was involved, but very little was comprehended or apprehended by the aspiring disciples. **Are ye able to drink the cup which I am about to drink?** The Saviour seizes upon one element of things, which they were either entirely overlooking, or taking into account only in a most inadequate manner. He, as it were, says: *There are multitudes of things which ye are failing to consider. Are ye, for instance, prepared to drink that bitter draught of contempt, and mockery, and suffering, which I am about to drain to the dregs? Mistake Me not: I am not on My way to unbounded prosperity and applause. I am not on the eve of surrounding Myself with the pomp and popular magnalia of earthly royalty. Deceive not yourselves with delusive anticipations. I am, as I have been telling you (ver. 17-19), on My way to ignominy, obloquy, and the most heartless persecution, and death itself. Are ye able to drink a cup filled with such bitter ingredients as these?* A cup, according to circumstances, may contain either a delicious beverage or a nauseous potion. It is obvious that the contents of the cup referred to by our Lord were of the latter description. When our Lord says, *Are ye able?* He is not intending to moot problems of nice psychological distinctions between willingness and ability. He was speaking freely and popularly, *Have ye counted the cost? Are ye prepared to pay the price? Have ye the moral courage that will be needed? Have ye strength of purpose enough? and strength of principle enough?* In the common text it is added, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? But there is reason to suppose that the words have been added out of Mark. Origen speaks of them as peculiar to Mark, and they are not found in the Sinaitic, Vatican, or Cambridge manuscripts, or in L, Z, 1, 22. Neither are they found in the majority of the manuscripts of the old Latin version; or in the subsequent Vulgate. They are wanting too in Cureton's Syriac version, and in the Sahidic, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions. Others of the fathers likewise, besides Origen, omit them, such as Epiphanius, Damascene, Hilary, Jerome. They are hence omitted from the text in the editions of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort. Meyer approves of the omission. Rightly, we conceive; Matthew's narrative in this case being in some respects an abridgement of Mark's. They say to Him, We are able: Though, in preferring their request, they had not been thinking of the extraordinary trials which would require to be endured ere they would be fit to occupy a very high position in the glory of the kingdom of heaven, yet, when the alternative of such trials was presented to them, they felt their hearts braced up to face them, whatever they might be. They were true men. They were resolved, come what might, to cast in their lot with their Lord, and to endure all that might befall them in His name. They had undoubtedly, however, but very dim ideas of the dreadfulness of the trials. And, although strongly devoted to their Lord, they would,

say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father. 24 And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against

as yet, be apprehending in only an indistinct manner that fountal fulness of grace, out of which they would require to draw, in order that strength might be perfected in their weakness.

VER. 23. He saith to them, My cup ye shall indeed drink: To as great a degree as was possible in the diversity of circumstances. The cup, in both cases, would be one; and it was a cup full of the bitterest ingredients. There would doubtless indeed be special ingredients in its contents as pressed to the lips of our Lord, ingredients that would be unique. (See ver. 28.) There would be something, on the other hand, in their cup, something very bitter, which could never be drunk by our Lord. But in the passage before us the Lord makes no reference to these peculiarities, either on the one side or on the other. He refers exclusively to the draught of sufferings that would be common to both. The next clause in the received text, and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, is omitted by the authorities referred to under the preceding verse, and seems to have been originally added in the margin, out of Mark, by some early harmonist. The omission or insertion is a matter of no practical moment. In the one case we have a single, in the other we have a duplicate, representation, in peculiarly graphic terms, of peculiar trial. But to sit on My right and on My left, is not Mine to give: Our Lord means that such dignities as His disciples desired would not, and could not, be conferred in a capricious way. Their enjoyment would not, and could not, be secured by a mere act of the sovereign's pleasure. There could be no scope, in such high matters, for personal favouritism, apart from principle; and still less for caprice of will. It was in vain therefore for any to attempt to steal a march on their fellow servants. But it shall be given to them for whom it has been prepared by My Father: When the coveted dignity is given by Him who is at once Sovereign and Saviour, it will be given, not out of His mere will, but to those for whom it has been Divinely prepared. And it has been Divinely prepared for those who are most worthy, those who have done most, and in heart and will sacrificed most, and suffered most. In the kingdom of heaven there is no chance of the highest posts and dignities being conferred on incompetent or inferior servants. The highest in excellence will be the highest in honour. They who have descended farthest for Christ's sake, and for souls' sakes, will ascend highest toward the right hand and the left of the Lord in glory. It is for such, whether they be apostles, or ordinary preachers, or humble sabbath school teachers, whether they be crowned monarchs, or the lowliest of menials, and among the most obscure of earth's hidden ones, that the highest places have been prepared by the Father in His all-embracing purpose and plan.]

VER. 24. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation in reference to the two brethren: The verb which is rendered *they were moved with indignation* (*ἠγανάκτευσαν*) is admirably translated *they were sore displeased* in chap. xxi. 15. The idea of *soreness* is etymologically inherent in the word. It is also rendered *to be much displeased* in Mark x. 14, 41. The ten had good

the two brethren. 25 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 even as the Son of man came not to be minis-

ground to be dissatisfied and indignant. But their displeasure would not be perfectly pure, unless it was entirely defecated from every element of selfish aspiration.

VER. 25. But Jesus called them to Him, and said. *Them*, the ten and the two, the whole twelve, who might be getting, under the influence of selfish desire and jealousy, into bad and grudging feelings in relation to one another. Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them: The word translated *princes* means *rulers*; and such is its most frequent rendering in our Authorized version. The reference here is not to royal personages, such as kings and emperors, but to their delegates, the governors of provinces or other high functionaries. The expression rendered *exercise dominion over them* conveys, more emphatically than in our rendering, an idea of tyrannical sway. *The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them*. It is the same word that is employed in 1 Pet. v. 3, *neither as being lords over God's heritage*. And they that are great exercise authority upon them: Even the subordinate magistrates, or high officials who are under the rulers, may use imperious authority over the people. The authority referred to by our Lord is such as bears imperiously down upon the people, and unduly depresses them (*κατεξουσιάζουσιν*).

VER. 26. Not so shall it be among you: *Among you*, literally *in you*, that is, *in your circle, in your sphere*, the sphere in which My subjects are found, and in which My will is supreme. But whosoever should wish to be great among you shall be your minister: The phrase *among you* has the same import as in the preceding clause. The expression *shall be* (*ἔσται*), instead of *let him be* (*ἔστω*), is the correct reading, supported by the great body of manuscriptural authorities. *Let him be* had been a marginal explanation. But the future expression *shall be* was idiomatically employed to denote what was imperatively required. It is akin to *must be*. See, for instance, the *shall* in the commandments of the decalogue or the duologue, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc. Within the circle of the kingdom of heaven the loftiest is the lowliest, and the lowliest is the loftiest. He who stoops down to minister steps up as he stoops down. He steps up *by* stepping down. It is so much nobler to do good than to get good. It is so much more glorious to glorify than to be glorified.

VER. 27. And whosoever should wish to be first among you shall be your servant: To be serviceable is a far greater glory, in the moral sphere of things, than to be served. He therefore who is most serviceable is in the sublimest position. He is 'first' in the heavenly method of numbering and adjusting. What an inversion of prevailing ideas on earth! What a turning upside down, and downside up, there has been among men! What a turning downside down, and upside up, there must be, ere all things get into their right places!

VER. 28. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered to, but to minister: He came not to get, but to give. How sublime His idea of His own mission!

tered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

With Him true knighthood, (or *servanthood*), is true kingship! He came to minister, to be a servant, to be serviceable, to be helpful, to scatter blessings out of heaven's cornucopia. *Not to be ministered to*: His mission was one of pure benevolence. It was a *ministry*. He came to distribute, out of His own infinite fulness, to the wants of the needy on earth. *And to give His life a ransom for many*: The Saviour thus mounts at once to the highest act of His mediatorial service; the act that gave character, and point, and aim, to all His other actings. Note the particulars. *He came*: Namely, into the world, from another sphere of being. *To give*: To give up, and to give away. *His life*: His human life; His *soul*, as the word is often rendered; the *life principle* in the humanity which He condescendingly took into union with Himself, when He came; that *life principle* which was the *sensation centre* of His adopted nature. *A ransom for many*: A ransom *instead of many*, (*ἀντὶ*) a ransom that was to be to Him who received it something of the nature of an equivalent; an equivalent for the gain to the stability of His throne, as Moral Governor of the Universe, that would have been got by the condign punishment of the many who were guilty. It is assumed by the Saviour that the punishment of rebellion, and of rebels, *is a gain to the stability of the Sovereign's throne, and to the blissful influence of His moral rule*. The assumption is a fundamental principle in all politics, terrestrial and celestial. It is, nevertheless, likewise assumed that it is transcendently desirable that such punishment, though really merited, should be averted from human rebels, provided it can be averted with safety to the interests of the Divine moral government. It is assumed, in addition, that what Christ came to do, and to give, would be, in the estimation of the Sovereign of the Universe, a sufficient reason for sparing or saving, under certain wise conditions, human lives or souls. It would be an adequate *ransom*; or, as viewed from another standpoint, an adequate *propitiation*; or, *an interposition of such moral value that, in consideration of its extraordinary influence on all the interests of the Universal Empire, rebellion might be safely forgiven*. That the ransom was to be given to God is manifest. (See Eph. v. 2.) There is no other Party who could have a right to it, or who could receive it and act upon it. It would have been God's moral authority which would have suffered loss, had there been saving without ransoming; and hence it must be to God that the ransom was to be paid. The ransom is a ransom, and is so called because of its *value* on the one hand, and because its value was to be available, on the other, for *release* (*λύτρον* from *λύω*). The ransom was to be given, says our Saviour, *for many*: The question of universality, or of non-universality, does not come up. The Saviour's mind is not determining the absolute extent of reach in the Divine intention or desire. "The word *many*," says Calvin wisely, "is not put definitely for a certain number, but for a large number, for 'the Saviour contrasts Himself with all the rest of men (*à tout le reste des hommes*). And in this sense the word is used in Rom. v. 15, where Paul does 'not speak only of a portion of men, but of the whole human race *totum humanum genus complectitur*.'" The Saviour is merely, for the moment, occupying His thoughts with His own single relationship to the multitudinousness of the individuals for whose interests He came. He came not to get multitudes to minister to His single self. He came to minister, in His single self, to multitudes; to minister, in particular, in the way of giving His life

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. 30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out,

a ransom for their souls. If the ransom was to be for some only, it was yet important to bear in mind that the *some* were not *few* but *many*. If it was to be for all, still it was important to bear in mind that the 'all,' unlike many other universalities, were exceedingly multitudinous. *All* the Persons of the Godhead are but three. *They are not many*. But all the persons for whose behoof the Godhead stooped to earth in fashion as a man, and in the form of a servant, are *many*. We know from other passages, such as 1 Tim. ii. 6, that the *many* were *all*. No single soul was passed by.

VER. 29. And as they departed from Jericho: A famous city lying on the route by which our Saviour was approaching Jerusalem. See chap. xix. 1. It was distant from Jerusalem about eighteen Roman miles, and was situated in the midst of an exceedingly fertile basin of country, celebrated for its palms, and roses, and balsams, and other delightfully odoriferous plants. It lay a few miles west of the Jordan. It was called in Old Testament times *the city of palms*, and afterwards *the city of perfumes*. There is not now a single palm to be found in its neighbourhood; though, when Dr. Robinson visited the place in 1838, there was "a solitary palm tree." "The plain is rich," says Dr. Robinson, "and susceptible of easy tillage and abundant irrigation, with a "climate to produce anything. Yet it lies almost desert; and the village is the "most miserable and filthy that we saw in Palestine. The houses, or hovels, "are merely four walls of stones taken from ancient ruins, and loosely thrown "together, with flat roofs of cornstalks or brushwood spread over with gravel. "They stand quite irregularly, and with large intervals; and each has around "it a yard enclosed by a hedge of the dry thorny boughs of the *nũbk*." (*Researches*, vol. ii., § 10, *May* 13.) In our Lord's time, however, Jericho was one of the finest and most important towns of Palestine. It had been extensively adorned by Herod the Great, who made it one of his favourite residences. **A great multitude followed Him:** On their way, along with Him, to the passover feast at Jerusalem.

VER. 30. And two blind men, who were sitting by the way side: Mark (x. 46-52) and Luke (xviii. 35-43), in their records of the miracle that is about to be narrated, make mention of only one man. And Mark records his name, Bartimæus. There is not, however, on this account the shadow of inconsistency. No doubt there would be one man prominent, and probably well known in the locality. The inhabitants of the town had possibly been long familiar with his appearance. Perhaps there was something striking or outstanding in his figure, or manners, or character. But the blind are social, and love one another's society. Often indeed are they shut up to draw together, if they would not be utterly forlorn. Hence, as would appear, there was with the well known Bartimæus, at the time referred to by the evangelists, a companion, who was altogether or comparatively inconspicuous, or unknown. (See chap. ix. 29; and comp. chap. viii. 28.) The expression, *who were sitting by the way side*, is graphic. They were in the place where Bartimæus was wont to take up his position, as he asked alms of the passers by. See Mark x. 46, Luke xviii. 35. It would no doubt be an appropriate spot; warm, but pleasantly shaded too. **When they heard that Jesus was passing by:** Or, more literally, *Jesus is passing*

saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David. 31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their

by: The demonstrative *that* just points to the reported saying, "Jesus is passing by." There was an unusual crowd, and much excitement and commotion. The blind men took notice of it, and had made inquiry as to the cause, and were informed "Jesus is passing by." The *passing by* referred to is connected by Matthew and Mark with our Saviour's *departure from Jericho*, while Luke as explicitly connects it with *His entrance*. The enemies of Christianity have crowded over the variation, as if it were an inexplicable discrepancy, and an irrefragable proof of the untrustworthiness of the evangelical documents. What is to be made of it? Some of the friends of the Gospel say that it is a mere insignificant detail, not worth looking at, of no moral moment at all so far as the real fact of our Lord's miracle is concerned, or so far as anything else of importance is involved. Others submit, as an hypothesis of conciliation, that one blind man may have been cured on the entry into the city, and another on the exit; and hence the reference to the two. We should be disposed, for ourselves, to suppose that, most probably, the blind men, hearing, just as Jesus was passing by, who He was, followed Him, and called out at a distance for mercy. Jesus, in advance, and earnestly engaged it might be in discoursing to the people around Him, might not, at the very first call, pause to attend to the suppliants. Others might have claims of precedence. There might too be a multitude of people intervening. The Saviour moreover might see it to be wise and good to postpone, for a little, compliance with the petition preferred. He might wish, as on many other occasions, to test faith and elicit perseverance. (See chap. ix. 27, 28; xv. 22-28.) Hence the blind men might continue to follow our Lord. If He rested in the heart of the little city, perhaps they took some shorter route to get close to Him as He passed out on the other side, and then they would renew their cry for mercy. Seeing the cure was wrought at the point of emergence, Matthew and Mark made reference only to that consummation of the case. Luke however, having information from other sources, takes note of the case at its chronological commencement, and then finishes off his account of the whole without tracing out in detail the unimportant turns and delays, the sinuosities as it were of incident. We are not bound to prove that such was, or must have been, the real principle of conciliation that brings into harmony the two accounts of the miracle. It is enough that the expositor show that there is a possibility of seeing the unity of the two-sided representation, when the case is looked at from the particular angle of view that has been suggested. Cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David: The compellation employed, in addressing our Lord, is the same that was employed by the other blind men whose case is recorded in chap. ix. 27-31. It was a current appellation of the Messiah. See chap. xv. 22; xxi. 9, 15; xxii. 42. Comp. chap. i. 1. No one could, in consistency with the Old Testament prophecies, be regarded as the Messiah, who was not, in some emphatic manner, *the Son of David*. See Luke iii. 4.

VER. 31. But the multitude rebuked them: Or, *chid them*. In order that they might hold their peace: Their importunity seemed to the multitude to be too great, and the noise perhaps too distracting. Multitudes or crowds are easily swayed, in certain circumstances, either in a sympathetic or in an unsympathetic direction. At times a wave of generosity and compassion passes over the mass, and fills and swells every bosom. At other times every heart seems to

peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David. 32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? 33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. 34 So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

be almost simultaneously petrified or steeled. But they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David: Or, as the words are arranged in \aleph B D L Z, 69, 124, and in the Vulgate, Sahidic, Coptic, Peshito Syriac, Armenian, and Ethiopic versions, *Lord, have mercy on us, Thou Son of David.* Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, adopt this order.

VER. 32. And Jesus, standing still, addressed them, and said, What will ye that I shall do to you? Or, rather, *What wish ye that I should do to you?* See ver. 21. The Saviour no doubt knew right well the particular point of their indefinite petition; but it was well, at once for their own sakes and for the sake of the multitude, that it should be explicitly expressed. The formal expression of it would fitly pave the way for the solemn performance of the miracle.

VER. 33. They say to Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened: Very literally, *In order that our eyes might be opened.* Aim is indicated. It is as if they had said, *In our cry to Thee for mercy, the opening of our eyes is our desire and our aim.* In Curton's Syriac version the answer of the suppliants is given thus, *That our eyes might be opened, and we shall see Thee.* In this last clause we have a specimen of the way in which little marginal observations or annotations by and by creep into the text.

VER. 34. And Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes: *Moved with compassion* is the translation that is given to the word in chap. xviii. 27. The tenderness of the Saviour's heart would doubtless be tremulously mirrored in His face. Meyer correctly notes that Matthew alone makes mention of the Lord's *touch*, as the antecedent of the cure; but when he adds that, according to the other evangelists, the cure was effected through the Lord's word *alone*, he unwarrantably surrenders himself to a gratuitous imagining of discrepancy. The other evangelists employ no expression which implies that there was no touching. Nothing is more congruous than the two representations. They but exhibit two sides of a complex transaction, beautiful in its complexity. And immediately their eyes looked up, and they followed Him: It was, as Pressensé says, *sublime aims* which they received from the Saviour (*magnifique aumône du Christ.*—JÉSUS CHRIST, v. 1, § 1, p. 544), and their gratitude was profound. In the manuscripts \aleph B D L Z, and in a large proportion of the ancient versions, the expression *their eyes* is omitted; and it has been left out by Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort. The two concluding clauses of the verse would then run thus, and *immediately they received their sight and followed Him*, or, more literally, *and immediately they looked up, and followed Him.* There is something peculiarly interesting in the expression *looked up*. It would be natural to turn the restored eyeballs, first of all, toward the frontal region of light. Such a direction upward would be doubly natural, when the gift of sight was consciously received as from Above.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 AND when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2 saying unto them, Go into the village over

CHAPTER XXI.

WE now enter upon the crowded and peculiarly solemn events of the *great week* of our Saviour's career, His *last week, the passion week*.

VER. 1. And when they drew nigh to Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage: Or *Beth-fagé*, as Wycliffe gives it; not *Beth-page* as it is sometimes mispronounced. In the Rheims version it is, not unhappily, spelled *Bethphagee*. It was a hamlet or 'clachan' (Jerome speaks of it as a *viculus*), near to Bethany, and lying on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives. No vestige of it, apparently, now remains. Sæwull, who visited the locality in the year 1102, says, "nearly all traces of it have disappeared." Sir John Maundeville visited it in the year 1322, and speaks of it as "three bow-shots" from the Ascension peak of Olivet (Wright's *Early Travels in Palestine*, pp. 44, 177). The word *Beth-fagé* means etymologically *House of green figs*, just as Bethany means *House of dates*. Porter supposes that Bethfagé and Bethany may have been only different parts of one straggling village. "It appears to me," says he, "from the way in which the two names are used in the Gospels, that they "were probably applied to *different quarters of the same village*, the one called "Bethphage from the fig orchards adjoining it, and the other Bethany from its "palm trees." (*Handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 180.) To the mount of Olives: The situation of *Beth-fagé* is thus geographically indicated by the evangelist; but instead of saying that it lay on, or at, the mount of Olives, he carries forward mentally the verb which he has already employed. They were *come unto the mount of Olives*. This mount of olives, or mount Olivet, as Tyndale here renders it, bounds Jerusalem on the east, and rises considerably higher than mount Zion. It is the only one of all "the mountains standing round about Jerusalem," which comes quite close to the city. It is more of a ridge than a mountain, and has four distinct summits, from the loftiest of which a magnificent view is commanded at once of the city on the western side, and of the wilderness of Judæa, the course of the Jordan, and the towering mountains of Moab, on the other or eastern side. "The olives and olive yards," says Dean Stanley, "from which it derived its name, must in earlier times "have clothed it more completely than at present. Now it is only in the "deeper or more secluded slope, leading up to the northernmost summit, that "those venerable trees spread into anything like a forest." (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. iii., p. 186.) Then sent Jesus two disciples: *Then*, for it was now time to complete the simple arrangements which were needed for His seemingly public entrance into the city where His Father's earthly house was situated.

VER. 2. Saying to them, Go into the village that is over against you: That is, into *Bethphage* as most suppose, including Thrupp (*Ancient Jerusalem*, p. 218). But Porter takes a different view. He says: "Knowing what was before "Him, it was natural Jesus should take the main road. Soon after leaving "Bethany (and Bethphage), that road meets a ravine. From its brow the top "of Zion is seen, but the rest of the city is hid by an intervening ridge; and

against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me. 3 And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

"just opposite the point where the first view of Zion is gained, on the other "side of the ravine, are the remains of an ancient village. Is not this the "spot where Jesus said to the two disciples, *Go into the village over against "you?* The main road turns sharply to the right, descends obliquely to the "bottom of the ravine, and then turning to the left ascends to the top of the "opposite ridge, a short distance above the ruined village. The two disciples "could cross the ravine direct, in a minute or two, while the procession would "take some time in slowly winding round the road." (*Handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 180.) And straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: Matthew is the only one of the evangelists who mentions the mother ass, in addition to the colt. It is an interesting detail, derived evidently from actual observation. The Saviour saw from afar, in the light of His own spirit, all that was within the village. His was true and unlimited *clairvoyance*. Hence He had no misgivings in sending the two disciples on their very definite errand. Loose them, and bring them to Me. He speaks with authority. The cattle on a thousand hills were His. He was the great Proprietor. All other owners were but fief-holders, or copy-holders.

VER. 3. And if any one say aught to you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them: Botherham connects the pronoun of *them* with the word *Lord* or *Master*: "*their Master has need.*" Unhappily. The expression *the Lord* is evidently used far more significantly and absolutely. Not that we are to suppose, with Alford, that it is here equivalent to *Jehovah*, as frequently in the Septuagint. This is to bound too high in the opposite direction. And yet the significance of the expression was doubtless intended to be very high. Its height would be fully realized only by the Saviour Himself, and by such as could see as far as Himself. It would also be devoutly and devotedly, though perhaps dimly, realized by the disciples who were to fulfil the commission. The people of the village too, and the owners of the animals, would in all probability be quite prepared to attach an indefinitely high import to the phrase. Porter seems to have apprehended, to a large degree, the true state of the case. "The people "of the village," as he remarks, "saw the procession; they knew its cause; and "were thus prepared to give the ass to the disciples the moment they hear, *The "Lord hath need of him.*" (*Handbook*, p. 180.) We must remember that the minds of multitudes of the people were on the tiptoe of expectation. They were prepared to witness, any day, the sudden arrival of One who would be emphatically entitled to the designation **THE LORD**. *What if this far-famed Nazarene should really be He? Who can tell? He seems too poor indeed. But there is something most remarkable and wonderful about Him. He is good enough; that we are sure of. He looks, too, noble enough. There is an unmistakable halo around Him. But it is, to a great degree, the halo of an impenetrable mystery. Yet may He not after all, and notwithstanding that He is a Nazarene, be the King in disguise?* The disciples, while using the absolute expression *the Lord*, might be pointing, or pointingly looking, in the direction of the intensely excited multitude on the opposite eminence. The owner of the animals would see that there was some unwonted enthusiasm, and something

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 Tell ye the daughter of Zion,

of the nature of a triumphal procession forming itself out of the chaos of the crowd. And straightway he will send them: With his hearty and humble obeisance.

VER. 4. But this came to pass: The evangelist re-transfers himself, in thought, into the middle of the whole scene, as it must have originally opened up to him. He has just begun, indeed, his narration; but his eye embraces in its sweep the entire succeeding details of our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. That it might be fulfilled: The hand of the Divine Administrator had been at work in the giving of the prediction. The hand of the same Divine Administrator was at work in the fulfilling of the prediction. It had been His wish to foretell what would come to pass, in order that bygone generations might be blessed. It was His wish to bring to pass what He had foretold, in order that the fulness of the blessing might be sealed to universal man. Which was spoken by the prophet, saying: The passage referred to is quoted from Zech. ix. 9. It is quoted freely however, and in a condensed form. The evangelist, while quoting it, had been thinking on another Messianic oracle, which goes delightfully abreast with it, and which is contained in Isa. lxii. 11. From this other oracle he adopts the introductory expression, *Tell ye the daughter of Zion*, with which he replaces the introductory expression of Zechariah's oracle, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion*. The evangelist thus was not finical or punctilious in reproducing word for word in his quotation. It was the grand outstanding idea that interested and charmed him.

VER. 5. Tell ye the daughter of Zion: Or, as the phrase is rendered in Isa. lxii. 11, *Say ye to the daughter of Zion*. It is as if heralds were Divinely addressed,—*Speed onward and announce to the daughter of Zion*. Prophets were heralds. Apostles were heralds. All preachers of the gospel are heralds. And indeed whosoever receives the gospel, in the love of it, should immediately act as a herald to those that are around. "Let him that heareth say, Come." By *the daughter of Zion* is meant *the people of Jerusalem*. Zion was the prominent hill of Jerusalem, and gave denomination to the entire city. The people or population of the city were regarded as *the progeny of the place*; and, in accordance with a very widespread peculiarity, the progeny, as viewed collectively, was represented *under a feminine designation*. Hence *daughter*, not *son*. It is on the same principle that we are to account for the name *Britannia*, and the female representation on our coins. Hence too *Italia* and its chief city *Roma* or *Rome*, both of them feminine representations. Hence also *Gallia* or *France*, *Hispania* or *Spain*, *Græcia* or *Greece*,—all feminine representations. So too *Athenai* or *Athens*. In speaking metaphorically of such countries or cities, we still persist in avoiding a masculine personification. We never think of saying in reference to any of them "*his history*," "*his progress*," "*his pre-eminence*," "*his decadence*." We personify in the feminine; "*Italy and her antecedents*," "*France and her prestige*," "*Rome and her arts*," "*Britain and her fleets*." Hence too we have in Scripture *the daughter of Babylon*, and *the daughter of Tyre*, and also, frequently, *the daughter of My people*. Compare the way in which sailors speak of their boats and ships. The ground reason of the representation is to be found, apparently, in a combination of two facts. (1) It was men, as distinguished from women, who had chief

Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, 7 and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them

occasion in primitive parliaments, "palavers," and other assemblies or circumstances, to be speaking of peoples and populations. (2) Both men and women, especially in early times, naturally practised objectivity, passing, that is to say, to the pole that was contrary to that of their own subjectivity, when they ascribed gender to objects that were outstanding in personality, or otherwise remarkable as being prized and loved possessions. Lo, thy King cometh to thee: The Messiah was a king, and came as a king, though His kingliness was after a different model from the kind of kingliness with which men in general were familiar. See chap. xx. 25. *Thy King*: The Messiah was the king of the people of Jerusalem, and of the entire people who lived within the circumference of that circle of which Jerusalem was the centre. But His rights as a king stretched out far beyond, to the ends of the earth; and His coming was, and still is, and will continue to be, in a high and momentous sense, to all. Meek: One prominent feature of His kingliness. Not a fierce and fiery warrior, with his hand itching to grasp the hilt of his falchion, that he might make havoc of all who would not instantly acknowledge his supremacy. His superiority to other kings was in a great degree a superiority in meekness. And seated—or more literally mounted (*ἐπιβεβηκώς*)—upon an ass, even a colt the foal of an ass: The expression *the foal of an ass* is exceedingly primitive in the original (*τὸν ἵπποφυλόν*). It is rendered with remarkable literality by Wycliffe, *the sone of a beest undir yook*. Tyndale's version is, *the fole of an asse used to the yooke*. The Rheims version is analogous, *the fole of her that is used to the yoke*. The original represents the mother ass, not as an animal reserved for the saddle, but as a common draught animal. So unfastidious and lowly was Jesus in the manifestation of His kingliness. He did not seek a war charger, on which to sit. He was contented with an ass, and the foal of a common ass that had been accustomed to the yoke. He chose however the foal, "whereon never man sat" (Mark xi. 2), as a significant indication of His primacy and priority in meekness and humility. He was no one's successor. He stepped into no one's place. None had ever before Him occupied the same position; and hence the firstfruits of all things on earth belonged to Him. The whole representation, as predicted by the prophet and as realized in fact by the Saviour, is sublimely hieroglyphic and typical. It was a pregnant parable in act, setting forth the spiritual peculiarities and dignities and glory of the reign of Christ. It is a reign of peace, humility, and meekness, because of love. The immediate addition to the prediction, as it occurs in Zechariah is suggestive and interesting. "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse (the war-horse) from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and He shall speak peace unto the nations; and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (chap. ix. 10).

VER. 6. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus charged them: They have never in the past found His word to fail, and they were entitled to have confidence that, in the present instance too, all things that He had said would be fulfilled.

VER. 7. And brought the ass: There is no *And* in the original. *They brought*

their clothes, and they set *him* thereon. 8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut

the ass. And the colt, and put on them their garments: Their *abbas*, or *outer robes*; or *cloaks* as the word is rendered in chap. v. 40; an extemporized housing, in default of proper trappings. Doubtless the fittest of the proffered robes would be selected by the officiating disciples. And they set Him thereon: Our translators have followed the reading of Beza, which was also given by Robert Stephens in the last of his four editions, that of 1551. But the reading in his three preceding editions, and *He sat thereon* (ἐπέκθισεν not ἐπέκθισαν), which is also the reading in Erasmus's second edition, that of 1519, is undoubtedly the correct reading. It has been received into the text by Bengel, Griesbach, Matthæi, Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. There would, we may reasonably suppose, be some assisting action on the part of the disciples (comp. Luke xix. 35); but Christ Himself also acted. He took His seat. *Thereon*, or *on them*; literally, *over them, above them* (ἐπάνω αὐτῶν), that is *upon the garments*. This is certainly the most natural interpretation of the expression, though some suppose that the pronoun points to the *ass and its colt*; and Dr. Wells will have it that our Lord rode upon both, "some part of the way on the ass, and some part on the colt." He insists on the matter in a long note! Strauss, as might have been expected, contends for the same reference of the pronoun, and dwells on the subject with characteristic prolixity, that he might turn the whole representation into ridicule. (*Leben*, ii. x., § 110.) So Bruno Bauer. (*Kritik*, iii., § 76.) Others, such as Grotius and Krebs, regard the expression as an instance of the inexact employment of the plural, while only a singular reference is really intended. (Comp. chap. ii. 20.) Le Clerc was of the same opinion, and hence, in his French version, he omits the pronoun altogether, stopping short at the word *above* (*dessus*). In the Vulgate there is the same omission; and hence Wycliffe too has simply *above*. The Syriac translation is interpretative in the same direction, *And they put their clothes upon the colt, and Jesus rode on it*. Alford's opinion coincides; and in vindication of it he remarks, "Thus we say, *The postillion rode on the horses*." Lange thinks that, while our Lord rode only on the colt, He yet in a sense "rode the pair by riding the one." "If we ascribe," he adds, "to the evangelist a symbolical consciousness, this circumstance assumes a lively significance. *The old theocracy runs idly and instinctively by the side of the young church, which has become the true bearer of the Divinity of the Saviour*." Such an idea however, though piquant to the imagination at the first blush, and though true too in its doctrinal and historical substrate, is really, as here intruded, a conceit. Dr. Lange was for the moment riding his favourite hobby of ingenuity. Justin Martyr however, in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, brings out substantially the same idea, interpreting the ass and the colt of the Jews and Gentiles respectively. But the reference of the pronoun *them*, as we have said, is undoubtedly to the *garments*, and not to the *asses*. Both Winer and Meyer agree in this interpretation.

VER. 8. And a very great multitude: Or, more literally, *But the greater part of the crowd*. The expression does not refer to the absolute size of the crowd, but to a large proportional part of it. Spread their own garments—or *cloaks*—in the way: Thus manifesting, extemporizingly, their high idea of the dignity of our Lord. They did not wait till they could provide appropriate tapestry or other cloth; they took off their own outer robes; somewhat on the principle

down branches from the trees, and strowed *them* in the way. 9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he

that actuated the heart of young Sir Walter Raleigh, when, on Queen Elizabeth coming to a miry part of the road, and hesitating for an instant how to step across, he "took off his new plush mantle, and spread it on the ground. Her majesty trod gently over the fair foot-cloth." It was customary, in royal processions, to spread decorative cloth, or carpet, upon the ground, that the feet of royalty might not be defiled, or that dust might not arise. Hence in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus Clytemnestra says :

". . . . But, my loved lord,
 Leave now that car; nor on the bare ground set
 That royal foot, beneath whose mighty tread
 Troy trembled. Haste, ye virgins, to whose care
 This pleasing office is entrusted, spread
 The streets with tapestry; let the ground be covered
 With richest purple, leading to the palace,
 That honour with just state may grace his entry."

(Potter's Translation.)

Dr. Robinson, when speaking of the inhabitants of Bethlehem, who had taken an active part in the rebellion of 1834, mentions an incident which throws some light on the conduct of the multitude who thronged our Lord. "At that time "when some of the inhabitants were already imprisoned, and all were in deep "distress, Mr. Farrar, then English consul at Damascus, was on a visit to "Jerusalem, and had rode out with Mr. Nicolayson to Solomon's Pools. On their "return, as they rose the ascent to enter Bethlehem, hundreds of the people, "male and female, met them, imploring the consul to interfere in their behalf "and afford them his protection; and all at once, by a sort of simultaneous "movement, *they spread their garments in the way before the horses.* The "consul was affected unto tears; but had of course no power to interfere." (*Biblical Researches*, sect. x., vol. ii., p. 162.) And others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed them in the way: *Strawed*, or *strowed*, or *strowed*, that is, *spread*. The verb to *straw*, *strew*, or *strow* (Anglo-Saxon *strowian*), originally meant to *spread*. Hence the name of our *strawberry* plant. The evangelist's word is the same that is rendered *spread* in the preceding clause of the verse. But the tense is different. In the preceding clause it is the aorist; in this,—according to the right reading of the text, though it is not the reading in Tischendorf's latest edition, his eighth,—it is the imperfect; and the word rendered *cut down* is also, and undisputedly, in the imperfect. The idea is, *that the people kept cutting down and spreading branches, twigs, or fronds.* It was a simple and interesting mode of decorating the road and manifesting respect, corresponding to the scattering of flowers, which continues to be a custom in our own and other lands.

VER. 9. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed: The course of people might be regarded as made up of several *crowds*; or, *vice versa*, the several *crowds* might be regarded as constituting one vast *concourse*. Compare the first clause of verse 8. Cried: That is, shouted with loud acclaim. Saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: It was a kind of *holy hurrah*. Had the event occurred in Rome, the shout would probably have been *Io triumphe!* Had it occurred in modern France, the people would have called out *Vive!* The

that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

word *Hosanna* is the Greek form of a Hebrew phrase occurring in Psalm cxviii. 26, and meaning *O save!* It is thus remarkably like the aspiration or petition that is breathed in our national anthem, *God save the Queen!* And as salvation, in its fulness, is just *life*, or *eternal life*, the petition breathed is equivalent to *Live!* or, *Live for ever!* and is thus tantamount, in the original import, to the French *Vive!* and the Italian *Viva!* While, however, the original import of the Hebrew word is *O save!* the term lost, in its current usage, its precise primary idea, and came, like its modern equivalents, to be just a peculiar form of a hearty acclamation, expressive of a mingled combination of approbation, admiration, and desire. *To the Son of David:* This expression points out determinately the Personal Object toward whom the kind wishes were directed which, as involved in an element of approbation and admiration, were represented by the ringing of the word *Hosanna*. Hence the dative *to*. Le Cene and others totally misapprehend the phraseology when they transpose and translate the words thus, *Saying to the Son of David, O save!* Jesus was enthusiastically accepted by the multitudes as the long promised Messianic *Son of David*. See chaps. i. 1, xx. 30. When the minds of the piously inclined among the people were kept free from rabbinical sophistication, the conviction rose natively and naturally to the surface, like the true cream of their thoughts, *that Jesus must be the Messiah*, the long expected Son of David, who would yet assume His great name, and sit right royally on the throne of His father. Blessed (*is*) He that cometh in the name of the Lord: It is better to omit the supplemental *is*. The words are an exclamation and acclamation, *Blessed He who cometh in the name of the Lord!* If a supplement be wished, it should be *Blessed (be) He who cometh in the name of the Lord!* It is a quotation from Psalm cxviii. 26. The evangelist's word for *Blessed* refers to *benediction* (*εὐλογημένος*), and here points up to the highest possible benediction, the benediction of God. It is in the benediction of God that the highest blessedness, which is enjoyable by creatures, is realized. The Messiah was regarded as coming *in the name of the Lord*. He was not to be provided by men, to deal in their behalf with God. He was to be provided by God, to deal in His behalf with men and for men. He was to be the Lord's Vicegerent, and clothed therefore with all the authority of the Lord. *Hosanna in the highest!* There can be no doubt that the expression *in the highest means in the highest places*, that is, *in the heavens*; and this is generally admitted by critics. But the import of the entire acclamation, *Hosanna in the heavens!* is matter of much dispute. The disputing has arisen from forgetting the distinction between the primary import of *Hosanna* and its conventional usage as a mere form of hearty acclamation. We could not say *Hurrah in the heavens!* Neither could the Greeks say *Io triumphe in the heavens!* But the Hebrews could say, most appropriately and beautifully, *Hosanna in the heavens!* They could use such a complex acclamation because (1) *Hosanna* originally means *O save!* and (2) the highest salvation possible is consummated, and must be consummated, *in the heavens*. But when the word *Hosanna*, losing its original supplicatory force, came to be used as a mere acclaiming expression of the highest good feelings, the appended phrase, which owed its peculiar appropriateness to the primary import of the exclamation, just served to intensify, to the highest degree possible, the expression of good wishes. *May the richest blessings of heaven be showered upon thy head!* Grotius thus was not so very far wrong,

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? 11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

when he interpreted the expression as meaning, in a holy kind of way, *three times three!* (*terque quaterque!*) But Baumgarten-Crusius, and many others, quite miss the mark, when they interpret the phrase thus, *O save, Thou who art in the heavens!* Fritzsche too is quite as far wrong, when he interprets thus, *Hosanna! let it be shouted in the heavens!* and Alford, when he explains thus, *May it be also ratified in heaven!*

VER. 10. And when He was come into Jerusalem: Or, as Purvey still more literally gives it, *And whanne He was entrid in to Jerusalem.* All the city was moved: Wycliffe's word is *stirid* (stirred). *Startled* is Rotherham's word. But it is not quite the idea of surprise that is intended, but a profounder groundswell of feeling. The verb is rendered *shaken* in Rev. vi. 13, Heb. xii. 26, Matt. xxviii. 3. The meaning is, that the whole city *was thrown into commotion.* First of all, the streets through which the procession passed would feel the impulse; and thence it would thrill with rapidity into the other parts. The state of indefinite expectancy in which many of the people lived, and which would culminate at their great festivals, made them as tinder, ready to be set into a blaze the moment that a spark alighted on them. Saying: The city is graphically personified, as if its inhabitants had been massed into one municipal personage, having one mind and mouth. Who is this? Such was, naturally, the first expression in which their excitement got vent on the one hand, and by which it fed itself on the other.

VER. 11. And the multitude said: *The multitude*, or, as it is in the original, *the multitudes, the crowds*, that is, the crowds who formed the irregular procession before and behind our Saviour. See verse 9. This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee: In the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts there is a transposition in the order of the principal words, *This is the prophet, Jesus, He from Nazareth of Galilee.* This is probably the original order of the words, and is supported by the Sahidic, Coptic, and Armenian versions; by Origen too, and by Eusebius. It is approved of by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, all of whom have received it into the text. If the other, which is the readier reading in some respects, had been the original reading, it is not likely that it would have been disturbed; while it is natural enough that some early transcriber should have smoothed the original ruggedness, by putting *Jesus* before *the prophet*, thinking all the time that he was but restoring the primitive or proper order. We may well suppose, however, that there would be abundant diversity in the expressions employed by the "multitudes." Some would express themselves in one way, some in another. But to the multiplied inquiries of the excited citizens there was a wave of echoing and re-echoing replies to the effect that *This is the prophet—Jesus—He from Nazareth of Galilee.* The enthusiastic crowds would probably, on their way, be talking to each other of the Old Testament representations of the Messiah. And as they could not shut their eyes to the fact that hitherto Jesus had acted more as a fearless speaker for God, than as a manifested monarch, their instincts seem to have led them to define the wonderful Being, to whom they were doing honour, as *the prophet* (who was to be raised up among them, like unto Moses, and who was to speak to them all that the Lord should

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the

command him. See Deut. xviii. 15, 18; John i. 21, vi. 14; Acts iii. 22, vii. 37). Having boldly asserted that He was *the prophet*, they added His common name and His local designation. Probably a majority of themselves would be Galileans, who had come up to the passover feast. (See Geikie, chap. iv., p. 399.)

VER. 12. And Jesus entered into the temple of God: The heart of the theocracy, and the great centre of attraction within the city, especially at festival seasons. The word *temple* is used in its largest latitude, as denoting *the entire sacred enclosure*, on the central summit of which stood the Holy and Most Holy place. And cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple: Such as those who sold and bought sheep for the passover, and cattle for peace offerings, besides wine, and oil, and the other *et-ceteras* connected with sacrifice. All the lambs, that were eaten in families on the passover evening, required to be killed *in the temple*. (See Deut. xvi. 2.) Hence a regular market seems, for convenience sake, to have been established in the spacious *court of the Gentiles*. Our Lord's holy zeal, 'the zeal of His Father's house,' was aroused; and He drove out the impious hucksters. He had performed the same purifying act at an early period of His public career. (See John ii. 14-17.) But, as there had been a reflux of the flood of iniquity, He had to repeat the deed. Such repetition, though the narrative has been nibbled at by Strauss, and by others too of whom better things might have been expected, such as Neander and Pressensé, need not be wondered at until we cease to wonder that the worshippers of Mammon should have marvellously repeated their sacrilegious acts, and should still indeed be repeating them, week by week, month by month, year by year. But why then, it is asked, does Matthew make no reference to the earlier event? We know not, and we do not need to know. But, possibly and probably, the reason may be found in the fact that it did not fall within the scope of his Monograph to make record of our Lord's ministry in Jerusalem and its vicinity, until the period of the closing scenes. So far as our Lord's public life is concerned, Matthew confines himself to what happened in Galilee and the adjoining districts, up to the events of the great crisis. It was no part of his intention to be an annalist of all our Lord's proceedings. And overthrew the tables of the money changers: *Overthrew*; or, as we now say, *overturned*. The money changers followed in the wake of the cattle dealers and the other hucksters, and established their *banks, benches, counters, or boards* as Wycliffe has it, within the same spacious part of the sacred enclosure in which the cattle and the sheep were congregated, *the court of the Gentiles*. The multitudes who came from a distance, and had only foreign money in their purses, could get it conveniently exchanged at these *banks* for the shekels or half shekels of the sanctuary, or for such other coins as were requisite. Such exchange was needed; and there was nothing wrong in the existence of the banks or counters. Neither was there anything wrong in the trade of the bankers or money changers, and in their charge, or "agio," if it had been reasonable, for making the exchanges. (The agio was *kollybos* in Greek, or *kôlbôn* in Hebrew, and hence the name of the money changers). Neither was there anything wrong in cattle dealers collecting, in some convenient place, their sheep and cattle for the accommodation of the worshippers. But there was something profane and sacrilegious

tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13 and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

in turning the very house of God into a common cattle market and banking establishment. The Jews would not have permitted such flagrant secularization and desecration of the courts that were sacred to their own use; but they had such contempt for the Gentiles, that they seemed to think that no great sin was committed in the secularization and desecration of their court, if only members of their own nation could 'turn a penny' by the affair. It was sacerdotal exclusiveness, partiality, bigotry, and haughtiness, in the superlative degree. And hence, in part, the holy indignation of the Saviour. And the seats of them that sold the doves: For the convenience, namely, of mothers or others, who had their humble offerings to present. (See Lev. xii. and xv.) Such doves were needed; but it was infamous to make a market for selling them in the very temple of God.

VER. 13. And saith (λέγει) to them,—doubtless in tones of irresistible authority, and with looks of inexpressible majesty,—It has been written: "Note," says Matthew Henry, "in the reformation of the church the eye must be upon the Scripture, and that must be adhered to." My house shall be called the house of prayer: Or, more literally, *a house of prayer*. The quotation is from a beautiful passage in Isa. lvi. 7, in which there is reference to the privileges vouchsafed to the Gentiles. "Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar: for Mine house shall be called *an house of prayer* for all people." But ye have made it: Or, as the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts give it, *But ye make it (ποιεῖτε)*. The Coptic and Æthiopic versions support the same reading; some other considerable authorities too; and it has been received into the text by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort. A den of thieves: Or, rather, *a den of robbers* (λῃστῶν). It is another word that properly means *thieves* (κλέπται). Both words occur in John x. 1, 8, and are there rightly discriminated in our Authorized version. The term before us is also rightly rendered in John xviii. 40 and 2 Cor. xi. 26. In all other passages it is, unhappily, translated *thieves*. In the passage before us Wycliffe gave *theses*, and the succeeding translators, down to, and inclusive of, the authors of our present version, followed in his wake. The Saviour, in using the expression, refers to Jer. vii. 11; and there the phrase, in the Septuagint, is identical with that of the evangelist. It is however rendered *a den of robbers*. We may reasonably suppose that constructive "robbery" would be perpetrated on purchasers by many of the cattle dealers and money changers. Advantage would be taken of the pressure, hurry, and sacredness of the circumstances to extort exorbitant prices. There would be downright commercial plundering, such as would scarcely anywhere else be paralleled, except among those professional highwaymen who had their haunts in comparatively inaccessible dens or caves. This we may the more readily believe, when we take into account that it is not likely that any but the profane and unprincipled would allow themselves to take sacrilegious advantage, for the sake of commerce, of the house of God. The very priests however, and high priests, must come under condemnation in this

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David! they were sore

matter. From them alone could the right to traffic within the precincts of the sanctuary be obtained. It would be obtained 'for a consideration.' The infamous 'almightiness' of money would thus be recognised by them. There would be payment, 'in cash,' of part of the anticipated plunder. There would thus be robbery, and sacrilegious robbery, incarnated under priestly robes. O shame! Shame that not in Rome only 'all things should be venal!' but that in Jerusalem also, and in the temple of the Lord, all things, even the most sacred things, should have their "price," so that only enough of silver and gold required to be paid in order to obtain licence for any amount of licentiousness!

VER. 14. And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them: A more delightful scene, and doubtless far more congenial to the Saviour's heart. Judgement was His strange act, mercy His delight. The grandeur of His character, amounting not only to the morally sublime, but almost to the morally miraculous in its effects, was indeed displayed in the former scene; but it was displayed, as was needful, on its sterner side. In this there was equal moral grandeur; but it was the grandeur of graciousness and grace.

VER. 15. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did: For, on the clearing of the court, the whole fraternity of officials, and the other frequenters of the sanctuary, in their various resorts or penetralia, would be put into commotion. They would instinctively and inquisitively draw together. Gradually gathering around the Wonder-worker, and yet, from His obvious majesty, keeping at a respectful distance from Him, they would look, and ponder, and confer. The expression *the wonderful things* would include not only the miracles of healing, but also the moral miracle of putting to flight the rude herd of drovers and money changers. Conscience had made cowards of them. And when the Saviour chose to display His majesty, it was not to be resisted. As to *the chief priests and scribes*, see on chap. ii. 4. And the children who were crying in the temple, *Hosanna to the Son of David!* These juvenile shoutings were, no doubt, the echoings of the acclamations with which the Saviour had been greeted all along His procession. A large proportion of the admiring crowd would accompany Him into *the court of the Gentiles*. There they would cheer Him enthusiastically, as He proceeded with the purgation of the sanctuary and the performance of His miracles of mercy. Among the crowd, as was natural, many children would mix themselves. And so soon as they came within the sphere of His influence they would feel their unsophisticated hearts drawn strangely and strongly toward His peerless person, a person in which majesty and meekness so marvellously "kissed each other." (Comp. chaps. xviii. 2, xix. 14.) No wonder therefore that they kept up, with their clear ringing voices, the favourite acclaim, *Hosanna to the Son of David!* (See ver. 9.) It grated however on the ears of the chief priests and scribes. They were sore displeased: Or, as Purvey in his revision of Wycliffe's version has it, *they hadden indignacioun*,—a translation which the word receives from

displeased, 16 and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

our Authorized translators in Matt. xxvi. 8 and Mark xiv. 4. *They were exasperated.* They would be thinking within themselves, and saying to one another,—*What business has that fanatic Galilean to disport Himself here? And then, too, He must have His mob of adorers around Him! Both He and they are a nuisance! The whole place is in an uproar in consequence of their wild and ridiculous ways. It is really most annoying to all respectable people. It is quite insufferable. Is there any quiet way, think you, brother, by which we could contrive to get rid of His disagreeable presence? Let us try.* (See Mark xi. 18.) *We shall draw nearer in the meantime, and speak to Him.*

VER. 16. And they said to Him, Hearest Thou what these are saying? Approaching our Lord, they, as it were, said: *Can it really be the case that you hear what these silly children are shouting, and that you take no means to stop their mouths? The foolish things! They don't know what they are saying. But you surely are too sensible a man to think that you are THE SON OF DAVID, or that it is right to cry HOSANNA to you. It makes a most unseemly uproar, moreover, in this sacred place, where meditation, adoration, and a holy calm should be reigning. Do you hear them? And Jesus saith to them, Yea: Did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou didst perfect praise? The Saviour, in holy majesty, lets them know that He had heard, with not ungrateful ears, the clear ringing acclamations. "Yea," or "Yes." But why is it, He as it were replies, that you assume that the children are acting wrongly and ridiculously? Have you lost faith in your own Scriptures? Do you not read there, "OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS, THOU, O LORD, HAST PERFECTED PRAISE"?* And if such praise, pleasing to the Lord, be perfected from the mouths even of mere babes and sucklings, why should it appear strange that from children more advanced, like these who are round about Me here, there should emanate what is both right in itself and eminently pleasing to the Lord? The Saviour quotes from the second verse of the eighth Psalm, one of the sweetest and deepest of lyrics, having a wonderful Messianic element in its heart. The psalmist breaks forth into intense adoration and admiration of the glory of the Lord, as manifested at once in the constitution of the great universe at large, and, in particular, in the constitution and re-constitution (in Christ) of man. The passage quoted rests on the assumption that even in those first and feeblest elementary articulations of the human being, which are the precursors of subsequent little lisplings and prattlings, there is something that postulates an Infinite Mind operating from above,—something that points upward and praises infinite wisdom, power, and love. The Saviour's quotation and application of the passage involve another assumption still, namely, that in the clear, transparent, ingenuous, unsophisticated utterances of children,—so far as these utterances are really their own, and not stuck into them artificially by their seniors,—there is often more truth to be met with than is to be found in the most elaborate deliverances of the most learned of rabbis, who not infrequently spend the whole summer and autumn of their existence in searching for reasons to support their prejudices, or in weaving veils to conceal their real convictions. *Thou, O Lord, hast perfected praise: Or, still more literally,*

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany ; and he lodged there.

Thou perfectedst praise. The verb in the Hebrew is, *Thou foundedst, or Thou hast founded.* The Greek verb means, *Thou completedst.* In the Hebrew expression reference is made to the *foundation* of a structure ; in the Greek, to its *completion.* The two ideas are harmonious in relation to the structures, or workmanship, of God. What He takes in hand He brings to consummation. And out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He not only originates, He carries on to perfection, what is eminently fitted to praise Himself, and what, as the psalm puts it, has "strength" in it, or power, when it is duly considered, to silence and subdue the adversaries of godliness, even although they may have been to a great extent under the sway of wrathful and embittered or revengeful feelings.

VER. 17. And He left them, and went forth out of the city to Bethany, and lodged there : With whom He lodged we know not, though it is often conjecturally assumed that the house of Lazarus was His home. We rather think, however, that He did not lodge with Lazarus. There is no evidence that He lodged with any one. We learn from Mark (xi. 11) that His twelve disciples accompanied Him ; and they might be too large a following to take with Him to any private dwelling. Luke says that "in the day time He was teaching in the temple, and at night He went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives" (xxi. 37). The verb which Luke employs, rendered *abode*, is the same that is here used by Matthew and rendered *lodged*. It represents a peculiar Hebrew word (לַיָּלָה), which properly means to *pass the night* ; but it gives no hint as to the conditions under which the night is passed. It primarily, indeed, denotes a staying or tarrying in an open or unroofed court or courtyard (אֹרֶחַ), and was hence appropriately employed to represent the idea of *divouacking* ; but in actual usage, in the Septuagint and elsewhere, it is indifferently employed to denote *staying over night*, or *staying* (indefinitely), under any conditions. It is not unlikely that our Saviour and His disciples, like multitudes of others who had come up to the feast, camped out during night on the mount of Olives. This is the opinion of Grotius and Wetstein. The city would be crowded. All the inns or khans would be filled to suffocation. And for centuries it had been customary for the overflowing throngs of strangers to pass the night on Olivet, or some of the other suburbs, in booths or tents. "Of all those thousands on thousands," says Mr. Hepworth Dixon, in reference to those who went up to Jerusalem to the passover, "a few might have friends in Jerusalem who were able to receive them into their houses ; only a few ; the concourse of people being too vast for the whole body of the pilgrims to find shelter within the walls. Every man lodged as it pleased him best. Some got into the poor little hamlets round about ; some pitched their tents on the hill-sides and in the shady glens ; but the thousands on thousands were content with the little green booths, called succoth, a wattle of twigs and leaves, such as Jacob had made for himself in Canaan, and such as the Sharon peasant still builds for his family at the Jerusalem gate." "The men from Galilee are said to have pitched their tents and built their booths on a part of Olivet, a little north of the road leading over its brow ; one of the three mamelons into which the ridge is divided by nature ; a circumstance which is supposed to have led to that mamelon being subsequently known by the name of Galilee hill, or hill of the men of Galilee." (*The Holy Land*, chap. xxi.) Possibly, however,

18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. 19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only,

our Saviour might be under some particular engagement to spend some portion of the evening, on this occasion, with some one or other of His friends in Bethany (comp. Matt. xxvi. 6, Mark xiv. 3); and hence perhaps the specification of *Bethany*, instead of the more indefinite expression *the mount of Olives*. Bethany was a suburban village, "standing," says Thrupp, "in a shallow ravine on the eastern slope of the mount of Olives, to the south-east of the central summit" (*Ancient Jerusalem*, p. 217). It is now called El-'Azirêyeh, from El-'Azir, the Arabic form of the name Lazarus. Dean Stanley describes it thus: "A wild mountain hamlet, screened by an intervening ridge from the view of the top of Olivet" (*Sinai and Palestine*, chap. iii., p. 189). It is, says Porter, "a poor village of some twenty houses, situated in a shallow wady, on the eastern slope of Olivet, and surrounded by broken rocky ground, once carefully terraced, and still containing a few orchards of fig trees. Its distance from Jerusalem is about a mile and a half, corresponding pretty exactly to the fifteen furlongs of the evangelist John (xi. 18)." (*Handbook for Syria*, p. 179.)

VER. 18. But in the morning, as He returned into the city, He hungered: His hungering is pretty good evidence that He had not been staying in the house of Martha and Mary. Most likely He had been much with Himself and with His Father, wrapped up in meditation, rapt up in supplication. "We may conclude from His hunger," says Quesnel, "that His triumph had been followed by fasting and prayer." No doubt His hunger was literal; and yet it would be very imperfectly understood if we did not realize, with Jerome and Gualther, that He willingly submitted to it, because there was beneath it a far deeper spiritual hunger. Hence much of the peculiarity of what follows, a peculiarity that is altogether unintelligible if we look upon the Saviour merely from the outside, and on the outside.

VER. 19. And seeing a single—or *solitary*—fig tree by the way: Literally, *on the way*, that is, *close upon the way*, or *at the side of the way*. But of course we must not think of a *walled way*, or a lane running as it were between "double-dikes." The ways about Jerusalem are unfenced, and mere routes; and no doubt were always so. He came to it: Literally, *He came upon it*. He came up to it; "if haply," says Mark (xi. 13), "He might find anything thereon." Fritzsche ridiculously supposes that the expression means *He climbed it*, assuming without the least shadow of reason that the tree must have been a large one, and also that ocular examination from the ground was not sufficient to determine whether or not there were figs on it; and likewise assuming other unlikelihoods besides. And found nothing thereon, except leaves only: *Thereon*, literally *in it*, that is, *within the compass of the tree*. Purvey's translation is, *ther ynne* (therein). Was He then disappointed? Had He hoped to find what He really failed to get? Such questions raise a case for delicate discrimination. And if any one should attempt to snap asunder the line that separated, in the unity of our Saviour's personality, that which was human from that which was Divine, and still more if any one should ignore altogether the combination of the two elements, and should think only of our Saviour either as man, or as God, he would run rapidly into a tanglement of inconsistencies or inconceivabilities. Our Saviour was human; and was subject to human limita-

tions and sensations. He therefore literally hungered, and no doubt was conscious of desire to have His hunger satisfied. Hence He would approach the conspicuous fig tree with desire. But He was far more than human. There was a glory side to His marvellous personality. And on that side of His being His hunger was not for food. It was hunger for the weal of immortal men. It was a longing for the salvation of the Jews, and of the world. Hence the whole peculiarity of His human life. Hence the whole peculiarity of this His last visit to Jerusalem. Hence His tears as He beheld the city and wept over its impenitence. Hence too His action on the present occasion. *He did not approach the conspicuous fig tree with this spiritual hungering unfelt.* We should utterly misconceive our Saviour, if we conceived of Him thus. He would verify that very morning, we may be sure, His own grand maxim, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." We may reasonably suppose that as He was walking with His disciples toward the city His converse would take colour from the events of the preceding day, and from other solemn events frequently referred to of late (see chaps. xvi. 21, xvii. 22, xx. 17, 18), that were casting their lurid shadows before. He could not indeed ignore His literal hunger. Perhaps His disciples had expressed concern that He should have been fasting so long. Perhaps He had been graciously referring to this concern, and acknowledging the fact that the body was in need of some refreshment. *But, we may suppose Him to have added, My bodily hunger gives Me little concern. I feel in My spirit a far more distressing uneasiness in reference to this people round about Me. My soul has been long hungering for the salvation of Jerusalem, and of all this people. Oh how it is hungering at this moment! What would I not submit to, what would I not suffer, to bring them salvation? And yet they will not accept Me as their Saviour! They are satisfied with their spiritual condition. They think that they are extremely well as they are, and exceedingly religious. They make the most ostentatious profession of holiness; and yet under all this display, AS LUXURIANT AS THOSE LEAVES ON THAT REMARKABLE FIG TREE BEFORE US THERE, they are utterly destitute of the fruits of righteousness!* He may have paused in His observations. His heart may have been too full for further utterance for a few moments. And then He may have resumed: *You have been affectionately expressing your concern in reference to My long fasting. I admit that I feel hunger; though I cannot mention the word without thinking of the deeper hunger in My spirit. But let us go up to that tree. If there be figs upon it, I shall gladly eat one or two, to satisfy My bodily desire. But what think ye? Will there be, do ye suppose, any figs? It is not yet, as ye all well know, the regular time for figs (Mark xi. 13). The heat of summer is needed to ripen them. It will be at least two months yet, ere the first fruits be gathered (Mark xiii. 28). Indeed, none of the other fig trees that we have passed as we came along have as yet put forth their leaves. But this tree we are approaching is remarkably and prematurely umbrageous. It is, so to speak, too forward. Figs in general, as you know, come along with the leaves, or even before the leaves; and hence the existence of the full-grown foliage is, in all ordinary cases, a pledge that fruit is not absent. But, now that we have at length come up to it, you see that there is no fruit at all! The tree, when looked at from a distance, promised us, as it were, abundance of fruit to satisfy our hunger. But lo! there is no fulfilment of its promise. It has gone to leaf. Ah! how like to some peoples! some cities! some persons! In some such strain might the Saviour have been discoursing, on His way up to the tree; and hence what follows. Dr. Kitto says: "This transaction took place a few days before*

and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. .20 And when

“the passover; and, in the year in which our Lord was crucified, the passover “occurred at the beginning of April. But figs do not come to maturity till the “middle or end of June.” (*Pictorial Bible*, in loc.) In certain favourable circumstances, however, there was “the hasty fruit before the summer, which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up,” so much prized was it. (Isa. xxviii. 4.) And saith to it: The Saviour addresses the tree; acting for the moment as if it were possessed of intelligence and responsibility. He thus clearly indicated to His disciples that He was engaged in working out, in their presence, a parable. What He said to the tree He meant to be applied to peoples and persons. Let no more fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever: Or, *Nevermore may there be fruit from thee for ever*. No farther opportunity of fruit bearing was to be vouchsafed. Henceforward it would be “too late, too late.” When peoples or persons fail to improve their day of grace, and bring forth only the leaves of profession without the fruits of righteousness, the fiat must go forth at length, *Cut short the period of probation! Cut down the barren trees! Why cumber they the ground?* See the parable of the barren fig tree in Luke xiii. 6-9. There the parable was spoken; here, with certain incidental modifications, it was acted. And presently the fig tree withered away: *Presently*, or *immediately*, as the word is generally rendered. Wycliffe’s word is *anon*. It is Tyndale’s word too. Sir John Cheke has *bi and bi*, that is, *without any delay*. All of these translations are good; or we may take the word *instantaneously*. The Divine power of our Lord went forth instantaneously for the consummation of His parabolic teaching; and the fig tree withered. A blight fell upon it at once. Its vitality was arrested. The Rheims version has simply *was withered*, instead of *withered away*, which our translators accepted from the Geneva and from Tyndale. There is nothing corresponding to *away* in the original. Wycliffe’s translation is, *was dried up*; Sir John Cheke’s, *was seered*. Some unhappy men, who either could not or would not see the setting of this work of our Lord, its moral foreground and background, and who have persisted and insisted in looking only at the detached act of blasting a fig tree when no fruit was found on it, and that too before the ordinary fruit season had arrived, have either been scandalized at the narrative on the one hand, or have tried to make themselves merry over it on the other. Woolston, for instance, hits at it by remarking that if a Kentish countryman were to seek for fruit in his garden during spring, and were to cut down the trees which had none, he would be a common laughing stock. Very true, we reply, if the Kentish countryman were a gardener, and had just or chiefly the interests of his garden to attend to, and no parables to teach by word or work; and if too there was no anomalous condition in any one of his trees, which either proved it to be useless, or else and at all events afforded a splendid opportunity for teaching a momentous moral lesson, that might be of infinite benefit to his neighbourhood, his country, and the world. Strauss follows in Woolston’s steps, and, to his own melancholy satisfaction, comes to the conclusion that the miracle, “even apart from the question of its physical “impossibility, must be pronounced, more decidedly than any other, to be such “as Jesus cannot really have performed.” (*Life of Christ*, ii. 11, § 104.) Of course He could not, or at least He would not, if the act had been meaningless, or if its meaning were paltry and petty, or if it had indicated a mere childish

the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! 21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into

displeasure. The old pagans, as Augustin tells us (*Contra Faustum*, xxii. 25), used to mock at the deed, and to say that Jesus was "demented" for punishing a fig tree because it had not fruit before its time. Yes, *if* it were the case that He did act as they represented. But what if He did not? What if He did not punish the tree? What if He did not blame it at all for its unfruitfulness? What if He used its peculiar condition merely as a mirror in which, or as the slide of a magic lantern by which, to represent with vividness the blameworthiness of some who were really and greatly blameworthy? Was it folly or dementedness to use nature for the purpose of teaching? Was it wrong or silly to instruct by means of visible symbols or parables? He who says that it is turns upside down the whole system of the universe. He is himself turned upside down. It is he who is acting, and speaking, and thinking, as if he were haunted with a demon of "dementedness."

VER. 20. And when His disciples saw it: Matthew does not tell us when it was that the disciples saw it. It was on the following morning, as we learn from Mark xi. 20. They marvelled, saying, How instantaneously the fig tree withered! They might be saying to one another, *Didn't you notice an instant effect yesterday, just when the Lord spoke? The leaves seemed to droop in a moment. But who would have thought that the withering would have been so complete in a single day? Verily He speaks and it is done. How great His power!*

VER. 21. But Jesus answered and said to them, Verily I say to you, If ye have faith and doubt not; *If ye have faith and be not distracted with doubt.* The word is rendered *stagger* in Rom. iv. 20, and *waver* in Jas. i. 6. Principal Campbell's free translation is, *if ye have an unshaken faith.* It was the duty of the first disciples, and it is ours, to have unwavering faith in the presence, infinite power, and perfect propitiousness of God, and in His readiness to do in us, for us, and by us, everything that infinite love shall prompt and infinite wisdom shall dictate. Ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree: It is a very brief expression in the original, *this thing of the fig tree.* Important in its own place as it is, and full of vast moral significance, it is but a very small affair compared with what may be achieved by you for the weal of the world. But even if ye shall say to this mountain: This lovely *mount of Olives* on which we are now standing, and from which we look down upon that infatuated city toppling on the brink of its doom. Be thou lifted up and cast into the sea, it should come to pass: Faith has removed already greater mountains than this; and many more shall it yet lift aloft and fling far out of sight into the abysses. What mountains of obstacles and obstructions! what mountains of prejudices! what mountains of accumulated evil habits, the debris of ages of unbelief! what 'hills of difficulty,' apparently insurmountable, 'difficulty,' inner, outer, social, political, spiritual! *All these* has faith tossed, and is faith still tossing, away! Faith? It was God, it is God, who was and is before the faith, and behind it too, who did the deeds of old, and whose hand is not wearied yet. If the removal of Olivet itself be needed, or of any other

the sea; it shall be done. 22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and

mountain, material or spiritual, He is still ready to put His finger on its peak and it will leap from its socket. See chap. xvii. 20.

VER. 22. And all things whatsoever ye may ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive: *In prayer*, very literally *in the prayer*, that is, *in the prayer which I take for granted ye will present when ye wish anything*. Our Saviour gives a *carte blanche* to His disciples, and authorizes them to draw on His Father to any amount. Whatsoever they ask, *believing*, that is, *believing that for Christ's sake they shall be heard and receive*, shall be given to them or done for them. Is it not too large a promise? So many have thought. Has it always been fulfilled? Many have said that it has not. But in saying so they know not what they say. *The promise is not too large. It has always been fulfilled, and it always will be.* What? "If I ask a mine of wealth, for instance?" If "I"? If who? A humble, holy believer? whose deepest, highest, all-absorbing desire is that God's will be done? If such a one ever asked a mine of wealth, he never asked it giddily, or unconditionally, or for selfish purposes. He never so asked it as to feel that it was *the real object of his heart's desire*. That which he did ask, the real object of his holy heart's desire, he always got. "If I ask health, shall I get it?" Yes, if you be a true believer, merging your will in Christ's will, and therefore not wishing health for one moment if it would be a curse to you or to others, or if it would stand in the way of a greater blessing, either on earth or in heaven. What you really wish, *if your wish has merged itself in the wish of Christ and of your Father*, you always will get when you present your wish at the throne of grace.

VER. 23. And when He was come into the temple: Where, during the pass-over week, there was sure to be a great concourse of the devoutest class of people, as well as troops of sight-seers, and traders, and loungers. The chief priests and the elders of the people approached Him as He was teaching: And no doubt there would be scribes along with them. See Mark xi. 27, Luke xx. 1; comp. Matt. xxi. 15. No doubt, too, they had been more or less formally deputed by the sanhedrin, or at least by those who had high authority in the sanhedrin. Compare John i. 19. It seemed to some of the great ones to be high time to take some steps to crush the Galilean. *If they did not, would not the whole affairs of the temple and of the religion of the people drift out of their hands? Had He not taken upon Himself to receive an ovation from the populace as "the Son of David"? Has He not taken upon Himself to regulate the affairs of the temple as if it were His own, even clearing it of the sacrificial sheep and cattle, and all the honest traders who pay us so liberally for their licence? We must crush Him. But let us go wisely about it, for He is popular.* Such may have been the purport of their inward thoughts and intercommunications. And said, By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave Thee this authority? Such seemed to be the best way to begin the assault. The long-headed recommended it. They were confident that the Galilean's mind was so full of His own high calling that He would at once claim to be acting on Divine authority. *If He do, then let us act cautiously, and we shall soon get Him*

who gave thee this authority? 24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves,

into our clutches. We might say that we were desirous of satisfying ourselves as to the reality of His credentials; and we might invite Him to meet us in sanhedrin assembled; and then, of course, we should take care of His exit. What think you, brethren? "Agreed! Agreed!" The question put to our Lord was twofold. (1.) *By what authority, very literally in what authority, or in what kind of authority* (see chap. xix. 18), that is, in the exercise of what kind of authority, *doest Thou these things?* (2.) *And who gave Thee this authority?* By means of the first part of the question they wished to ascertain whether He would openly profess that His authority to act as He was doing was Divine or merely human. By means of the second part they hoped to push Him into a corner, in which He might feel it rather puzzling to prove that God had overlooked them, His accredited ministers in the matter of the temple and of religion, and conferred upon Him direct such a great authority. Had they been dealing with a fanatic or an impostor, the question would have been like a nail well driven home. The expression *these things* is intentionally indeterminate. The questioners had no doubt a very special reference to *the clearing of the Gentile court*; for that was a matter of 'licence' and lucre. But they did not like to fasten upon it openly, for it was also a matter not of 'licence' only, but of shameless licentiousness, and not of lucre merely, but of "filthy lucre." Hence they merged it out of sight in the mass of the things that He was publicly doing in His own high and heavenly way.

VER. 24. But Jesus—the glance of whose eyes was not to be arrested by any veils, however thickly interwoven with ingenuity and disingenuousness—answered and said to them, I also will ask you one thing: Or, as the expression is rendered in Mark xi. 29, and here by the Revisionists, *one question*. In the original it is *one word*; and that is the rendering of the Rheims version, and of Wycliffe too, only he gives it picturesquely thus, "o word." There is no great leap of thought between *word* and *thing*, for *thing* stands nearly related to *think*. Every *thing* is a *think*. Weizsäcker substitutes *Etwas* for Luther's *Ein Wort*. Which if ye tell Me I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. They had digged a pit in which to catch Him; and into that very pit they were about themselves to fall. Malice, with stealthy step, attempted to execute an insidious left-hand movement against its object; but it forgot to look to the right-hand side, and hence it does not notice that Divine retribution was striding on apace.

VER. 25. The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven, or from men? Jesus knew, and John himself knew, that "God sent him to baptize." (John i. 33.) Not indeed to baptize only, but also to lift up his herald cry regarding the advent of the King, and in general "to prepare the way of the Lord." But his baptism was the most striking and outstanding peculiarity of his ministry; and it is therefore here seized upon by our Lord as representative of his entire mission and commission. And they reasoned with themselves: This does not mean that they reasoned within their own minds to the following effect. It means that they reasoned aside among themselves. They turned aside to one

saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? 26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. 27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and

another, and privately conferred together on the Saviour's question. So Bleek and Meyer. **Saying:** To one another. With this word Tischendorf concludes verse 25. Capriciously, and at variance with his own principles in the rest of his text. Robert Stephens, in his 1551 edition, that in which he introduced the verses, made the division where it is in our Authorized version. If we should say, From heaven, He will say to us, Why then did ye not believe him? We could not answer that question very satisfactorily; for if his baptism were from heaven we should have believed him. We must not say then *From heaven*. The question thus, with these priests and scribes and Pharisees, was not, *What is truth?* but, *What will serve our present purpose (whether it be true or false)?*

VER. 26. But if we should say, Of men . . . we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet: More especially since he is now no more. There should be a pause after the expression *Of men*, indicating that there intervenes what grammarians call an *aposiopesis*, or a graphic suppression of something that was cautiously said *sotto voce*. The questioners whispered something to one another, afraid lest the faintest breath of it should reach the surrounding people, who would no doubt be keeping at a respectful distance. We learn from Luke xx. 6 what it was which they whispered. It was something to the following effect, "all the people will stone us." In the expression *we fear the people* there is an inextricable minglement of the objective and subjective. But it honestly gathers up the sum total of the purport of the whisperings.

VER. 27. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell: Or, more literally, and as it is given in the Rheims, *We know not*. Wycliffe's version is *We witen nat*. The Anglo-Saxon version is, *We nyton*, a fine compound verb, now lost. (*Nytan*, or *nitan*, is a contraction of *ne witan*, *not to know*.) Good Matthew Henry, misled by the tense of the original word (*οἶδαμεν*), supposed that the meaning of the expression was, *We never knew*. He did not consider that the verb primarily meant *we have seen*, and therefore *we now know*. It is evident that when the questioners said *We know not*, they really meant in their hearts, *We don't want to know; and, even although we did know, we would not be prepared to avow our knowledge; for we see that the avowal would lead us into difficulty*. What heroes! He too said to them, *Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things*: Note the expression, *He too said, Neither tell I you*. It indicates that when they said *We know not* they really meant *We decline to tell*. Hence Christ too declined to answer the question proposed to Him. Why should He answer it, if they had made up their minds that they would not be guided in their conduct by the evidence of the truth, but only by passion, prepossession, pelf, and the pinch of popular pressure? Why cast pearls of knowledge before such swinish natures as will only trample them in the mire, and then turn aside to rend you?

VER. 28. But what think ye? Christ pursues His advantage. The questioners

he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. 29 He answered and said, I will not : but afterward he repented, and went. 30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir : and went not. 31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I

would no doubt be somewhat confounded and abashed. They would be inwardly gnashing their teeth. But they stood their ground, and resolved to bide their time. Before however they could do anything, or say anything, the Saviour, skilfully availing Himself of the tide as it rolled in, said. A man had two sons Or, still more literally, *two children*. And he came to the first, and said, Child, go work to-day in my vineyard : Or, as a preponderance of the best manuscripts give the expression, *in the vineyard*, the reading that is approved of by Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. We, in this country, do not use the word *child* in the way indicated in the text ; nor even the word *son*. We would, in such circumstances, employ instead the Christian name.

VER. 29. But he answered and said, I won't: but afterward he repented, and went: Or, *he rued and went off*, namely, to the vineyard. The word (*μεταμεληθείς*) which we have translated *rued*, and which really means *rued* in every passage where it occurs, is a different word from that which is employed wherever *repentance toward God* is referred to, that *repentance* which is the reverse-side of *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the word which is employed in 2 Cor. vii. 8 ; also in Heb. vii. 21 ; and in Matt. xxvii. 3, where it is said that " Judas repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver." He *rued*. It was very wrong and unfilial for the youth to say to his father *I won't*. But his heart was not callous. He was soon stricken with remorse, and did his father's orders.

VER. 30. And he came to the second : Or rather, according to the best reading, *to the other*. This reading has been received into the text by Tischendorf and Alford, as well as Griesbach and Scholz. It was approved of too by Mill ; and it is approved of by Meyer. Wycliffe's translation of the clause is, *cummynge to the tother*. Tregelles however, and Westcott-and-Hort, and the Revisionists retain the reading of the received text. It is the easier, but for that very reason the unlikelier, reading. And said likewise: He addressed him in a similar manner. And he answered and said, I go, sir ; and went not: In the original there is an ellipsis. Instead of *I go sir*, or, as Tyndale gives it, *I will sir*, it is simply *I sir*. It is very graphic. The youth intended to strike a contrast between himself and his brother, *You may depend upon ME, sir*.

VER. 31. Whether of them twain : A lumbering expression, instead of the simpler and more literal rendering of the Rheims, *which of the two*. Even Wycliffe has *who of the two*. It was Tyndale who introduced *whether of them twain*, and it was reproduced in the Geneva, and, strange to say, is given almost entire by the English Revisionists. Did the will of his father? Or, better and more literally, *of the father?* They say to Him, The first : The tone of their answer would be to the following effect, *The first, to be sure! Why put such a question as that?* Strange to say, instead of *The first*, Lachmann and Tregelles read *The latter*. It is the reading of the Vatican manuscript, and also of the Jerusalem Syriac, and the Coptic and Armenian versions, as likewise of some manuscripts of the Æthiopic. But then in the Vatican manuscript and

say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came unto you in

the coincident versions there is a transposition of the replies of the sons, as contained in ver. 29, 30. The first says *I sir*, the second *I won't*. This transposition necessitated, for congruity's sake, the substitution of *The latter* for *The first* in ver. 31. But to retain *The latter*, and yet to negative the transposition in ver. 29 and 30, is altogether inconsistent. It is an inconsistency however of respectable antiquity. It is found in the Cambridge manuscript, and in some codices of the Vulgate and Old Latin. There is every reason to conclude that the Cambridge reading is spurious. The overwhelming body of authorities, headed by the Sinaitic and Ephraemi manuscripts (S and C), and by the Syriac Peshito, give *first* instead of *last*. If *last* were the true reading, then we should require to suppose that the answer of our Lord's interrogators was given in mockery and with laughter, and under a hardy determination to parry contemptuously the stroke which they foresaw was about to alight on them. There is no evidence however that they were prepared to manifest so openly their malice and their scorn. They had been discomfited in their onset; and the people round about them, and round about the Saviour, were in an earnest mood. There is nothing moreover in our Saviour's reply that would lead us to suppose that they had insultingly attempted to displace the saddle from its proper back, and thus to confound the intended application of the parable. Indeed, there is no reason to suppose that they foresaw with clearness the swoop that was coming on them. They were no match for our Saviour, even in dialectical dexterity. *We*, from the accomplished end, can see clearly the course, from the beginning, which the Saviour was pursuing. But it would be altogether different with those who merely had the beginning of things in view, and had to conjecture, on the spur of the moment, what the end might possibly turn out to be. The reading of the Cambridge manuscript is no doubt a broken remnant of the anciently transposed collocation in ver. 29, 30. Jesus saith to them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots—the *taxgatherers and the fallen women*—are going before you into the kingdom of God: Note the definite article before *publicans and harlots*. It points to certain classes of society, as classes. They were far down in the social pyramid. But not unlikely there would be conspicuous representatives of them both, round about the Saviour, as He spoke. One of His disciples had been a publican; our evangelist. And it was one of the peculiar seals of our Lord's Divine ministry that women *who had been sinners* were lifted up by Him from their fallen condition, and made pure. As to the word *publican*, see on chap. v. 46, ix. 9. When our Saviour says, *The publicans and the harlots are going before you into the kingdom of heaven*, His expression, while severely condemnatory of the high priests and elders and scribes, yet keeps, as Chrysostom remarks, the door of hope open for them. They might yet follow if they chose. But it was not now in their power to be the leaders of the procession, as they ought to have been. They were like the son who said to the father, *I sir*, and who yet went not into the vineyard. The publicans and the harlots, on the other hand, had at first refused to do the will of the Father, but they rued and became obedient.

VER. 32. For John came to you: In what way? By what route? What was the road which he took, when he sought to approach their hearts and

the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder,

consciences? See next words. In the way of righteousness: Or, very literally, in *righteousness' way*. He was distinguished for all that you yourselves call *righteousness*. He was not only a lover of God and of men, he excelled you all in the virtues which you most highly esteem, in self denial, self renunciation, and self mortification. He climbed the highest cliffs of asceticism, and stood upon the pinnacle. And ye believed him not: Notwithstanding that you could not find a flaw in his character, yet ye believed him not when he testified of the heavenly kingdom and the heavenly King. Ye did not repent and make ready, although ye had been long and loudly professing that ye were longing for the King's advent and for the establishment of His kingdom. But the publicans and the harlots—and many more in a similar position in society—believed him: They made no profession of righteousness, and of a righteous readiness to hail the King and become the willing subjects of His kingdom. They had been previously saying, as it were, to God, *We don't choose to go and work in Thy vineyard*. Yet when John appeared they believed his message, repented, and went into the vineyard. And ye, when ye saw it: Or, as Tyndale gives it admirably, *And ye, though ye saw it*. Even after ye saw how blissfully the tax-gatherers and fallen women were affected, and how nobly they were retrieving themselves under the impulse of John's ministry. Did not afterward repent, that ye might believe him: Ye did not regret and rue your unbelief, that ye might exchange it for belief. Ye persisted in your unbelief. The interpretation of the parable in ver. 28-30 is now evident. It is not the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles which the Saviour is depicting, though Chrysostom, Jerome, and Euthymius Zigabenus give prominence to this idea. It is the difference between the high-flying professors of religiousness among the Jews, and those who had made no profession at all. The latter were represented by the son who said *I won't*, but who afterwards repented, in response to the preaching of John, and went. The high-flyers were represented by the son who said *I sir*, but went not, and did not repent even when John made the wilderness to thrill with his ringing herald cry. "It is an evil thing," says Chrysostom, "not to choose what is good from the beginning. But it is a far greater evil to refuse to repent of what is evil. It is this that maketh many desperately wicked. I see it taking effect on some, and superinducing in them the last degree of insensibility."

VER. 33. Hear another parable: The Saviour improves His opportunity, and sends in wave upon wave of earnest parabolic remonstrance, to lash into sensibility, if possible, their semi-petrified consciences. There was a certain householder: Or, according to the correct reading of the text, *There was a man, a householder*. Our Saviour lays down what is human as a stepping stone whereby we may ascend to what is Divine. The word translated *householder* means *house master*, a *paterfamilias*. Who planted a vineyard: Palestine was emphatically a land of vineyards, more particularly in the district that surrounded Jerusalem, where Jesus now was. "The elevation of the hills and table lands of Judah," says Dean Stanley, "is the true climate of the vine." "There, more than elsewhere in Palestine, are to be seen on the sides of the hills the vineyards, marked by their watchtowers and walls seated on their

which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to

“ancient terraces, the earliest and latest symbol of Judah.” “Enclosures of loose stones, like the walls of the fields in Derbyshire or Westmoreland, every-where catch the eye on the bare slopes of Hebron, of Bethlehem, and of Olivet.” (*Sinai and Palestine*, chaps. iii. and xiii., pp. 164, 421.) And surrounded it with a hedge: We need not think of a quickset hedge. The word employed by the evangelist has no special reference to such a mode of enclosure. It simply denotes a fence, of whatsoever materials made. And no doubt the great majority of the fences that surrounded the Judæan vineyards, if not the whole of them, would consist of walls or ‘dikes,’ such as are referred to in the quotations on the preceding clause, walls composed either exclusively of stones where the soil was scanty, and such was the case in most places, or of stones and baked mud combined, where there was abundance of soil. Sometimes however, for the sake of farther protection from wild beasts, thorny shrubs were added or intermingled. See Isa. v. 5. It may be noted in passing, that our Saviour’s mind seems to have been glancing, as He spoke, at the Old Testament parable contained in Isaiah v. 1-6. And digged a winepress in it: Note the word *digged*. It corresponds to the marginal word *hewed* in Isa. v. 2. It has no reference to the *digging of soil*. It denotes the action that would be required for scooping out a winepress in such solid rock as the limestone rock of the mountains of Judah. The vineyard is supposed to be situated on a rocky hillside, the best of all localities for a vineyard. Ancient winepresses, so scooped out in the living rock, are still to be met with in Palestine. One is thus described by Dr. Robinson: “Another excavation, close by our tent, which interested me, was an ancient winepress, the first I had ever seen. Advantage had been taken of a ledge of rock. On the upper side, towards the south, a shallow vat had been dug out, eight feet square and fifteen inches deep; its bottom declining slightly towards the north. The thickness of the rock left on the north was one foot; and two feet lower down on that side another smaller vat was excavated, four feet square by three feet deep. The grapes were trodden in the shallow upper vat, and the juice drawn off by a hole at the bottom (still remaining) into the lower vat.” (*Later Researches in Palestine*, p. 137.) There were often, however, variations in the constructions of these winepresses. Canon Tristram saw several of the ancient winepresses, which still exist in mount Carmel. “In all cases,” he says, “both on Carmel and elsewhere, a flat or gently sloping rock is made use of for their construction. At the upper end a trough is cut, about three feet deep, and four and a half by three and a half feet in length and breadth. Just below this, in the same rock, is hewn out a second trough, fourteen inches deep, and four feet by three in size. The two are connected by two or three small holes bored through the rock close to the bottom of the upper trough, so that, the grapes being put in and pressed down, the juice streamed into the lower vat. Each vineyard seems to have had one of these presses.” (*The Land of Israel*, chap. v., p. 107.) And built a tower: Which would serve partly as a watchtower, and partly as a storage for the wine; and partly also a residence for the workmen, in the season when their attendance would be required. Its tower form however would be due to the fact that it was intended for watching purposes. Such towers, at the present time, in certain countries in the East, are often, says Jahn, “thirty feet square and eighty feet high.” (*Biblical Antiq.*, § 67.) And leased it out to

husbandmen, and went into a far country : 34 and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. 35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another,

husbandmen : The proprietor is represented as belonging to that wealthier class in the social pyramid who do not themselves engage in manual labour. He was a lord of broad acres. And hence he farmed out this particular property. He let it to a joint-stock company of *husbandmen*, who were to pay him *rent* (or *render*) in kind. Instead of *husbandmen*, Wycliffe has the more literal translation *erthe tiliers* (i.e. *carth tillers*). Luther gives a freer rendering, *vinedressers* (Weingärtner). *Husbandmen* however is an admirable version, as *vinedressing*, in such a country as Palestine, was an important department of *husbandry*; and it was the peculiarity of *husbandmen* that they dwelt in *houses* for the purpose of tilling the soil, instead of roaming about as unsettled hunters, or as shepherds living in temporary tents. **And went into a far country :** There is nothing in the original to convey the idea that he went into a very distant country. The expression simply means, *he went abroad*, or, as Wakefield renders it, *he went from home*. Both translations are admissible; but the former is much the better of the two, and adheres most closely to the radical idea of the original term. Barnes altogether misunderstood the word when he says that it "means only that he departed from them." The phrase is with sufficient accuracy rendered by Tyndale *and went into a strange countre*, a translation that kept its place in the Bishops' Bible, and the Geneva, and the Rheims. When our translators substituted *far* for *strange*, it is probable that they simply intended to convey the idea that the lord of the vineyard went *forth* or '*furth*' of his own locality or of his own people's realm. Sir John Cheke's translation is, "and iorneid (journeyed) *forth* himself."

VER. 34. **And when the time of the fruit drew near :** *The time of the fruit*, or, more literally, *the season of the fruits*. Principal Campbell's translation is, *when the vintage approached*. **He sent his servants to the husbandmen, to receive the fruits of it :** Or rather, *to receive his fruits*, to receive that proportion of the fruits that was his stipulated rent. So the pronoun is understood by Luther, Wakefield, Meyer, De Wette, Arnoldi, Webster-and-Wilkinson. It had been stipulated that the rent should be paid in kind. "It is the system known in India at this day as *ryot rent*; the cultivator undertakes to give the owner a certain fixed quantity yearly from the produce of the farm, and all that is over belongs to himself." (Arnot, *Parables*, p. 238.)

VER. 35. **And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another :** Madly maltreating them all. They acted as if they had been furibund with intoxication. They not only refused wickedly to consider the very reasonable rights of their superior; they infatuatedly refused to consider that their conduct must speedily issue in their own ruin. The word for *beat* is etymologically of very strong import, *slayed*. The expression *stoned another* is supposed by Bengel and Meyer to be an ascent on the preceding expression *killed another*, and thus they interpret it as denoting a more cruel kind of murdering. It is not necessary, however, to assume that a regular climax is intended. The Syriac version transposes the two expressions. So does Wakefield. But the transposition is a manifest, and most unnecessary, tinkering of a free and easy combination.

and stoned another. 36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first : and they did unto them likewise. 37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. 38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. 39 And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. 40 When

VER. 36. Again he sent other servants, more than the first ; and they did to them in like manner, i.e. *they treated them in like manner* : He was astonishingly forbearing ; too much so, most people would suppose. And so he was, if he had not been parabolically representing a forbearance that is almost infinitely wonderful, a forbearance that cannot be matched or approximatively paralleled by any human forbearance. *More than the first* who were sent, *more in number*, as Sir John Cheke gives it (*moor in number*). So Vitringa and the majority of expositors. Doddridge explains, "more in number, and higher in office." Bengel had given the same explanation, though laying stress and emphasis on the latter idea. Wakefield went farther, and translated the expression, *more honourable than the first*. Principal Campbell also translates *more respectable*. Markland had taken the same view. (Bowyer's *Critical Conjectures*, in loc.) But wrongly. The Saviour's mind is running on the groove of things that lies beyond the parable, and referring to the prophets who were sent to the children of Israel. More, and more, and more of them were sent, till the Son Himself was sent ; but the later prophets were not higher in rank or dignity or moral glory than the earlier.

VER. 37. But, last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son : A very natural expectation. It brings up however an element in the parable which cannot have any precise counterpart in the application. If God had been merely an exalted man, with a prescience only a few degrees more piercing than our own, He too would have expected that His Son would be revered. *Reverence* is an admirable translation. It was accepted by King James's translators from the authors of the Rheims version. Tyndale's version, followed by the Geneva, had been *they will fear my son*. The version in Cranmer's Bible is better, *they will stand in awe of my son*. Sir John Cheke's is better still, *they will be in some awe of my son*.

VER. 38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir : come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance : Or, according to the better reading (*σχήσωμεν* instead of *κατασχήσωμεν*), the reading accepted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, and by Meyer too and De Wette, *Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance*. It is as if they had said, *It is this heir alone that stands between us and the possession of the vineyard and all its profits. His father won't return for many a long day, we may be sure. And while he remains so far away, we may set him at defiance. Is it not very hard indeed that we should do all the work of the vineyard, and not reap all the benefits ?*

VER. 39. And they seized him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him : Mark transposes the last two clauses ; but we need not suppose that either he or Matthew were wishful to represent, even here, a precise chronology. They viewed from different standpoints the salient features of the case. If we should resolve however on adjusting the clauses chronologically, then we should

the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? 41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his*

be disposed to follow, in our imagination of the case, Matthew's order. As soon as the heir made his appearance within the gate of the vineyard, they seized him, abused him, dragged him out, and murdered him. We are now near the climax of the parable. We may turn therefore and glance at the other side of things, the 'far' side, as parabolically pointed at. God is the householder. *The people of the theocracy are the vineyard.* (See ver. 41.) That people was for a long season the Jews. Comp. Isaiah v. 1-7. But we must not seek for definite and detached equivalents for the *fence*, the *winepress*, and the *tower*. The *fence* doubtless denotes, in general, as Euthymius Zigabenus on second thoughts perceived, the guardianship of God. But to suppose, with Jerome, Theophylact, and Euthymius, that the tower denoted the Jewish temple, and the winepress the altar of burnt offering, is merely to play at interpreting. The *husbandmen* however denote no doubt the leaders of the theocratic people, whose duty it was so to teach and train and guide their brethren that there would be forthcoming in their lives abundance of the fruits of righteousness. *There would have been such fruits, if the leaders had been what they ought to have been.* Under the symbolism of the departure of the proprietor to a foreign land, we are to think of the fact that God is removed from the eyes of men, and was removed consequently from the eyes of the Jewish leaders, even as He was to a lamentable extent removed or pushed off from their hearts. The *servants* sent for the fruits denote the prophets, or other extraordinary messengers, who were sent to the Jews from time to time in the interest of God and His dues. On the treatment accorded to these servants, history speaks. We have a commentary on the subject in Hebrews xi. 36-39. The Son was He who was speaking the parable, and who, in claiming to be different from all the prophets, and to be indeed the Son of the Lord and Proprietor of the Jewish nation, showed that He realized His own peerless peculiarity and pre-eminence of nature. Was He right, or was He wrong, in this realization? If He was wrong, He was *infinitely wrong*. But if He was infinitely wrong, His general character and influence, as transcendently good and altogether right, are miracles of almost infinite inexplicability. If however He was right, then Christianity is right, and no man anywhere is right till he be a Christian.

VER. 40. Whenever, then, the Lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen? The Saviour had carried the interest of His hearers with Him. Even His enemies, the chief priests and elders and scribes, had been rapt along. And hence He as it were appeals to them to state, themselves, what must be the conclusion of the wicked infatuation which He had been parabolically depicting. His question wavers between the parabolic representation on the one hand and its intended application on the other, *What will he do?* He does not ask, *What did he do, think ye?* There is thus a home thrust in it. *What will he do?* "Nay," says Trapp, "what will he not do?"

VER. 41. They say unto Him—and then He himself repeats, and perhaps completes and intensifies their reply (see Mark xiii. 9, and Luke xx. 16)—He will miserably destroy those wicked men: The expression is remarkably keen and emphatic in the original, in virtue of a peculiar alliteration, and also a peculiar arrangement of the words (*κακούς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτούς*). In our Authorized

vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. 42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders

version there is no attempt to reproduce either the paranomasia or the peculiar arrangement. But there is a very fair attempt in the Rheims version, *The naughty men he will bring to naught*. If the pronoun had been inserted, the success would have been greater—*the naughty men, he will bring them to naught!* But still the translation is but a feeble representation of the force of the original. Wynne renders the expression thus, *he will wretchedly destroy those wretches*. (See his *New Testament carefully collated with the Greek*.) Principal Campbell followed in his wake and translated thus, *he will put those wretches to a wretched death*. The version of the English Revisionists is, *he will miserably destroy those miserable men*. In the original the adjective points emphatically to *moral evil*. The adverb points as emphatically to *penal evil*. The latter is the dark shadow of the former. It is probable that the Saviour was pointing in His mind, though indeterminately, to the destruction of Jerusalem and the involved destruction of the Jewish polity, civil and ecclesiastical. And will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render him the fruits in their seasons: The theocracy on earth, or the kingdom of God as it exists on earth, was to be under the administrative direction of other 'ministers.' See ver. 43. God is its sovereign. The sovereign is its only legislator. But He has His human 'ministers' to administer officially what requires to be officially transacted. These ministers would no longer be the Jewish high priests, and elders, and scribes. Our Saviour points to the transference of spiritual privileges to the Gentiles.

VER. 42. Jesus saith unto them: Following up the effect produced by the application of His parable, and supplementing by another set of images what had been imperfectly represented by the catastrophe of the wicked husbandmen. Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected: The Saviour quotes from the same triumphal and glowing psalm from which the enthusiastic people had on the preceding day derived their acclamations when they hailed Him with Hosannas, the 118th. The passage quoted is, says Melancthon, one of the "sweetest" in the word of God (*dulcissimus versiculus*). Instead of *The stone*, perhaps we should translate *A stone*. There is no article in the original, and nothing is lost by the indefinite reference in this incipient part of the representation. The word rendered *rejected* is translated *disallowed* in 1 Peter ii. 4, 7. It literally means *disapproved of*, or *repudiated*. A still stronger word is used in Acts iv. 11, and is there translated *set at naught*. The same became head of a corner. There would likely be more than one corner, whatever kind of building may have been referred to; and hence there is a propriety in adhering to the indefiniteness of the original, a corner. The stone referred to *became head of a corner*, or *was made into (the) head of a corner*. Note the "into." When the stone was transferred from its lowly position on the ground *into* the place assigned to it, then *it constituted the head of a corner*. The expression "the head of a corner" is interpreted by the majority of expositors, both ancient and modern, as meaning "the base or foundation stone of a corner." The word *head* is thus understood as simply meaning *chief* or *chief part*; and, by attributing to it this meaning and interpreting the phrase as having reference to the foundation, there is harmony produced, it is supposed, between the representation here and the representation in Isa. xxviii. 16, where

rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this

it is said, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." It is supposed also that the word which is rendered *chief corner (stone)* in Eph. ii. 20 and 1 Pet. ii. 6, a word found nowhere else than in the New Testament, is just another way of representing the idea that is meant by *head of a corner*. There is a difference however. The expression *chief corner stone* (*ἀκρογωνιαίος*) naturally denotes just *extreme* or *projecting corner stone* (compare for the first part of the word, Matt. xxiv. 31, Mark xiii. 27, Luke xvi. 24), such as we often see in great foundation stones, the projection being particularly conspicuous at the corners. But to interpret *head of a corner* as meaning *base of a corner* seems to be a turning upside down of what is architecturally natural. *It represents the corner as standing on its head*. This inversion of ideas is all the more unnatural and unlikely, as any corner of a house must have, as a matter of fact, a high as well as a low extremity. But if the low extremity be called the *head*, what will the high extremity, the real head, be called? We believe therefore, with Dr. Robinson, that the expression quoted by our Lord denotes "the top stone of the corner, the copestone." (*New Test. Lexicon*, sub voce.) Gesenius was of the same opinion. (*Hebrew Lexicon*, sub voce.) And the exigency of the context in the 118th Psalm, and of the circumstances in which our Saviour made the quotation, seems to demand this natural interpretation. The representation in the psalm seems to assume that after the stone had been disapproved of, and rejected, and set at nought, by the builders, as being perhaps too insignificant looking, *the builders went on with their work*. But ere they finished it, and when, as we may suppose, they were just engaged in completing the coping, a space was left, at a corner too, which just admitted of the despised stone. No other size of stone would do. There was thus no alternative. It was hoisted up, and crowned the corner line as a noble "coigne of vantage." In our Saviour's application again of the passage, the Jewish priests and doctors and elders *are supposed to have been long engaged* in building. It was their duty to build up a living temple for the worship and the glory of God; but they refused to put to its own appropriate and fundamental, or otherwise pre-eminently important, place, a certain stone which the great Architect had provided. It was too insignificant looking in their estimation. And yet, whatsoever they should decide in the matter, it must be inserted, and, although left out by them at the first, it would yet get into a position, appropriate, pre-eminent, and peerless. *It would crown the building*. It had been Divinely destined to be the elevated Headstone of the corner: and to the head of the corner it would be elevated. It is with reference to this position, *at the top of the building*, that there is mention made, in the 44th verse, of the stone *falling*, and "grinding to powder." True, Christ is not merely a copestone. He is the great foundation stone of the spiritual temple. God hath laid Him as such. (Isa. xviii. 16.) And "other foundation can no man lay." (1 Cor. iii. 11.) He is needed at the base of things as the chief corner stone. (Eph. ii. 20, 1 Pet. ii. 4-6.) But the figure, though sublime, so far as it reaches or can reach, is far from reaching far enough to represent the full reality of Christ's relation to the living temple of God. He is the chief corner stone, not only at one corner, but at every corner, of the foundation. The figure however could not with propriety be broken up into such multiplicity of reference. And yet He is not only at the corners of the building, those junctures which are of such moment for binding the various

is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

sides of the many sided heavenly structure into unity, He is likewise the real foundation all round and round; and apostles and prophets must rest upon Him, and not lie alongside of Him, as on one level of importance. But the figure cannot be stretched so far. And then too He is just as much needed at the top as at the bottom. He is the Ending as well as the Beginning, the Omega as well as the Alpha. He must comprehend all. He must bind all on every side into harmony, unity, stability, and beauty. We need not wonder therefore that in the Scripture representations of our Lord as a *Stone*, we should have "here a little, and there a little." In no other way could any approximative idea of His fulness be pictorially represented. This is the Lord's doing: Or, more literally, *This came to pass from the Lord*. The pronoun *this* has occasioned to critics a considerable amount of perplexity. It is feminine in the original; and hence Theophylact and Euthymius Zigabenus suppose that it refers to the "corner" spoken of, which they regard as representing *the church, which collects into unity Jews and Gentiles*. They interpret thus, *This corner is from the Lord, and it is admirable in our eyes*. Le Fèvre and Wetstein take the same view of the reference of the pronoun. But it is a manifest strain. Elsner again, and Meyer, and Fritzsche, contend that the reference is to the whole expression *head of the corner*, the word 'head' being feminine in Greek, as well as the word 'corner.' So Whiston. But this too is straining, more especially when we take into account that the word 'head' in Hebrew is not feminine but masculine. The idea of Beza and Casaubon is the right one. They suppose that the pronoun is feminine Hebraistically; that is, because it is a literal translation of the Hebrew pronoun, which has no neuter form. It is feminine here, though used as a neuter. (Comp. 1 Sam. iv. 7; 2 Kings iii. 18; Ps. xxvii. 4.) Our English Wall, as also Bengel, Wakefield, De Wette, Webster-and-Wilkinson, Arnoldi, and indeed modern critics in general, agree in accepting this interpretation. *This thing came to pass from the Lord*. The elevation of the despised and rejected stone was brought about by the overruling agency of God, all the prejudices of the "rough hewing" builders notwithstanding. And it is marvellous in our eyes: It amazes us to see how effectually all the intervening obstacles to its elevation have been surmounted. Doubtless the reference of the psalmist would be to some well known fact, that had attracted the attention and interest of the people. But we know not when and where the fact occurred. It has been supposed that the crowning stone of the great pyramid of Egypt is alluded to, a far fetched and most unlikely supposition. It is much more probable that the occurrence was connected with the building either of the first, or more likely of the second temple, in Jerusalem. We know not the writer of the psalm; and do not need to know. It is probable that it was composed after the return from Babylon. And, if so, the Israelite who speaks in the body of the psalm may be regarded as impersonating Israel in general, the true Israel of God. Hence the Messiah cannot be far away. The Old Testament Israel unfolded Him, and was indeed 'Israel' just because it unfolded Him. The New Testament Israel are gathered up in Him, and are still 'Israel' just because they are, in a fine spiritual sense, "flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone."

VER. 43. Therefore: Because ye are rejecting the indispensable Stone, because ye are despising, and spitefully entreating, and murderously plotting against the Heir of the vineyard. I say unto you: Mark the "I." What a height of self consciousness is indicated by it! The kingdom of God shall be

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.
 44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

taken away from you: The peculiar privileges and honours connected with the kingdom shall be forfeited by you. Ye have utterly abused your prerogatives; and hence they shall be withdrawn. It is noteworthy that the kingdom of God was regarded by our Lord as in existence among the Jews. It was indeed only very partially developed. There was much of rind and husk about it. But still it was there. See chaps. iii. 2, vi. 10. And shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof: In the word 'fruits' we have the echo of the parable of the vineyard in ver. 33-41. The 'fruits' really referred to are the fruits of righteousness, "fruit unto holiness" (Rom. vi. 22), the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22, 23). The 'nation' referred to is, of course, none of the particular 'nationalities' of the world, not even the Gentile people as a whole. Believing Jews, 'Israelites indeed,' are not excluded. It is the great ideal nation of the good, the godly, the Christlike, the Christian, the believing. It is "the holy nation," "the peculiar people." (1 Pet. ii. 9.)

VER. 44. And he that falleth on this stone shall be broken: The reference of the representation in verses 43 and 44 oscillates freely and finely, for a moment or two, between the vineyard and the rejected stone. It here returns to the stone. Wakefield however is scandalized at the oscillation, and hence, in his *Translation of the New Testament*, he transposes verses 42 and 43, thus connecting verses 42 and 44. Daniel Heinsius long before (*Exercitationes*, in loc.), and also Louis Cappel (*Spicilegium*, in loc.), and W. Bowyer (*Conjectures*, in loc.), had pleaded for the same transposition. Tischendorf again, followed by Ultramaré and Weizsäcker, omits verse 44 altogether from the text, supposing it to have been imported from Luke xx. 18. He has however but the authority of the Cambridge manuscript (D) and 'the queen of the cursives' (33), and some manuscripts of the *Old Latin*, added to the silence of Origen in his Commentary, for the omission. It is far too narrow a foundation to support such a superstructure of inference. The word *broken* (*συνθλασθήσεται*) is intensified in Cranmer's Bible, *shall be broken in pieces*. Liddell-and-Scott translate it here, *crushed in pieces*. Sir John Cheke gives it, *shall be broosed*. It means, *shall be severely bruised, and, as it were, shattered*. If any one, refusing to look at or to recognise the stone as it lies on the ground, shall run against it, he will suffer most painfully for his wilful negligence. Coming into collision with it he will stumble, and fall on it, and be sorely bruised and cut. Happy if, after having fallen, he rises again, and never more rushes heedlessly against the barrier which God has laid across his downward way. But on whomsoever it shall fall: For, as we have said (on verse 42), no single position or relationship of the stone can express the manifold fulness of the relations of Jesus to men. We must, at one time, look upon the stone as lying on the ground, and not yet built in. It lies, as it were, athwart the sinner's way, being purposely "set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel" and out of Israel. (See Luke ii. 34.) At another time we must look upon it as laid in its foundation situation. Once more it is hoisted aloft as a copestone. What if too, in order to serve some great end in the military tactics of heaven, it should be let fall from its high position upon such as may be rudely and wickedly assailing and besieging the fortress of salvation? What would be the effect of the fall? It will grind

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. 46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 AND Jesus answered and spake unto them again by

him to powder: Literally, *It will winnow him*. "Here," says Dr. Daniel Scott, the compiler of the *Appendix to Stephens' Thesaurus*, "is a plain reference to the use of the *fan* in purging the corn from the chaff." (*New Version of Matthew's Gospel*.) True. The Saviour's idea is compressed and pregnant. If the stone fall on any one, it will pound him into atoms, and thus dissipate him as effectually as if he were the dust of the threshing floor that needed to be driven away. Sir John Cheke's translation is, *it will drive him lijk dust awai*. This is the punishment of the finally impenitent, when Christ shall descend to judgement. The former clause of the verse describes the penal consequences of unbelief during the day of probation. Such penal consequences are experienced in manifold ways, innerly and outwardly, by persons and by peoples. Happy they who take warning and avoid *the last end*.

VER. 45. But when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables: Being attracted, by their pictorial interest, to persist in listening. (See on chap. xiii. 3.) They perceived that He spake of them: They *perceived* (ἐγνώσαν), they *noted*, they *knew*. The shoe pinched indeed; but it fitted too, and they must needs put it on. The word for *spake* is in the present tense in the original. They knew that howsoever He might express Himself, this was the case, *He speaks concerning them*. The pointing of the parabolic finger toward themselves was unmistakable.

VER. 46. And while seeking to lay hands on Him—being eager to get Him into their clutches—they feared the thronging multitudes, since they took Him for a prophet: They held Him for a prophet. Literally, according to the correct reading, "They had Him into a prophet" (ἐς not ὧς), that is, *they put Him into the place of a prophet, and held and had Him there*. They would be talking among themselves thus: *Say what the scribes please, this is no ordinary man. Not one of them is like Him. The most learned of them is no match for Him. There is an evident peculiarity of relationship to God. The mind of God is in Him. He speaks for God; and when we listen to Him, we cannot help thinking that the thoughts are coming down from Above, and that we are listening to the Word of God*. Such was the general conviction. Others had higher notions, and were saying in their hearts, *Surely this must be the prophet of whom Moses spake*.

CHAPTER XXII.

VER. 1. And Jesus answered: There is no mention made of any question being proposed to Him. But we may reasonably suppose that, in addition to the discourses and salient remarks which are expressly recorded by the evangelists, there would be many interlinking and otherwise intervening observations, made sometimes on the one side and sometimes on the other, which would enter into the actual web of our Lord's intercommunications with

parables, and said, 2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a

the people, and modify the bearing and shaping of His sayings. We may suppose also, in reference to the present occasion, that there would be a somewhat shifting, and by no means perfectly silent, auditory around our Saviour, in the midst of the immense concourse that floated hither and thither throughout the spacious court of the Gentiles. (See chap. xxi. 23.) Many would be coming, many going, many speaking. Among the rest, numbers of priests and elders and scribes would be in a perpetual flux, flinging out freely their remarks as they moved along. Hence we need not marvel that it is said in Mark xii. 12 that after the parable of the *Stone* which became *Head of a corner*, the leaders of the people, who had taken our Lord to task regarding His authority, "left Him and went their way." Mark does not record the parable that immediately follows in Matthew. And both before and after its delivery some of the leaders referred to, as well as of the people in general, might go, while some might stay and others might come. But if there were no actual questions proposed to our Lord, and no audible mutterings in reference to His teachings among the scribes and elders and priests, to which we might suppose Him to be replying, we may rest assured that He was looking down through their eyes, and by other avenues, into their hearts, and responsively meeting the unuttered objections, and undeveloped murmurings and murderous intentions of their spirits. See chap. xxi. 46. And spake to them again in parables, and said: *In parables*, that is, *in a parabolic way*. The plural expression may be understood as having reference to the category of parables. Or it may have been the case that several parables were spoken, though only one is recorded. Or the expression may be used with a reference to the multiplicity of parabolic details contained in the one parable that follows. Each of these details was really a parable in miniature, a *throwing of something beside another thing*, for the purpose of graphically representing the thing that lay beyond. (See on chap. xiii. 3.) The one parable in fact was thus both *one and more than one*. It was a *parable composed of parables*.

VER. 2. The following parable is recorded by Matthew alone. Some indeed have supposed that it is but another version of the *parable of the marriage supper*, as contained in Luke xiv. 16-24. Even Calvin was of this opinion. So too Maldonato and Wetstein, and of course Strauss. (*Leben Jesu*, § 78.) But wrongly, without doubt. There is indeed a certain interesting parallelism between the two, and in some respects a coincidence. But there are also vital features of distinction; and it was at different times, at different places, and in different circumstances, that the two parables were respectively spoken. We need not marvel at the partial coincidence. *It would have been strange indeed, if our Lord did not occasionally give line upon line, here a little and there a little, of the very same mental materials*. It would have been finical to have refused to say an appropriate thing, because it had been said before, or to tell an appropriate parable, because some elements of it had formerly been made use of, in speaking to other parties in other circumstances. "This Teacher sent from God," says Arnot, "was wont in later lessons to walk sometimes over His own former footsteps, as far as that tract best suited His purpose; and to diverge into a new path at the point where a diversity in the circumstances demanded variety in the treatment. This is the method followed both in nature and revelation, the method both of God and of men." (*Parables*, p. 256.) "We are constrained," says Lisko, "both on external and on internal grounds, to

certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wed-

“ regard the two parabolical discourses of our Lord as quite different from, and “ independent of, each other.” (*The Parables*, § 14.) They were “ spoken,” says Scholten, “ on different occasions and with different intents.” (*De Parabolis*, § 26, p. 209.) “ Without doubt,” says Bruce, “ the theme is one and the “ same; but it is a theme twice handled by the same artist, and for diverse purposes.” (*Parables*, p. 461.) The kingdom of heaven: Namely, in some of its more important aspects, especially as regards the world-wide extension of its privileges. This kingdom of heaven, or heavenly kingdom, so intimately connected with our earth and so much needed by men on earth, was the favourite theme of our Saviour’s parables and other discourses. It was His theme of themes. As to the essence and nature of the kingdom, see on chaps. iii. 2, vi. 10, xiii. 3–50. Is like: Or, more literally, *was likened, was made like*, namely, in the original plan that was drafted in the Divine mind. See on chap. xiii. 24. To a certain king: Literally, *a man, a king*, or, as it is given in Cranmer’s Bible, *a man that was a kynge*. This element of royalty distinguishes, at the very outset, the parable before us from the kindred one in Luke xiv. 16–24. The royal personage of course represents God the Father. Who made a marriage for his son: The word *marriage* here does not denote “ the act of uniting a man and a woman for life ” (Johnson), the act of wedlock. It is used, metonymically, to denote a *marriage festival*, or a *wedding*, taking this fine old English word in its extended acceptation (as equivalent to the German *Hochzeit*). *Wedding*, indeed, is the term that is employed to translate the same original word in ver. 3. Wycliffe uses the plural, *weddings*. Sir John Cheke’s rendering is the best, *a marriage feast*. But the word is plural in the original, and thus corresponds to our dignified English word *nuptials*, which is a reproduction of the Latin *nuptiæ*. The plural form is significant; for there is both a plural and a singular element involved in the nuptial tie. There is a union of oneness and twoness. The oneness is dual. Hence, though the term is singular in the eighth verse, it is plural in the second, third and fourth verses. The king’s son represents our Saviour, who woos Humanity, and seeks its hand and heart, that it may enjoy with Him, and that He may enjoy with it, everlasting fellowship and bliss. All that portion of Humanity who welcome His holy and heavenly advances, and return His love, are actually united to Him in a ‘bond of perfectness,’ an ineffable wedlock, and share with Him for ever His privileges, possessions, honours, and joys. See on chap. ix. 15. No parable, however, could set forth pictorially the manifold fulness of the unique relationship; and hence we must allow the idea to spread out before us in some degree of indefiniteness. In the reality, for example, *the bride and the worthy guests* are identical. But in the parable they must be conceived of as distinct. The *marriage feast*, however, is undoubtedly in substance just *the marriage supper of the Lamb*. (Rev. xix. 9.) It represents *the abundance of bliss, which the Royal Father has provided for sinners, in consideration of their very peculiar and endearing relation to His Son*. Its fulness is in heaven. It is only its foretaste, its antepast, that can be enjoyed on earth.

VER. 3. And sent forth his servants: Such, namely, as were denominated among the Romans ‘ inviters ’ (*invitatores*) or ‘ callers ’ (*vocatores*). To call them who had been invited to the marriage feast: Who had been anticipatively invited some considerable time before. “ It is,” says Dr. Kitto, “ still customary in the “ East not only to give an invitation some time beforehand, but to send round

ding: and they would not come. 4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

“servants at the proper time to inform the invited guests that all things are “ready.” (*Pictorial Bible*, in loc.) These inviters represent, no doubt, God’s inspired messengers, the bearers of His gracious message. We must let the time element become indefinite as we think of them; and then we shall find them during the whole currency of the Mosaic dispensation, up to the very time when our Lord was speaking. “They who had been invited” represent the Jews in general, though there was doubtless, in our Saviour’s mind and intention, a very special reference to the spiritual aristocracy of the people (as representing the whole people). Such would be the natural guests of the sovereign. And they would not come: They did not choose to come. Infatuated men! Not come to a feast? to a marriage feast? to be the guests of the king and his son? Are they demented? Yes; morally demented. A moral mania has taken possession of them.

VER. 4. Again, he sent forth other servants: “Again,” the third time. There was the original invitation. Then the announcement that all things were ready. And here again he renews his invitation. Amazing condescension and forbearance! One might have supposed that he would have flared up in wrath, or at least have felt his dignity so much insulted that he could not brook to give such unworthy individuals a second opportunity of saying No, and of treating him, and his son, and his son’s marriage, with contempt. Had it been literal history, and not parable, this man and king would have been found acting in a very different spirit. But our Lord was thinking of His Infinite Father, and thus the glory that was beyond shone through His parable, and presents to view a Sovereign of ideal excellence. With instructions to say to them who had been invited, Lo, my dinner have I made ready: In the just expectation of your presence as my guests. It will be noticed that it is *dinner* and not *supper* that is referred to; and herein too is another difference between this parable and that in Luke xiv. 16-24. The word that is translated *supper* (δείπνον) denoted the principal meal of the day, taken at the conclusion of the day’s work. It corresponded in some respects to the late dinner that is customary in the fashionable circles of Great Britain. The Jewish *dinner* again (δριστον) was the earlier and lighter of the two customary meals, corresponding partly to our English breakfast, and partly to luncheon. (See especially Phavorinus’s *Lexicon*, sub voce.) The French word *déjeuner*, in its modern acceptance, is almost to a nicety the counterpart of the word which our Saviour employs. “In France,” says Dr. Ogilvie, “this term,” that is *déjeuner*, “is rapidly losing its original acceptance, being used, particularly by the fashionable world, as synonymous with “the English *luncheon*.” What Hermann Vambéry says regarding the modern Turks represents substantially, we doubt not, the custom of the Jews of old, “there are only two meals during the day, the smaller one between ten and “eleven o’clock in the morning, and the second and larger one after sunset.” My oxen and my fatlings have been killed, and all things are ready: come to the marriage feast: In the specification of the substantial elements of the feast we have an interesting remnant of ancient simplicity of manners; and at the same time the facts specified indicate the high obligation that was devolving on the

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6 and the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*. 7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth

invited guests to make no procrastination. It must be "now or never" with the dinner, and with them. *Fattings* denotes all the animals, smaller than the oxen, that had been specially fed for the occasion. Wycliffe supposed that the reference was to fowls; and hence he translates the word *volatilis*. In this, as frequently, he followed the Anglo-Saxon version (*fugeles*). But such a translation is an unwarranted limitation of the reference of the term.

VER. 5. But they made light of it: Rather a strong translation. The original expression (*ἀμελήσαντες*) simply denotes that *they gave themselves no concern*. It is translated *regarded not* in Heb. viii. 9; and this is Sir John Cheke's version in the case before us. Such disregard, however, really involved contempt; and hence it is true that they must, in their hearts, have made light of their sovereign's favour and his feast. And went off, one to his own field, and another to his merchandise: Note the pronoun *own* before *field*. A contrast lurks in it. It was his own concerns, and not the gratification or honour of his sovereign, in which he was interested. The field of the farmer and the merchandise of the merchant are specified representatively. Self interest, worldly self interest, or rather, imagined self interest in the things of this world, was the deliberate choice of those who are represented by the invited guests. It was worldliness, after all, that was the ruling passion of the chief priests and elders and scribes, and the great body of the Jewish people. Mammon was their master. Gold was their god.

VER. 6. And the remnant: That is, the remainder of the originally invited guests (*οἱ λοιποί*, Scoticé *the lave*). While the great body of the invited simply gave themselves no concern about the king's invitation and his feast, there was a certain proportion of them, whose state of mind went far beyond unconcern and implicit contempt. They were determined enemies and rebels; and now was their chosen moment for casting off their long worn mask of subjection, and hurling defiance in the face of their lord. Seized his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them: The verb that is translated *entreated spitefully* is rendered in 1 Thess. ii. 2 *entreated shamefully*, that is, *treated dishonouringly* or *contumeliously*. Whiston renders it here *treated injuriously*. Note the old word *entreated*. It just meant *treated*, that is, *handled*. Chaucer says, in his *Lamentation of Marie Magdaleine*,—

With their vengeance insaciabie
Now have they him *entreated* so
That to report it is too lamentable.

From this, the original meaning of *treat*, comes the word *treaty*, a *handling* not by force, but by way of negotiation. When a weaker party thus *treated*, he often required to stoop to supplication, and hence his *treaty* became *entreaty*. Still his *entreating* was just his mode of *treating* or *handling*. And, contrariwise, the roughest possible handling was just a peculiar mode of *treatment*, though neither *entreaty* nor a *treaty*.

VER. 7. But the king was wroth: As became him. He whose spirit is not roused by daring and defiant wickedness into conscious emotional antagonism must be devoid either of heart on the one hand, or of a sense of the distinction

his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the

between right and wrong on the other. In the Divine wrath, however, there will never be anything that is akin to a transport of passion, or to the wantonness of malice. And sending his armies destroyed those murderers: Strauss mocks at this part of the representation, alleging that "it seems to be the echo of another parable, which presented the relation between the superior and the dependents, not in the milder form of a rejected invitation, but in the more "severe one of an insurrection." (*Leben Jesu*, § 78.) But there is really insurrection and rebellion indicated. It was a king's invitation that was scorned. And indeed, when we let our minds go down to the base of the unique reality represented, the invitation was a royal invitation to rebels to come and be reconciled. The king was willing and wishful to receive them back into his favour, and to make them partakers of his everlasting hospitality and happiness. But they would not, and added fresh, insolent, and most insulting indignity to their ancient and long-persisted-in injury. No wonder that, in such circumstances, there were limits to the royal forbearance. *His armies*: Or, as the same word is rendered in Luke xxiii. 11, *his men of war*. This is the translation given here in Cranmer's Bible. Tyndale has *his warryers*. It is a free translation. Our word *armies* is apt to suggest a large idea; though originally *army* just denoted *armed persons*, without respect to numbers (from the French *armée*). The Greek word, however, denotes exactly what we mean by *troops*. **And burned their city**: As the Saviour's mind was running on the thing signified, He parabolically supposes that the originally invited guests were the inhabitants of a certain city. He was thinking of Jerusalem; and parabolically predicted its destruction by the hands of the Romans. God's hand, in this matter, was wielding the hands of the Romans, and hence, on the high plane of things, it was It which made the stroke of vengeance swoop down on the guilty city. *His troops*: "That is," says Theophylact, "the Romans."

VER. 8. Then saith he to his servants, The marriage feast is ready, but they who had been invited were not worthy: They have proved that they were not worthy. Not only were they utterly destitute of that worthiness which would have given them a claim to be sharers of the king's festive bliss and joy; they were even devoid of that minor degree of moral worth that would have ensured some manner of congruity and happy sympathy between his state of heart and theirs. See Acts xiii. 46. Note the past tense, *were*. It is supposed that they were now destroyed. The time element in the parable is indefinite in some of its relations.

VER. 9. The marriage feast is ready, and waiting to be enjoyed; Go ye therefore into the highways: Or, still more literally, *Go forth therefore upon the highways*. The expression appropriately rendered *highways* is complex in the original, and means the *thoroughfares of the ways*. It refers to the *main lines of road, the trunk ways* as it were, into which the various minor roads discharge, and along which there is a *through and through outlet* (*διέξοδος*) for the *traffic of the district*. The reference, of course, is not, as some have supposed, to the ways within a city, the streets; but to the landward ways beyond the boundary of the destroyed city. **And whomsoever ye may find, invite to the**

marriage. 10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12 and he saith unto

marriage feast: Make no respect of persons. I shall make every one heartily welcome. Mark, "every one." Comp. Matt. xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 15.

VER. 10. And those servants went out into the public ways, and gathered together all such as they found, both bad and good: They made no respect of persons whatsoever. None were suffered to pass by uninvited because they were beggars, or manifest waifs and moral wrecks of humanity. All, without the slightest distinction, either as to position in society or even as to moral character, were welcomed and urged to come to the marriage feast. The words *bad and good* are used, of course, with reference to the ordinary moral standards of comparison. Throughout all society there are the distinctions indicated, ascending, on the one hand, through numerous steps of gradation, into the vicinity of the perfectly pure, and correspondingly descending, on the other, into the deepest abysses of impurity. The *bad* are mentioned before the *good*, to give prominence to the remarkable graciousness of the sovereign. All without exception, even the worst, are embraced within the scope of his grace. And the marriage feast was furnished—literally *was filled*—with guests: Such is Sir John Cheke's faithful version, *And y^e marriage feest was filled with geestes*. It is a free sort of expression, making not the least pretension to precision. The *feast* was the great matter, and, for the moment, it is identified with the festal hall in which it was held, as if the two things were one and the same. In his last edition of the text, the eighth, Tischendorf reads *bridal chamber* (*νυμφῶν*) instead of *marriage feast* (*γάμος*). It is the reading, wonderful to say, of both the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts; and it has been accepted by Westcott-and-Hort, and followed by Oltramare and Weissäcker. But surely it must have been the marginal explanation of an early annotator. The received reading must be retained as the more difficult. We cannot conceive of it being originally a marginal explanation.

VER. 11. But when the king came in: Viz. before the feast commenced. What follows is a beautifully appropriate rider to the parable, showing that, notwithstanding the great graciousness of the Sovereign, it would be at any man's peril if he tried to abuse it. Strauss however, as was to be expected, could not see the consistency of the rider (*Leben Jesu*, § 78); and Bruno Bauer, being determined that he would not see it, turned his back upon every legitimate point of view, and then, with his usual profanity and flippancy, criticised the combination as if it were an awkward attempt "to pile church steeple upon church steeple." (*Als ob auf eine Kirchturmsspitze ein neuer Thurm gebaut werden könnte*: KRITIK DER EV. GESCH., § 78: 5.) He did not notice that the ridiculousness was nowhere else than in his own notion. To see the guests: The verb translated *to see* means *to behold*; and the idea is, *to inspect*. It is not meant that the king entered to introduce himself to his guests, and then to take his place at the head of his table. All that is assumed. But something more was required. The king must see to it that there should be no abuse of his graciousness; and hence he must cast an inspecting glance over the company. He saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment: What of that?

him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding

says Strauss. "If the king commanded that all, both bad and good, who "should be found on the highways, were to be bidden to come forthwith to the "feast, he could not wonder that they had not all wedding attire." (*Leben Jesu*, § 78.) But why could he not? and why should he not? *They all ought to have had on suitable wedding attire.* The warrantableness of this assumption is as obvious as anything within the boards of the Bible, or within the boards of any book whatever. It is perfectly clear that, *for this sovereign's guests, on the present occasion*, whatever might be the case with the guests of other sovereigns, or even with the guests of this sovereign on other occasions, all that was needed for cleanliness of person and becomingness of attire was liberally provided for. In the royal lavers there was abundance of water, in which the guests might wash and be cleansed. In the inexhaustible royal wardrobes there was abundance of robes to furnish them all with appropriate raiment, "clean and white"; for, as Calvin remarks, "whomsoever the Lord invites, He at the same time supplies with raiment." The king's servants were standing ready to conduct all intending guests to the baths, and to render them every assistance that was requisite. Others, with flowing robes hung over their arms, were prepared to "array" their Lord's guests "in fine linen, clean and white (for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints": Rev. xix. 8). See next verse. In many parts of the East it is common for potentates and others to make presents of garments; and a considerable proportion of the wealth of grandees and princes consists in immense supplies of apparel. (See Job xxvii. 16.) And as garments in the East are not made to fit closely to the person, as with us, there is no danger of accumulating misfits. Even Horace mentions of Lucullus that he had five thousand cloaks in his wardrobes. (*Epist.* i. 6: 43.) And Sir John Chardin says of the king of Persia that "the number of dresses "which he gives away in presents is immense (*infini*). He always keeps, for "this purpose, his wardrobes full and regularly assorted. More than forty "tailors are constantly employed in making the garments." (*Trench's Parables*, p. 227; and *Harmer's Observations*, x., vol. ii., p. 396.)

VER. 12. And he saith to him, Friend: *Friend* is a fine idiomatic translation. The original word literally means *comrade* or *companion*. Sir John Cheke renders it *fellow*, in the old sense of the term. (See Exod. ii. 13, Jonah i. 7, Zech. xiii. 7.) The king speaks self-restrainingly, as it were, and respectfully. **How camest thou in here, not having a wedding garment?** The *not* in this clause is different in the original from the *not* of the concluding clause of the preceding verse ($\mu\eta\text{---}\sigma\upsilon\kappa$). It is, as grammarians phrase it, *subjective*; whereas the preceding is *objective* and historical. A nice idea is expressed, *The man was quite conscious of what he was doing, when he elbowed himself in without the wedding attire.* He intended to be without it. And hence the king, as it were, says to him: *What mean you by such conduct? How dared you urge your way in? Did you not know the rule of the court? Were you not distinctly informed concerning it by my attendants? Did they not call upon you to go with them and be suitably arrayed? Can you say they were remiss? Did they manifest the least reluctance to accommodate you? Did they not earnestly remonstrate with you, when you insisted on coming in as you were? What have you to say for yourself? Do you mean to say that your travelling attire is perfectly suitable? Does it please you better, spotted, polluted, ragged though it be, than the "fine linen, clean and white," which it is my royal pleasure that all my guests should*

garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and

wear on this festive occasion? What have you to plead by way of apology for your conduct? Bishop Wordsworth thinks that the wedding garment means the ordinance of baptism, and he says that it "has a solemn and awful sense in reference to the Quakers." But the meaning is far deeper. There can be no doubt that the wedding garment represents *the righteousness of the saints* (see Rev. xix. 8, compare Rev. iii. 5), that righteousness which is the theme of the sermon on the mount (see Matt. v. 6, 20, vi. 5), and which is spiritual cleanness or holiness. This is the upper, and as it were the outer, robe of the saint. There is in addition an under robe, unseen but real, and first put on, the robe of the Saviour's righteousness, "which is unto all and upon all them that believe." Or, should another representation of the matter be preferred, the inner and unseen side of the wedding garment is itself the righteousness of Christ, while the outer and visible side, on which all can look, is the righteousness of the Christian. The two sides are inseparable, and they are both of them wrought in the looms of God, though in different ways. "For one then to come in with filthy garments, is," as Chrysostom remarks, "to depart hence with the life impure." And he was speechless: Literally, *he was muzzled*. He had not one word to say in self defence. What he had done he had done wilfully and defiantly, being determined to pursue his own chosen way, let who would find fault.

VER. 13. Then the king said to the attendants, Bind him hand and foot: Literally, *Bind his feet and hands*. He greatly abused his liberty, while he had it. Let him now be deprived of so much of it as might qualify him for seriously disturbing us, or for being further injurious to his fellow subjects. And take him away: Or rather, *and take him up*. He is regarded as lying on the floor after being bound in feet and hands. Griesbach however suspected the genuineness of the clause altogether; and it is omitted from the texts of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. It is wanting in both the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and in many other high authorities. It is not found too in Erasmus's editions of the text. It may have been innocently intruded. And cast him into outer darkness: Or rather, *into the outer darkness*. It was already night; and the brilliantly illuminated festal hall, the place of joy, and delightful fellowship, and bliss, was surrounded with blackness of darkness. Into that blackness of darkness, somewhere or other, the scorned of the rules of the court was to be thrown. The imagination is left to localize, as it may please, his whereabouts and surroundings; and one may think, if one chooses, and as Storr does, of some dismal dungeon (*carcer caliginosissimus*: DE PARABOLIS CHRISTI, § 11). But, for the moment, the festal hall is heaven, and all else is the region of dreariness, and darkness, and woe. "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," the entire moral refuse of society. (Rev. xxii. 15, compare Matt. viii. 11, 12.) There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth: That bitter *weeping*, compared with which all other weepings are insignificant; that utterly hopeless *gnashing of the teeth*, which removes it to an almost immeasurable distance from all other gnashings and corresponding expressions of distress. See chaps. viii. 12; xiii. 42, 50.

gnashing of teeth. 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might

VER. 14. For many are called, but few chosen: The *For* looks back to the whole parable. The entire body of those who were originally invited, the agricultural and commercial magnates, representing the spiritual superiors and natural leaders of the Jewish people, had declined the royal invitation. They therefore were not chosen. If they were not unanimous in their rejection of the invitation, the few who adopted it were so few that no notice is taken of them in the parable. The dependents of these magnates seemed to have followed slavishly in the footsteps of their superiors; and hence they too were not chosen. The city was burned. When the royal messengers went out to the landward highways, most probably the great body of the travellers would treat the invitation in the same way in which it had been treated by those who were nearer the throne. When we step out of the parable into the reality which is parabolically represented, we know that the great body of even the humbler classes of the Jews, and the great body of all classes of the Gentiles, have declined the invitation, and have preferred to give themselves up to their own pursuits, their own farms, their own pleasures, their own merchandise. And hence they too are not chosen. Even of those who profess to accept the invitation, some content themselves with mere profession. They do not, in reality, accept the king's favour and comply with the rules of the court. And hence they too, because really rejecting and scorning the king's invitation, are not chosen. They could not be, in consistency with infinite wisdom. Such is the nature of the bridal feast, and such is the relationship of Christ and of God to men's free agency, that none can be wisely chosen to be everlasting partakers of the Divine hospitality and bliss, but such as choose to accept the gracious invitation. *They who choose the Divine choice are Divinely chosen. They who refuse or reject the Divine choice are Divinely refused and rejected.* The mere profession of faith "is not enough," says Calvin, "to ensure God's acknowledgment." (*Minime sufficere, ut pro suis Deus agnoscat, quicumque videntur nomen vocationi ejus dedisse.*) The Divine choosing and refusing, in such cases, is conditioned on inner reality. And hence the chosen are "chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," according to something real that is the object of foreknowledge, and "through sanctification of the Spirit." (1 Pet. i. 2.) They are "chosen unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit," on the Divine and higher side of things, "and through belief of the truth," on the human and lower side. While it is far from being the case that everything is left to human choice, it is the case that *there is something which men must either choose or refuse*; and as they choose or refuse, their doom is fixed. "What then?" says Chrysostom, "shall we not go over to blessedness so great? Shall we not join the angels? Shall we not accept the clean garments, and take part in the ceremonies of the marriage feast? Shall we rather continue in our rags, like beggars in the street, and indeed in a state far worse and more wretched?"

VER. 15. Then went the Pharisees: *The Pharisees*, as a particular party interested in compassing the destruction of our Lord. (Matt. xii. 14, xxi. 41.) They went from among the surrounding crowd. Inasmuch as the united deputies of the respective antichrist parties, who had sought to get our Lord into their power by questioning His authority (chap. xxi. 23), had been totally confounded and nonplussed, it would appear that some prominent members of the party of the Pharisees, bitterly chagrined, retired by themselves for a little,

entangle him in *his* talk. 16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest

to consider what they should do. And took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk: Or, rather, *And took counsel that they might insnare Him in discourse.* They took counsel with a view (*ἔβρωσ*) to insnaring Him in the expression of some opinion or other, which could be made actionable at the bar of the civil authorities. (See Luke xx. 20.) Pitiful poltroons! As cruel as they were cowardly! They heartlessly resolved to lay a trap for our Lord (*παγιδεύσωσιν*), and plotted to draw Him out flatteringly, till He might put His foot, unsuspectingly, in the noose which they had contrived!

VER. 16. And they send out to Him their disciples, with the Herodians: It is not known with certainty who these Herodians were. They are not referred to by Josephus, or any contemporary writers. And, with the Herods, they would of course pass away altogether from the scene. The early fathers had just to conjecture like ourselves what were their principles. Origen thought it probable (*εἰκόσ*) that all those of the Jews who advocated the expediency and lawfulness of paying tribute to the Romans would be called Herodians by those who disapproved of submitting to that badge of national subjection. (*Comm. on Matt.*, in loc.) The opinion of Origen, with more or less modification, has been generally accepted all down the ages. Calvin received it. Richard Baxter too. Alford also accepted it; as did Winer before him, and Neander the historian in his *Life of Christ*. So did Meyer in the early editions of his *Commentary*; but in his later editions he supposes, with greater likelihood, that the Herodians would be a political party of the Jewish people who would gladly have accepted the dynasty of the Herods to the exclusion of the Romans. They would be the national party. Many of them would admit indeed that there was much about the Herods that was objectionable. Their origin was objectionable. Their semi-heathenish manners were objectionable. Their morals were objectionable. But then they had become naturalized, and were of magnificent habits; and they devoted themselves to the development of the national glory. Might they not be, after all, the dynasty for which the nation had been looking for centuries? and in which the prophecies which so delighted the pious found a sufficient though a merely political fulfilment? Might not the salvation of the people, as a people, be dependent on the Herods? So, likely, contended the Herodians. And thus there would be a point in which they, as a merely political party, and the Pharisees as a religious party, would touch one another and coincide. The Pharisees were in general opposed to the rule of the Romans, as a violation of the fundamental principle of the theocracy. They paid their tribute under a secret protest, and were longing for the appearance of a truly Jewish king who would raise their nation from the footstool of the world's affairs to the throne. **Saying, Master:** Literally, *Teacher*, that is, *Rabbi*. They imagined that He would be pleased with the deferential appellation. It was a sop. We know that Thou art true: Another sop. Thou art a thoroughly honest and straightforward rabbi, with no duplicity of character. Thou hast nothing in Thee of the trimmer. **And teachest the way of God in truth:** Thou art thoroughly to be depended on as teaching us the way in which God would have us all to walk. When Thou speakest, Thy voice is as the echo of a voice from above, which says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Neither carest Thou

thou for any man : for thou regardest not the person of men.
17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give

for any one : We do not mean that Thou givest Thyself no concern for the weal of men. On the contrary, we believe that Thou art a true lover of men. But we are sure that in all matters of conscience Thou art utterly indifferent to the opinions of men regarding Thy teaching. If Thou knowest that what Thou sayest is true, it gives Thee no concern whether it be agreeable or disagreeable to other rabbis, or to priests and high priests, or to princes and kings! Thou wilt never consider for a moment whether what Thou hast got to teach will be pleasing to the procurator, or to Cæsar, or to any one! For Thou regardest not the person of men : Literally, *For Thou dost not look into (the) face of men*, viz. to indicate by a smile of favouritism that Thou wilt be on their side, be their case good or bad. The Greek expression is one of several parallel phrases, which reproduce a peculiar Hebrew idiom, which had its origin in the custom of prostration before a superior. If the prostrate person was told to lift up his face, so that the superior might deign to smile upon it, he was accepted. His face, or person, was accepted, righteously or unrighteously as the case might be. It was wrong for a judge however to favour any one who was at his bar. It was wrong therefore for him, while acting in his judicial capacity, to *accept faces* or *persons*, or to *have respect to faces* or *persons*. And hence the phrase *respect-of-faces*, or *respect-of-persons*, came to denote judicial partiality, which is always wicked. Thence it came, by a still more elongated process, to mean in general *favouritism*. Our Saviour's flatterers expressed their conviction that He was incapable of flattering, or otherwise improperly favouring. "They thought, belike," says Trapp, "to have tickled and taken our Saviour with their flatteries, and so to have had what they would of Him. But Christ was unflatterable." They came to Him, as Matthew Henry remarks, in the spirit of Joab, "who kissed and killed."

VER. 17. Tell us, then, What thinkest Thou! Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Give us a plain categorical answer, like a brave man, as Thou art. Yea or nay? They were playing skilfully, as they fancied, upon His weak point of self conceit and vanity! They had cunningly led Him to a lofty peak of principle, from which He could not move either to the right hand or to the left, without dashing Himself to pieces over one precipice or another! They expected and wished that He should move to the right hand, and say, *It is unlawful*, and then they would instantly accuse Him to Pilate, as plotting against the supremacy of the Roman emperor (Luke xx. 20), just as Judas of Gaulonitis had formerly done. (See Josephus, *Antiq.* xviii. 1: 1, 6.) But if He should fear to say *It is unlawful*, and should therefore say *It is lawful*, then they would make the best of the second-best answer, and raise the hue and cry that He was the enemy of His nation, and opposed to their indefeasible theocratic prerogatives and sovereignty. It was apparently however in the hope that they might succeed in getting Him to say *It is unlawful*, that the Pharisees associated the Herodians with their own disciples. They thought that Jesus would conceive that a negative answer to the question would be agreeable to both classes of questioners, and that He might consequently be induced, if only His weak point were skilfully played upon, to give that answer! The poor short-sighted manœuvrers! The word rendered *tribute* (*κῆνος*) is properly the Roman word *census*, which we too have adopted into our own language, though with a different application from what it bore among the Jews. It de-

tribute unto Cæsar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which

noted, as used by the Jews, *the annual poll-tax which was levied on the people for the treasury of the Roman emperor*. The publicans collected it, and were obliged to transmit to the Roman treasury as much as accorded with *the official census of the population*. Hence the designation of the tax. It was of the value of a day's wages. (See ver. 19, and chap. xx. 2.)

VER. 18. But Jesus knew their wickedness: His eye saw into their hearts, and discerned the malicious aim that was actuating them. And said, Why tempt ye Me? Why make such an attempt upon Me? Why try, in this underhand way, to inveigle and entrap Me? Why should you do the ignominious work of him who is the Great Tempter? Ye hypocrites: The Lord spoke plainly, and tore before their faces the veil under which they were endeavouring to hide their intent. They commended Him for not fearing to speak the truth; and the truth regarding themselves He now spoke without fear.

VER. 19. Show Me the tribute money: Show Me the coin in which the poll-tax is paid. The word for money in the original is *nomisma*, whence our word *numismatics*, denoting the science of coins. And they brought to Him a penny: The Roman silver penny, the *denarius*. It was, at once, the amount of the capitation tax and the coin in which it was required to be paid. (See on chap. xx. 2.) The coin thus got currency among the people, a matter of financial moment for the Roman mint on the one hand, and of political moment for the Roman government on the other, as it impressed upon the people the idea of the Roman supremacy. It galled them nevertheless. They could not but see that the neck of their national liberty was under the foot of the Roman emperor.

VER. 20. And He saith to them, Whose is this image and the superscription? Instead of *superscription*, which is the Vulgate version, Erasmus and Beza have *inscription*, a better translation upon the whole. *Superscription* is apt to suggest, as indeed Wycliffe renders it, *the writing above*. But in the silver penny referred to the legend was often at the sides of the emperor's likeness, and not above. The Greek word (*ἐπιγραφή*) denotes, not *the writing that was above the head*, but *the writing that was upon the coin*. Sir John Cheke gives it precisely, *on-writing*. Our Lord asks His question, not, of course, for the information of Himself, but for the preparation of His questioners' minds.

VER. 21. They say unto Him, Cæsar's: The likeness was that of Cæsar, and the name inscribed was that of Cæsar. Very likely the particular coin would be one of the denarii of Tiberius, the successor of Augustus Cæsar the first Roman emperor. The word Cæsar (pronounced by both Romans and Greeks *Kaisar*) was originally the surname of the Julian family. Hence it was the surname of the great military genius, Julius Cæsar. After his death, and in accordance with his will, it was adopted by his grand-nephew Caius Octavius, who at length became the first Roman emperor, under the designation of Cæsar Augustus. It hence became the honorary appellation of the succeeding emperors; until at a later period it was transferred to the heir apparent to the Roman throne. Then saith He to them, Render then to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to

are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's. 22

God the things that are God's: One of the wisest, deepest, and yet simplest maxims ever uttered in human language. It gleams in its own light. With what instant effect must it have shone in upon the minds of His questioners, dispelling into nonentity the little cloud of fog which they had joined hand in hand to distil over the trap which they had laid. They had imagined that they had successfully shut up our Saviour to a simple *yea* or *nay*. Perhaps they were chuckling in their hearts over the anticipation that, whether accepting the *yea* or the *nay*, Jesus must suicidally commit Himself to a definite attitude in relation to a great political question, on which national feeling on the one hand, and Roman feeling on the other, were running high. But lo, instead of being caught in their net so cleverly disposed, he rises erect into a region overtopping their little questions, and lays down a principle of action to guide, not them only, but all their fellow-men everywhere and in every age. He legislates for universal man, throughout universal time. He as it were says to His interrogators: *Think not to catch Me in that paltry snare. My mission is far other than to mingle in petty political fray. The little questions of to-day, in that sphere of things, will not be the questions of to-morrow. And men's prejudices are too deeply enlisted to suffer them at present to listen to the still small voice of reason on the topics in dispute. I have come to be the WORD of God for all time and for all the world. I lay down principles which will, as men are able to bear their application, purify the politics of every people, and ultimately adjust all the differences that separate person from person, party from party, and people from people. One of these principles, in so far as it is applicable to you, is the following,—*RENDER TO CÆSAR THE THINGS THAT BELONG TO CÆSAR, THE THINGS THAT ARE HIS DUE, AND TO GOD THE THINGS THAT BELONG TO GOD AND ARE HIS DUE. *Render, that is, Discharge, or Pay, as the word is frequently translated. "O answer full of miracle!" exclaims Hilary. (Comment., in loc.) It is assumed, in the Saviour's principle, that the Jews had to do with Cæsar and Cæsar with the Jews. Was it not matter of fact that his money was circulating among them, and that they were obliged to let it circulate? Was it not matter of fact that they were obliged to pay the capitation tax with it? It is true then that they had duties to discharge to Cæsar. Our Lord assumes it. And He also assumes, tacitly, that it would be unwise, in present circumstances, to resist the authority of Cæsar. It would be politically ruinous. It was actually ruinous a few years afterward. The attempt ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the remnant of the nation. Our Saviour however does not expressly lay down the principle that it was right to pay tribute to Cæsar. There is a time for speaking out, and there is a time for refraining from speaking out. He remits the whole subject, as it were, to the conscience of the people; wisely keeping aloof from their irritating political contests. But He reminds them whatever duties were involved in their actual relation to Cæsar, these they were bound to discharge; but without prejudice to the supreme prerogatives of God. He does not formally indeed discriminate between *state* and *church*. Still less does He formally enjoin, as some have supposed, the payment both of the political capitation tax on the one hand, and of the ecclesiastical half shekel of the sanctuary on the other. Nor does He poetically contrast the *metal money* to be rendered to Cæsar and the *mental money* to be rendered to God, the soul itself, as having enstamped on it the image and inscription of God. (So Tertullian *Cont. Marc.*, iv. 38; and also Erasmus, Neander, Wordsworth, Alford.) But He does formally discriminate between*

When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, 24 saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 25 Now

what is due to magistrates and other rulers, and what is due to God; and He enjoins the discharge of the twofold dues.

VER. 22. **And when they heard they marvelled:** There were reaches in His intelligence that utterly baffled them. They felt that they were completely outwitted, and yet without the left-handed aid of any quirk or quibble, such as they were accustomed to in their schools. **And left Him, and went their way:** Humbler men, let us hope. But if not humbler, they would feel humiliated, and would retire to nurse their malice for other measures and opportunities.

VER. 23. **On the same day came to Him Sadducees:** Not *the Sadducees*, as in our Authorized version. Luther unhappily put in the article; and Tyndale followed in his steps. And hence our Authorized version. Which say there is no resurrection: The *which* or *who*, which our translators have here used, corresponds exactly to the text which they had before them in their editions (*οἱ λέγοντες*). But there is reason to believe that in the original text there was no corresponding word (no *οἱ*), so that the whole clause should run thus, *On the same day Sadducees approached Him, saying that there is no resurrection.* This reading of the text is found in the uncial manuscripts \aleph B D M S Z II; and in Nos. 1 and 33 of the cursives, besides many others. (No. 33 is *the queen of the cursives*; and of No. 1 Tregelles says, "none of the later uncial manuscripts is comparable to this, as to the goodness of the text in the Gospels.") The same reading is supported by the Peshito Syriac and Cureton's Syriac, which run thus, "*and say to Him that there is no resurrection.*" The reading has been adopted in the editions of Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf (the eighth), and Westcott-and-Hort. The Sadducees referred to came up to our Saviour, and in some way or other, not recorded, entered upon one of their distinctive tenets, asserting that there is no resurrection. **And asked Him:** Or, *And interrogated Him* (*ἐπηρώτησαν*) or *proposed to Him a question.* They do not seem to have been animated by any sinister intention. But, probably enough, they were an air of only half concealed superciliousness and self sufficiency as they addressed the humble and enthusiastic Rabbi.

VER. 24. **Saying, Master:** Literally, *Teacher*, or *Rabbi*. Though sufficiently self sufficient and confident, they were nevertheless outwardly respectful toward the wonderful Galilean. **Moses said, If a man die, not having children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up offspring to his brother:** They were pointing to what is said in Deut. xxv. 5-10, a passage that has reference to some of the unpleasant customs of a rude state of society. Michaelis is undoubtedly right in contending that the ordinance referred to, commonly called *the levirate law* from an old Latin word *levir*, did not originate the idea of a widow's claim upon her deceased husband's surviving brothers, if still unmarried. (*Mosaisches Recht.*, § 98.) On the contrary, Moses found the idea already existing and operating. He found in certain places of society, amid certain coteries of "brethren dwelling together," loose, licentious, and festering habits, the result of the idea referred to. The habits however had established and were maintain-

there were with us seven brethren : and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother : 26 likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. 27 And last of all the woman died also. 28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of

ing themselves by an ancient prescriptive right (comp. Gen. xxxviii.); and all therefore that Moses could, in the circumstances, effect politically, was to limit and curtail the evil. The habits were not identical with the unhappy and disgusting customs that still linger in Tibet, but there was a filament of connection between them. "In the East in general," says Dr. Latham, "one man has many wives. In Tibet, and certain other countries where Tibetan habits are practised, one woman has many husbands." (*Descriptive Ethnology*, vol. i., chap. 2, p. 44.) This is *polyandry* as contradistinguished from *polygamy*. Turner mentions a case, which came under his observation in Tibet, of one woman who had five husbands, all brothers. And "along with this," says Dr. Latham, "I take the Jewish practice of one brother, on the death of another, taking to himself the relict of the deceased." (*Desc. Ethnology*, ut supra.) The expression to *raise up offspring to his brother* indicates that the child which might be the issue of the second marriage would be entered in the genealogical register as the child, not of the natural father, but of the deceased brother, and would thus become his heir.

VER. 25. Now there were with us seven brothers: We may either suppose, with Chrysostom, Euthymius, and Meyer, that the Sadducees were imagining a case for argument's sake; or, what is more likely, that they were referring to what had actually occurred in some singularly exceptional set of circumstances. And the first married and died; and, not having offspring, left his wife to his brother: It had been his wish that his brother should marry his relict. (Hence the subjective $\mu\eta$ instead of the objective $\alpha\omega\kappa$.)

VER. 26. In like manner the second also, and the third, unto the seventh: Literally, *until the seven*, that is, as Arnoldi correctly explains, *until the seven had had her and had died*. "Happy it was," interposes Trapp not unhappily, "if, seeing their brethren fall so fast, themselves were warned to number their own days, and provide for death's coming."

VER. 27. But last of all—and at length—the woman died: The received text adds the word *also*. But Tischendorf, with good reason apparently, has, in his eighth edition, left it out. It is wanting in \aleph B L U Δ II, 1. It is omitted too by Alford and Westcott-and-Hort.

VER. 28. The Sadducees having thus deftly, as they imagined, and with considerable graphic ability, prepared the way for the question which they thought a perfect puzzle, continue: In the resurrection, then, of which of the seven shall she be wife? for all had her. There now! What can you make of that, on your principle of a resurrection? It should be noted, however, that the puzzle of the Sadducees had no special relation to what may be involved in the resurrection of the body as contradistinguished from what is involved in the immortality of the soul. Their objection was not, specifically, against any mode or modal adjunct of future life, but, generically, against the idea that men are to exist at all in the future. They had convinced themselves that the world is one-sided, *this*-sided, and that after death there is no prolongation of self-consciousness, or of the self in which self-consciousness inheres, into any

the seven? for they all had her. 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God,

other side of things, *that-side*, the side beyond, a side in which are found the flowers and the fruits of the mental and moral buddings that are here. "The doctrine of the Sadducees," says Josephus, "is, that souls die with the bodies." (*Antiq.* xviii. 1: 4.) "They take away," he says again, "the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and of punishments and rewards in Hades." (*Wars*, ii. 8: 14.)

VER. 29. But Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err: Or, as the word is generally rendered in our version, and here too by Tyndale, *ye are deceived*. Ye are led astray in your ideas. The expression leaves room for the idea to enter dimly in, that there was some Agency behind themselves that had to do with their error. Dresigius however would give a middle import to the word, *ye deceive yourselves*. (*De Verbis Mediis*, p. 391.) Not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God: Ignorance is the mother of errors. In God error is inconceivable, just because He is incapable of ignorance. The Sadducees were ignorant of the meaning of the Scriptures, on the one hand: see this illustrated in ver. 31, 32. And they were ignorant of the power of God, on the other, to make manifold changes in human nature, while yet preserving its essential identity: see this illustrated in ver. 30.

VER. 30. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage: The former of the two verbs refers to the marriage of males; the latter to that of females. But are as angels of God in heaven: The expression *in heaven*, very literally *in the heaven*, is to be connected with the word *angels*. Love indeed will continue in the glorified state; but it will be defecated and sublimed. Some of the modes in which it manifests itself on earth will be changed. But, in being changed, they will only be transfigured into higher modes. Nothing of the sweetness of love will be eliminated or diminished. There will be the most endearing intimacies. Heart will be interlinked with heart. Affections will intertwine and interblend. Love will never lie smitten, bleeding, or despised. Instead of *angels of God*, Westcott-and-Hort read simply *angels*, and they have been followed by the English Revisionists. But the expression *of God* is an unlikely interpolation; whereas an innocent retrenchment of the phrase was by no means an improbable occurrence.

VER. 31. But as touching the resurrection of the dead did ye never read what is spoken to you by God, saying: The Saviour refers to what is written in Exodus iii. 6, quoting from the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses, as constituting the primary law of the Lord. We are not to suppose, however, that He quoted from the Pentateuch as being the only common standard of appeal. There is no reason to support the notion entertained by Jerome and many others that the Sadducees did not accept the rest of the Scriptures as veritable parcels and parts of the word of God. Josephus tells us that they rejected the *unwritten traditions* of the elders as having authority over the conscience; but he does not intimate that they objected to any portion of the sacred Scriptures in general, as a revelation of the mind of God. (See Reuss's *Sadducæer* in

saying, 32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but

Herzog's *Real Encyclopädie*.) The expression "spoken unto you by God" is noticeable, as implying that whatever God is saying in the Scriptures He is saying unto all and each. His voice reaches down through all ages, and carries its message of mercy to all who have ears to hear and minds to apprehend.

VER. 32. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: Jerome raises the question why our Lord did not adduce some more evident and cogent argument for the resurrection, such as Isaiah xxvi. 19 and Daniel xii. 2. He comes to the conclusion that the reason was that the Sadducees did not acknowledge any other portion of the Bible than the Five Books of Moses. He was wrong however, as we have seen (see ver. 31), in this assumption. And he was also wrong in his notion regarding the great doctrinal difficulty or peculiarity of the Sadducees, and consequently regarding the relevancy and force of the Saviour's argumentation. The great doctrinal difficulty and peculiarity of the Sadducees did not turn upon the incident or detail of the resurrection of the body. It lay in the generic conception of the immortality of the personality. Once establish that to their satisfaction, and they would not scruple in reference to the resurrection of the body, which just brings out the idea of the future completeness of humanity. Hence the Saviour, with far-reaching insight as well as consummate logical skill, refers them to the *very primary element and central principle of the Jewish Scriptures and of the Jewish dispensation*, as that principle and primary element were, wrapped up in God's peculiar relationship to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In that relationship was the root of a direct antithesis to the peculiar unbelief of the Sadducees. The whole of God's peculiar relationship to Abraham and his descendants had reference to the moral state, moral desert, and moral prospects of persons. *It had reference therefore to immortality, which is an involution of morality.* It was a relationship that took cognisance of Abraham as a sinner, and of all his fellow men as sinners; and it graciously involved the provision of *propitiation for their sins*. It thus embraced within itself the means of *everlasting salvation*. It was either this or nothing worth having. Abraham needed salvation, salvation as a sinner, that is, everlasting salvation. So did the succeeding patriarchs; and their descendants; and all mankind. And there was salvation with God. He was Himself to come down, and work it out and give it. He was to appear in the line of Abraham. He told the glorious truth to Abraham. It was the good news. It was the Gospel. (Gal. iii. 8.) Abraham believed it; and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. He looked from afar, and rejoiced in the Coming One. He rejoiced in Him, not simply, and not chiefly, *because He was to come in the line of his posterity, but chiefly because He was really to come, so that "all the families of the earth" were to be blessed.* (Gen. xii. 3, xviii. 18, xxii. 18, xxvi. 4.) He and all the families of the earth equally needed salvation from sin's penalty and from sin. The salvation which they needed was, in its very essential conception, salvation from all the woes of which the sensitive element within us, the soul, is susceptible by reason of sin. It was hence salvation with the fulness of blessedness within it, and, therefore, *salvation that runs on—on—on—to eternity.* Thus we see the power of the Saviour's argument. It does not lie, formally, as has been supposed by Chrysostom, Theophylact, Euthymius Zigabenus, and

many others, inclusive of Heidegger and Principal Campbell, in the present tense of the substantive verb as distinguished from the past, "*I am* (not merely *I was*) the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." In the parallel passage of Mark (xii. 26) the verb is wholly omitted. In the parallel passage of Luke (xx. 37) the emphasis is, by a variation in representation, formally removed from any copulative peculiarity of tense. In the original Hebrew too the verb is wanting. It cannot therefore be regarded as constituting the formal nerve of the argument; although it is true that *the idea of present time*, as superadded to the past, and as perpetually running on into the future, is essentially involved and implied. The nerve of the argument, however, lies deeper. It lies in the very nature of the relationship referred to. *If it be a fact that God was the God of Abraham, it must also be a truth that God is the God of Abraham.* It would not have been a fact that God *was* the God of Abraham, if it were not a truth that God *is* the God of Abraham. What God did of old in reference to Abraham, in the way of distinguishing him from the mass of his fellow men, would be utterly inexplicable if Abraham were not continuing to exist, and deriving consciously from God the fulness of the blessings which it is competent for a propitious God to bestow. Abraham of old lived by faith in God as his God, and walked on the earth as a "stranger" and a "pilgrim," "seeking for a country, a heavenly." (Heb. xi. 8-16.) But if Abraham is not now in the "country" which he sought, his faith and his pilgrimage were beginnings without endings, and there was really no grand or gracious sense in which God was "his God," "his Shield" from all evil, and "his Exceeding Great Reward." (Gen. xv. 1.) The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews informs us that "God is not ashamed to be called Abraham's God, *because He prepared for him a city*" (xi. 16). It could have been no great boon to Abraham merely to have had children. That boon he would in all likelihood be sharing with the most degraded of felons and idolaters. *It was the Messianic hope involved in his posterity that was the real boon.* And that Messianic hope postulated the ideas of propitiation for sins and the everlasting salvation of the soul. It would be utterly absurd to suppose that God would make august arrangements to come down into humanity to be a Propitiator for sins and a Saviour of souls, *if sins and souls have no relation to an enduring state of being*, in which there may be, on the one hand, an everlasting human reciprocity in relation to the Godhead of God, and, on the other, an everlasting outpouring of the fulness of God's Godhead into the everlastingly expanding capacity of the soul. Human existence here is but the shadow, thrown before, of human existence hereafter; or else the whole economy of God in relation to Abraham and his seed, and the Seed within that seed, and thus in relation to sin, and propitiation, and salvation, is an absolute inexplicability and an infinite riddle. Hence the amazing power and the complete logical and theological perfection of the Saviour's argument. He, as it were, says to the Sadducees: *The existence of the privileges of Judaism, and your own existence as privileged children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is utterly unaccountable on the hypothesis on which you base your peculiarity. You are overthrowing the foundations of all that peculiarity of which this very temple, in which we are standing, is the centre. Ye must therefore be erring, not knowing the Scriptures, and what it is that is involved in God's peculiar relation to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* Bruno Bauer however, seeing nothing at all of the Saviour's idea, and yet full of the pride of self satisfied ignorance, speaks of the argument as "laughable." (*Kritik*, xii., § 79 : 3.) And Strauss, for the same reason, mocks

of the living. 33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. 35 Then

at the "rabbinical dialectics" of our Lord, who "must needs find" the idea of immortality "where it is not to be met with by unprejudiced eyes." (*Leben Jesu*, ii. 6, § 79.) *God*, says the Saviour, *is not the God of the dead, but of the living*. The word *dead* has here its lowest Sadducean import, denoting those who have ceased to be. Contrariwise, the word *living* denotes those who are continuing to be. The word *God*, again, when forming the subject of the proposition "*God is*," must be understood absolutely as meaning simply the *Divine Being*; but as occurring in the predicate clause, "*the God of the living, not of the dead*," must be understood relatively. The relation is one of *holy reciprocity or mutual objectivity*. *God is the God of those who, on the one hand, are the objects of His propitious grace, and who, on the other hand, regard and treat Him as the Object of their supreme trust, love, and obedience. But such propitious grace, on the one hand, and such trust, love, and obedience, on the other, postulate immortality; and indeed they have no meaning whatever, if that postulate be ignored. "God," says our Saviour, "is the God of the living, not of the dead." God is the Covenant-God of immortals only. "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them."* (Ps. ciii. 17, 18.) The "covenant" which they keep, and which was made with Abraham, and renewed with Isaac (see Gen. xvii. 19), and Jacob, and the Jews as a people (1 Chron. xvi. 17), was, in its inner essence, and so far as it took spiritual effect, the effect Divinely desired, an "everlasting covenant." (See Isa. xxiv. 5, lv. 3, lxi. 8; Ezek. xxxvii. 26; Heb. xiii. 20.) It involved, in virtue of propitiatory grace, that glorious relation of reciprocal objectivity that made it right for God to say to the objects of His grace, *I am your God and your Portion for ever*, and equally right for those, the living objects of His grace, to say respondingly, *Thou art our God and our Portion for ever*.

VER. 33. And when the multitude heard His answer: The word rendered *multitude* is plural in the original, *crowds*, the crowds namely of the common people, who were thronging around and eagerly listening to the discussion. They were astonished at His doctrine: The term *doctrine*, in its common modern import, refers to the subject matter of teaching. It denotes, as Dr. Samuel Johnson defines it, "the principles or positions of any sect or master, that which is taught." But here it simply means *teaching*; and draws attention rather to what was peculiar, and peculiarly felicitous and masterly, in the mode of instructing and discussing, than to any peculiarity in the tenets inculcated. (Comp. chap. vii. 28, 29.) Wycliffe's translation of the word is *teaching*. Sir John Cheke uses the ambidextrous word *lerning*. The Anglo-Saxon version agrees with him. Its translation is *lare*, a word still preserved in Scotch, and equivalent to *lore*.

VER. 34. But when the Pharisees heard that He put the Sadducees to silence, they gathered themselves together: Or, as Tyndale idiomatically gives it, *they drew togedder*. The expression rendered *together* has a local reference. Attracted by their denominational feelings, they collected clusteringly in the court of the

one of them, *which was a lawyer*, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying, 36 Master, *which is the great command-*

ment, and in the immediate vicinity of our Lord, no doubt variously affected. Some would be almost ready to gnash their teeth with chagrin that the Nazarene was so amazingly triumphant in all His discussions. Others who were peculiarly concerned about their own rabbinical credit and skill, would be mortified that the argument with which our Saviour had just been confounding the Sadducees had never occurred to themselves. It was so obvious! so simple! so appropriate! Others still, of more generous and noble mould, would be favourably impressed, and saying to their friends or to themselves, *He cannot be so great a heretic after all. What if we have all along been doing Him injustice?*

VER. 35. And one of them, a lawyer: This is the only passage in Matthew in which the word *lawyer* (*νομικός*) occurs. It is found, however, several times in Luke's Gospel, and also once in Titus iii. 13. The translation of the term in the Authorized version is admirable, much better than that of Wycliffe, *a teacher of the lawe*, and that of Tyndale, *a doctoure of lawe*, and that of the Geneva version, *an expounder of the lawe*. It is another word (*νομοδιδάσκαλος*) that has these significations. But what the distinctive professional badge of the *lawyer* really was is not known. The lawyer before us evidently belonged to the party of the Pharisees; and hence the expression, "one of them, a lawyer." He would also belong to the class of *scribes*. See Mark xii. 28; and compare Luke xi. 45, 46, 52, 53. Every lawyer would be a scribe, though every scribe might not be a lawyer. Lightfoot supposed that the lawyers would be those who confined themselves to the interpretation and application of the written law, as distinguished from those who interpreted and applied the traditions of the elders. (See *Leusden's edition of Lightfoot's Opera*, in loc.) But perhaps they were simply a higher grade of scribes, who devoted themselves to *giving counsel on matters of law*. They would thus be *Biblical barristers* as it were. Proposed a question, tempting Him, and saying: Tregelles and Tischendorf, as well as Lachmann and Westcott-and-Hort, omit the phrase *and saying*. It is wanting in N B L, 33, and other considerable authorities. It is of no moment whether it be rejected or retained. The word *tempting* has in modern English a much narrower acceptation than it had of old, and than the original term has (*πειράζω*). It suggests almost exclusively some kind of *attempting* that is sinister, sinful, malicious, and, as it were, from beneath. But originally it denoted *trying*, *testing*, *proving*, which might be on the right hand side of things as well as on the left. The original word is translated *to prove* in John vi. 6; *to assay* in Acts xvi. 7; and *to try* in Heb. xi. 17, Rev. ii. 2-10, iii. 10. (Compare what is said on Matt. vi. 13.) In the case before us there is no evidence at all that the *trying* or *testing* of the lawyer was malicious. On the contrary, the nature of the question is such as to suggest that he merely wished, under the impulse of what was on the whole a favourable impression of our Lord, *to put Him to the test* on a matter, not so much of doubtful disputation as of the profoundest practical significance. When we turn to the narrative in Mark xii. 28-34 we find that such was the real aim of the questioner.

VER. 36. Rabbi, which is the great commandment in the law? Our English interrogative *which* is a poor translation of the original term (*ποία*), and yet it is difficult, without a cumbrous circumlocution, to devise a better. The original term is *qualitative*. It draws attention to the distinctive quality, nature, or essence of the great commandment; *Of what nature is the great commandment*

ment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour

in the law? What is the essential nature of the great commandment in the law? The expression *in the law* must be understood as referring indeterminately to the whole written revelation, but pointing determinately to that side or portion of it which exhibited legislatively the duty of men. The portion referred to was found chiefly in the *Five Books of Moses*. These, the Pentateuch, were the original *Law*. But when the other writings were added the sum total frequently received the original denomination; so that the expression *in the law* is nearly equivalent to our common expression *in the Bible*. The phrase is expanded or unfolded in verse 40. (Comp. chap. v. 17, 18.)

VER. 37. And He said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: See Deut. vi. 5, x. 12. It is *in*, instead of *with*, in the original. The heart and soul and mind are thus represented rather as the seat of the love required, than as the instruments wherewith the loving is to be effected. Wycliffe, in the second and third clauses, preserves the *in*, but in the first he has *of*. The word rendered *all* is not the common word for *all*, but the word for *whole*. It is in fact our very word *whole* (ὅλος). *In thy whole heart, and in thy whole soul, and in thy whole mind*; that is, if we would reproduce to a nicety the peculiarity of the Hebrew expression, in which the word *whole* is a substantive, *in the whole of thy heart, and in the whole of thy soul, and in the whole of thy mind*. The words *heart, soul, mind* represent different aspects of one substantive entity, the one spiritual element of our nature, whether that element be metaphysically simple or in some respect constituted and compound. It is the *heart* or centre of our complex being. (See chaps. ix. 4, xii. 34, xiii. 15, 19, xv. 8, 19.) It is the *soul*, the seat of sensations and feelings in general. It is the *mind*, that in us which perceives and thinks and understands. "All that is within us" should be enlisted in the love of the Lord our God. "What more sweet," exclaims Soares in his rapture, "could be enjoined, what more delightful, what more holy, than to love the "Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy "mind?" (*Comment. in sacrosanctum Evangelium secundum Matt.*, p. 411.)

VER. 38. This is the first and great commandment: Or rather, according to the reading that is approved of by all the great modern critics, *This is the great and first commandment*. Such is the order of the adjectives in the manuscripts N B D L Z, 1, 13, 33, etc., as also in the Old Latin version, and the Vulgate, and the Syriac version too. Obedience to this great and first commandment is godliness. And godliness is just the Godward and heavenly side of goodness. It is the consummation and climax of human duty. It does not lie, chronologically at least, at the foundation of human dutifulness; but it forms the pinnacle and keystone of all truly noble moral character. Never will it be right with mankind until it be universally realized in human character.

VER. 39. A second is like to it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: See Lev. xix. 18. Obedience to this commandment constitutes the manward side of goodness. It is philanthropy. As a form of true moral goodness, it is akin to godliness. The two duties, says Jesus, are *like* unto one another. They run parallel; only godliness is on the upper line of things, philanthropy on the

as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

lower. And, all along their lines, filaments of godliness dip down into philanthropy, while filaments of philanthropy rise up into godliness. Love to man naturally interblends with love to God. The two duties interpenetrate at innumerable points; and, by their interpenetration, the resultant goodness is perfected both upwardly and downwardly. True godliness, as having to do with the invisible side of things, may sometimes indeed be comparatively latent; but, when existent, it will invariably manifest itself in true philanthropy, which, as having to do with the visible side of things, must always be patent. In like manner, true philanthropy, the philanthropy of principle, philanthropy that transcends the limits of all the accidental circles of kindred, class, and country, philanthropy that is cosmopolitan on the one hand and individualising on the other, this philanthropy is ever crowned, either explicitly or implicitly, patently or latently, never blatantly, with true godliness. Full-orbed moral goodness is thus always two-sided. It has an earthward and a heavenward, a manward and a Godward, side. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*: As thou lovest thyself; with love equal to the love wherewith thou lovest thyself. Such is human duty on its manward side. How happy would the world be if such love were realized in the hearts and lives of all! Instead of each man having only the benefit of his own love of himself, one love, he would have the benefit of the equal loves of all around him! When all love thus, earth will be indeed the vestibule of heaven. The *love* referred to is of course *the love of benevolence*, a love which is directly controllable by will, and which is in this respect to be distinguished from the love of complacency and delight, for which we are only mediately responsible; and are thus responsible only when true excellency of character is really discoverable in the object to be loved.

VER. 40. On these two commandments the whole law hangs, and the prophets: Such is the proper order of the clauses. In the original however the preposition is *in* instead of *on*, *In these two commandments*. The two commandments are represented as embracing or comprehending the whole law; and the prophets too. The law and the prophets are not suspended, as it were, outside the two commandments, as superadded to them. They hang inside, as being elaborated from the very essence of the twofold love. Nothing ethical in the law, and nothing ethical in the prophets, have been imported from other sources. Everything in both the law and the prophets has grown up from within the two commandments, and derives indeed its entire value from the fact that it is resolvable into them, resolvable, that is to say, either into love to God as God, or into love to man as man. When the Saviour uses here the expression *the law*, His thoughts were concentrating themselves on the Original Verbal Revelation in which God "made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel" (Ps. ciii. 7). This was *authoritative* for the guidance of the Jews. It was *the Law*. But after saying, *In these two commandments the whole law hangs*, He adds *and the prophets*, referring to the rest of the written revelation, all parts of which were given through God's *prophets*. Whatever they wrote, and on whatsoever subject it was that they wrote, they invariably had an underlying ethical aim. And that aim resolved itself into the contents of the two commandments of love.

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son of David*. 43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,

VER. 41. But the Pharisees being gathered together—about Him, or near Him (see ver. 34)—Jesus proposed a question to them: They would be variously affected by the remarkable answers which He had given to the various questions which had been proposed to Him. Some few, we may hope, would be disposed to cherish favourable and even admiring sentiments. Others would be simply disconcerted, not knowing well what to think, and ready to turn either to the right hand or to the left. But doubtless Jesus would see clearly that in the hearts of the mass of them there was a settled antipathy and hate. (See next chapter.) Perhaps He noticed that there was a general disapprobation of the way in which the exceptional lawyer had acted. The leaders might be muttering moodily to one another, *Why should that good brother embarrass us by his simplicity? Everybody surely knows which is the great commandment. But if he had asked something that would puzzle, that would have been to the point. And would it not be quite easy to puzzle the upstart by some question out of the prophets or the psalms? He has never been at any of our seminaries, and indoctrinated into the mysteries of the Scriptures.* Jesus read their supercilious thoughts, and gave them a chance of establishing, in presence of the people, their true knowledge, if they possessed it, of the import of the most important parts of the prophecies and the psalms.

VER. 42. *Saying, What think ye of Christ?* An unfortunate translation; but, strange to say, persistently holding its place in all the old English versions, Wycliffe's, Purvey's revision of Wycliffe, Tyndale's, Myles Coverdale's, Cranmer's, the Geneva, the Rheims, Sir John Cheke. In the original it is, *What think ye concerning the Christ?* (*πρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ*;) This preliminary query is but opening up, in an arrowy manner, a pathway for those which follow. *Whose son is He?* Namely, according to the predictions of the prophets. *They say unto Him, David's:* They were all agreed that the Messiah was to be the son of David, and the heir of his throne. Comp. chaps. i. 1, ix. 27, xiii. 23, xv. 22, xx. 30, 31; xxi. 9, 15, also Isa. xi. 1.

VERS. 43, 44. *He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, THE LORD SAID UNTO MY LORD, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND, TILL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES THY FOOTSTOOL.* See Ps. cx. 1: *How then?* that is, *How can you account for it then?* What is the reason that justified and impelled David to call Him LORD? It will be perceived that our Lord assumes that David was the speaker in the psalm, and its writer. And, notwithstanding the positive assertions of De Wette (*der Dichter David nicht ist*), Meyer (*derselbe nicht von David selbst herrühren kann*), and others, to the contrary, there is not a particle of evidence that is really antagonistic to the psalm's Davidic origin. It will also be perceived that our Lord assumes the Messianic reference of the psalm. Paulus indeed disputes the fact of this assumption, and with his usual spirit of interpretative contrariety and oddity insists that the Saviour put His question to the Pharisees to prove to them that they must be under a mistake in supposing that the psalm has any reference to the Messiah. (*Commentar. über die drey erst. Evn.*, vol. iii., pp. 320-343.) Paulus himself was thus of opinion that the psalm is not Messianic; and so, unhappily, are many others

44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right

who have gone still farther than Paulus on his own peculiar line of things, or taken a shorter road out of the supernatural. Maurer rejects the Messianic reference. Hupfeld pleads hard against it; and so many others, though none more ably. They think that Christ's interpretation of the psalm was a scientific mistake. But no. It is they who have committed the scientific mistake. So far from there being ground to imagine, with Hupfeld, that the New Testament conception of the nature, and work, and reward of the Messiah was an impossibility to the Old Testament writers, it seems to be scientifically clear that the whole New Testament is the outgrowth of the Old. Richard Baxter was right; "Judaism was but Christianity in the egg." (*Life and Times by Sylvester*, p. 23.) And outside the sphere of Judaism there were multitudes of things lying in the same direction, only not so positively 'pronounced.' There has been indeed a grand unity of aim in all the ages. God, and God propitious, has been in all history. Behind the progress of events there has been, all along, a Divine Mind showering in, as the clouds and fogs of human prejudices would permit, innumerable sparks or sparkles of its own infinite intelligence, and pointing men hopefully onward and upward. An infinite Conscience too has all along kept touching human consciences, and as it were Divinely magnetizing them, or adjusting the moral compasses of men's souls. Side by side with the infinite Conscience an infinite Heart has been sending its pulses strangely and mysteriously, but really, into all human hearts as much as might be, and often producing wonderful reciprocal longings and lovings and yearnings. So far also as the myriad movements of finite free wills would admit, an infinite Will has been seeking to guide the helm of every human soul, and the helm of all those groups of souls which we call peoples or nations. Hence the Messianic element from of old and everywhere. Hence its peculiar and gradually condensing development among the Hebrews. It was of God. Hence, among other phenomena, the Messianic prophecies. Psalm cx. is one of them. Jesus assumed it. And the evidence of the truthfulness of the assumption seems so convincing and overpowering that it was evidently admitted by the rabbis whom our Lord interrogated; otherwise, as Schöttgen remarks (*Horæ Hebraicæ*, in loc.), they would have protested against His assumption. It has been acknowledged too by all the best rabbinical writers since the Christian era, as well as unanimously by the Christian fathers, and all but unanimously by the great body of Christian expositors in all ages. (See Reinke's *Einleitung* to the psalm.) Note the expression, *in spirit*, or rather, *in Spirit*, "How then doth David *in Spirit* call Him Lord?" The reference is manifestly to the *Holy Spirit*. Comp. Mark xii. 36. In our idiom we should add the definite article, *in the Spirit*. David was *in the Spirit* when he had the vision which is depicted in the psalm. He was, as it were, taken *inside the mind of the Spirit*, so that he perceived and could reproduce in imperfect human phraseology the imagery of the Divine ideas. *How then doth he call him Lord?* It is easy for us, with the New Testament in our hands, to answer our Lord's question. David's son was David's Lord, because He was more than David's son. He was God's own Son, a sharer of God's own nature. He was "the Mighty God" as well as "a child of days." (See Isa. vii. 14, ix. 6.) *The Lord said unto my Lord*: Namely, on occasion of our Lord's ascension into glory, on the completion of His great propitiatory work. (Acts ii. 33-35.) The psalmist reproduces a vision which had been revealed to him, the scene of which is laid in heaven. The chronology and full

hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? 45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? 46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2 saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

import of what was thus revealed to him *he* might not so fully understand as *we* may, who have the torch of New Testament history in our hands. (See 1 Pet. i. 10-12.) *Sit Thou on My right hand*: As having gloriously finished the work which was given Thee to do, and in which I rest satisfied and well pleased. *Till I put Thine enemies underneath Thy feet*: Keep Thy place at My right hand till, all the earth over, Thy right to reign be acknowledged, Thy right to reign in all kingdoms, in all communities, in all hearts. Men in general are as yet madly opposed to Thee, and many will persist in their mad rebellion. But all rebellion and opposition will eventually be put down.

VER. 45. If then David call Him Lord: Or, rather, *calls*, as he really does. How is He His son? Our Lord thus intimates to the Pharisees that they had but a poor outside view of the real nature, character, and work of the long promised Messiah. It was not a mere monarch, somewhat like David himself that was needed. It was one who was fit to be David's monarch, and the Monarch of all other monarchs, one who would have power with God, and whose throne might be established in hearts. Did our Saviour refer inwardly to Himself as He thus questioned the Pharisees regarding David's psalm? If He did, how exalted His conception of His own nature and work! Was His conception a dream? Was our Lord, with all His common sense, and uncommon goodness, and unparalleled moral power, a moral power that is overshadowing at this moment the best portion of the globe, a mere dreamer? If not, is He not indeed our Lord and our God?

VER. 46. And no one was able to answer Him a word: They were "shut up," baffled and confounded. But enraged too: see next chapter. Neither durst any one, from that day forth, ask Him any more questions: Or, as Wycliffe picturesquely renders it, *Nether eny man was hardy fro that day for to aze Hym more*. They found that it was beyond their power to puzzle Him; and into every pit they digged, however cautiously and cunningly they picked their steps round about its mouth, they were somehow or other compelled to fall.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VER. 1. Then: After the Pharisees, notwithstanding all their power of talk and quirk, had been completely struck dumb; and yet not humbled. Spake Jesus to the multitude—literally *the crowds*—and to His disciples: He turned round to those who were far better than the Pharisees, because making far less profession of superiority. His heart yearned over them; especially when He considered how much they would be exposed to the domineering and sophisticating influence of the party who claimed to be the monopolists of the nation's religiousness. He felt it necessary to utter in their hearing words of warning.

VER. 2. Saying, The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: A somewhat imperfect translation. (See Venema's *Commentarius ad Matt. xxiii. 1-12.*) A more literal translation of the whole expression would be, *The scribes and Phari-*

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do

sees have seated themselves on the seat of Moses. Very literally, they *seated themselves*, viz. at a time indefinitely anterior. Our Saviour thus looks back to a former age, when the class of scribes and Pharisees rose into power in the nation. They were not Divinely appointed, and there was something of self assumption in their self elevation. Still our Saviour does not blame them for making it their aim to instruct the people in reference to the mind of God. When the pure Hebrew language, in which the Scriptures were, for the most part written, came to be disused by the people, it was needful that some individuals should translate it for them, and explain what was meant. It was needful therefore that there should be *Scribes*, or a literary class, devoted to sacred letters, and ready to let the people hear, in their vernacular tongue, what Moses himself taught of old and was still teaching, and what the subsequent prophets of ancient Israel had said and were still saying. It was thus needful that some should step up, as it were, to the seat of Moses, and speak as in his name, though with a somewhat different tongue. This the scribes and rabbis and other leading Pharisees did. And so far it was well, if they did not assume too much in consequence of what they were doing, and if they were consistent in themselves, conforming their conduct, inner and outer, to the precepts of Moses and the instructions of the prophets. *The seat of Moses*: Or, as the Rheims version has it, *the chair of Moses*. Wycliffe too uses the word *chair* (or *chaier*). It is quite an appropriate translation, for the word *chair* is just a crushed and corrupted form, or a contracted modification, of the evangelist's own term, *cathedra*. We got our English word through the French, whose name for a *pulpit* is *chaire*. This *chaire* is a comparatively modern abbreviation of the original term; and in the Provençal dialect the word is *cadieira* or *cadera*. The later Hebrews themselves used the evangelist's term to denote a rabbi's elevated *chair*, on which he sat when teaching. (See Vitringa, *De Synagog. Vet.*, i. 1: 7, p. 166.) We still speak of a professor's *chair*. And our own word *cathedral* just denotes *a church in which the bishop has his cathedra or chair*, from which he gives or may give instruction to the people of his charge. When Moses is represented as having a *chair*, he is regarded in the light of an authoritative instructor in things moral and spiritual. His chair was a chair of spiritual jurisprudence. The whole people of Israel were his pupils, and were bound to accept, with implicit submission, his teaching.

VER. 3. All things therefore whatsoever they may say to you, do and observe: Such is, as nearly as possible, a literal translation of the correct text (*πάντα ὅντα ἃν εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν ποιήσατε καὶ τηρεῖτε*). Of course, we are not to suppose that our Saviour enjoined upon His disciples, and the people in general, an absolutely unqualified compliance with everything that was inculcated by the scribes and Pharisees. He objected to much that they taught. But He was at present engaged with something else than what was objectionable in the subject-matter of their teaching. His meaning amounts to the following, *Whatsoever things the scribes and Pharisees inculcate upon you, when they translate to you the words of the Book of God, and whatsoever things they prove, in their teachings, to be agreeable to the mind of God, as made known in His Book, all these things do.* The Saviour's mind was intent on drawing a distinction between the teaching and the practice of the scribes and Pharisees. But do not ye after their works; for they say and do not: Like many others who have followed in their wake,

not. 4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their

they did not act according to their teaching. There was war between their words and their works. They preached one thing and practised another. Their voice, as Matthew Henry remarks, was the voice of Jacob, but their hands were the hands of Esau. It was well therefore for the Saviour to say, *Follow not their example. Do not do as they do; though, when they tell you the mind of God, do as they bid you.*

VER. 4. *But,—so far from doing what they teach,—they bind heavy burdens, and difficult to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders:* In expounding the law they add detail to detail, duty to duty, and, arranging them into classes, bind them as it were into heavy bundles, and pile them up on men's shoulders. In all this there was nothing wrong. The expression in our version, *grievous to be borne* (*δυσβάστακτα*), is, if genuine, somewhat too strong. The Saviour is not referring to unauthorized impositions, or as Mace translates the phrase, *intolerable impositions*. He is referring, as Calvin justly remarks, to the duties inculcated in the Bible, which the people were to do (see ver. 3), the commandments of God which, though weighty indeed and sufficiently trying to human weakness, are yet "not grievous." (1 John v. 3.) The evangelist's word just means *difficult to be borne*, or, as Dr. Daniel Scott gives it, *hard-to-be-borne*. Wakefield's version corresponds, *hard-to-bear*. Sir John Cheke's version is too strong, *hardli bearabil*. Wycliffe's is much too strong, *unportable*. So is Luther's (*untrügliche*), and Principal Campbell's, *intolerable burdens*. But Tischendorf in his last edition, and Westcott-and-Hort, drop out the expression as apocryphal. Tregelles enclosed it in brackets. With reason apparently, for it is more likely that the strong and striking expression would be added in the margin than that it would be cut down by an unprecise transcriber. *But will not themselves move them with their finger:* The duties referred to were like weighty articles which need to be carried somewhither. But while the scribes and Pharisees toiled hard enough to lay them on men's shoulders, they would not put forth the least effort to take part in carrying them along. They would work rabbinically, in the way of binding them into bundles, and lifting them up to lay them on the shoulders of others. But they would not so much as make the least beginning of movement by stretching forth 'their finger' in order to lift the load to their own shoulders that they might carry it along. If even a touch with their forefinger would have sufficed to put the burden on their back, that touch they would not give. "They preached," says Richard Baxter, "the rigour of the law, but kept it not."

VER. 5. *But all their works they do to be seen of men:* They did works, many works; but they did them *theatrically* (*θεατρῶναι*), that men might behold them and applaud. While they would not so much as stir a finger to carry on the real work of God, they were ready to toil with both their hands and all their might to do certain works of their own with a view to their own glory, their own glory in the estimation not of God but of men. *For they make broad their phylacteries:* There is no *For* in the received text. But it is found in the manuscripts *N B D L*, 1, 13, 22, 33, and in the Italic version, and the Vulgate, Sahidic, Coptic, the Peshito Syriac, and the Harclean. In what follows the *For*

phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6 and

the Saviour gives evidence of the theatrical motives that were actuating the scribes and Pharisees. First, *They broaden their phylacteries.* The word *phylacteries* is Greek, and means *amulets* or *preservatives* or *guards*, as Sir John Cheke renders it, that is, *guards* or *safeguards*. It is an imperfect translation of the rabbinical word *tephillin*, which means *prayers*. And yet, imperfect though it was, it was not far off the mark, for the formalists among the Jews had superstitious notions regarding their *tephillin*, which were akin, so far as the amount of superstition was concerned, to the notions of the surrounding heathen concerning the virtue which was inherent in their *amulets* and *charms*. These *tephillin* were not real *prayers*. Still less were they real prayers in the only place where real prayers can be, *in the heart*. They were *little scrolls of parchment with passages of Scripture written on them!* Nothing wrong in that, was there? No. But then these little scrolls were not to be opened up and read at the time of prayer! They were to be kept carefully rolled up and deposited in a little box, or *house*, as the Hebrews call it, tightly closed and sewed up (*arcte consuitur*: ΟΥΧΘ). This box or house was to be attached to thongs, which must be at least as broad 'as a barleycorn,' and with these thongs it was to be fixed on the forehead just above the junction of the eyebrows! And another was to be strapped to the left arm, just opposite the heart! And when thus accoutred, with head and heart unitedly enlisted, the man was to proceed with his ritual of prayers! These two *tephillin* or *phylacteries* are universally used at this day in the weekday services of the synagogue, or in the private prayers that are a substitute for the public services. But "they are not worn on the sabbath as on other days" (Mills' *British Jews*, p. 107), it being assumed that they must be superfluous on days that are wholly devoted to worship. It would appear that in our Lord's time the scribes and Pharisees took care to have their *phylacteries* made broader than those that were worn by the bulk of the people, to intimate to all beholders that the spirit of true devotion in them was broader and larger than in all their compeers! In modern times the size of the *tephillin* has become prescriptively fixed. The scrolls are about an inch broad and eight inches long. There are four passages thus deposited in the boxes, viz. Exod. xiii. 1-10; Exod. xiii. 11-16; Deut. vi. 4-9; Deut. xi. 13-21: passages in which it is enjoined that the words of the Lord should be as a sign or token on the hand, and as a memorial, or as frontlets, between the eyes; they were to be habitually borne about in the mind, like signets or fillets on the body. The four passages specified are written on four separate scrolls, and are inserted in four separate cells or compartments within the box for the forehead! But for the box on the arm they are to be written on one scroll only, so that in that box there must be no subdivision into compartments! In strapping this box however on the arm, the thong is to be seven times wound round! There are various other minutæ to be observed, mincing the ceremonial into the veriest fritters of insignificance. (See, on the whole subject, Winer's *Real-Wörterbuch*; Leyrer's *Phylakterien*, in *Herzog*; Mills' *British Jews*; Otho's *Lexicon Rabbin.*; Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, pp. 1743-4, etc.) And enlarge the borders of their garments: Another feature and evidence of their theatrical religiosity. There was a real anti-heathenish mystery in the *borders* or *fringes* of the outer garment, or cloak, that was customarily worn by the Jews. See Numb. xv. 37-41. But the scribes and Pharisees were careful to make their *fringes* or *borders*

love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

larger than other people's, that they might thereby proclaim to all and sundry that they were more careful than their neighbours to "remember all the commandments of the Lord to do them." The word here rendered *borders* (κράσπεδα) is the term that is translated *hem* in Matt. ix. 20, and *fringes* in Numb. xv. 38, 39. (See *Septuagint* version.) It is here rendered *hemmys* (i.e. *hems*) by Wycliffe, and *fringes* in the Rheims version. It is somewhat uncertain whether it denotes, on the one hand, a continuous *fringe*, *border*, *hem*, or, on the other, detached *tassels* at the four corners of the robe. (See on chap. ix. 20.) The modern Jews assume that it denotes detached *tassels*; and hence, in the construction of their *arba' kanphoth*, which they wear under their outer garb but which is intended to be the modern representative of the ancient outer robe, they are most careful to have the tassels of the proper length, of the proper number of threads, and with the proper array of knots. There must be five double knots, which signify the Five Books of Moses! The ten single knots, contained in the five double, signify the ten commandments! The eight threads of which the fringe is made signify circumcision, which is to be performed on the eighth day! The seven windings of the long thread after the first double knot signify that the sabbath is to be kept on the seventh day! etc., etc., etc. (See Mills' *British Jews*, pp. 17-19, and compare pp. 97-100.)

VER. 6. They love too the uppermost rooms at feasts: The Saviour thus passes on to another feature of the ostentatiousness and conceit of the scribes and Pharisees. They loved the *uppermost rooms*, literally the *first reclination*, that is, the first reclining place, or as Wycliffe gives it, the *first sitting place*. He, as well as our Authorized translators, followed the Vulgate in the substitution of the plural for the singular. Erasmus too has the plural in his editions of the text. It is found in manuscripts 1 and 33, and in some other authorities. Incorrectly and unhappily; for, according to our Saviour's representation, each one was wishing the *one chief place*, the *worthiest place*, as it is rendered in the first edition of the Geneva. Tyndale's version is freer, and love to sit uppermooste. At feasts: Literally, at suppers; very literally, in the suppers (the suppers to which guests are invited). Wycliffe has it in sopers. And the chief seats in the synagogues: The first *chairs*, as Wycliffe has it, the conspicuous seats, the seats of honour, where they might concentrate on themselves many eyes, and in the occupancy of which they would secure to themselves the reverence of the congregation. There is doubtless a reference to the seats set for the elders, in front of the ark, where the law was deposited, and facing the mass of the worshippers. (See Vitringa, *De Synagoga*, pp. 191, 192; and Leyrer's *Synagogen*, 92.)

VER. 7. And greetings in the markets: Literally, the *greetings*, which namely it was customary for inferiors to give, in a most respectful way, to their superiors. Instead of the old Saxon word *greetings*, Wycliffe has *salutacions*. The *markets* were the chief places of concourse, where many eyes would readily take note, if any individual was receiving the profound *salaams* of those who met him. See on chap. xi. 16. The scribes and Pharisees were, it seems, far more desirous of getting respect than of giving it. And to be called of men,

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even*

Rabbi, Rabbi: The word *Rabbi* was just budding into common use about our Saviour's time. (See Pressel's *Rabbinismus*, in Herzog's *Real-Encyk.*) It is a Hebrew word properly meaning *my master*, and was originally used not *in speaking of a master*, but, vocatively, *in speaking to him*. It corresponded strikingly to the French word *Monsieur*, which originally meant *My Sieur*, being used vocatively. Like *Monsieur*, however, the Hebrew *Rabbi* began by-and-by to be used absolutely, as denoting simply *a master*, although the possessive pronoun, as in the French, continued to hold its original place. The root word was *rab*, which as an adjective meant *great* or *chief*, and as a noun *a great one, a chief, a master*. There was an ambition, it would appear, on the part of many to receive the honourable designation, although they had not really earned a title to it. This ambition has yet its exact counterpart in our own day and country. *Rabbi, Rabbi:* The repetition is a graphic representation, and undoubtedly genuine. It is not found indeed in the manuscripts which are marked **N B L A**, 1, 13, 22, 33. It is also wanting in the Vulgate version, and in the Italic, Syriac, Peshito, Coptic, Sahidic, and Æthiopic, etc. It is left out too by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. But still it is much easier to account for the omission of the duplicate, as apparently superfluous, than for its arbitrary intrusion; and hence the internal likelihood of its genuineness. It was a custom among the Jews to repeat the honorary title, when they wished to do special honour to the individual who bore it. (See instances in Lightfoot's *Exercitations*, in loc.)

VER. 8. But be not ye called Rabbi: The Saviour here turns to His own disciples in particular. See verse 1; and comp. Luke xx. 45, 46. He charges them not to be ambitious of human honour, and in particular of honorary titles. Not that deserved honour is to be disesteemed and eschewed. We are expressly commanded to "render honour to whom honour is due." (Rom. xiii. 7.) We are to "honour the king." (1 Pet. ii. 17.) And in whomsoever we find any true kingliness of soul, him assuredly we should honour. We are to "honour all men" (1 Pet. ii. 17); for, when we consider the godlike make of man (see Ps. viii. 5, *in the Hebrew*), and how God himself has "crowned him with glory and honour" (Ps. viii. 5), we cannot but find, even underneath a mass of most dishonouring wickedness, much to honour. And in the more honourable of men there will be still more that is worthy of honour. Nevertheless, the mind is bending in a totally wrong direction, when it is preponderatingly ambitious of honour. As to honorary titles, if a man loves them for their own sake, or for the sake of thereby uplifting himself above his peers, he is altogether unworthy of them. In so far as they are coveted or sought, and especially if sought as means of self glorification, and very especially if sought for by means that are not honourable, they are to be utterly deprecated. But if they be modest and truthful in their import, on the one hand, and meted out impartially, on the other, then they will but express facts of inward conviction, which must have names of one kind or another. The names, however, ought to be truthful and modest. And hence there was reason to object to *Rabbi, My Great One,—Your Highness* as it were. No wonder that our Saviour, at the time at which He spoke, when the title was just pushing its way into currency, proscribed its use among His disciples. It should never have been used. But it has now lost, we presume, its original immodesty of import, and is tantamount to a mere designation of office. The

Christ; and all ye are brethren. 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in

conventionalisms of words change; so that, in a living language, the associations and acceptations of a word may change. Barnes objects to the title *Doctor of Divinity*, and thinks that "the spirit of our Saviour's command is violated by the reception of it." But he overlooks the fact that the title is modest in its meaning, *Teacher of Theology*; and he also fails to note that, if it be really deserved, there is no reason why men should not think so, and say so. For one is your Master, even Christ: The clause *even the Christ* has been apparently intruded into the text. It had been originally a marginal note. It is wanting in the manuscripts \aleph B D L II, 1, and in the Italic version, and the Vulgate, Peshito Syriac, Jerusalem Syriac, Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian. It is omitted by all the great modern editors. Griesbach too omitted it; and Mill condemned it. (*Prolegomena*, p. 83.) There is also some uncertainty with regard to the word translated *Master*. In the received text it is the same word that occurs in verse 10 ($\kappa\alpha\theta\eta\gamma\eta\tau\acute{\eta}\varsigma$). But Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort have in their respective editions of the text the word for *Teacher* instead ($\delta\iota\delta\acute{\alpha}\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$). Alford too. Rightly, no doubt; though the other reading has the great preponderance of external authorities in its favour. Beza, in his day, was in favour of *Teacher*; Drusus too, and Grotius, both very decidedly. Mill likewise (*ut supra*), and Bengel; as also Fritzsche and Meyer. The other reading must, we presume, have got up out of verse 10. *Teacher* is the reading of the Vatican manuscript, and U and 33 'the queen of the cursives'; also of Origen and Eusebius. When Jesus says, *for one is your Teacher*, we must assume, with the ancient marginal annotator, that He refers to Himself. Alford supposes the allusion to be to the Spirit; and hence he finds the idea of the Divine Trinity in ver. 8, 9, 10. Doubtless a reference to the Spirit is *theologically implied*; but, at that peculiar stage of events, the disciples would think only of the Saviour Himself as their Teacher. See John xiii. 13. It is noteworthy that Jesus does not say, *One is your Rabbi*. The word was getting odious associations, associations of strut, and self conceit, and dogmatism; so that our Saviour pushed it aside with a kind of disgust, and contented Himself with the modest title *Teacher*. He was however an authoritative Teacher; and He knew that He was. While He did not, and could not, wish any of His disciples to assume a position in which their *ipse dixit* was to be taken as warrant enough for the truthfulness of what was taught, He knew that His own *ipse dixit* had a title to pass unchallenged. And all ye are brethren: One would have expected this clause to come in at the conclusion of the next verse. And Wakefield actually transfers it thither. So does Principal Campbell. Beza and Mill thought the next verse the fitting place; and Venema is positive that the transference should be made. The clause is actually found there in the uncial manuscript U, as well as in more than thirty of the cursives. Still there is not sufficient authority for making the transposition. And the idea of Jesus would seem to have been the following,—*It would ill become any of you to seek to be a rabbi over the rest, or even to be an authoritative teacher. Ye are all brethren, and stand on one spiritual level. Ye need a Teacher, it is true; but such a Teacher ye already have. And although, in course of time, one of yourselves should learn more, and know more, than the others, yet that would not qualify him for a position of religious authority over the rest.*

VER. 9. And call not any one on the earth your Father; for one is your

heaven. 10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your

Father, He who is in heaven: Of course the Saviour has no reference to the sphere of natural fatherhood in family circles, and the fitness and desirableness of the designation *father* on the part of children toward their parents. Neither was He intending to teach that none of His disciples would ever, in some of the lower spheres of spiritual influence, have *sons in the faith*, to whom they would sustain the endearing relation of *fathers in Christ Jesus*. (See 1 Cor. iv. 15, 1 Tim. i. 2, 2 Tim. i. 2, Tit. i. 4.) He was aiming His bolt at a different class of persons altogether, who vaingloriously coveted, as an artificial and merely honorary title, the designation *Abba* or *Father*. There were such persons among the more conceited of the scribes and Pharisees. The designation was tantamount to *Rabbi*. We read in Juchasin, fol. 31, 2, "Abba (father) is a "name of honour corresponding to Rabbi." And Rambam, in the Preface to Mischnajoth, says, "the first and highest grade of rabbis consists of those who "are called by their own simple name, without any title of honour at all. The "second consists of those who are called *Rabbanim*. The third consists of "those who are called *Rabbi*. And," he adds, "the men of this grade are also "called *Abba*." (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmudicum*, sub voce.) The Saviour wishes that His disciples should neither accept nor give such a designation; in the Jewish spirit of it at least. It would seem to be almost in open defiance of His injunction, that, within the limits of the Roman Catholic church, the designation is universally given to their chief bishop, the "Pope." The word 'Pope' is our corrupted way of pronouncing what the French call *Pape*, and the Italians *Papa* or *Father*. How strange the designation, as given to the Roman bishop! strange, when we look at the subject in the light of our Saviour's injunction! It is strange too that every parish minister in the Greek church is called *Papa* (πάππας). There are besides, in the Roman Catholic church, many professional *Fathers* under the one great Papa. In some other churches likewise there are too many of these professional Fathers; for, as Bishop Wilkins observes, *Father* is a title which assuming priests of all religions have greatly affected. (See Doddridge, in loc.) And now, though the designation has in a great measure got rubbed down into a mere discriminative appellation, marking out a definite ecclesiastical position or office, still its use is unhappy, and has something to do with a widespread confusion of ideas on things moral and spiritual. Already, in our Saviour's time, an element of *popery* was stealthily lurking, and vigorously germinating, in the use of the designation; and it was, we doubt not, because of this element, that the title was greedily courted on the one hand, and too readily accorded on the other, while at the same time, and in the third place, it was earnestly repudiated by our Saviour. It is our Father in heaven who alone has an absolute paternal authority in all things sacred. There is a trifling diversity of reading, as regards the expression *He who is in heaven*, or *He in the heavens* (ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς). Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort, have the adjective *the heavenly* (ὁ οὐράνιος), for one is your Father, the heavenly.

VER. 10. Neither be ye called **Masters**: Or, more literally, *Leaders*. Not that it is wrong to desire to lead men into truth and righteousness. The Saviour has no reference to such leading. He refers to leadership as a post of honour and authority, such leadership as involves *the supremacy of the leader's will* in relation to his peers. *When more ways than one are open to a band of brethren, the leader's will determines the road to be taken.* This element of *will*

Master, *even Christ*. 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

is predominant in our Saviour's conception. For one is your Leader, the Christ: He does not directly point to Himself, or name Himself, by saying "even Christ." He lays down a general principle, *The Messiah is your one Leader*. It becomes Him to lead. He has been Divinely appointed to the post. And hence in all important matters, that are beyond the circumference of what is ascertainable by intuition and demonstration, it is His will, and His alone, that is to be supreme and absolute. Apart from Him, and under Him, the less leadership in the church the better, *in all matters of mere will*.

VER. 11. But: So far is it from being the case that greatness among My followers shall be realized in high-sounding titles, and in those honorary and authoritative prerogatives and superiorities which such titles are supposed to indicate, or intended to assume. The greatest among you: Or, very literally, *The greater of you*, that is, *He who is greater than all the rest of you*, and thus, *he who is the greatest*, the *greatest* in the highest acceptation of the term *great*. Paulus thinks, but ridiculously as usual, that Jesus is pointing to Himself, instead of giving counsel to His disciples. Shall be your servant: Or rather, *Will be your servant*. It will not be his aim to be served by you. It will be his aim and his wish to serve you. See chap. xx. 26, 27. And the end of his aim in serving you will not turn round circuitously toward himself. It will terminate on his brethren. Note, however, that it is one thing to have this inward aiming manifesting itself in outward acting, and a totally different thing to assume the title of *your most humble servant*, or to call oneself, with the Pope of Rome, in a spirit it may be of the haughtiest possible humility, *the servant of God's servants*.

VER. 12. But—on the other hand—whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted: By Me, and by My Father, and, in the end, by the Intelligent Universe at large. The lowliest will be the loftiest. But he who seeks to be the loftiest will be the lowest. The way up leads down. The way down leads up. Jesus Himself ascended in a descending way.

VER. 13. But woe to you: The Saviour, realizing the immense distance of the scribes and Pharisees from the character which He had been depicting, and, more particularly, the immense desire which they cherished to keep for ever at a distance from it, turns round upon them from His disciples, and addresses them directly, in a strain of holy and awfully scathing invective. Most probably He had noted that they had been listening sneeringly to the remarks which He had addressed to His disciples and to the people at large. He saw them encouraging in one another the spirit of derision, and thus filling to the brim their cup of iniquity. Faithfulness and true benevolence required that He should speak out. Woe: There is indignation in the word, and just denunciation; but, as Vatable long ago remarked, there is *deploration* too. There is *wailing* in it. It is rendered *alas* in Rev. xviii. 10, 16, 19. Comp. Matt. xviii. 7. Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: He seizes, in the word *hypocrites*, on the prominent feature of their character as religionists. The word is Greek and

for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is

graphic. It means *stage players*, persons who acted a part as a spectacle, and who consequently, in what they said and did, *personated a character that was not really their own*. Because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: Or before men, or in the face of the men who are gathered around the door and would willingly enter in. The kingdom of heaven is, for the moment, compared to a house, a temple, a palace. The scribes and Pharisees have slammed to the opened door, and are standing without, keeping it shut, and seeing to it that, so far as their influence could extend, none should get in. For ye neither go in yourselves, nor suffer ye them that are going in to enter: Many would willingly have entered. They had stepped forward to enter, and were entering. But the scribes and Pharisees interposed and kept them back. It is a vivid and masterly picture of the kind of influence exerted by the scribes and Pharisees on the common people.

VER. 14. This verse is wanting altogether in the Sinaitic (S), Vatican (B), and Cambridge (D) manuscripts; as also in L Z, 1, 28, 33 'the queen of the cursives,' and others. It seems to have been transferred from Mark xii. 40 and Luke xx. 47, in both of which places it is genuine. Mill had no doubt that it was an import from Mark and Luke. Long before him Grotius was certain that it did not belong to Matthew's text. He states the case with admirable critical comprehension and wisdom. Beza, before Grotius, had suspicions. Griesbach too suspected its genuineness. And Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, leave it out from their texts. Tischendorf says, "it is *obviously* to be left out." No doubt of it. Origen omits it. In the Eusebian Canon it is ascribed to Mark and Luke, but not to Matthew. It is wanting in many of the best manuscripts of the Vulgate version, and of the Italic. It is wanting in the Anglo-Saxon version, and the Armenian (*Zoh.*), and the Sahidic (*Münt.*). And in those manuscripts and versions in which it occurs there is a perplexing discordance as to its position, whether it should come in as verse 13 or as verse 14. In Robert Stephens's first three editions (1546, 1549, 1550) it comes in before what is now verse 14. But in his last edition of 1551 it comes in as verse 14; and hence its position in Beza's editions, and in the *Elzevirs*, and in our *Authorized version*. The reverse position however is that which is accorded to it in the great body of the best manuscripts in which the verse is found at all. The verse falls to be explained in Mark and Luke.

VER. 15. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: The repetition is emphatic and solemn; and, when the roused majesty of the Saviour is taken into account, it must have had a mighty effect, on some hearts at least. Omitting the 14th verse, there are *seven woes* in all, like seven thunderclaps, giving monition of impending doom. Because ye compass the sea and the dry

made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! 17 Ye fools

(land) to make one proselyte: Even a single proselyte, or, as Sir John Cheke has it, *oon freschman* (*one freshman*), one new adherent, one convert to judaism. There was nothing wrong with the zeal, as zeal. No zeal, in its abstract self, is either right or wrong. It is the voluntary direction of the zeal that gives it moral character. Zeal for what is good is good. Zeal for what is evil is evil. Zeal to get applause and fame, and, in particular, applause and fame for what one does not really possess but only hypocritically professes, is detestable. Such was the zeal which the Saviour here signalises, the zeal of the scribes and Pharisees to make proselytes to judaism. (See *Weststein's quotations*, in loc.) It was zeal to get the repute and glory of being eminently religious. There were two classes of proselytes recognised by the Jews, *proselytes of righteousness*, and *proselytes of the gate*, or *proselytes of sojourning*. The *proselytes of righteousness* were those Gentiles who adopted all the peculiarities of judaism, and became therefore naturalised Jews. They were supposed to be characterised by true *righteousness*. The *proselytes of the gate*, again, or *proselytes of sojourning*, were those who, without accepting circumcision, and merging their own national customs, yet paid respect, while sojourning in the Holy Land, to the ordinances of judaism, and observed 'the seven precepts of Noah' regarding things moral. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, pp. 407-8.) The zeal of the scribes and Pharisees was to make *proselytes of righteousness*. There was no particular glory to be got in making proselytes of the other class. (See Danz's *Dissertation on Jewish Proselytism in Meuschen's New Test.*, in loc.) And when he is made, ye make him twofold more a son of perdition than yourselves: Literally a son of Gehenna. Sir John Cheke has it, in expressive slang, a *hell-imp*, that is, one who derives his peculiarity of character from beneath. He is not "born from above" (John iii, 3), but from below. The expression *twofold more than yourselves* is peculiar, and has been misunderstood by Kypke and Wakefield. Very literally it would be, as Erasmus noted, *more twofold than you* (yourselves). That is, ye make him a more twofold child of hell than you yourselves are. It is implied that they themselves were *twofold children of hell*. They had been double-dipped, as it were, and double-dyed, in the spirit that bubbles up from beneath. But it is better on the whole to take the phrase *διπλοτέρον ὑμῶν* adverbially, as in our English version. They made their proselytes twice worse than themselves; for in such matters the learners outstrip their teachers. The Pharisaic proselytes in many cases would be only the basest and most unprincipled of men, who, getting nothing to change the inner character, but only learning outward lessons of hypocrisy, would outdo their teachers in the utter irreligion of the religiousness which they professed. "Out of bad heathens," as Erasmus says, "they were made worse Jews." (*Ex malo ethnico fit pejor Judæus.*)

VER. 16. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor: A wretched specimen of chicane and hairsplitting casuistry, which, it seems, had been getting currency in our Saviour's time. If one swore by the

and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? 18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. 19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the

temple that he would do a certain thing, or give a certain sum, he might, according to this rabbinic subterfuge, accomplish an evasion of the obligation, and withdraw guiltless from his solemn promise. *It is nothing!* The promissory oath is nothing. *It bindeth not*, as Principal Campbell translates the expression. But if he should swear by the gold of the temple, he was absolutely bound!

VER. 17. Fools and blind! for which is greater the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold: *Sanctified* (*ἀγιάσας*) is the best reading, rather than *sanctifieth*. Note the *for*. It introduces a consideration that justifies the double designation *Fools and Blind!* At times it is necessary to speak plainly on the left hand side of things, as well as on the right, and to call *folly* and wilful *blindness* by their own naked names. It was not in malice however, but in sorrow and holy indignation, that Christ thus spoke. There was a *wail* in His *woe!* The gold was *sanctified* by the temple; of course in an outward and relative respect. In consequence of its connection with the temple (as forming part of its vessels or ornamentation), it was linked on to what was peculiarly sacred, or to what was dedicated and devoted to the most sacred engagements of men. Thence its sacredness above the gold in common currency. *Which is greater?* In solemn significance and moral value.

VER. 18. And: Lo another of your absurd inventions! Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty: This last expression is unfortunate. It occurs, first of all, in Cranmer's Bible, and looks as if it had been a translation from Luther's version misunderstood (*der ist schuldig*). The German adjective has two distinct meanings, (1) *guilty*, and (2) *bound, obliged, indebted, a debtor*. Luther employed it, of course, in the latter acceptation, the only acceptation consistent with the evangelist's original term (*ὀφείλει*). One might have supposed, indeed, that the English word *guilty* was used in the same sense, as denoting *liability to pay*, were it not that Tyndale, apparently misled by the same ambiguity in Luther's term, translates the phrase *offendeth*; and this translation ran down into the Geneva. There is no ambiguity whatsoever in the evangelist's term. It is the same that is used at the close of ver. 16, and which is there properly rendered *he is a debtor*, that is, *he is under obligation to fulfil his promise*. Wycliffe renders the term in both verses *owith*; and the Rheims in both has *is bound*. Whiston in both cases has *is a debtor*.

VER. 19. Ye fools and blind: Or, simply, *Blind!* without *Fools*, according to Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort, under sanction of the manuscripts M D L Z, I, and of the Vulgate version, the Curetonian Syriac, and the Æthiopic. For which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Were it not for the altar, and the consequent recognition of the rights and dues of God, the gift or oblation would be merely so many pounds of flesh and bones, or other corruptible matter. The sacred idea would be gone. The verb *sanctifieth* is in the present here; not in the aorist, as in ver. 17.

gift? 20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. 21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. 22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted

VER. 20. He therefore who sweareth by the altar sweareth by it, and by all things thereon: "In reality, therefore," as Dr. Samuel Clarke paraphrases the verse, "to swear by the altar of God is the very same thing as to swear by the oblation that is offered thereupon, and by Him to whom the offering is made."

VER. 21. And he who sweareth by the temple sweareth by it, and by Him who inhabiteth it: The temple derives all its significance from God. It is the palace of God, the place where God may be found at home as it were by the worshipper, found in consciousness. He may be found elsewhere, it is true; anywhere. But in our present moral and physical condition it is of the utmost moment that there be places and times consecrated to particular acts of conscious intercourse with God. *Inhabiteth* (κατοικοῦντι): Such is the reading not only of the received text, but also of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and of H, 1, 18, 69. It corresponds with the Vulgate version, and the old Italic; and, after having been ousted by the critical editors, Bengel, Griesbach, Matthai, Scholz, Tregelles, it has been restored by Tischendorf, in his eighth edition. Lachmann retained it, and Westcott-and-Hort retain it too. It would almost seem that the other reading, *inhabited it, or took up His abode in it*, had been an ingenious marginal note of some very early possessor of the Gospel, who felt convinced that our Saviour must have indicated that the glory of Judaism and of the temple was departed, or departing. Such indications would be in the *Troja fuit* direction.

VER. 22. And he that sweareth by the heaven sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him who sitteth thereon: An oath by heaven would be nonsense, if it were not virtually an oath by Him who is enthroned in heaven. An oath is an appeal to God. See chap. v. 34. "So that, in short," as Dr. Samuel Clarke remarks, "what thing soever you swear by, 'tis the very same thing as swearing by God, whose creation that thing is." It is impossible therefore to evade profanity in unjustifiable swearing, by merely omitting the full or literal name of God. The omission is a mere quirk or sop for an easy going conscience.

VER. 23. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye pay tithe of the mint, and the anise, and the cummin: You affect to be so extraordinarily conscientious and godly that you cannot, on any consideration, allow yourselves to overlook, in paying your tithes, such trifling productions of the soil as are almost inappreciable in their tithable value. Is it not said, you argue, that "all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord"? Must we not do as we are commanded? (Lev. xxvii. 30.) *The mint*: Or, *the sweetsmell*, as the Greek word means. The term is Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as well as English. The plant is well known, and is still a favourite in the East. It is used for various purposes. The floors of synagogues and dwellings were sometimes strewed with it, for the sake of the fragrance. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, sub voce "Minta.") It would be, however, in only very small quantities that it

the weightier *matters* of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith :

would be reared by unprofessional individuals. *The anise* : Or *dill*, as it is in the margin of our Authorized version. *Anise* was Tyndale's word, being confounded by him with the analogous word in the original. *Anise*, hence, descended into our Authorized version. Wycliffe, on the other hand, retained the Vulgate word, which was a simple reproduction of the evangelist's word (*anete, anethum, not anisum*). Luther however has *dill*, and so has Sir John Cheke ; and this is the translation that is generally approved of. "The *anise* "has its specific name, and, though similar to the *dill* in properties, is an "entirely distinct plant. The *dill* is an umbelliferous plant, producing a small "flower of a bright brown colour, and a flattened elliptical fruit or seed. Both "the plant and the seed were used by the ancients as a condiment, the latter "having a warm aromatic flavour resembling that of the caraway seed. Its "use with us is medicinal, as a carminative. It is still extensively cultivated "in the East." (Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, sub voce.) *The cummin* : "It is an "umbelliferous plant, something like fennel (*cuminum sativum*, Linn.). The "seeds have a bitterish warm taste, with an aromatic flavour. It was used in "conjunction with salt as a sauce. (Plin. xix. 8.) The Maltese are said to "grow cummin at the present day, and to thresh it in the manner described by "Isaiah." (Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, sub voce.) It is said in Isaiah (xxviii. 25-27) that cummin was not threshed in the ordinary way in which wheat was threshed ; it was just beaten with a rod. The tithes of these plants would be of scarcely any appreciable value ; but to present it would argue, it was hoped, a highly conscientious and scrupulous spirit. But how was that spirit carried out in higher matters ? And have left undone the weightier matters of the law : They should have begun with the weightier matters. But instead of that, they omitted these matters, and left them unattended to, while busily occupying themselves, in a spirit of microscopic scrupulosity, with ostentatious trifles. *The weightier matters of the law* : That is, the more important duties which are inculcated in the authoritative revelation given through Moses, and thereafter enforced in the books of the succeeding prophets. *Judgement, and mercy, and faith* : The Saviour specifies *three* of the weightier matters in contradistinction to the *three* trifling tithings to which He had already made reference. *Judgement* : That is, *judging with a view to adjusting the rights and duties of men in relation to one another*. But, as *judging would be mockery without justice*, the judgement referred to is *just judgement*, or impartiality in judging, impartiality in passing judgement either officially and publicly, or unofficially and privately, upon our fellow men. In short, it is *justice*, the translation of the American Revisionists. *Mercy* : Pity, compassion, kindness, benevolence toward the suffering, whether simply unfortunate or both unfortunate and guilty. *Faith* : That is, *Faithfulness*, or, as the word is rendered in Titus ii. 10, *fidelity*, one of the two poles of meaning that are characteristic of this important word. It is, in the case of the corresponding word that is used in the Old Testament (אֱמוּנָה), the immensely preponderating signification. But in the case of the New Testament word (πίστις) the immense preponderance is given to the signification of *faith* as distinguished from *faithfulness*. In English the words *faith* and *faithfulness* are finely allied to one another, but in one definite direction, *faith* is the root and *faithfulness* is the fruit. He that is *full-of-faith* is *faithful*. And yet there is reciprocity. He that is *faithful* to the deepest promptings of his conscience will have *faith*.

these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24 *Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.*

Thus *faith* and *faithfulness* are inseparably interlinked and interinvolved. And hence it is one word in the Old Testament, and one in the New, that represents both. In the passage before us the reference is evidently to one of the great moralities of life; and hence it means *faithfulness*, or, as Richard Baxter gives it, *faithful dealing*. It is not unlikely that some of those who most ostentatiously brought in the almost valueless tithes of the mint, dill, and cummin, would be withholding, by some false declaration or other subterfuge, some valuable tithes that were due from their flocks and herds, or cornfields and vineyards. These ought ye to have done: That is, these weightier matters, as Euthymius Zigabenus correctly explains. Wall and Bengel are certainly wrong in supposing the reference to be to the trifling tithings. The reference to the weightier matters will be all the more emphatically indicated, if, with Lachmann, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort, we read, *But these ye ought to have done.* And those not to have left undone: It is all very right to be scrupulous in your tithing. By all means be minutely conscientious. But then see to it that ye do not put the last first, and put off and put out the first altogether, contenting yourselves with the last and least. See to it, on the contrary, that, in the first place, ye put the first first, and that then, in the second place, ye bring in the last, and keep it ever there.

VER. 24. *Blind guides! who strain out the gnat, but gulp down the camel!* The Saviour, in strong parabolic and proverbial language, pours ridicule upon the moral absurdity of the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees. They were to the last degree scrupulous in observing the conventional jots and tittles of religiousness, which collectively might make up, let us say, the thousandth part of religion, while they were utterly unscrupulous in neglecting, or boldly pushing aside, the great moral duties which constitute the nine hundred and ninety-nine parts of true goodness and godliness. They *strained out the gnat*: Note the article. Sir John Cheke has it. Bishop Middleton is correct in saying, "Perhaps therefore the spirit of the original would have been best preserved by translating, *the gnat, the camel.*" (*Greek Article*, in loc.) In our Authorized version there is another and much greater imperfection, the preposition *at* instead of *out*. The phrase indeed "which strain *at* a gnat" makes good enough sense, in a way, and gives a sufficiently graphic representation of extreme fastidiousness. The stomach rises as it were at the presence of the little insect either in the water or in the wine, and therefore a strong effort, or *strain*, is made to keep the internal commotion *restrained*. But *at* is nevertheless a typographical error, and, as Bishop Lowth remarks, "wholly destroys the meaning of the phrase." (*Eng. Grammar*, p. 167.) It is found however in the first edition of the Authorized version, 1611, and thenceforward it has kept its place steadfastly, in consequence, we presume, of the appropriate idea of fastidiousness and disgust which the phrase suggests. Hammond did not challenge it, nor Trapp, nor Whitby. Dr. Wells accepted it. Good David Dickson, too; and he explains the proverb as meaning this, "The preciseness of hypocrites "is no less ridiculous than if a man *should make nice* to swallow a midge or a "smaller matter, and not stand to swallow down a greater matter, as it were an "horse or a camel." Matthew Henry too felt no scruples about it, and explains

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 *Thou* blind

the phrase thus, "They strained at gnats, *heaved at them* with a seeming dread, as if they had a great abhorrence of sin, and were afraid of it in the least instance." But Doddridge, Dr. D. Scott, Wynne, Wesley, Macknight, Newcome, Dr. Adam Clarke, Barnes, Kitto, Trench, and many others, inclusive of all the more modern translators, have seen and rectified the blunder. Principal Campbell, however, hesitates. He says, "I do not understand the import of the phrase, *strain at a gnat*." "The expression, *strain out a gnat*, it must be confessed, sounds very oddly ; and it may be justly questioned whether any "good English authority can be produced for such a manner of construing the "verb." And yet Tyndale, in his version, has *which strayne out a gnat*. This too is the translation in Bishop Coverdale's version, and in Cranmer's Bible, and in the Geneva. Sir John Cheke has the corresponding phrase, *which do strain awai the gnat*. It is also the undoubted import of the Greek expression. The verb used, indeed, literally means *to strain through (a cloth or other strainer)*, and would hence be originally applied to the liquid strained. But in *straining through the liquid*, the insect would be *strained out* ; and there would be no *straining at*. I have frequently seen the inhabitants of the East putting a piece of cloth over the spout or mouth of a water jug, when they were about to drink, that all gnats, or other insects, or any floating impurities, might be arrested. *The gnat* : A little fly. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, pp. 342, 927.) Aristotle uses the word to denote an insect that arises from a certain worm or larva that is found in the sediment of sour wine. (*Hist. Animal.*, v. 19.) It is quite customary, at all events, in the East to strain wine, as well as water, that all such insects may be excluded. "In the East," says Dr. Kitto, "where insects of all kinds and sizes abound, it is difficult to keep liquors, "which are left for the least time uncovered, clear of insects ; for which reason, "as well as because there are some insects which breed in wine, it was and is "usual to strain the wine before drinking, to prevent insects passing into the "drinking vessel." The fastidious Jews remembered too that such insects as the gnat were ceremonially *unclean* ; and hence it was needful to be extremely precise. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, p. 1516.) But *gulp down the camel* : Literally, *but drink down*. Thomson has, rather awkwardly, *but drink up*. Cardinal Cajetan was staggered somewhat at the boldness of the imagery. And Mace, in his translation, actually gives *beetle* instead of *camel* ! a sadly prosaic metamorphosis, which not only extinguishes all the poetry of the parable, but also lowers immeasurably the wished-for estimate of the moral inconsistency of the scribes and Pharisees. They did *gulp down*, not merely *beetles*, but *camels*. It was not small incongruities simply of which they were guilty. It was gigantic inconsistencies. (Compare chaps. vii. 4 and xix. 24.)

VER. 25. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! because ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter ; but within they are full of extortion and excess : The Saviour draws an ideal picture, mingling His colours freely, and then holds it up as a reflection of the character of the scribes and Pharisees. Their conduct was just as inconsistent and absurd as that of a man who was fastidious about the cleanliness of the outside of the vessels which he used in eating and drinking, while he did not scruple in the least to have the inside

Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is within the cup and platter*, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's bones*, and of all

contents uncleanly and abominable. Note (1) the word *platter* (*πρωψίς*). It properly denoted a *side dish*, in the sense of *some dainty*, put down on the table as an *entremet*. Then it came to denote the literal *dish* as distinguished from its contents, the *vessel itself or platter* in which the dainty was placed. Phrynichus (*Eclogæ*, sub voce), and Thomas Magister (*Eclogæ*, sub voce), protest against this latter usage of the word as being un-Attic; but it had established itself in many places, and, among the rest, in Palestine. Note (2) the word *extortion*. The term is rendered *ravensing* in Luke xi. 39, and *spoiling* in Heb. x. 34. *Robbery* is Sir John Cheke's translation, and *rapine* that of the Rheims. This last rendering is the best of all. Note (3) the word *excess* (*ἀκρασία*). It means properly *incontinence*, and might be rendered *intemperance* or *debauchery*. Wycliffe rendered it *uncleanness*; and Tyndale *excess*, an excellent translation. It is not uninteresting to notice, further, that Griesbach and Scholz dismissed the specific word for *incontinence, intemperance, or debauchery*, the word of the received text, and substituted in its place the generic term for *unrighteousness* (*ἀδικία*). But all the best recent editors have returned to the specific term of the old text, under the sanction too of the highest manuscriptural authorities, inclusive of N B D, 1, 13, 33, 69, etc. Note (4) that the word *rapine* turns back specially and emphatically toward the word *platter*; while the word *incontinence* or *intemperance* turns back similarly, and empties itself into the word *cup*. In the contents of the platter there was the *result of the rapine*; in the contents of the cup there was the *preparation for the debauch*. Note (5) that the expression "they are full of rapine and intemperance" is literally "they are full out of rapine and intemperance." There is a condensation of ideas. (See Grimm, sub voce.) The things that fill the cup and platter were got out of two causes, each as unclean as it was possible to be. The one was an *efficient cause*, 'rapine.' The other was a *final cause*, 'debauchery.' Rapine was indulged in; debauchery was desired: and hence the full platter and the full cup. Both were brimming with uncleanness.

VER. 26. Blind Pharisee! cleanse first the inside of the cup and the platter, that the outside of them too may be clean: A parabolic exhortation, in which there is a minglement, but no real tanglement, of signs and things signified. *Thou art wilfully blind in reference to momentous duties, whilst thou art sufficiently lynx-eyed in reference to some little details of outward propriety. Look aloft. Let your eye sweep athwart the breadth of things spiritual. Let it sweep athwart your own consciences, and pierce down into the depths of your hearts. There you will see clearly that it is impossible for the outside of things to be religiously clean, if the inside be unclean. The cup and platter never can be religiously clean outside, if the inside be foul with wickednesses executed and intended.*

VER. 27. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness: There were various kinds of sepulchres among the Jews. Many of them were chambers or vaults hewn out of the solid rock. Multitudes of these are still to be seen round about Jerusalem. It

uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the

would, however, be only the higher and middle classes of society who would be able to provide for their families sepulchres of this description. In other cases, and especially no doubt among the poorest classes, the sepulchre would consist of a grave dug down in the earth, with no erection of any kind to mark the spot. See Luke xi. 44. In other cases it consisted of a grave with a slab over it, or some erection of mason work, plastered over, such as is common among the Mohammedans at the present day. This superimposed mason-work seems to have been periodically or occasionally whitewashed with a solution of chalk or lime. It is doubtless to this third class of sepulchres that our Saviour makes reference in the passage before us. Early in spring, on the 15th day of the month Adar, as we learn from the rabbinical writers, it was the custom of the Jews to put to rights the roads in and around the cities, and to re-whitewash the sepulchres, which were situated, as a general rule, outside their cities. They daubed them, as we read in Maasar Sheni (c. i. hal. 1), "with chalk, diluted in water." Why so? Not simply, or chiefly, as a preservative, or for ornamentation; but principally to render them conspicuous, and thus to give notice to the traveller that graves were there, so that ceremonial defilement might be avoided, by avoiding to come in contact with them. The Jerusalem Gemarists give the reason thus: *It is that they may be like the leper. The leper cries out, UNCLEAN! UNCLEAN! and here, in like manner, uncleanness cries out to you, and says, COME NOT NEAR!* (See Lightfoot and Wetstein, in loc.) When newly "whited," as they had just been at the period of the year when our Saviour was speaking, they looked clean, and gleamed beautifully, as we have often seen them, in the sunshine. How different within! Hence the aptness of the similitude for hypocrites, especially those of the high-flying description. The Saviour applies it in next verse. Dean Stanley takes a different view of our Saviour's reference. He says: "There can be little doubt that the real explanation must be sought in the ornaments, and possibly the paintings, now disappeared, of the vast array of sepulchres with which the hills and valleys about Jerusalem are perforated, and some of which, if the discourse was spoken in the temple, may have been visible at the moment in the valley of the Kedron." (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 428.) But *painted or otherwise ornamented sepulchres* are one thing (see ver. 29), and *whited sepulchres* are another.

VER. 28. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men; but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity: One who saw into all hearts, and into all that is within all hearts, and who besides had rights and prerogatives in relation to, and over, all hearts, was fully entitled to use such language.

VER. 29. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous: Our Lord seems to be referring to those four remarkable monuments which stand even now at the base of the mount of Olives, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, just below the south-east angle of the temple mount. They would be conspicuous objects to one standing on the platform of the temple. They are miscalled, at present, the tombs of Zechariah, Absalom, Jehoshaphat, and St. James. "The pic-

sepulchres of the righteous, 30 and say, If we had been in the

"tiresqueness of the whole group," says Thrupp, "has naturally rendered them a favourite subject for the pencil, and most of those who have perused any of the recent illustrations of the East are probably familiar with their general appearance. They stand in the precipitous face of the rock, in the narrowest part of the ravine, immediately over the bed of the brook. Two of them, those that bear the names of Absalom and Zechariah, are monoliths cut out of the solid rock, with a passage left round them, the others are merely excavations with ornamental portals. The northernmost monument, that of Absalom, consists in the lower part of a solid mass of rock about twenty feet square, with a pilaster of an anomalous character at each corner, and Ionic columns between the pilasters; the frieze and architecture of the entablature above are Doric, the metopes are occupied by circular disks or shields. The cornice is more in the Egyptian style. This lower storey is surmounted first by a square, and then by a circular attic, and above this is placed a roof resembling a horn in shape, and thus corresponding to the name which the natives give to the monument, *Tantur Fqrâûn, the Horn of Pharaoh.*" (*Ancient Jerusalem*, pp. 227, 228.) Its total height above the present surface of the ground is fifty-four feet. The tomb of Zechariah is a perfect monolith, surmounted by a pyramid instead of a horn. The tomb of St. James is an irregular excavation opening out into several chambers. The interior of that of Jehoshaphat is at present inaccessible; but its pediment, says Porter, "is richly ornamented with foliage, and has a strange and striking appearance, as if rising up in all its beauty out of the heart of the mountain." (*Handbook for Syria*, p. 143.) The porch again of St. James's tomb is "supported by two columns and two half columns of the Doric order, connected by an architrave, over which is a Doric frieze, with triglyphs and a cornice." (*Porter's Handbook*, p. 143.) These four monuments have quite puzzled antiquarian investigators; and there have been many discussions regarding their age and destinations. Dr. Robinson is of opinion that the mixture of the styles of architecture is such that they cannot be ascribed to an earlier era than that of the Herods. (*Researches*, vol. i., p. 521.) Porter is of the same opinion: "The strange mingling of the Greek and Egyptian styles, observable both here and in Petra, would not be inconsistent with the age of the Herods." (*Handbook*, p. 142.) Not unlikely is Thrupp right in his idea that the two monolithic cenotaphs,—the one named after Zechariah, and the other misnamed after Absalom,—were the tombs which the scribes and Pharisees were engaged in constructing at the time that our Saviour addressed them, and that the chambered sepulchres misnamed after James and Jehoshaphat, and lying between the monolithic monuments, were the sepulchres which they were "garnishing" or beautifying, viz., in their entrances. "Nothing can seem more natural than that our Lord should have pointed to them, and thus have increased the force of His words by adducing the very monuments, on which His hearers were gazing, as proofs of the hypocrisy He was upbraiding." (*Ancient Jerusalem*, p. 231.) The names at present appropriated to the monuments are entirely arbitrary (with the exception probably of that of Zacharias: see verse 35). They are by no means identical with the names which they bore in the middle ages and the preceding centuries. (See Thrupp's *Ancient Jerusalem*, pp. 231, 232; and Robinson's *Researches*, vol. i., p. 520.) *Garnish*: It is Tyndale's word. Sir John Cheke has it, *dress up. Of the righteous*: The word "righteous" corresponded, in its use among the

days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. 31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

Jews, to the word "saints" in its use among the Roman Catholics. Calvin applies the whole passage to the Roman Catholics thus: "Let them then adorn the images of the saints as they please with incense, candles, flowers, and every kind of pomp. If Peter were now alive they would tear him in pieces; Paul they would bury with stones; and if Christ Himself were yet in the world, they would burn Him with a slow fire." But what was it that was wrong in building monuments to the murdered prophets, and garnishing the tombs of the righteous? See next verse.

VER. 30. And ye say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets: Our fathers, worthy men! were quite wrong in shedding the blood of the prophets. Had we been they, we should have acted quite differently! Was there anything wrong in saying this? Not in the least, if what they said was true. See next verse.

VER. 31. So that ye bear witness to yourselves—in reference to yourselves—that ye are the sons of them who murdered the prophets. A sentiment of righteous invective predominates. It is as if the Saviour had said, *Ye are indeed the children of your fathers! I need not reason with you to show you the hypocrisy of this sepulchre building and tomb garnishing. If ye really differed from your fathers in spirit, and approved of the spirit of the men whom they hated, persecuted, and murdered, would you persist in acting exactly as they did? Ye are truly the sons of your fathers, in more senses than ye are dreaming of. Ye say, Our fathers! Our fathers! Ye say well. Ye are their sons.*

VER. 32. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers: Or, more literally, *And ye! fill ye up the measure of your fathers!* The Saviour's heart was heaving, and He felt the inadequacy of all common modes of expression to convey the commotion of His emotions. Hence the brokenness, abruptness, and boldness of His phraseology. *And ye!* That is, *And ye, as the sons of your fathers and the heirs of their spirit! fill ye up:* In the Vatican manuscript it is, *Ye will fill up* (πληρώσετε). In the Cambridge it is, *Ye filled up* (ἐπληρώσατε). Both of them evident tinkering of the true 'imperative' reading, which seemed a stumbling-block to those who lost sight of the spirit in the letter. The Saviour, in saying *Fill up!* did not actually wish them to go on in their wicked way, and finish the work which their fathers had begun. Far from that. He would have rejoiced if they had repented. Calvin is right in protesting that "He does not order them to do what they were doing" (*non jubet eos facere quod faciunt*). Our Lord had lofty views of human liberty; and speaking reproachfully, condemnatorily, indignantly, wailingly, He as it were says, *If you will be so mad as to persist in walking in your fathers' footsteps, if you will not be persuaded by any amount of gracious dealing and temporal chastisement, then truly there is no further help for you. You must just go on, and fill to the brim the vessel into which your fathers poured their iniquities. You are free. It would be an evil transcending all other evils to annihilate that freedom.*

VER. 33. Serpents! For ever hissing at the heels of the holy. Compare Gen. iii. 13-15. Progeny of vipers! or, as Sir John Cheke has it, of *springs*

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify;

of adders! Sneakingly wriggling about, as your fathers did before you, and watching for the fitting time, when you may inject by stealth your fatal poison. See chaps. iii. 7, xii. 34. How can ye escape? Or, more literally, *How shall ye escape?* It is as if He had said, There is really no *how* in this case at all. There is no way of escape for those determined to go on in the highway of iniquity. It would be inconsistent and wrong, and a blunder in moral government, to let them escape the judgement of Gehenna, or, the judgement or judicial sentence that adjudges to the endurance of the final and irretrievable woe. This expression, *the judgement of Gehenna*, was not invented by our Saviour. It was current among the rabbis. (See Wetstein, in loc.)

VER. 34. Wherefore: Or rather, *Therefore*. Euthymius Zigabenus supposes that there is an illative reference to the 32nd verse, *Because ye are about to fill up the measure of your fathers' wickedness*. Jansen adds, *and because ye are the progeny of vipers*. He says moreover, justly enough, that the word is not intended to indicate the *cause* of the 'sending' that is immediately specified. Maldonato supposes the reference to be to the fact that the persons addressed were *serpents* and the *progeny of vipers*. Olearius oddly supposes that the phrase does not mean *therefore* or *wherefore*, but *meanwhile* or *hereafter*. Meyer, with very unnecessary harshness, interprets it, in all the editions of his *Commentary* but the first, as referring to the last clause of the preceding verse, and as meaning *that ye may 'not' escape the damnation of hell*. Ernesti again regards the *therefore* as a mere particle of transition: most unlikely. Euthymius and Jansen and Maldonato are no doubt substantially right; only there is no need for supposing a precise retroverting reference to distant or detached sayings. The Saviour's heart was in commotion; and His language is abrupt. He was manifestly thinking however of the inveteracy of the Pharisees' enmity to the really good and godly, and thus to real goodness and godliness. And it is with that thought in His mind that He says *Therefore*. Lo, I send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: This is not the proper logical, or theological, or historical consequence of what is pointed at in the word *Therefore*. It is but the mental stepping-stone that leads to the logical, theological, and historical consequence. The *Lo* thus looks forward and beyond. Note the 'I.' It is emphatic (ἐγώ), and reveals the Divine self-consciousness of our Lord. He identifies Himself with His Father. There is no need of supposing, with Van Hengel, an ellipsis of the expression "God says" (*Interpretatio*, in loc., p. 15). Note the 'send.' The time indicated is present, though the act runs on into the future. (Comp. Luke xi. 49.) The Saviour had already begun His sending. Note the designations, "prophets, wise men, scribes." They are not to be nicely discriminated, and distributed piecemeal among the apostles and their coadjutors. They are rather to be regarded as bringing out different aspects of one ministry. They were, more or less, old-fashioned names, but finely significant. Christ's ministers or messengers, who were to carry on His work, were to be *prophets*, speakers for God, speaking under the inspiration of God: *wise men*, wise to guide in the right way and to save souls: *scribes*, learned in the lore of revelation, from whose lips others might learn how to act and how to suffer. Some of them ye shall kill and crucify: Here begins the proper con-

and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city: 35 that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of

sequence of that hate of godliness and goodness, to which the Saviour points back by means of His *Therefore*. It is somewhat as if He had said, *Therefore, lo, when I send unto you prophets, wise men, and scribes, ye shall kill and crucify some of them*, etc. (Comp. chap. xi. 35.) *Kill* is generic; *crucify* is specific. James, for instance, was killed with the sword; Peter was crucified. **And some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city:** In one cruel way or another would they manifest their hate of the doctrine and the persons of the Saviour's messengers. Compare, for the facts, Acts v. 40, viii. 1-4, 2 Cor. xi. 24-27; and, for the phraseology, Matt. x. 17, 23.

VER. 35. **That upon you may come:** Such is the only admissible translation; denoting *intent*, and not simply *result*, as Rosenmüller, Kuinöl, and Webster-and-Wilkinson would have it. These critics would translate the conjunctive particle, *so that*, or *in such a way that*; and then they would turn the verb into the indicative mood. This is to make a sacrifice of exegesis upon the altar of dogmatic theory. It must not be. Our thoughts must take the shape of the words of the Spirit of God. In whose mind then was the *intent* referred to? We shall see presently. **All the righteous blood shed on the earth:** Note (1) the expression *the righteous blood*. It is stronger than *the innocent blood*, for righteousness is better than innocence. It is positive goodness; while innocence is only freedom from badness. *Righteous blood* is *the blood of such as are martyrs for the cause of God*. Note (2) the participle *shed*. In the original, it is not past, but present. The present tense however is used, not in antithesis to the past on the one hand, or to the future on the other, but representatively or typically. The meaning, at bottom, is, *all the righteous blood that has been, is being, and will be, shed unrighteously*. Note (3) the expression *on the earth*. It does not denote the local direction of *the blood shed*, but the local extent of the field within which the martyrdoms referred to have taken, are taking, or may yet take, place. What is meant by the expression "*may come upon you*"? Note, *first*, the form of the expression. Wherever the blood was shed, and whenever, it would, as it were, in some of its drops, leap or spark while being shed, so as to *come upon* the persons referred to and be found in their skirts. Thus, by the fact of its presence on them, would they be convicted of confederacy, as it were, with the murderers, of complicity in their murders. Note, *secondly*, the Saviour's idea; *A large proportion of the punishment due to the actors, in the martyrdoms of all times and places, would be due to the scribes and Pharisees*. Why? Because they were sedulously gathering into themselves the character, and serving themselves heirs to the deserts, of all the other haters of holiness. It is *one principle* that is maliciously opposed, and murderously assailed, in all martyrdoms; and there was in the parties addressed by our Lord such a special antagonism to that one principle, that it seemed to absorb into itself all that was unholy in other persecutors. In whose mind then was the *intent* or *design* that is referred to when it is said, "*That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth*"? If we view the subject philosophically, and as regards the theological substrate that underlies the free and easy phraseology, we must at once answer, with Calvin, *in the mind of God*. It would be contrary to sound theology, and to sound philosophy, to

righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

ignore the agency of God in the matter, His intentional agency, and thus His intent. He 'suffered' them to walk in their own ways. (Acts xiv. 16.) He did not deem it right to break in upon the mental and moral constitution He had given them, that He might arrest the murderous strokes that were about to fall. On the contrary, He had long continued to maintain, and He intended still to maintain, that constitution; and when He foresaw that they would madly persist in abusing it, and bid defiance to His righteousness and grace, He resolved that by 'suffering' them meanwhile, as long as wisdom would permit, and then by-and-by bringing on them, after their cup of iniquity was full, the consummation of the doom which was their due, He would turn them to account, as beacons in His universe. There is, however, nothing in all this of the nature of *unconditional intent, purpose, or decree*. And it is noteworthy, besides, that in the connection of vers. 34 and 35 the reference to the action of God is only theologically and philosophically implied, not formally expressed. There is, instead, express reference to the action of the scribes and Pharisees themselves. They acted in their own infatuated way, *in order that all the righteous blood shed on the earth might come upon them*; that is, they acted as if they were intending and desiring that the blood might come on them. They were like those who 'love death,' and 'seek' it, 'seek destruction.' (Prov. viii. 36, xvii. 19, xxi. 6.) They did not indeed 'formally,' as logicians speak, love, seek, and intend their own death and destruction. But they 'formally' loved, sought, and intended that which God had connected with death and destruction. And thus, while dashing along in their loved career, they 'materially,' as logicians phrase it, and 'virtually,' rushed voluntarily upon their deserved retribution. From the blood of Abel the righteous until the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar: W. Bruce, a minister of the "New Church" (Swedenborgian), thus explains this clause: "Abel means those who are in the good of charity, and, abstractly, that good 'itself; and Cain, who slew Abel, means those who make faith alone the means 'or condition of salvation, and disesteem the good of charity, and therefore slay 'it. Zacharias signifies those who are in the truth of doctrine, and, abstractly, 'the truth of doctrine itself. Hence the blood of both signifies the extinction 'of all good and truth. Slaying Zacharias between the temple and the altar 'signifies all manner of rejection of the Lord; for *the temple* signifies the Lord 'as to Divine truth, and *the altar* the Lord as to Divine good, and *between them* 'signifies both together." (*Commentary on Matthew*, p. 510.) But surely this is to dream, not to expound. Abel is specified, not because of any peculiar "good of charity" attaching to him, but because he was chronologically the first of martyrs for righteousness' sake. But who is *Zacharias son of Barachias*? A much disputed point, though practically, as Richard Baxter remarks, "of no great moment." There is little doubt, indeed, that almost all critics would have been agreed that he is the Zacharias whose martyrdom is recorded in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, had it not been the case that that Zacharias was the son of *Jehoiada*, whereas *Zacharias, the minor prophet, was the son of Barachias*. Hence the difficulty. It is a difficulty about a comparative *jot* of a matter; but it is nevertheless *more than a jot of a difficulty* in connection with the trustworthiness and inspiration of the evangelist. (1.) It led Michaelis to suppose that the Zacharias referred to must be the minor prophet. (*Anmerkungen*, in

loc.) The same opinion had been broached in ancient times by some of the obscurer of the fathers. (See *Theophylact*, in loc.) There is however no historical basis to support it. There is no record to the effect that the minor prophet was a martyr, and martyred too "between the altar and the temple." (2.) Some have supposed that our Saviour, instead of referring to a past event, was prophetically pointing to a martyrdom in the future! Finding in Josephus (*Wars*, iv. 5 : 4) a graphic and touching account of the murder of a certain "Zacharias," son too of "Baruch," in "the middle of the temple," a murder perpetrated by the 'zealots' just before the destruction of Jerusalem, they have thought that our Lord makes anticipative reference to it. The occurrence of such a murder in the temple is certainly, in some respects, a marvellous fact, more especially when we take into account not merely the name Zacharias, but also the close etymological connection that subsists between the names Baruch and Barachias. Grotius was struck by the strange coincidence, and could not resist the conviction that, while our Saviour was undoubtedly referring to *Zacharias son of Jehoiada*, there was yet in His words a foreshadowing of the fate of the future Zacharias. (*Addam hoc quoque, videri ita hic Christum alludere ad veterem historiam ut simul insit ejus verbis futuri presagium.*) Hammond goes much further than Grotius, and contends that the single reference of our Saviour was to the future Zacharias. So too Krebs, and Hug, and others. Zuingli inclined in the same direction. But doubtless erroneously. Our Saviour does not say *ye will kill*, but *ye killed*. And then, besides, there is a distinction between *Baruch* and *Barachias*; and Josephus does not mention that the murder took place "between the altar and the temple." (3.) Origen supposed that the Zacharias referred to was the father of John the Baptist, and Melancthon acquiesces in the opinion. Origen mentions that there was in his day a tradition to the effect that John's father had been really murdered between the altar and the temple, because he asserted, on a certain occasion, the rights of the mother of our Lord as a true virgin. In the apocryphal *Protevangelium of James* (xvi. 9-25), again, there is an account of the murder of this same Zacharias, because he would not disclose to Herod where his son John was concealed. Both editions of this tradition, however, are manifest fables, *manufactured out of the passage before us*. (4.) Wall supposes that the Saviour refers to *some unhistorical Zacharias son of Barachias*, "whom the Jews had slain lately," an opinion to which we long felt a leaning, in consequence more particularly of the expression "whom ye slew." It is however not only a mere guess, but also to all appearance inconsistent with the way in which Luke represents the subject (xi. 51). See what follows. (5.) There can be little doubt that the opinion of the overwhelming majority of critics is the correct one, that the reference is to Zacharias, *the historical martyr*, whose martyrdom is recorded in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. Hence the bare name in Luke, without the specification of his father. Hence too, probably, the connection of our Saviour's reference to him with the statement regarding *the building of the tombs of the prophets and the garnishing of the sepulchres of the righteous* (ver. 29). One of the ornamental cenotaphs still standing in the valley of Jehoshaphat bears the name of *the tomb of Zacharias*. We believe that the name, though it varies somewhat in the progress of its traditional descent to the present day, is founded on fact; for there was none of all the Jewish martyrs who was, in the estimation of the rabbis, more glorious, as a martyr, than Zacharias. (See Lightfoot's *Exercitationes*, in loc.) It is in virtue moreover of this reference to the illustrious Zacharias, that we see the beauty and peculiar propriety of the expression in

the 37th verse, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, *and stonest them which are sent unto thee.*" It was by *stoning* that Zacharias was martyred. (See 2 Chron. xxiv. 21.) And then besides we have, in our assumption, a reason for the special connection of Abel and Zacharias, as relatively *first and last*. There were many martyrs after Zacharias (see for instance Jer. xxvi. 23); but the murder of Abel is mentioned toward the commencement of the first book, and the murder of Zacharias is mentioned toward the conclusion of the last book, in the Hebrew Bible. Such is the Jewish arrangement of the biblical books; quite different from the arrangement in our English Bibles. The expression, hence, *from the blood of Abel the righteous until the blood of Zacharias*, brings naturally into view all the martyrdoms recorded in the Bible, all these as typical or representative of all others. But why then is Zacharias said to be *the son of Barachias*? It seems impossible to tell with absolute certainty. Many have supposed that his father, like multitudes of others, both in the Old Testament and in the New, might have a double name, and that Barachias was the duplicate. Luther was of this opinion; and Beza, Grotius, Lightfoot, Le Clerc; as also, among many others, Whitby, Dr. Adam Clarke, Principal Campbell, Wordsworth, Arnoldi. Lightfoot indeed supposes, though on insufficient grounds, that it is *Zacharias son of Jehoiada* who is called, in Isa. viii. 2, *Zacharias son of Jeberechiah*, that is, *son of Barachias* (see the Septuagint word; *Jeberechiah* is the primary and full form of *Berechiah* or *Barachias*). Others, such as Van Hengel (on the whole), Eadie, Ebrard, and Lange (partially), have supposed that Jehoiada may have been the grandfather of Zacharias, thus leaving Barachias to be the proper name of his father. This, we are disposed to believe, is by far the likeliest supposition. We might illustrate its possibility by the case of Zacharias, the minor prophet. In the book of Ezra (chaps. v. 1 and vi. 14) this Zacharias is spoken of as *the son of Iddo*; but in his own book of prophecies (chap. i. 1) he is more discriminatively marked out as *Zacharias son of Barachias, son of Iddo*. He was thus really the *grandson of Iddo*, although he is called in Ezra *the son of Iddo*. His father, possibly, may have been short lived, or otherwise inconspicuous; and he may have been brought up with Iddo as a son. So possibly and probably with the martyr Zacharias. Jehoiada the high priest was an eminently conspicuous and influential man, and lived to a very great age, being "an hundred and thirty years old when he died." (2 Chron. xxiv. 15.) Most likely he would survive his son Barachias by some fifty or sixty years or more, and would be for long to Zacharias in place of a father. Such was probably the true state of the case; surely an infinitely more likely supposition than that of Fritzsche (broached of old by Louis Cappel), that Matthew's memory had got confused! (*Nullus dubito quin rectius nominis confusi insimuletur scriptor.*) Baumgarten-Crusius, however, would either adopt Fritzsche's idea, or assume that the words "son of Barachias" are an apocryphal addition to the text, an addition that had crept in from an erroneous marginal note. Even Meyer would substantially agree with Fritzsche, carrying back the error to the protevangelium-document of which Matthew made use. But these suppositions are wild, or at least wilful, and wilfully bent in the left-hand direction. *If, as is extremely likely, one of the recently erected monuments was dedicated to Zacharias, then doubtless, apart altogether from every kind of assumption as regards inspiration, there would be no danger of the evangelist confounding the martyr with the minor prophet. All the Jews who took even the smallest interest in what was publicly going on would be familiar with the martyr's history, and in particular with his traditional*

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

genealogy. And so of course would Matthew. It is evident that there was a good deal of tradition afloat regarding Zacharias, and that respect was entertained, both by the evangelist and by the Saviour, to some portions of the universally accepted traditions; for it is not specified in the Old Testament that he was murdered *between the altar and the temple.* There was however a distinct tradition to that effect. (See Lightfoot's *Exercitations*, in loc.) It may be noted, in passing, that the expression *son of Barachias* is omitted in the original Sinaitic manuscript (N*); as also by Eusebius. Jerome too mentions that in the edition of the Gospel which was in use among the Nazarenes the expression was replaced by *son of Jehoiada.* But this replacement on the one hand, and that omission on the other, are evidently to be accounted for on the illegitimate ground of a supposed inaccuracy in the original reading. There can be no doubt, when the combined testimony of manuscripts, ancient versions, and ancient commentators is taken into candid consideration, that the reading is genuine. And there can be as little doubt that when the martyrological circumstances of the times are taken into consideration, there does not remain the shadow of a good reason for supposing that there is any historical error. *Whom ye slew:* A remarkable expression, and uttered by our Saviour while standing on a peculiarly lofty elevation of thought. For the moment He blends all the Old Testament and more modern persecutors and murderers into one class or mob, actuated by one soul or spirit; and He freely ascribes to one fraction of them what was perpetrated by another. *Ye, in your other selves, those other selves that were living of old, slew the very man whose monument ye have been vaingloriously erecting, as if ye were the true friends of the martyrs, and utterly opposed to the spirit of their murderers.* *The temple:* The temple proper, as consisting of the Holy and Most Holy Places. *The altar:* viz., of burnt offering, in the court of the priests, and right in front of the temple.

VER. 36. Verily I say to you, All these (things) shall come upon this generation: Erasmus Schmid supposes that *all these (things)* refers to the successive 'woes,' which our Saviour had been pronouncing from the 13th verse downward. It is more probable, however, that the reference is to the successive crimes of martyrdom, from Abel's murder onward, which are spoken of, representatively, in the immediately preceding verse. Comp. Luke xi. 50, 51. *The generation* referred to, or the individuals then living who were addressed by our Saviour (or else animated by the spirit that was dominant in the persons who were addressed), were sedulously gathering up into their hearts, and making their own, all that was evil in bygone persecutors and murderers. They were forestalling too, as far as possible, all future crimes. In the murder they were meditating, they were about to put the culminating stone on the entire fabric of human iniquity. But, in doing so, they were working laboriously to pull down upon their heads the penalty that was due to all corresponding iniquities, past, present, and to come. "In the killing of Christ," says Dr. Lightfoot, "the guilt of the murder of all His types and members is, in some measure, included." *All these things shall come:* Viz. in their penalty. The reference is doubtless to the judicial dissolution of judaism, and the destruction of Jerusalem through the instrumentality of the Romans, "than which destruction," says

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I

Lightfoot, "no former ages have ever seen any more woeful, or amazing,—nor shall any future, before the funeral of the world itself." (See chap. xxiv. 21.)

VER. 37. The Saviour's heart was now full to the brim, and He hastens to the close of His address. Why continue to speak to those who would not hear? or, hearing, would not consider? His anguish was at its climax. All along the ages He had been rejected in spirit; and now He was rejected in person. Hearts had been crucifying Him for centuries on centuries. The hour was on the wing that was about to witness His crucifixion by hands. Hence the deeply elegiac tone of the words of this remarkable verse. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem: Or rather, simply, *Jerusalem! Jerusalem!* In the original, Jerusalem is not *spoken to* but *spoken of*; and therefore, if any interjection should be desired, *Ah* would be better than *O*. Luther uses no interjection; nor Wycliffe, nor Tyndale. *Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee*: In the original there is no *thou* or *thee*. The words are not addressed to Jerusalem, but spoken, in 'the third person,' concerning it, *that killest the prophets, and stonest them which have been sent to it!* It is only with the next clause that the direct address, in the second person, commences. Note the force of the descriptive expressions. They are anticipatory in the original, and bring into view a thing of wont, an abiding characteristic. All along the ages the Jews had acted on the same principle on which they were still acting. God's messengers and messages were wantonly rejected. In the expression, *and stonest them that have been sent to it*, there is, as we have seen on ver. 35, a glancing, representatively, at the way in which Zacharias had been martyred. (See 2 Chron. xxiv. 21.) *How often wished I to gather thy children together*: Not only since I appeared in the flesh, but all along the ages. So Calvin, Stier, Alford, and all the best expositors. "He was looking back," says Eustace Conder, "not over the brief years of His earthly ministry, but through the long ages of Israel's history." (*Commentary*, in loc.) *Thy children*: The Saviour's spirit was, as regards some of its elements, in a high poetic mood, and hence He personifies Jerusalem, for the moment, as if it were the mother of the Jews. *Wished I*; Some of the older expositors stop at this expression; and set to work, by might and main, to reconcile it with the doctrine of unconditional reprobation. How could the Saviour, they ask, say *I wished*, when, if He had really wished, He could and would, in an instant, have controlled all their wills and successfully gathered them together under the wings of His love and protecting care? He speaks, says Beza, "concerning His external ministry." He speaks, says Piscator, "of His human will," as distinguished from His "Divine." He speaks, says Pareus, of His Divine will indeed, but only "of His preceptive will," and not of *His will of good pleasure*. We cannot accept any of these answers. Not Beza's, for "external ministry" is neither internal *wish* nor *will*. Not Piscator's, for Christ's mere human wish or will, apart from His Divine, would have been of no peculiar significance to the Jews or to any people; and moreover there is no reason to believe that it would be at variance with the Divine. Not Pareus's, for the Saviour is not speaking of what He willed or wished or enjoined others to do, but of what He himself wished and willed to do. Every interpretation that would explain away the reality of the Saviour's

have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! 38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39 For I say unto you,

sincere and most gracious desire to have all the Jews without distinction or exception *gathered together under Him*, into the enjoyment of His love and protecting care, is deeply to be deplored, as at radical variance with the fundamental principle of "the gospel." (See John iii. 16.) Even as a hen gathereth together her chickens under her wings: In the original it is the generic term *bird* or *fowl* (*ὄρνις*) that is used; but the reference nevertheless is manifestly specific, and thus in accordance with our Authorized version. Luther used the same liberty in his version; so did Erasmus, Beza, and Castellio in their respective versions; Bengel too, and Zinzendorf, and Fehlinger, in theirs. But not Sir John Cheke. The Vulgate had used it too; and thus the homely word had got virtually stereotyped into European universality. *Her chickens*: Etymologically, *her young ones*; or, generically, *her chicks*. But when we substitute *hen* for *bird*, no translation is equal to *chickens*. The similitude condescendingly employed by our Saviour is one of the homeliest possible, but inexpressibly felicitous and significant. It graphically represents the Saviour's intense and tender solicitude and desire. How lofty too the self consciousness which it bespeaks! The whole of the Jews belonged to Him as His brood. He *could* cover and protect them all. He could do, too, without them, although He longed after them; *but they could not do without Him*. How unnatural likewise it would be, if they should mistrust Him and try to avoid Him! And ye would not: The language is evidence, as Dean Alford justly remarks, "of the freedom of man's will to resist the grace of God." Calvin was led astray by the theology which he inherited, when he denied the validity of the evidence, and accused those of sophistry who adduced it (*a sophistis arripitur*). He did not anticipate the progress of philosophic thought, and perceive that *the denial of all theology, revealed and natural, is involved in the denial of the freedom of the will*. Note the *ye*. The Saviour does not say, "And thou wouldest not," the version of Wycliffe and the Vulgate. He says *ye*. At first He spoke *about* "Jerusalem, Jerusalem." Then He addressed it directly, as the mother of its inhabitants and of the Jews in general. But now He passes out altogether from the personification, and addresses the children themselves, the individuals who composed the sum total of the people.

VER. 38. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: Lachmann omits the word *desolate*. Meyer approves. Westcott-and-Hort put it in the margin. It is omitted in the Vatican manuscript; and it is probable that it ought to be omitted in Luke xiii. 35. But there should be no doubt that it is genuine here. It is in the great body of the best manuscripts, inclusive of the Sinaitic (Σ), the Ephraemi (C), and the Cambridge (D). It is supported too by the best of the ancient versions, as also by Clemens, Origen, Eusebius, and Cyprian among the Fathers. Tischendorf retains it. It is not essential to the meaning of the Saviour's valedictory saying; but it fills the vessel of its import to the full. The Saviour, as it were, *says farewell* to Jerusalem and the Jews; only His *farewell* is in some respects rather a penal *fare-ill* than a complimentary *fare-well*. It is the avowal of a solemn dereliction. *Your house is left to you: I leave it; and therefore it is desolate*. Note the expression *to you*. It forbids a common interpretation of the valedictory saying, the interpretation which

Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

refers the desolation spoken of to the devastation of the Temple and the city and the land by the Romans. (*See, as a specimen, Hammond's Paraphrase.*) In that devastation, the house was not *left at all*; still less was it left *to the people*. Both house and people were swept away. But the Saviour's reference is to His own leaving or departure, a leaving that involved the penal departure of His Father as the Head of the theocracy. The Jewish theocracy was to be a theocracy no longer. 'Ichabod' was to be its name. Judaism henceforth would be mere judaism, not Jehovaism or Jahveism. The Jews henceforth, instead of being the people and kingdom of God, would be a mere Semitic nationality under the dynasty of the Herods or under no dynasty at all. Their temple would just be like any other temple of any other contemporaneous people, an empty edifice dedicated to the empty celebration of an empty ritual. *Your house*: Grotius supposed that the reference is to *the city*; as it were, *your dwelling-place*. Loesner takes the same view in his Dissertation on the phrase (*De Domo Judæorum orba*). Fritzsche too; and others. But it is far better to attribute to the word its simple and natural signification, and to understand the reference to be to the temple, the local centre of the theocracy. It was the pride of all the Jews, the point toward which they turned their hearts and their faces, as they prayed, in whatever part of the country or of the world they were sojourning. It had been *the house of God*, the palace of the Great King. He had spoken of it as 'My house.' (See chap. xxi. 13.) The Prince Royal of the universe, the King's Son, had come to it, and should have felt Himself at home in it. But when in it, He had been insulted by His own subjects and servants. At the very moment that He was speaking, He was an object of sneering and jeering. He was deliberately and heartlessly rejected. Plots were being hatched to lay upon Him, even within the precincts of the fane, unholy and murderous hands. And hence His solemn announcement of His penal dereliction. *This house is no longer My home. It is no longer My Father's house. You glory in it indeed as God's and yours. It is simply yours. My Father and I forsake it. We leave it 'to you.' And when we leave it, all who look down upon it with spiritual eyes will see that it is 'desolate.'* Jerome understood the Saviour's reference to be to the temple; Theophylact too, and Euthymius Zigabenus; Calvin also, and Olearius, and Wolf, Doddridge, Wesley, Rosenmüller, Kuinöl, Arnoldi, and many others.

VER. 39. For I say to you: The *For* shows in what respect the house was to be 'left,' and to be 'desolate.' Ye shall not see Me: It is My resolution that "Ye shall not see Me." Henceforth: Literally, *From now*. But the Saviour does not refer to the precise moment or hour when He was speaking. From the centre of that moment or hour He was looking out on a considerable circumference of time; and He included in His view the whole period of His final sufferings. He dated thence. "In saying *henceforth*," says Euthymius Zigabenus, "He does not refer to that hour alone, but to the entire time until the crucifixion." After His resurrection He appeared to His disciples and certain chosen individuals, but "not to all the people." (Acts x. 41.) Till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: (see Ps. cxviii. 26) This is unnaturally interpreted by many expositors as a shutting of the door of hope for ever. They suppose that the *till*, while leading on to a considerable distance in the future, is not intended to put a stop to the dreariness of the

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and

prospect. (Comp. chap. v. 26). Euthymius Zigabenus asks, "And when shall they say, *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*?" He answers his own question thus: "Willingly, never. But, unwillingly, at Christ's second coming, when He shall come with power and great glory, and when the knowledge of what He is will be of no advantage to them." Calvin takes the same view; Hammond also, so far as the idea of hopelessness is concerned; Wetstein too; and Dr. Samuel Clarke, whose paraphrase of the verse is as follows, "And 'I assure you the time will speedily come, and it is now at hand, when ye shall see Me no more, till ye shall be forced to own Me to be indeed the Messiah, the Son of God with power.'" But the exclamation, *Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord!* is not merely a forced conviction, the outcry of despair. It is an acclamation of welcome (see chap. xxi. 9), a joyful hosanna and 'hurrah'; and hence Grotius, though in a fit of most exceptionable caprice, would interpret the phraseology thus, *Until you would gladly say, if it were not too late.* Heinsius too, after complaining that there were as many interpretations of the passage as there were theologians (*quot theologi, tot sententiæ*), adds another, the most unlikely of them all, that the acclamation from the psalm had been stuck in by the evangelist at the wrong place of his narrative! Many others hold on, in one way or another, to the idea of hopelessness; Meyer among the rest. But unnaturally. *The language was intended to open a door of hope.* The Saviour saw from afar that "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in: and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, *There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.*" (Rom. xi. 25, 26.) The time is on the wing when the Saviour shall come again; to judgement indeed, but not to judgement only. He shall come to reign. Every eye shall see Him; the eyes of Jews among the rest. Many shall mourn and be in bitterness. But others shall be glad. All the true Jews, the Israelites indeed, the real people of Israel, shall be glad. The earth will be a new earth, with a new heaven overarching. There is a haze of glory around those grand futurities (see next chapter); and it would be perilous, or puerile, to attempt to map them out with extreme preciseness. But there are undoubtedly joyful days ahead for both Gentiles and Jews.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WE are now approaching the 'last things,' both in Christ's terrestrial teaching and in His terrestrial life. The 'eschatology' of this twenty-fourth chapter in particular, and of the twenty-fifth, is of the utmost significance, and has given rise to a vast amount of discussion and exegetical literature.

VER. 1. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: Or rather, according to the best reading, *And Jesus went out from the temple and was going on His way.* This arrangement of the words is given in the manuscripts \aleph β δ Λ , 1, 33 (the queen of the cursives), 69. And it is supported by the great body of the ancient versions, the Old Latin, the Vulgate, Syriac (Peshito, Philoxenian, Harolean, and Jerusalem), Coptic, Armenian, Æthiopic. The Lord, strange to say, had not been welcomed in His own home, His Father's house, and therefore He left it, that He might, during the fraction of time that was yet before Him, finish in other respects the work that was given Him to do.

his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these

And His disciples came to Him: Or, *approached*. He had apparently been striding on before, wrapt in His own thoughts. He would probably leave the temple area either by the Golden gate on the east side of the enclosure, or by the Triple gate on the south side. (See Count de Vogüé's *Temple de Jérusalem*, plates 16 and 36.) The disciples followed at a respectful distance, at once awed and bewildered. They wished, however, to have a clearer idea of what He meant when He said, "Lo, your house is left unto you desolate" (chap. xxiii. 38), and hence they quickened their steps and approached their Lord; first one of them, and then another. (See Mark xiii. 1.) To show Him the buildings of the temple: It was an indirect way of attempting to draw Him out to speak to them concerning the future fate of the edifice, and concerning His schemes in general in relation to His own future and the future of His kingdom. It is as if they had said: *Speak to us still further. Speak to us explicitly. There are strange tumults in our hearts. We cannot see afar off. We should like to see. We had expected that this house would be the very centre of Thy theocracy. Since Herod has enlarged and so marvellously adorned it, at such vast expense, and after so many years of toil, it seems worthy to be used by Thee in the interests of Thy kingdom. It looks to us as if it might be, and should be, 'an eternal excellency,' or at least 'a joy of many generations,' to which, as Isaiah says, 'all nations might flow' to worship the God of Jacob. See these buildings all round and round the Holy and Most Holy Place! How massive! How magnificent! Could anything be grander? It was a saying among the rabbis, "He that never saw the temple of Herod never saw a fine building,"* (See Lightfoot's *Exercitations*, in loc.)

VER. 2. But He answered and said to them: Such seems to be the correct reading, slightly differing from that of the received text. It is given by all the great critical authorities. See ye not all these things? An interrogation that has given unnecessary trouble to many interpreters. Casaubon is positive that the *not* should be cancelled. So is Fritzsche. Olearius again would remove the interrogative element altogether, and turn the expression into an injunction, *Admire not all these things*. Paulus too would interpret thus, *Give yourselves no concern in reference to all this* (that is, *all this edifice*). Both of these critics, however, overlooked a certain peculiarity of the negative particle (not the subjective *μή*, but *ού*). Meyer also has, from the first, felt perplexed, and would now interpret the words thus, without interrogation, *Ye see not all this*. But there is not the slightest reason for objecting to the interrogation; and there is no real difficulty with the interpretation. The expression *all these things* does not refer definitely to the buildings of the temple. It refers to these buildings only in so far as they were contingently connected with a more generic class of things, the things of dread significance to which our Saviour had been referring in some of His concluding remarks within the courts of the Gentiles. See chap. xxiii. 36, where the same expression occurs. It is as if He had said: *Are ye yet in the dark? Do ye not yet understand that judaism is doomed, as a thing effete and incurably corrupt? Do ye not understand that Jerusalem, the centre of judaism, is doomed, as a city full of incurable corruption? Do ye not understand that this temple, as the centre of Jerusalem, and the centre too alas of Jerusalem's incurable corruption and hypocrisy, is also doomed? Do ye not see "these things"?* When the morals of a people become thoroughly

things ? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came

corrupt, no political expedients will long succeed in averting social ruin and physical degradation. There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down : The expression rendered *one stone upon another* is literally *a stone upon a stone*. The word rendered *thrown down* is translated *overthrown* in Acts v. 39, and *dissolved* in 2 Cor. v. 1. It etymologically means *loosened down*. Sir John Cheke renders it here *loused away*. A compound idea is expressed. There is, first, the notion of *detachment*. And then there is the notion of *throwing down* the detached stones, a process of destruction that could be carried on in the case of all the buildings without exception on the area of the temple, in consequence of the natural and artificial elevation of the area all round and round. The Saviour's prediction was fulfilled to the letter. "The language was spoken," says Dr. Robinson, "of the *buildings of the temple*, the "splendid fane itself, and its magnificent porticos; and in this sense the "prophecy has been terribly fulfilled, even to the utmost letter." (*Researches*, vol. i., p. 436.) Portions indeed of the substructions of the walls, that were laboriously raised to enlarge the temple area, are still standing as they were in our Saviour's days, intensely interesting relics of a departed architectural glory. But, as Thrupp remarks, "Of the whole of the walls and buildings "of the inner court, we may verily say that not one stone has been left upon "another; and even the raised platform on which the inner court stood has "been levelled with the rest of the area. The whole of the porticoes of the "outer court have in like manner disappeared; and even of the ancient "external walls not a stone remains reaching up and visible above the floor "of the area on which the prophecy was delivered." (*Ancient Jerusalem*, p. 398.)

VER. 3. And as He sat on the mount of Olives : Which rises to the east, about 270 feet higher than the temple mount, and from which therefore there would be a most commanding and imposing view of all the temple erections and of the whole city. Our Saviour, having left the temple, and crossed the brook Kidron, slowly ascended Olivet. There was more than a prophet's burden on His heart. He would often pause, as He ascended; and turn round and look, and sigh or weep. Every foot of the ground on which He was treading was historic, and classic, and sacred. He was making it still more sacred, and classic, and historic. The future was unrolling itself to His gaze, His own future, the future of Jerusalem, of the Jews, of the world. At length He reached some comparatively secluded spot, where there was a convenient ledge of rock, and the friendly shelter, it may be, of olive trees; and He seated Himself. It was drawing toward evening. The shadows were lengthening. The coolness was delightful. The wearied populace were dispersed or dispersing to their evening quarters; and none but His chosen apostles were near Him. The disciples came to Him privately: *Privately*, that is, apart from the more miscellaneous followers who had surrounded Him in the temple, and had continued, stragglingly, to follow Him up the mountain side, animated by wonder and curiosity, but beginning perhaps to suspect that they had been too hasty after all in their hosannahs. *There is majesty in His mien! He looks as if He were worthy to be a king! But is He not too poor?* "Peter, James, John, and Andrew," gradually approach, and seat themselves beside

unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world? 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come

Him, and enter into talk. (Mark xiii. 3.) By-and-by the entire group of the brethren cluster around, and the solemn conversation proceeds. Saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the age? The word *coming*, though a good translation of the original term (*παρουσία*), is not literal. Literally the Greek term means *presence*; and so it is rendered in 2 Cor. x. 10; Phil. ii. 12. (See Warren's *Parousia*, 1879.) In all other passages, however, it is rendered *coming*. Luther's version corresponds (*Zukunft*); but Funckherott, in his uncouth attempt at absolute literality, renders the term *essence-beside* (*weessenheit da beyhin*). Instead of the word *age*, our Authorized version has *world*, doubtless an unhappy rendering, and exceedingly inexact. "The disciples do *not* ask," says Lightfoot, "the signs of the Messiah's coming, as we believe it, at the last day, to judge both the quick and the dead." (*Exercitations*, in loc.) In the original the word is *αἰών*, and has reference, not to the material of the earth or universe, but to 'a space of time.' Compare the use of the word in the plural, Luke i. 33; Rom. i. 25, ix. 5, xi. 36, xvi. 27; 1 Cor. x. 11; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Gal. i. 5; Heb. xiii. 8, 21; Rev. i. 18, iv. 9, 10; etc. In all these passages there is reference, not to 'the worlds,' but to 'the ages.' The disciples ask two questions, not three, as Grotius and many more represent it. The first is simple, embodying but one idea, *When shall 'these things' be?* The second is compound, and double folding, *What shall be the sign of Thy presence and of the age's end?* It is assumed by the questioners that with the presence of Christ there would be *the end of the age*. In the correct text (that of N B C L, 1, 33) there is no article before the word *end*. It was not needed, though it might have been employed. The *age*, to which the disciples made reference, was the then 'present evil age' (Gal. i. 3). It is still 'present.' It is the age when evil is predominant, the age that precedes the golden age of the world's history. Happy for the earth will it be when this latter age is inaugurated! Happy when the preceding age will be ended! Unhappy, however, for many individuals will the time of the transition be! As to the prior of the two questions, *When shall 'these things' be?* the demonstrative pronoun *these* looks back to the expression *all these* as occurring in ver. 2, and thence back to the same expression as occurring in chap. xxiii. 36. It infolds within itself a special reference to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. See the second clause of ver. 2, and compare chap. xxiii. 35-38; also chap. xxii. 6, 7.

VER. 4. And Jesus answered and said to them, Take heed that no one deceive you: His first words are, most fittingly, words of caution. *You ask questions on momentous subjects. See to it that you do not allow yourselves to be led astray, when I shall have left you!* The word rendered *Take heed* literally means *See*, or *Look*, or *Behold*. Wycliffe and Sir John Cheke render it *See*. The Rheims rendering is *Beware*. The word rendered *deceive* (*πλανήσῃ*) literally means *lead astray* or *cause to err*. *See to it, that no one cause you to err!* The Saviour is looking, specially, in the direction of the second question of His disciples; though not exclusively so. And what He says to His questioners, He intended,

in my name, saying, I am Christ: and shall deceive many.

assuredly, not for their benefit alone, but for the benefit of all the discipleship, inclusive of the disciples that were to be, as well as of the disciples that then were.

VER. 5. For many shall come in My name: Literally, *on My name*, founding on My name their pretensions and actions. *My name*, that is, the name of the Messiah, the Christ, which belongs to Me alone. Saying, I am Christ: Literally, *I am the Christ*. Luther, like our English translators, missed the article. But Felbinger, Bengel, Zinzendorf, correctly inserted it. So Dr. Daniel Scott, and the more modern translators. And shall deceive many: Or, *And shall lead many astray*. See on ver. 4. No doubt numbers of the impostors or enthusiasts here referred to would make their appearance before the destruction of Jerusalem. It was a time of intense religious excitement; and the religiousness that prevailed was in general unbridled and fanatical. We need not expect however that many, if any, of these pretended Messiahs would be able to act such a part on the great stage of society as to find a place in history. They would in general be too petty in soul, and too paltry in mental power, to attract attention individually, except in their own very limited circles. They would thus be somewhat like the innumerable enthusiasts who, in succeeding ages, have fancied that they were Christ, or that at least they were, in some peculiar way or other, impersonations of His power and authority, authorized precursors at all events, and inaugurators of His impending advent. Consider, for instance, the pretensions of the Agapēmoné community, as exhibited in the following manifestoes:—"The Sounding of the First Trumpet (Rev. vii. 7). I declare that "God is on a throne of judgement, and that the Lamb that was slain is in the "midst of it: I declare too that He has His throne of judgement in Br. "Prince, the man whose name is THE BRANCH. (Signed) B. Thomas. (The "Agapēmoné, 17th January, 1864.)"—"The Sounding of the Third Trumpet " (Rev. viii. 10). I declare that the day of grace is past, and the door of mercy "shut; I declare, too, that Christ is come in judgement according to the testi- "mony of Jesus, Behold He cometh. (Signed) Br. Verriour. (The Agapēmoné, "31st January, 1864.)"—"The Sounding of the Fifth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 1-11). "I declare that the Holy Ghost in Br. Prince took flesh, and bore in His own "body the curse of its independence, that separation from God which is death, "that condemnation of the devil which is hell; thereby revealing the devil as "the life of the flesh, the author of its independence, and of all the sin and "evil in it, the man of sin, the son of perdition: I declare, too, that the Lord "Jesus Christ, who was in His Spirit in Br. Prince, did reveal Himself from "heaven, consuming that wicked one with the Spirit of His mouth, and destroy- "ing him with the brightness of His coming, as the Son of Man, in His own "body, Br. Prince, the man whose name is The Branch. (Signed) Br. Cobbe. "(The Agapēmoné, 18th February, 1864.)" These are melancholy manifestoes and manifestations, which would no doubt have their antique duplicates or correspondencies, though under unessential modifications of form, in the times that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. See also *The Only Sacrifice*, and the other publications of James Biden, who thinks that he is "the Son of man" so frequently addressed in Ezekiel, and the "one like unto Moses," and "the rod out of the stem of Jesse." He conceives that his publication, entitled *Truths Maintained*, "fulfilled the prediction contained in the first part of Ezekiel, chap. v." He thinks that what was said concerning the sun-dial of

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars : see that ye

Ahaz, "which was to be put back ten degrees," teaches "that the 185,000 Assyrians, a symbolic number, were to be reduced to 1850, to intimate the year in which the prophecy was fulfilled by the publication of (his book entitled) THE TRUE CHURCH." He has actually "bound Satan" too (Rev. xx. 1), and "is to rule," and "take the kingdom when sixty-two years of age." In our day, and in our country, not very many we presume are led away by Mr. Biden; but in other circumstances it might have been otherwise, for he seems to be in solemn earnest, and in his writings wields a nervous style. Consider also the pretensions of Emanuel Swedenborg, though manifested in a peculiarly subjective, instead of objective, phase. He lays it down as a principle that "the second coming of the Lord is effected by a man, by whom He has manifested Himself in person, and whom He has filled with His Spirit, to teach the doctrine of the New Church." This man, as he conceives, was himself. (*True Christ. Religion*, chap. xiv.) Consider also the pretensions of Joanna Southcote, who gave herself out to be the woman spoken of in Revelation xii., and predicted that on October 19, 1814, she would give birth to the Messiah. Her followers at one time were said to be 100,000 in number, and there are still one or two congregations in existence which look for her reappearing along with the Christ. About the year A.D. 131 or 132, Bar Cochba (Star-Son) appeared in the Holy Land, professing to be the 'star' that was seen of old by Balaam. (Num. xxiv. 17.) He raised the banner of revolt once more against the Romans, promising deliverance from heaven to the people. The result was a most melancholy butchery. The partially resuscitated city of Jerusalem was completely razed; and in its room, and on its site, a purely Roman city was erected and called *Ælia Capitolina*. We do not know how much of the same spirit may have been in Theudas (Acts v. 36), or in "the Egyptian" with whom the chief captain in Jerusalem confounded Paul. (Acts xxi. 38.) And it would serve but little purpose to rake deep into such litter.

VER. 6. **And ye shall hear.** The idea is: *By-and-by ye shall begin to hear.* Ye : the Saviour is speaking to His apostles as the representatives of the whole body of His disciples. He as it were says: *Pay no regard to the professions of any individuals who pretend to be the Christ, or the precursors of His second advent. Before that event arrive, many great changes must take place among the nations. And, to come to particulars, ye shall by and by begin to hear of wars and of rumours of wars.* Note the 'of.' Ye shall begin to hear of wars, as actual occurrences, and of rumours of wars, as likely to occur. Besides the actual wars there will be flying reports circulating in the high places of society, and getting to be overheard by inquisitive politicians, and thence retailed descendingly to the other portions of the general public, that the relations between certain sovereigns are critical, and that sooner or later there will be rupture and war. These reports, or 'on-dits,' or *bruites* as the Rheims has it, may at first be sedulously stifled, or only cautiously whispered from ear to ear; but, says the Saviour, *ye shall by and by begin to hear of them.* Ye shall begin to hear of their circulation, for people will be beginning to get uneasy, looking to the future with uncertainty and trembling. Such seems to be the purport of the phraseology; and so it is interpreted by Maldonato, De Wette, Arnoldi, etc. The expression however, *Ye shall hear of wars*, if rendered with extreme literality, would be, *ye shall hear wars.* Wycliffe rendered it thus, *ye ben to heere bateyls.* So did Luther, and Bengel too; and Meyer interprets accordingly, as if the Saviour were intimating

be not troubled : for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom : and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these

that His disciples would actually be within earshot of the mustering and the tramping of the conflicting hosts and the dreadful clash of arms. But the expression, no doubt, is correctly translated in our Authorized version (see Gal. i. 13 ; Eph. i. 15, iii. 2 ; Col. i. 4) ; and hence the second clause, instead of meaning *ye shall hear reports of wars* (at a distance), as antithetically distinguished from *hearing wars* (at hand), will refer to the *hearing of the rumours of impending wars*. It is not of much moment that we should inquire minutely whether or not the disciples were in a position to *hear of wars*, and *of rumours of wars*, before the destruction of Jerusalem. The Saviour is referring, not to the antecedents of the destruction of Jerusalem, but to the antecedents of His second coming and of the end of the evil age. There were indeed wars, nearer and more remote, before the destruction of Jerusalem. But oh how many have been since ! What evidence they are of the continuance of the 'evil age' ! The earth everywhere has been enpurpled with the blood of brothers, who have fought with one another as if they had been incarnated fiends. See that ye be not troubled : Literally, *See, be not troubled*, or, as Sir John Cheke gives it, *Look ie be not trobled*, or, better still, *Look ie, be not trobled* (see H. Stephens's remarks on the comma, at p. 35 of Preface to his N. T. of 1576). I have forewarned you. Be not overtaken with unmanning and unmanly dismay. Be collected and cool, in the midst of all such commotions, when they are around you. Be calm in reference to them when they are lowering in the distance. For all these things must come to pass : Not indeed by an absolute necessity, a necessity that has its unconditioned origin in the will or wisdom of God. Far from that. The wars and all the other woes, " come they not hence," says James (iv. 2), " even of men's lusts ? " The ' efficient ' causes of the wars, and the ' meritorious ' or ' demeritorious ' causes of the woes, are to be found in the wills of men. The hand of God is in them only penally and overrulingly. So long however as the masses of men continue to be unchristian and ungodly, contentions and collisions, wars and woes, *must be*. But the end is not yet : The end of the age.

VER. 7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom : Note the *For*. It is not by means of a few wars only that the demon of sin will be glutted. Alas, no. Perplexities will increase, extending into a wider circle of nationalities, intensifying into more bitter enmity, and taking the form and fury of fiercer feuds and collisions. Selfishness, especially in nations, is always short sighted. It is prompt to lift its hand and to rush into the fray ; but it is slow to put the telescope to its eye and sweep the spheres of far-away futurities. The words of Jesus have been fulfilling themselves for centuries. And there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places : In the received text there is a middle clause, *and pestilences* ; but it is probable that it had been originally inserted only in the margin, by some harmonist, out of Luke xxi. 11. It is not found in the Sinaitic, Vatican, or Cambridge manuscripts, that is, in \aleph B D, or in E*. Hilary too omits it ; and Arnobius ; and some of the best of the Old Latin manuscripts. Lachmann leaves it out of the text, and Tregelles. So too Tischendorf, in his eighth edition, and Alford, and Westcott-

are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you

and-Hort. *Famines*: We have a specimen, though but a specimen, in Acts xi. 28. There have been many of them all along the currency of the 'evil age'; and although in the progress of civilization and the development of international economy their pressure on certain points of the globe is wonderfully, and may still be more and more, mitigated, yet when they do occur among a people they are a terrific calamity. Not until there be the realization of the thorough unity and brotherhood of mankind will their baleful effects be altogether neutralized. Their occurrence therefore is a proof that "not yet" has the golden age been inaugurated. *Earthquakes*: Or, as it is picturesquely spelled by Sir John Cheke, *erthquaakes*. Scholars have busied themselves, and with wonderful success, in hunting up historical notices of the earthquakes that occurred before the destruction of Jerusalem, just as they have laboured to find out records of famines and wars. See Wetstein, Stier, and Alford. But there is no special significance in such records, or in the occurrences recorded. The rôle of wars and famines and earthquakes is not yet finished. There is a deep connection between the physical and the moral. The mystery of iniquity is not yet finished and unmasked. Man has more schemes and expedients to launch, in his effort to get on without Christ and God. Shift upon shift in politics will yet be contrived, in the hope of getting all things made right, and all men made happy and prosperous, without God or godliness. Hence it is not time for the inauguration of the 'new earth.' And therefore it is not time, however marvellous to some it may appear, for earthquakes to cease. When once it is time to enter on the golden age, the age of purity and peace and glory, the cosmical rôle of earthquakes will have run out; and the earth will be a 'new' earth (2 Pet. iii. 13), fit to be the home of those who are themselves made inwardly 'new.' It will be a universal paradise.

VER. 8. But all these things are the beginning of sorrows: They are the beginning of the end; yet only the beginning. It is as if our Saviour had said,—*The woes, of which I have made mention, rise up before My view, chronologically, one after another, as wave upon wave. Lo, they spread around, as I look upon the scene. They roll on, and still on, into futurity, repeating and re-repeating themselves. But all the woes, of which I have yet spoken, are only the beginnings of sorrows.* The Saviour dates from His own standpoint in time. He might have gone farther back, and then the sorrows He refers to would have been but the prolongation of sorrows in past ages. But dating from the time when He was speaking, they were *the beginning of the end*. The word rendered *sorrows* properly means *birth-pangs*. It is translated *travail* in 1 Thess. v. 3. It is a word of hope. The sorrows are not final. They are to be succeeded by a great joy. A birth is to take place. There is to be a *re-generation* of the world. (See chap. xix. 28.) Then, and thenceforward, not only will there be men here and there who are born again into a new creaturehood; *mankind, as a whole, will be the new mankind*. The present time is in *travail* with the future; and the future will be the heir of everlasting bliss.

VER. 9. Then: The word has no strange meaning, but is to be understood in its ordinary acceptation. Even Erasmus's 'meanwhile' (*interim*), of which Cremer, in his *Monograph on Matthew xxiv., xxv.*, approves, and on which nevertheless he improves (*in so qualificirter zeit*), is too great a departure from the natural import of the term. We must take the term in its natural acceptation. The Saviour's mind is not reverting to the beginning of the trials

up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be

that were awaiting His faithful followers. He had been looking down the lines of time for a considerable distance, noting the condition of the world. He now pauses in His survey, and transfers His prophetic telescope to another sphere, the sphere in which He could observe the condition of His disciples. In looking thither, however, He does not return back along the lines of time, to trace their trials from the commencement. He might have done so; but He does not. He just passes, at the point of future time which He had prophetically reached, from the condition of things in the great area of the world to the condition of things in the little area of His church. Luke uses an expression that suggests a totally different but yet a perfectly harmonious point of view. (Luke xxi. 12.) Both representations are real. **Shall they deliver you up to be afflicted:** When the Saviour says *you* He is not confining His attention *specifically* to Peter, James, John, and the other apostles, as individuals. He is speaking to them *generically*, as representatives of the entire body of His disciples. (See verse 10.) If this fact be overlooked, nothing will be understood. The expression, *to be afflicted*, is admirably and more literally rendered by Wycliffe, *in to tribulacioun*. The persecuting parties, who deliver into tribulation, are not specified; and hence when it is said (*they*) *shall deliver you*, or (*men*) *shall deliver you*, the meaning is just equivalent to the indefinite passive, *ye shall be delivered*. **And shall kill you:** The Saviour speaks of what would happen in multitudes of instances; not in all, of course. He speaks too without varnish. He excites no false hopes of worldly ease and elevation. But the fact that He could thus speak to persons whose hopes centred in His kingdom, and in the enjoyment of its peculiar privileges, is proof that, amid all the darkness of their views, they yet knew that their real position and reward, as subjects of the King of kings, would be modified, either not at all or only to an inappreciable degree, by the contingency of death. **And ye shall be hated by all nations because of My name:** Note that the Saviour says *by all nations*. The expression is proof that His mind was stretching out in a generic direction far beyond the little circle of His twelve apostles. (See verse 10.) Note too the expression *because of My name*. The hatred is not elicited by what the disciples are in themselves as men, but by what they are 'in Christ' as Christian men. So infatuated are the masses of mankind, and so thoroughly opposed to their own highest interests. The exceptions are, comparatively speaking, so few that the Saviour does not note them. What is sweet, men in general maintain to be bitter; what is bitter, they maintain to be sweet. Light they insist is darkness. Goodness is badness! Contrariwise, badness and darkness are goodness and light! They are prepared to prove their point by every sort of sophistry; or by fire and fagot, if their decision be not accepted.

VER. 10. **And then:** When persecution rises into rage, and hate, grown savage, watches remorselessly for every opportunity of opening its mouth and clenching its fist. **Shall many be offended:** *Many*, namely, of yourselves. *Many*, that is to say, of My professed disciples. The expression is a demonstration that the Saviour was thinking, not of the career of His twelve apostles simply or chiefly, but of the fortunes of the entire Christian community. *Offended:* That is, *stumbled or snared*. (See chaps. v. 29; xi. 6; xiii. 21, 41;

offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love

xvi. 23; xviii. 7.) They shall stumble in their faith, and fall. Sir John Cheke renders the expression still more strongly, *then schal mani ful awai*. So Wakefield, *then will many fall off*. The Rheims version is more literal, *then many shall be scandalized*. But it is too literal, for *scandalized* is simply the Greek word Anglicised. *Insnared* is Principal Campbell's word. The hate of the world, and the sufferings involved in that hate, are so ill to bear that many will begin to say within themselves,—*Why martyr ourselves? Why attempt, at the peril of our businesses, and homes, and lives, to swim against the mighty current? Why seek to maintain a conscience? Is not the maintenance too expensive? Who can bear it? Let conscience go! Let the kingdom of heaven go! Let Christ go!* And shall betray one another: They shall not only sneak out of the yoke for themselves; they shall, to save themselves, or to purchase the forbearance and favour or confidence of their persecutors, give information regarding their brethren. And these very brethren, equally unnatural, will be counterworking their betrayers by seeking to steal a march on them in the art and act of betrayal! Alas, it has often been done. So dreadful has been the pressure of opposition to the name of Christ. And shall hate one another: Aye, with hate that is more intense and hateful than the hate of such as have never named the name of Christ.

VER. 11. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray: *Prophets*; the word has no special reference to prediction. It denotes *teachers who profess to have the mind of God, and to speak for God, so that their message is to be received as a message from God*. (See chaps. vii. 15, xi. 9.) All along the age, ever since Christianity began its career, the world and the church have been infested by such *false prophets*, teachers who have claimed to have the fulness of the mind of God, and to have a monopoly of teaching it to the people. These false prophets have been 'many'; and they have been found where multitudes never think of looking for them. They began to spring up in the church at a very early period. See Acts xx. 29, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 1 John iv. 1.

VER. 12. And because iniquity shall abound: Or, *And because iniquity shall be multiplied*. In all other passages where the verb (*πληθύνω*) occurs, it is translated *multiply*. (Acts vi. 1, 7, vii. 17, ix. 31, xii. 24; 2 Cor. ix. 10; Heb. vi. 14; etc.) Wycliffe renders it here, *schal be plenteous*. Luther gives a free but fine translation, *shall take the upper hand*. The word rendered *iniquity* (*ἀνομία*) is the term which is translated *transgression of the law* in 1 John iii. 4. In all other passages it is rendered *iniquity*. It literally means *lawlessness*, and here denotes *immorality*, but of course immorality on both its sides, its man-ward and its God-ward side. Principal Campbell renders it *vice*. The reference of the Saviour is to immorality or vice within the professing church! The love of many shall wax cold: In the original it is not of many, but of the many (*τῶν πολλῶν*), a far more serious matter. (*Loquitur de doctrinæ morumque depravatione inter ipsos christianos obvia, immo majorem eorum partem invasura*: DORNER, *De Oratione Christi eschatologica*, Matt. xxiv., p. 48.) The love of the majority shall cool; their love to one another as Christians, their love to Christianity, their love to Christ, their love to God. The zeal of their love will radiate off until the residuum will scarcely be recognisable as love. A sad state of things!

of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all

VER. 13. But he who endureth : Who holds on, and holds up, under all the trials that come upon him, either from the inner circle of professing Christians or from the outer circle of the world at large. The Rheims version has *persevereth* instead of *endureth*. Sir John Cheke has *he that abideth*. Wycliffe, *he that schal dwell stable*. *Endureth* however, the translation got from Tyndale, is the best of all. It brings out the compound idea of *perseverance under trials*. To the end: This does not mean precisely *until death*, as Euthymius Zigabenus, Elsner, Holden, Arnoldi, suppose. Still less does it mean *until the destruction of Jerusalem*, as Krebs contended, Wakefield and Bland approving. Rosenmüller too at first approved; but by-and-by he hesitated; and finally (in his sixth edition) he abandoned the interpretation. Neither does it mean, as Meyer, De Wette, and Baumgarten-Crusius suppose, *until the end of that period of trial*, that is, *until the appearing of Jesus at the end of the age*. This would be to assume that all who should be saved were to live till the end of the age, an assumption at variance with what is said in ver. 9, "then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you." The expression *the end* has no article in the original, and hence the entire phrase was, strictly speaking, a certain indefinite import somewhat equivalent to our word *finally*. *He who shall endure finally*,—*he whose endurance shall be final*,—*he shall be saved*. The meaning obviously is, *he who shall endure as long as endurance is needed*; that is, *he who shall endure to the end of his period of probation*, with whatsoever point in the great cycle of the age, or in the greater cycle of time in general, that end shall be coincident. It will be equally true of the *dead in Christ*, and of the living *who shall be changed at our Lord's appearing*, that *their endurance has been final*. They have endured to the end. Comp. chap. x. 23; and Heb. iii. 6, 14, vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. ii. 26. The same shall be saved: Note the emphatic phrase, *The same*. It is the demonstrative pronoun in the original (*ὁὗτος*). It is as if the Saviour had said, *he, but he alone, shall be saved*, namely with everlasting salvation, salvation consisting, on its under side, of deliverance from all evils whatsoever, all hell-ward evils; and, on its upper side, of the enjoyment of heavenly glory and honour coupled with immortality. (Comp. Rom. i. 16 with Rom. ii. 7.)

VER. 14. And this gospel of the kingdom: The pronoun *this* has proved a stumbling-block to some; and so ingenious a critic as De Wette was apparently pushed not only to his wit's end, but beyond that boundary, to account for it. He fancied that Matthew had simply 'forgotten himself,' and was thinking for the moment of the *volume of the Gospel* which he himself was engaged in writing! (*Der Evang. vergisst sich, und lässt J. auf das Ev. das er eben schreibt hinweisen.*) How some men do 'forget themselves'! Who, without such forgetfulness, could have overlooked the fact that the evangelist does not speak of 'this gospel' as being published and circulated, but 'preached'? The *this* has manifest reference to the 13th verse, which is implicitly a grand enunciation of the gospel. The gospel or good news may be represented under a variety of phases; but in them all there must be, either explicitly or implicitly, a reference to the possibility and practicability of 'salvation.' Such possibility and practicability of 'salvation' to sinners is the great moral marvel. The announce-

the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desola-

ment of it, or, still more particularly, the announcement of the atoning way by which the moral marvel is realized, or even the announcement of the simple and gracious condition or conditions under which the blessings of the atoning work are appropriated and secured, is "glad tidings of great joy," "the glorious gospel of the grace of God." Hence the statement of the 13th verse, *he who endureth to the end (in faith and fealty terminating on Me) shall be saved, is 'the gospel.'* The Saviour calls it "the gospel of the kingdom" (comp. chap. iv. 23); for God has not thrown off His rebellious subjects, and left them to break up into utter anarchy and chaos. He has had compassion on them, and has graciously resolved to re-establish for their benefit a heavenly kingdom. They are by His grace eligible to all the blessings of this kingdom. They may have, in it, peace and joy and holiness, and all the sweets of heavenly love. (Rom. xiv. 17.) This kingdom was founded on the mediatorial work of Christ, the work which He was about to consummate. He was to be the king. He was so already. Of old, He had acted as such anticipatively, and gathered subjects into His new and heavenly community. He was busy gathering more. And with the completion of His atoning work the kingdom would be formally founded. By-and-by it would burst forth in all its transcendent glory, and appropriate into itself or else grind to powder all other kingdoms on the face of the earth. (Dan. ii. 34, 44; Rev. xi. 15.) *Shall be preached in all the world:* Not merely throughout the Roman empire, as Macknight and Dr. Samuel Clarke suppose, and as Dr. Adam Clarke all but concedes, but, far more extensively and literally, in every place where man is found, from the river to the ends of the earth, and from pole to pole. Sir John Cheke's version is, *through y^e hoole world.* Modern Christian missions, which are but a return in spirit, though still of a very partial description, to the mission operations of the apostolic age, are supplying some of the preliminary links that are needed for the fulfilment of this prediction. Hosts of native missionaries in all parts of the globe will yet be required. For a witness to all nations: Not a witness against them, as Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Arnoldi suppose; nor yet a witness to them against the Jews, as Grotius and Richard Baxter suppose; but for a testimony to them of the grace of God to sinners universally, and His willingness to take them back into the enjoyment of His favour. "This," says John, "is the testimony that God hath given to us,—hath made over to us in gift—eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 Ep. v. 11). Hence Whitby's paraphrase is substantially correct, "for a witness to all nations *that I am the Christ.*" The expression to *all nations* would be more literally rendered to *all the nations.* Sir John Cheke has it, *to al y^e hejen,* that is, to *all the heathen.* And then shall the end come: Not the end of Jerusalem, as Chrysostom, Theophylact, Euthymius Zigabenus suppose, or of judaism, or of the Jewish state; nor yet the end of the globe or habitable earth; but the end of 'the age,' 'the evil age,' the age that precedes the age or era of the Messiah's glorious presence and reign. In every other interpretation of the reference there is inextricable tanglement and inconsistency.

VER. 15. When therefore: Or, *Whenever then.* This *therefore* or logical *then* has occasioned difficulty to many expositors. It seems to indicate an inference; and yet, if this be the case, is there not, it has been asked, an anachronism

tion, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place

introduced? Is it not strange to draw an inference from *what is to happen at the conclusion of the age*, that is to regulate *what should be done at the destruction of Jerusalem*? Ebrard and Wieseler imagine that, instead of an inference, the participle merely indicates a *return* to the first question proposed by the disciples, the question that has reference to the destruction of the temple (ver. 3). They are certainly wrong, however, in their conception of the office of the participle. But they are right nevertheless in their conception of the direction which our Saviour's mind was taking. The Saviour was turning from the great outstretching subject of the evil age in general, a subject on which His eye had run forward to the very consummation of the period; and, as Dörner remarks (*Orat. Eschat.*, p. 51), He does recur in fact to the more local topic on which He had spoken in ver. 2. But the *therefore* or *then* is nevertheless simply illative as usual. It indicates, and without the least approach to anachronism, *an inference that is to be drawn from what is said in ver. 4-14*, or, as Dörner expresses it, *an application of the eschatological principles embodied in these verses*. We shall see the nature of the inference when we come to ver. 16. Whenever, then, ye shall see: Or, as Young and Rotherham render the expression, *Whenever therefore ye may see*. Or, as the English Revisionists give it, *When therefore ye see*. Strictly speaking, the mind is carried forward to a contingent point of time in the future, when the particular act of seeing referred to is thought of as past. What is it that is thought of as seen? The abomination of the desolation, spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place: An expression that has given occasion to a vast amount of discussion. But note, in the first place, the phrase "*through Daniel the prophet*." It assumes that the prediction was not the invention of Daniel. It came from beyond him, from above. Our Saviour thus gives His imprimatur to the Divine origin of the Book of Daniel, even as regards those concluding and apocalyptic parts on which the efforts of ancient and modern sceptics have been most pertinaciously expended. It has been much disputed among reverent critics whether the Saviour refers to what is said in Dan. ix. 27 (*βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων*), or to what is said in chap. xi. 31 (*βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως*) and chap. xii. 11 (*τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως*). Beza thought that it was to this last passage that our Saviour refers. Tregelles thinks that the reference is to chap. xi. 31 and chap. xii. 11, because in chap. ix. 27 the expression in the Hebrew original cannot be literally rendered by the phrase which is quoted by our Lord. (*Remarks on Daniel*, pp. 105, 193.) He also thinks that in all the three passages of Daniel the prediction concerns *something that is still future*. He is consequently shut up to the conclusion that our Lord's reference, likewise, is to something that is yet to be in Jerusalem as Jerusalem is to be. We have no doubt however that Hengstenberg (*Genuineness of Daniel*, iii. 3) and expositors in general are right in assuming, on the one hand, that our Lord's direct reference is to the great fontal prediction in chap. ix. 24-27, and in assuming, on the other, that in the expression which He quotes, as well as in His own mind, there was a reference to something that was to happen in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Chrysostom had a strong conviction in the same direction. (See his *Third Oration against the Jews*, towards the close.) The expression in the Hebrew original—(read *הַנֶּפֶץ* instead of *הַנֶּפֶץ*)—literally means *upon the wing*, that is, *upon the wing of the temple*, the especial pride of the peculiar people (comp. Matt. iv. 5), *shall be the abominations of the desolator*.

But in the Septuagint version, as well as in that of Theodotion, which has ecclesiastically superseded that of the Septuagint, the expression is freely rendered thus, *on the temple shall be (the) abomination of the desolations*. In chaps. xi. 31 (Sept.) and xii. 11, again, the plural *desolations* is changed into the singular, *desolation*. The singular is retained in the reference to the prediction that is contained in 1 Macc. i. 54. It seems to have covered over entirely, and superseded, the plural of the fontal passage in Dan. ix. 27. Hence our Saviour's use of it. The two representations, the singular and the plural, are but two phases of one substantive idea. They are, in short, identical. And not only so; but when we come to the substance or substrate of things, it makes no difference whatever whether we speak of *the abominations of the desolator*, or of *the abomination of the desolation*.

Keeping then, meanwhile, to the form of expression which our Saviour has used, *what is the abomination of the desolation?* The answer must divide itself into two parts, embracing, on the one hand, the inner or subjective import of the expression as an expression, and, on the other, its outer, objective, or historical reference, as the designation of some precontemplated reality. As to the inner import of the expression, it certainly does not mean, as Zuingli, Kuinöl, Wahl, Meyer, and Arnoldi suppose, *the abominable desolation* (*die schensliche Verwüstung*). Baumgarten-Crusius, running on the same line of thought with the critics mentioned, says that the word *abomination* is 'the mere predicate of the desolation.' But such an idea is the inversion of the actual state of the case. The chief notion is not found in the word *desolation*, but in the word *abomination*. And, so far indeed as the Hebrew expression in Dan. xi. 31 and xii. 11 is concerned, *the desolating abomination* would be much nearer the real idea intended than the inverse phrase *the abominable desolation*. Gilbert Wakefield renders the expression before us *that destructive abomination*. Beza too, long before him, had rendered it *that devastating abomination*. Prin. Campbell renders it *the desolating abomination*. So Whedon. Not quite correctly however. The genitive in the Greek expression is simply 'possessive.' It denotes *pertaining to*; so that the whole expression means *the abomination pertaining to the desolation*. It is assumed that there is *desolation* or *devastation*. It is assumed, in the Hebrew phraseology of Dan. ix. 27, that there is, in connection with the desolation, and as its author, a *desolator* or *devastator*. And *the abomination* spoken of is something that may be viewed as pertaining equally to the person and to his work. What then is it? In putting such a question, we pass on to the objective reference of the phrase.

Chrysostom thought that it was the statue of Titus, which he says was placed within the temple. Theophylact and Euthymius Zigabenus follow him in his notion. But there is no evidence that any such statue was really erected. The fact has doubtless been merely imagined. Jerome thought that the reference *might be* to the equestrian statue of Hadrian, which at a subsequent period was really erected on the site of the temple. It remained there to Jerome's own day. But such an *abomination* was far too late in time to fit into the imminent reference of our Saviour. It belonged to the second century of the Christian era, when Jerusalem was turned into a Roman colony under the name of *Ælia Capitolina*. The opinion however to which Jerome gave preference is that the *abomination* spoken of is *the Antichrist* who is described in 2 Thess. ii. 4. Tregelles's view substantially accords. But on this supposition the whole prediction is, with the utmost improbability, lifted centuries beyond that destruction of Jerusalem which was to be witnessed within the

chronological limits of the 'generation' then existing. (See ver. 34.) Zuingli supposed that the reference of the expression is simply to the fact of desolation or devastation, not to any of its accompanying characteristics (*so ir sähen wärend das es also grusamlich umb den tempel staat*). But he misunderstood the import of the expression as an expression. Melancthon, stumbling on a mystical view of interpretation, supposed that the reference is to the idolatry of the papacy. Louis Cappel, in the spirit of a far more rational exegesis, supposed that the reference is to the dreadful pollutions perpetrated in the temple by the Zealots during the internecine feuds which preceded the taking of the city by Titus. These Zealots, as we learn from Josephus, took possession of the temple, and used it as their citadel in their battles or frays with the rest of the citizens. Again and again, when they were attacked by the citizens, multitudes were slain within the sacred precincts. See the graphic but harrowing narrative of their proceedings in the fourth book of Josephus's *Wars*. The Zealots are there spoken of as "filling the house of God with abominations." (iv. 3: 10.) "They had seized upon the strongest place of the whole city. You may still call it the temple if you please; but it is now like a citadel or fortress." (iv. 3: 10.) "They walk about in the midst of the holy places, at the very time when their hands are still warm with the blood of their own countrymen." (iv. 3: 10.) "They are robbers who, by their prodigious wickedness, have profaned this most sacred floor, and who are to be now seen drinking themselves drunk in the sanctuary, and expending the spoils of those whom they have slaughtered upon their insatiable lusts." (iv. 4: 3.) "This place, which is adored by the whole world, and honoured to the ends of the earth by such as only know of it by report, is trampled upon by these wild beasts born among ourselves." (iv. 4: 3.) "And now the outer temple was all of it overflowed with blood; and that day, as it came on, saw eight thousand five hundred dead bodies there." (iv. 5: 1.) "There was a certain ancient oracle concerning these men (the Zealots), that the city should then be taken, and the sanctuary burnt in war, when a sedition should break out among the people, and their own hands should pollute the temple of God. Now while the Zealots did not disbelieve these predictions, they yet made themselves the unwitting instruments of their accomplishment." (iv. 6: 3.) "They seized upon the inner court of the temple, and laid their arms upon the holy gates, and over the holy fronts of that court." (v. 1: 1.) "The temple was defiled everywhere with murders." (v. 1: 1.) It is evident that the doings of these Zealots were great and lamentable pollutions within the holy place. In many respects they were *abominable*. Hence Elsner takes the same view of the reference as Louis Cappel took. Bleek too, and Hug; Olearius also to a large extent, though not altogether, and Surenhusius to the same extent. (*Biblos Katallages*, pp. 273-6.) Bishop Wordsworth also; and Alford likewise; and also, apparently, Stier. Improbably, nevertheless: for, however impolitic, immoral, polluting, and frightfully fanatical the conduct of the Zealots was, there was nothing of the nature of outward idolatry in it. But the word rendered *abomination* in Daniel has a most emphatic connection with idolatry. It is, as used in the plural, translated *abominable idols* in 2 Chron. xv. 8. And frequently elsewhere it is used, both in the singular and in the plural, to denote an idol or idols. Hence we read of "the *abomination* of the Ammonites," "the *abomination* of Moab," "the *abomination* of the Zidonians," meaning the idols of these peoples. (1 Kings xi. 5, 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 13. See also Jer. iv. 1, vii. 30, xiii. 27, xvi. 18, xxxii. 34; Ezek. v. 11, vii. 20, xi. 18; etc.) In Zech. ix. 7, again,

the term is used to denote *meats offered to idols*. We have no doubt therefore that Grotius was right when he interpreted Daniel's expression as having reference to the *idolrous ensigns of the Romans*. Such of these ensigns as bore the image of Cæsar were at once special objects of idolrous honours among the Roman soldiers on the one hand (see Stonard's *Dissertation on the Weeks of Daniel*, pp. 460, 461), and especially obnoxious, on the other, to the Jews. (See *Suidas*, sub voce βδελυγμα.) This is strikingly illustrated by what is recorded in the eighteenth book of Josephus's *Antiquities* (3: 1). "Pilate the procurator, in removing certain troops from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, to winter there, introduced ensigns with *Cæsar's effigy* upon them. The introduction into Jerusalem of such images was the deepest possible dishonour to the Jewish law, which strictly forbids us the making of images. On this account the former procurators were wont to make their entry into the city with such ensigns as were free from the obnoxious ornament. Pilate was the first who attempted to trample under foot the religious feelings of the people in this matter. The standards were introduced in the night time. But as soon as the citizens knew it they sent a numerous deputation to Cæsarea, to intercede with the procurator, that he might remove the images. He refused to grant their request, under the plea that it would be dishonouring to Cæsar. But they persevered, day after day, in their importunity. So on the sixth day, having got impatient, he secretly arranged that a company of soldiers should be in readiness, while he came and took his place on the judgement seat. The seat was so set as to conceal the soldiery that were in waiting. When the Jews then again presented themselves, and urged their petition, he gave a signal to the soldiers to encompass them, and threatened them with immediate death unless they should abandon their suit and return home. But they threw themselves on the ground, and laid bare their necks, alleging that they would willingly submit to death rather than give their consent that their laws should be transgressed; upon which Pilate was so deeply affected with their devotion to the maintenance of their laws, that he forthwith gave orders that the images should be carried back from Jerusalem to Cæsarea." These images then were emphatically an *abomination* to the Jews; and being the ensign images of the devastating Romans, they were *the abomination of the devastation*, that devastation which was brought upon Jerusalem and Judæa by the Romans. Few expositors have seized with such precision as Grotius the import of the expression. Principal Campbell has, however, and Lange too. John Wesley also. Many, misled partially by the notion that what is said in Luke xxi. 20 is absolutely parallel, have contented themselves with vaguely supposing that it was *the Roman army* that was *the abomination of the desolation*. Such is Bengel's interpretation, and Wetstein's, Stock's, Whitby's, Michaelis's, Heumann's, Rosenmüller's, Dr. Adam Clarke's, Kuinöl's, De Wette's, Whedon's. But it loses sight of the peculiarity of the word *abomination*; and it is connected too with an erroneous conception of the import of the expression "the holy place," where the abomination is said to stand. When we get to the true conception of the reference of the expression, then the entire peculiarity of the phraseology is accounted for; as also the peculiarity of the Hebrew expression in Daniel ix. 27, *upon the wing (shall be) the abominations of the desolator*. The standards may either be regarded collectively as *one abomination*, or distributively as *abominations*. They belonged to the *desolator*, that is, to the Romans *conceived collectively*; and they pertained therefore to the *desolation* or *desolations* which resulted from the

(whoso readeth, let him understand) : 16 then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains. 17 Let him which is on

hostile campaign which the Roman army was engaged in prosecuting. **Standing in the holy place :** That is, in the temple, which was emphatically the *holy place*. There is no probability that the phrase was intended to have a wider reference to the city in general, or to the environs of the city, or, more indefinitely still, to the whole land. The probability is still less that it was intended to refer, as Bengel supposed, to the *mount of Olives* in particular. But when was the *abomination of the desolation*, when were the *abomination standards*, set up in the temple? Josephus informs us explicitly. It was toward the close of the siege, and after Titus had given orders to set fire to the temple gates. Soon thereafter, and contrary to the desire of Titus, a flaming projectile was thrown into the temple proper, and the entire magnificent pile, the architectural glory of the world, was wrapped in flames and destroyed. The Zealots had then to leave the spot they had so foully polluted, and to retire into the city. "And now," says Josephus, "the Romans upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple (*κομίσαντες τὰς σημάτας εἰς τὸ ἱερόν*), and set them over against its eastern gate; and there they offered sacrifices to them, and with the loudest acclamations declared Titus to be emperor." (*Wars*, vi. 6 : 1.) This was, with a witness, the *abomination of the desolation standing in the holy place*, and expressly receiving abominably idolatrous honours. The siege operations thenceforward proceeded rapidly to their consummation. **Whoso readeth, let him understand :** Or, as Sir John Cheke renders it, *let him that readeth marke it*. The word rendered *mark* by Sir John, and *understand* in our version (*νοεῖτω*), is rendered *consider* in 2 Tim. ii. 7, a good translation for this passage. The Saviour incites the reader of Daniel's prophecies to apply his mind (his *vois*) to the special portion to which He has made reference. It was of the highest Messianic significance; and those Jews who supposed that the prediction was fulfilled in the history of Antiochus Epiphanes, and who hence imagined that the *abomination of desolation* was the heathen altar which that tyrant had caused to be built upon the summit of the great altar of burnt offering (see 1 Macc. i. 54, 59; vi. 7), had taken a too superficial view. There is no reason for doubting that this parenthetical injunction was spoken by our Lord Himself. It is entirely arbitrary on the part of Bengel, Principal Campbell, Olshausen, Meyer, De Wette, Alford, and some others, to suppose that it was a note of warning thrown in by the evangelist, for the benefit of such as might need to take the advice contained in the next verse. The fact that it is found in Mark's narrative too (xiii. 14) confirms the conclusion that it is not Matthew's remark, but our Lord's. Indeed, it is really but the echo of the special injunction that was given by Gabriel to Daniel himself in reference to the prophecy. See Dan. ix. 23, "therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision."

VER. 16. Then let those in Judæa flee to the mountains : Or, *take refuge upon the mountains*. All will be over with the city in a very short time. The temple being carried, the rest of the city will speedily be taken, and the massacre will be terrific. This will not only be the case in Jerusalem, but throughout all Judæa. *In whatever part of the surrounding country any of My disciples may be, let them take warning, and flee to the fastnesses in the mountainous regions. If they have lingered on in the neighbourhood, looking wistfully at the*

the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house. 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

progress of events, even after they have seen Jerusalem compassed with armies (Luke xxi. 20), let them linger not a single hour longer, but with the utmost speed betake themselves to the natural fortresses of the mountains. Here begins the practical inference from what had been stated in vers. 4-14. And now the force and propriety of the Saviour's *therefore*, or logical *then*, in ver. 15 may be seen. It is as if He had said, *Do not deceive yourselves. Do not wait on, in the hope that, ere the desolation be complete, I shall appear and rescue the city and the remnant of the people. Buoy not up your hearts with such an expectation. There is much, very much, to be done ere the end of the age and the fitting time for My ultimate appearing arrive. And therefore, instead of lingering in Judæa, in the vain hope that at the last moment I shall, by a miraculous interposition, sweep away the Roman invaders, see that ye make haste to the mountains. Ye will have lingered already too long, if ye have tarried till the abomination of desolation, closing in from the environing approaches, be actually standing in the holy place.* We learn from Eusebius that before the lines of Titus's circumvallation were drawn around the devoted city, the great body of the Christians who lived in Jerusalem, being thus forewarned by our Lord, escaped to Pella beyond Jordan. (*Hist. Ecclesiast.*, iii. 5.)

VER. 17. **He who is on the housetop:** Viz. in any part of Judæa. See the preceding verse. The reference is not to Jerusalem itself. It would be too late to escape from it. Let him not go down to take anything out of his house: Or, according to the more correct reading of the text ($\tau\acute{\alpha}$ instead of $\tau\acute{\iota}$), *to take the things out of his house.* It is a graphic way of representing a case of great urgency. *Not a moment of time should be lost. Don't delay for anything whatsoever. The moment you get information that the temple is carried, pass along from roof to roof till you get to the gate of the town, and flee for your lives.* (See Winer's *Real-Wörterbuch*, sub voce 'Dach.') "The Christians at Aleppo, in Russell's time, lived contiguous, and made their housetops a means of mutual communication, to avoid passing through the streets in time of plague." (*Smith's Bible Dictionary*, sub voce 'House.')

VER. 18. **And he who is in the field—working or reconnoitring—let him not return back to take his cloak:** "The body," says Trapp, "is better than raiment." *Cloak* is the proper reading ($\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\omicron\nu$), the reading of the manuscripts \aleph B D K L Z II, 1, 33, and many other authorities. It is the reading not only of the Peshito Syriac, but also of the Itala and the Vulgate, and hence Wycliffe translates the verse thus, *and he that is in the feild turne not agen to take his coote.* The reading *clothes* ($\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\alpha$) is the reading of the text that was unquestioningly 'received' at the time that our version was made.

VER. 19. **But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!** Alas for them! There is *weeping* in the *woe*. The Saviour's heart breaks as He thinks of the melancholy condition of tender mothers who are unfit for rapid flight ($\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ $\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$ $\epsilon\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ $\phi\acute{\omicron}\rho\omicron\nu$, EUTH. ZIGABENUS), or whose arms are filled with infants whom they are nursing, and who must thus be carried. Instead of *give suck* Wycliffe has *noryschinge*, that is, *nourishing*.

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day.

Our modern word *nursing* is just a crushed way of pronouncing *nourishing*. The corresponding word in the Anglo-Saxon version is *fedendum*, that is, *feeding*.

VER. 20. But pray ye that your flight be not in winter: A perfectly good translation, but not presenting quite literally the precise aspect of idea which is exhibited in the original. It is not the subject matter of the petition that is directly specified, but the aim of the petitioners. The expression would be literally rendered thus, *But pray ye, in order that (tua) your flight may not be during winter*. The verb translated *pray ye* (*προσεύχεσθε*) is by no means merely equivalent to *ask ye, or request ye*. It is, to a predominant extent, used absolutely to denote the *presentation of prayer as a mode of adoration and worship*. (See Matt. vi. 5, 6, 7, 9, xiv. 23, xxiii. 14, xxvi. 36, 39, 41, 42, 44; Acts x. 9, 30, xi. 5, xii. 12, xiii. 3, etc.) It is as if the Saviour had said, *Neglect not to present yourselves humbly, adoringly, submissively, frequently, at the footstool of the throne of grace, surrendering yourselves to the will of your Father, and invoking His compassion, IN ORDER THAT the high privilege may be conferred upon you, if it should be consistent with the Divine arrangements and all the essentials of the case, of not being subjected to the necessity of flight in the winter season*. It would aggravate exceedingly the inevitable woes of the flight, if the inclemency of winter weather should be added to them (see *The Land and the Book*, p. 222). **Neither on the sabbath day**: Or, more simply and literally, according to the received text, *nor on sabbath*. Many of the continental critics have difficulty in accounting for this reference to the sabbath, when they take into account our Saviour's continued protest, by work and word, against the rigidly pharisaic observance of the day. Was it not too the case, they ask, that with the cessation of judaism or its sublimation into Christianity, the sabbath, as sabbath, was finally abolished? In answering these questions, and in dealing with the entire subject of the sabbath, discrimination is needed. But note, *firstly*, that the Saviour was still within the margin of the old dispensation. Hence, in part, His use of the word 'sabbath.' Note, *secondly*, that He was not anticipating a new state of things in which there would be no sabbatistal day whatever. By no means. It would be very far from desirable, in the present condition of human nature, that our weeks should be without their special day of solemn pause. It would be sad indeed if the world's worry were to go on uninterruptedly, especially amid the competitive forces and consequent 'fastness' of commercial and highly civilized communities. It would be spiritually and morally and even physically disastrous, if, amid the continual stretching and straining and bending toward earth and earth's things, there were no periodical parentheses of seasons, frequently recurring, during which the worldly bow might be unbent, and the thoughts and energies of the man turned systematically upward and heavenward. Our Lord, we may presume, was not oblivious of such things; and hence He freely uses the word *sabbath*, though He would be far indeed from shaping His notion of the word in harmony with the narrow notions of the Pharisees. Then, *thirdly*, He would remember that the institution of the sabbath is hedged round and round, not only in spirit, but even in letter, by the peculiar position which the statute appointing it occupies in the innermost list and moral summary of the whole body of Jewish statutes,

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

the decalogue. The rest of the statutes of the decalogue hold good for all dispensations. And why not this too, in its spirit at least? Our Saviour, as it were, says, *As it would be a sad outward aggravation of the inevitable calamity, if the flight of My disciples should require to take place amid the severities of winter, so it would be a peculiar inward aggravation if they should require to flee on a day which they devote to rest and special spiritual solemnities, and on which therefore they calculate as furnishing them with moral might to meet their trials heroically. Let them then assiduously lift up their desires on the whole subject to their Heavenly Father, in prayer.*

VER. 21. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world till this time, no, nor ever shall be: The *for* introduces a reason, not exclusively for what is said in the immediately preceding verse, but generically for what is said in verses 16-20. It is as if the Saviour had expressed Himself thus, *I may well give utterance to My feelings in such urgent advices, and deep-drawn wailings* (see ver. 19), *for* —. The word *then* refers to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The tribulations which would then be poured into the cup of the Jewish people would be of the bitterest possible description. The language is much stronger than what is found in Dan. xii. 1. It is superlative in its relation both to the past and to the future. We might explain this superlative mode of representation by the freedom which is universally assumed and accorded in popular speech. Men speak unhesitatingly, when referring to anything remarkable, of the 'highest,' the 'greatest,' the 'extreme,' the 'extremest.' It is an idiom of hyperbolism. But what if the Lord was not availing Himself, at this time, of any of the conventional hyperbolisms of human language? *Not improbably there really never was, and never will be, such extreme tribulation endured in any city, or by any people, as was endured in Jerusalem and by the Jews at the time referred to.* Josephus thought so. "Of all the cities," says he, "which came under the Roman sway, Jerusalem arrived at a higher degree of felicity than any other; and then it fell into a lower depth of calamity. It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, are not to be compared with those of the Jews." (*Preface to Wars*, § 4.) "In one word, and to speak in brief the whole truth, never did any other city endure such tribulations (*τοιαῦτα πεπονθέναι*); and never from the beginning of time was any generation more prolific of evil." (*Wars*, v. 10: 5.) There were obvious circumstances which aggravated, to an extraordinary degree, the sufferings of the Jews, circumstances which never met in confluence before, and which in all probability can never concur again. Not only were there all the sorrows consequent on a protracted siege, with famine and pestilence raging within. There were, in addition, constant internecine feuds and fightings, and wholesale and retail murdering. Tens of thousands fell fratricidally within the walls. The 'Zealots' created and maintained a 'reign of terror' akin to that of the French Revolution, only more dreadful, and, considering the available scope and compass, more bloody. These Zealots established themselves moreover in the temple as their fortress, and made their sallies thence against the other citizens, thus wounding, by their wanton desecration of the holy place, the feelings of the great body of the people, in the tenderest spot imaginable, and in the most cruel manner conceivable. And then too the people, all the time,

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

looked upon themselves as the only people of God, His one national 'son' and darling. They regarded their city as not only pre-eminently but exclusively 'the city of God, and their temple as the one terrestrial house of God, the home of all true religion, and the moral heart of the whole world. Throw into the midst of such convictions and associations the fiery flying arrow, *Why then all these woes?* and the anguish that must have resulted from the collision of what was within and of what was without may be imagined. Then too the city was choke full of Jews from all parts of the country and the world, who had come up to celebrate the passover. The crowding increased the famine, and gave scope for intensifying every kind of evil, moral and physical. Myriads of dead and murdered bodies had to be thrown over the walls. Thousands more were wantonly tossed over the temple walls by the 'Zealots.' Think not merely of the pestilential effluvia thence arising, but of the agonies of feeling inflicted on families and individuals. And then, over and above all these elements of woe, multitudes lived from day to day in the hourly expectation that, in some sudden and miraculous way, the Lord would appear for their rescue. Oh the anguish of finding this hope indefinitely deferred! Oh the tenfold anguish of the revulsion, when the hope had to give place at length to despair! It is not improbable then that, when all things are taken into account, there never was before, and that there never will be again, such extraordinary tribulation. The expression, however, which is rendered in our version *no, nor ever shall be* (οὐδ' οὐ μὴ γένηται), is a peculiar idiom, which cannot be reproduced in our language, and which indeed can with difficulty be represented in its nicety. It is a strong assertion of non-occurrence in the future. But there is, in its peculiarity, a lingering thought to the following effect, *no, nor (is there fear) lest there should be.*

VER. 22. And except those days were shortened: *Those days* of tribulation connected with the siege and storming of Jerusalem. *Shortened*, brought more speedily to a termination than might have been expected. Instead of *shortened* Wycliffe has the corresponding word *breggid*, that is *abridged*. Fritzsche strangely supposes, as if he had been in quest of the grotesque, that the abridging referred to is not in the number of the days, but in their diurnal length. There should be no flesh saved: Or, *Nobody should be saved*, that is, *nobody in the sphere referred to*, the sphere of Jerusalem and the Jews. "By *no flesh* here," says Chrysostom, "He means *no Jewish flesh*." (Comp. Luke xxi. 23.) Josephus mentions that there were eleven hundred thousand who perished in connection with the siege; and he computes that ninety-seven thousand were carried into captivity. (*Wars*, vi. 9: 3.) Although his estimate should have been unwittingly exaggerated to a large degree, yet we may rest assured that the destruction of life was, comparatively speaking, enormous. If the siege had been protracted to a much greater length, and if consequently the vengeful feelings of the besiegers in general, and of Titus and his father Vespasian in particular, had been intensified and inflamed, there would probably have been an utter extinction of the Jewish people. The Romans at the time had it in their power, 'humanly speaking,' to have swept the whole race clean away. But for the elect's sake: For the sake of the Christian

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ !

element in the population, the Christians who then were, and the Christians who, as God foresaw, were yet and are yet to be (see Rom. xi. 12-29). These Christians were the *elect* of the Jewish people. They were *chosen or picked out* from among all the rest to enjoy the peculiar blessings, and to discharge the peculiar duties, of the true Israel of God, the true kingdom of heaven. But the Romans were not capable, in their peculiar circumstances, of distinguishing nicely, if at all, between them and the rest of the Jews. Still less were they capable of foreseeing the future blessings which would be showered far and wide over mankind, in connection with the ultimate conversion to Christianity of "the remnant of the people." And hence, if their animosity and hatred had been stirred to the depth, so that they should have resolved to sweep out of existence the whole community of the Jews, the Jewish Christians would inevitably have been involved in the war of extirpation. There would thus have been no provision left for the future "grafting in again" of the Jewish element into that glorious theocratic tree, whose branches are to overshadow the earth. If such had been the case, the loss to the world would have been irreparable. Those days shall be shortened: Viz. by a gracious overruling of the Divine hand, though in the midst of a marvellous tanglement of human schemes and sins. Many events, thus graciously overruled, contributed to the shortening of the days of tribulation. Vespasian's attention, after he had been for some time engaged in the war, was, in consequence of the unpopularity and degrading vices of the emperor Vitellius, turned toward the throne in Rome. His interests were thus more than divided. Revolts and inroads moreover, elsewhere, and particularly in the north of Europe, made it desirable not to expend extremely protracted efforts upon the prosecution of the Jewish war. Then Vespasian's son, Titus, to whom in the end the Jewish campaign was intrusted by his father, was of a generous disposition. Josephus besides, the Jewish historian, was a favourite both with him and with his father, and had much influence in mollifying their exasperated feelings. Bernice moreover, the sister of Agrippa, was beloved by Titus, and had a great control over his feelings. And then also Titus was desirous of prosecuting the campaign with speed, that he might accompany his father to Rome and share in the triumphal entry and the consequent festivities. In the infatuated dissensions moreover of the Jews themselves there was a penal element of things that was Divinely wielded, in an overruling way, for the merciful shortening of the siege. In these, and, as we need not doubt, in many other ways, would it be open to the Divine Will to put forth the Divine Hand, in order to shorten graciously the days of tribulation.

VER. 23. Then: That is, *Thereafter*. The word looks indefinitely forward from the period of the destruction of Jerusalem. If any one shall say to you, Lo, here is the Christ! or here! believe not: Or, as Wycliffe gives it, *nil ye believe*, that is, *refuse to believe*. The Saviour, at the commencement of His remarks (vers. 4 and 5), had warned His disciples against giving credence to any one who should say "I am Christ"; and, having applied His lesson to the specific time preceding the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, He now casts His eye indefinitely forward and repeats the warning. *It would be ruinous to you, I say it again, to give heed to any such rumours or professions or assumptions. It matters not although they may come before, or at, or after the destruction of that beautiful temple that towers so majestically before us, and that highly*

or there! believe *it* not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert! go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers! believe *it* not.

favoured city of which it is the conspicuous ornament. Come when they may, come from what quarter they may, give no credit to the pretensions. See ver. 27.

VER. 24. For there shall arise—in the time thenceforward—false Christs: Hypocritical or fanatical pretenders to the Messiahship. And false prophets: Professing to be commissioned to herald the immediate advent of the Christ. And shall exhibit great signs and prodigies: Lying wonders; for there are many mysterious regions of things, in which there is scope for very marvellous phenomena, that may prove inexplicable to multitudes of minds. These marvellous phenomena may be regarded by the superstitious, or the ignorant and the unwary, as seals of the Divine approbation or even of a Divine commission. Witness, for instance, many wizard feats. Witness, too, many wonderful instances of instantaneous cure. Witness, also, marvels of clairvoyance and prevision and mind-reading, and other phases of spiritism or ‘spiritualism.’ So as to deceive, if possible, the very elect. It is as if the Saviour said, *Even My true disciples will, in some cases, be apt to be led astray, and give credit to such pretenders or fanatics. But if they be true indeed to Me, and continue true, they will be rescued from the snare.* It is certain that the elect will never, as a body, be deceived. So much we may infer with confidence from the Saviour’s expression, *if possible.* But it is not quite so certain that the Saviour intended to intimate that in no case whatever would individual Christians be largely imposed upon.

VER. 25. Behold, I have told you before: Or, *Lo I have forewarned you.* And he who is forewarned should be forearmed.

VER. 26. If then they should say to you—if people should say to you, if any persons whatever should say to you—*Lo, He is in the desert!*—that is, *Lo the Christ is in the desert!*—go not forth: From the towns where you may be dwelling. *Go not out to the desert to meet Him.* Our Saviour thus re-repeats His warning. *Lo, He is in the secret chambers!* believe it not: He re-re-repeats His warning. The word that is rendered *secret chambers* is translated *closet*, in the singular, in Matt. vi. 6 and Luke xii. 3. It occurs in only one other place in the New Testament, Luke xii. 24, where it is rendered *storehouse*. In ordinary domestic establishments the storehouse would be a *closet*, or *closed chamber*, a place kept private and *secluded*. Sir John Cheke renders the term *closets* in the passage before us. So does the Rheims version. When the Saviour specifies *the desert*, and *the secret chambers*, He does not mean His reference to be exhaustive. It is only representative. It is as if He had said, *If it should ever be said to you, Lo the Christ has appeared! and if you should be positively assured that He is, for instance, in such or such a desert, or in such and such an individual’s house, give no credence to the report. Wherever He may be said to have appeared, give yourselves no concern whatever about it.* It is tacitly assumed, in our Saviour’s representation, that whoever either wilfully acts the part of an impostor in the matter referred to, or is himself fanatically deluded and self imposed upon, will, as a general rule, keep at a distance from public scrutiny.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

It is at once the impostor's policy, and the fanatic's instinct, to deny facilities for full and impartial examination. Hence the pretended Christ will probably either betake himself to the desert, or screen himself in some chamber, where there will be comparative difficulty of access and of sifting investigation. The plural expression, *the secret chambers*, is employed, says Fritzsche, to point out *the kind or genus or category of the places where the Christ of enthusiasts might be supposed to be*. It is as if it were said, distributively, *in the private chamber of this man's house, or in the private chamber of that man's dwelling*. Principal Campbell freely renders the expression in the singular, "in the closet."

VER. 27. Here follows the reason why the disciples of our Lord should never pay the least regard to any rumours or reports regarding the second coming of the Son of man. When He does really come, no man will need any other man to say to him *Lo here!* or *Lo there!* For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and flasheth even to the west, so shall be the coming—the presence—of the Son of man: There is no *also after so* in the best manuscriptural authorities. The presence of the Son of man, when He does come in His glory, *will manifest itself at once to all*. This is the Saviour's idea, brought out vividly by His comparison, as far as the imperfections of any possible comparison would permit. He does not, of course, speak of the lightning with any reference to its scientific meteorological nature, or its geographical relations. He does not intend to teach that any flashes really traverse the entire hemisphere of the habitable world. He does not consider the subject from any scientific standpoint at all. He speaks popularly. *Just as you have often seen the lightning flashing vividly and instantaneously from horizon to horizon, and making itself manifest to all within its sphere, even though they be in the interior of their homes; so shall the coming of the Son of man be, when He really does come in His glory. It will be instantaneously apparent to all everywhere who have anything to do with it, that is, to all everywhere within the sphere of this habitable world*. It is not the idea of *suddenness* that is expressed. It is the idea of *universal self manifestation*. (*Fulgur unico ictu totum aërem illustrat: PAULUS DE PALACIO.*) No one will need to say to his neighbour, *Come, and let us go here, or there, that we may see Him!* The word we translate *shineth* (*phaiverai*) properly means *makes itself apparent*. Wycliffe renders it *apperith* (*appearith*); and the same rendering is given in Cranmer's Bible, and the Rheims. Luther gave *shineth*, and Tyndale followed him, and Myles Coverdale. Hence our Authorized version. The word however is translated *appear* in ver. 30.

VER. 28. For: This particle, which has occasioned great perplexity to Elsner, Whedon, and others, as also unconscious difficulty to multitudes more, seems to have been foisted into the text by some early possessor of the *Gospel*. He had, it would appear, imagined, but erroneously, that the statement in the 28th verse was intended to be corroborative or illustrative of the statement in the 27th. Many have had the same idea, such as Lightfoot and Macknight. Even Meyer, while rejecting the particle, has the same idea of the relation of the two verses. But the particle is undoubtedly spurious. It is wanting in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts (Σ B D), as also in L, 1, 33, "the queen of the cursives," and 102. It is wanting too in the Italic, Vulgate,

28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Sahidic, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions. It is omitted also by Hippolytus, Origen, Cyprian, Hilary. In the Syriac Peshito a conjunction is used that is quite different, and equivalent to *but*. Lachmann omitted the particle from the text. So has Tregelles. Tischendorf too in his eighth edition. Alford also, and Westcott-and-Hort. And when once the inner texture of the Saviour's discourse is clearly discerned there is the strongest corroborative evidence of its spuriousness. Wheresoever the carcase may be, there will the eagles be gathered together: Under the term *eagles* the ancients, and especially the common people, often included various kinds of birds, such as vultures in particular. They thus used the term, in a kind of generic sense, to denote *birds of the order of 'raptors.'* No doubt it is vultures that are here referred to, as the eagle does not feed on carrion, but on fresh or living flesh. It is otherwise with vultures, or *vulturine eagles* as Trapp calls them, and in particular with the *vultur percnopterus*, the *carrion kite*. In general, the birds belonging to the vulture genus are of a cowardly nature. "They are" too, says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "a hideous looking bird." (*Land and Book*, p. 316.) "Their geographical distribution is confined chiefly to warm countries, where they act as scavengers "to purify the earth from the putrid carcasses with which it would otherwise "be encumbered." (*Ogilvie's Imperial Dictionary*, sub voce.) Mr. Tristram, describing the wady Kelt, near the scene of the parable of the good Samaritan, says of the ravine: "We gaze down, and see the ravens, eagles, and griffon "vultures sailing beneath us. These are now the sole inhabitants of the caves, "the monarchs of the waste, or, more strictly perhaps, the board of sanitary "commissioners, a business which would be ill executed in this region, were it "not for the beneficent natural provision of the vulture, the raven, and other "birds of prey." (*The Land of Israel*, chap. ix., p. 202.) Wherever in that region the carcase may be, the members of "the native board of sanitary commissioners" will snuff it afar, and soon be on the wing for it. No fear of it being overlooked. It will speedily be pounced upon, and torn to pieces with rivalry of eagerness. Such is the natural history aspect of the parabolic case. But what is the interpretation of the parable? Many different views have been taken, some of them fanciful enough. Chrysostom, without specifying what he understood by the *carcase*, says that the *eagles* denote "angels, martyrs, and saints." It is evident that he had imagined that Christ referred to Himself as He shall be in His second advent, under the similitude of the *carcase*. Jerome takes substantially the same view, though on a somewhat lower plane. The word *carcase* refers, he says, to the death of the Saviour. The eagles are believers. Euthymius Zigabenus flies, without any soaring, in the same direction. Christ, he says, represents Himself as the *carcase*, "gathering toward itself the eagles, and affording them their spiritual food and eternal life." Theophylact rises higher in his flight, and does soar, but thereby loses the significancy of the *carcase*. He supposes the reference to be to the rising of the saints into the air to meet the Lord. "They shall be rapt up into the clouds like eagles." Calvin's notion corresponds in the main with that of Euthymius Zigabenus, only he gives prominence to the collecting of the eagles into a kind of congregational unity. "In my opinion Christ intended to argue "from the less to the greater. If there be so great sagacity in birds, that many "gather together from distant places to one carcase, it would be shameful if be-

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the

"lievers were not to flock together to the Author of life, by whom alone they are truly fed." "Here then is a method prescribed for the maintenance of a holy unity, and the avoidance of those distractions of errors which tear in pieces the body of the church, namely, that we abide fixed down in Christ (*in Christo defixi*)." All these are painful interpretations. It revolts the heart to think of comparing Christ to *carrion*, and believers to *vultures* scenting from afar their ill odoured prey, clustering with rivalry together, and 'fixing down' their beaks in the corruption. We wonder that Calvin did not note the incongruity of surrendering the *body of Christ* to be 'torn to pieces,' that the *body of the church* might, while thus occupied with the common prey, be preserved from a similar fate. Yet the same view, in the main features, is taken of the passage by Le Fèvre, Erasmus, Münster, Zuingli, Bucer, Beza, Paulus de Palacio, Jansen, Doddridge, Fritzsche, Wordsworth. "The sacrificed body of Christ," saith Pemble, "hath a most fragrant smell, inviting the saints, like birds of prey, to flie from afar." (See Trapp, in loc.) We do not wonder that Grotius expressed surprise that reverence for Christ had not laid an interdict on such an interpretation. Lightfoot also says, "I wonder any can understand these words of pious men flying to Christ, when the discourse here is quite of a different thing." Whitty's explanation goes in a direction entirely different, and is free from moral and æsthetic offensiveness. "Wherever the carcass is (i.e. *the Jews are*), there will the eagles (*the Roman armies, whose ensign is the eagle*) be gathered together." It was also Lightfoot's interpretation, and Hammond's, Richard Baxter's, Le Clerc's, Wolf's, Wells's, Wetstein's, Wesley's, Henmann's, Macknight's, Adam Clarke's. Löder too defends it in his *Dissertation* on the subject. But it proceeds on the assumption that the preceding verse refers to Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem by the agency of the Romans, an assumption which derives no confirmation from the historical facts connected with the gradual approach of the Romans, and which otherwise introduces inextricable confusion into the interpretation of the chapter. We believe that the Saviour was looking in another direction altogether, and over a far wider sphere. It is as if He had spoken thus: *Do not then suffer your minds to be agitated or distracted when ye hear that the Christ has appeared here, or there, or anywhere. Give no heed to such rumours. Every one of them, ye may rest assured, is founded on delusion. Lo, I have forewarned you. When I really do come in My surpassing glory, My coming will manifest and verify itself, without the help of human heralds. But as I look forward toward the time of My appearing, what melancholy prospects open up to My view, all round and round, onward and still onward. Not Jerusalem only is as carrion for the crows. Not the Jews only are rotten to the core and ripe for dissolution. As the curtain of the future rolls up before My inward eye, I see the vultures of Divine vengeance flying in flocks athwart the whole area of the earth! Lo they swoop down here! They swoop down there! The sky is darkened with their numbers! Far as My eye can reach, I still see them! Alas for the habitable earth, My Father's goodly world, so fit to be the abode of purity and love! It is rank everywhere with corruption! Death is rotting instead of life! But wheresoever the carcass is, there the vultures will gather together! Judgement must get its Divine commission; and where the 'wind' of vanity and wickedness has been persistently chosen and sown, the penal 'whirlwinds' of heaven must be let loose to do their work.*

VER. 29. But immediately after the tribulation of those days: This word

sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens

immediately has been a perfect rack of torture to such expositors as have lost their way in the interpretation of the chapter. "I am not so blear-eyed," says Paulus de Palacio, "as not to see the difficulty." Olearius and Schott would interpret it as meaning *suddenly*, connecting it with the verbs which follow. But the word does not mean *suddenly*; and there is no need for hunting out abstrusities of connection and import. The whole difficulty arises from assuming that *the tribulation of those days* has reference to the tribulation that was to be experienced in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem. (See vers. 16-21.) There is not however the slightest necessity for making such an assumption. There is every reason indeed for rejecting it, as Calvin did. He says, "Some interpreters commit the great mistake of referring *the tribulation of those days* to the destruction of Jerusalem." (*Perperam de Hierosolyma excidio accipiunt.*) This great mistake is founded on an unwarrantably narrow view of the Saviour's aim in His discourse in general, and on an inappropriately microscopic way of peering toward telescopic objects. Those objects would be necessarily dim to the disciples' minds, not only in consequence of their absolute distance in time, but also in consequence of their relative distance from the immature conceptions and anticipations which they had formed. The Saviour however had gone forward, in His "second seeing," from the scenes connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. (See vers. 23-28; and comp. vers. 4-14.) And, in the expression *the tribulation of those days*, He seems to refer to the scenes that were lying open to His view when He spoke of the vultures of Divine vengeance gathering together *wheresoever* the moral carcase was to be found. He was looking forward, in short, "until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled." (See Luke xxi. 24.) It is as if He had said, *Ah, these are dreadful scenes that stand unveiled to My view.* (Comp. Ps. ii. 9; cx. 5, 6.) *They rehearse the scenes that will so soon be enacted on this corrupt city of Jerusalem, and this infatuated people of the Jews. But there will be at length,—oh how desirable!—an end to them all. The evil age, as I see it in the future, hastens to its close. And immediately after the dreadful tribulation that will tear to pieces the corrupted nations, who persist in rejecting My gospel, the great cosmical preparation for the new age, the new state of things, will proceed.* Our Lord then goes on to give such a picture of the cosmical changes as was suitable to the minds of His disciples. The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light, and the stars shall fall out of the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: The language was grandly graphic for the age; but it is not, of course, to be regarded as presenting a scientific representation of occurrences. It was finely popular and poetic, and would thus speak powerfully home to the imagination and the heart. It would be a ridiculous mistake to seek to introduce into its interpretation the principles of Newton's Principia. We might as reasonably seek to interpret Euclid by Homer, or Homer by Euclid. It would be absurd. There can be no mathematical explanation of poetical imagery. There can be no poetical solution of geometrical problems. Lightfoot understood that the language was to be interpreted on the principle of imagery; but he mistook its application, when he referred it to the mere dissolution of judaism. He explains it thus: "The Jewish heaven shall perish, and the sun "and moon of its glory and happiness shall be darkened, and brought to "nothing. The sun is the religion of the church; the moon is the government

shall be shaken : 30 and then shall appear the sign of the Son

“ of the state ; and the stars are the judges and doctors of both.” (*Exercitationes*, in loc.) Warburton (*Divine Legation*, book iv., § 4) and Bishop Newton (*Prophecies*, chap. xx.) agree in their interpretation with Lightfoot. But Dorner takes a long step in advance of them, when he applies the imagery to the destruction of heathenism, with all its deifications of nature, and superstitious assumptions of astral influences. (*Orat. Eschatolog.*, pp. 64-67.) Yet even this interpretation is too artificial and contracted. Our Saviour's thoughts were, for the time being, expatiating in a plane of things not only outside the circle of judaism, ecclesiastically and politically considered, but also outside the circle of paganism, politically and ecclesiastically considered. He is ranging freely within a wider circumference. As He looks forward to the end of the age He sees that the vultures of vengeance were not only about to pounce upon judaism, which was already more than morally moribund, but that they were also, keen of scent, about to wing their way to all surrounding paganism, and thenceforward also to all the communities of the world, even to those that had assumed the name of Christian, but had failed to imbibe and assimilate the character of Christ. The dread work of social retribution goes steadily on. The Saviour traces it. At length the end is being neared. It is the midnight of the world. Creation is travelling as in birth. (Rom. viii. 22.) The hour has come. The ‘regeneration’ of the earth is at hand. (Matt. xix. 28.) There will be ere long a *new creation*, and ‘the morning stars’ shall again ‘sing together,’ and ‘the sons of God shall shout for joy.’ Pause but a little, and lo, *the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.* (2 Pet. iii. 13.) IT IS THE PRELUDE OF THIS GREAT COSMICAL CHANGE WHICH IS SO GRANDLY DESCRIBED IN THE WORDS BEFORE US. The expression *the powers of the heavens*, that is, *of the physical heavens*, has probably reference to those spiritual hierarchies, or ‘spiritual wickednesses in high places,’ which, having an intimate connection with ‘the Prince of the power of the air,’ exert, to a greater or less extent, a maleficent influence over the earth as the home of men, and over men as living at home upon it. (Eph. vi. 12, ii. 2; Col. ii. 15. Comp. Matt. iv. 1, viii. 28, xiii. 39.) These powers shall be *shaken* at the time when the new heavens and new earth are about to emerge, and by-and-by they shall be removed altogether and for ever. (See Heb. xii. 26, 27; Rev. xx.)

Vers. 30. And then : Close upon the woes of nations, and the throes of nature, referred to in the two preceding verses. Shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven : We are not told what this sign shall be ; and we must not be positive in conjecturing. Many have supposed that it will be a *visible cross*. The fathers in general took this view, and it is espoused by Alford. It is ingeniously defended by Pfeiffer and Klem in their united *Dissertation* on the subject. “It is most probable,” says Olshausen again, “that a *star* is meant (in allusion to Num. xxiv. 17).” “The sign,” says Hombergk, “is just *Christ Himself*.” Dresigius thinks, on the other hand, that it is *the rising of the dead*. (*De verbis mediis*, pp. 489-492.) We need not specify other fanciful conjectures. Were we to form a definite opinion on the subject, it would come nearer to the view of Hombergk than to any of the others we have specified : only we would by no means regard Christ as being precisely His own sign. Neither would we, with Storr (*Opuscul.*, iii., p. 36), interpret the phrase *the sign of the Son of man* as meaning *the sign which consists of the Son of man*, as if the expression *the Son*

of man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and

of man were in the genitive of apposition. Christ will not appear, we may presume, in a detached and uncircumstanced manner. He will be gloriously attended. (See the last clause of the verse. See also Matt. xxv. 31, xxvi. 64; Dan. vii. 9-14.) There will too be radiating from Him an ineffable effulgence, such as was partially witnessed on the mount of transfiguration. (See chap. xvii. 2.) The forerunners, or the first streamers and gleams, the lightnings as it were, of this effulgence may be the *sign* or *signal* of the actual appearing of His person. They will be the outriders of His presence, the evidencing 'epiphany' and 'brightness of His coming.' (2 Thess. ii. 8.) So Burger. And then : At the first unmistakable evidence that the Son of man is about to burst upon their view. Shall all the tribes of the earth mourn : The word *mourn* does not sufficiently express the instant dismay of the unbelieving, impenitent, and unprepared masses of men. The idea is, *they shall strike (upon their breasts)*. The word is rendered *weyle* (wail) by Wycliffe, and *bewail* in the Rheims version. Our Authorized translators have rendered it *wail* in Rev. i. 7; and *bewail* in Luke viii. 52, xxiii. 27, Rev. xviii. 9. By the *tribes* or *clans of the earth*, or, as it is in the Old Testament, *the families of the earth* (Gen. xii. 3, xxviii. 14), we are not to understand, with Whiston, *the tribes of the land*, or with Bishop Newton, "all the Jewish tribes," but evidently *the peoples of the earth*. Tyndale's rendering is *kindreds*. So is Wycliffe's (*kynredis*; for peoples, tribes, or nationalities, are communities of such as are *kin to one another*). And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory : Before they see Him, and while as yet they have only perceived the unmistakable *sign of His coming*, they shall lift up a sudden scream that will pierce the welkin. But in a moment they shall behold Himself. "Every eye shall see Him" (Rev. i. 7). *In the clouds* : See Dan. vii. 13. In the original it is *on the clouds*; seated as it were on them, or having them underneath Him. In Whiston's translation it is given literally, *upon the clouds*. He shall come *with power and great glory* : His whole aspect, and the pomp of His surroundings, and the hosts of His attendants, will indicate *power*, and constitute *great glory*.

VER. 31. And He shall send forth His angels : His attendant angels, hosts of whom shall be thronging around Him. (Comp. Heb. i. 14.) With a great sound of a trumpet : Or rather, *with a trumpet of a mighty sound*; very literally, *with a trumpet of a great voice*. Sir John Cheke's version is near the mark, *with a loud-sounded trumpet*. Had he said *loud-sounding*, the translation would have been perfect. Dr. Daniel Scott's translation is, *with a trumpet of a loud sound*. So Bengel. In the Sinaitic manuscript and some other authorities the word *sound* is omitted altogether; and if that were the correct reading the adjective *great* would be united with the substantive *trumpet*, and the expression would require to be translated *with a great trumpet*. Tischendorf has received this reading into the text of his eighth edition. Incorrectly, we apprehend. There are other variations in the manuscripts and early versions. The Cambridge manuscript for example (D) reads as follows, *with a trumpet and a great voice*. And this is the reading of the Italic and Vulgate versions. Hence

they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree ; When his branch is

it is put in the margin of our Bible. These however are but trifling variations. Luther freely uses the plural of the word *trumpet*. So does Le Clerc (*avec des trompettes*). But it is better to adhere to the literal representation ; for it is the singular that is employed in 1 Thess. iv. 16 and 1 Cor. xv. 52. It is as if there were but one trumpeter, flitting hither and thither over the earth, while the troops of his angel companions were alighting everywhere to fulfil their errand of love. The mighty sound will awake the dead in Christ. (See 1 Thess. iv. 16, 1 Cor. xv. 52.) But what this mighty trumpet sound will be we need not speculate. (*O Christe, prælium inis!*—PAULUS DE PALACIO.) Assuredly it is not, as Lightfoot supposed, the gospel. In the last analysis it must doubtless resolve itself into such a forthgoing of the almighty energy of God as will unmistakably assert its reality, and arouse, arrest, and command the attention of all whose attention is Divinely desired. **And they shall gather together His elect :** Mark it is "*His elect,*" Christ's own chosen ones. All Christians are Christ's Christians. They are God's Christians too, God's elect. Christ and God are one. Christ does not here bring into view the two classes of His elect, those who are alive as regards the flesh, and those who are dead as regards the flesh. He masses them into one class, as if the peculiar relation to the flesh, whether on the one side or on the other, were a matter of very secondary moment. (See 1 Thess. iv. 15-17, 1 Cor. xv. 50-57.) **From the four winds :** From the four quarters or cardinal points of the earth, north, south, east, and west, from all of which points, in turns, the winds of heaven blow. **From one end of heaven to the other :** Literally, *From (the) extremities of (the) heavens to their extremities ;* or, as we should say, *from horizon to horizon.* Wherever the heaven dips down (to the eye) and touches the earth, there and thence, all round and round, and without missing any spot on the face of the earth, will the angels do their work, and gather the good "to meet the Lord in the air," and to be for ever with Him, joint-heirs with Him of His glory. (See 1 Thess. iv. 17.)

VER. 32. Now: Or rather *But (dê)*. It is as if the Saviour had said, *But to turn to what more immediately concerns you. You questioned Me as to the time when the things threatened concerning Jerusalem would take place.* (See ver. 3 ; comp. Mark xiii. 4, Luke xxi. 7.) *You connected with your question other points in reference to the duration of this age, and My coming to bring the age to a termination. These latter topics relate to futurities which you may not yet be in a position to understand. But I have warned you not to be deceived by rumours of My advent. Take heed to that warning. As regards however your leading question (see Mark xiii. 4, Luke xxi. 7) concerning the things that are to come on Jerusalem, and which will foreshadow much that is to follow, I wish you to have a definite idea.* The Saviour then returns in thought to the things referred to in the 36th and 38th verses of the preceding chapter, as well as in the 2nd verse of the present chapter, and in that part of the query of the disciples in verse 3 which constituted to their mind the chief point of interest. **From the fig tree learn its parable :** It is as if the Saviour had said, *We are sitting in the midst of fig trees and olive trees on this beautiful mount. Let Me draw your attention to a particular lesson which I wish you*

yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things,

to learn from them, a lesson which is a parable, and the very parable you are needing, and which the trees are capable of rendering. Here we may suppose that our Lord caught hold of a spray of an adjoining fig tree, and looked at it in detail. It was the time of spring, when buddings would be in various stages of development according to the differing natures of the different kinds of trees. He proceeds, **When his branch is yet tender:** On the *his*, instead of *its*, see on chap. v. 13. The word *branch* means *branchlet* here, or one of the small twigs, sprigs, or sprays, in which the larger branches of a tree terminate. *Is yet tender:* It is not *is* in the original, nor even *is become*, as Scholefield would render it (*Hints*, in loc.). The Saviour is referring to what would, under certain conditions, by-and-by be. We cannot, with our very limited range of verbal relationships, do justice to the precise shade of idea. It is somewhat to the following effect, *Whenever now its branch shall have become tender.* The word *tender* does not refer to the delicacy or feebleness of the young spray, but to its succulent condition when the process of budding is going on. **And the leaves shall have sprouted out:** Read *ἐκφύῃ*, the second aorist passive, instead of *ἐκφύῃ*. So Erasmus, Bengel, Matthaei, Lachmann, Fritzsche, Wahl, Grimm, Tregelles. Griesbach too thought highly of the reading. Schott in his last edition adopted it. Middleton also, though not understanding the verb thoroughly, construed *the leaves* in the nominative, on the false ground however that the article required that construction. **Ye know that the summer is nigh:** Its outriders have arrived, and it will soon follow in its chariot of flowers and fruits.

VER. 33. So also (*καί*) **ye:** There is an intentional emphasis on the *ye* (*ὕμεις*). It is as if the Saviour had said, *Ye, whatsoever may be the case with others who have not enjoyed the advantage of the teaching which ye have received.* **When ye shall see all these things:** All what things? A question that has proved a stumbling block to multitudes of expositors. In answering it, there may be absolute certainty regarding one point, *The things referred to cannot be all the things which are prophetically specified in the immediately preceding verses on the one hand (ver. 29-31), or in the sum total of the entire preceding context on the other (ver. 5-31).* We cannot suppose that our Saviour said that, when His disciples should see the sun and moon darkened, and the stars falling, and then the sign of the Son of man in the heaven, and then the dismay of all nations, and then the Son of man Himself coming with clouds and great glory, and then the angels sent out with sound of trumpet to the ends of the earth to gather the elect, then, thence and thereafter, they would know that "it is near, even at the doors." We cannot suppose this, for when the future has become past it is sufficiently certain, and needs not particular notification that it will no longer be future. To what then does the expression 'all these things' refer? The probability is that it is the echo and resumption of certain 'things' which had kept afloat on the surface of the minds of the disciples, all through the Saviour's apocalyptic conversation, and which had been the intensely interesting theme of their consideration and inquiry, before He had given utterance to the general prophetic disclosures of the preceding context. They were the 'things' indeed which had given occasion to that apocalypse. And that apocalypse, though peculiarly interesting to us, in this more advanced period of the world's history, for its own sake and for its world-wide referenees, was in all likelihood peculiarly interesting to them, chiefly because of its connection with the

destruction of their temple, and of Jerusalem as a city, and of judaism as an institution. In fact, the grand ulterior disclosures, in our Saviour's little Apocalypse, are, to a large extent, *thrown in* by Him, in the way of warning His disciples not to be deceived by premature announcements, or indeed by announcements of any kind, regarding His personal appearing to terminate the evil age of the world, and to inaugurate the glad and good and golden epoch of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Note then that our Saviour had, an hour or so before, been saying to the Pharisees in the temple, "Verily I say unto you, *all these things* shall come upon this generation" (chap. xxiii. 36). He added (ver. 38), "Behold your house is left unto you, desolate." Then, on His leaving the temple, the disciples came to Him to point out to Him the massive and magnificent structures of the wonderful edifice, as if it had been made for perpetuity, and would be worthy of being, by-and-by, at once the regal palace and the ecclesiastical centre of the kingdom of heaven. But Jesus said unto them, "Do ye not see *all these things*?" Note the repetition of the expression, "all these things." It seems almost a little out of place. But in truth the expression was in process of being stereotyped, with a fixed reference attached; and hence, though hence alone, the perfect propriety of our Saviour's use of the phrase. Well: when they had slowly wended their way up the steep ascent of the mount of Olives, till they reached a suitable perch and *belle-vue*, and perhaps a favourite resort, and when they were seated and had been for some time absorbed in solemn meditation, the disciples once more broke silence, their minds still running on 'all these things,' and they said, "Tell us when shall '*these things*' be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" In Mark the queries run thus, "Tell us, when shall '*these things*' be? and what shall be the sign when '*all these things*' shall be fulfilled?" The reference to the end of the age, and the coming of the Lord in connection with it to introduce the golden age, is, to the minds of the disciples, either strictly subordinate to "all these things," the things connected with the temple and Jerusalem, or else dimly, indefinitely, and confusedly, mingled up with them and merged in them. It is 'all these things' then, that are uppermost and outstanding in the disciples' thoughts; and the things no doubt continued there, still outstanding and uppermost, while the Saviour was warning them not to be deceived by rumours of His coming, and assuring them that when He did come to introduce the glorious time His coming would at once and sufficiently manifest and verify itself. Hence, when after the few minutes, which would be requisite to say what is contained in the preceding part of the chapter, He returns to speak of "all these things," His disciples would be prepared instantly to link on what He was now saying to what they had all through been thinking of. This they would all the more readily do, as in verses 15-22 the Saviour had turned most directly and pointedly to 'all these things,' and had so spoken of them as to intimate that it would be in vain to expect His cosmical interposition in behalf of the elect at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. When then He here resumptively says, *When ye shall see 'all these things,'* the reference is, as we apprehend, to the following effect, *When the woes which I had to utter in reference to the "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" (chap. xxiii. 13-36, 38, 39), begin to thicken upon the doomed people; when the temple itself shall be invaded, and its walls, massive though they be and apparently indestructible, become shattered; when the abomination of the desolation gets a footing within its sacred enclosure; and when all the natural accompaniments of such a tragedy are in progress; when ye shall see 'all these things,' then mark what*

know that it is near, *even* at the doors. 34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be

follows. It is added, Know that (it) is near : (It), such is the supplement of Wycliffe, Luther, Tyndale. Others supply *He*, as in the margin. So Beza, Grotius, Le Clerc, Le Cene, Bishop Horsley (*Sermons*, i.), Fritzsche, Meyer, Rilliet, Burger. In reality however there is a blank in the expression which the imagination is left to fill up, *know that—is near*. It is a blank which may be filled up on a variety of sides. Some would interpret thus, "Know that a *spiritual summer* is near." This is perhaps however too fanciful. We might, more prosaically, say, "Know that the *utter desolation of the city* is near" (see Luke xxi. 20); or, "Know that the *overthrow of judaism in all its peculiarities* is near," that judaism which has become not only obsolete but utterly corrupt, and a nuisance in the world; or, "Know that a *new and glorious development of the kingdom of heaven* is near" (see Luke xxi. 31); or, "Know that the *Son of man Himself* is near," overruling the actions of the Roman armies and the infatuation of the Jewish people, and paving the way for the grander and ulterior development of His kingship and kingdom (see chap. xvi. 28). Yes, the beginning of the end will then take place. Even at the doors: Literally *upon (the) doors*, that is, *close upon the doors*. The plural is used idiomatically, and also without the article, somewhat in the same way as in our English idiom we say *up stairs* and *down stairs*, instead of *up the stairs* and *down the stairs*. The idiomatic plural may have had its origin, as Robinson suggests (*Lexicon*, sub voce), in a reference to *folding doors*, such as the great outer double doors of the larger class of oriental houses. So Dr. Daniel Scott. Sir John Cheke's translation of the expression is free but admirable, *at hand*.

VER. 34. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not be passed away till 'all these things' have come to pass: A statement that has occasioned almost infinite perplexity to such as have not apprehended the reference of the expression *all these things* (see the preceding verse), and who yet feel persuaded that Christ made no mistake. "This indeed," says Cunninghame, "is the "difficulty which, more than any other, has puzzled and perplexed those who "have endeavoured to give a consistent interpretation of our Lord's prophecy" (*Dissertation on the Seals and Trumpets*, p. 311, ed. 1832). Hence the expression *this generation* has been subjected to torture. Chrysostom tortured it. He supposed that it does not refer to a *generation in time* at all, but to a *generation in kind*, as when it is said in Ps. xxiv. 6, "This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek thy face, O Jacob." Comp., in the Septuagint, Jer. viii. 3; and, in English, Prov. xxx. 11, 12, 13, 14 ("in English" we say, for the word in the Septuagint is ἐκγονοί). Chrysostom thought that it is *the generation of believers* who are referred to. Origen before him took the same view; as also Theophylact and Euthymius Zigabenus, after him; Paulus de Palacio too. The modern Paulus likewise, H. E. Gottlob, though a very different man, adopted the same interpretation (*meine geistige Nachkommenschaft*); and Lange clings to it. Jerome did equal torture to the expression, but he hesitated between two interpretations, each different from Chrysostom's, (1) *This race of men in general*, (2) *this race of the Jews in particular*. (*Aut omne genus hominum significat, aut specialiter Judæorum.*) Zuingli committed the double torture of combining Jerome's alternatives into one, *this race of the Jews and of all men*. Few, if any, have followed Zuingli in this conglomeration; but a considerable number of respectable critics have accepted the first moiety of his double

reference, *this race of the Jews*. Le Fèvre, for instance, and Jansen, Calov, Mede (*Works*, p. 752), Wolf, Heumann, Storr (*Opusc.*, iii., p. 39), Adam Clarke, Faber, Stier, Dorner (*Orat. Eschat.*, p. 75), Alford, Arnoldi. Heumann indeed translates the expression, in his German version, *this people (dieses Volk)*, and even goes so far as to maintain, in his Commentary, that the word never means *generation* in the New Testament, but always *people!* (see chap. i. 17.) Rotherham too, in his version, yields to the pressure of the exegetical difficulty, and substitutes *race* for *generation*. Most unwarrantably, however. The word indeed is not always used in one precise aspect of import. Dorner is right when he contends that it cannot always mean *age*. It has various sides of reference; and, among them, it very frequently brings into view the *people* or *some particular people of an age*. But it does always, when used absolutely, and it does always in the New Testament, involve as an element of its import, either outstandingly and obtrusively or inobtrusively and implicitly, a reference to a *limited period of duration, and such a limited period too as may be measured by the natural life-term of the persons referred to as generated*. That natural life-term may be generalized into an average, or looked at in some of its manifold actual variations; but the word has reference to it. Hence the processional expression in Luke i. 50, "from generation to generation." Hence too the implicitly contrastive expression in Acts xiii. 36 concerning David, "after he had served *his own generation*, he fell on sleep." Hence too the plural expression in Col. i. 26, "hid from ages, and from generations." Comp. Eph. iii. 5, 21, Acts xiv. 16. Hence also the expression, also implicitly contrastive, in Heb. iii. 10, "I was grieved *with that generation*," "and I swear in My wrath, *They shall not enter into My rest*." As to the expression before us, *this generation*, it evidently means, as in all the other passages where it occurs (Matt. xi. 16, xii. 41, 42, xxiii. 36; Mark viii. 12; Luke vii. 31, xi. 30, 31, 32, 50, 51, xvii. 25), *this present generation*. The verb with which it is connected, *shall (not) pass*, literally *shall (not) go by*, that is *shall (not) pass away*, is appropriate to describe the fleeting course of a generation. See Eccles. i. 4. It would by no means be so appropriate if used in reference to the fate of a people, as a people. And then, besides, the corresponding expression in Matt. xvi. 28, "Verily I say unto you, *there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death* till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom," settles our Saviour's reference. The great body of critics agree with us. They are firm in the conviction that the expression must mean *this present generation*; but then they in general draw Lightfoot's inference, "Hence it appears plain enough, that the foregoing verses are to be understood . . . of the destruction of Jerusalem." And thus, escaping from the whirlpool of Charybdis, they founder, to the great delectation of Strauss and Straussians, upon Scylla. "This," says Bishop Porteous, "is an unanswerable proof that everything our Lord has been saying in the preceding part of the chapter related principally . . . to the destruction of Jerusalem, which did in reality happen before that generation passed away." "It is to me a wonder," says Bishop Newton, "how any man can refer part of the foregoing discussion to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to the end of the world, when it is said so positively here "in the conclusion, *All these things shall be fulfilled in this generation*." (*Dissertations*, xxi.) To escape this inference, which in truth seems pregnant with unbelieveabilities, Cunningham may translate the concluding verb thus, "shall begin to be" (*The Seals and Trumpets*, p. 314). It is, however, a torturing mistranslation. Gisborne and Trapp, and a few others, would lay the torture

fulfilled. 35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

elsewhere. Instead of *this generation*, they would read *that generation*. But all such torturing shifts must be abandoned.

VER. 35. **The heaven and the earth shall pass away:** Our Saviour is not speaking scientifically; but true science, nevertheless, was underlying what He says. The present forms of the heaven and the earth will not, and cannot, continue for ever. They are changing. And in the course of time the change will issue in their complete transformation, so that the present earth and the present heaven will yet cease to be. When only a narrow view is taken of the visible universe, its stability seems to be absolute. It seems to be immutable. But it is not so. It was once exceedingly different from what it now is; and in time to come it will, so far as its present form is concerned, be "folded up as a (worn out) vesture." Witness the geological structure of our own globe. Consider the physical nature of the moon, an immense cinder. Consider the splinters of asteroids, and the planetary gap in which they move. Is there not evidence too that star suns have either been used up, and their light blown out, or have moved away to other spheres? It is *not* true, though many of the "mockers" have asseverated it, that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." **But My words shall not pass away:** What an immeasurable height there must have been within the self-consciousness of our Lord, when He thus contrasted the imperishableness of His own words with the perishableness of the heaven and the earth! It is to His prediction in the preceding verse that He specially refers. Its fulfilment might be absolutely depended on. It would not fail. It was not liable to any casualty or transformation. And what was true of the words of that prediction is equally true of all our Saviour's words, of the sum total of His teachings. "The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away," and sun and moon and stars shall pass away, "but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." (1 Pet. i. 24, 25.)

VER. 36. **But of that day:** Literally, *But concerning that day*, that is, *But the truth concerning that day*. The reference is to the truth about the date of that day. What day? Manifestly some day beyond the date of "all these things." Hence the *that*, referring to what was spoken of farther back in our Saviour's apocalypse. (See ver. 30.) It is obviously the day of the Son of man that is referred to, the day "when He shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels" (2 Thess. i. 7), "with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv. 30). It is "the day of the Lord" (1 Cor. i. 8, v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14; 1 Thess. v., 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10); "the great day" (Jude 6). It is elsewhere, by way of emphasis, eminence, and pre-eminence, marked off and marked out absolutely as "*that day*." (See 2 Tim. i. 12, 18; iv. 8.) **And hour:** An appendage to the expression *that day*, intended to recall the idea of the instantaneousness of the Lord's appearing. (See ver. 27.) A whole day will not be necessary for the revealing of His presence. He will come at once, in a moment, "suddenly." (Mark xiii. 36; 1 Thess. v. 2, 3.) **Knoweth no one:** And yet we received some twenty years ago repeated papers from Australia, in which it was actually alleged that the Lord was to appear at twelve o'clock on October 22nd, 1866! **No, not the angels of heaven:** Although no doubt they must be gifted with far more extensive prevision than the most favoured of mortals. **Nor the Son (οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός):** These words are not in the received text, or in the great body

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

of the manuscripts; and yet they were probably in the autograph of Matthew. They are found in the three oldest manuscripts, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and Cambridge (NB D); and in many copies of the Old Latin version; as also in the Hærclean Syriac, and the Æthiopic and Armenian versions. Unfortunately Cureton's Syriac is blank at this place. Irenæus received them, and Origen, Chrysostom, Hilary. Lachmann introduced them into the text; and so has Tischendorf in his eighth edition. So have Westcott-and-Hort. It might be supposed indeed that some harmonist had originally inserted them from Mark xiii. 32. But, on the other hand, they were a kind of stumbling block and a puzzle to the early Christians, and on that account it is not likely that they would have been added to Matthew's text, if they had been originally wanting. Jerome mentions that in his day they were "in some of the Latin codices, but not in the Greek, and in particular not in the copies of Adamantius and Pierius." His statement must be regarded as extending only to such copies of the text as he had within his own reach. He evidently did not like the words, inasmuch as Arius and Eunomius rejoiced over them, "as if the ignorance of the Master were the glory of the disciples." If for any reason they should have been omitted in some very early copies, they would not have run much chance, one would suppose, of reintroduction, more particularly after the rise of the Arian controversy. But in what sense could it be truthfully said of the Son, that He "knew not" the date of "that day"? There is no real difficulty. There were two distinct elements in the unity of our Lord's being, a Divine and a human. The infinite and the finite were combined. Attention is drawn in the Gospels sometimes to the one side and sometimes to the other. We need not be sceptical in reference to such twosidedness. It is a mystery indeed. But in our own natures we have mystery upon mystery, and, in particular, a wonderful mystery of twosidedness, consisting of the contraries, though not the contradictories, of material and spiritual being. Hence there are many things which are true of us, in relation to the one side of our being, while they are not true of us in relation to the other. So with Jesus, in a higher plane of things. Much that is true in reference to His Divinity could not be affirmed of His humanity. His humanity for instance could not possibly be possessed of omniscience. Omniscience is an infinity. The Divine intelligence, when interpenetrating the human, has yet an indefinite amount of points which cannot be touched by corresponding points in the human. The human intelligence, hence, can bear the influx of only a quota of the Divine ideas. Its vessel is limited, and cannot hold everything. It would lie therefore with the Divine wisdom and will to determine what should be put into the vessel. Or, to vary our standpoint of consideration, the eye of our Lord's human intelligence, when looking athwart scenes that lay beyond, saw under the conditions and limitations of *perspective*. Intervening valleys of things would lie hidden in obscurity; while, far away in the distant horizon, there would be an absolute limit to vision. All this involves much mystery indeed. Yes, but so does all else too. Yet there is not an atom of ground on which legitimate objection or disbelief can stand. **But My Father only**: Or, rather, *But the Father only*. The *My* is wanting in the manuscripts NB D L Δ II, 1, 33 "the queen of the cursives," 69; in the Vulgate also, and the older Latin, the Syriac versions too (the Peshito, Philoxenian, Hærclean,

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of

and Jerusalem); and also the Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. Lachmann and Tregelles omit it. And Tischendorf too in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort. Note the *But*. In the original it is *Except* (*ἐξ ἧς*), and turns back directly to the first clause of the verse; *no one knows concerning that day and hour, except the Father only*. Some students of prophecy, feeling chafed apparently by the declaration of our Lord regarding His own human ignorance of "that day and hour," have rejoiced that He did not extend His observation to *weeks and months and years!* "There is not," says M. Baxter, "a single text in the Bible that implies that the week or month of Christ's advent will not be discovered beforehand." (*Louis Napoleon the Destined Monarch of the World*, p. 281.) The year of Christ's coming, or of the inauguration of the millennium, has often been fixed by ardent students of prophecy. Many, in the middle ages, expected it to be a.d. 1000. Those of the expectants who outlived that year were sadly disappointed. Dolcino, of the "Apostolical Brotherhood," fixed on 1303; and, when he found facts disappointing him, he fixed again on 1304. Even Bengel, so wise in many respects, and so good, fixed on "June 18th, 1836." (See *Burk's Memoir*, p. 294.) He was sure that "by the help of the Lord he had found the number of the beast," and by that means he had got a sure basis for his calculation. He agreed, throughout, with the principles of M. Baxter in regard to the limitations under which the statement of the verse before us is to be received. Jung Stilling followed in Bengel's wake, being quickened by Bengel's writings, but having an independent genius of his own. He was positive that, not 1836, but 1816, was the year in which the millennium was to begin. Sander, again, moving to the other side of Bengel's time, fixed on 1847. Numerous authors, now or lately living, quite positively fixed on 1860, or 1861, or 1862, or thereby! We had personal knowledge of some. All this confidence of chronological reverie is melancholy, and most injurious to the interests of the Bible in the estimation of such as lean on human judgements. Our Saviour's words should lay an everlasting ban upon such speculations. He specifies the "day and hour," not because the week or month or year was present to His human view, although He chose to veil it from the view of others, but because He was thinking of the instantaneousness of His own appearing. If He had already specified the year, and month, and week of His appearing, and had then added, *but of the day and hour knoweth no one but the Father*, there would have been reason to conclude that He was referring only to the minutiae of time. But when He gives no such setting to His declaration, He leaves the chronology of His glorious appearing, after having pushed it far beyond the destruction of Jerusalem, entirely indefinite. He as it were says, *As I look forward, from some such standpoint as your own, to the outstretching future, sweeping far far away, I find no data within the range of My perspective for fixing the date of My appearing*.

VER. 37. But as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man: It is uncertain whether *But* (*δέ*) or *For* (*γάρ*) is the connecting conjunction. Lachmann, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort read *For*. If it should be the correct reading, then our Saviour expressly intimates that even up to the moment of His appearing men will not know the day and hour of His coming. If *But* however be the right reading—and on the whole it is the best supported, and it is approved of by Tischendorf—then the Saviour, *assuming that the precise time of His appearing is unknown and unknowable*, proceeds to point

the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

out, graphically and in a representative way, what will be the state of society at the very time of His advent.

VER. 38. For as, in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking: Just as if nothing particular was about to happen. The Saviour is not here depicting scenes of revelry, or making reference to riotous eating and drinking. (See John vi. 54, 56, 57, 58.) He directs attention to legitimate doings. Marrying and giving in marriage: Marrying wives, and giving their daughters in marriage. (See 1 Cor. vii. 38.) These two matrimonial acts are mentioned as specimens of engagements which, in themselves, are perfectly innocent, and in connection with which there is naturally the anticipation of happiness. Until the day when Noah entered into the ark: Amid perhaps the jeers of multitudes, and to the utter amazement of others, who thought themselves sufficiently sure that to-morrow would be as to-day.

VER. 39. And they knew not, that any great catastrophe was impending, that a flood was coming, until the flood came, and took them all away: "And took them all away," or, as we should now express it, *and swept them all away*. The expression literally is, *and lifted them all up*. (See Math. ix. 6; xiv. 12, 20; xvi. 24; xvii. 27; etc.) The phrase fixes attention on the first effect of the rising waters. When the Saviour speaks of the antediluvians *not knowing*, He is not blaming them. They were indeed to be blamed in many respects. But it is not their blameworthiness for their conduct, or for their unbelief, or for their ignorance, to which the Saviour is drawing attention. He is simply referring to the fact that they were up to the last moment ignorant of the impending catastrophe. See vers. 40, 41. So shall also the coming of the Son of man be: It will be sudden. *People will not know of it till it happen*. Even good people will be engaged in their ordinary avocations. See ver. 36, and vers. 40, 41.

VER. 40. Then shall two men be in the field: The Saviour draws a mental picture. Two men are *in the field*, where their daily work is found. They are both engaged in their lawful labour. The coming of the Lord overtakes them. What are the consequences? *The one shall be taken and the other left*: Or, literally and more graphically, *One is taken, and one is left*. The Saviour sets Himself down, as it were, in the midst of the future scene, as if it were present, and then describes it. (The Germans would say that He *vergegenwärtiget das Zukünftige*.) In the received text the expression runs thus, *The one is taken, and the one is left*. But according to the correct text, the text that is given in the manuscripts \aleph B D I L, and in 1 and 33 "the queen of the cursives," there is no article before the numerals. *Taken*: Whither? To be with the Lord. The word employed (*παράλαμβάνεται*) denotes literally *taking beside (one)*, or *taking with (one)*. It implies therefore that the person taken will be *taken by another*, so as to be *with that other*. The same word is employed in John xiv. 3, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." There, however, the ministerial agency is merged entirely out of view. But in the expression before us the action of the gathering angels is tacitly subsumed. See ver. 31. The

41 *Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be*

Saviour's reference is undoubtedly, as Theophylact remarked, to the event that is described in 1 Thess. iv. 17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air," caught up by the ministering angels. *One is left*: On the earth. The unbeliever is referred to. He is left to await the Lord's pleasure, whatever that may be, to await his doom. (See 2 Thess. i. 7-9.) Such is the hieroglyph. The full evolution of all the physical as well as moral experiences and relationships involved in the events referred to will not be attempted by the wise. The subject has grand cosmical bearings, and touches space and time and creation at large, at multitudes of points, which in our little pictures and perspectives may be easily huddled into confusion.

VER. 41. *Two women shall be grinding at the mill*: In the former verse there is representative reference to *two men*; in this the reference, equally representative, is to *two women*. Meyer says, *two slaves* ("Zwei *Sclavinnen*": N. TEST. UEBERSETZUNG). But such a contraction of the reference is entirely arbitrary, and, so far as our Saviour's thoughts are concerned, quite unlikely. Meyer might with equal propriety have supposed that *male slaves* are referred to in the preceding verse. It was quite common for the free women to grind the grain that was needed for household use; although of course in large establishments, where there were slaves, this menial labour would devolve upon the unfortunate 'maid-servants' (Exod. xi. 5). It was common likewise for two to sit together, opposite one another, at the work of grinding with the handmill. They operated in general not alternately, but simultaneously, so as to produce continuous and rapid rotatory motion. "The upper stone," says Dr. Robinson, "is turned upon the lower, by means of an upright stick fixed "in it as a handle. We afterwards saw many of these mills; and saw only "women grinding, sometimes one alone and sometimes two together. The "female kneels or sits at her task, and turns the mill with both hands, feeding "it occasionally with one." (*Biblical Researches*, vol. ii., p. 181.) "In the "court," says Horatio B. Hackett, "of one of the houses" at Jenin, on the border of Esdraelon, "I saw two young women sitting on the ground, engaged "in grinding. The mill consisted of two stones, the upper one circular, the "lower one partly so, with a projection on one side, two or three inches long, "slanting downward, and scooped out so as to carry off the meal. The lower "stone had an iron pivot (I think it was) extending from its centre through a "hole in the centre of the upper stone. An upright handle was fixed in a "socket near the edge of the upper stone, and both the women, taking hold of "this handle, whirled the stone round and round with great rapidity. One "of them every now and then dropped a handful of grain into the hole at the "centre of the upper stone." (*Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 48.) The word for *mill* in the received text ($\mu\lambda\acute{\omega}\nu$) does not denote a handmill or quern, but a *mill house*, what the Romans called *pistrinum*, and what we now often mean when we speak of a *grain mill*. In the true text, however, the word used ($\mu\acute{\omega}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$), a very old and widely diffused term, denotes the instrument for grinding, the 'quern.' Wycliffe indeed translates it quern, 'in oo querne.' Note his preposition 'in.' It corresponds to the preposition in the Greek, instead of 'at.' The idea is that the women are grinding the grain which is *in* the quern. *One is taken, and one is left*: Such is the literal rendering of this clause. It might be two sisters who were working together, or mother and daughter. The

taken, and the other left. 42 Watch therefore : for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have

one was a believer, however, doing her work for Christ. The other was an unbeliever, and did not link on her labour to her Lord. Both are supposed to be unaware of the time of the Lord's appearing.

VER. 42. **Watch therefore :** Keep the spirit awake, and on the outlook. Take heed lest it sink into spiritual torpor, drowsiness, or unconsciousness. It is possible for it to be in such a condition, although awake and all alive to things secular, social, political, scientific, literary. See 1 Thess. v. 6. **For ye know not at what hour your Lord cometh :** Or, as it is in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts, and in the cursives that are numbered 1, 33, 69, *For ye know not on what day your Lord cometh.* It is of no moment, practically, which of the two readings be accepted. Note the *what*. The original word refers to quality or peculiar characteristic (*ποιός*). The idea is, *ye know not whether the day or hour of the Lord's coming be characterized by the quality of comparative immediacy or of comparative remoteness.* And yet the Lord had told His disciples that many events would occur before His glorious appearing. Wherein, then, the consistency of the injunction of this verse? It is found in a combination of two assumptions,—(1) That the Lord was speaking, not merely to and for His apostles, but to and for His disciples in all places and times. (2) That He took a broad view of spiritual realities, and the bearing of the great events connected with His kingdom on individual souls. So far as the soul's real interests and its great duties are concerned, it is of no real moment whether it shall remain incarnate till the coming of the Lord, or be "absent from the body" long before that event. Spiritual watchfulness in either case is equally needed. And the day and hour when the intervening veil between the soul and the Saviour shall be drawn aside is equally uncertain.

VER. 43. **But know this :** Or, better on the whole, *But this ye know.* So Bengel, Mace, Dr. Daniel Scott, Edgar Taylor, Sharpe, Rotherham. It is of little moment whether we take the verb as in the imperative, or as in the indicative. **That if the goodman-of-the-house :** Or, the *master of the house.* So it is rendered in chap. x. 25 ; Luke xiii. 25, xiv. 21. See note on chap. xx. 11. The article graphically points to the *particular householder* whom the Saviour parabolically conjured up for the purpose of His illustration, and whose house He supposes to have been rifled by a burglar. **Had known in what watch the thief would come :** In cities and camps it was customary for armed men to keep *watch* during the night, lest enemies should take advantage of the darkness and come upon the citizens, or upon the army, at unawares. But that the watching might be efficient, and the watchers relieved from over-exertion, relays were appointed. Hence the night was divided into a certain number of distinct periods, called *watches*. (See on chap. xiv. 25.) By-and-by the word was adopted as the convenient symbol of the divisions of time, even when no real *watches* were kept up. And it is because these divisions or periods, along with the corresponding periods of the daytime, are measured and marked on our pocket timepieces or chronometers, that these timepieces themselves obtained the name of *watches*. The *what* employed in this verse is the same as in the preceding verse. **He would have watched :** He would have kept awake. **And**

suffered his house to be broken up. 44 Therefore be ye also ready : for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But and if

would not have suffered his house to be broken up : Or, as we should now express it, *to be broken into*. Wycliffe's translation is, *to be vndermyndyd* (undermined). Literally it is, *to-be-dug-through*, a graphic word, appropriate to describe the action that would be required to get into a house whose walls consisted in a great measure of mud. Such was the kind of houses inhabited by the mass of the people in primitive times. There are still myriads of them in the East, and far too many of them in the west. "In Egypt," says Horatio B. Hackett, "and most of the towns of Palestine, at the present time, the houses are built, not of wood or stone as we build them, but of mud more or less hardened by exposure to the sun, or of mud and pebbles mixed together." (*Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 59.) The easiest way therefore, and the most noiseless, for burglars to operate, was not to force the door, but, as it were, to delve or dig the walls.

VER. 44. *Therefore be ye also ready* : The *therefore* and the *also* indicate the relation between the illustrative case depicted in the preceding verse, and the duty of the Saviour's disciples. *It was not possible, perhaps, for that householder to be ready to resist the thief. He did not know when the thief would come. He would, however, have been awake and prepared if he had known at what watch the thief would come. Ye also need to be prepared ; and ye may. Ye do not need to be at any time spiritually asleep, and off your guard. Be ye THEREFORE ready, or prepared.* The preparation referred to is "the preparation of the gospel of peace," the preparation that is found in the habitual faith of the gospel of peace. (Eph. vi. 15.) For in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh : Or, as Sir John Cheke renders it freely but admirably, *For iou can not gess what tijm ye Son of man will com.* No one knows when He will come to the earth, to glorify it ; or to the individual believing soul, to glorify it. There is an intimate connection between the two acts. The latter is indeed a preliminary part of the former, with certain unimportant circumstantialities merged, circumstantialities of time and space.

VER. 45. *Who then is the faithful and prudent servant, whom his lord, when going abroad, set over his household to give them their food, and all their other requisites, in season? Who? It is the servant who attends to his duties, every day, and every hour, just as he would do if he knew that his lord would return that very day, or in that very hour. He only is faithful to his lord. He only is prudent and wise for himself.*

VER. 46. *Happy that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing : Attending to the wants of the household, just as he would do if he knew that the lord would make his appearance that very day.*

VER. 47. *Verily I say to you* : Or, as we should now express it in familiar phraseology, *I assure you*. The consequence will be that he will set him over all

that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 and shall begin to smite *his* fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 and shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

that He hath: He will promote him to the highest position in his establishment. He will make him the overseer of all that belongs to him, thus conferring upon him the highest honour and reward of which he is susceptible.

VER. 48. But if that wicked servant: The Saviour changes the parabolic scene, and points out the contrary alternative of things. There is, however, great compression in His representation, and hence the demonstrative expression, *that wicked servant*. Tischendorf in his last edition leaves out the *that*, and reads simply, *But if the wicked servant*. On insufficient grounds however. It is as if the Saviour had said, *But if that servant who was left in charge with the household shall be wicked, and if he*. Shall say in his heart: For thinking is just an inward speaking. **My Lord is tarrying:** So the verb is rendered in chap. xxv. 5, Luke i. 21, Heb. x. 37. Purvey's version is, *My Lord tarryeth to come*. Sir John Cheke's, *mi Mr. taryeth long or he com*. The wicked servant says to himself, *There is no fear of him coming for a good long while; and I shall see to it that I begin to be careful in good time*.

VER. 49. And shall begin to strike his fellow servants: Not only neglecting their interests, but actually abusing them in the spirit of a petty tyrant. He struts about as if he were master, and lords it over them. **And shall eat and drink with the drunken:** With the drunkards. The Rheims version has it "with drunkards." Wycliffe has it admirably, but archaically, "with drunkenlewe men," that is *with drunkenly men*, men given to drunkenness. Consorting with such characters is, says Matthew Henry, "an inlet to all manner of sin." (The correct reading is *ἐσθίη δὲ καὶ πίνη*, not *ἐσθίειν δὲ καὶ πίνειν*.)

VER. 50. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour which he knoweth not: "Our putting off," says Matthew Henry, "the thoughts of Christ's coming will not put off His coming."

VER. 51. And shall cut him asunder: Literally, *shall cut him in two*; or, as Tyndale gives it, *and wyl deuyde him* (and will divide him). A terrific form of capital punishment, carried sometimes into execution with a saw. (See Heb. xi. 37.) It represents here a doom too dreadful to be capable of explicit representation and explanation. (See Preussii *Dichotomia*.) **And shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites:** The Saviour at this point passes out of the parable into the dread reality. He as it were says, *Or, to let drop now the parabolic veil, this wicked professor of My Christianity shall not only be thrown down from his eminence, he shall be consigned to the doom of those whose doom is the most doleful of all, the hypocrites*. In the place of that doom there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth: *There*, more than anywhere else. See chaps. viii. 12, xiii. 42, 50, xxii. 13.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the

CHAPTER XXV.

THE Saviour, still sitting on the mount of Olives, over against Jerusalem, on Tuesday, the 4th April, the 12th Nisan, U.C. 783, A.D. 30 (see Wieseler's *Synopsis* and Andrew's *Life of our Lord*), continues to speak to His disciples. He speaks of His coming again. And as He speaks He paints. He draws pictures of the future scenes, covering "the chamber of imagery," inside the minds of His auditors, with glowing and indelible representations.

VER. 1. Then: Viz. when the Son of man shall come "in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." See chap. xxiv. 30-51. Shall the kingdom of heaven be likened: Not verbally, but really. Not merely in thought, but in fact. (See on chap. vii. 26.) It shall be made like or assimilated, as regards the experience both of its real and of its unreal subjects. To ten virgins: We are not to imagine mysteries in the number ten, though no doubt it was a dominant number in many Jewish arrangements. "The nation of the Jews delighted mightily," says Lightfoot, "in the number ten." Most likely the attendant virgins at marriages would frequently be ten. They rarely came short, says Lightfoot, of that number. The original arithmetic of the ten fingers would determine a large amount of such adjustments as needed definite numbering. *Virgins*: There is no peculiar significance in their virginity. It is only a beautiful part in the pictorial drapery of the parable. It is altogether beside the mark to suppose, with Chrysostom, Jerome, and others, that our Saviour was intending to commend a state of nunhood. "The structure of the parable," says Arnot, "required virgins in this place, in order that the picture might be true to nature. In the customs apparently of all times and all countries, this position at a marriage least is assigned to young unmarried women." "From the procession of virgins, therefore, I obtain no more than I would have obtained from a procession of men or matrons, if the habits of society had permitted such a representation to have been made." (*Parables*, p. 288.) In such a case the parable would have suffered æsthetically, but not theologically. *Virgins*: It is not churches that are parabolically referred to, as Vitringa thought (*Verk. van de Parbolen*, in loc.), "virgin churches," as Shepard calls them. (*Parable of the Ten Virgins opened and applied*, part i., chap. xii., sec. 1.) It is persons, as persons, Christians and almost-Christians. Who took their lamps: A substitute for torches, and more suitable for females to bear, especially if they should be lightly and elegantly dressed. Flakes are apt to fall from torches. The lamps used at marriage processions were small cups or bowls, gracefully suspended from long slender staves or poles. Inside the bowl was the wick, bedded in pitch, and kept soaking in oil. And went forth: It is not said whence; and we need not, in our imaginations, conjecture. Greswell and Meyer say, from the bride's house. It is better, however, to leave the localization indefinite. To meet the bridegroom: To welcome him on occasion of his coming for his bride. The professing Christians represented are all alike, as they start, in a lively and exulting condition. (Compare chap. xiii. 20.) They all alike profess to love the appearing of the Bride-

bridegroom. 2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took

groom. They all alike go forth with their lamps, *the objectifying symbols of subjective joy and zeal*. Trench and others suppose that the scene of the parable does not refer to the coming of the bridegroom to receive his bride, but to his return to his home in company with his bride. The same view of the scene was entertained in very ancient times, for in the Cambridge manuscript (D), as well as in X and 1, the text is supplemented thus, *to meet the bridegroom and the bride*. The same supplement is found in the Vulgate version, and in the Old Latin which preceded the Vulgate, as also in the Syriac versions, the Peshito and the Philoxenian; in the Armenian too. Origen also and Hilary give the supplement. Hence in Cranmer's Bible the translation is, *to mete the brydgrome (and the bryde)*. So in Whiston's New Testament. The supplement is wanting, however, in the great body of the authorities, and was no doubt an early exegetical note. A mistaken one, too, as we presume, founded on a misconception of the scene. If the bridegroom had been regarded as accompanied by the bride, it would be difficult to suppose that there should be no reference to her in the text. A very large amount of interest would, we should have supposed, have gathered, for the time being, around her; and the virgins would have gone forth to meet her. When we look beyond the parable, moreover, to the great reality represented, it is certain that it is *Christ coming to the earth for His bride* that is represented. Indeed, as Kirsten remarks, *the wise virgins are the bride*.

VER. 2. But five of them were foolish and five wise: Such is the proper order of the words *foolish* (or *folysshe* as Tyndale picturesquely gives it) and *wise* (or *prudent*). It is the order of the manuscripts \aleph B C D L Z, 1, 33. We are not however to lay any weight of significance on the equal number of the two classes or groups, as if the Lord were intending to teach that a meridian line will actually divide the world of men on the one hand, or the world of professing Christians on the other, into two equal hemispheres. It is enough to notice, æsthetically, that the group of the *foolish*, or, as Valenti persistently represents them, *the almost-Christian* (*Beinahechristen*: PARABELN, pp. 181-197), is so large and conspicuous as to attract the particular attention of the observer, and to lead to the inquiry, In which group am I?

VER. 3. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: That is, *did not provide themselves with oil*, namely, in separate vessels. (See ver. 4.) The pronoun *them*, in the expression *with them*, does not refer to the lamps, but to the virgins ($\mu\epsilon\theta' \epsilon\lambda\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon$). Note the conjunction *For* at the beginning of the verse. Its genuineness is not quite established; but it is supported by the manuscripts \aleph B C L, 33; and it has been received into the text by Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort (*αὶ ἅπα μωραῖ*). If genuine, it intimates that what follows contains the justification of the epithets *foolish* and *wise*, which, in the preceding verse, had been ascribed to the virgins. The foolish ones did not take with them, as they should have done, a full supply of oil. Doubtless, indeed, they would have oil in their lamps, as they went forth. They would go forth *with their lamps lighted*; for it would be already dark. It was night. They make, to turn to the thing signified, a lively profession of faith and joy and zeal; and their profession is quite as conspicuous, and as flames as vividly for the time, as the profession of their wise companions.

no oil with them: 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all

But they did not calculate on the possibility of a long delay; and hence they did not make provision for maintaining as long as might be needed the light of their lamps. They were quite positive, in all likelihood, that no great provision was requisite.

VER. 4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps: They considered that it was really uncertain at what particular hour the bridegroom would make his appearance. He had not fixed the hour. He had to come, besides, from a great distance, a far country. Possibly he might be detained till very late. Hence, to meet every contingency, they took a full supply of oil in their cruses or flasks. These flasks, indeed, would not be ornamental in the eyes of the great body of onlookers. They would, besides, be somewhat cumbering or fettering. With a lamp in the one hand, and a vessel in the other, there would be enough to try their patience. But it was right to be fully prepared for all contingencies, was it not? Fully prepared they were resolved to be. They had counted the cost, and made up their minds that no part of it should be shirked.

VER. 5. But, the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept: They had gone out a considerable distance, we may suppose. Perhaps they had got the length of one of the adjoining villages on the line of road. Here, not seeing any sign, or hearing any word, of the approach of the procession, they had entered, let us suppose, into the court of some house which was available for the occasion, to rest and wait until the long looked for visitor should make his appearance. As they waited long, relieving perchance the tedium by appropriate bridal songs, and by recounting to one another the purport of the communications which had been made by the bridegroom to the bride, they by-and-by began to get drowsy. And at length *they all slumbered and slept*. They *slumbered*: The word thus rendered literally means *nodded*, and denotes that involuntary drooping of the head which, in the case of those who are in a sitting posture, naturally occurs on the approach of sleep. Wycliffe renders it *nappiden* (*napped*). He followed the Anglo-Saxon version (*hnappedon*). *Drooped their heads and slept*: There is a beautiful variation of tense in the original. The verb for *drooped their heads* is in the aorist, while the verb for *slept* is in the imperfect. The idea intended is, that they did not *continue* merely nodding; but, falling into deep sleep, *they continued sleeping*. It is noticeable that the virgins are not blamed for having fallen asleep; and hence there is but slender ground, or occasion, in the parable, for elaborate dissertation, such as is indulged in by Shepard and others, on the sinfulness of spiritual drowsiness. And yet, doubtless, there would have been blameworthiness somewhere, if all the virgins, and all the rest of the people who were interested in the bridegroom's coming, for parabolically we must think of others besides the virgins, had suffered themselves, in the utter neglect of *vigils*, to fall asleep. *Watching required to be attended to*. Otherwise, when the bridegroom arrived, he might have received no festal welcome at all. Since however no blame is attached to the virgins, we may reasonably assume that arrangements had been made for relays of watchers. "The duration of the world," says Shepard, "from the first to the second coming, is but as it were a night divided into several watches. The saints are the watchmen of the world." (*Ten*

slumbered and slept. 6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh! go ye out to meet him! 7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your

Virgins, part i., chap. x., § 1.) Some expositors have supposed that the sleeping of the virgins was intended by our Lord to represent *the sleep of natural death* on the part of both the real and the unreal professors of Christianity, all along the ages till the second coming of the Lord. So Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustin (Sermo xciii.), Theophylact, Euthymius Zigabenus, Hugo de Sancto Victore, Le Fèvre, Jansen, Conder. It is perhaps, in some respects, and within a partial sphere of things, not an entirely illegitimate application of the representation of the parable. But it is, at best, simply an arbitrary application, and lies, assuredly, aside from our Lord's actual intent. It is far from being the case that He has in view *only such as shall have been deceased* at the time of His coming. It is still further from being the case *that they, whose lamps continue to burn till the sleep of death arrives, shall find themselves unfurnished to meet the bridegroom when He appears.*

VER. 6. And at midnight there was a shout, LO THE BRIDEGROOM! COME YE OUT TO MEET HIM! Though he had delayed longer than was generally expected, yet at length he came. The watchers would be exclaiming to one another: *See! yonder are lights in the distance! Are they not the first torches of the procession? See, they are turning the slope of the mountain summit! There is a waving line of descent! It is they! Lo the Bridegroom, the Bridegroom!* Snatches too of the joyous music, sounding from afar under the silence of the stars, would be falling already on their ears. All is stir. The excitement speedily rises into enthusiasm. Instantaneously there is a rushing to and fro. Young feet run from house to house. Young shrill voices repeat the joyful shout, *Lo the bridegroom!* In every place, where the glimpse of lamps showed that there were parties who were waiting, the call is eagerly rung out, *Go ye forth to meet him!* We may note that with this expression, *Go ye forth to meet him*, the Alexandrine manuscript (A), preserved in the British Museum library, begins. It is one of the most important transcripts of the New Testament in existence. It is supposed to belong to the fifth century. Unfortunately, all of Matthew that precedes this passage is lost.

VER. 7. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps: *Trimmed* is a fine word. It was given by the Geneva, and adopted in the Rheims as well as in our Authorized version. Tyndale and Myles Coverdale had *prepared*; Sir John Cheke, *furnished*; Purvey, in his revision of Wycliffe, *araïeden* (*arrayed*). The lamps, laid against the wall, had of course been kept burning all the time that the virgins had been waiting and sleeping, for they did not know the moment when they might require to issue forth to meet the procession. As, however, they had been burning long, they required trimming and replenishing.

VER. 8. But the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out: *Going out* is the marginal reading, and the correct translation. It is the Rheims version. Tyndale's translation corresponds, *for our lampes goo out*. Our Authorized version was adopted from Cranmer's Bible. Just when a vigorous and lively light was needed, the last fitful glimmers were dying away within the empty bowls of the foolish virgins! And now at length they wake up to the consequences of their folly. They had pertinaciously refused to

oil; for our lamps are gone out. 9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door

encumber themselves with vessels of oil. They had been quite sure that there was no need for such a singular and troublesome preparation. *Their lamps were full of oil. What more could be reasonably required? Of what use was it to overdo a good thing? It would very seriously incommode and fetter them to be carrying a lamp in the one hand and a cruet in the other! What an annoyance! And then, too, how awkward and unfashionable it would look! There was no use in submitting to such crucifixion of the feelings! They would run the risk!* But now they see the consequences of their short-sighted pertinacity, and they apply for assistance to their companions. The application is beautifully graphic in the parabolic picture, but we must not seek inquisitively for anything precisely corresponding in the spiritual reality. "I am fearful," says Shepard, though he preached in this matter better than he practised, "to rack and torment parables, wherein I chiefly look to the scope." (*Ten Virgins*, part i., chap. xii., § 1.)

VER. 9. But the wise answered, saying, (*We fear*) lest there be not enough for us and for you; go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves: Such is probably the correct reading of the passage. In the received text there is a *but* introducing the second clause of the reply. But it is wanting in the Sinaitic, Alexandrine, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts (Σ A B D), as well as in E G H S V F A, and in the Italic and Vulgate versions, and the Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic. Origen too omits it. Does it not seem as if the wise virgins were deficient in generosity? *Certainly it can only seem so at the first blush.* There was no real unkindness. Neither was there irony, as Augustin (Sermo xciii., § 12), Calvin, Trapp, and some others, assume. We may suppose that they would address their companions in some such way as follows: *We are sorry that we have no oil to spare. We have no more than will suffice for our own lamps. We have yet a great way to go; and unless our lamps are sufficiently replenished, the lights would go out before the bridegroom could arrive at the bride's. See, it takes all that we have in our vessels to fill the bowls! Ah! you should have taken our advice before, when we remonstrated with you. There is no resource now that we know of, but to try to get a supply from those who sell. The procession is yet at a distance; go, and buy if you can. Them that sell: Shepard says that these represent the ministers of the gospel. But such an idea is a total mistake. Ministers of the gospel, just as well as others, need to buy. Chrysostom's idea, however, is much more unnatural. They who sell, says he, are the poor. To buy from them is to give them alms! Theophylact echoes the absurdity. But, evidently, we are not to seek for a precise counterpart to such a detail of the parable as this. So says Maldonato wisely. In another aspect of things, another circle altogether, it is the Bridegroom Himself who sells; and He calls upon all, if they come in time, to buy without money and without price. See Rev. iii. 18 and Isa. lv. 1.*

VER. 10. It was however 'too late, too late.' But while they go off to buy, the bridegroom came; and—to cut short the story—they who were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut: *To the marriage: That is,*

was shut. 11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

to the marriage festivity. It is the same word which is employed in chap. xxii. 2, 3, 4. *They who were ready*: Who were prepared, who had made adequate preparation. W. Ward, in his *View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos*, says: "At a marriage, the procession of which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived at Serampore, to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, *Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him*. All the persons employed now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession. Some of them had lost their lights, and were unprepared; but it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade moved forward to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area before the house, covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed upon a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut, and guarded by sepoys. I and others expostulated with the doorkeepers, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment: *and the door was shut*. I was exceedingly anxious to be present while the marriage formulas were repeated, but was obliged to depart in disappointment." (Vol. iii., p. 171, ed. 1820.)

VER. 11. But afterward came the other virgins also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us: They apply direct to the Bridegroom; for now that he had arrived at the residence of the Bride, *his* will was supreme. Everything was henceforth to be conducted according to *his* mind. He was not an ordinary bridegroom, on a natural equality with his bride and his bride's people. He was of a far higher station; and it became him to take the command at once of all the ceremonies, and of all the other affairs of the household. It was in truth to his own home that he had come. He had come back to rule and to reign. Thus the great spiritual reality, lying on the other side of the parable, gives shape to the parabolic representation.

VER. 12. But he answered and said, Verily I say to you, I know you not: Here too, as in the preceding verse, the spiritual reality represented by the parable shines through and modifies the picture. An ordinary bridegroom, coming from a distance, would not be expected to know the companions of the bride, and would not be disposed to exclude any from the bridal festivity on the simple ground that they were unknown to him. But our Saviour was not thinking of an ordinary bridegroom. He was thinking of One who was very extraordinary, and who stood in very varied relations to His Bride. He knew all about her, and all about her surroundings. *To Him indeed the Bride and the wise virgins were one*, though of course the parable, as a parable, does not admit of the identification. (See on Matt. xxii. 2.) *In thinking of His bride He knew none but the wise*. Or, to vary the representation, On coming to His own home, none but His real companions will be admitted to intimacy with Him, to a share in His honours, and to the feast of His espousals. All others indeed

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

have already refused His companionship, and have thus paved the way for their exclusion.

VER. 13. Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour: It is added in the Authorized version, and in the received text, wherein the Son of man cometh. But the addition is an addition to the original text. It is wanting in the uncial manuscripts marked \aleph ABCDLX Δ H, and in 1 and 33, as well as in the Vulgate and the older Latin version; in the Syriac versions too, and the Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian, \AA thiopic. It is omitted from the text by Griesbach and Scholz, as well as Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort. The added words however are an admirable exegetical note of some early annotator. *Watch*: That is the real moral of the parable, when the term is taken in its proper pregnant fulness and comprehension, as including all needful preparation. *Watch so as to be ready*. In this respect the wise virgins watched. Even when they slept, they were like the spouse in the *Song of Solomon*, who says, "I sleep, but my heart waketh" (*Song* v. 2). They were ready. They expected the Bridegroom. They wished him to come. They loved his appearing. They prepared for it, and were prepared. This idea of adequate preparation is the great idea that is enforced in the parable. A state of adequate preparation involves, theologically, the requisite of perseverance in faith and all the fruits of faith,—perseverance that holds on through all contingencies and trials. Calvin is right when he says: "Some expositors torment themselves greatly in explaining the *lamps*, and the *vessels*, and the *oil*; but the simple and genuine meaning of the whole is just this, that it is not enough to have a lively zeal for a while. We must have in addition a perseverance that never tires." Bucer is of the same mind with Calvin: "It is nothing at all to the purpose to speculate and refine about *virginity*, and *lamps*, and *oil*, and *those who sell oil*. These refined speculations are the trifles of allegorizers. But the one idea that is of moment is that they who are really prepared shall enter into the joy of the Lord, while the unprepared shall be excluded." In accordance with these wise opinions of Calvin and Bucer, we need not take part in the controversy that has been keenly waged, between some Protestants on the one hand and some Papists on the other, whether the oil in the vessels, and which was wanting to the virgins who were foolish, represents faith, as Luther supposed, or good works, as Origen supposed. Strictly speaking, as Hugo de Sancto Victore saw (*Allegoria* x. 23), it represents neither. Grotius supposes that the reference is to the *Holy Spirit*; an opinion that is good, theologically, if we take with us the idea that the store of the heavenly influence is something which any one may get, if he be really willing and wishful,—something consequently which is not capriciously, arbitrarily, and unconditionally withheld from any. The foolish virgins had oil as well as the wise; but they did not, by an act of will, provide themselves with enough of it. On the contrary, by an act of will, they refused to provide themselves with a sufficiency. With Grotius agree many of the more modern expositors, such as Olshausen, Heubner, Lange, Valenti, Cremer, Arnot, Richard Baxter was not far off the mark, theologically, when he says that the *lamp* denoted "preparation by *sudden act*," and the *vessel* "preparation by *stated habit*."

VER. 14. The Saviour proceeds to another parable, in which He shows, from

14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to

another standpoint, what kind of preparation will be needed for His coming. *Spiritual diligence will be needed.* This parable (of vers. 14-30) has by some, as by Calvin for instance and Maldonato, been identified with that which is narrated in Luke xix. 11-27. But they are undoubtedly quite distinct (see Lange), though they partially interpenetrate. "This is to be remarked," says Chrysostom, "that the one is quite different from the other." For: The Saviour introduces His additional parable in the way of adducing an additional reason for that watchful preparation, which He had just inculcated. (Ver. 13.) As a man travelling into a far country, etc., etc.: We have here an instance of what grammarians call *anantapodoton*. There is no *apodosis*, *reddition*, or formal counterpart of the *protasis*, and thus no precise *conclusion* to the sentence. One might have expected that the two sides of the case would have been formally stated, somewhat as follows, *As a man travelling into a far country, etc., etc., so the Son of man in the kingdom of heaven, etc., etc.* But, in a free and easy way, the line of comparison is let go. (There is *imperfecta et pendens oratio*: MALDONATO.) There are many similar *anantapodota* in the New Testament, for the inspired writers were not fastidious in the matter of 'the wisdom of words.' *Travelling into a far country*: Or rather, and more simply, *going abroad* (*ἀποδημῶν*). See chap. xxi. 33. Wycliffe renders the expression, *goynge fer* (going far, that is, going 'furth' or forth) *in pilgrimage*. Tyndale's translation is, *redy to take his journey to a straunge countre*. Such a gentleman called his servants: The servants who belonged to him, and who were, indeed, his property. The Saviour thus refers only to such persons as have, by profession, a standing in His household. He refers, that is to say, to such as are 'professing' or 'professed' believers. All such individuals are His professed servants. But as all men without distinction ought to be His servants, the principle of the parable is applicable, in a certain important plane of representation, to men without exception. And delivered to them his goods: His property, so far as it might be available for trading purposes; his *floating capital* as it were. The word is rendered *substance* in Luke viii. 3, and *things possessed* in Luke xii. 15, Acts iv. 32. It denotes here *his means*. The reference, so far as the spiritual side of the parable is concerned, is to *the means of grace*, understanding by the expression, not specifically *the means of obtaining grace for one's self*, but generically *the means of diffusing, or of rendering available to self and to others, the Divine grace or graciousness*; the means, that is to say, of promoting at once the interests of the kingdom of heaven on earth and the terrestrial wealth, honour, and glory of the King of the kingdom. These means embrace, more particularly, the objective peculiarities and privileges unfolded in the Gospel, and most Divinely co-related to the subjective wants and susceptibilities of sinful men. They are the real property of Christ, as Christ.

VER. 15. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: He gave different sums to different servants; and yet the smallest sum was large. It was a *talent*, which was equivalent to *three thousand Jewish shekels*. It was above £200 sterling in value; but how much above is not easily determined. (See on Matt. xviii. 24.) It must be borne in mind, besides, that at

another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded

the time when our Lord was on the earth £200 represented a much larger sum than is represented by £200 at the present day in Great Britain, where the precious metals are, comparatively speaking, so abundant. This part of our Lord's parable has given occasion to a peculiar phrase or idiom in our English language, which has got itself stereotyped. We speak of a man of *talent*, and also of a man of *talents*, meaning a man of distinguished mental ability or abilities. The idea conveyed is not our Lord's idea. It is, in some respects, a misapplication of our Lord's idea. But it has become a fixture, nevertheless, in our idiomatic phraseology. Our Lord distinguished *talent* and *talents* from *ability*. See next clause. By *talent* and *talents* He meant given proportions of His own evangelical things, His evangelical *peculium*, the evangelical peculiarities of His heavenly kingdom, given in trust to His servants according to their ability. But as *simple mental ability* is also given to men in trust, to be traded with for Him who gave it, it is not unnaturally or illegitimately regarded as itself *a kind of talent*. And thus *abilities* are *talents*. So that, when we go round the subject, there is a point at which our Saviour's representation and our national idiom coincide. *Talent*, as signifying *faculty, power, or gift of nature*, is, says Dr. Samuel Johnson, "a metaphor borrowed from the talents mentioned in the Holy Writ." Our participial word *talented* however is an awkward term, inasmuch as we have no verb *to talent*. To each according to his several ability: That is, according to the ability that *severed*, or distinguished, him from his fellow servants; or, as we might very accurately render the expression, *according to his peculiar ability* (κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν δόναμιν). The master is careful to avoid everything like overtaxation of the ability or capability of any of his servants. The translation of the Rheims version is *according to his propre facultie*. The Geneva version is, *after his habilitie*. It was wise to give different sums to different servants. Some had greater ability for trading than others, and could manage with ease *larger concerns* than it would be possible for some others of equal conscientiousness to undertake. So, among our Lord's spiritual servants, some have greater capacity for spiritual trading than others. They can use to advantage, and to the increase of their Lord's substance and glory, a larger amount of evangelical energy and influence. Their natural ability is hence made the basis and the measure of their spiritual or evangelical responsibility. And took his journey: In our Authorized version it is, *And straightway took his journey*. But the word *straightway* is at the close of the sentence in the original; and Tischendorf, in his last (his eighth) edition, closes the sentence before it, and connects the word in construction with the next verse, *Straightway he that had received the five talents*. He is followed by Westcott-and-Hort, and they are supported in this transference by the fact that in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts there is no conjunction (no δέ) at the beginning of the 16th verse. There is some likelihood in Tischendorf's reading; but it is not a matter of much moment. *Took his journey*: Literally, *went abroad*. It is, as Hugo de Sancto Victore remarks, our Saviour's ascension to heaven that is represented (*profectio, ascensio*).

VER. 16. Straightway he who received the five talents went and traded with them: He lost no time, but instantly devoted himself to carry out his master's desire, applying his mind diligently to his work, and buying and selling to the

with the same, and made *them* other five talents. 17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee

best advantage. **And made other five talents:** He increased his master's capital cent. for cent. In our Authorized version there is an awkward supplement of the pronoun *them* introduced after *made*. It is not found in Wycliffe, Tyndale, the Geneva version, or the Rheims. Wycliffe's translation is, *and wan other fyve*. So Tyndale's, *and wanne other fyve talentes*. The Geneva, *and gained other five talents*. The *them* disturbs the idiom; for the word *made* is used for *won* or *gained*. We speak every day of a man *making* money. Both Greeks and Romans used the same idiom; so too do the Germans and the Dutch.

VER. 17. **And in like manner he who received the two gained other two:** Such is the simple reading of Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort (omitting *καὶ αὐτός*), under the sanction of \aleph B CL, 33; and the Italic, Vulgate, and Peshito Syriac, Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions.

VER. 18. **But he who received the one went away and digged in the earth—** digged a hole in the earth,—and hid his lord's money: He absolutely refused to trade with it for his master. That would have been, it seems, too great a tax upon his energies. *Of what use to him would it be to enrich his master? Was not his master rich enough already?* The word for money is silver in the original. A talent in silver coin would make a somewhat bulky deposit.

VER. 19. **But after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them:** He takes account of the use they had made of his talents. Note the expression *after a long time*. It was an incidental intimation to His apostles that they should not weary, though their Lord did not make His appearance so soon as they desired or had anticipated. Neither should *we*, in this age. It may still be a long time; and yet, viewed from another standpoint, it will be but a little while, and the Lord will not tarry.

VER. 20. **And he who received the five talents, approaching, brought other five talents, and said, Sir, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I gained five talents more:** The expression *beside them* or *in addition to them* is omitted in the manuscripts \aleph B DL, 33 "the queen of the cursives," and in the Italic, Vulgate, Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. It is left out by the modern critics, but its presence or absence is a matter of no practical moment.

VER. 21. **His lord said to him, Well done:** Literally, *Well!* And so Tyndale has it. It is a condensed expression of approval. **Good and faithful servant, thou wast faithful (in my absence) over a few things, I will (now that I am present) set thee over many things: I will promote thee to a much higher position**

ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents : behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gather-

in my establishment. Enter into the joy of thy lord : It is my pleasure, meanwhile, that thou shouldst be an honoured partaker with myself of all the festivities which are connected with my return. I am glad to be here. I am glad to meet with all my faithful people. It is a festive season to me and to mine. I wish thee to enjoy it to the full.

VER. 22, 23. He also who received the two talents then approached, and said, Sir, thou deliveredst unto me two talents : behold, I gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well ! good and faithful servant, thou wast faithful over a few things, I shall set thee over many ; enter into the joy of thy lord : This second servant, morally viewed, was in all respects as noble a man as the first. His vessel could not hold as much indeed as the other's, but it was as full. It is not mere capacity on which Jesus smiles congratulation and commendation. It is the right use of capacity.

VER. 24. And he also, who had received the one talent, approached, and said, Sir, I knew thee that thou art a hard man : He knew himself, he should have said, that he had been inexcusably negligent and slothful. But instead of making this truthful acknowledgement, he fished about for a false excuse, and made his case a thousand times worse than it would otherwise have been. He accused his master of being *hard*, that is, hard hearted ; insensible to the feelings of others in all matters relating to money, and hence close-fisted as regarded his own, and grasping as regarded what might by hook or crook be got from others. The 'seventeenth' meaning which Dr. Samuel Johnson gives to the word *hard* is the one that is applicable here, 'avaricious, faultily sparing.' Little was the servant thinking of the hardness and utter stoniness of his own heart, in giving utterance to such cruel insolence, falsehood, and slander. Reaping where thou didst not sow : Not only reaping thine own fields, and leaving no gleanings for the poor behind, but unscrupulously passing the boundary line that separates thy fields from the fields of thy neighbours, and thrusting thy sickle, whenever thou hast an opportunity, into their standing corn. *Sir, thou art so hard as to be not only ungenerous, but positively unjust.* It is added, and gathering where thou didst not scatter : *Where and whence.* The reference of the expression is, apparently, to the husbandman's work on the threshing-floor. He first scattered over the area of the floor the loosened sheaves of grain, which he wished to be threshed. Then he threshed them with flails, or by the trampling of oxen or other animals, or by machines. Then he winnowed the threshed mass. And then he gathered the pure grain. (See on Matt. iii. 12.) *The grain was gathered where the grain-bearing stalks were scattered.* But the servant before us slanderously charged his master with seeking to gather grain where he had never scattered the grain-bearing stalks, with seeking to get profit where he had never expended either labour or capital. What a picture

ing where thou hast not strawed: 25 and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that* is thine. 26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not? and gather where I have not strawed? 27 thou

he draws of a commercial 'screw,' or of an unscrupulous miser, hard of hand and hard of heart, scraping with his 'muck-rake,' and griping, all round and round, in other people's inclosures!

VER. 25. **And I was afraid:** Here was the alleged reason why he buried the talent committed to him. It would be partly the real reason, and partly a veil to hide the real reason, his cherished indolence and self-indulgence. He was afraid; afraid of his master's severity, and thence afraid to trade with the talent, lest he should be unsuccessful in his 'adventure.' If he should be unsuccessful, how could he ever face a master so exceedingly severe, exacting, unfeeling, and unscrupulous about the way in which money was got for him, if only it was got? It was a frightful spectre that was staring upon him from within the recesses of his imagination. But whence came it? It was the creation of his own foul imagination. He wilfully, without reason, and in the face of reason, projected on his master the loathsome features of his own base character. **And went and hid thy talent in the earth: behold, thou hast thine own:** Or, as the Rheims has it, *thou hast that which thine is.* Tyndale's version is *thou hast thyn awne.*

VER. 26. **But his lord answered and said to him, Thou wicked and slothful servant:** The word for *wicked* (*πονηρός*) means etymologically *bringing trouble*. Principal Campbell insists that it means *malignant*. But this is too narrow too much its evil import. Webster and Wilkinson render it *worthless*; the Rheims version is *naughtie*; and so Sir John Cheke's. There seems, however, to be no better rendering than that of our Authorized version. **Thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not? and gather whence I scattered not?** To read these words as if they were the acknowledgement and affirmation of the allegations quoted is to do the greatest injustice possible to the character of the master, and the spirit and aim of the parable. We must suppose the infusion of such tones as would express the most indignant querying and amazement. For a moment, though for a moment only, the insulted master takes up the insults, and holds them forth to view as containing, in their very essence, and even apart from all other considerations, a full and sufficient ground for the unmitigated condemnation of the reviler. It is as if he had said: *You do not mince your insults. You have put your invention on the rack to find out the blackest possible pigment, with which to bedaub my character. I will not reason with you regarding such unparalleled unreasonableness. But out of your own foul calumnies, as uttered by your own mouth, and without taking into account at all the element of utter untruthfulness that is in them, I condemn you. You knew, you say, that I was the hardest and most avaricious of men? You knew that?* The good modern editors of the New Testament insert an interrogation point at the close of the clause. So Bengel, Schott, Knapp, Tittmann, Näbe, Burton, Hahn, Vater, Göschen, Muralto, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Buttmann, Alford, Weizsäcker, Billiet, Oltramare, and Westcott and Hort. It is omitted by Erasmus, Stephens, Beza, the Elzevirs, Mill, Wetstein, Griesbach, Matthæi, Scholz, Bloomfield, Webster and Wilkinson, Ornsby, the English Revisionists, etc.

oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it

VER. 27. Thou oughtest then to have put my money to the exchangers: Or, better, *to the bankers*, the Rheims translation. The original term is different from the term employed in chap. xxi. 12, and means, exactly, *bankers*, having reference to the *table, bench, or bank*, on which the money was counted. Our word *bank* is just the Italian *banco*, a *bench* or *counter*. Note the verb *put*. The Rheims translation is *committed*. In Cranmer's Bible it is *delivered*. The Greek term is literally *thrown*, a graphic representation, bringing to view how very easy it would have been to have cast down the bag of money on the banker's bank. And at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest: *Interest*, to our modern ears, is a better word than *usury*, though *usury* of old just meant *interest*, and was an unexceptionable term. It denoted the commission that was given for the use of borrowed money. Now however usury means *illegal* or *exorbitant interest*; and a usurer, or usurious person, is a financial harpy or shark, a rapacious money-lender, whose aim is to take undue advantage of the difficulties or vices of those who wish to borrow. *Usury*, in the passage before us, is the translation of the Rheims version, and of Wycliffe. Tyndale and the Geneva have *vantage*, which was an evasion of the proper translation, for, at the time that these versions were made, the principle of lending money on interest or for usury was regarded with suspicion. The original word (*τόκος*) denotes the *produce* or natural *progeny* of money lent. In the laws of Moses usury was denounced on the part of Hebrews in relation to Hebrews, though permitted in relation to strangers. (Deut. xxiii. 19, 20; comp. Ps. xv. 5.) It was a peculiar state of society that was contemplated, a sort of family state, a state of brotherhood, in which it would be unnatural for a more fortunate brother to refuse to help, except in a venal way, or for a pecuniary consideration, a poor or unfortunate brother. (See Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 35-37; Deut. xv. 1-10.) It was a grand ideal; and some day it will be realised. There was a momentary revival of it after Pentecost. But the nation did not come up to the mark of its high calling. It did not become 'a holy nation' in reality, a holy family or brotherhood. Sin entered in and ran riot. Selfishness marred the harmonies of the Divine constitution. The circumvallation, that had been Divinely constructed to keep the people intact from the surrounding heathenisms and pollutions, got to be, at many points, completely levelled or obliterated. The hedge of peculiarity was trampled down. And hence it was found necessary to modify in practice some of the original enactments, which had contemplated a totally different state of society. Sin had estranged Jew from Jew. They had become as it were 'strangers' to one another. The old law concerning *usury* had thus, among other laws, gradually fallen into desuetude. Properly so. And in a commercial age like ours, when there is an aim, not to separate locally and socially a peculiar people, but to weave into amity and unity all the nations of the earth by commercial inter-relations and the aggressions of philanthropy, the adoption of the old Jewish law on interest would be at once a political anachronism and a social solecism. But a new state of things will by-and-by be inaugurated.

VER. 28. Take then away from him the talent, which he has so signally and

unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

so sinfully failed to improve, and give it to him that hath the ten talents: He who has the ten talents has shown, in addition to his praiseworthy willingness and devotedness, such eminent capacity for business, that it will be as easy for him, when he resumes his trading, to put out to profitable use eleven talents, as ten; and I shall rejoice, we may suppose his lord to have added, to give him an increasing interest in his transactions.

VER. 29. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: Or, as the same verb is rendered in chap. xiii. 12, *He shall have more abundance*, that is, *he shall have more abundantly*. He shall have measure, not only full, but running over. This is the case with him who *has* what he ought to have; and who *has* it because he has made a right use of what has been given to him. But from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath: From him who *hath* not what he ought to have, because he hath not used aright and improved what he graciously got, shall be taken away what he *got* in grace, and thus what, in that respect, he *has*. In consequence of not having what he ought to have, he will lose what he actually has. Such will be the doom of those who do not turn to account, according to their ability, their Christian advantages, for the advancement of the interests of the kingdom of heaven, and of Christ the King. The ability of some to use for Christ a talent of privileges, or several talents, may be the ability of natural intelligence. That of others may be, to a large extent, the ability of acquired learning. Of others it may be, pre-eminently, the ability of money, or of social position, or of æsthetic genius, or of science mastered, or of personal charms, or of peculiar emotional susceptibility, or of some special energy in active power. Whatever the peculiar capacity may be, he who does not improve the Christian advantages, with which it is graciously charged, shall in the end forfeit all advantage of Christianity and of Christ. His vessel will be turned upside down and emptied, and then refilled with a bitter potion of penalty.

VER. 30. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth: Words of melancholy doom, which our Saviour, alas! found it necessary to iterate and reiterate. See chap. viii. 12, xiii. 42, 50, xxii. 13. The partition between the parable and the thing parabolically represented had, at this concluding stage of the narrative, got thin and riven. The reality beyond, whether a reality of gloom or of glory, was bursting through. The lord of the talents is already in his festal hall. It is brightly illuminated. None, however, but faithful and therefore useful servants can be allowed to feast with him. The unprofitable or useless servant must be cast into the outside darkness. It is the final separation that is thought of, the separation of the light of glory from the darkness of woe, the separation of the good and the bad among men. In drawing this line of final separation, regard will be had to actual character, as evinced by actual works. See the following paragraph, ver. 31-46.

VER. 31. The paragraph, extending from this verse to the close of the

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 and before him shall be gathered all nations:

chapter, is not a parable, as some, inclusive of Townsend and Olshausen, have supposed, but a prophecy. It is a prophecy, however, which is largely imbued with parabolic and dramatic symbolisms; and which consequently requires, for its interpretation, the careful discrimination of substance and form, essence and accident. It is, says Chrysostom, "a most delightful portion of Scripture, in the contemplation of which, however often it be revolved, the mind never wearies." But when the Son of man shall have come in His glory: It is what is often called His *second coming* that is referred to, that coming which is parabolically mentioned in vers. 6 and 19, and which is vividly depicted in chap. xxiv. 30. It is frequently referred to, in the Old Testament predictions, in such a way as not to be distinguished from His first coming. *The two events were looked at in perspective by the ancient seers, and coalesced to the eye.* No wonder. They were in the same direction of things, and were to be seen in one plane of vision. They belonged to one category of phenomena. Indeed, when we turn from the standpoint of prophetic perspective, and look at the subject from a higher standpoint, a standpoint that has to do with the Divine philosophy of things, we see that the two comings are, in reality, just two phases of one great manward movement on the part of God. *They are two scenes, as it were, in one great theanthropic act.* And perhaps there may be scenes within scenes. The future coming, while one in one respect, may yet be multiple in some other respect. There is nothing indeed in the chapter before us, or in the preceding chapter, to suggest this multiple element; but see chap. xvi. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 23-38; 1 Thess. iv. 16; and especially Rev. xx. In His glory: Not in a state of humiliation, as at His first coming, but in a state of glorification, as unchallengeable King of kings. He shall come to give its complement to His great mediatorial work, and to put all things finally to rights in the relation of this earth, and its inhabitants, to the rest of God's great universe. And all the angels with Him: The adjective *holy* before *angels*, in the received text and the Authorized version, is probably a supplement. It is wanting in the manuscripts **N B D L II**, 1, 33, and in the Vulgate and old Latin versions, as also in the Coptic, Jerusalem Syriac, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. The scene depicted is in the highest degree august. See the celestial pomp, "all the angels." The pomp, however, is not merely 'spectacular.' *Ministry is needed* to an extent that baffles human computation; and hence, in particular, the immensity of the retinue of *ministering spirits*. See chap. xiii. 41, 49, xxiv. 31. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: The throne that appertains to Him as an integral part of His glory, and that is itself most glorious. It is represented, in Rev. xx. 11, as "a great white throne." But to speculate on the physics of its construction or appearance would be to lose one's self in a tangle of fancies. It is enough for us to realise that the throne will be at once pre-eminently 'great,' and perfectly 'white' or immaculate and pure, and hence pre-eminently 'glorious.' From it will issue, and that is the main thing, the perfection of judgement, judgement that will not only be absolutely authoritative and irreversible and hence final, but that will also command the approbation and admiration of the moral universe at large.

VER. 32. And before Him shall be gathered all the nations: Viz., of mankind.

and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd

The phrase is thus equivalent to *the whole human race*. The word rendered *nations* (ἔθνη) is indeed generally employed in the New Testament to designate *non-Judaic peoples*, or *Gentiles*. It is generally rendered *Gentiles*. In the passage before us Sir John Cheke translates it *heathen*. But there is no reason for supposing that the Saviour was intentionally excluding the Jews from His reference. On the contrary, He was intentionally ascending to a standpoint of view, from which the dispensational distinction between Jews and Gentiles was completely obliterated, so that the Jewish people, as now contemplated by Him, simply took their place, among other peoples, as one of the nations of the earth. Comp. chap. xxviii. 19. Wycliffe's translation is *alle folkis*. *All the nations*: There is nothing in the expression, or its immediate setting, to determine whether the reference is simply to those who shall be alive on the earth at the coming of the Lord, or, more comprehensively, to all, in addition, who have ever lived. But the paragraph, viewed as a whole, and taken in connection with the entire 'eschatological' discourse of which it forms a part, seems to proceed on the assumption that *all who have ever lived are embraced within the scope of the Saviour's conception*. Why should it be supposed that the judicial action depicted will be confined to such as shall happen to be alive at the time of the Lord's appearing? It is not to them only that accountability to the Lord attaches. And we know from other passages, which speak explicitly, that the great judgement will have reference at once to the 'quick' and to the 'dead.' See 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1; Rev. xx. 12, 13. *All the nations*: Various other limitations of the expression, besides the limitation in the time direction, have been imagined by expositors. Some have imagined that it is only *professing Christians* who are referred to. Lactantius (*Inst.* vii. 20) was of this opinion, and Euthymius Zigabenus, and Grotius. Meyer too; though, in the second edition of his *Commentary*, he supposed that it is only *professing Gentile Christians* who are meant, while in his first edition he had supposed that it is *all men* without exception who are referred to. Others, such as Keil (*Opuscula*, pp. 136-159), have gone in quite a contrary direction, and have supposed that *those only are referred to who are not professing Christians*. Olshausen was of the same opinion, substantially. "The only alternative," he says, "is to understand the term as denoting all men, with the exception of believers, that is, *all unbelievers*." Stier, Alford, and Benham hold corresponding opinions. They suppose that the reference is to *all men with the exception of the elect, or such as are truly saints, or really Christian*. All such limitations, however, whatever their modification, are unwarrantable, and at variance with the fundamental conception of the paragraph. And He shall separate them from one another: Note the *them*. It is masculine in the original (*αὐτοῖς*), though the word for *nations* (ἔθνη) is neuter. The Saviour's mind has already disintegrated the nations in conception, and was thinking of the individuals who composed them. He 'separates' individuals from individuals into two great classes. He knew them thoroughly. He had always known them. He was familiar from of old with everything in their hearts, everything in their lives. Hence when they shall be gathered in a commingled condition before Him, He will be able to reduce the chaos into perfect order, and with infallible precision. Sitting on His throne, and viewing, at a glance, the immense congregation, He will be able to point out unhesitatingly, to His attendant angels, all those who should be conducted to the right hand, and all

divideth *his* sheep from the goats : 33 and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then

those who should be conducted to the left. The myriads of attendant spirits, acting on His directions, will effect with unerring accuracy the classification into the two great groups. The right hand group will consist of those who have done right and are right. The left hand group of those who have done wrong and are wrong. As the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats : Literally, *from the kids*. The shepherd has no difficulty in effecting this separation when he requires it. He is in no danger of mistaking, in any case, a sheep for a goat or kid, or a goat or kid for a sheep. Though the two kinds of animals are often mixed together when out in the fields grazing, yet to the shepherd's eye they are never confounded ; and when, for any purpose whatsoever, they require to be separated, the separation is effected unerringly. The two species of animals, though in some respects somewhat alike, are yet very different. When travelling between Joppa and Jerusalem, I saw, at a certain spot, a great intermingled flock of sheep and goats. The goats were all perfectly black, the sheep were all beautifully white ; and thus, even to my eye, and while I was looking from a distance, the distinction between the two kinds was strikingly obvious. If a separation of the two had been required, there would not have been the least danger of a mistake. The East is the land of sheep ; but in some parts of it goats also are extensively reared, not merely for the consumpt of the kid's flesh, but for milk. Dr. Tristram, in speaking of his visit to Rasheiya, "perched on a spur of Mount Hermon," says : "Below the castle is a wide, open market place. In it hundreds of goats were gathered for the night, and it was no easy matter to thread our way among them. All the she-goats of the neighbouring hills are driven in every evening, and remain for their morning milking, after which they set forth on their day's excursion. Each house possesses several, and all know their owners. The evening milking is a picturesque scene. Every street and open space is filled with the goats ; and women, girls, and boys are everywhere milking with their small pewter pots, the goats anxiously awaiting their turn, and lying down to chew the cud as soon as it is over." "They are a solemn set, these black mountain goats." "The ears of the Lebanon goats are not so long as in the Syrian breed, nor do they curl up, and the horns are generally larger, and often diverge horizontally instead of lying back over the ears. The hair is longer and more silky, and the build of the animal more compact. Any other colour than black is rare." (*The Land of Israel*, chap. xxv. p. 608.) Horatio B. Hackett says : "The people of the villages on the borders of the desert are accustomed to lead forth their flocks to the pastures found there. We frequently passed, on our way, shepherds so employed ; and it was interesting to observe, as a verification of what is implied in the Saviour's statement (Matt. xxv. 33), that the sheep and the goats were not kept distinct, but intermixed with one another." (*Illustrations*, p. 11.)

VER. 33. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on the left : *The goats*, literally the *kidlings*. It is a diminutive of the word used in the preceding verse. The Saviour, having in that verse employed a graphic simile in which sheep and kids or goats are specified, continues in this verse to employ, with augmentingly graphic effect, the same kind of terminology, but no longer in the form of simple simile. He employs it metaphorically. He, as it were, says to His disciples : *Let the holy be represented by the sheep to*

shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you

which I have incidentally referred, and the unholy by the kids or goats. These two kinds of animals will serve sufficiently the end I have in view. And although it is in some respects an arbitrary metaphor to speak of goats in the manner proposed, yet allow the pictorial symbolism for the occasion. As for sheep, they are appropriately representative of the holy. There is something in their gentleness, inoffensiveness, peacefulness, and tractability that readily vindicates the symbolism. Note the idiomatic phraseology, *on the right hand, on the left*. In Greek the phrase of idiom is different: it is *from the right-side (parts), and from the left-side (parts)*, the direction being measured not on or along the side, or toward the centre, of the person or thing referred to, but from the centre. Wycliffe's translation is, *on His righthalf, on the lefthalf*.

VER. 34. Then shall the King say to them on His right hand: Note that the Saviour says of Himself, *the King*. Comp. chap. xxvii. 11. He knew thoroughly His own dignity, although it was veiled from the eyes of most on earth. When He shall come again, it will be unveiled. He will not come simply as a Judge. He will be a Judge, from whose judicial decisions there will be no appeal. He will be a royal Judge. He is *the King*. He says, *Come, ye blessed of My Father*: Note the *Come*. The Saviour wishes the holy to be *beside Himself* for ever and ever. They are the *blessed of the Saviour's Father*. The word *blessed* is in the perfect tense. They *have been blessed*. The Father has spoken well of them (*εὐλογημένοι*). He has uttered His benediction upon them, that is the precise idea. He has been pleased with the inner choice made by them in the heart of their heart, and He has expressed His pleasure in a Divine decree that they should be exalted into the enjoyment of His Son's everlasting bliss (*οἱ εὐλογημένοι, οἱ ἑπαινετοί, οἱ ἐκλεκτοί*: EUTHYMUS). Instead of 'the simple expression *ye blessed*, Tyndale has *ye blessed children*. Wakefield inserts the same supplement. But wrongly. The filial idea is not indicated in the expression. The Saviour does not say *ye blessed of your Father*, or, *of the Father*, but of *My Father*, realising at once His own peculiar relationship to the Father, and the supremacy of the Father in the mediatorial economy. (See John xiv. 28.) *Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*: *The kingdom*, that is, the kingdom of heaven, as viewed on the side of its privileges. In that heavenly kingdom there are, in the matter of privileges, no drawbacks, no disadvantages. There are no trying inequalities of pressure; no hardships; no galling or grinding taxation, for instance; no unallowed rivalries and selfish competition; no lordliness on the one hand, and no serfdom on the other. There is a perfect adjustment and balance, a perfect brotherhood. And the King's kingliness is employed to bless every individual to the fulness of his capacity. *Inherit this kingdom*, says our Saviour; that is, *Receive it as your lot*. Such is the import of the term employed (*κληρονομήσατε*). Wycliffe's alternative translation is admirable, *take yee in possessioun the kyngdam*. The blessings of the kingdom are ready for you in virtue of your relation to Me. Ye are joint-heirs with Me. I am My Father's Heir. And in things of this description the Father does not need to die, that the Son and His co-heirs may possess and enjoy all. *Prepared for you from the foundation of the world*: And long before it (Eph. i. 4); but the Saviour at this time does not choose to go farther back in thought. From every point in the past the Father was looking forward. And beholding, in the future, event after event rising up

from the foundation of the world : 35 for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : 36 naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee ? or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in ? or naked, and clothed thee ? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ?

in succession, He smiled in complacency as He witnessed from afar the allegiance of the believing. He chose them to be joint-heirs with His Son, in the matter of the bliss of the heavenly kingdom. He prepared the kingdom for them, providing for every one of them ample scope and verge, the fullest possible range, of employment and enjoyment.

VER. 35. For I was an hungred : That is, *I was in a state of hunger*. See on chap. xii. 1. Wycliffe's fine, simple version is, *I was hungry—And ye gave Me meat* : Or more literally, and as the Rheims has it, *and ye gave Me to eat*.—*I was thirsty*, or, as Tyndale has it, *I thirsted*, and the Rheims, *I was athirst*, and ye gave Me drink.—*I was a stranger*, and ye took Me in : A beautiful translation. Tyndale's is, *I was herbourlesse* (harbourless), and ye lodged Me. Sir John Cheke's is, *I was a stranger, and ie harboroud Me*. Both these are excellent ; but our Authorized version, borrowed from the Rheims, is best. *Stranger* is the literal translation, that is, *one who has come from another place* (Latin, *advena*), and who is therefore in want of the comforts of a home. *Ye took Me in* ; *ye led Me along with (yourselves) into your homes*. *Ye took Me as by the hand and led Me in* (*συνήγαγέρτ με*).

VER. 36. Naked, and ye clothed Me : *Naked*, the word is to be understood as embracing in its range of popular application *every ill-clad condition*. Comp. Jas. ii. 15. *I was sick, and ye visited Me* : The word translated *visited* (*ἐπισκέψασθε*), etymologically means *looked upon* ; and it is interesting to note that *visited* itself is connected with *vision*. When we make a *visit* to a person, our aim is to *see* him. Le Clerc and Beausobre, missing the pregnancy of the expression, omit the idea of *visiting* altogether, and substitute the idea of *tending, nursing, or caring for, vous avez eu soin de moi*. *I was in prison, and ye came to Me* : Ye were not ashamed to share with Me the odium under which I was unjustly lying.

VERS. 37–39. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee hungry and fed Thee ? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink ? And when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in ? or naked, and clothed Thee ? And when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee ? The righteous are represented as dwelling on the details of beneficence which the Lord had specified, going over them one by one, inasmuch as the Lord had signified that they had not only done one or other of the good deeds which He particularizes, but all of them. The thoughts of the righteous are expressed, not as they shall be uttered in the light of the statement about to be made by the Saviour, but as they would be naturally expressed in the absence of the Saviour's explanation. That explanation has for its logical antecedent the diffidence, and hence the difficulty, which the holy are supposed to feel in reference to the Saviour's

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of

representation of their conduct and character. All the holy, indeed, may be regarded as having been conscious of love to God, love to Christ, love to Christians, and love to men in general. But many of them, the overwhelming majority of them, have never literally met with Christ in a state of destitution; and how then can it be the case that they have done to Him, as He says they have done, and that it is in consideration of having done as He says they have done, that they are welcomed into heavenly glory? It is not simply the idea of *modesty* that is expressed. Something profounder is suggested. *There is a mystery in many of the actions of men, which needs the interpretation of the Master.*

VER. 40. And the King shall answer and say to them, Verily I say to you, In so far as ye did it to one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it to Me: The King thus interprets the righteous to themselves. He interprets for them their deeds of beneficence. Underneath all these deeds He found a principle of faith that terminated on Himself. Their love followed their faith, and, in all its outgoings, vibrated toward Himself. He was implicitly the Object of it all. The love in particular that terminated on Christians, even the humblest and the 'least,' is regarded by Christ as going farther and terminating on Himself. Christ thus identifies Himself with Christians, even the lowliest, "not monks only," says Chrysostom, "and those who have made mountains their haunts, but all believers." He is, in His own conception of Himself, one with them all; and He wishes them all to realise, in their own conception of themselves, that they are one with Him (*ἐν τῷ γὰρ Χριστιανῷ ὁ Χριστός*: THEOPHYLACT). And thus what is done to them, because they are Christians He looks upon as done to Himself. Hence it is the case that there is a latent theological reference to *faith* in the awards of the great judgement day. Its existence is tacitly recognised in the case of all those who are approved of. But it is its ethical result, the love into which it commutes itself, and which is the fulfilling of the law, it is this which is brought into prominence as the public ground of the judicial approbation. Not that we are to suppose that any are everlastingly saved by the merit of their good works or their love. Salvation is wholly of grace through faith. The propitiation of Christ is the only meritorious cause of the forgiveness of sinners. (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) Their faith, 'without works,' is the only condition on which they get the benefit of the great propitiation. (Rom. iii. 20-22; iv. 5, 6.) But still their faith was never meant to continue without works. (Jas. ii. 17.) It would be of no worth if it did not work. It was meant to work; and it does work diligently. (Gal. v. 6.) It effloresces and bears fruit in works. (Rom. vi. 22.) And these works, when viewed in their inner essence as well as in their outer form, constitute that character which is moral meetness for everlasting glory. It is on the evidence of this character, a thing patent to the great moral public, that the Great Judge pronounces His final awards. See 2 Cor. v. 10; Rom. ii. 13; and comp. Jas. ii. 14-26. And hence, while the Saviour specifies love to Christians as Christians, and thus love to Himself as Christ, yet the specification is representative, and the principle is applicable generically to all true benevolence to man as man. There is a plane of things on which Christ has become a 'brother' to every man. And when benevolence is shown to the least of the human brotherhood, because he is a brother and a man, Christ is

these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels :

honoured, and God is glorified. "For this end," says Chrysostom, "God gave us speech, and hands, and feet, and strength of body, and mind, and understanding, that we might use them at once for our own salvation and for our neighbour's weal." When the Judge, as it were, points to "*these His brethren,*" and then refers to the *least* of them (*τούτων τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν ἐλαχίστων*), it is not needful that we should suppose that they are different from 'the sheep,' and are hence to be regarded as the children of 'the first resurrection' and the assessors of Christ. The Saviour has not been here distinguishing between resurrection and resurrection. He has not been referring formally to the resurrection at all. He is massing His references into the widest representations. And His specifying language, '*these My brethren,*' is to be accounted for on the principle that in pronouncing sentence on each, He could point to surrounding brethren who had been loved and sympathetically helped. Even in speaking to the '*least*' of the brethren, the Saviour beautifully portrays the excellency of their character by referring, not so much to their devotedness to their superiors, as to their benevolence to others around them who were like themselves among the '*least*.' It is often nobler in a poor believer to help according to his ability another poor believer, than to cling admiringly and gratefully to those who are rich and strong.

VER. 41. Then shall He say also to them on the left hand, Depart from Me: An awfully solemn expression as coming from the lips of Him who has come so near to men, and who is now saying so urgently to all men, "Come to Me." On the floor of morals there must either be attraction or repulsion; and they who will not come nigh must in the end be driven away. Ye accursed: When looking at the expression theologically, we cannot doubt that a reference to the Father is implied. *Ye who have been cursed*, viz., by My Father, ye on whom He has already pronounced, in merited severity, His malediction. The Son, in judging, but echoes after all the mind of the Father. Even in this function of judging, He is the Word of the Father. Alford would challenge the implicated reference to the Father. He says, "Not 'cursed of My Father,' because all man's salvation *is of God*, all his condemnation *from himself*." Chrysostom makes a similar remark. Also Origen and Theophylact. But too narrowly. For while all man's sin is certainly from himself, his condemnation is as certainly from God. (See Ps. xxxvii. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 8; Rom. ii. 5, 6, ix.) At the same time it is significant that formal reference to the action of the Father is merged out of view, so that the malediction is, as it were, impersonal in form. Into the everlasting fire: The word *fire* is used, of course, not literally, but metaphorically, to represent the dreadful penalty, whatever that may be, of persisted in sinfulness. The word *everlasting* or *æonian* has in it no wicket gate that we can see; certainly no wicket gate ajar, through which light from heaven is streaming in. The Saviour adds, Prepared for the devil and his angels: Prepared, or, more literally, *which has been prepared*. There is no hint of any remedial scheme initiated for the recovery of *the devil and his angels*. Perhaps there have been very peculiar aggravations in their rebellion. Perhaps the system of the universe, in its moral interrelations, did not admit of a twofold plan of propitiation; and perhaps the plan that had reference to men was not sufficiently elastic, and was not capable of being made sufficiently

42 for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. 46 And these shall go away into

elastic, to admit of its application to devils. Perhaps there was not an opening, in the nature of the case, for the principle of representation as applicable to fallen spirits. Perhaps it would be unwise to make sure that wherever sin should be chosen, propitiation would be introduced. Perhaps it was evident to the Divine omniscience,—which embraces not only all that is *future*, but also all that is *futurible*,—that propitiation, if made for devils, would be utterly without avail, because it would be unanimously scorned and rejected. It might hence be a necessity, in the Divine moral government, to prepare an appropriate penalty for the devil and his angels. Something different was prepared for men (*quantum ad deum*: ORIGEN); but if any men will persist in taking part with the devil in his work and spirit, they must submit to take part with him also in his doom. Alford entirely lost for the moment his theological longitude and latitude when, in explanation of the expression, “prepared for the devil and his angels,” and in antithesis to it, he says, “prepared *not* for you: because *there is election to life*; but *there is no reprobation to death*.” There is certainly no unconditional reprobation to death. But God does doom the impenitent.

VERS. 42, 43. For I was hungry, and ye did not give Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye did not give Me to drink; I was a stranger, and ye did not take Me in; naked, and ye did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and ye did not visit Me: They were culpably destitute of faith in Christ, and hence of that love which is the fruit of faith. No wonder that they did not discover Christ in *His little ones* around them, and love them. The implicit and essential Christ, revealed to them and to all in the spirit of the letter, if not in the Letter of the Spirit, was rejected by them or neglected. Even in the presence of the historical Christ, they could so shut their eyes as to take no note of Him in the conduct and character of His representees.

VER. 44. Then shall they also—they as well as the righteous—answer, saying: The *Him*, which is given in the received text after *answer*, is omitted in all the uncial manuscripts, and by all the great editors, inclusive of Bengel and Griesbach. And Mill condemned it. Lord, when did we see Thee hungering, or thirsting, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee? If we had ever really met with Thee, O Thou Lord of glory, in want of anything, we would assuredly have given Thee freely of all that we possessed. If we ever denied Thee, we did not know that it was Thou whom we denied.

VER. 45. Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say to you, in so far as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me: Ye should have seen Me in the humblest of My brethren. I was really in them, the Christ of their Christianity.

VER. 46. And these, adds our Saviour to His disciples, shall go away into

everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2 Ye know that after two

everlasting punishment, but the righteous shall enter with the Saviour Himself into everlasting life: It is the same adjective in the original that is connected both with *punishment* and with *life*. Tyndale arbitrarily varied the translation into *everlasting* and *eternal*; but Wycliffe and Sir John Cheke have *everlasting* in both clauses. Whatsoever be the standpoint of view from which we choose to look at the Saviour's representations, whether it be simply popular or strictly philosophical, it is important to note that the element of duration or age or ages, so far as it is indicated at all, is identical toward both poles. The mind is led on as far in the descending, as in the ascending direction. ("*Prudens lector,*" says Jerome, "*attende quod et supplicia aeterna sint, et vita perpetua metum deinceps non habeat ruinarum.*") The Revisionists and McLellan use in both clauses the word *eternal* instead of *everlasting*. But it is desirable to reserve, as far as possible, the word *eternal* to denote infinite duration in the past as well as infinite duration in the future. And as regards the radical *æonian* idea, it is noteworthy that it is equally suggested in the first syllables of both the terms: *eternal* is *æviternal* or *etivernal*, and what is *eviternal* is for *ever*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE end is at hand. Two days more, and the last day in the Lord's terrestrial career will have arrived. Things are thickening fast, and converging in the direction of the great Consummation.

VER. 1. And it came to pass, when Jesus finished all these sayings: The discoursings, namely, that are contained in chaps. xxiv. and xxv. They had been poured forth freely from the fulness of His prophetic spirit, as He sat, along with His disciples, on the brow of the Mount of Olives, and looked on the loved but lapsed city and the doomed temple. He said to His disciples: Turning to them direct, and addressing them. In what goes immediately before He had been not so much conversing as prophesying. His gaze would be abstracted from surrounding objects, and fixed, *in perfect second sight*, on distant realities.

VER. 2. Ye know that after two days the passover takes place: Or *pask*, as Wycliffe gives it. Tyndale renders it *ester*, that is, *Easter*, and so it is in Myles Coverdale, and in Cranmer's Bible, and in the Geneva. It was the memorial of the day when the destroying angel struck the first-born of the Egyptians, and *passed over* the blood-sprinkled dwellings of the Israelites. (Exod. xii. 1-51.) It was the chief of the Jewish festivals, occurring in the centre of the first month of the Jewish year, the month Nisan or Abib. (Exod. xii. 2-6.) It marked the date of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and was the foreshadowing of a grander sacrifice, that was to be followed by a greater deliverance than the exode from the Egyptian house of bondage. Our Saviour was crucified on Passover Day, or Easter (*see on ver. 18*); and He thus wound up the Old Testament Passovers. "Christ our Passover" was then "sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. v. 7.) It has been a time of paschal festivity,

days is *the feast of the passover*, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes,

ever since, to such of mankind as choose to avail themselves of His blood, that they may be saved. (1 Cor. v. 8.) The Passover occurred at the time of the full moon about the end of March, or the beginning of April. We say "about the end of March or the beginning of April"; for as the Jewish months were lunar, or measured by natural lunations, having the full moon always in their centre, they do not correspond with the months of our modern calendar, which have no special connection with lunations, but are solar, being measured off as integrant parts of the period of the annual revolution of the earth round the sun. *After two days*: It is probable that it was on the Tuesday afternoon of our Lord's last week that He uttered these words. He measured off the intervening Wednesday and Thursday, and let His thoughts fix themselves on the Friday, "Good Friday," the middle day of the month, Passover Day, the day of His own sacrifice. It is probable that He had made His triumphal entry into the city on Sunday, the 2nd April, the 10th Nisan or Abib, u.c. 785; A.D. 30. (See Matt. xxi. 1-17, and comp. John xii. 1-15.) He went back to Olivet in the afternoon. On Monday He returned to the city, acting His sublime parable, by the way, on the barren fig-tree. (Matt. xxi. 18, etc.) Again He went back to Olivet to spend the night. On Tuesday, as He returned once more to the city, the disciples noticed how completely the tree had been blighted. (Mark xi. 19, 20.) That Tuesday was a crisis-day in reference to the people. Our Lord expended His last effort upon them, in the way of testifying to them. He thus wound up His work as a public teacher of the Jews. He did not cease, however, thenceforward to teach. He did not lay aside His prophetic office. But retiring with His disciples, He opened up to them glimpses of what was to be on the earth in nearer and more distant times. And the Son of man is delivered up to be crucified: *Delivered up* is a more literal translation than that of our Authorized version, *betrayed*. It is, without the preposition *up*, the translation of Tyndale, Coverdale, Sir John Choche, the Geneva, and the Rheims. The word employed is the same that occurs in Matt. xi. 27, xviii. 34, xxv. 14, 20, 22. The reference, however, is undoubtedly to the delivering up *by the traitor*. Note the tense of the verb, *is delivered up*. The Saviour lets His mind go forward to the Passover Day, so that the delivering up is, as it were, a thing present to Him. He saw it as clearly as if it were already actually present. We are not to suppose, however, that He intended this clause to be, like the former, dependent on the expression *Ye know*. The connection is free and easy, and the intentional reference of *Ye know* drops off, undoubtedly, at the close of the first clause. Henneberg reverses the real state of the case when he translates the verb as an imperative, *Know!* (*Wisset!*)

VER. 3. Then: That is, on that very afternoon or evening of Tuesday. The parables and woes which our Saviour had uttered in the temple (xxi.-xxiii.) had aroused, to the highest pitch of intensity, the feelings of the people; and the leaders deemed it expedient to take some steps to maintain their position. Then assembled together, in private conclave, the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people: The principal members, no doubt, of the sanhedrin. The clause *and the scribes* is wanting in the most important manuscripts (N A B D L Θ, 1, 33, 69), as also in the Vulgate, Sahidic, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions, and is probably a supplement. Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles,

and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4 and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*. 5 But they said, Not

Westcott-and-Hort omit it. But it is certain, nevertheless, that the scribes would be present. See Mark xiv. 1; Luke xxii. 2. As to the *chief priests, and the scribes*, see on chap. ii. 4. As to the *elders, or lay members*, see on chap. xvi. 21. **Into the palace of the high priest:** *The* high priest by way of pre-eminence, the individual who was in actual office at the time. The word, freely rendered *palace* (αὐλή), properly means *the open court, or hall*, which constituted the centre of an oriental house of respectable dimensions, and around which the respective apartments of the dwelling were built. It is rendered *court* by Sir John Cheke, and *hall* by Wycliffe. In the greater mansions there was sometimes court beyond court. At other times, the one great court was divided into an inner and an outer compartment, the inner being on a higher elevation than the outer, and ceiled over. Round the three inner sides of this inner compartment there generally ran a raised seat, or *divan*, or *deeván*, on which guests were accommodated. The apartment, open at its fourth or outer side to the other part of the court, from which however it could be separated by curtains, constituted, as occasion required, a reception room, festal hall, or council chamber. The *court* of the high priest was no doubt double (see Mark xiv. 66; Luke xxii. 61), and the consultation referred to by the evangelist would take place in the inner compartment. **Who was called Caiaphas:** His full name was Joseph Caiaphas. (Josephus, *Ant.*, xviii. 2: 2.) He was son-in-law of Annas, who had formerly been high priest, and who still continued, in virtue of his family, social position, age, and character, to be a kind of chieftain in the sacerdotal circle. Caiaphas was elevated to the high priesthood, over the head of Simon, by the Roman procurator, Valerius Gratus, Pilate's predecessor; and continued in the office during the whole procuratorship of Pilate. He was, however, soon afterwards deposed by the proconsul Vitellius, who appointed Jonathan, son of Annas, in his stead. (Josephus, *Ant.* xviii. 4, 3.)

VER. 4. **And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill Him:** The object of their consultation was not to determine whether or not they should seize our Lord at some convenient conjuncture and put Him to death, but in what way they should effect their murderous purpose. It was a foregone conclusion with them, that He must be got out of the way. It was dangerous to their craft to let Him go at large. But how to compass their end, that was the question. Hence the conjunction *that* after *consulted*. In the original it is *in order that* (ὥστε). They took counsel together *with a view to effecting* the seizure and death of our Lord. They did not see that it would be safe to lay hold of Him publicly. They must set their wits into exercise to catch Him in some underhand way, 'by subtilty,' or, as the Rheims version gives it, 'by some wile.' Sir John Cheke renders it, 'bi sum craft.' Coverdale has it plainly, 'by disceate.'

VER. 5. **But they said, Not on the feast day:** Or rather, *Not during the feast*. The feast continued for seven days, there being a special convocation, or festal 'turn-out,' on the first, and also on the concluding day. See Exod. xii. 14-19. The paschal lamb was sacrificed on the 14th day, at even, and eaten on the 15th day, from which 15th day till the 21st was the feast of unleavened

on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7 there came unto him a woman having an alabaster

bread (Num. xxviii. 16-25), a continuation of the paschal feast, and hence often generically called *the Passover*. The high priest's council thought it prudent to postpone their attempt on our Lord till after the feast. Note the *not* before the expression *during the feast*. It is that peculiar kind of negative (*μή*), called *subjective*, which intimates that the counsellors said to one another, *Let us not arrest Him during the feast*. Neander supposes that they resolved to arrest Him *before* the feast. (*Life of Christ*, § 263.) So Ewald, *Life of Christ*, chap. xxxvi.) So too Pressensé (*Life of Christ*, liv. v., chap. iv. 1). So not a few others. Mistakingly, however. The whole city and suburbs were already swarming with the multitudes who were anticipating the feast. Caravans were hourly arriving, increasing the throng. All was excitement. Great too was the interest attaching to the wonderful Nazarene. But in a few days there would be an ebbing of the tidal waves, and then, as the counsellors concluded, would be the fitting opportunity for striking their blow. "Wherefore also," says Chrysostom, "they waited for the feast to be past." "They did not think," says Calvin, "that the opportunity was ripe until, at the close of the festival, the crowd should be dispersed." Lest there should be an uproar among the people: *An uproar, or a riot—a tumult*, as the word is rendered in Matt. xxvii. 24; Mark v. 38; Acts xxi. 34, xxiv. 18. The Rheims renders it *tumult* here. The word corresponds exactly to what the French call an *émeute*; and that is Rolliet's rendering.

VER. 6. But when Jesus was in Bethany: On what particular day is not specified. The chronology of the occurrence was not regarded by Matthew as a matter of moment for the object that he had in view in his *Memoirs*. We learn, however, from John xii. 1-13, that the event took place "six days before the Passover," or on the day that preceded that Sunday on which our Lord made His triumphal entry into the city. Matthew thus steps backward chronologically, to take up the thread of the narrative. As to Bethany, see on chap. xxi. 17. In the house of Simon the leper: We know not who this Simon was, though it is likely that he was either a relative, or an intimate friend, of the Lazarus family. (See John xii. 2, 3.) Not improbably he had been cured of his leprosy by our Lord, but was still popularly called *Simon the leper* to distinguish him from the multitude of other Simons, as Simon or Simeon was one of the commonest of Jewish names.

VER. 7. Then approached Him a woman: It was Mary, the sister of Martha, as we learn from John xii. 2, 3. Neither Matthew nor Mark ever name either Martha, or Mary her sister, or Lazarus their brother. Perhaps at the time when their Gospels were published the sisters and their brother, or one or more of them, may have been still alive, and in such circumstances, or in such a position, that it was a matter of befitting delicacy or prudence not to specify them by name. Some, such as Chrysostom, Maldonato, Grotius, have identified with Mary the woman "who was a sinner," mentioned in Luke vii. 37. But the anointing there referred to was undoubtedly, as Origen, Jerome, and Calvin saw, altogether different from the anointing here recorded, different as regards time, and place, and circumstances. The anointing here recorded is not, however, to be distinguished, as has been done by many, inclusive of Origen, Chrysostom, Lightfoot, from the anointing mentioned in John xii. 2, 3. "I

box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*. 8 But when his disciples saw *it*, they had

admire," says Lightfoot, "that any one should be able to confound these two stories." But when we bear in mind the free and easy anecdotal plan on which our evangelist constructed his *Memoirs*, there is no reason to "admire" the identification of the narratives. The wonder would be that the same sort of event, with the same criticism on the 'waste,' accompanied with the same vindication of the deed by our Lord, should be repeated within so short a time, and at the same village of Bethany. "Wherefore," says Calvin, "let it be held as a fixed matter that the two histories coincide." Having an alabaster box of very precious ointment: Or, of very costly perfume. The word rendered ointment (*μύρον*) denoted no doubt some fine aromatic liquid or balsam. Luther renders it *water*; Michaelis, *sweet-smelling water*; Young, *myrrh*; Bengel, *ointment*; Wakefield, *perfumed ointment*; Reitz, Bolten, Prin. Campbell, Dickinson, *balsam*; Le Cene, Rilliet, Oltramare, McLellan, *perfume (parfum)*. There is no word corresponding to *box* in the original. The expression is simply and unspecifically *an alabaster*; and the reference would be, not to an alabaster *box* or *casket*, such as the Roman ladies kept on their toilet tables for holding their cosmetics or jewels, but to some kind of elegantly shaped alabaster *bottle, cruet, or cruse*. It was called an *alabaster* because made of *alabaster*, just as we speak of a *glass* made of *glass*. Indeed, Luther's translation of the expression before us is a *glass*. That is too free, however. Alabaster is a beautiful calcareous spar, softer than marble, and therefore easily scooped or fashioned into ornamental boxes, bottles, vases, and jars. Pliny says that "unguents are best preserved in alabasters" (*unguenta optime servantur in alabastris*,—*HIST. NAT.* iii. 3). And poured upon His head as He was reclining (at table): There is no *it* in the original after *poured*; a matter of some moment. The verb is used indefinitely; and hence there is no intimation to the effect that the whole of the perfume was poured upon the *head*. If there had been any such intimation it would have been difficult indeed to reconcile Matthew's account with John's, in which there is mention only of the anointing of the Saviour's *feet*. Meyer, taking far too narrow a view, thinks that the two accounts are irreconcilable. But, as the case stands, they are thoroughly consistent the one with the other, though presenting to view different acts in the same scene. The different acts had made, respectively, on the minds of the two narrators, the deepest impression. Tyndale and the Geneva and the Rheims all supply *it* after *poured*. Luther too, and Bengel, and the French Geneva. Not Felbinger however, nor our own Wycliffe, who translates thus: *and shedde out on the heed of Hyn restinge*.

VER. 8. But when His disciples saw *it*, they had indignation: Taking for the moment a narrow view of things, as was not unnatural to men in their social position. There would be, first of all, surprise at the expense lavished. They had not been accustomed to such things. Then perhaps there would be the interchanging of looks. The face of Judas especially would be covered with writhes. (See John xii. 4-6.) He would be indeed the centre, and most likely the source, of the gathering dissatisfaction and disaffection. Half-muttered whisperings round about him would supervene. The unpleasant contagion would spread. "One murmurer," says good David Dickson, "may infect a whole company." At length, collecting together all the suppressed irritation, and intensifying it, Judas, with an impertinence natural to his sort of soul,

indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9 for this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble

would, in somewhat louder tones than those of whispers, give utterance to the chafing of his spirit. He would intentionally raise his voice that it might reach the ears of all his fellow disciples. (See John xii. 4-6.) Saying, To what purpose this waste? It is as if the spokesman had said: *Is this right? It may be a delightful scent indeed. But what good purpose does it serve? It does not feed anybody. It does not put clothes on anybody's back. It is a mere luxury, and a superfluity. For my part I do not and cannot approve of such things.*

VER. 9. For this might have been sold for much: The word *ointment* after *this* is an addition to the original text. It is wanting in the manuscripts \aleph A B D L Δ II, 1*, and in the Old Latin version, and the Vulgate, and the two Syriac versions, and the Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic. It was not necessary, while the senses of the grumblers were bathed in the delightful scent, to give any name to the thing to which the speaker referred. They did not notice however their own inconsistency in giving vent to their hyper-criticism. If it would have been right to sell the perfume, it would have been right for some one, somewhere or other, to buy it, and to use it. But if it would have been right for some one, somewhere or other, to buy and use the perfume, how could it be wrong for Mary to do with it as she did? She was quite able to purchase it on the one hand, and she made the most becoming use imaginable of it on the other. And given to the poor: A free and easy phrase instead of *and the proceeds given to the poor*. They forgot that while it is a sacred duty to be mindful of the poor, there are other duties besides. They forgot too that, in being mindful of the poor, one must be careful not to act toward them in a pauperising way, and still less in such a way as would, if consistently carried out, pauperise the rich as well as the poor. It is a sacred duty, assuredly, to relieve the poor; but it is a still more sacred duty to assist them to relieve themselves by giving them employment in making, as a small addition to a million other articles of use and comfort, alabaster vessels, and delicious perfumes.

VER. 10. But when Jesus understood it: A rather unhappy translation, suggesting that there was the lapse of some time, and the intervention of some events, ere Jesus became cognisant of what the disciples were muttering. The original expression however conveys no such idea ($\gamma\rho\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma\ \delta\epsilon\ \delta\ \iota\eta\sigma\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$). It cannot be quite literally rendered in our idiom. The Geneva and the Rheims render it, *and Jesus knowing it*. Wycliffe's translation is tantamount, *Jesus wrytinge* (*Jesus witting, i.e., knowing*). If we could have said *knewing* instead of *knowing*, the force of the original would be completely expressed. Jesus *knew* thoroughly, without being informed, how His disciples were feeling, and what they had been saying. He was cognisant, and had all along been cognisant, of what was transpiring at their part of the table. He said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? Or, as we should now express it, *the lady*? It would appear that the ill-mannered and narrow-minded remarks of the disciples had reached the ears of Mary. Perhaps Judas had rudely intended them to be heard by her. Perhaps he had even seized the opportunity of her momentary presence in his vicinity to arrest her, and to remonstrate with her in the same half suppressed mutters, in which he was speaking to his fellow disciples, while diligently blowing the coals of their dissatisfaction. Very likely. Mary would feel embarrassed

ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. 12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial. 13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world,

and annoyed; and, unaccustomed to such rudeness, would be for a moment at a loss how to express herself. But Jesus at once relieves her by speaking, down the table, to the disciples, *Why molest the lady?* He added, *for she wrought a good work in reference to Me: In what she did, a short time ago, she wrought a good work which terminated on Me.* He takes up an ethical position, in antagonism to their ethical objection. They ethically blamed Mary for wasting what might have been turned to very useful account for the benefit of the poor. They virtually condemned her deed as *a bad work*. No, says Jesus; it is *a good work, a beautiful work*, ethically considered (*ἔργον καλόν*). *True indeed it terminated on Me, instead of on the poor. But it is not ethically wrong that some things should be done to Me, as well as to the poor. It is not ethically wrong that the things done to Me should be suitable to My position and condition.* "Some works of piety," says Richard Baxter, "must be preferred before works of charity to the poor." "You cannot have any great life," says Dr. Parker, "without sentiment. Life is not all cold logic. The flowers are the lovelier for the dews that tremble upon them; and you look so much younger and nobler when the tears of real pity are in your eyes: you are not unmanned; you are more than manned." (*Inner Life of Christ*, iii., p. 200.)

VER. 11. For ye have the poor always with you, but Me ye have not always: Our Saviour vindicates the ethical goodness of the deed done, on the special ground that speedily none of them would have any further opportunity of expending anything on His person. Their opportunities, on the other hand, of expending their beneficence on the poor would never cease, so long as they continued on the earth. In the indefinite words, *but Me ye have not always*, He touches affectingly, but delicately, on the nearness of His departure.

VER. 12. For: This particle introduces an explanation and amplification of the idea suggested by the concluding words of the preceding verse. For in that she shed this perfume on My body, she did it in order to My entombment: Not that she consciously intended it as equivalent to embalment. But Jesus interpreted her act according to His own anticipation of the solemn event that was at hand. "Our deeds mean more than we sometimes mean them to mean, says Christ" (*Parker*). Chrysostom represents Him as virtually saying, "She hath announced before My Passion." The aroma of the delicious perfume had been agreeable to the Lord, not simply or chiefly because it pleasingly affected His delicate sense of scent, but because it connected itself, still more delicately, in His thoughts and feelings, with His coming death and entombment. His own interest, to a large extent, had mysteriously to do with these events. They were events big with blessings to the universe.

VER. 13. Verily I say to you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world: *This gospel, of which, and of the spread of which, we have been talking this evening at this table, and to the foundation of which I have just been incidentally referring when I spoke of My approaching entombment.* No doubt the conversation at the table would be under the leadership of our Lord, and would by Him be imbued with His own solemn thoughts and feelings in reference to

there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto

the near and the more remote future. He would see it to be needful to prepare, as far as practicable, for the startling events that were about to transpire, the minds, not only of His twelve apostles, but also of His Bethany disciples, and of such other adherents as He might have the opportunity of influencing. It is by this most reasonable assumption, and taking into account what is involved in the mystic expression of the preceding verse, that we are to account for the demonstrative *this* before the word *gospel*. (See chap. xxiv. 14.) This also, which this woman did, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her: As has actually turned out to be the case. Most true is it, after all the spasmodic efforts and straining of worldlings to perpetuate their names and to gain renown, that "none of all the trumpets of fame sound so loud and so long as the everlasting gospel." (*Matthew Henry*)

VER. 14. Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests: It affected the heart of the evangelist, as it had struck wonder into the heart of the general public, that he who betrayed the Lord should have belonged to the innermost circle of His discipleship; and hence the formal expression *one of the twelve*. There is however, after all, nothing exceedingly astonishing in the occurrence. In all great and good movements, originated or headed by noble souls, and having reference to the ethical condition of man, a condition subject to infinite details of intricacy and perplexity, the main difficulties that mar the development of the schemes, and impede their progress toward triumph, are too often found in the small intellects, or small hearts, or small consciences of the inner circle of adherents. If this be the case in all ordinary philanthropic movements, religious, social, political, what marvel that our Saviour had not, even in His chosen apostles, sufficiently capacious vessels to bear the fulness of His high aspirations, intentions, and aims? 'Chosen' though they were, they were simply the best that in the circumstances could be got. What wonder that they were exceedingly imperfect? What wonder that one of them, finding his own little private expectations and plans in reference to the Messiah unrealised, should have gradually, in accordance with his intellectual and moral littleness, come to the conclusion that he had made a mistake in attaching his fortunes to the Nazarene? What wonder that he should have often muttered to himself as follows: *What can all this coming gloom, of which the Master speaks so frequently, portend? If He is the true Messiah, why not set up His kingdom at once, instead of waiting, indefinitely, till some more auspicious future period? The present would certainly suit me best. Am I sure that that future period, He speaks of so much, will ever come? Why such opposition now? Why should such as we, who were chosen, as He seemed to assure us, to high and honourable office, be exposed to cruel obloquy and pinching penury? It is really too hard to have to submit to all this. Things look more than doubtful. I must see after myself. Is it not time to get out of the concern? Have I not been too long attached to a falling cause? If I do not take care, I shall fall with it, and be ruined. I must get out. That is a settled point. But need I go with nothing in my hands? Why should I? Why not make something out of my mistake? Let me be wise and wary. I shall sound some of the high folks connected with the sanhedrin; and perhaps I may after all get myself bettered a good bit in the world.* Such may have been some of the

the chief priests, 15 and said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with

ruminations of Judas. The *Then* at the beginning of the verse is used somewhat indefinitely; only it seems to connect, logically, the act of Judas with the mortification which he would feel on occasion of the reproof administered by the Saviour in the house of Simon. Not unlikely that reproof would bring to a crisis those feelings of disappointment and disaffection which he had for long been harbouring and nursing, but *secretly* as he fancied, in his bosom. He seems to have resolved from that moment to take steps to save something for himself out of the coming wreck. We must certainly suppose that his first visit to the chief priests and other leaders would be tentative only. He could not know beforehand whether, and how far, he would be trusted and treated with. It is evidently to this first visit that Matthew here refers. The plot could not leap into maturity in a moment. Such an idea would be ridiculous. And hence a future stage of things is referred to in John xiii. 27, though Meyer cannot see anything but a contradiction in the two representations. It is strange that he should not take into consideration that things of this kind require to *grow*.

VER. 15. And said, What will ye give me? and I will deliver Him up to you: He thus sounded them. They on their part would sound him too; for they would not know at first what to think of his proposal. *Was he to be trusted? Might there not be some 'ruse' under the 'rose'?* Was it likely that one of the chosen disciples of such an enthusiastic Rabbi would be capable of treason toward his Master? *May he not be acting a part toward us? Let us be on our guard.* They would ask him his name. They would question him as to his family and his antecedents. They would scarily, and yet with secret zest, search into the reasons of his professed dissatisfaction, and of his alleged willingness to act the part of informer and betrayer? *Why are you willing and wanting to betray your Master? Have you found His professions to be dishonest? Is He, notwithstanding all His public strictness and zeal, privately loose or immoral? Is He fond of money? Is He fond of luxury? Does He adhere to the truth? Is there disaffection among the rest of His disciples? Is He plotting any insurrection against the Romans? Is He contriving any plan to get possession of the temple? Who are His chief adherents in Galilee? Who in Jerusalem? Who in Bethany? What is it that He says to people in private? What is the purport of His secret instructions? How does He conduct Himself, when He fancies that no eye is on Him?* Such might be specimens of the many questions proposed to Judas, when for the first time closeted with Caiaphas, or some of the other leading men of the sanhedrin. All the time Judas himself, unknown to himself, would be read by his questioners. No high opinion would be formed of him. He did not attempt to conceal from them that he was a man who had his price. They would be saying to one another, when they retired into some side apartment to consult, or when he turned his back and departed, *If this be a fair specimen of the Nazarene's disciples, they must be a set of mean, unprincipled fellows, and ready tools indeed for the execution of any evil machination, if remunerative!* How sad that the chiefs of the people should have had occasion for such depreciatory ideas and remarks! How sad that Christianity has, all along, got so little justice done to it in the house of its friends! And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver: *They covenanted with him* is an unwarrantable translation of the original expression

him for thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

(ἐῶρησαν αὐτῷ). It was apparently imported by our Authorized translators into Matthew's phrase from a collation of the expressions in Luke xxii. 5 and Mark xiv. 11. The rendering, in the older English versions,—Tyndale, the Geneva, the Rheims,—is, *they appointed unto him*. Wycliffe's corresponds, *thei ordēyneden to hym*. Myles Coverdale's is equivalent but free, *they offered hi* [that is, him] *thirtie syluer pens*. Such renderings are approximative reproductions of the Vulgate version (*constituerunt*), which had been retained by Erasmus, and which is approved of by Castellio, Grotius, Henneberg, Fritzsche,—*they fixed to him*, that is, *they promised to him*. The real meaning, however, of Matthew's expression was given by Beza,—and thence by the lexicographers Stock, Schöttgen, Schleusner, Bretschneider, Wahl, Robinson, Grimm, *they weighed to him*, that is, *they paid to him*. So too Euthymius Zigabenus, Piscator, Erasmus Schmid, Raphel, Palairat, Wakefield, Bengel (*schossen ihm*), Michaelis (*Zahleten ihm*), Prin. Campbell, Scholefield, De Wette, Meyer, Rilliet, Oltramare, Wordsworth. Very literally the expression means, *they caused to stand to him*, that is, *they placed to him*, namely in the balance (ἐν σταβύῳ, Isa. xlvi. 6: see Jer. xxxii. 9). The peculiarity of the phrase is derived from the olden times when the precious metals, being uncoined, were weighed in the balance on occasion of making payments. The Jews had no coined money up to the time of the captivity. And even in our Lord's time *the shekel of the sanctuary* would probably continue to be carefully determined by actual weighing. There can be no doubt, however, that in the expression before us, the evangelist was intentionally referring to what is said in Zech. xi. 12, *they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver* (ἐῶρησαν τὸν μισθὸν μου τριάκοντα ἀργυροῦς). The words in Zechariah manifestly refer, not to a mere agreement or promise, but to an actual payment. (See the Hebrew.) It is also to be taken into account that in Matt. xxvii. 3 Judas is represented as having the thirty silverlings in actual possession; and, so far as Matthew's narrative is concerned, there is no antecedent statement, from which that actual possession could be inferred, but the one before us. *Thirty pieces of silver*, or *thirty silverlings*; that is, *thirty shekels*: A very paltry sum, if it was not intended to be merely a sum in hand, to act as a 'refresher' on the traitor, lest he should be tempted to 'rue.' We may reasonably suppose that they would not be prepared to put at once, into the hands of Judas, the full price which they were willing to give for the head of our Lord. What knew they of Judas to lead them to trust him implicitly? *If they should pay him in full before his work was done, what if he should decamp? Or, what if he should be unable to execute his design? What if his fellow disciples should begin to suspect him, and to set their Master on His guard, so that He should escape from the snare of the fowler?* And yet it seemed to be worth the while to whet the man's avaricious appetite by giving him some 'earnest money.' This view of the case accounts for the smallness of the sum. And it also effects the reconciliation of Matthew's account with that of Mark and Luke, from which we learn that they promised, or agreed, to "give him money." *Thirty shekels*: Or, *staters*,—each stater or shekel being of the value of two *didrachms*. See on Matt. xvi. 24, 27. A shekel was not quite three shillings sterling. Thirty shekels was the sum which a man was obliged to pay if his ox should gore a manservant or maidservant. See Exod. xxi. 22.

VER. 16. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him: Or,

17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? 18 And he said, Go

more literally, *he sought a favourable opportunity in order that he might deliver Him up.* He sought a favourable opportunity, with the view of delivering Him up. Fancying himself undetected, counting and recounting his silverlings in his heart, he sneaked about, simulating loyalty, but watching for a suitable occasion to complete his transaction and get his full pay.

VER. 17. But on the first day of the unleavened bread: The last but one of our Lord's life on earth. What day of the month was it? Strange as it may appear, the answer to this question has elicited voluminous controversy. We cannot doubt that the Paschal Lamb, while always slain on the fourteenth of the month Abib or Nisan, in the afternoon, or, as the Hebrews expressed it, "between the evenings," was always eaten on the fifteenth. See Exod. xii. 6, 29, 51, xiii. 3, 4; Lev. xxiii. 5, 6; Num. xxviii. 16, 17, xxxiii. 3; Ezek. xlv. 21, 22. Comp. Josephus, *Antiq.*, iii. 10: 5. It was in the evening, or during the early part of the night, that is to say, it was at the commencement of the civil day (the *νυχθήμερον*), not at its conclusion, that the lamb was eaten. (Exod. xii. 8.) This fifteenth day, on which the paschal lamb was eaten, was the first of the seven statutory days of the festival of Unleavened Bread. See Exod. xii. 15, 17, 18, 19; Lev. xxiii. 5, 6; Num. xxviii. 16, 17; Deut. xvi. 2, 3, 7, 8; Ezek. xlv. 21. It was thus, at once a part of the seven days' festival, and yet, on account of the great significance of the lamb, it stood, to a certain extent, apart from all the other festivities as a thing by itself. Hence it happened that just as the whole seven days' festivity was sometimes denominated the Unleavened Bread (Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12; Acts xii. 3, xx. 6), so it was sometimes denominated the Passover. (See Luke xxii. 1; comp. Josephus, *Ant.*, xiv. 2: 1.) At other times both names were combined, the Passover and the Unleavened Bread. (See Mark xiv. 1.) The expression before us, on the first day of the unleavened bread, is popular, and has reference not to the first of the statutory days of the festival, the fifteenth namely of the month, but to the preceding day, which the people freely added to the statutory days for the purpose of having all things in readiness for the due observance of the festival. They removed therefore, on the fourteenth, at latest, their leavened bread, not leaving the minutest crumb of it in their dwellings, and they prepared their unleavened cakes which they required to use immediately after sunset. The fourteenth was thus, popularly, the first day of the unleavened bread, or, as Luke expresses it (xxii. 7), "the day of unleavened bread when the passover must be killed," though not eaten. Hence Josephus, using the same mode of popular representation, speaks of the feast as being "for eight days." (*Antiq.*, ii. 15: 1.) Chrysostom caught the evangelist's idea, "By the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread he means the day before that feast." Some time that day the disciples approached Jesus, and said, Where wilt Thou that we make ready for Thee to eat the passover? A chamber was required; and the materials of a simple but satisfying repast or feast, bread, herbs, and wine, were required. The paschal lamb itself, the staple of the feast, the *pièce de résistance*, had to be purchased, and then it had to be slain in the temple "between the evenings," that is, between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day (Josephus, *War*, vi. 9: 3), or, between three and five o'clock in the afternoon. After being slain in the sacred place (Deut. xvi. 5, 6), it had to be taken to a

into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy

private dwelling to be cooked, that it might be ready for the sacred festivity, which would commence with the commencement of the fifteenth day.

VER. 18. **And He said, Go into the city**—namely, Jerusalem—to such a man: An idiomatic expression covering indefinitely the name and designation of the individual referred to. Our Saviour would of course name or otherwise discriminate the individual whom He meant; but the evangelist very properly, deeming it of no moment to record the person's name, or occupation, or place of residence, veils his unimportant identity under a common indefinite phrase. (Comp. the corresponding Hebrew expression in Ruth iv. 1.) No doubt, however, the individual to whom the disciples were directed would, as Calmet remarks, know our Lord, and would be reserving, in virtue of some more or less definite understanding, a suitable chamber for His use. **And say to him, The Teacher says, My time is at hand**: It would be a mysterious phrase both to the householder and to the disciples. It evidently indicated, however, that something important, in reference to the Lord, was imminent. What could it be? Their curiosity would be on tip-toe. And perhaps they would be solemnly whispering to one another: *What can the Teacher mean? Will He be intending, now at length, to throw aside His veil, and appear in His glory? The festival time would indeed be a most fitting occasion for the transfiguration, would it not?* The report proceeds, **I will keep the passover**: In the original the verb is in the present tense, *I keep the passover*, or, very literally, *I make the passover*; that is, *I celebrate the passover, I eat the paschal lamb*. The matter was fixed in the Saviour's mind, as much as if the future were already present. Wycliffe preserves the present tense, *I make paske*. But Tyndale and Coverdale freely used the future, *I will kepe Myne ester*. Where? **at thy house**. With whom? **with My disciples**. The Saviour acted as the Head of a domestic establishment. His disciples and Himself became, as it were, a family circle. The language of this verse, and the next, more especially when taken in connection with the statements of Mark (xiv. 12-16) and Luke (xxii. 7-13), leaves us no room for doubting that it was *the statutory passover supper* to which our Lord refers. It has been contended, however, that certain representations in the Gospel of John (see John xiii. 1, xviii. 28, xix. 14, 31) are inexplicable on this hypothesis, and only explicable on the hypothesis that the true statutory passover supper fell to be observed on the following evening, that is, on the evening after the crucifixion. Our Lord is supposed to have anticipated its observance by a day. This was Scaliger's ultimate view (*necessario Dominus Pascha anticipavit. Neque enim aliter potest esse, quamvis olim aliter senserimus, sed perperam*,—DE EMENDATIONE TEMPORUM, vi. 1, p. 567). It was also the view of Grotius, a great name in such a matter; and of Hammond too: Iken likewise took the same view; only he held that our Lord was not singular in anticipating the common day. He supposed that the Karaites and the Pharisees differed on the subject, and that hence two days were observed by the two contending parties. Heumann avows himself to have been persuaded by Iken. And P. S. Jarvis says: "The question then is, Did our Lord, of His own authority, depart from the practice of the Jewish church, and eat a passover of His own appointment, anticipating the legal passover? or, was there a diversity of practice among the Jews at that time, so that the Jewish nation in general ate the passover on the night between Thursday

house with my disciples. 19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. 21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto

“and Friday, and a portion of them, including the high priests and elders, “on the night between Friday and Saturday, the commencement of their “Sabbath? The latter appears to me to be the only tenable hypothesis.” (*Chronological Introduction*, ii. 7, p. 455.) Arnoldi also holds by the anticipative idea. So do many others, inclusive of Ellicott and Farrar, and Bernhard Weiss. But it is an expedient of conciliation, conjured up by ingenuity in a state of desperation. It has no historical basis. It is, as Dr. Robinson expresses it, “gathered from the air.” (*Div. Sac.*, 1845, p. 443.) Neither the New Testament nor Josephus gives any hint of any diversity of opinion and practice on such a subject; and, we may be sure, it would have been impossible for any dissentients from the temple authorities to have carried out into practice their dissentient theory. It was requisite that all the paschal lambs should be slain or sacrificed *in the temple*; and the time for slaying them was fixed by law. There is, however, no need for such venturesome hypotheses of conciliation between the statements of John and the statements of the three synoptical evangelists. The four evangelists, when soberly and soundly interpreted, are in perfect harmony; and even John xviii. 28 presents no real difficulty when we bear in mind that the word *passover* was popularly used not only to designate *the supper of the paschal lamb*, but also to represent the whole appended festival of the seven days of unleavened bread. See Luke xxii. 1.

VER. 19. **And the disciples did as Jesus ordered them:** Our word *ordered* corresponds, almost to a nicety, with the original term (*σκέτασαν*). **And they made ready the passover:** Or, Sir John Cheke has it, *and maad redi His Easter*. Tyndale's version is, *and made redy the esterlambe*. They got the paschal lamb; got it sacrificed in the temple “between the evenings,” that is, between three and five o'clock in the afternoon (Exod. xii. 6; Josephus, *War*, vi. 9: 3); then got arrangements made for the due cooking of it, and provided all the eteteras of the humble feast. (See on ver. 17.)

VER. 20. **And when evening was come:** Note the expression *was come*; not *coming*, as Rotherham has it. The idea is, *after evening had set in*. But how soon after is not indicated. **He sat down:** Or rather, *He was sitting (at table)*, or, still more literally, *he was reclining (at table)*. The verb is in the imperfect tense, and does not denote the act of taking the recumbent position. It introduces us into a scene that has already been going on, we know not for how long. **With the twelve:** Lachmann and Tischendorf add the word *disciples*. It is found in the manuscripts noted \aleph A L M Δ II, 33, and in the Italic, Vulgate, Peshito Syriac, Philoxenian Syriac, Jerusalem Syriac, Coptic, Armenian and Æthiopic versions. What strange emotions would be in the traitor's breast! How peculiarly solemn the emotions of Him who looked into the breast of the traitor!

VER. 21. **And while they were eating, He said, Verily I say to you, that one of you shall betray Me:** The Saviour's heart was touched by the idea of such ingratitude and treachery, on the part of one who was so near Him, and who had been crowned by Him with so much lovingkindness. Perhaps, too, He

you, that one of you shall betray me. 22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? 23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray

mercifully resolved to make a last effort to touch the guilty one's conscience, and bring him to contrition.

VER. 22. And they were exceeding sorrowful: The tones of the Saviour's voice, as well as the dreadful import of the thing said, had struck into their hearts. They would feel *stunned* and bewildered. "*One of you,*" did He say? *One of us!* They would look upon one another with incipient suspicion. (John xiii. 22.) They would then respectively look in, and search their hearts as 'with lighted candles.' When the evangelist says *they*, he speaks of course of the disciples indefinitely, or as considered *in the mass*. He does not intend to include Judas in particular. And began to say to Him, each one,—or *everi oon*, as Sir John Cheke has it,—Is it I, Lord? Note the word *began*. It takes us back to the commencement of a string of questions, and allows us to go on with it in imagination. First, one of the disciples, and then another, and then again another would say, *Is it I, Lord?* We may be sure, however, that it would not be Judas who would be foremost with the query, *Is it I?* The interrogative particle employed ($\mu\eta\pi\tau\iota$) is of such a nature that a negative answer is confidently anticipated. *Surely it is not I, is it?* The first one who proposed the question, though bewildered for the moment, and although also sensitively anxious to know the worst about himself, if bad he should be, yet could not find anything in his heart or conscience that could warrant the conclusion that he would be capable of doing such a dreadful and dastardly deed.

VER. 23. And He answered and said, He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me: *Dipped*, not *dippeth*, as in our Authorized version, and the older English versions, and in Luther, and the Vulgate. The Lord graciously gives the traitor another chance of breaking down into contrition and repentance. He does not, all at once, expose him, and thus rivet on him his resolution. He answers distantly and indeterminately the shower of questions which had fallen on Him. He, as it were, says: *Sad to say, sad to think, the guilty one is present. I know him perfectly well. I see into him. But I give no name. He has already had his hand along with mine, in that vessel there, on this my board.* "To me Christ seems," says Chrysostom, "to have done this to win Judas over to a better disposition." In Mark xiv. 20, the present tense *dippeth*, instead of the past tense *dipped*, is used. There is perfect harmony between the two representations. We may suppose our Saviour, after a pause, to have proceeded thus: *Aye, and not only has he already dipped with Me. Now that we are all once more dipping simultaneously into the vessel, I would repeat My allegation, though it almost chokes Me to give it utterance: One who is at this moment dipping with Me, at My own table, in this solemn passover feast, will betray Me.* Instead of *dish*, which is Tyndale's word (*disshe*), Wycliffe has *plater* (platter). It denotes here a large basin or bowl, which was placed in the centre of the table, within reach of all the guests. It would contain some kind of liquid preparation, in which morsels of the unleavened passover cakes might be dipped and soaked. (See John xiii. 26.) It must be borne in mind that the customs of the East in reference to meals were and still are extremely different from our European habits. The ancient Jews did not use at table spoons, knives,

me. 24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.

and forks. Their table, frequently, was merely a coverlet on the floor. Except in great houses, the company was limited to a number that would make a convenient segment of a circle, around a centre of easy access to the outstretched arms of the respective guests. And when, as on festival occasions, there were several courses, each course generally consisted of something contained in one large central vessel, from which the various guests helped themselves with their own hands. Sometimes, however, the host would distinguish a favoured individual by presenting to him, direct, some selected bolus or morsel. Hermann Vambéry, after large experience, both in East and West, says that "roast meat, or any other solid piece of food, tastes far better when eaten with one's fingers than with knife and fork." There was and is, however, a graceful and delicate, as well as a slovenly and disgusting, way of using one's fingers.

VER. 24. The Son of man indeed goeth: Or, *goeth away*, as the word is sometimes rendered. (John vi. 67, xiv. 28.) It is elsewhere rendered *departeth*. (Mark vi. 33; Jas. ii. 16.) Note the tense, *departeth*, or *goeth away*. The Saviour, as it were, annihilates in thought the little space of time that had to intervene ere the moment of His departure would arrive. That moment would not tarry. *The Son of man is just on the eve of terminating His visible connection with the scene of things down here on the earth.* He is just about to withdraw Himself, voluntarily, from this human world, so far as His corporeal relationship is concerned, and to go to His Father. (John xvi. 5, 10, 16, 17.) Thus steadily and calmly did our Lord anticipate His impending decease. As it has been written concerning Him: In such passages, for instance, of the Old Testament Scriptures as the 22nd Psalm and the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. He looked back to the bygone ages, and saw that the eyes of the holy and the hopeful, all along the vista of the past, had been looking forward, more or less earnestly, piercingly, and percipiently, to Himself, and to the decease which He was about to accomplish. The faith of many, both in His person and in His decease, would indeed be implicit only, or exceedingly indefinite and dim; but with others it would be explicit. But woe to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed: Note still the present tense, *is betrayed*. The Saviour's thoughts have gone forward to the end. The dastardly deed is done. It was diabolical as well as dastardly; and hence indeed the expression "*through whom*." Origen draws attention to the preposition, as pointing to the invisible agent, who was behind the traitor, and using his hard and hardened heart. *Woe to that man!* There is *wailing* in the *woe*, though no doubt an element of indignation too, and of denunciation also. *Alas for that man!* The Saviour, as it were, groans in spirit. He feels the load of the terrific consequences which would result to the traitor from his dreadful deed. Hence his 'woe.' He utters His groan anticipatively, and forestallingly, and in love. It was because of this love, as we take it, that He used the expression *that man*. He wished it, in all its pointedness, to go like an arrow into the conscience of the guilty individual. It were good for that man if he were not born: very literally, *It was good to him if that man was not born.* Note the emphatic repetition of the phrase *that man*. It is thrust in, almost obtrusively, to take effect, apparently, on the heart and conscience of the traitor. As to the expression, *it was good to him*, or, *it were good for him*, it is evidently popular, and not to be *parved*

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

too closely on every side. It is, says Lightfoot, "a very usual way of speaking in the Talmudists." But it must not be looked at through metaphysical spectacles. Our Lord did not intend to say that it would have been good in *the actual experience of the man*, if he had not been born (or begotten). Such an idea would have involved the notion of the man's conscious existence independently of his human parentage, and consequently of his conscious pre-existence,—a notion which our Lord, and the Talmudists, whose expression He employed, were certainly not intending to teach or to imply. Our Lord simply gave utterance, in the free and easy unmetaphysical phraseology of the day, to the solemn thought that Judas was, apparently, with awful perversity, about to plunge into a condition in which existence would be no longer a boon to him. It might still, indeed, be something of the nature of a boon to others. It might be turned to account for the good of others. It might be a beacon in the universe, to all eternity. But as for himself, if he should persist in his voluntary madness, there would be no element of blessing left. Existence would not be "good for him."

VER. 25. And Judas, who betrayed Him: This expression *who betrayed Him*, is *the defining clause* that served to distinguish the Judas referred to from the other apostolic Judas or Jude. (Luke vi. 16.) It is participial in the original, *the betraying one, the traitor*. He answered: What he said was in response to the allegation which our Lord had variously expressed and repeated, *One of you shall betray Me; He that dipped his hand with Me in the vessel, he shall betray me; Woe to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed!* He felt himself addressed, And said, Is it I, Lord? "O insensibility!" exclaims Chrysostom. Probably all the rest of the disciples had already, in the ingenuousness of their hearts, put the same question, *and were continuing to put it in showers*; and thus, for very shame, Judas felt that he must put it too. Perhaps he said within himself: *The Master is not answering the question. He is not saying to any one either 'Nay' or 'Yea.'* Perhaps, after all, He is only conjecturing; or, it may be that He has got, through some channel or other, a hint of the fact that some one of His disciples—though He does not know who—has been seen in the palace of the high priest. *I shall put on a bold face and propose the question, just like the rest. Indeed I must do so, I see, or else convict myself in their estimation. They are beginning to cast on me suspicious looks!* The man would be conscious, no doubt, of a bitter pang ere his resolution to speak could come fully to the birth. In our Authorized version, the question runs, "Master, is it I?" In the original it is, "*Rabbi*, is it I?" whereas the other disciples are represented as having said, "*Lord*, is it I?" Tyndale and the Geneva have *Master* in both cases. But the Vulgate, following more exactly the variation in the original, has *Lord* in the first instance, and *Rabbi* in the second. This same distinction is reproduced in Wycliffe and the Rheims, and in Luther too. He said to him, Thou hast said: Or, literally, *Thou saidst*, a peculiar and solemn idiomatic formula of affirmation, common among the Jews in our Lord's day (see Wetstein, and Schöttgen's *Hor. Heb.*), but not occurring in the Old Testament Hebrew. Occasional correspondencies are found in Greek and Latin authors. (See Wetstein.) It is as if the respondent were to say to the querist: *Thou wilt find, in the heart of thy question, the right reply. Just turn the interrogative into an affirmative, and thou wilt have the truth of the*

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed

case. Our Saviour, we doubt not, would *whisper* His reply into the ear of Judas. Comp. John xiii. 25-30. The other disciples would thus note, indeed, that something particular was said to Judas; but they would not know what it was. Our Lord thus once more appealed direct to the guilty man's conscience, without exposing him. He graciously gave him an opportunity of even yet retracing his steps. It was in vain however. The die, it seems, was cast in the heart of the traitor, and he was resolved to brave it out. A wilful moral madness was holding his conscience as in a vice. He was under a Satanic spell.

VER. 26. But as they were eating: At some subsequent stage—unspecified—in their simple passover entertainment. No doubt it would be toward the conclusion of the feast (comp. Luke xxii. 20); but we must not suppose, with Kuinöl, as also Elsner and Calvin, that the evangelist's expression means *after they had eaten*. Very likely there would be a considerably lengthened ceremonial in connection with the passover supper, somewhat corresponding to the ceremonial that is still observed by modern Jews. (See Otho's *Lexicon Rabbin.*, sub voce 'pascha'; and Mills' *British Jews*, pp. 194-204.) Judas would be away, having received his sop. (John xiii. 26-30.) The beginning of the end was at hand; and the solemnities of the events that were imminent would be crowding in upon the Saviour's heart. **Jesus took bread:** "In this solemn transaction," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "we must weigh every word, as there is none without its appropriate and deeply emphatic meaning." *Bread:* (*ἄρτον*, not *τὸν ἄρτον*,—and so **Ν B C D G L Z, 1, 33.**) It would be some portion of the unleavened cakes, or "bread of affliction" (Deut. xvi. 3), which was used during the whole of the passover festival; for the feast was not intended to be a thing of gloat and glut to the sensuous appetites. The spiritual element was to predominate. There was to be a minglement of reminiscences, having reference to what was sad as well as to what was glad. The bread used in general by the Jews was in the form of cakes, which did not require to be cut, but might easily be broken. Comp. 1 Cor. x. 17. It is very noteworthy that the Lord, in instituting His New Testament supper, did not take flesh, but 'bread,' or 'a cake,' using it, by a fine hieroglyphical freedom, as the sufficient symbol of His 'flesh.' He thus provided, with far-reaching sagacity, for the simplicity, facility, and universal practicability and acceptability of His own peculiar ordinance. **And blessed:** In the margin it is mentioned that "many Greek copies have *gave thanks*." Chief among these is the Alexandrian manuscript (A). Also **Δ E F H K M S U V, 1, 69.** But *blessed*, nevertheless, is the correct reading, supported by **Ν B C D G L Z, 33,** and by the great majority of the ancient versions. It is the reading of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort. Yet the word is really tantamount in meaning to *gave thanks*. (See ver. 27, and 1 Cor. xi. 24.) It literally means *to speak well*,—to utter a *benediction*. The benediction uttered by our Lord would really terminate on God, although having a reference to the bread that was about to be broken. Our Authorized version has "blessed it." (Comp. Luke ix. 16; 1 Cor. x. 16.) But the idea is that *the Lord spoke well* 'to' the Father 'concerning' the bread, or, *thanked the Father for the bread*. Thus He both 'blessed *Him*' and 'blessed *it*.' His blessing, however, so far as it had reference to the bread, was no mystic "consecration," effecting an actual change in the thing blessed. It was simply a *benediction*, and having far

it, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat ;

more of the element of *praise* in it than of the element of *prayer*. And brake : Significantly and symbolically. The action had in view something more than a mere division of the cake for the purpose of distribution. It represented in a figure the breaking of the Lord's own body. (See 1 Cor. xi. 24.) And gave to the disciples : to be handed round. It will be noted that there is no mention made of the Lord Himself partaking of the broken cake. *We cannot suppose that He did partake.* He was giving Himself to His disciples. But to have given Himself to Himself would have been to have either ignored or perplexed the profound significancy of the ordinance. And said, Take, eat : That is, *Take with the hand, and eat.* Such is the natural import of the phraseology, though it is not needful to fancy that any great stress is to be laid on any little details in the modes of giving and receiving. *Eat* : Appropriate to yourselves, and assimilate into your being. Do this act, both on the lower plane of things, the material, and on the higher, the spiritual. The lower is but the stepping stone to the higher. There was far more in what our Lord really gave to His disciples, than what He gave with His hands. The mere morsel of material bread, though all that the disciples' hands could take, or their eyes could perceive, and their mouths taste, was but a symbol of that which their souls required, and which they could receive and enjoy. *This* : That is, *This thing that I give you (τοῦτο)*. *Is My body* : Cartloads of super-refined absurdities, have, unhappily, been heaped on this simple affirmation. And if Christianity had not been really Divine, its life would have long ago been utterly crushed out of it under the immensity of the load. Rhetoric, as Selden remarks, has been mistaken for logic ; and the *is* has been insisted upon as demonstration that the thing given by the Lord into the hands of His disciples was not bread at all, but—literally—His own body. Hence the doctrine of *transubstantiation*. Others have insisted that if the thing given was really bread, it was also at one and the same time the literal body of the Lord. This is the doctrine of *consubstantiation*. The substantive verb "is," it has been contended, *must* be taken as *the copula of substantive existence*. All this is sad ; for it would hence follow (1) *That one substance is another.* (2) *That a thing is not itself*—Christ's body for instance. At the time that He uttered the words of the institution, He was in His body ; and therefore He did not hand it, in His hand, to His disciples. It would follow (3) *That a part of the whole is yet the whole of which it is a part.* If the whole cake is the body, and the broken cake is the broken body, and if yet every morsel of the broken cake is also the body, then a part of the body is the whole of the body. It would follow (4) *That a thing which is one, and but one, is yet more than one* ; for if the cake be the one body, and yet each morsel of the cake be also the one body, then Christ's one body is many bodies. It would follow (5) *That a thing which is, by its very essence, limited to a certain spot in space is yet not limited to that spot.* Christ's body, for instance, when with His own hand He gave it into the hands of His disciples, while yet it remained where it was before, at an appreciable distance from His disciples' hands. It would follow (6) *That the percipency of the soul, operating through the senses of the body, while these senses are perfectly awake, and perfectly sound, may yet be absolutely and hopelessly deceived.* If the percipency of the soul, operating through sight, touch, and taste, and equipped too with all the adjuncts of scientific analysis, finds bread, and bread only, in the morsel of the sacramental cake, and if yet that morsel be physically transubstantiated

this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 for

into, or consubstantiated with, the living body of Christ, then all the senses appealed to must be liars, and everything that we see and hear and touch and taste may be a lie. The culminating act of religion would thus be the copestone of universal and insuperable scepticism. But this will not do. We must take a different view of the words of the institution. The *is*, in the expression *is My body*, must be understood not as the *copula of substantive existence*, but as the *copula of symbolical or representative relationship*. Why not? Compare, for instance, chap. xiii. 38, 39, "The field *is* the world: the good seed *are* the children of the kingdom: but the tares *are* the children of the wicked one: the enemy that sowed them *is* the devil: the harvest *is* the end of the world: and the reapers *are* the angels." Parabolism or symbolism or representativism of some kind must be admitted. (Comp. Gen. xl. 12, 18, Ezek. xxxvii. 11; Dan. ii. 38, vii. 17, 24, viii. 21; Matt. xiii. 37; Luke xv. 26, xx. 17; Acts x. 17; Gal. iv. 24, 25; Eph. iv. 9; Heb. vii. 2; Rev. i. 20.) Indeed the parabolic element in the Lord's supper is the true key to its interpretation. *The supper is a parable to the eye, the touch, the taste*. And when our Saviour said of the morsel of bread, *this is My body*, He but interpreted the figurative or representative significance of one of the elements of the parable. If we would get the spiritual blessing when we communicate, we must mentally transfigure the figure. Accepting for ourselves, and appropriating to ourselves, all that is involved in the Great Work that was consummated by the breaking of the body of our Lord, we must allow the process of inward assimilation to proceed. In that process the elements of the work that is appropriated will be found to be meat indeed, and strength, and life.

VER. 27. **And He took the cup:** Many of the best manuscripts have a *cup* instead of *the cup*. And both Tischendorf and Tregelles, as also Westcott and Hort, omit the article. Lachmann however inserts it, and rightly as we imagine. It is found in the manuscripts A C D H K M S U V I I I, and in the great body of the cursives. Most likely there would be *but one cup* on the table, a true cup of fellowship and intercommunion, a 'loving cup.' Hence the appropriateness of the article. **And gave thanks:** This explains the nature of the *blessing* specified in the preceding verse. There was no holy charm operating on the element within the cup, and transubstantiating or otherwise modifying it. The element was wine, and continued to be wine. It was an element appropriate to a *feast*. It was innocuously exhilarative. In our Saviour's supper there is thus not only provision for *feeding*, there is likewise provision for *feasting*. The supper is 'a feast of love,' and a great occasion of thankfulness. Hence one of its favourite ecclesiastical names, *the Eucharist*. Hence too the wine. In our Saviour's time wine was invariably used in connection with the Passover supper. (See Lightfoot's *Exercitations* in loc.) It did not form part of the original institution; but it had been superadded. It is invariably used still in the "commemorative passover supper" that is annually observed by the Jews. **And gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:** "And yet," says Calvin, "the Pope has not been deterred from changing and violating this fixed law of the Lord, for "he has prohibited all the laity from the use of the cup." The Saviour's expression would lead us to the conclusion that the cup was handed from one to another round the entire circle of the disciples.

VER. 28. **For:** Here follows the reason why they were all to drink of the

this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for

wine. This: That is, *This thing* (τοῦτο), viz., which is in the cup; that is, *This wine*. Note the copula, *This 'is'*: That is, *This is in figure*. The radical idea is, *This is a symbol of, This represents*. My blood: The wine used at the passover supper was red. (See Lightfoot, *Exercitations* in loc.) It was thus, so far as colour was concerned, a fit representation of the Saviour's blood. Indeed red wine was often called by the ancients *the blood of the grape*. (See Gen. xlix. 11; also Wetstein in loc.) But the significancy of the symbol by no means lay exclusively, or even chiefly, in the colour of the wine. It lay, to a far greater extent, in the exhilarating property of the element. Believers have in Christ what cheers the soul, and buoys it up with "lively hope," and "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Had it not been for Christ, all that is above and around would have been enveloped in gloom to the guilty spirit. But Christ is the Dayspring from on high, that chases the darkness away. Ere however this darkness could be dissipated, the death of the Mediator was required. Our sins were upon Him; and His life must be sacrificed, a ransom for our souls. Hence the value of His 'blood,' His sacrificial 'blood.' It is in His death that we find life. It is in the depth of His sorrow that we find the wellspring of our joy. Of the new testament: (Such is the correct reading, not το ἀπὸ μου τὸ τῆς, κ.δ.) It is not quite certain that the word *new* is genuine. It is wanting in both the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts, that is in \aleph B, as also in L Z, and 33 "the queen of the cursives." Tischendorf omits it; so do Westcott-and-Hort; and Meyer approves. It is difficult to account for its absence in these manuscripts if it was in the evangelist's autograph. There would be no temptation to leave it out. But it is not unlikely that the word should be the marginal annotation of some very early possessor of the Gospel. If it was an early marginal annotation, it was yet a true gloss, a good note, and brings out the idea which must have been present in the mind of our Lord. It is an idea which we may readily conceive of Him expressing as well as entertaining. His blood was *the blood of the new testament*. It was the *new testament blood*. It was the blood by which God's new testament, in reference to sinful men, was confirmed or ratified. *The new testament*: Such is the translation in all the older English versions, being founded on the Latin Vulgate. Luther too gives it, and Piscator, and Bengel, in their German versions. In almost all the more modern English versions the word *covenant* is substituted for *testament*. So Mace, Doddridge, Dr. Daniel Scott, Whiston, Macknight, Wynne, Worsley, Wakefield, Principal Campbell, Bolten, Edgar Taylor, Sharpe, Young, Rilliet, Oltramare, Brameld, McLellan, Rotherham, Alford. The substitution is right. *Covenant* corresponds better to the analogous Hebrew term. And yet it is an exceedingly imperfect word to convey the Divine idea, or to represent the Divine reality. The Divine reality was *unique*, and therefore no generic or specific human word can do it justice. It was that marvellous *Disposition of things*, in virtue of which forgiveness is extended to sinners, and all those other blessings which are the appropriate complement of the Divine forgiveness, and which are summed up in everlasting bliss. This marvellous *Disposition* or *Arrangement* was a Divine Scheme, Plan, Ordinance, or Institution. But it was more. It was also a *Covenant*. There was something reciprocal in it. God grants forgiveness and everlasting life on *condition that men voluntarily accept His mercy, repent and believe and live by faith*. But the fulness of the blessing is not exhausted when thus exhibited. And hence it is, in addition, a *Testamentary Disposition, Gift, or Grant, of the*

many, for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you,

effects, property, or possessions of God, so that men may be His 'heirs.' *All things are yours*, says He to believers; *I make them over to you*. And yet it is not needful that He Himself should die or cease to be, in order that all these things may be heritably enjoyed to the full. Men may come to this inheritance, while yet He continues in His own everlasting enjoyment of all His blessedness. Indeed, His continuance in His blessedness is essential to men's participation in it. And yet their participation is His *Will*, and His final or *last Will*. He has testified it; so that it is His *Testament* (His *διαθήκη*, in the classical import of the term). There is then an element of the testamentary in the gracious arrangement of God in reference to sinners (see Heb. ix. 15-17); but the reciprocity element is also and still more conspicuous. And hence, upon the whole, when one human term must be selected, *covenant* is the best translation. The *new covenant* is described in Jer. xxxi. 31-34 and Heb. viii., ix. The *old covenant* was the preliminary, alphabetic, adumbrative arrangement that was made with the Jews. See Exod. xxiv. 1-8; Heb. ix. 19-21. It was anticipatorily sketched out in the origination and institution of the Passover. The blood of the Passover was on God's part the pledge of His mercy, and on man's the acknowledgement of the Divine grace. The blood of the New Passover, while wholly the gift of God, needs to be acknowledged and accepted by the sinner. **Which is shed**: *which is being shed, or poured out*. He might have said, *which is about to be shed*. But as there was only a step between the time when He was speaking, and the time when He was about to surrender Himself to be crucified, He goes forward in thought to the consummation. All the significancy of the ordinance of the supper rested and rests on the assumption of the completed atonement. **For many**: (*περι πολλῶν*) that is, *in reference to many*. But if *in reference to many*, it would be *for the sake and benefit of many* (*ὕπερ*, see Luke xxii. 20). The word *many* merely indicates the multitudinousness of the individuals, in reference to whom the atoning blood was shed. It does not, in itself, determine or suggest whether they embraced the whole of mankind, or constituted only a portion of the race. "Under the word *many*," says Calvin, "the Saviour designates not a part of the world only, but the whole human race, for he opposes *many* to one" (*non partem mundi tantum designat, sed totum humanum genus*). What was the end in view? **For remission of sins**: Literally *unto remission of sins*; that is, *with a view to remission of sins*. This import of the preposition is what Webster calls "the ethical sense of destination." (*Syntax of the Gr. Test.*, p. 162. Grimm would say, *denotat finem ad quem obtinendum aliquid aptum est*.—Lex., sub voce. *Remission of sins* is a condensed way of expressing *remission of the penalty due to sins*. This remission is not indeed the end of ends contemplated in the shedding of the blood of the Saviour. Destruction of sinfulness is an end beyond. Restoration to moral godlikeness is still farther beyond. And yet farther on and up is everlasting fellowship with God in His own ineffable bliss. But the great difficulty in moral government, and the difficulty that was barricading the way of access to upward and onward progression, is surmounted, when remission of sins becomes realisable. This could be the case only on the footing of a passover sacrifice or an atonement culminating in the surrender of the Atoner's life, and the shedding of His blood. Comp. chap. xx. 28.

VER. 29. **But I say to you**: Not unlikely the New Testament supper had been grafted on the Old at that particular part of the passover feast, when the

I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

third cup, commonly called *the cup of benediction*, or *blessing*, was sent round. And if the ancient ceremonial corresponded with that which, in modern times, is in general use among the Jews, there was yet a fourth and concluding cup. Possibly, and probably, after a long pause and interval, during which the contents of John xiv., xv., xvi., xvii. came in, the Lord and His disciples partook of the fourth cup of the passover feast, "after which," says Maimonides, "no more wine must be tasted that night"; and then He would speak as follows. **I shall not drink henceforth**: Or literally, *from now*. Wycliffe's translation is, *fro this tyme*. The end was hastening on. **Of this fruit of the vine**: *Fruit*, literally *offspring*. *Produce* would be a good rendering, Dr. Daniel Scott's; or *product*. The Lord had experienced high and holy enjoyment in His fellowship with His disciples, turning, as He did, all the elements of the feast into things of the highest spiritual significance. But it was now time to leave for Olivet and to prepare for the end. The eventful future was pressing on apace. Our Lord felt it knocking at the door of His heart. And hence the observation that He makes over their parting cup. **Until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of My Father**: The word rendered *new* (*καινόν*) is different from the term which is commonly employed (*νέον*), when *fresh-made wine* or *must* is referred to. (Comp. chap. ix. 17; Mark ii. 22; Luke v. 37, 38, 39.) It denotes here, as Bengel remarks, a peculiar kind of newness (*novitatem dicit plane singularem*). The reference is to the unknown time in the future, when *all things shall be made 'new,'* when there shall be '*new*' heavens and a '*new*' earth, a fit abode of glory for the '*new*' mankind. It will be a time of general glorification. Souls will be glorified. Bodies will be glorified. The surroundings too of both souls and bodies will be made all glorious. There will be feasting then, even as now; but it will be on a higher plane. It will be, as it were, glorified feasting. The Passover supper, already sublimed into the Lord's supper, will be still further sublimed and glorified into the Marriage supper of the Lamb. It will be a *new kind* of supper. Hence the wine that will be used will be *new*, a *new kind* of wine (see Gataker's *Advers. Misc.* xxviii.), inexpressibly superior to all that is now called wine, in all the elements of excellence. It is assumed by our Lord that His kingdom, in the future, will be "the kingdom of His Father." His Father and He are One. It is assumed too that when He comes in His kingdom, it will be a time of feasting and surpassing joy. See chap. xxv. 21, 23, 34, 46.

VER. 30. And when they had sung an hymn: Or *psalm*, as it is in the margin and the Geneva: or, very literally, *And when they had hymned* (*ὑμνήσαντες*). The word does not imply that it was but one hymn or psalm that was sung or chanted. And if the tradition, preserved among the Jews, is of any weight in such a matter, the *hymning* at the conclusion of the supper would embrace Psalms cxv., cxvi., cxvii., cxviii., which constitute the second part of the Jewish Hallelujah, or *Hallel*, as they call it. The other part of the *Hallel* consisted of Psalms cxiii., cxiv., which it was customary to chant at the commencement of the feast. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, sub voce, pp. 613, 614.) Sir John Cheke translates the expression before us, *And after they had praised God*. Tyndale's version, adopted by Coverdale, is prosaic enough, *And when they had*

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the

sayde grace. After the hymn, they went out: From the house and from the city. The original prohibition, "and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning" (Exod. xii. 22), was evidently not regarded in our Saviour's time as obligatory. Into the mount of Olives: Or, as it is in the Rheims version, *unto Mount Olivet*. They would go, first *unto* the mount, passing over the brook Kedron, and then they would dive *into* some one or other of the hollowed and sequestered spots.

VER. 31. Then saith Jesus to them: *Then*, probably when they were beginning, on the farther side of Kedron, to ascend the hill. It was late at night; after midnight, it may be presumed. But it would be a semi-transparent night. The moon, just full orb'd, would be shedding down unparsimoniously and noiselessly, on city, hill, and dell, its mellowed radiance. A solemn stillness would be reigning all around. There would be no rustle in the trees. The din of the city would be hushed. The stars would be looking calmly down. And starlike eyes, behind the stars, and at every point in space, would be gazing sympathetically in the direction of Gethsemane. As the little company, less by one than it was before, was moving solemnly along toward the favourite retreat, each would be wrapped up in the mantle of his own individual meditation. There would be awe upon the disciples' hearts, and yet a spirit of intense devotion to their Lord. By-and-by—for the end was imminent—the Saviour broke the semi-sepulchral silence, and said with bursting heart, *All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: Offended, or stumbled.* All of you without exception shall this night find in Me what will stumble you. There is emphasis on the *All ye*. It means *Even you, and all of you*. It is as if the Saviour had said: *We shall make no more reference to the absent one. He has already stumbled on Me, and fallen. He thinks, poor man! that he understands Me; and he is disappointed. Need I assure you that he does not know Me? He has looked only at the husk and outer rind of things. But even you, true and faithful and devoted as you all are, even you have not been able to take in the fulness of the truth regarding Me, and regarding the work which I am about to consummate by suffering. My heart bleeds for you. You will receive this very night a terrific shock, and it will—ah Me! I clearly foresee it—stagger your faith to its centre.* The expression *shall be stumbled in Me* is literally, and as the Rheims gives it, *shall be scandalized in Me*. So Whiston. Principal Campbell renders it freely, *I shall prove a stumbling-stone to you all.* (See chaps. v. 29, 30; xi. 6; xiii. 21, 57; xv. 12; xvii. 27; xviii. 6, 8, 9; xxiv. 10.) That which is about to happen to Me will so take you by surprise, and will appear to you to be so unaccountable, that, for a season, your faith in Me will drift from its moorings. For it has been written: *Viz., in Zech. xiii. 7, a passage that occurs in the midst of many remarkable predictions, which touch abruptly a multitude of points in the times that were stretching out beyond, and far beyond, the days of the prophet.* (See Stier's *Die Reden des Herrn*, in loc.) The Saviour saw Himself referred to in the passage. *I will smite the shepherd: It is a free quotation. The passage in the Old Testament runs more fully thus: Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd!* Such treatment of the Shepherd by the Lord of hosts would be a mystery of mysteries, and infinitely inexplicable, were not the Shepherd a Saviour, and were it not needful that such a Saviour,

shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended. 34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night,

in order that He might save, should be a sacrifice. The world's sins were upon Him. (Isa. liii. 6.) He was the sin-bearer, the bearer of the sins of the world. And hence it was that the sword of executive vengeance, which the Great Magistrate of the universe "beareth not in vain" (Rom. xiii. 4), while lifted up to smite *them*, was about to fall on *Him*. Such a stroke was needed, and inevitable, if sin was to be treated as sin on the one hand, and if there was to be salvation for the sinner on the other. And the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad: Deprived of their visible leader, and stunned by the apparent catastrophe, they will not know what to do or whither to turn. Our Lord's following was a "little flock." His disciples were "the sheep of the flock." The scattering referred to was not so much physical as spiritual. The disciples' minds would for a season get bewildered. Despair would seize them. They would flee hither and thither from their centre, they knew not whither. But they would not be forsaken. One from above, as we read in the prophecy (Zech. xiii. 6), says, *And I will turn Mine hand—graciously and gently—upon the little ones*, and will re-collect them. See next verse.

VER. 32. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee: You will recover yourselves, and return to Galilee, your own proper home. I shall meet you there. *I shall go before you*, or, *I shall precede you*, viz., as a shepherd does his flock. (*Das προάγειν* ist 'pastoris more' gemeint: STRIER. Grotius had made the same remark.) It is a gracious promise. The statement of it was fitted to let in a ray of light upon the darkness that would be settling down upon the minds of the disciples. See chap. xxviii. 7, 10, 16.

VER. 33. But Peter answered and said to Him, If all shall be stumbled in Thee, I shall never be stumbled: "What sayest thou, O Peter!" exclaims Chrysostom. He said something that had, indeed, a noble side of sincerity in it, that will bear to be held up to the light. There was magnanimity in what he said. And he said it in the loyalty of his heart. But yet he had only the faintest, and most imaginative, conception of the events, and the infolded trials and temptations that were about to occur; and he had a still fainter and more imaginative conception of the subjacent weaknesses of his own spirit. He knew not himself! He knew his strength in a sense, but he did not know his weakness; and hence he greatly over-estimated himself in relation to his brethren.

VER. 34. Jesus said to him, Verily I say to thee, that this night, before a cock shall have crowed,—viz., in your hearing and Mine,—thou shalt have denied Me: How minute and how perfect the foresight of the Lord! The eye which was behind His human eye was an infinite microscope, as well as an infinite telescope; and it swept in its range the future and the past as well as the present. *This night, before a cock shall have crowed*: that is, Not very many minutes from this very moment, and long before the morning's dawn. The crowing of cocks during the stillness of the night is quite a feature in oriental life, and nowhere more so than in and around Jerusalem, at all events at the

before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 35 Peter

time when the writer was there. Without barn-door fowls, says Dr. W. M. Thomson, "the peasants, not to say citizens in general, would scarcely know "how to live. Their eggs, and they themselves, answer the place of meat for "most of their meals. They swarm round every door, share in the food of "their possessors, are at home among the children in every room, roost over- "head at night, and, with their ceaseless crowing, are the town clock and the "morning bell to call up the sleepers at early dawn." (*The Land and the Book*, p. 672.) The great time for cock-crowing was, and is, in the third watch of the night. See Mark xiii. 35. After the *gallicinium* there was the *conticinium*, and then the *diluculum*. The chorus of crowings at that time,—maintained in part by a spirit of rivalry, and in part perhaps by the more social principle of responsive recognition,—is something remarkable at the present day in the towns and villages of Palestine. There would no doubt be a corresponding state of things in our Saviour's time. For though it is stated in the Mishna that it was not allowable to keep cocks in Jerusalem, yet the statement is evidently a mere imagination or figment. "It is certain," says Lightfoot, "that there were cocks at Jerusalem, as well as at other places. And memor- "able is the story of a cock, which was stoned, by the sentence of the council, "for having killed a little child." (*Hebrew and Talmud. Exercitations*, in loc.). **Thrice**: Mark—not Mark and Luke as Barnes says—gives our Lord's statement thus, *Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow TWICE, thou shalt deny Me THRICE*; and this is, no doubt, the fullest record of the remark, though both in the narrative of Mark and in that of Matthew, as we presume, the Lord's remark is given in a condensed form. The *twice* is not to be accounted for, as many—inclusive of Barnes, Alford, Wordsworth, Conder—have supposed on the principle that there was usually or frequently a preliminary midnight crowing. For Mark expressly records that after Peter's *first denial a cock crew*, and then after his third denial *a cock crew again* (chap. xiv. 68-72). Infidels, as might be anticipated, have taken occasion for repeated cock-crowings over the supposed contradiction; and Strauss does not fail to hold the apparent discrepancy up to view. But there is no contradiction. Mark's account, indeed, is the fuller of the two, and the more precise in the form of the phraseology. It would, most probably, be supplied to him out of the tenacious memory of Peter himself, who is generally supposed to have stood in some peculiar and important relation to Mark's Gospel. But the representation of Matthew—which is identical with that of Luke and John—seizes and presents to view the great idea of our Lord in a free and easy manner, which makes not the slightest pretension, in such a trifling detail, to nicety of particularization. It is tantamount to the following putting of the case: *Verily I say to thee, Peter, that this night, long before the morning dawns, thou shalt deny Me. Thou shalt deny Me once, and again, and again. Here is the 'thrice.' Dost thou start at the idea of such weakness, irresolution, and baseness? I do not marvel. I tell thee the truth. The time is rushing on. Before thou shalt have heard a cock crow, thou shalt have denied Me! Here is the denial before a cock shall have crowed. Our Saviour may then have added: And before the cock shall have crowed twice, thou shalt have denied Me thrice.* The representation in Matthew is not only compact, it is crowded besides. **Denied Me**: Dis-owned Me.

VER. 35. Peter saith to Him, Though I should have to die with Thee (κάν θέη,

said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Geth-

κ.τ.λ.). Wycliffe's version is excellent, *Gif it shal behove me to dye with Thee*. It is much superior to that of King James's translators, *though I should die with Thee*. Peter stretched his imagination of the impending trial to the utmost, and supposed that the Lord was really going to be murdered. He was willing to share in the doom. So he thought. He could not conceive of himself disowning his Lord in any circumstances whatsoever. **I will not deny Thee** : I will not disown Thee. No. Never. **In like manner did all the disciples also speak** : also, as well as Peter. *Is our Lord about to be stoned, or in any other way to be fatally maltreated? Can it be the case that there will be some literal reality in what He has once and again said to us about crucifixion?* (Chap. x. 38; xvi. 24; xx. 19.) *It matters not. We shall never desert or disown Him, although we should need to suffer with Him to the last extremity. O our Lord, say not to us again such cruel words. It is impossible that we could ever disown Thee. Look into our hearts and see the depth of our love and the transparency of our sincerity.*

VER. 36. The Lord did not insist. He had said enough. The sad procession moved on. Then cometh Jesus with them to a place called Gethsemane: It had been a favourite retreat. "For Jesus," says John, "ofttimes resorted thither with His disciples." (Chap. xviii. 2.) It would be not only quiet, but shady and lovely. It was a 'garden.' (John xviii. 1.) Josephus tells us that the suburbs of Jerusalem abounded with charming gardens and 'paradises.' (*War*, vi. 1: 1.) Perhaps Gethsemane belonged to one who revered the Lord, and invited Him to make free use of it during His stay. Or, perhaps, as Dr. W. M. Thomson suggests, it might, along with other suburban gardens and pleasure grounds, be thrown open, on the great festival occasions, to all faithful pilgrims who came from a distance. (*The Land and the Book*, pt. iv., ch. xli., p. 634.) The word *Gethsemane* means *oil-press*. At one time or other, and possibly in our Saviour's time, there had been in the place a press for the manufacture of olive oil. The mount of Olives was, as its name sufficiently indicates, a peculiar habitat of olives. At the present day, just beyond the brook Kedron, between the paths that go up to the summit of the mount, and distant from the wall of Jerusalem about three quarters of a mile, there is an enclosed garden, called *Gethsemane* or *Dschesmanije*. It has been only recently enclosed, and is almost a square, being about 160 ft. by 150 ft. It belongs to the Latin community, and is kept by a Latin monk, who shows it readily to strangers. The writer's memory frequently goes back to it and lingers within its walls. There are eight very ancient olive trees in it, singularly patriarchal in appearance, and remarkably rugged, and massive, and gnarled. Standing beside them one's mind instinctively travels backward to a very remote period. When Henry Maundrell visited the spot in 1697, they were then, as now, of extremely venerable aspect. He says, "It is well planted with olive trees, and these of so old a growth, that they are believed to be the same that stood here in our blessed Saviour's time." (*Journey*, p. 105, ed. 1749.) Dean Stanley says, "In spite of all the doubts that can be raised against their antiquity, the eight aged olive trees, if only by their manifest difference from all others on the mountain, have always struck even the most indifferent observers." "They will remain, so long as their already protracted life is spared, the most venerable of

semene, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very

“their race on the surface of the earth. Their gnarled trunks and scanty foliage will always be regarded as the most affecting of the sacred memorials in or about Jerusalem,—the most nearly approaching to the everlasting hills themselves in the force with which they carry us back to the events of the Gospel history.” (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 455.) It is true Josephus informs us that the Romans, at their siege, “cut down all the trees that were in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, and for ninety furlongs round about.” (*War*, vi. 1 : 1.) But it would be only the well grown trees which would be of use to them in their military operations. And it is quite reasonable to suppose that many of the stripling plants would be left standing. We confide, however, to scientific botanists the determination of the age of the Gethsemane olives. Since the writer's visit, another and adjacent plot of the Gethsemane district has, in a spirit of rivalry, been enclosed by the Greek Christians. But, says Porter, “they do not often exhibit it as yet to the Franks.” It is saddening to think that the two contiguous spots should become, as it were, bones of contention to partisan sects. The enlightened visitor, while feeling assured that in either enclosure he cannot be far from the sacred scene, will yet bear in mind that all the topographical lines that have been drawn are entirely arbitrary and merely conventional. **And saith to His disciples:** That is, to the general company or body of His disciples. See next verse. **Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray:** He felt that He must get to be alone for a season with His heavenly Father, that He might open Himself up undistractedly to the progressive inflowing of His will. He had desires, rooting themselves innocently in His humanity, which He wished to lift up, steadfastly and continuously, till, to His own perfect consciousness, even as man, they should merge and melt and be absorbed in the desires and will of His Father.

VER. 37. And He took with Him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee: John and James. (See chap. iv. 21.) These three constituted the innermost of the concentric circles of the discipleship. They were, so to speak, the *élite* of the elect; and they would in all likelihood be acknowledged as such by their brethren. (See chap. xvii. 1.) Our Lord felt for them a love of peculiar interest and complacency, because, as we may presume, He perceived in them some peculiar features of moral strength and nobleness on the one hand, or of moral sensitiveness, receptivity, and loveliness on the other. On the present occasion He was wishful to have them nearer to His person than it would be fitting for the rest to be. He would see that in consequence of their peculiar characteristics, they would be better able than the others to understand Him, to sympathize with Him, and to learn lessons from what was about to transpire in His experience. **And began to be sorrowful and very heavy:** An ascending or climactic phrase, the latter part of it denoting intensified sorrow. The word rendered *to be very heavy* (*ἀδηνουεῖν*) is also used in Mark's narrative, and might be translated *to be greatly distressed*. It refers to what is still more graphically described by Luke as “being in an agony.” (Chap. xxii. 44.) Its etymological import is not yet a settled point with philologists. Buttmann supposes that the root idea is *to be away from home, to be away from one's own people*. (See *ἀδηνος = ἀπὸδηνος*.) Grimm has accepted this derivation; and Meyer. So of old Leigh and Pasor. If it be correct, the idea involved would

heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding

certainly be exceedingly suitable to our Lord's condition, as also to the only other case in the New Testament in which the word is employed. (See Phil. ii. 26.) Our Lord's spirit was filled with a most oppressive sense of loneliness. Nobody understood Him. To nobody could He impart what was at the heights, and in the depths of His spirit. He felt as if He were far away from home. He had come indeed to His own people on the earth, and would gladly have felt at home with them; but they had not received Him. They had acted toward Him, not only as strangers, but as enemies. To His very disciples even He was in a great measure a stranger. They did not understand Him. He was therefore most lonely. He was, as it were, treading in an olive press "alone"; "of the people there was none with Him." (Isa. lxiii. 3.) Still, we must not press the evangelist's word. Whatever may be its root idea, and the stem of its import, it certainly means *to be greatly distressed*. So it is explained, no doubt with a special reference to the passage before us, by the ancient lexicographers Suidas and Phavorinus (*ἀδημονῶ, τὸ λίαν λυποῦμαι*). Hesychius explains it in the light of Luke's expression, *to be in an agony* (*ἀδημονῶ, ἀγωνιῶ*). That too is Tyndale's translation. The Geneva version is kindred in import, and *grievously troubled*. The version of our Authorized translators is not quite so happy. It was evidently suggested to them by that etymology of the word which is given by Eustathius, and which supposes that *satiety* is the radical signification (*ἄδης*): so Schneider, Passow, Skarlatos (*Athens*, 1852), Bretschneider, Wahl, Robinson. Note that it is said that our Lord "*began*" to be sorrowful and greatly distressed." He had no doubt had many pangs before; but now they became intensified into the superlative degree, so that He could not refrain from "strong crying and tears" (Heb. v. 7). On many former occasions billows had broken over Him, billows upon billows (see John xii. 27); but now a whole 'sea of troubles' seemed to break loose, rising up, and rolling in with tremendous roar, to overwhelm Him.

VER. 38. Then saith He to them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: Sir John Cheke's version is free, but gives the idea, *I am even lijk to die for sorrow*. Our Lord speaks of His *soul* (*ψυχή*), the spiritual centre of His humanity, and that centre considered on its sensitive side. It was *exceedingly sorrowful*. The Greek word is peculiarly graphic (*πεπλιυπος*), representing His soul as *encompassed with sorrow*. At every point and pore, as it were, of His susceptibility, sorrow was pressing in. It was sorrow *even unto death*. Sorrow in general lies on the line of death, just as joy in general lies on the line of life. If the sorrow be sufficiently intense, it will run down into death. The heart will break: The Saviour evidently felt as if His heart was breaking. His whole humanity was heaving with commotion, and seemed as if it were about to break up. What caused such overpowering grief? It is a question not to be lightly put, and only to be very partially answered, unless we could see to the entire circumference of our Saviour's mediatorial relations. But who can thus see? Where is the standpoint to be found? Men cannot transcend their human limitations, just as the eagle cannot soar beyond the atmosphere in which it flies. They cannot see far up or far down, far out or far in. It is not needful that they should see everything. It is not difficult to see what is enough to show how natural and how reasonable it was that the *Saviour's soul should be exceeding sorrowful even unto death*. (1) Judas was approaching with his band: Judas, His own disciple. (2) Peter was about to deny Him.

sorrowful, even unto death. Tarry ye here, and watch with me.

(3) The rest of the disciples were about to lose confidence in Him, and to forsake Him. (4) He was about to undergo a mock trial, and to be subjected to cruel indignities. (5) He was about to be crucified—a terrible and opprobrious way of inflicting a violent death on slaves who were felons. (6) In the occurrence of these various events, along with many corresponding incidents, multitudes of persons, Jews and Gentiles, would find plausible reasons for tossing aside, as not only invalid, but as also absolutely ridiculous, His claims to be accepted as the Divine Saviour of man. How sad! Hence too the retardation of the Christianization of mankind at large, and the consequent injury of myriads and millions of souls. How peculiarly sad and saddening!

(7) Yet it was the Father's good pleasure, and His own too, so far as the deepest desires of His heart were concerned, that, in the circumstances, He should submit to all these woes. Why? In considering this 'why' the spirit feels it needful to ascend into another sphere of things, of the greatest possible significance. Why was our Lord in Gethsemane at all? Why did He ever make His appearance at Jerusalem? Why did He reside so long, and labour so assiduously, in Galilee? Why did He appear on earth, "manifest in flesh"? Why, when thus manifest, and "in fashion as a man," was He moving habitually among the humblest classes of society? Why was He submitting to the manifold privations which are the result of pinching poverty, while yet having at His command the affluence of the world and of the universe? Why was He submitting to innumerable other trials incident to a state of society saturated with sin and interpenetrated up-through and down-through with the Divinely appointed penalty of sin? Why? No answer to these questions will go deep enough, which ignores the vicarious relation of our Lord. He had come into the sphere of men, and had gone down into the lowest department of the sphere, *the department whither the whole of the race were gradually gravitating and tending*, that He might, in some high respect, stand in the room of men, working for them on the one hand, and suffering for them on the other. He came that He might work out for men, in their behalf and in their room, what they should have worked out for themselves, perfect righteousness. He came that He might synchronously suffer for men, at once in their behalf and in their room, what they were all liable to suffer for themselves, the penal consequences of their unrighteousness. The unrighteousnesses of the world were, in some peculiar way accumulated on His soul, and piled up to heaven like mountains upon mountains. He was "bearing the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) "The Lord had laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 6.) Thus He was being "wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of *our* peace was upon Him, that by His stripes *we* might be healed." (Isa. liii. 5.) He was suffering, as far as it was possible, the approach of the death which is the "wages of sin" (Rom. vi. 23), and which is the antithesis of life everlasting, and thus the opposite of the fulness of bliss. No wonder that *His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto (natural) death. Tarry ye here, or, Remain ye here, Abide here.* The Rheims has it, *Stay here.* His sorrow was so overpowering that He felt that He must get away with it to a distance from men. **And watch with Me:** Literally, *And keep awake with Me.* It is a compound and compressed expression. *Keep 'awake,' and keep thus consciously 'with Me,' though at a little distance from Me.* The Saviour's humanity clung to His loving disciples, and wished them to be near Him, even

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup

when it felt that it must go aside to bear its unparticipable burden. How exquisitely human!

VER. 39. **And He went a little farther**: Or, better still, *And He went forward a little* (*προελθὼν μικρόν*). Strange to say, the reading, which is overwhelmingly supported by the uncial manuscripts, and by about a hundred of the cursives, inclusive of the best of them, 1, 33, 69, is not, *He went forward a little*, but *He approached a little* (*προσελθὼν μικρόν*). Scholz has received this reading into the text; and Tregelles too; and Tischendorf in his eighth edition. It is supported by the manuscripts \aleph A C D I L Γ Δ E F G H K S U V. And yet there is no room for doubting that the addition of the single letter, which makes all the difference between the two readings, is a mere mechanical *erratum* of the transcribers, to which they would be all the more liable, as the word which they give is exceedingly common in Matthew, whereas the other word never occurs in any other part of his Gospel. It is undoubtedly however the right word, as is evidenced by the appended expression *a little*. It is found in the Vatican manuscript (B), as also in M and II*, and is supported by the Itala and Vulgate versions. Lachmann too gives it. **And fell on His face**: He would kneel at first (Luke xxii. 41); and by-and-by, as the intensity of His feelings increased and overwhelmed Him, He would prostrate Himself entirely. **And prayed, saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me!** *Pass or pass away*, as the verb is rendered in the 42nd verse, and also frequently elsewhere. (See chap. xxiv. 35; Luke xxi. 32; 2 Cor. v. 17; Jas. i. 10; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xxi. 1.) *This cup*: This bitter, bitter cup, of which, so far as the intensity of the bitterness is concerned, I am only now beginning to taste. There was of course, and as we have seen on ver. 38, a mixture of elements in the cup; and the exquisite sensitiveness and percipiency of our Saviour's spirit would marvellously qualify Him at once for discriminating them, and for feeling the accumulated effect of them all. At the *bottom* of the cup, heavier by far than all the other elements, there was the inevitable death potion, the proper penalty of sin. (Rom. vi. 23; Ezek. xviii. 4, xxxiii.) It was deadly. It was death. It was death, in the most awful and comprehensive sense of the term, so far as it is fitted to express a Divine infliction, a penal outgoing of holy Divine agency. It was hence something far more dreadful than the simple severance of soul and body; though, in our Saviour's circumstances, it could not be realized without resulting in that severance, violently induced. But floating above, and intermingling with, that dread essential element, there were in the cup which was pressed to our Saviour's lips many superadded ingredients, the superaddition of which must have intensified tremendously the inevitable bitterness. How exceedingly bitter must have been the treason of Judas! the imminent denial of Peter! the dereliction of the other apostles! There were also the impending mock trial, and the mock verdict! the petty insults too of the smaller men in the sanhedrin! the scowls and Satanic malice of the higher officials! the injustice also of the Roman procurator! the cold, heartless handling and mis-handling of the Roman soldiery! and the ribaldry of the Jewish mob! There were besides the servility, and in particular the 'shame' of the cross. *All these were contingent elements in the potion*. Even on the just hypothesis that it was needful for the atonement to be wrought out, to a large extent, by suffering as well as by doing, by suffering unto death, these contingencies might not have

been. They should not have been. It was a sin for them to be. They were from man only, not from God. They were in utter opposition to the will of God. And our blessed Saviour, as it were, said, *Must I drink them?* He could not help the revolt of the entire sensibility of His nature. He would not have been human, still less would He have been Divine, had He liked such things, or felt no shrinking from them. But the very shrinking which He felt would have been a mere amiable instinct, and by no means a meritorious and priceless principle of character, had He not gone up with it to His Father, and given expression to it in prayer. Hence the petition before us. The desire, into which it resolved itself, had reference, no doubt, in the main, to the contingencies of the cup, the non-essentials of the fatal potion; though at the same time there would be, we need not hesitate to admit, an awful instinctive revolting or recoil from the dread inevitable dregs that were beneath. These dregs however needed to be drunk, if atonement was to be. And we cannot conceive of our Saviour resiling from His position as a devoted Atoner, and wishing to get quit of the fatal potion. We cannot conceive of Him repenting, as it were, of His mediatorial interposition. He was not fickle. Neither was there a vestige of moral weakness in His heart. His heart, though having in it a beautiful feminine element, was not effeminate. Though He was womanly in some of the features of His sensibility, He was not womanish. He was a hero, though far more than a hero. He felt no unmanly tremors when He offered Himself to be the *Forlorn Hope of Humanity*. He felt no approaches to such tremors as He mounted to the summit of the battlements of human sin. He had given Himself up, self-consecratedly, to be a Sacrifice. He knew that He must fall, though not before the citadel of Satan should be carried. He knew that He must die, so far as it was possible for Him to die, and that in His death there would be more dreadful ingredients and more protracted sufferings, than the mere severance of His soul and body. He knew that He must 'taste death' in its deadliness. But He also knew that it was possible thus to taste death without the contingencies referred to. He no doubt wished too, when once it should be necessary for Him to die, that He should accomplish His decease in public; for He was emphatically a public personage, and acting before and for the public. Hence, as we presume, His "supplication with strong crying and tears, unto Him who was able to save Him from death." (Heb. v. 7.) Hence His prayer, *My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, 'this cup'* as thus filled, and as I am even now tasting it. *If it is possible:* And there was a sense in which it was 'possible.' See Mark xiv. 36. It was possible to the Father to arrest Judas by other than moral means. (See ver. 53.) It was possible to stretch out 'the besom of destruction' and to sweep away both him and his 'band,' or to engulf them in a common grave. It was possible to bid the whirlwind or the earthquake shake the high priest's palace till it should tumble into ruins. Or, if the palace were to be saved, it was still possible to strike down the high priest's person. It was possible to paralyze every tongue that should dare to speak one derogatory word in reference to Jesus, and to strike with instant blindness every eye that should look on Him scowlingly or askance. If miracle upon miracle were wrought, *the cup, as it was being presented to our Lord, and pressed to His lips in Gethsemane, would have passed away entirely.* But then the introduction of such miracles, for the attainment of such ends, would have been the introduction of an entirely different system of Divine government. And one result, amid others, would have been that the Divine crusade against sin and Satan, the grandest enterprise ever

pass from me : nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep,
and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one

inaugurated in the universe, would have been removed from the grandest of arenas, the ethical, to the arena of physical force, *thus leaving, so far as that ethical arena was concerned, the victory with Satan and with sin.* If the 'possible' had become actual under such conditions, would it have been for the weal of the universe? would it have been for the glory of God? would it have been for the glory of the Son of God? **Nevertheless:** Notwithstanding the fact that I have this feeling of desire for deliverance from the contingencies of suffering that are in My cup. **Not as I will, but as Thou wilt:** *Or Not as I wish, but as Thou wishest.* It is as if He had said, *By far the deepest desire in My heart is that Thy wish and will should be done.* The lifting up of this desire was therefore the real prayer of our Saviour's prayer. He could not help indeed desiring deliverance from injury, injustice, ingratitude, insolence, insult, misunderstanding, cruelty, hate, shame. Hence the outcry of His agonized heart. But underneath that awful agony there lay, millions of fathoms deep, unmoved and immovable, the intense desire that His Father's wish and will should be done. That wish and will were in reality His own. And thus He both desired, and He did not desire, that the cup should pass from Him. In the surface element of His feelings, He desired that the cup should pass. In the ocean of feeling that lay beneath, His desire was that it should not pass. And there was the Divinest harmony between the two desires. They sublimely coincided in all that was essential to moral excellency. In both there was a longing for what was good. But the good that was longed for in the undermost and deepest emotions was immeasurably the greater, and hence the Father willed that the cup should not pass altogether away, *and the Son's will was entirely the same.* Hence it was the case that He continued to drink deeper and deeper into the bitterness of the cup. He returned to it, and returned to it, and returned to it again, taking draught after draught.

VER. 40. **And He cometh to the disciples, and findeth them sleeping:** We must remember, on the one hand, that it was already a considerable time past midnight, and on the other, that the minds of the disciples had been for long on the strain. We must not forget, moreover, that when grief is superadded to strain it has, in certain natures, and especially at certain conjunctures in their state, a peculiarly oppressing and soporific tendency. It overpowers the activity of the brain and steepens the senses in an element of drowsiness and passivity. (See Luke xxii. 45.) **And:** Meyer draws attention to the 'simple pathos' that is affectingly expressed by this re-repetition of the *and*. **He saith to Peter:** Addressing, most wisely, to him in particular the reproof that was needed by all the three. For if Peter's profession had been well founded, greater efforts should have been put forth by him, than by the others, to comply with the wish of the Master, and to comfort Him by the sustained activity of sympathy. **What! could ye not watch with Me one hour?** The exclamation *What!* is an admirable idiomatic translation. The Greek idiom is different. It is literally *Thus or So*, without the exclamation point. *Thus could ye not watch with Me one hour?* The expression is crowded and crushed. Is it thus ye come short already? It is a reproof, with a deep element of pathos implied. "If the footmen have wearied you, how will ye contend with horses?" (Trapp.)

hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. 42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my

It is also implied that our Lord had been engaged, or would yet continue to be engaged, in prayer for about an hour. Hence it is but condensed snatches of His utterances that are preserved in the respective Gospels.

VER. 41. **Watch:** Keep awake, I entreat you. You will have need, ere long, for all your faculties in their most wakeful condition. **And pray:** Lift up your hearts to your heavenly Father, and open them wide to His influence, that they may be filled from above out of His fulness. **That ye enter not into temptation:** This clause describes, not that which was to be the burden of their prayer, but that which was to be *their aim* at once in watching and in giving themselves to prayer (*iva*). The full translation would be, *in order that ye may not enter into temptation*. Temptation was at hand, and they would infallibly go right into the heart of it and be overpowered by it, unless they diligently, kept awake, and, ascending into communion with God, laid their spirits open to the influence of His wish and will. Their entrance into temptation would be wilful on the one side of it, though it might be unwitting on the other. **The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak:** These words are not an apology for the overpowering drowsiness of His disciples. Still less are they, as some have supposed, an apology for His own overpowering agony. Nor are they simply a doctrinal platitude regarding a supposed insolvable polarity of moral contraries in all incarnated beings. They assert indeed a certain moral contrariety; but, in asserting it, they exhibit a reason why our Lord's disciples should give themselves to watchfulness and prayerfulness. The Saviour intimates to them that if they should be remiss in watchfulness and prayerfulness, they would be in great danger of entering into temptation, and falling under its power, *because, though their spirit was willing, their flesh, like all flesh, was weak*. The Saviour thus graciously and sympathetically admitted that they were *willing in spirit*. In the heart of their heart they were *ready* (see Mark xiv. 38; Acts xvii. 11; Rom. i. 15; 2 Cor. viii. 11, 19; ix. 2) to do their duty, whatever it might be, and in particular to do what was requisite for the present occasion and the impending trial, as also for their ultimate position in the kingdom of heaven. But then *their flesh was weak*. The Saviour does not refer to what is commonly called *physical weakness*. Not unlikely most of the disciples would be *physically* as strong at least as Himself, perhaps stronger. He had a far profounder reference. He meant that in those moral susceptibilities of their nature, which were most readily influenced by their incarnated condition, they were weak. In their relations to the objects of sense in general, and to their countrymen in particular, and to the various institutions which were the pride and glory of their countrymen, they were apt to fall before temptation, as, alas! in a very brief period they proved themselves to be.

VER. 42. **Again, a second time, He went away, and prayed, saying:** The expression *a second time* is added to the word *again* by a kind of solemn pleonasm, because the evangelist, looking forward as well as backward, wished to draw attention particularly to the numerical re-repetition of the Saviour's prayer. Once, and again, and yet again, He returned, in direct consciousness, to His Father, with the same desires welling up and flowing forth from His heart.

Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. 43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. 44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest. Behold, the

My Father, if this cannot pass from Me unless I drink it, Thy will be done: In the best reading of the text the word *cup* is left unexpressed after the pronoun *this*. Instead of *cannot*, our translators read *may not*, which, though originally equivalent to *can not* (see the Anglo-Saxon *mæge*, and compare the English words *might* and *main*), seemed to them, we presume, a milder form of expression. So too Wycliffe, and the Bishop's Bible, and the Rheims. It is *cannot*, however, in the original. For, while in an obvious and most important respect, the cup *could* have been made to pass from the Saviour (see Mark xiv. 36), there was another and equally important respect in which it *could not*. Absolutely it could; relatively to the circumstances of the case it could not. Out of the traces of wisdom, it could; within the traces of wisdom it could not. So far as mere omnipotence was concerned, God could easily have removed it. But He could not have done so to the conservation, consolidation, and advancement of the best interests of men in particular, and of His universal moral empire in general. Hence the Saviour, in the deepest desire of His heart, wished and willed that His Father's wish and will should be done.

VER. 43. **And He came again and found them sleeping:** Such is the proper position of the word *again*. It is supported by the manuscripts \aleph B C D I L Γ , 1, 33, 124, etc. The Coptic version supplements the expression thus, *And He came again to His disciples and found them sleeping*. It is added, *For their eyes were heavy*: In their strong, muscular natures the physical element had got the complete ascendancy. They were not afraid of themselves spiritually, or jealous over themselves; and the immense mediatorial interests of the impending crisis were left by them lying aside from their view, and undreamed of.

VER. 44. **And He left them again:** After having in vain sought to arouse their interest. See Mark xiv. 40. **And went away, and prayed a third time, saying the same words:** Tischendorf, in his eighth edition, reads the last clause as follows, *saying again the same words*. He thus repeats the *again* on the authority of the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts (\aleph and B), and L and 124, and the Coptic version. Westcott and Hort concur. The term translated *words* is singular in the original ($\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\nu$). But it would scarcely do to translate it *word*, with Wycliffe and the Rheims. The term does not quite correspond to our English *word*, except when *word* is used collectively, as it is in such expressions as *a word of exhortation*, *a word of prayer*. Sir John Cheke's translation is, *and said the saam thing*. But we are not to suppose that our Saviour restricted Himself to the re-repetition of a single phrase. The idea is, that the burden of His prayer was to the same effect as before. He continued lifting up all His desires in reference to the imminent crisis, in all its ingredients, until, at every point of His consciousness, they melted into the desire of His Father.

VER. 45. **Then cometh He to the disciples (the His in the received text is probably spurious), and saith to them, Sleep on now and take your rest:** Our translators had evidently regarded the Saviour's words as spoken in irony; and

this was the view of the expression that was taken by the critics, whose opinion had the greatest weight with them. It was taken not only by Theophylact and Euthymius Zigabenus, to whose opinion in all likelihood they would pay little if any heed, but also by Erasmus, Münster, Calvin, Bucer (who calls it however *amica ironia et correptio*), and Beza (who speaks of the expression as a *sarcasm*). It was taken also by Maldonato and Jansen, Piscator and Aretius; and it is approved of by Hammond, Henry, Doddridge, Michaelis, Principal Campbell, Holden, Fritzsche, Meyer, Webster-and-Wilkinson, Hanna. It is, however, unless somewhat strongly and peculiarly modified, a rather unlikely conception of our Saviour's expression. It is unlikely when we consider the deeply solemn and tender tone of our Saviour's spirit. Unlikely too, when we consider the phrase which is rendered *now* (τὸ ἵκανόν). It properly means *the remainder (of the time)*. Henry Stephens, repelled by the idea of irony, understood the expression interrogatively, *Sleep ye (still) and take rest?* (Preface to his 1576 New Testament, last page.) See Luke xxii. 46. Luther had taken the same view. (*Ach wolt ihr nun schlaffen und ruhen?*) Wolf too, and Heumann, Kypke, Mace, Wynne, Wakefield, Macknight, Adam Clarke, Greswell, Burton, Robinson, Whedon, Rotherham. But the adverbial phrase rendered *still* (or *now*), does not naturally mean *still* (or *yet*). It naturally *looks forward* from the time indicated by the tense of the verb with which it is conjoined. It is translated *from henceforth* in Heb. x. 13. Comp. 2 Tim. iv. 8. And hence, indeed, Arnoldi would render the Saviour's words thus, *Sleep at a future time, and take your rest, putting the emphasis on the phrase at a future time, that is, not now (künftighin)*. That too was Meyer's *first* interpretation. It is far better however to take, with Augustin, a more simple view of the Saviour's words (*Consens. Evangelist*, ii. 11), and to regard Him as meaning just what He says. He speaks graciously, sympathisingly, indulgently, and yet with a certain appreciable mixture of sorrowful condemnation. We shall understand Him the more readily if we bear in mind that we need not suppose that all the remarks, contained in this verse and the next, were made in the mere shred and fraction of a minute. Our Lord had remained long in converse with His Father, at the time when He first went forward from His three disciples (see ver. 40). On coming back to them, and finding them asleep, He may have spent a few minutes in their presence, pathetically remonstrating with them, and tenderly warning and exhorting them. He was pressed however in spirit, and had to retire without delay to be alone with His Father. On coming again to His disciples, and finding them still overpowered, He would continue beside them but for the space of a few minutes or moments. His agony returned on Him, and He had to leave them once more. By-and-by, having "offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death (*i.e.*, from the dissolution of His humanity, with which He was threatened in Gethsemane), *He was heard (and delivered) from His fear*" (Heb. v. 7). He was "strengthened" (Luke xxii. 43). He was calmed. The mere human element of His desire was swallowed up in the Divine. His prayer was granted, not indeed in the way of certain bitter ingredients in the cup being removed, but in the way of postponing the time for the drinking of the draught, and by the impartation meanwhile of strength from on high. He returned, grandly invigorated, to His disciples. They still "slumbered and slept." But most likely they would open their eyes as He approached; and, smitten with shame and confusion, would begin, self reproachingly, to rouse themselves up. Standing before them, or seating

hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going : behold, he is at hand that

Himself in sublime condescension by their side, the gentle Saviour, we may suppose, would benignantly interpose and speak to them, to some such effect as follows : *My struggle for the present is past. It is not of such moment now that you should watch with Me. Spare yourselves. I see that you are still overpowered. You will have need ere long of all the refreshment you can get. Snatch a few moments of further repose. There is still a little time. I am content to stay in solitude beside you, and I shall wake you when the crisis overtakes us.* (See next verse.) *'Sleep the remainder (of the available time), and rest yourselves.'* Augustin's view of the expression is approved of by Winer (iii. 43 : 1). The balm of the Saviour's words would drop soothingly on the wearied spirits of the disciples. They would, in all likelihood, drop over again, and "rest" and "sleep" for a season, while the Saviour, seated beside them, and wrapt, imperturbably now, in the folds of high mediatorial meditation, would turn His eyes toward Jerusalem in the direction of its eastern gate. (*Sicut Dominus aliquantum*: AUGUSTIN, *loc. cit.*). By-and-by the flashes of torches and lanterns were beheld by Him in the dim distance. The crisis of the world was at hand. The Lord knew it. As He looked and listened, His eager ear heard the knell of departing dispensations. A new state of things was about to be rung in. The first tollings were rolling in from afar. The Saviour turned to His disciples, broke silence, and spoke. Behold, the hour is at hand : Literally, *has drawn nigh*. So the verb is rendered in chap. xxi. 1 ; Luke xv. 25, xxi. 28, xxii. 1 ; Jas. v. 8. *The hour* : The all important hour, the time of the crisis, the time of the consummation of the mediatorial mystery, the time that is the meeting point of dispensations, the turning point of a glorious ending on the one hand and a more glorious beginning on the other. See John vii. 30, viii. 20, xii. 23, 27, xiii. 1, xvii. 1. And the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners : The arrest was so imminent that our Saviour speaks of it as if it were already actual. The few minutes of interval that were yet to elapse were, as it were, annihilated to His view. He refers, of course, to the consummation of the traitorous action of Judas in handing Him over to the members of the sanhedrin, the senators of the nation. These senators were *sinner*s. They were *sinner*s emphatically. And yet, with all the haughtiness of hypocritical holiness, they were about to sit self-complacently in judgement on one who "knew no sin." He knew, too, in the sphere of His consciousness, that in the sphere of His experience He "knew no sin." How lofty the self-consciousness of our Lord ! How piercing also must the pang have been of suffering judicial examination and condemnation at the hand of such *sinner*s ! (See Ps. xxii. 12, 13, 16, 21.)

VER. 46. Rise : Shake off drowsiness now. Start to your feet. Let us be going : It is as if He had said : *See ye not yonder torches and lanterns ? What I have again and again predicted to you is just about to transpire. The predictions too of the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms are about to be fulfilled. Arise. Let us step forward to rouse the rest of the disciples, and then let us go forth, calmly and boldly, to meet the traitor and his band. Fear not. The prince of this world shall be outwitted and cast out. The Saviour and His chosen three would then move on toward the others, and thence, in solemn silence, they would advance in the direction of the approaching lanterns and torches. The individuals of 'the band' would be gradually becoming distinguishable. And*

doth betray me. 47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. 48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. 49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master;

the Saviour, as He looked, said to the disciples, Lo, he who betrayeth Me is just at hand. "Every one," says Horatio B. Hackett, "must have noticed something abrupt in the Saviour's summons to the disciples, *Arise, let us be going; see, he is at hand that doth betray Me.* (Chap. xxvi. 46.) It is not improbable that His watchful eye at that moment caught sight of Judas and his accomplices, as they issued from one of the eastern gates, or turned round the northern or southern corner of the walls, in order to descend into the valley. Even if the night was dark, He could have seen the torches which they carried, and could have felt no uncertainty respecting the object of such a movement at that unseasonable hour. This view is not necessary to the explanation of the passage, but it is a natural one, and supplies a connection between the language and the external circumstances, which augments exceedingly the graphic power of the narrative." (*Illustrations of Scripture*, ch. vii., p. 169.)

VER. 47. And while He was yet speaking, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came: There is pathos in the particularization, *one of the twelve*. It had probably become, by the time that Matthew's Gospel was composed, a kind of stereotyped designation of the traitor. Men would be often saying to one another, and more especially when narrating the case for the first time to strangers: "Yes, wonderful to state, Jesus was betrayed by *one of the twelve*, one of those whom He chose as His special disciples and apostles. His name was Judas." And with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people: They were empowered and sent out by the sanhedrin. Part of the multitude would consist of a detachment (a *σπεῖρα* or cohort, or indefinitely, *a company*) of Roman soldiers (see John xviii. 3); and these, of course would be armed with *swords*. Others were simply armed with *batons, staves, sticks, cudgels, 'shillelahs'* as it were, or *clubs* (the Rheims word, and Principal Campbell's); Wycliffe's word is *battis* (that is, *bats*), connected with *beat* and *battle*; McLellan's, *truncheons*. For part of the multitude would consist of the 'servants' of the conspicuous men in the sanhedrin. (John xviii. 3.) And not improbably some of the conspicuous men themselves would either openly or in disguise be mingled with the crowd, to make sure that no ruse should be attempted; for of course the traitor would not be implicitly trusted. (See Luke xxii. 52.)

VER. 48. But he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, He it is; arrest Him: Or, *take Him into custody*. "Ah, lewd losell!" exclaims Trapp. He was a *losell* indeed, *lost* to all shame. The very "*superfluous* of naughtiness" gushes over in the *kiss*. It seems to have been heartlessly fixed upon as simply the most convenient mode of securing identification, so that, in the dusk of the night, the soldiers might be perfectly certain who was the person to be secured. The *kiss*, conventionally considered, was a mode of indicating friendliness, corresponding in the main, to the *shaking of hands* in our country.

VER. 49. And forthwith approaching Jesus: *Forthwith*, that is, immediately

and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

on coming face to face with the little group that consisted of our Lord and His disciples. He said, *Hail, Master*: In the original, *Hail, Rabbi*, for such would be the vernacular designation with which the disciples were accustomed to salute the Lord. *Hail*: literally *Rejoice!* It was the common Greek salutation on occasion of meeting. It corresponded to the Semitic *Salaam!* or *Peace* (to you)! and to our English *Good morning* (to you)! And kissed Him: It is a stronger term (*κατεφιλήσεν*) than is used in the preceding verse (*φιλήσῃ*), and intimates that the kiss which the traitor impudently imprinted on our Lord was cruelly emphatic. This emphasis was heartless overdoing. (*Mel in ore, fel in corde.*) The two words employed in the two verses are sometimes contrasted in the classics, the one before us being used to denote intensity. (See *Xen., Memor.*, ii. 6: 33, *ὡς τοὺς μὲν καλοὺς φιλήσουσός μου, τοὺς δ' ἀγαθοὺς καταφιλήσουσός.*) The same idea of intensity invariably attaches to the use of the term in the New Testament. See Luke vii. 38, 45, xv. 20; Acts xx. 37. These are all the passages in which the term occurs, with the exception of the one before us, and the corresponding passage in Mark xiv. 45.

VER. 50. But Jesus said to him, Friend: The Greek word properly means *comrade*, but is idiomatically equivalent to our word *friend*, when employed somewhat solemnly, by a superior, either in a social or in a moral point of view, toward an inferior. See chap. xx. 13. Wherefore art thou come? A very difficult expression in the original. The difficulty arises from the fact that the relative pronoun, which forms part of the phrase, is never used in a direct interrogation. (See Lobeck on *Phrynichi Eclog*, p. 57, foot.) Burton, Fritzsche, and Webster-and-Wilkinson, would substitute exclamation for interrogation, *On what errand art thou present!* But in this case too a different pronoun would have been anticipated (*ἐπὶ τι*, instead of *ἐφ' ὅ*: in all the best manuscripts it is *ὅ*, not *ὅ* as in the received text). Winer supposes that in the waning age of Hellenism there had crept in a corrupt confusion of the pronouns, and hence, along with Oltramare, he would accept the common interpretation of the expression, *On what errand art thou present? For what purpose art thou here?* (*Gram.*, iii., 24: 4.) It is probable that we are either to adopt this idea of Winer, or to explain the Saviour's remark on the principle that it was a fragmentary phrase with a full idiomatic import. (*Say*) *on what errand thou art present; (Say) for what purpose thou art here.* The idea thus conveyed turns round exactly to what is expressed by the customary interrogative translation, *Wherefore art thou here?* Euthymius Zigabenus supposes that the word omitted by our Saviour was not *Say*, but *Do* (*πράττε*), (*Do that*) *for which thou art come!* that is, *Have done with insulting words and acts of courtesy, and finish your work!* Meyer, Alford, Burger take the same view. But it seems to involve too violent an aposiopesis of the principal idea. The remark of our Lord, so far removed from everything of the nature of fire and fury, but spoken nevertheless with solemn and arrowy directness, would be fitted to go home to the heart and conscience of the traitor. It would stick fast. No doubt it did; but, alas! it was now too late to draw back. Then approaching they laid hands on Jesus, and took Him into custody: He gave Himself up; only however after He had given them sufficient evidence, that if He had chosen, He could have surrounded Himself in an instant as with a wall of fire, and set armies at defiance. (See John xviii. 4-6.)

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. 52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. 53 Thinkest

VER. 51. And, behold, one of them that were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear: The blow had been aimed apparently at the head or neck, but had probably been unskilfully brought home, or else skilfully diverted by some counter movement on the part of the servant or one of his companions, so that, happily, it took only partial effect. It is noteworthy that all the other evangelists mention the incident. But John alone records that it was Peter who dealt the blow. He also gives the name of the servant who was wounded. (John xviii. 10.) It might have been unkind to Peter, or possibly even imprudent in relation to his personal safety, to have named him in *the early vivâ voce accounts of the incident*. And hence perhaps, as the result of that *vivâ voce* custom, the reticence of the three synoptical evangelists. At the time however when John wrote, all danger of wounding personal feelings on the one hand, or of exciting a spirit of revenge on the other, would be at an end.

VER. 52. Then saith Jesus to him, Return thy sword into its place: That is, into its *scabbard*, which was, in the circumstances of Peter, its only proper place. On the *his* of the text, for *its*, see on chap. v. 13. The movements of the 'hand' were hesitating, it seems, and slow (John xviii. 6), and thus there was time for speech. For all who take the sword shall perish by the sword: In the original there is no article in either of the two clauses, before the word *sword* (it is omitted by Wycliffe); and in the last clause the preposition is *in* instead of *by* or *with*. These peculiarities are idioms, but with a realizable idea underlying them. The Saviour is referring to *sword influence in general*, or *violence*, and, with His eye scanning the contingencies of universal time, He enunciates a grand generalized principle: *All who take and wield sword influence, or physical force influence, shall perish 'in' the very element on which they have chosen to depend*. "All"? Is it true? Has the principle been verified by history? Augustin felt perplexed by our Saviour's words; but most emphatically are they true, in *that sphere of things within which He wished the principle to be applied*. He did not refer to all arenas. If such had been His reference, destruction by sword would require to repeat itself to perpetuity; for every race of destroyers would need, in its turn, to be destroyed by succeeding destroyers. Our Lord was referring to one particular arena, that in which His disciples had to struggle. He was referring to Peter and his peers, to professing Christians, as professing Christians, and as professedly seeking to promote Christianity. *It is My express pleasure that they should not seize the sword to defend Me, or to advance My cause, the Cause of the kingdom of heaven. It is spiritual weapons alone, which it will be legitimate for them to wield. To have recourse to other and 'carnal' weapons, weapons of violence, would be only to frustrate, suicidally, their aim; and it would infallibly, sooner or later, bring ruin upon themselves and their schemes*. Christ and Christianity cannot be forced upon men. It is not "apostolical," says Erasmus, "to wield the iron sword." The triumphs of the kingdom of heaven must consist of free-will offerings. Its victories must be bloodless, achieved by the weapons of truth and love. Every professedly

thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

Christian community that seeks persistently to maintain and extend itself by violence is doomed. Nothing is more certain. It will perish by violence.

VER. 53. Or: For there is in the original such a disjunctive particle. The Lord intended to present to Peter's mind an alternative consideration, *Or, to turn to another view of the case.* Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father: Or, more literally still, *that I cannot now beseech My Father?* The word rendered *pray to* (*παρακαλέσαι*), is not the generic word for *prayer*, but a specific word that primarily means to *call to one's side*. It is generally rendered *beseech* in the New Testament; and in Luke xv. 28, 1 Cor. iv. 13, 1 Tim. v. 1, it is translated *intreat*. Such is its meaning here, either *intreat* or *beseech*. What then? **And He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels.** The numerical *twelve* is most likely a definite for an indefinite number, and yet perhaps it glances at the complement of the apostles. *Did I require, Peter, to have defenders, I could easily get from My Father legions of angels who excel in strength. My disciples are not numerous. I once had 'twelve.'* *That was the normal number, as relative to the twelve tribes of Israel. But if I wished it, I could in an instant have the services of 'twelve' legions of angels, or of 'more.'* The Roman 'legion' varied in number at different periods, but about the time of our Saviour consisted, when complete, of about 6000 infantry, and a contingent of cavalry. With an army of twelve or more legions of angelic defenders, how speedily would the petty band of Judas have been dissipated into nonentity! The Saviour's question, viewed rhetorically, is inartificially constructed; the last clause being more of the nature of an affirmation than an interrogation. But in the original the two clauses, while quite inartificially connected, are somewhat more symmetrically arranged or ruled under the preliminary *not*, than it is easy to represent in English, in which, unhappily, but almost unavoidably, the *not* is welded in *cannot*. The precise idea is to the following effect, *Or thinkest thou THAT IT IS NOT THE CASE, that I could now beseech My Father, and that He will give Me (if I should so beseech Him) more than twelve legions of angels?* As regards the verb rendered *give* in the public version, and *send* by the Revisionists, it properly means to *place beside*. There is thus something more suggested than *placing at one's disposal*. There is a picture of our Lord, ensconced as it were, and thus safely sheltered, amid surrounding battalions. Note the synonymous adverbs *now* and *presently* in the two clauses of the complex question. Only one of them should have been given. There is a difference of opinion, however, among critics whether it should stand in the first or in the second clause. In the received text it is found in the first, and Lachmann and Alford approve of that position. But in the Vulgate version it is found in the second (though Beza has in all his editions of the Vulgate transposed it), and Tregelles approves of that position; and Tischendorf too in his eighth edition, as also Westcott-and-Hort. For the former position there is the authority of the Alexandrine and Cambridge manuscripts (A D), and all the rest of the uncials, except the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and L. These three important uncials, and 33 of the cursives, 'the queen,' support the latter position, and are backed by the Peshito Syriac version, and the Sahidic, Coptic, and Armenian. It is probable that the former position, as being the more inartificial of the two,

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take

as well as the best supported, is in accordance with the original text of the evangelist. Our translators, puzzled apparently by the divergency, and no doubt by the misplacement in Beza's editions of the Vulgate, seem to have compromised the difficulty by a double insertion. The translation in Cranmer's Bible runs thus, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall give Me (*even now*) more than twelve legions of angels?"

VER. 54. **But:** There is nothing corresponding to this particle in the original. Tyndale introduced it, and it was reproduced by Myles Coverdale, and in Cranmer's Bible, and the first Geneva. **How then:** How in that case? How, if I should be defended and rescued by legions of angels? Shall the Scriptures be fulfilled? Or still more literally, *Should the Scriptures be fulfilled?* That thus it must come to pass: That is, *That I must give Myself up to death.* The Saviour refers to that long file of passages, stretching from the commencement to the conclusion of the Old Testament Scriptures, which represent a certain mysterious suffering, culminating in death, as an essential characteristic of the great Deliverer's career. He was to be despised, rejected, wounded, and bruised; smitten to death with an awakened sword. (See Isa. liii.; Ps. xxii.; Zech. xiii. 7.) He was to be a Sacrifice for human sins, and thus the Substance of all the sacrificial shadows which had flickered for multitudes of successive ages on the altars of all bygone dispensations. The sufferings thus indicated might in many cases be contingent on contingencies. The death depicted might be but a partial aspect, or some given mode, of death; and that mode or aspect of the dread reality might be contingent on contingencies. But sufferings under some determinate form or other, and death under some determinate aspect or another, were 'necessary.' They 'must be' (δε?). The wise and gracious purposes of God could not otherwise be fulfilled. Sin could not otherwise be expiated. Salvation, culminating in glorification, could not otherwise be secured. Meyer, in the second and third editions of his *Commentary*, puts the interrogative point in the middle of the verse, *How then should the Scriptures be fulfilled?* and translates the last clause thus, *For thus it must come to pass.* This too is De Wette's interpretation. But Meyer, in his fourth and fifth editions, returned to the construction of his first, the right construction, the construction of our Authorized version.

VER. 55. In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes: For He had time and opportunity to speak. Not only was it dusk; strange influences of various kinds were operating on the people, restraining them, and causing hesitancy and delay. *The multitudes:* The *multitude* were *multitudes*. There were the Roman soldiers on the one hand, and some of the high ecclesiastical officials on the other, and then too the servants of the high officials. (See on ver. 47.) It would be to the Jews, of course, that our Lord would direct His remarks, and in particular to the men of mark. (See Luke xxii. 52.) **As against a robber,** came ye out with swords and staves to apprehend Me? *Came ye out?* namely, from the city. The word for *robber* (λῃστήν) is rendered *thief* in our Authorized version. Unhappily however; for it is a more formidable character that is represented, one who would be likely to have associates, and who would be

me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. 56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

ready to defend himself to the utmost, and to sell his life dearly, if it should be threatened. Hence the propriety of our Saviour's reference to *swords and staves*. The word *apprehend* is in the original rather *comprehend* than *apprehend* (συνλαβεῖν). But *comprehend*, although in Latin sometimes meaning to *apprehend*, has, in our English idiom, gone off into another line of import altogether. The original term etymologically means *to take together*. I sat daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye laid not hold on Me: And why not, if it be right that ye now should apprehend Me? Were ye cowards then? Are ye cowards still? Are ye not conscious to yourselves that ye are? and that ye are engaged in an ignominious work of darkness? Note the word *sat*. It refers to the customary attitude of a rabbi, while teaching. See chap. v. 1, xiii. 2. Note the expression *with you*, or *in your presence* (πρὸς ὑμᾶς). It is omitted by Tischendorf, not being found in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and L, and 33 "the queen of the cursives," nor in the Sahidic and Coptic versions. It is of no practical moment whether it be omitted or retained.

VER. 56. But all this has come to pass, in order that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled: The Saviour is still speaking to the "multitudes," a fact that is lost sight of under the form of our Authorized translation, "But all this was done." Our translators had taken the view approved of by Beza, and hesitatingly by Erasmus (comp. his *Paraphrase* and his *Annotations*), that the words embody a reflection of the evangelist, not a remark of our Lord. So too Bengel, Fritzsche, and De Wette. Our translators follow, in their translation, Wycliffe, Tyndale, the Geneva, and the Rheims. But in Cranmer's Bible and Myles Coverdale's the rendering is "But all thys is done," a rendering which is also given by Brameld and Alford. All the Scriptures of the Old Testament were the *Scriptures of prophets*; that is, of men who saw in the light of God, and who, seeing in His light, beheld from afar the advent of a Saviour who was to suffer and to die. Our Saviour, having thus spoken, and given a reason for the step He was about to take, voluntarily yielded Himself up into the hands of His captors. Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled: Notwithstanding all that He had said, they had not been able to take in anything like the fulness of the truth. They were staggered in their faith. Their hopes were smitten to the dust. And turning their backs on their Lord, they sought to provide for their own safety. Thou too, Peter? And ye, John and James? Even so. Alas!

VER. 57. But they who arrested Jesus led Him off to Caiaphas the high priest, at whose residence the scribes and the elders were assembled: He was, first of all, however, as we learn from John xviii. 13 ff., taken to the house of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, where He would be detained until due official arrangements could be made. Matthew does not seek to detail all the steps of the process. But as soon as our Saviour was safely lodged in the house of

58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; 60 but found none. Yea, though many false witnesses came, yet

Annas, a *pro re nata* meeting of the sanhedrin seems to have been hastily summoned. (See Mark xiv. 53). It assembled, as was natural, at the residence of the high priest; and thither our Saviour was conveyed.

VER. 58. But Peter followed Him afar off: Animated no doubt with conflicting feelings. His hopes were ruptured, but his heart-strings pulled him in the direction of his Lord. He wondered what the end would be. Would it be, on the part of his Master, but a cry of distress, and then a violent death, and then nothing more? Or would there be some grand interposition of heavenly power ere the last act of the tragedy should be reached? Unto the high priest's palace: Until he reached the hall or court of the high priest's house. (See ver. 3.) He would 'hang about' outside for a season, timidly looking in, and wondering if in the dusk and the commotion he might venture in, and then skulk undetected in some crowd or corner. The failure of his faith had made a coward of him. And yet, though faith had almost vanished, affection still drew him on; and curiosity to see the upshot grew stronger and stronger. At length it got the mastery. And he entered in, and sat with the servants, to see the end: They would be clustering about in the outer part of the court, which was open to the sky, while the sanhedrin would be meeting in the inner and canopied compartment, which would be partially separated from the outer part by drawn drapery. (See on ver. 3.) Certain officers would be privileged no doubt to be moving inward and outward on duty or at discretion. And many peering eyes would be directed inward as the curtains were from time to time opened.

VER. 59. But the chief priests, and elders, and the whole sanhedrin: The clause *and elders* seems to be a marginal amplification. It is wanting in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts (that is, in **N B D**), as also in L, and 69, and likewise in the Itala, Vulgate, Sahidic, Coptic, and Armenian versions. It is omitted by Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf in his eighth edition, Alford, and Westcott-and-Hort. The *chief priests* are specified as the natural leaders of those assembling, and then all the other constituent members are merged in *the whole sanhedrin*. They sought false witness against Jesus: They did not ostensibly *seek for false witness*. But as a judicial court they not only *demand evidence*; that would have been right; but *they sought for such evidence as would convict of a misdemeanour worthy of death*. They had really prejudged the case, and were determined to convict: only they realized that it would be needful to observe the forms of righteous procedure, in order to insure the executive concurrence of the Roman procurator. Hence they grasped at any kind of evidence that was proffered, though by unscrupulous witnesses. That evidence, as might have been anticipated, turned out to be incapable of verification. It was *false witness*. But they sought it that they might put Him to death: Nothing less would satiate their hate, or stanch their fears.

VER. 60. But found none, though many false witnesses came forward: Such is the reading that is approved of by Tregelles, Tischendorf, and Westcott-and-

found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, 61 and said, *This fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. 62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? *what is it which* these witness against thee? 63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou

Hort. It would appear that the witnesses did not agree in their representations; and without the agreement of at least two of them, a conviction could not be legally effected. (See Deut. xvii. 6, xix. 15; and comp. John viii. 17; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 19.) But at last two false witnesses came forward: Or, as the expression runs in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, *But at last two came forward*, the characteristic designation *false witnesses* being omitted.

VER. 61. And averred, *This (person) said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days*: Literally, *through three days*, that is, *in the course of three days*. Even the testimony of these witnesses, however, did not, it seems, quite agree. See Mark xiv. 59. They mingled with their report of what they had heard, their own interpretation of what our Lord had really said. Jesus never said, *I am able to destroy the temple of God*. But He told His opponents what He was able to do, and would do, if they should lay sacrilegious hands on the noblest temple of God that was to be found on earth, His own Body. (See John ii. 19-21.) As the testimony, however, of these two witnesses was unmistakably pointing in the direction of a fact, and of a great assumption and self assertion, the sanhedrin would seem to have expected that our Lord would be eager to say something or other in explanation and self exculpation. Hence what is recorded in the next verse.

VER. 62. And the high priest—Caiaphas to wit—stood up and said to Him, *Dost thou answer nothing? What do these testify against thee? That is, What hast Thou to say to the things which these two witnesses testify against Thee? What explanation hast Thou to give of Thine own words, to which they have made reference?* The high priest had evidently lost, if he had ever possessed, the spirit of judicial calmness and impartiality. He had become excited and impatient.

VER. 63. But Jesus remained silent: And thus, in the majesty of His bearing he entered, as it were, His protest against the high priest's violation of the principles of justice. It was no part of the duty of a 'panel' at the bar to clear up conflicting testimonies against himself, in order to assist prejudging judges to effect a conviction. The high priest felt constrained to bow to the legitimacy of our Saviour's silence, and would no doubt digest as well as he could the unuttered rebuke. But his inward passion would be inflamed. And the high priest answered and said: Speaking in a manner that was responsive to what was implied in our Lord's silence. I adjure Thee by the living God: He put our Saviour judicially upon oath. He could not legitimately call upon Him to clear up the conflict of the conflicting witnesses. Their testimony, therefore, as not being adequate to convict, had to be laid aside. Yet there was a point in it, in reference to which the witnesses concurred. And, in the judgement of the high priest, that very point was the turning point of the whole case. They were both prepared to aver that our Lord had assumed, in what He said, that He was standing in the highest possible relationship at once to God and to men, a rela-

be the Christ, the Son of God. 64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and

tionship far transcending that of other rabbis, and of all other mortals, whatever might be their eminence in endowments or in office. The high priest interpreted the assumption as a claim to be the Messiah. And hence he availed himself of his prerogative to put the Person at his bar on oath, that He might, under the most solemn of sanctions, declare who and what He was. *By the living God*: Oaths in courts were always taken directly by the name of God. And in a Jewish court it was befitting that they should be administered by *the living God*. It was the glory of the Jews that the God whom they adored was not a lifeless idol, like the gods of the heathen around them, but a Being of infinite self consciousness and life, an infinitely self conscious Mind and Power. That Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God: The initial particle translated *that*, is not simply demonstrative, but denotes *aim*. It means *in order that (ὅνα)*, and thus brings directly into view what it was which the high priest judicially designed in his adjuration. *I put Thee on oath, in order that Thou mayest, without equivocation, or any mental reservation, say to us whether Thou art the Christ, the Son of God*. In combining the two designations, *the Christ*, and *the Son of God*, the high priest would probably be inwardly referring to the Messianic representations of the second psalm. (See vers. 2, 6, 7, 12.) He would perhaps be thinking thus in his heart, *Can it really be the case that this Nazarene will, on oath, profess to be the individual who is the subject of the predictions of that marvellous Messianic psalm?*

VER. 64. Jesus saith to him, Thou hast said: Or, still more literally, *Thou saidst*. That is, *What thou saidst, when thou didst apply to Me, interrogatively, the designations 'the Christ,' and 'the Son of God,' is true of Me. I am the Christ. I am the Son of God*. Jesus thus responded affirmatively and fearlessly to the adjuration of the high priest. "Christ," says Michaelis, "took a real oath." (*Mosaisches Recht*, § 302.) It was not the custom of the Jews, in accepting a judicial oath, to repeat the express form of the oath. Our Lord, in accepting the oath, employed a formula which was common among the Jews, when replying affirmatively to an interrogation. (*Comp. ver. 25 for the formula 'Thou saidst.'* *Comp. also Mark xiv. 62, where the answer of our Lord is given in the equivalent phrase 'I am.'* See also Michaelis's *Mosaisches Recht*, § 302.) Nevertheless: This word has puzzled some expositors. Whedon says that it "should rather be *moreover*." And so indeed is the term (πλήν) translated by Whiston, Mace, Wynne, Wakefield, Newcome, Thomson, Edgar Taylor, Sharpe, Rilliet. Principal Campbell renders it *nay* Dr. Daniel Scott *but*, which is also the interpretation of Alford. Le Clerc omits it altogether. But it really just means *nevertheless*. Our Lord, apparently, had noticed the spirit of intense incredulity with which the high priest had proposed, adjuringly, his question. He had also noticed the shock which His plain affirmative answer had seemed to give, at once to the high priest and to all his assessors. Hence the *nevertheless*. It is as if He had said, *And notwithstanding the present incredulity of thyself and of those who are around thee, I say to you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of the power, and coming on the clouds of heaven*: Our Lord had already referred to the representations of Psalm ii., an admitted Messianic oracle of the highest significance, as finding their fulfilment in Himself. He now refers to another

coming in the clouds of heaven. 65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further

admitted Messianic oracle, also of very weighty import, and appropriates to Himself the burden of its contents. See Dan. vii. 9-14. He claimed to be the predicted "Son of man," to whom should be given "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve Him." Every eye should see Him. His present judges would be judged by Him, and have their everlasting destinies fixed by His decision. *Hereafter*: An admirable translation. The phrase literally means *from now*, that is, as here employed, *forward from now*. It suggests a contrast: *Now* the high priest seemed supreme, and the Son of man was at his bar. *But some time after now*,—the Saviour does not indicate anything regarding the length of time,—the positions of the two parties would be reversed. *At the right hand of power*, literally of the power. The expression the power is idiomatic, the abstract being used for the concrete. The reference is to the Power above all the other 'powers that be,' whether on earth or in heaven, 'the Power' that is pre-eminently 'Power,' the Divine Magisterial Power, the Power of the Supreme Magistrate of the universe. Sir John Cheke's version is, *on His right hand that is power itself*. Jesus knew that He was about to be exalted to the right hand of that Majesty, and that He would be there for ever. There, consequently, would He be when He should come on the clouds of heaven (chap. xxiv. 30, 31, xxv. 31). While Jesus has His throne, and reigns, and will reign, He is never apart from His Father, or away from His Father's right hand. Figurative representations collapse. Jesus is ever, as Mediator, next to the Father, who, so far at least as the mediatorial economy is concerned, gloriously represents the prerogatives of the entire Godhead.

VER. 65. Then the high priest rent his garments: One of the primitive ways of manifesting deep distress. Selfhood refuses, as it were, to take to itself the benefit and enjoyment of the ordinary blessings of life. Its subjectivity, for the time being, goes out into objectivity, and the riven condition of the feelings of the heart is displayed. It would be a touching action when thoroughly natural. (See 2 Kings xviii. 37, xix. 1; Acts xiv. 14.) As a general rule, however, it argued, in the peculiarity of its objectivity, a somewhat untutored condition of the emotional nature; and in all ordinary cases, therefore, it would be a mode of showing grief not becoming in a high priest. See Lev. x. 6, xxi. 10, in which passages it is forbidden to the high priest. It held its place, however, as a fit symbolism of distress or agony in extraordinary circumstances. And yet an artificial excrescence of mannerism grew out of it. The Talmudists actually give instructions as to the particular garments that are to be torn as occasion requires! and as to the particular part of the garments too, in which the tear should take place,—not the back, nor the sides, but the front! They give instruction likewise as to the proper direction and the proper length of the rent that is to be made! It was to be as long as the palm of the hand is broad! (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmudicum*, p. 2146.) Most probably the high priest's rent would be duly performed according to rule and measure and the best etiquette of the age. **Saying, He hath spoken blasphemy**: Or, still more literally, *He blasphemed*, namely, in what He has just been avowing concerning Himself. *He spoke—did he not?—to the great injury of God. What an insult to the Deity it must be for a poor, commonplace man, like that, to profess to be the Christ, the Son of God, the*

need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. 67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their

Son of man, and worthy to be seated in the highest place of the universe, next to God! Why, He is neither Prince, Priest, nor Levite! He has neither riches, rank, nor academic erudition! It is added, What further need have we of witnesses: Or more literally, Why yet have we need of witnesses? That is, Why should it be the case, that, after such a declaration from His own lips, we should still need witnesses? Is not the supposition of such need an absurdity? Lo, now ye heard the blasphemy: Now, just now. Ye heard: With your own ears. The blasphemy: I repeat the fact. Could any fact be more incontestable?

VER. 66. What think ye? What is your judgement, brethren, regarding this Man's desert? I speak of His desert, for as to the fact of His guilt, that is as evident as the light of heaven at mid-day. And they answered and said, He is guilty of death: that is, *He has incurred the penalty of death; He is obnoxious to death.* Such is the meaning of the phrase. The word translated *guilty* is, in chap. v. 21, 22, rendered *in danger*; and the expression before us is rendered by Wycliffe, *He is worthy to dye.* So too in Cranmer's Bible, and the Geneva version. So also by Sir John Cheke. Wycliffe, however, and Coverdale, and the Rheims give the translation that is reproduced in our Authorized version. It is to our modern ears an awkward expression, and hence Wells (*Paraphrase with Annotations*, in loc.) replaces it with the phrase, *He is worthy of death*, and says in a note: "By the expression, *guilty of death*, we now-a-days commonly understand one that is guilty of having killed another, not one that is *worthy of death* for any other crime. And therefore I judged it best to alter the common reading, though it be literally agreeable to the Greek." Richardson connects the word *guilt* with *guile*. But it is more likely that it should be connected with the German *Geld* (money), *Gilt* (rent), and the Anglo-Saxon *gyld* (payment). A *guilty* person would be originally a person liable to make payment or give atonement. In our modern English we speak of a person as being "*guilty of a crime.*" In older English it was legitimate to speak of a person being "*guilty of the punishment of a crime.*" *He is worthy of death:* Such was the judgement of the irregular meeting of the sanhedrin, which had assembled in the residence of Caiaphas. But before it could have the full validity of a legal verdict, a regular meeting of the sanhedrin would require to be called. That meeting was held a few hours later. (See chap. xxvii. 1.) Meanwhile the 'Panel' was treated as if he were a legally convicted culprit; and the more vulgar members of the court, along with the officials, and the other common bystanders, were allowed to make Him the butt of their malice and miserable merriment.

VER. 67. Then did they spit into His face, and buffeted Him: Oh the indignity! And yet He sublimely endured it, for *their* sakes, for *our* sakes. *Buffeted:* Or *boxed with doubled fists.* The heart breaks to think of it. Piers Ploughman uses the expression "he boffated me aboute the mouthe." The word *boffat* or *buffet* is onomatopoeic. You think you hear the sound of the blows. (*Sonus, seu fragor*, says the etymologist Skinner, *qui ab ictu editur, per onomatopœiam.*—*Etymologicon*, sub voce.) And some smote Him with the palms of their hands: It is one word in the original which is rendered *smote with the palms of their*

hands, 68 saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. 70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. 71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another

hands. They *slapped* Him, viz., on the side of the head. And it such a head! The same verb is employed in chap. v. 39, "Whosoever shall *smite* thee (shall *slap* thee) on thy right cheek." In the margin of John xviii. 22 the word *slap* is given.

VER. 68. *Saying, Prophecy to us, thou Christ, Who is it that struck thee? They called Him Christ in mockery and ribaldry. Aye, indeed, you are Christ! And a great prophet too! You can see without looking, we understand; and behind as easily as before! Well then, now's the time to exercise your prophetic gift, and win immortal fame! Who gave you that blow from behind? Alas! Alas!*

VER. 69. But Peter—while all this was going on in the inner compartment of the high priest's court—was sitting (ἐκάθητο) without in the court: He was in the outer and open part of the court, where the servants of the house, and such other miscellaneous individuals, as had been attracted by what was going on, and had been able for one reason or another to secure admission, were lounging about, or moving to and fro. See on vers. 3 and 58. And a damsel approached him, saying: In the original it is *one damsel*, for the evangelist is thinking of another. He therefore specifies numerically first the one, and then the other. *Damsel*: Or *maid*, that is, *servant-maid*. The word is rendered *bondmaid* in Gal. iv. 22, and *bondwoman* in Gal. iv. 23, 30, 31. *Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean*: The words are to be read, not as a bare and bald affirmation, but rather as a free and easy exclamation. *And thou wast with Jesus the Galilean! You will be able to give us, then, some information regarding Him!* The expression *thou too*, or *and thou*, implies that the damsel and her companions had been talking to one another about some other one who had some connection with Jesus. That other one was either Judas, or more probably John, who was known in the high priest's household, and who was now, or had lately been, somewhere or other within the premises. See John xviii. 15, 16.

VER. 70. But he denied before all, saying, I know not what thou art saying: Alas for poor blustering human nature! How cowardly it is! especially when it is conscious that it is standing only on a very humble platform of observation. Note, however, the form of Peter's denial. He seemed to have tried, at the beginning, to equivocate with the girl and with himself. He did not at all once deny that he was with Jesus. But he took advantage of the indeterminateness of the maid's expression to parry, as he hoped, the unwelcome observation. Foes as well as friends *might have been 'with Jesus.'* The high priest himself might be said, in a certain sense, to be '*with Jesus.*' Peter caught at the straw; but as he grasped it, he was whirled into a vortex of meanness and wickedness, from which it was impossible to emerge unscathed.

VER. 71. And when he was gone out into the porch: He was now in terror lest he should be identified; and he tried by shifting his position to escape from his tormentors. He seems to have sidled off, as opportunity allowed,

maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth. 72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. 73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. 74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not

into the dim, overarched passage, or inner porchway, leading outward from the area of the court to the entrance gate. But he was a marked man; and there had been whisperings all over the court regarding him; and so he could not by any species of manœuvre succeed in concealing himself, or veiling his identity. Another (*maid*) saw him, and saith to them that were there, This (*man*) also was with Jesus the Nazarene: The Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts omit the *also*, and Tischendorf leaves it out in his eighth edition. Westcott-and-Hort also. It is found, however, in the Alexandrian manuscript, and in almost all the rest of the chief authorities. It is probably authentic, glancing covertly in all likelihood at the fact that John's intimacy with Jesus had been the subject of talk among the inmates of the outer court. *This man also*, as well as John.

VER. 72. And again he denied: *Again*, for his former equivocation was a real denial. "His false dissembling," says Trapp, "was a true denying." With an oath: Poor Peter! What kind of demon has entered thee? I know not the Man: *The Man*, Peter? Is that the way you now speak of your Lord? But do you think that you are really hoodwinking the eyes that are glaring at you all round about, or looking askance on you, and passing knowing winks to one another? Let us see.

VER. 73. And after a little they who were standing—that is, *standing about*—approached and said to Peter, Assuredly thou also art of them: Without doubt thou art one of the 'set,' one of the disciples of that fellow in there. You need not sidle off, man; you need not deny it. For: In the original it is *For also* or *For even* (*καὶ γάρ*), that is, *For in addition* to all other evidences thy speech bewrayeth thee: Thy manner of speaking *maketh thee manifest* as a Galilean, and therefore, we conclude, one of His followers. For if thou art a Galilean, and Galilean thou must be with that unmistakeable accent of thine, pray why shouldst thou be here, if thou wert not one of His disciples? And how else, moreover, wouldst thou be sneaking about with that 'hang-dog' look, which you are carrying on your face? The Galilean accent, or 'brogue,' was, it seems, sufficiently self-evidencing. It would reveal itself, whether Greek or Aramaic were spoken. In Aramaic the Galileans did not, it is said, discriminate distinctly the different gutturals, and they confounded other letters besides. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmudicum*, pp. 435, 436.)

VER. 74. Then began he to curse, and to swear 'I know not the Man': As if his spirit had been full of fire and brimstone. Having voluntarily closed himself upwardly, and opened himself downwardly, something stygian and demonic had taken possession of him, and was working in him and through him with fell energy and effect. Satan was 'sifting him,' trying to sift out of him everything that was good, and showering up glaringly through his riddled spirit almost everything that was bad. Hence his 'cursings,' directed either against the persons who were identifying him, or, more probably, against himself if he should be asserting what was false; and his 'swearings,' to the effect

the man. And immediately the cock crew. 75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 WHEN the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. 2 And when they had bound him, they led

that he knew nothing at all of 'the Man' who was undergoing trial at the bar of the council. **And immediately a cock crew:** It was in reality the second crowing that had been audible to Peter. (See Mark xiv. 72, and the note on ver. 34 of this chapter.) But it was that particular crowing which was connected with the third denial of Peter, and of which alone Matthew takes notice.

VER. 75. **And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, who had said to him, Before a cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice:** See ver. 34. The genuineness of the expression to *him* is uncertain. It is omitted in the manuscripts noted **NBD L**, 33, and in the Vulgate, Syriac Peshito, Syriac Philoxenian, and Armenian versions. It is of no moment whether it be retained or omitted. One sees now the wisdom of the Lord's prediction of Peter's denial. The prediction was attached to some extraordinary protestations on the part of Peter. And, at the present conjuncture, these protestations and their implications came welling up, by the law of association, into the blasted spirit of the disciple. **And he went out, and wept bitterly:** He *went out* from the inner porchway of the court of Caiaphas where he had been skulking. The wicket door would be at hand. He would not be able to rush fast enough from the scene of his degradation and infatuation. *And wept bitterly:* Oh how bitterly it needed to be! The strong man would bow himself in agony. The evangelist veils the scene. Let us veil it too. But the agony would do him good for ever. The 'rock' was stricken. It heaved as if an earthquake were beneath it, or within it. To and fro it rocked, and then burst, and melted, and flowed. Oh how gladly would he have wept, if he could, a whole sea of salt tears!

CHAPTER XXVII.

VER. 1. **But when morning came:** The morning of Friday, the morning of that Passover Day which had begun after the sunset of the preceding evening. **All the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus, in order to put Him to death:** A regularly summoned meeting of the sanhedrin was obtained at the earliest hour possible. The action of the extraordinary provisional meeting was approved of. Its sentence was formally endorsed and recorded. (See chap. xxvi. 65, 66.) And then the court entered into deliberation as to the likeliest way of effecting the speedy execution of the 'convict.' They seemed to think that there might be peril, at that stage of things, in attempting to keep Him till after the conclusion of the feast. (See chap. xxvi. 3-5.)

VER. 2. **And they handcuffed Him:** Perhaps they chained Him by the wrist to officers on either side. He had been previously handcuffed. (See John xviii. 12.) But apparently the handcuffs had been loosed while he was standing

him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the

at the bar of the sanhedrin. **And led Him away:** Going apparently in a body (see Luke xxiii. 1), in order to give the greatest possible weight to the application which they were about to present to the civil governor. They would not have very far to walk. Their council chamber was within the temple premises, and the praetorium, or residence of the procurator, was either, we presume, close to the temple area, in the adjoining Castle of Antonia, or, a little farther removed, on Mount Zion, where Herod's palace was situated. It was the custom of the Roman procurators to occupy, wherever they went, the old palatial residences. **And delivered Him up to Pilate the governor:** The Roman procurator of Judæa and Samaria, and thus the local representative of the authority of the Roman emperor. The office had been instituted on the degradation of Archelaus, the son and successor of Herod the Great (Matt. ii. 22). Pontius Pilate was the fifth who had filled it; his predecessors being (1) Coponius, (2) Marcus Ambivius, (3) Annius Rufus, (4) Valerius Gratus. Pilate belonged to the Roman family of the Pontii. He was appointed to the procuratorship in the twelfth year of the emperor Tiberius, A.D. 25-26. He was never popular, and, in consequence of certain severe measures which he had taken against the Samaritans, he was at length sent to Rome, by his superior, the propraetor Vitellius, governor of Syria, to answer before the emperor the accusations which were laid to his charge. (Josephus, *Antiq.*, xviii. 4: 2.) On his arrival in Rome he found Tiberius deceased and Caligula reigning in his stead. He did not succeed, however, in clearing himself, and hence he never returned to Judæa. It is supposed that he committed suicide, but where is not certain. (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* ii. 7.) There are several highly 'sensational' traditions, preserved in mediæval literature, regarding his latter end, and the particular locality where it occurred. (See Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, sub voce "Pilate.")

VER. 3. **Then when Judas, who betrayed Him, saw that He was condemned:** Then, apparently when Jesus was being led forth bound, and conducted in the direction of the residence of Pilate. Then Judas perceived that his Master was *condemned*, namely, by the sanhedrin. He would see from the procession, and from the determined looks of the high priests, elders, and scribes, that blood alone would satisfy the bloodhounds. Very likely, indeed, no attempt would be made to conceal the bloodthirsty aim. Not improbably the creatures of the leading senators would be instructed to arouse the mob, and awaken in the breasts of as many of the people as possible the desire for an 'auto de fé.' *Would it not be for the great glory of God to extinguish in blood such insufferable blasphemy, such dreadfully fanatical pretension? By all means, brethren, get the people wrought up to a due pitch of zeal. Scatter yourselves judiciously among them. Find out the most combustible materials available. Set fire to the public feeling; and fan the flame till it blazes to heaven. It will be a most meritorious proceeding on the part of all concerned.* Judas might be in the crowd that would accompany the procession, seeing all that was to be seen, and hearing all that was to be heard. **He repented himself:** Or simply, *He repented*, as Purvey has it. *He rued.* (So Zinzendorf, *gereuete es ihm.*) It is the same word that is found in Matt. xxi. 29 (*μεταμεληθεὶς*). He bitterly regretted the infatuated step which he had taken. Sir John Cheke renders the word, *he did forthink*

thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, *What is that to us? see thou to that.*

himself. Coverdale's version is, *it repented him.* There was a revulsion in his heart. His conscience rose up against him. Remorse took hold of him. *What had he gained,* he began to think, *by his dastardly deed?* A few paltry pieces of silver, and the promise of some more, and the scorn of his own soul! The scorn too of those very chief priests and elders and scribes! The scorn even of the meanest menials, who were now bustling about like excited bees, or proudly strutting past as deriving importance from the important execution that was in prospect! *How ignobly I have acted! How basely! How badly! I, who had such privileges and blessed opportunities of getting good and doing good! I have sinned! sinned! I cannot look up to that glorious arch of heaven, that is so grandly over-canopying Him there, as He walks along with His meek, mild, majestic mien! Oh that I could shrink into nonentity!* We are not however with Schollmeyer (*Jesus und Judas*, pp. 51, 52), Whately, De Quincey, and others, to infer, from this bitter heart-wringing of Judas, that the under-current of his intention had all along been good, and that he only erred in wishing to precipitate the *dénouement* of the real Messiahship of his Lord. There is not a single peg in Scripture on which to hang such an idea. On the contrary, the traitor now seems to have got a glimpse into the bottomless depth of iniquity which he had been suffering to seethe within his soul. It was a terrific sight, and gave omen of terrific consequences. **And returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders:** *Returned*, such is the proper import of the original term (*ἀπέστρεψε*, or as Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott-and-Hort read, *ἐστρεψεν*). It would appear that Judas could not restrain himself while looking at the procession. His conscience became too powerful for him. He felt that he must try to undo what he had done. Inwardly exclaiming, *Oh that it may not be too late!* he seems to have rushed forward, and presented himself before the leaders of the sanhedrin, as they walked in procession gravely but malignantly along. He held out to them the detested identical thirty pieces which he had received from them; and as he stretched them forth in his hand, he wildly exclaimed—

VER. 4. **Saying, I sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood:** The expression is exceedingly condensed, crushing within itself, irregularly, and as it were excitedly, a complexity of ideas. He does not say, *I sinned in that I betrayed an innocent person.* That was only part of his meaning. He saw that death was resolved on, and would be inflicted. The *blood* of his innocent and holy Lord would be shed, and he, by his accursed act of treason, would be the murderer! To his eye indeed the murder was already perpetrated, the blood was already shed! *He had delivered up the most innocent of beings, and thus was guilty, beyond all other murderers, of shedding immaculately innocent blood.* (See Deut. xxvii 25.) **But they said, What is that to us? Literally, What is to us? What is in reference to us? That is, What is it in reference to us whether you sinned or not? Pray, sir, bear in mind that we did not summon you to give any evidence in the case. We had evidence quite independent of you. And we found Him guilty. Whether you sinned however in betraying Him as you did, we leave you to determine for yourself. You will know best your own motives. It was no very honourable action indeed! We cannot say that we highly esteem you for it. But it was your own affair, not ours. It is added, See thou to that: But**

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

this is not a literal translation. In the original the expression is affirmative, not imperative (ὁ δὲ ψῆ), *Thou thyself wilt see (to it). Thou thyself, we presume, will look to thyself in this matter, and judge of thyself as thou seest fit. Thine own conduct and character are thine own concern, not ours.*

VER. 5. And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple: Such is the reading of Tregelles and Tischendorf in his eighth edition, and Westcott-and-Hort (*eis τὸν ναόν*). It is supported by both the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, and by L, 33, 69, 124, all of them important authorities. The Gothic and Æthiopic versions also support it. The reading of the received text, as also of Lachmann and Alford, is *in the temple*. It has a great preponderance of authorities in its favour, inclusive of the Alexandrine manuscript, and the Cambridge (in the Latin). If it should be the genuine reading, then the verb *threw* will be equivalent to *threw (down)*, (see Luke iv. 35), or *threw (from him)*, see Acts xxii. 23; and the entire expression will bring into view the place 'in' which the hated coins lay after they were thrown 'into' it. It is a matter of little moment which of the two readings be accepted. That of the received text, as the more difficult of the two, as well as the best supported externally, may probably be regarded as the true original. It is to be noted however that the word rendered *temple* is not the term which is used to denote the whole sacred inclosure with its concentric courts (the *ιερόν*). It denotes the *temple proper*, consisting of the *Holy and Most Holy Places*, with the *small surrounding inclosure that was open to the priests only* (the *ναός*). Judas threw his silver coins into that inclosure. It would just, in all likelihood, be a few paces from the spot where he had made his abrupt confession, and received his heartless rebuff. (See on ver. 2.) When so unfeelingly repulsed, he seems to have got frantic with agony and despair. And hence, starting at a bound to the "wall of partition," that guarded off the court of the priests from the intrusion of the common people, he threw the hated money over. He had got it from the chief priests as an instalment in hand (chap. xxvi. 14, 15), and he returned it to them in the only way that now seemed possible to him. Had he cast it at their feet, as they were passing along through the court of the Gentiles, there would simply have been a scramble for it among the mob. It would not in that case have reached its proper destination. And *departed*: Or *And withdrew himself*. So the word is translated in chap. xii. 15 and Mark iii. 7. He withdrew from the procession, and from the surrounding people, and from the temple area. And *went and hanged himself*: Or literally, *And went away and strangled himself* (*ἀπῆγγαστο*). The word, as was noted by Beza, De Dieu, Lightfoot, Sebastian Schmidt, Erasmus Schmid, and others, has no specific reference to *hanging* as a mode of *strangling*, though *strangling* was no doubt frequently effected by *hanging*. The term is compound, and means that *he strangled himself off*, or *strangled himself away*. ("Verbum simplex *rem ipsam seu actionem*, compositum *finem ejus*, notat": PERIZONIUS, *Dissertatio de Morte Judae et verbo ἀπῆγγαστο*, p. 37.) There has been much discussion however regarding the word, chiefly in consequence of the statement in Acts i. 18, that "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." This statement has led many, inclusive of Grotius, Heinsius, Perizonius (*Diss.*, p. 76), Pricæus, Hammond, to suppose that it is *mental strangling*, or *melancholy*, that is meant. (See especially, on the subject, the historical *Dissertation* of Warneck, *De*

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is

suspendio Judae.) But there is really not the shadow of a difficulty in conciliating the two accounts. The temple erections stood on precipitous rocks, and there were multitudes of other precipitous places round about. The despairing traitor, stricken into phrenzy by the lashings of his awakened conscience, seems to have hastened off to some adjoining steep, seeking perhaps a refuge from himself, or at least a place where he might, as he hoped, be by himself. He had had, we may reasonably suppose, a whole night of fevered excitement. And after reflection and anguish had fairly set in, life burned on fast, as if amid the moral combustibles of nature. Every moment was making rapid havoc of his vital energies. He was maddened. Having reached, in this phrenzied state of mind, some perilous perch or peak, over the Valley of Hinnom, he might seat himself perhaps and wildly gaze for a few awful minutes, now upward, now downward, now around, now into vacuity. Old associations would come flooding over him, and he would retrace, with the speed of lightning, and with its awful scarring too, the ineffably holy and heavenly career of his Master. He would think of the gentle efforts so patiently and perseveringly put forth at the paschal supper to recall him to a sense of his duty. *Oh how infatuated, how diabolically infatuated, I was!* Then he would remember his Lord's aspect as he had just seen Him, when led forth from the sanhedrin "as a lamb to the slaughter." Then he would picture to himself the vile treatment which, even at that moment, He would be experiencing at the hands of those who were thirsting for His blood. Such thoughts as these would burn within him. He could not bear the torment. He would snatch off his girdle where he sat, and intentionally poisoning himself on some precipitous place, he would twist it round his neck till insensibility was complete. Or he might slightly attach one of its ends to some adjoining tree. Speedily he would topple over into the abyss, into which he had wistfully looked just a moment or two before. "It was finished," so far as the man's earthly career was concerned. But it is not the case that "it is finished." "Interpreters," says Horatio B. Hackett, "have suggested that Judas may have hung himself "on a tree near a precipice over the Valley of Hinnom." "For myself, I felt, "as I stood in this valley, and looked up to the rocky terraces which hang over "it, that the proposed explanation was a perfectly natural one. I was more "than ever satisfied with it. I measured the precipitous, almost perpendicular, "walls, in different places, and found the height to be variously forty, thirty- "six, thirty-three, thirty, and twenty-five feet. Olive trees still grow quite "near the top of those rocks, and, no doubt, in former times they were still "more numerous in the same place. A rocky pavement exists, also, at the "bottom of the precipices, and hence, on that account too, a person who should "fall from above would be liable to be crushed and mangled, as well as killed. "The traitor may have struck in his fall upon some pointed rock which entered "the body and caused 'his bowels to gush out.'" (*Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 175.)

VER. 6. And the chief priests took the silver pieces: When by-and-by they were gathered up and laid before them. There would be more than a superstitious awe resting upon their spirits, as well as upon the spirits of all the inferior members of the fraternity. And said, It is not lawful to throw them into the treasury: the temple freewill-offering treasury, called *Corbanas* (see Jose-

the price of blood. 7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. 8 Wherefore

plus, *War*, ii. 9 : 4), into which the *corbans* or *gifts* of the people were cast. Comp. Mark 'xii. 41-43; Luke xxi. 1. Coverdale renders it *the Gods chest*. It is said that there were thirteen distinct 'arks' or receptacles—shaped like inverted trumpets—which were set for the reception of the offerings. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmudicum*, p. 2506.) It would have been contrary to usage, and a violation of the feelings of the public, to have thrown the thirty 'silverlings' into this treasury. Because they are the price of blood : They were given to secure the capital punishment of Jesus. If, as is probable, it was after the crucifixion of our Lord that the sanhedrin took up the subject of what was to be done with the money, then the blood, of which it was the price, had been already shed. The money, hence, was actual blood-money. It was unclean. An unusual awe would be brooding over the spirits of the principal actors in the tragedy.

VER. 7. And they took counsel : That is, they consulted together on the matter. And bought with them the field of the potter : the well-known field of the potter—no doubt in the Valley of Hinnom. (Comp. Jer. xviii. 2 and xix. 6, 7.) It would be but a very little plot of ground; and probably, as Grotius suggests, wrought out, so far as the yield of clay was concerned. Tradition has fixed on a spot on the Hill of Evil Counsel as the site of this field. "Argillaceous clay," says Horatio B. Hackett, "is still found in the neighbourhood." "A workman," he adds, "in a pottery which I visited at Jerusalem, said that all their clay was obtained from the hill over the Valley of Hinnom." (*Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 175.) To bury strangers in : Or, as the Rheims renders it, *To be a burying place for strangers*; that is, says Grotius, Fritzsche, Meyer, for such *stranger Jews* as might die while visiting the city on occasion of any of the great festivals. It is more likely, however, that the reference is to foreigners, such as Greeks and Romans, whose ashes would be regarded as in a special sense unclean. So Beza. There would thus be a compromise of feelings. The money would be treated as unclean, and yet it would be laid out for a charitable purpose. The field traditionally fixed upon "is not now marked," says Dr. Robinson, "by any boundary to distinguish it from the rest of the hillside; and the former charnel-house, now a ruin, is all that remains to point out the site. It is a long, massive building of stone, erected in front apparently of a natural cave; with a roof arched the whole length, and the walls sunk deep below the ground outside, forming a deep pit or cellar within. An opening at each end enabled us to look in; but the bottom was empty and dry, except a few bones much decayed. This plot of ground, originally bought to bury strangers in, seems to have been early set apart by the Latins, and even by the crusaders themselves, as a place for the burial of pilgrims. Sir J. Maundeville, in the 14th century, says, in *that Feld ben manye Tombes of Cristene Men, for there ben manye Pilgrymes graven*. He is also the first to mention the charnel-house, which then belonged to the Hospital of St. John. In the beginning of the 14th century, Quaresmius describes it as being long to the Armenians, who sold the right of interment at a high price. In Maundrell's day dead bodies were still deposited in it; and Korte relates that in his time it was the usual burial-place of pilgrims. Dr. Clarke repeats the same story in the beginning of this century; but at present it has the appearance of having been for a much longer time abandoned. The soil of

that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. 9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet,

“this spot was long believed to have the power of consuming dead bodies in the space of twenty-four hours. On this account shiploads of it are said to have been carried away in A.D. 1218 in order to cover over the famous Campo Santo “in Pisa.” (*Researches*, vol. i., § vii., p. 525.)

VER. 8. *Wherefore*: Because it was purchased with the price of blood, and appropriately so purchased. See next clause. *That field was called, The field of blood*: Or *Aceldama, Akeldama*. See Acts i. 19. It is probable that it was the very spot on which Judas had expired; and hence there would be a coincidence of reasons for the designation which it received. Immediately after the shocking catastrophe that had occurred, it would be visited perhaps by crowds of people, under the influence of prurient curiosity—just as similar scenes attract sensation crowds in our own country. It would immediately be called *the blood field*. See Acts i. 19. When purchased with the blood-money, the name would be sealed and confirmed. *Unto this day*: That is, *And continues to be so called to this day*. The improvised designation did not give place to any other, such for instance, as what it formerly bore, *the potter's field*.

VER. 9. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet*: And yet the passage about to be quoted is found, not in the prophecies of *Jeremiah*, but in the eleventh chapter of *Zechariah* (ver. 13). How then are we to account for the word ‘*Jeremiah*’? This question has been asked and agitated by Origen, Augustin, and Jerome, as well as by almost all subsequent expositors. It has received, as might have been anticipated, very various answers. (See in particular Schlegel's Monograph *De agro sanguinis*.) For instance: (1) It has been thought that the passage must have been quoted by the evangelist from some writing of Jeremiah now lost. Origen suggested this idea as an alternative solution of the difficulty; and it has been approved of by Kuinöl among others. It is quite unlikely, however, as the passage is actually found in *Zechariah*. (2) Euthymius Zigabenus thought it probable that the text of Jeremiah had been tampered with by the Jews. A most improbable supposition, more especially as the Septuagint translation of both *Jeremiah* and *Zechariah* was in the hands of Christians as well as of Jews from the beginning of Christianity. (3) Mede threw out the idea that chaps. ix.–xi. of our present *Book of Zechariah* were not the composition of *Zechariah*, but really belonged to *Jeremiah*; yet, being discovered in the time of *Zechariah*, they were attached, he supposed, to his prophecies, just as “the words of Agur” are attached to the *Proverbs of Solomon*, or as the psalms of Heman, Ethan, etc., are to the *Psalms of David*. He made this suggestion in a letter to De Dieu in 1634, and confirmed it in a letter to Dr. Twisse in 1635. (*Works*, pp. 571, 833, 834.) His idea was caught hold of by Hammond, Kidder, Whiston, and others, and supported, on the whole, by Archbishop Newcome in his work on the *Minor Prophets*. “I conclude,” says the archbishop, “from internal marks “in chapters ix., x., xi., that these three chapters were written much earlier “than the time of *Zechariah*, and before the captivity of the ten tribes.” With the archbishop agree—to the extent of maintaining that chapters ix., x., xi. are not the composition of the author of the preceding chapters—Döderlein, Michaelis, Eichhorn, Bertholdt, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, Knobel, Bleek, Davidson, and many others. But this notion of these critics is built, as

we conceive, on a foundation of unhappy prejudices in reference to things biblical. As regards Mede's own view of the matter, it assumes a condition of critical investigation, and critical opinion, in reference to the Old Testament Scriptures, which is assuredly anachronistic. Even if we should suppose that Matthew was convinced that it was not Zechariah, but Jeremiah, who was the author of the oracle from which the quotation is made, we cannot, without a critical anachronism, suppose that he would indicate his conviction in the simple incidental way of ascribing the words quoted to another than that prophet under whose name they stood in the accredited Old Testament Scriptures. (4) Grotius thought it not unlikely that the words had been originally Jeremiah's, but had been handed down orally to the time of Zechariah, and accepted by him as his own. It is an ingenious but far fetched solution of the difficulty. Schwartz's notion is akin. (*Dissertatio*, § 20.) (5) Hengstenberg supposed that "the prophecy of Zechariah, as to its principal parts, is only a resumption of that in the *Prophecies of Jeremiah*, chaps. xviii. and xix.," and that therefore Matthew, in naming Jeremiah, points to the primary author of the prediction. Hengstenberg works out this idea with great ingenuity and power. But it is, like the idea of Grotius, too ingenious and far fetched. (6) Elsner supposed that the field that was purchased was the field in Anathoth which Jeremiah bought. (See Jer. xxxii.) He would interpolate the evangelist's expression thus, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah and the prophet." Forced, awkward, clumsy—an impossible expedient. Lange's interpretation, however, is somewhat similar; and so is Schlegel's. (7) Bishop Wordsworth supposes "that by referring here, not to Zechariah, where we " read " the passage, but to Jeremiah, where we do *not* read it, the Holy Spirit teaches " us *not* to regard the prophets as the *authors* of their prophecies, but to trace " their prophecies flowing down *through* them, in different channels from age " to age, till we see them all at length springing forth from the one living " Fountain of wisdom in the Godhead Itself." This might be good teaching, if no name at all had been specified by the evangelist; but it does not seem to be a good reason for substituting a wrong name for the right one. Augustin, however, hammered on the same anvil, only he more boldly put the case thus: Matthew, he supposes, might likely enough, in writing his *Gospel*, put down, by a passing oversight, the word Jeremiah for the word Zechariah. And just as likely he would speedily have corrected his mistake, more particularly when pointed out to him by his friends, if he had not begun to think that after all it might be, and had been, Divinely overruled. For was it not the case, that all the prophets spoke by one Spirit, and that therefore what was spoken through Zechariah was also spoken through Jeremiah, and what through Jeremiah was also through Zechariah? (*Consensus Evv.*, lib. iii., 7.) The premiss is undoubtedly good, that all the prophets spake by one Spirit. But the conclusion, that the utterances of one prophet are the utterances of every other, is undoubtedly fallacious, if there be such a thing at all as logical fallacy. (8) Bengel supposed that Matthew simply wrote that which was spoken by the prophet, and that some officious transcriber added *Jeremiah* in the margin. Dr. Adam Clarke approves of this idea. Wesley, too, and Doddridge; Glöckler also, and Livermore. Many others, besides, inclusive of Beza. But the marvellous unanimity of all the uncial manuscripts (Glöckler is in error when he excepts the Alexandrine), and all the cursives—with the most trifling exceptions, could not be accounted for by the blundering officiousness of any single annotator or transcriber. Augustin mentions, indeed, that the word *Jeremiah* was wanting in

some copies in his day. It is wanting, too, in the Peshito Syriac; as also in 33 "the queen of the cursives," and in one or two of the *Old Latin* manuscripts. But the omission in these few exceptional cases is most likely to be accounted for on the principle that the transcribers suspected an error in the copies from which they transcribed. (9) Calvin says: "How the name *Jeremiah* crept in I confess I do not know, nor do I concern myself anxiously to inquire. It is certain that the word *Jeremiah* has been put down by mistake for *Zechariah*." (*Certes la chose monstre d'elle mesme qu'on s'est abusé en mettant le nom de Jérémie pour Zacharie.*) This is honest. (10) Lightfoot, on the other hand, says, "I do confidently assert that Matthew wrote 'Jeremy' as we read it, and that it was very readily understood and received by his countrymen." He holds indeed that the words quoted are Zechariah's, but he imagines that they are spoken of as Jeremy's, because, in a certain ancient arrangement of the books of the Bible, *Jeremiah's prophecies stood first in the volume of the prophets (instead of Isaiah's as at present), and gave name to the whole volume.* It is an ingenious device for untying the knot, and accepted by Surenhusius, Scrivener, and Dr. David Brown; but it is, like some of the other devices we have stated, too evidently ingenious and hyper-ingenious, far fetched. (11) Origen suggested that the evangelist may have committed a *slip of the pen*; and many modern critics, improving on his suggestion, assume, without the slightest hesitation, that there must have been more in the case, a *slip of the memory*. So Mill (on the whole), Griesbach too (*Comment. criticus*, in loc.), and Paulus, Fritzsche, De Wette, Meyer, D'Eichthal, Alford ("quoted from memory and inaccurately," or "unprecisely" as he expresses it in his fifth edition). The assumption is insisted on. But why, it is difficult to see, unless on the basis of another assumption—that it is desirable to establish that the evangelists committed mistakes. Quite a potholer is made indeed to reach conclusively this conclusion. But the idea of an error of memory, in the case before us, is altogether arbitrary and wanton; especially when we consider that Matthew would be accustomed from his childhood to the reading of the prophets, and that he gives abundant evidence in his *Gospel* of familiarity with the prophetic writings in general, and with the prophecies of Zechariah in particular. (See chaps. xxi. 4, xxvi. 31.) His mind, besides, unlike the minds of most modern authors, would not be distracted by the perusal of multitudes of books. And then, too, the passage which he quotes is so peculiar and striking, that there is the greatest unlikelihood imaginable of ascribing it to the wrong author. A lapse of the evangelist's memory is clearly one of the last suppositions to which we should have recourse. (12) Dr. Henderson supposed (*Com. on Zech.*) that the mistake would probably originate with the translator, who rendered Matthew's Hebrew Gospel into Greek (misreading γ' for γ). The same idea had been suggested by Alexander Morus, and proposed by Stephen le Moyne. But it not only assumes a peculiar and questionable theory regarding the origin of Matthew's Gospel, it still further assumes that the Gospel which we now possess is less authentic and trustworthy than the Gospel which it supposes to be lost. Beza, Bishop Hall, Barnes, and others, imagine some kind of abbreviation in Greek, corresponding to the abbreviation imagined by Dr. Henderson in Hebrew. But the abbreviations suggested are, it seems, entirely out of the question. (See Mill's *Note*, and Wetstein's *Prologomena*, p. 3.) But what, then, are we to think on this important matter? Simply, we presume, that the word *Jeremiah* is, as it were, a *typographical erratum*. It is a *graphical erratum*. And it would appear to have crept into the original edition of the *Gospel*, the first published edition.

saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of

Hence its universal diffusion, and its persistence from age to age. There is nothing wonderful in such an occurrence. It is precisely paralleled by the expression, "which strain at a gnat," instead of "which strain out a gnat" in our English Authorized translation of the Bible. (See note on Matt. xxiii. 24.) And critics might as legitimately contend that the minds of our translators had become confused, and their memories confounded, in reference to the distinction between *out* and *at*, as insist upon it that we cannot account for *Jeremiah* in place of *Zechariah*, except on the hypothesis that Matthew's mind had become confused, and his memory entangled in a fault. The distinguished printer and scholar Robert Stephens, published in 1546 and 1549, respectively, his two editions of the New Testament, which are known to bibliographers as the *O mirificam editions*. The latter of the two is distinguished from the former as the '*pulres*' edition, because of a remarkable typographical *erratum* in the preface of that edition, *pulres* instead of *plures*. But would any one hence infer that Robert Stephens was not quite sure whether the correct word was *plures* or *pulres*? Or would it be legitimate to suppose that in 1549 he actually thought that *pulres* was the correct word? No more right has any one to infer that Matthew actually confounded in his mind *Zechariah* with *Jeremiah*. Let it be borne in mind that books were as literally published in those manuscriptal days as they still are in these typographical days. Let it be also borne in mind—a matter very commonly lost sight of by New Testament critics and hyper-critics—that published books were prepared from the author's manuscript by professional writers or copyists. In many cases, moreover, if not in most, when a large edition of a book was sure to be disposed of, a number of writers or copyists would probably write at one and the same time to the dictation of a reader. And hence if the reader, under any momentary illusion or fit of mental absence, misread a word, and especially if the word were a proper name which would not suggest to the writers an absurdity or impropriety, the *erratum* would be apt to be a fixture in the edition, just like Stephens's *pulres*, and to be carried into all subsequent transcripts, just like *at* for *out* in the English Authorized translation of Matt. xxiii. 24. The propagation of the *erratum* would be likely to be all the more persistent, if the work were regarded with peculiar veneration, like Matthew's Gospel in olden times, and our Authorized English Bible in modern times, and especially if the *erratum* were of such a nature that various possibilities of interpretation might be imagined. Calvin was right, then, in his decision regarding the word that it is an *erratum*. Scaliger was probably right in his decision, that the *erratum* was due to the mere professional writer or reader (*oportet errorem esse librarii*: SCALIGERIANA, p. 168, ed. 1668). Melancthon had the same idea. It is perfectly arbitrary and wanton to suppose that it is more probable that the author's own memory or fingers made the mistake. **Saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver:** Instead of *they took*, we might read *I took*—the reading of the original passage in *Zechariah*. The Greek word (ἐλαβον) may be either the first person singular or the third person plural. It is the first person singular in the Septuagint version of the prophet; and Mede and Hammond contend that it should be regarded as being here in the same person. So too Principal Campbell. They are supported by the Syriac versions, and the Persic, and by the Sinaitic manuscript (which gives ἐδωκα in ver. 10). No doubt, however, the word is to be taken as in the third person plural, *they took*. (See ἐδωκαν in ver. 10.) The quotation is not given

him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; 10 and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor

verbatim or slavishly. The evangelist allows the historic fact, mentioned in vers. 7 and 8, to press in upon and modify the form of the prophet's expression. In Zechariah the Shepherd receives the money. It is *his price*. But he does not pocket it or keep it. He receives it, and casts it from him. It had to go therefore into the hands of others, and *they took it*. It is added, the price of Him who had been prized! The language is ironical, and still more emphatically so in the Hebrew, which Henderson renders thus, *the splendid price at which I was estimated by them!* It is added, whom they priced on the part of the children of Israel: We can in English do more justice to the idea than is easy even in Greek, in consequence of the slight divergence in import of *prized* and *priced*, originally one word. But the entire expression is peculiar and irregular. In the Hebrew the Good Shepherd says: "The splendid price at which I was estimated by them," that is, *by the children of Israel*. But the evangelist, in making his own free use of the prophet's language, fits it on to *the act of the members of the sanhedrin*. Hence, in a way that is perfectly accordant, indeed, with the language of the Hebrew oracle, but also peculiarly modified by the historic fact to which he refers, he represents the sanhedrists as *pricing our Lord* at the figure specified—*on the part of, or at the instance of, the children of Israel* (ἀπό). The action of the rulers was authorized, as it were, by the spirit of the great body of the people. It was, therefore, virtually the action of the children of Israel in general.

VER. 10. *And gave them for the potter's field:* In this part too of the quotation, the evangelist stretches freely the prophet's language over the historic fact, thus contenting himself with the main drift of the prophet's phraseology. Nothing but a kind of ignominious use could be made of the money. "The priests," says Hengstenberg, "removed the gold, as unclean, out of the temple, and purchased with it a mean spot in that very valley, which, at an earlier period, had been polluted by innocent blood, and had brought upon Jerusalem the vengeance of the Lord." (*Christology of the Old Test.*, in loc.) *As the Lord appointed me:* See the commencement of the 13th verse in the 11th chapter of Zechariah, where we read, *And the Lord said unto me*. Note the *me*. The evangelist discontinues his free use of the third person plural instead of the first person singular, and thus recurs to the precise standpoint of the prophet. Note the word *appointed*. *The Lord's hand was in the matter of the destination of the money*. To this extent at least, that it should go from the hands in which it was originally placed, and go with a stigma upon it. It must be cast away in scorn and detestation, and appropriated to some ignominious, though legitimate, use. It could not be made use of by the good Shepherd, or received into the Lord's treasury. Neither should it be kept by Judas, much as he may have coveted it, or by any of the priests.

VER. 11. *But Jesus stood before the governor:* The evangelist thus resumes the thread of his tragic narrative. And the governor interrogated Him, saying, *Art Thou the king of the Jews?* Such was the shape which, for obvious reasons, the sanhedrists had given to their accusation. They hoped to secure an immediate conviction of the object of their hate, on the ground of treason

asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto

to Cæsar. The evangelist abruptly introduces us to the scene at the moment when the procurator put his interrogatory to our Lord. Before, however, that interrogatory could have been put, the sanhedrists must of course have explained and justified their hasty appearance at the praetorium, and specified the charge which they had to prefer against the prisoner. And Jesus said to him, Thou sayest: He acknowledged the charge. He claimed to be *the king of the Jews*. "This," says Grotius, "is that *good confession*, of which Paul makes mention in 1 Tim. vi. 13." The expression *Thou sayest* was just a peculiar idiom, equivalent to a strong affirmation. It intimated that *if the thing said in the interrogation were put forth in the form of an affirmation, it would be the truth of the case.* (See chap. xxvi. 25.)

VER. 12. And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing: Our Lord's majestic bearing while acknowledging that He was *the king of the Jews*, coupled with His manifest spirituality, and His marvellous mildness and meekness, had evidently impressed the procurator favourably. He could not see the least likelihood of treasonable intent in reference to Cæsar's prerogatives. The chief priests and elders, perceiving the impression produced, began to explain and enforce their charge. They insisted that the prisoner was a dangerous pretender, and a very bad man. Cæsar's interests could not be secure in Judæa if He were allowed to go at large. But our Lord stood sublimely silent amid all the din that they raised, and the hissing missiles that they aimed at His heart.

VER. 13. Pilate would no doubt be surprised at the contrast in the bearing of the accused and the conduct of the accusers. Jesus, unlike His accusers, and unlike too other accused persons who had stood at the governor's bar, did not fret and fume and grow fierce and furious. He preserved throughout a lofty dignity of demeanour, interblended beautifully with a spirit of calm resignation, wonderfully unlike what might be expected from a dangerous political schemer or agitator. Then says Pilate to Him, Hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee? I expected that Thou wouldest be doing Thy best to vindicate Thyself.

VER. 14. And He answered him to never a word: Or more literally, *And He did not answer him, not even to one word.* He made no defensive reply, not even so much as to one single word, one single thing that was said against Him. *He made no defensive reply even to a single charge.* The term *word* has reference to what was spoken by the chief priests and elders against Him. Insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly: Such calm, meek, dignified silence manifested a style of character which had never come under his observation before.

VER. 15. Now at (that) feast: Or more literally, *But at feast (time), that is, at passover time.* The meaning is, *at each passover, or, passover by passover.*

the people a prisoner, whom they would. 16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is

(Comp. Luke ii. 41). The governor was wont to release one prisoner to the people: Or rather to the *multitude*, for so the word is generally rendered; and the deed was intended to be a sop to the *common people*, to keep them in good humour with the procurator. It was a singular kind of favour, certainly; and possible only under tyrannies, or in times of political suspicion and unrest, when persons would be liable to imprisonment for political offences, and thus for reasons that would make them popular with the masses. Whom they would: That is, *whom they wished*. He allowed them their choice. And no doubt they would generally fix upon some one who had made himself conspicuous for his zeal in promoting what would be regarded as *national* interests, as opposed to the special interests of their Roman superiors. It would almost always be a *political prisoner* whom they would desire.

VER. 16. And they had then: *They*, the multitude to wit. See the preceding verse, and the succeeding one too. The expression is peculiar; for in an obvious respect it was not *they*, but the *Roman procurator*, who 'had' the prisoner. The phrase, however, excellently indicates that the person referred to belonged to the multitude, or was of that class which makes up the great body of the multitude. In the Vulgate version it is *he had*, instead of *they had*; and Erasmus also has *he had* in his translation, although the Greek word in his editions is plural. The change from *they* to *he* had evidently been conjectural. A notable prisoner: An admirable translation, and so is that of the Rheims, a *notorious prisoner*. He was called Barabbas: The name signifies *Son-of-Abbas*, or *Son of Abba*; that is, *Son-of-Father*, *Son-of-Father So and so*. The name would originally be given to one who was the son of some rabbi who had been known in his locality as *Father So and so*. Not unlikely Barabbas would thus be a person of respectable parentage, though for long he had gravitated toward the lowest stratum of society.

VER. 17. When then they were gathered together: *Then*, it being the case, that is to say, that there was that noted prisoner Barabbas. The procurator had thence a scheme in his head to effect the release of Jesus. *They*: that is, the multitude. The multitude would be gathered together in front of the procurator's residence, and in consequence of some hasty proclamation made by his orders. Heralds or public criers would be sent through the principal streets, announcing to the people, that *it was the pleasure of his highness, the governor, to liberate, according to his wont, a prisoner in honour of the festivity which commenced that day. All and sundry, therefore, were invited to repair without delay to the praetorium, where the governor would meet them, and accord to them their pleasure, in selecting for release whatever prisoner they chose*. Pilate would have recourse to that step, at that particular juncture, in the hope of managing matters so deftly, as to induce the people to ask the release of Jesus, who seemed to be accused of only political conspiracy, no great crime in the eyes of the Jews, when directed simply against the Roman rule. In the interval that which is recorded in Luke xxiii. 6-11 would transpire. Pilate said to them, Whom will ye that I release to you: Or, Whom wish ye that I should release to you? Whom is it your pleasure that I should release to you? Barabbas,

called Christ? 18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

or Jesus who is called Christ? Instead of waiting till the people themselves named the person whose release they wished, he adroitly threw out before them two names, in the hope that the choice would be limited to either the one or the other. And no doubt he supposed that if the people should be contented to limit their choice within the alternatives which he suggested, they would not for a moment hesitate for whom to ask. Barabbas, though apparently of respectable parentage, and an enemy no doubt to Roman rule, was not so much a political offender as a freebooter and dangerous bandit, who levied 'black mail' on all classes within his reach, and thus preyed on the public, and made himself a pest to society. He seems to have been a kind of Jewish 'Rob Roy,' who lived by plunder, and never scrupled to imbrue his hands in the blood of such as stood in the way of his imagined interests. He was a 'robber' and a 'murderer,' and had been seized by the authorities while actually engaged in some seditious affray. (See Mark xv. 7; Luke xxiii. 19; John xviii. 40; Acts iii. 14.) It seemed a clever scheme on the part of Pilate, to pit this man against Jesus, who had no blot attaching to His moral character, and who was accused of no other crime than of being too ardently devoted to the cause of national and anti-Roman supremacy. *Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ*: Origen read the expression thus, *Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ*. But he mentions that in many copies the reading was not *Jesus Barabbas*, but simply *Barabbas*. A few cursive manuscripts, inclusive of 1, present the reading of Origen; as do also the Armenian version and the Jerusalem Syriac. But, strange to say, Michaelis, Fritzsche, and Meyer approve of the reading, and suppose that Barabbas, as well as our Lord, was really called *Jesus*. Archbishop Trench too leans to the same idea. (*Studies in the Gospels*, § 15, p. 300.) Farrar also. (*Life of Christ*, ii., p. 377.) The great editors, however, inclusive of Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf (in his 1859 and 1869 editions), and Tregelles, are quite opposed to the supplement as thoroughly apocryphal. Correctly so, as is evidenced by ver. 20. Tregelles has admirably pointed out the probable source of the apocryphal reading (*Haec lectio orta fuisse videtur e litteris posterioribus vocis ἑμῶν casu bis scriptis; sic, ὁ ΤΜΙΝΙΝ, hinc ὁ ΤΜΙΝΙΝ, i. e., ἑμῶν et Ἰησοῦν*). His conjecture on this subject is more probable than that of Griesbach, and much more probable than that of Alford.

VER. 18. For he knew that because of envy they delivered Him up: Mark the *For*. It introduces a clause intended to account for the expedient to which Pilate had recourse to get Jesus released. He interested himself in the matter, because he saw through the flimsy artifices of the sanhedrists. They were not actuated by high political considerations, or by a disinterested desire to avert some impending danger from the Roman rule in Judæa. They were standing paltering on their own ecclesiastical plane, and were animated with a petty jealousy of the influence exerted on the masses by the lofty character and wonderful endowments of Jesus the Christ. To suppose, with Trench, that Barabbas was, in the estimation of the Jews, "the popular hero, who had sought to realize his own and their idea of the kingdom of God by violence and blood," and who had thus "actually been what they wanted the Lord to be" (*Studies in the Gospels*, p. 298), is inconsistent with the benevolent aim toward our Lord which seems to have been the actuating motive of Pilate's procedure in proposing the alternative of election. To have pitted a 'popular hero'

19 When he was set down on the judgement seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

against our Lord would simply have amounted to a scheme to frustrate his own wish, and to insure the people's rejection of Jesus. Archbishop Trenchard's view of the character of Barabbas somewhat corresponds to that which was entertained by Bishop Maltby. (See *Bastow's Bible Dictionary*, sub voce.)

VER. 19. But while he was sitting on the judgement seat: Awaiting the expression of the people's choice in reference to the prisoner to be released. After the liberty of choice had been accorded to them, they would begin to converse together, in groups, discussing which 'of the twain' they would claim, or whether they would accept either of them. Hence some considerable time would be occupied, while the procurator was sitting, disengaged, on his seat. His wife sent to him: For, contrary to the rule under the republic, it was the custom of the Roman magistrates, under the empire, to take their wives with them to the provinces. The custom had been objected to in Rome by Severus Cæcina; but his objection was wisely and strenuously overruled. (See Tacitus, *Annal.*, iii. 33, 34.) The wife of Pilate, according to ecclesiastical tradition, was called *Procla*, or *Claudia Procula*. She is represented as having been a pious lady, who had tendencies toward Judaism. It is alleged that she ultimately became a Christian. Origen takes her discipleship for granted. She is regarded as a 'saint' in the Greek Church. Of the truth of the tradition regarding her tendency toward Judaism, we know nothing. But the statement in the verse before us, the probable fount of the tradition, would warrant the assumption that she had peculiar spiritual susceptibilities, and would, likely, take an interest in the spiritual things that have to do with the inner and upper sides of human nature. Probably too she might have heard about the career and character of Jesus. Saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just (man): Or, as we should probably express it in our modern idiom, *with that good man*. The word translated *just* is more extensive in its import than is suggested by the translation. Still more does it overlap the signification assigned to it by Principal Campbell, *innocent*. It means *righteous*; and *righteousness*, among the Jews, was the favourite form which they gave to their idea of moral goodness or sanctity. It is of course a higher phase of moral character than mere *innocence*. *Righteousness* is positive, while *innocence* is merely negative. The expression *Have thou nothing to do with*, is a peculiar idiom, being literally *Let there be nothing to thee and that righteous person*. Comp. chap. viii. 29. The idea is somewhat to this effect: *Let there be nothing between thee and that righteous person,—nothing*, that is to say, *of which you may afterward have self-accusing thoughts*. The language is deprecatory. For I suffered many things to-day in a dream because of Him: *To-day*, or, as we should say, in our idiom, *this morning*. It would be yet very early in the day when the lady sent her message. *I suffered many things*: That is, I suffered *much* in my mind as I witnessed in my dream some shocking scenes, in which that righteous person was the central figure. *In a dream*: If in a delicate state of health, as is likely from the fact that *she had to send to Pilate* to make known her experiences and her wishes, she might be peculiarly sensitive, at once in her susceptibilities of vision, and in her conscience. Strauss insists on it that Matthew obviously

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Bar-

regarded her dream as Divinely sent. It is certainly the case that many of the ancient expositors, inclusive of Origen and Jerome, delighted to recognise the hand of God in the dream. Others, however, thought that they could detect, in the occurrence, rather the hand of the devil, seeking to prevent the atoning death of our Lord! But either alternative of view is arbitrary. Dreams of presentiment are common phenomena, whatever our philosophies may make of them; and hence they are not always to be attributed to any special agency either from above or from beneath. The hand of God cannot, indeed, be entirely absent from the machinery that produces them, but other agencies may and must often intervene, while the surroundings and inner energies of the mind will modify in myriads of ways the influx of influences. When coming events do fling their shadows before, these shadows are frequently reflected by the mirrors of the mind into the consciousness of the sensitive. But a thousand contingencies are at hand to dim, or darken, or derange, or otherwise damage and confuse, the mirroring susceptibilities.

VER. 20. But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes: That is, *used their persuasive influence with the multitudes*. They would probably divine the procurator's desire to secure the release of Jesus. And hence they improved the time allotted to the people to make up their mind. They would distribute themselves among the crowd, and plead strenuously and powerfully, with person after person, and group after group. *It might be true*, they would admit, *that Barabbas was not the best of men. They could have wished that the governor had not named him. But since he had been named, let him be chosen. If he was not the best of men, Jesus was most likely the worst. At all events He was by far the more guilty and the more dangerous of the two.* The expression, that they should ask Barabbas, is literally *in order that they should ask Barabbas*. They used all their persuasive influence with the multitudes, *in order that they might on the one hand ask Barabbas, and on the other hand destroy Jesus*. The expression, *destroy Jesus*, is rendered by Sir John Cheke, *put Jesus to death*. The Rheims version is, *and make Jesus away; that is, and make away with Jesus*.

VER. 21. But the governor, after waiting a reasonable time, answered and said to them: That is, *to the multitudes*. The word *answered* seems to suggest that from many points in the crowd intimations were reaching him, to the effect that they were now ready to give their decision. Wherever, indeed, the high priests and elders had been busiest, and were most successful, there most probably voices would be already calling out, *Barabbas! Barabbas!* The governor responds to all the signals that were given, of whatever description they were, and said to them, *Whether of the twain will ye that I release to you? Whom from the two—that is, which of the two—is it your pleasure that I shall release to you?* The procurator, by the mode of expression which he employs, kept the idea before the minds of the multitude, that it was his wish that they should limit their choice to one of the two whom he had specified. *But they said, Barabbas: Blush, human nature! And yet, says Trapp, "This mad choice is every day made."* Some unworthy person or other, some unworthy thing or other, is preferred by multitudes, by *the multitudes*, to Christ. Not so, however, with those

abbas. 22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

who are Christians indeed. They have the spirit of the illustrious scholar, Immanuel Tremellius, a Jew, who when dying reversed his nation's decision, and exclaimed, *Not Barabbas, but Jesus!* (*Vivat Christus, et pereat Barabbas!*)

VER. 22. Pilate saith to them, What then shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? *Then*, that is, Since it is your pleasure that I should release unto you Barabbas. The expression *what shall I do with Jesus?* is somewhat peculiar in the original. There is nothing corresponding to *with*. The phrase is somewhat equivalent to, *what shall I make Jesus?* But still that is not its precise import. We must let our minds hover between the two words *do* and *make*. Pilate means *What penalty—what punishment—shall I inflict upon Jesus?* Such a question betrayed the moral impotency of the man. They all say, Let Him be crucified! There is no *to him* in the best texts. The people would shout out *Let Him be crucified!* under the instigation, no doubt, of the priests and elders. Comp. John xix. 6. Crucifixion was named as the mode of execution, in pursuance of the idea that our Lord was a political offender, who had a design by the hand that was treasonable in relation to Cæsar. Hence it was that the long-headed men in the sanhedrin fixed upon a Roman, as distinguished from a Jewish, mode of execution. The Jewish modes of execution were stoning, burning, strangling, and the sword. Crucifixion, a horribly inhuman mode of capital punishment, had been for long in use among Phœnicians, Egyptians, Persians, and other peoples, oriental and occidental, as also, in particular, among the Romans, and likewise among the Greeks; but, with the progress of civilization and refinement, it was not much resorted to by Greeks and Romans, in the case of freemen, except for aggravated offences among the lowest class of the citizens. It was, to a large extent, appropriated as the punishment of criminal slaves. It was at once the most dreadful, the most barbarous, and the most ignominious form of execution. (*Carnifex vero, et obductio capitis, et nomen ipsum crucis, absit non modo a corpore civium Romanorum, sed etiam a cogitatione, oculis, auribus: CICERO, pro C. Rabirio, 5.*) Instead of the Latinized expression, *Let Him be crucified*, Sir John Cheke has, *Let Him be crossed*.

VER. 23. But the governor said, Why, what evil did He? A somewhat free translation, yet, as Scholefield remarks, "not only correct, but happy and elegant." (*Hints, in loc.*) There is no *why* in the original. There is in its place the conjunction *for* (*γάρ*) which delicately intimates that the procurator, surprised, flits for a moment into the standpoint of the people, that he might find out the reason of their demand. Or, the case might be represented thus,—Pilate, as it were, says, *Why ask, as you do, that Jesus should be crucified? for what evil did He?* But they cried out the more, saying, Let Him be crucified: The verb rendered *they cried out* is in the imperfect tense, *they kept shouting out*. The adverb rendered *the more* means *exceedingly*. So it is translated in Acts xxvi. 11. The idea is, *they kept vehemently shouting out*. Their blood was up, and the spirit of bloodhounds took possession of them. They got, moreover, all the more intent on carrying out their bloodthirsty resolution as they perceived a wavering unwillingness on the part of the procurator. There was

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person : see ye *to it*. 25 Then answered all the

moral weakness revealed behind that wavering unwillingness; and nothing could have more effectually inflamed a mob, than a glimpse of such a revelation.

VER. 24. But when Pilate perceived that he could prevail nothing : Or rather, *that it availed nothing*, that is, *that it was of no use*,—viz., to go on making efforts to change the mind of the mob. There is a little peculiarity in the Greek idiom, *But when Pilate perceived (this, to wit) 'It is of no use.'* But that rather a tumult was made : The people were getting uproarious and riotous. He took water and washed his hands before the multitude : He thus accommodated his action to the significant Jewish symbolism (see Deut. xxi. 6), that the Jews might receive a due impression of the fact that his own personal convictions of what was right were in antagonism to their wishes. Strauss thinks that this accommodation on the part of the Roman procurator to the symbolism of the Jews was not a likely occurrence. But why he should think so, it is difficult to imagine, except on the principle that it is desirable to bring down upon Matthew an avalanche of all possible objections, however small, to his historic trustworthiness. Nothing, on the other hand, seems more natural to us than that Pilate should seek to impress upon the multitude, by means of their own usages, that he wished to wash his hands of all responsibility whatsoever in reference to the doom of the remarkable personage at his bar. *Saying, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous person* : It is somewhat uncertain whether the word *righteous* was in Matthew's original text. It is wanting in the Vatican and Cambridge manuscripts (B D), and is omitted by Tischendorf and Westcott-and-Hort. It is not unlikely that it may have been brought down from the 19th verse. In the Alexandrine and some other authorities, which insert it, there is an awkwardness in its position (*τοῦτον τοῦ δικαίου*), which rather favours the idea that it may have crept in from the margin. Its presence or absence is a matter of no practical moment. When Pilate says, *I am innocent of the blood of this person*, or, more literally, *I am innocent from the blood of this person*, the expression, modelled after a common Hebrew phrase, has something of pregnancy in it, and means *I am innocent, because free, from the blood of this person*; that is, *I consider myself as not answerable for the blood of this person*, or, *I am free from responsibility in reference to this person's blood*. Coverdale's translation is, *I am unguiltie of the bloude of this righteous man*. Pilate thus declared that, while he gave Jesus up to the bloodthirsty will of the multitude, he was not to be regarded as approving of his execution. He admitted, in other words, that the execution would be murder. But, such being the case, it was in vain for him to imagine that he could shake himself free from the criminality of being an accomplice of the murderers. See ye to it : Or rather *Ye shall see to it*; that is, *Ye shall see to it, I presume, that ye take to yourselves the whole responsibility of the deed, and that I do not be blamed for it*. Pilate forgot that in things moral men cannot clear one another by a mere act of will. Still less can they, in their individual actions, be like the rowers in our British waters, who look one way and go another.

VER. 25. And all the people answered : Under the instigation, no doubt, of

people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

the priests and scribes and elders. First one would speak out, and then another, until 'all' joined in chorus. And said, His blood (be) upon us, and upon our children: An awful imprecatory form of expressing the heartiest possible willingness to take away from Pilate all the blame, if blame there should be, of putting Jesus to death. It is as if the people had said: *Give thyself no concern in reference to this man's blood. Nothing in the universe can be lighter than the blame of shedding it. We shall see to it. The deed in truth will be a merit, and something to be proud of, and to rejoice over. But if there should be blame, depend upon it, thou shalt be free. We warrant you indemnification. We fear not to appeal to the Almighty God, and to say, On us, and on our children, not on you or on yours, be all the accountability and culpability!* "And so," says Richard Baxter, "it hath been to this day with a most dreadful vengeance." And yet not wholly 'so.' In the imprecation of the Jews they laid such a peculiar emphasis on the 'us' and the 'our children,' that they entirely exonerated Pilate and all dependent upon him. But this was more than they had a right to do, and more than they could do. The blood of Jesus was found on Pilate's skirts, and he and his suffered for his murderous deed. In another respect, too, was the imprecation of the Jewish multitude ineffectual. They wantonly sought to involve their children in equal responsibility with themselves. But they could not. The shield of God interposed. The children's teeth would not be set on edge, though the fathers should eat sour grapes. (Ezek. xviii. 2-4.) "The son would not bear the iniquity of the father." (Ezek. xviii. 20.) The children could not but suffer indeed in consequence of the fathers' recklessness and wickedness. (Exod. xx. 5.) When individuals are connected together in a state of society, the conduct of one affects the condition of another. Children reap the fruits of their fathers' misconduct. But the culpability of their fathers' actions does not lie at their door.

VER. 26. Then released he Barabbas unto them, but scourged Jesus and delivered Him up that He might be crucified: His elastic conscience yielded to the popular pressure. *He scourged Jesus*: That is, he caused Him to be scourged; and so Coverdale renders it. He gave orders that He should be scourged, and saw that his orders were fulfilled. Such scourging was regarded as an *appropriate preface to crucifixion*, or as an *integral part of the punishment that culminated in crucifixion*. The culmination of the punishment was reached gradually as it were. (See Livy, *Hist.* xxxii. 36, *verberatos crucibus adfixit*.) And hence if in any case relenting were at all realizable, time was afforded for its realization. Pilate seems to have hoped that the Jews would relent and be satisfied, when they saw that their 'King' was severely scourged. (Comp. Luke xxiii. 16; John xix. 1-6.) But no. Their appetite was only whetted. The word rendered *scourged* (*φραγελλώσας*) is formed from the same Latin term from which we have our English *flagellated* (*flagellum*). The Saviour would probably, according to the Roman custom, be bound to a pillar while being flagellated (and, alas! *corpore denudato*). The Roman flagellation was applied to the bared back, and was administered by means either of rods, or of leather thongs, which latter were often pointed with lead or bone. It harrows the heart to think that our blessed Lord was subjected to this cruel indignity. But assuredly great

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.
28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

must have been the moral ends that He had in view, when He condescended to submit to the agony and to the shame,—“giving His back to the smiters.” Matthew condenses his narrative, and thus leaves out of view several details. (Comp. Luke xxiii. 7-25; John xix. 1-16.) *And delivered Him up that He might be crucified*: Pilate swayed irresolutely backward and forward for a season. He played fast and loose with his conscience, in a vain attempt to get the people to consent to let go their prey. He was frustrated at every point, and in the end made his conscience give in and bow to expediency. So, after scourging our Lord, *he delivered Him to be crucified*. He delivered Him to the mob (John xix. 16), and thus to the will of the mob (Luke xxiii. 25), making use, however, of his soldiers to see the execution legally consummated.

VER. 27. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall: Or, as it is in the original, *into the praetorium*. The word *praetorium* was the technical name for the mansion house or residence of a provincial governor. It originally denoted a *praetor's place of abode*, and was applied, in the language of the camp, to the *governor's tent*, for originally a *general* was a *praetor*. The word *praetor* just meant *leader*; and, although restricted, in the course of time, to a peculiar kind of leader, it yet so strongly retained its primary, etymological, and generic import, that *praetorium* continued to be employed to denote the residence of other leaders besides those who were called *praetors*, in the conventionally restricted sense of the term. When it is said that the soldiers, who were acting as the bodyguard of the procurator, took our Lord ‘*into*’ the *praetorium*, it is assumed, in accordance with what is said in John xviii. 28, 29, that Pilate had, during the process that is narrated in the preceding verses, or at least during the greater part of it, been seated in presence of the assembled people, *outside his residence*. But now, in anticipation of the end, the soldiers took our Lord inside the great quadrangle of the governor's mansion house. (See on chap. xxvi. 3, and comp. Mark xv. 16.) *And gathered unto Him*: Or, *upon Him* (*ἐπ’ αὐτόν*), as the expression literally means. The persons referred to would be gathered round about our Lord, so as to be close *upon* Him. *The whole band*: Or *the whole cohort*, that is, the entire detachment of soldiers who were doing duty in Jerusalem, and whose quarters would be connected with the *praetorium*. The procurator's usual residence was at Caesarea, and there the most of the soldiers needed for service in Judaea were in barracks. But a detachment was kept in Jerusalem to overawe the populace, and meet any emergency that might arise.

VER. 28. The brutal fellows resolved to have some savage sport with their Jewish prisoner. They had mastered so much of the charge that was brought against Him, as to understand that He claimed to be a *king*, *the king of the Jews*. *Well: they stripped Him*: Not only of His outer garment or cloak, but also of his tunic (see *ἱμάτια*, in ver. 31). *And arrayed Him in a scarlet robe*: No doubt either some officer's cloak, much “the worse for the wear,” some old and tattered Roman *paludamentum*, a kind of long cape, or short military mantle, that was gracefully fastened by a buckle over the right shoulder; or, still more probably, some cast off robe of royalty got from the establishment of Herod the tetrarch. (See Luke xxiii. 11.) The gay, bright colour was suitable

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of

for a thing of mock royalty. Instead of *scarlet* Young has *crimson*, a very suitable word, as being derived from the Arabic *kermes*, the equivalent of the term referred to by the evangelist (κόκκος), the name of the insect (mistakenly supposed to be a berry) from which the colour was anciently obtained by the dyers in the western parts of Asia. The modern *cochineal* corresponds to the ancient *kermes*, but the cochineal insect is reared, not on the *ilex* or *kermes oak*, but on a *cactus*. Instead of either *scarlet* or *crimson*, Luther has, freely, *purple*; and he was followed by Tyndale and Coverdale, in their respective versions, and by Whittingham in the first edition of the Geneva. *Purple*, indeed, is Mark's word (xv. 17), and John's (xix. 2), and may likely have been the real colour, if the robe were some cast off garment from the royal or tetrarchal wardrobe of Herod. The Jews were not precise and scientific in their discrimination of colours. (See Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, sub voce "colours.") And it is most likely that all that Matthew meant by his word *crimson* or *scarlet* was a *gay, bright colour, predominantly red or ruddy*. This idea is confirmed by the peculiar term which Luke employs (xxiii. 11),—a term equally applicable to either crimson or purple. It is rendered *gorgeous* in our version, but it simply means *bright* (λαμπράν). Wycliffe's translation of Matthew's term is *red*.

VER. 29. And they platted a crown of thorns and put it on His head: We know not the kind of thorn of which this mockery crown was made. Young, pliant sprays would be employed. But no doubt the savages would see to it that they should be prickly enough. "Every one," says Horatio B. Hackett, "who has been in Palestine must have been struck with the number of thorny shrubs and plants that abound there. The traveller finds them in his path, go where he may. Many of them are small, but some grow as high as a man's head." (*Illustrations*, p. 82.) Some grow much higher. Dr. Tristram, describing the district in the neighbourhood of Elisha's Fountain, on the way between Jerusalem and Jericho, says: "The principal tree was the *zizyphus*, *spina Christi*, growing twenty or thirty feet high, with its subangular branches studded with long pointed and rather reflex thorns, very strong,—a true "wait-a-bit" tree. No one can approach it with impunity unless clad in leather, and in three days the whole party were in rags, from passing through "the thickets." (*The Land of Israel*, p. 205.) It is quite likely that the soldiers would find the thorns growing in the great quadrangle of the praetorium; and at all events there would be abundance of them in the immediate vicinity, on the rocky sides of the adjoining valley of the Tyropoeon. And a reed in His right hand: That is, *And they put a reed in His right hand* (ἔθηκαν—mentally disintegrated from the compound ἐπέθηκαν of the preceding clause), a sham sceptre. It is no particular kind of reed that is indicated. The word employed is the generic term for all sorts of reeds. It would, not unlikely, be some light walking-stick of the reed description, but of no great beauty. And they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! They did Him derisive obeisance. They would bow the knee, says Trapp, "with ludicrous devotion." And yet the Saviour, with a lofty abstractedness of thought, might be seeing, behind the film of their derisive insults, the fitful flickerings from afar of the true homage of multitudes of Gentiles.

the Jews! 30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene,

VER. 30. And they spit upon Him: Or, as Tyndale, Coverdale, and the Geneva have it, *they spitted*. The verb is in the aorist tense. The English corresponding term is either *spat*, *spet*, *spit*, or *spitted*. *Spat* occurs in John ix. 6. *Spet* is used by Purvey in the passage before us. *Spit* occurs again and again (Num. xii. 14; Mark vii. 33, viii. 23). And took the reed, and smote Him on the head: Taking care, no doubt, to assist the thorns to do their work.

“ Salve caput cruentatum,
Totum spinis coronatum,
Conquassatum, vulneratum,
Arundine sic verberatum!”

The verb translated *smote* is in the imperfect tense, which intimates that the blows on the head were persistently repeated. They *took the reed*: Because no doubt our Lord's hand let it go, refusing to grasp it. At first some heartless fellow would place it in the Saviour's hand, and would hold it in, while his companions busied themselves in doing their obeisance.

VER. 31. And after they had mocked Him: When their game of mockery was past, for at length they got sick of it. There would be something in the lofty bearing and heavenly meekness of “the Lamb of God,” that, in spite of all their efforts to get their fun to the full, made it difficult work. The mirth dragged heavily. The roars of laughter died away, and, somehow or other, refused to be renewed. They took the robe off from Him, and put His own garments on Him: Most probably also they would remove the crown of thorns. And led Him off to crucify Him: They led Him off in the direction of the usual place of execution in the suburban district, outside the city walls. It was necessary that all executions should take place outside the walls of the city. See Num. xv. 35, 36; 1 Kings xxi. 13; Acts vii. 58; Heb. xiii. 12.

VER. 32. But as they were going out: Namely, from the city. They found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: He was coming in, as Luke informs us, from the country (xxiii. 26). He was a foreign Jew, a Hellenist, belonging to Cyrene, a city of Libya, in the north of Africa, a place much frequented by Jews. (See Josephus, *c. Apion*. ii. 4.) Most likely Simon, on meeting the procession, had felt his heart touched by sympathy for the Sufferer. As he looked, he loved Him. And at once his spirit would be stirred with surprise and indignation. *What, men and brethren! That man assuredly is no malefactor. He has not the look of a malefactor. Behold Him! That is not a felon's face! You must be labouring under some great delusion. Oh, stop, stop! He has been cruelly maltreated! See His lacerated brow and back! How faint He is under the burden of His cross! yet how meek! and so noble withal in His bearing!* Remonstrance, however, was in vain. And yet so much humanity remained in reference to the wonderful Sufferer, that the mob were willing to accord Him such a trifle of assistance as would allow them to punish Simon for his gratuitous interference. The shout would rise, while Simon was yet remonstrating with them, “Let *him* bear the cross!”—“Let *him* bear the cross!” The soldiers,

Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.
 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha,

it would appear, were nothing loath. Him they impressed, that he might bear His cross: The word which our translators have rendered *compelled* is the same that is found in chap. v. 41. It was a term borrowed from the Persians, and denoted exactly what we mean by *impressment*. They impressed Simon, in order that he might bear the cross, viz., after or behind Jesus. (See Luke xxiii. 26.) They had no intention of entirely relieving Jesus. According to the custom of the age, the cross was laid on the shoulder of the condemned individual, and he was obliged to drag or trail it to the place of execution. (See Matt. x. 38, xvi. 24.) This *taking up of the cross* was a preliminary part of the punishment awarded to criminals who were to be crucified. Hence it was that Jesus *had to bear His cross* before His actual crucifixion. (See John xix. 17.) Doubtless, however, after the various agonies, inward and outward, which He had been enduring, this bearing of the cross would be a burden too heavy to be borne. Perhaps He would be staggering under the load, and stumbling from faintness. And partly perchance in consequence of this, but principally, we should presume, out of pique for the remonstrance addressed to them, the mob insisted on Simon taking his place behind the Convict, and thus dividing the burden, and sharing the infamy, of the Man whose cause he had so 'ultroniously' espoused. Most probably Simon's heart would not greatly rebel, and when once he took his place behind the meek, mysterious Sufferer, he would feel contented and satisfied. It would not be long ere words of love passed between them. And Simon, after simply assisting for a little in carrying the burden, may have insisted on bearing the entire weight. Hence perhaps the representations of Matthew and Mark (xv. 21). Simon seems to have become a Christian; and his sons seem to have followed in his footsteps. (See Mark xv. 21, and comp. Rom. xvi. 13.)

VER. 33. And when they were come to a place called Golgotha: A place no doubt altogether different from the spot where now stands, within the walls of Jerusalem, and in connection with the church of the Holy Sepulchre, the chapel of Golgotha. "In every view which I have been able to take," says Dr. Robinson, "of the question, both topographical and historical, whether on the spot or in the closet, and in spite of all my previous prepossessions, I am led irresistibly to the conclusion, that the Golgotha and the tomb now shown in the church of the Holy Sepulchre are not the real places of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord." (*Bib. Researches*, vol. ii., p. 80.) The true site of the scene of the crucifixion is still matter of conjecture. Certainly the place must have been near the city (John xix. 20), but outside the municipal boundaries (Heb. xiii. 12). It would lie by the side of one of the leading landward roads. "Such a spot," says Dr. Robinson, "would only be found upon the western or northern sides of the city on the roads leading toward Joppa or Damascus." (*Bib. Researches*, vol. ii., p. 80.) Since the time of Dr. Robinson, Captain Conder has made discoveries which go a long way to sustain, if not to satisfy, curiosity respecting the sites both of the ancient place of criminal execution, Golgotha, and of the rock-hewn tomb in the garden. The locality referred to lies near the Damascus Gate, just beside the great north road. The principal knoll, the supposed place of doom, is "110 feet above the top of the Sakhrâh rock in the Haram, and commands a view over the city walls to the temple inclosure." An ancient Jewish tomb, apart from all others, has been dis-

that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 they gave him vinegar to

covered in a smaller knoll, lying west of the north road, about 200 yards from the top of the larger knoll; and now the question is started, What if this should be the actual sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea? (See Conder's *Holy Sepulchre* in *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund*, April, 1883.) The evangelist explains the meaning of the word *Golgotha*. It was an Aramaic word, being properly *Gulgotha*, corresponding to the Hebrew *Gulgoleth*, which is translated *skull* in Jud. ix. 53 and 2 Kings ix. 35. It is from the same root as *Gilgal*, and also *Galilee*, which originally denoted a *circuit*. The skull was so denominated apparently because of its roundedness, *Gulgoleth* being connected with a verb that signified *to roll*. The Latin word for skull, employed by the Vulgate translator, is *calvaria*; and hence our word *Calvary*, which has entirely superseded in Europe the analogous Aramaic name *Golgotha*. It has been customary to speak of *Mount Calvary*. The custom has prevailed in Europe for above a thousand years, and yet, says Dr. Robinson, "neither Eusebius, nor Cyril (except as made to say so by the Latin translator), nor Jerome, nor the historians of the 4th and 5th centuries speak of Calvary as a 'mount.'" (*Bib. Researches*, vol. ii., p. 18.) "There is," says Dean Stanley, in "the Scriptural narrative no mention of a mount or hill." (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 460.) And yet there was doubtless some foundation for the popular representation. The place would be a rounded protuberance or skull-like elevation of rocky substance. The designation *monticule* is employed in the ancient *Jerusalem Itinerary*, the itinerary of the palmer from Bourdeaux in A.D. 333 (*monticulus Golgotha*). Captain Conder speaks of the "knoll just beside the main north road." He calls it, now a "hill," and now a "hillock." "The hill is quite bare, with scanty grass covering the rocky soil." "The hillock is rounded," he says, "on all sides but the south." The evangelist's expression, *a place of a skull*, does not mean, as Tyndale and Coverdale give it, *a place of 'deed' men's sculles*. And yet the same translation descended both into Cranmer's Bible and into the Geneva version. It rather means *a place whose name was Skull*. (See Luke xxiii. 33.) The entire expression of the evangelist is somewhat crowded and compressed. Were it—as given in the texts of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott-and-Hort (ὁ ἐστὶν κρανίου τόπος λεγόμενος)—completely disentangled and unfolded, it would appear somewhat as follows: *to a place called Golgotha, which word means a skull, so that the entire expression 'place called Golgotha' means, 'Skull Place.'* The word 'place,' however, be it noted, forms, strictly speaking, no part of the name of the place, and consequently no part of the name which the evangelist wishes to explain. Yet it has got involved in his explanatory clause. He simply means that the place was called *Golgotha* or *Skull*. The imagination of some of the early Christians ran riot in reference to this *Golgotha*. They dreamed that it was the burial place of Adam.

VER. 34. They gave Him wine to drink: It is *vinegar* in the received text; and Tischendorf received that reading into his seventh edition. But *wine* is the reading of the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts (Σ B D), as well as of K L II, and of 1, 33 "the queen of the cursives," and 69. It is supported too by the Vulgate version, and by a majority of the manuscripts of the older Latin, as also by the margin of the Harclean Syriac, and by the Jerusalem Syriac, and by the Sahidic, Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. Tischendorf has received it into his eighth edition. Lachmann and

drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his

Tregelles both give it. And so do Westcott-and-Hort. It is undoubtedly the correct reading,—the other, *vinegar*, having got in from a marginal annotation that made reference to Ps. lxxix. 21. See Mark xv. 23. Mingled with gall: That is, *mingled with some bitter ingredient*, fitted to stupify or to render insensible. It would be under the impulse of feelings of humanity that such a drugged drink would be presented to our Lord. It would be presented by the Roman soldiers. It was a custom, it would appear—humane in its origin, and humane in its maintenance—to give to such as were about to be crucified, or otherwise severely punished, wine to strengthen them. And it was also a custom, it would appear—likewise humane in its origin and maintenance—to mix with the wine some narcotic substance that would act, to a greater or less degree, as an anodyne. (See Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmud.*, p. 2131.) There was probably no *special* humanity intended toward our Saviour; but, in this particular detail of treatment, there was no *special* departure from the ordinary customs of humanity. The word *gall*, as used by the evangelist, is an instance of the specific being employed for the generic. It represents, no doubt, not an animal, but a vegetable substance, of bitter and stupifying properties. The substance, however, is unknown. The word is used in the same generic way in the Septuagint. It is employed to denote *absinthe* or *wormwood* in Prov. v. 4 and Lam. iii. 15. And it is employed in Deut. xxix. 18, xxxii. 32; Ps. lxxix. 21; Jer. viii. 14, ix. 15; Lam. iii. 19, to render a Hebrew word (שֶׁמֶן) which Gesenius supposes to be the *poppy*, and which, if not the poppy, must be some other intoxicating and intoxicating vegetable product. And when He tasted, He would not drink: He did not choose to be stupified. He wished to be in the full possession of His sensibility and self-consciousness; for His work, which He was about to consummate in suffering, had to do far more with the inner centre than with the outer circumference of His being.

VER. 35. And when they crucified Him: Such is the evangelist's simple, unsensational statement. He does not make the least atom of attempt at any kind of sentimental description. Crucifixion, nevertheless, was a very dreadful mode of execution—very dreadful as a mere matter of sensation, and pre-eminently shocking as a matter of indignity and shame. The common form of the cross resembled, as ancient writers inform us (see Tertullian, *Con. Marc.*, iii. 22), our capital letter T; only there was generally a slight projection of the perpendicular post above the transverse bar. This form of the cross is often called, generically, the Latin cross; or, specifically, *St. Anthony's cross*. Another, but less frequent form, now called *St. Andrew's cross*, resembled the letter X. It was doubtless on a Latin cross that our Lord was crucified. Such was the conviction of the ancient fathers, who rejoiced in the outstretching of the Saviour's arms as if to embrace the world of mankind. Such too is the assumption that underlies the ancient and modern *representations of the crucifixion by artists*. (See Lipsius, *De Cruce*, and Stockbauer's *Kunstgeschichte des Kreuzes*.) As to the way in which the act of crucifixion was effected: the cross was generally fixed in its socket before the convict was affixed. When once it was securely fixed, the convict's body was elevated by cords, and caused to rest on a short support or saddle, jutting out from about the centre of the perpendicular pillar; and then the hands and feet were nailed. The nailing must have involved, especially to sensitive frames, a cruel torture, as the rude perforations

garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36 And sitting

had to take place in the midst of a network of tender sensation nerves. It has been disputed whether or not the feet of crucified persons were really nailed, as well as their hands. Paulus contends that they were not. He supposes that they were only tied. Fritzsche and others acquiesce in his conclusion. But it is an entirely fanciful conclusion. There is no evidence whatsoever that tying was common. There is not even evidence, it seems, *that it was ever practised among either Greeks or Romans*. Neither is there any reason to support the supposition, as a matter of simple *à priori* probability. Undoubtedly, whatever may have been the case in other instances, our Lord's feet, as well as His hands, were actually nailed. See Luke xxiv. 40. Comp. Ps. xxii. 16. That common artistic representation, however, in which foot is folded over foot, and then transfixed with a single nail, is entirely arbitrary, and would have involved, from the unnatural straining of the limbs, a much larger amount of wanton inhumanity than there is reason to assume. The representation seems to have become prevalent among artists, in consequence of affording scope for a finer symmetry of the figure, and thus for a finer artistic effect. The European public, it must be borne in mind, became practically unacquainted with crucifying after the time of the Emperor Constantine. Out of reverence for the cross, as the symbol of Christianity, he, by statute, abolished crucifixion as a mode of punishment. It has never been revived, much to the advantage of humanity. They divided among themselves His garments: The verb rendered *parted* in our version (*διεμερίσθησαν*) is in the middle voice, and hence the translation we have given. The clothes of the crucified were the perquisites of those soldiers who acted the part of executioners. Casting lots: Or, more literally, *Casting lot*; and so it was common to speak in old English. Chaucer uses the expression. It is the translation too of Purvey, in his revision of Wycliffe, and *kesten lotte*. Matthew compresses his representation of the soldiers' action in reference to the garments. John goes into details. See John xix. 23, 24. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots: This clause did not belong to Matthew's autograph, but was added in the margin by some ancient harmonist, out of John xix. 24. And hence in later times it crept into the text, and was printed by Erasmus and succeeding editors. It is not found in the Sinaitic, Vatican, Alexandrine, or Cambridge manuscripts (N B A D), or in the other uncial manuscripts of importance. It is wanting too in 33 "the queen of the cursives." It is omitted in the Syriac Peshito version, and in the Sahidic, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions. It is omitted too by Origen, Hilary, and Augustin in his *Consensus*. It is dropped from the text by Matthæi, Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and of course by Westcott-and-Hort. It was regarded by Erasmus himself as borrowed from John. Beza and Grotius were both of the same opinion. So were Mill and Weststein, and even Whitby (*Examen*, in loc.); Principal Campbell too. Its spuriousness, so far as Matthew's text is concerned, may be looked upon as indubitable, or as one of the established facts of textual criticism. "It ought not to be questioned," says Scrivener, "that the words were interpolated by the copyists from John xix. 24."

VER. 36. And sitting down, they watched Him there: The same soldiers who

down they watched him there; 37 and set up over his head his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

affixed our Lord to the cross, and divided among themselves His garments, remained on guard over Him. It would be their duty, or the duty of the relays that relieved them, to see the execution consummated in death. Before death should supervene, it would be their duty to prevent the infliction of any wanton cruelties on the part of passers by or others. Specially would it devolve on them to take care that the friends of the crucified should have no opportunity of taking him down from the cross by stealth, and carrying him away. It sometimes happened that crucified persons were stolen by their friends, and then so skilfully treated by nursing and medicaments, that they recovered, and became fit for the ordinary duties of life. The soldiers who were on guard over our Saviour *sat down*, probably on some shelf or ledge of rock, near the cross, and would soon be engrossed in their own favourite topics of conversation, or in mutual banter, or in some of those trifling little games with which they were accustomed to while away their vacant time. *They watched Him there*: *The there* is pleonastic, but graphic.

VER. 37. And they—the soldiers—placed above His head—on the summit of the projecting part of the perpendicular portion of the cross—His accusation written: The word *accusation* is perhaps as good a translation as can be got, but it is not a perfectly literal rendering. It was introduced by our Authorized translators on the basis apparently of Beza's version (*crimen*). Wycliffe, following the Vulgate, gives *cause* instead, a very literal version (*alriav*); indeed far too literal. It is given, however, by Erasmus also and Castellio; and in the English Geneva too, and the Rheims. Tyndale, again, following Luther, and followed by Coverdale and by the forerunner-edition of the English Geneva, the edition of 1557, gives a very exegetical translation, *the cause of His death*. It is noteworthy that the same exegetical translation is given in the ancient Peshito version. Count Zinzendorf goes still farther in the exegetical direction and renders the word thus, *from what cause He must die*. Mace's translation is more elegant, but less literal, *the reason of His execution*. Felbinger's version (*Beschuldigung*) and Bengel's (*Klage*) correspond with our Authorized translation. Grimm approves of Beza's translation; and so does Dr. Daniel Scott. The idea certainly is, *His alleged crime*, which was the *cause* of His condemnation to crucifixion. **This is Jesus the king of the Jews**: That is, the inscription was to this effect. That is all that is meant by the evangelist. It was apparently no matter of interest to him to produce and to preserve the inscription in a *verbatim* and *literatim* manner. Comp. Mark xv. 26; Luke xxiii. 38; John xix. 19. In each of the evangelists there is some variation in the form of the inscription; but in all of them the substantive idea gets prominence *that Jesus was the king of the Jews*. (See Reyher's *Monograph on the Titles*.) It was Pilate himself who seems to have had the inscription drawn out (John xix. 19), and, either unwittingly or wittingly, he gave it such a shape that it rather announced a fact than intimated an impeachment.

VER. 38. Then: That is, after the crucifixion of our Lord had become a completed fact. We need not suppose, however, that a precise relation of subsequence to all the facts that are specified in vers. 35-37 is indicated. Things are grouped pictorially, rather than with precise chronology. (Comp.

38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, 40 and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: If thou be the Son of

Luke xxiii. 32-38.) But our Lord was the prominent figure in the scene, and no doubt His case would be attended to first, not only by the evangelist, but also by the soldiery who had charge of the executions. **Were two thieves crucified with Him:** Or, more literally and accurately, *two robbers*. See Matt. xxi. 13. Perhaps they were accomplices of Barabbas. They had at all events been desperadoes, brigands, and outlaws. *Are crucified with Him:* Note the tense. The evangelist sets us down in the midst of the scene, and lets us see the thing in progress. It would appear to have been a custom to execute criminals at feast seasons, that the assembled people might take warning. (See Hottinger's Monograph, *De Ritu dimittendi reum in Festo Paschatis*, § 8. Comp. Deut. xvii. 13.) It thus happened that our Lord was "numbered with transgressors" (Isa. liii. 12). And hence He became reviled to people's eyes, as well as to their ears, reviled as the "friend of sinners," the comrade and accomplice of rogues and rascals. **One on the right hand, and one on the left:** As if Jesus were 'hand and glove' with the vilest of the vile, and had been by far the worst of the three; as if He had been *the chief of sinners*.

VER. 39. But the passers by reviled Him: Or, very literally, *blasphemed Him*, or, as Wycliffe picturesquely gives it, *blasfemyden Hym*. They taunted Him bitterly and bitingly. *The passers by:* For the place of execution, or the Skull (ver. 33), was evidently an elevation by the side of one of the landward roads; and there would be streams of people pouring in, on all sides of the city, from the country. It was a day of holy convocation. The temple would be the great centre of convergence. **Wagging their heads:** Derisively. See Ps. xxii. 7. The expression, in the original, is simply *moving their heads*; and so Wycliffe renders it. It is a better translation than Norton's, *nodding*. Some would move their heads in one way, and some in another. Some would make perhaps a profound salaam, as before a sovereign. Others might simply give a scornful little jerk to one side, as they hastily passed by; and, speedily spitting out their venom, without ever pausing on their march, they would proceed on their way, as if the case were too paltry to merit one moment more of their attention. Only, ere they got past, they would fling some poisoned arrow at His heart. Others would stand still, that they might gloat deliberately over His woe, and have the luxury of pouring slowly in upon His spirit the burning lava of their mockery.

VER. 40. And saying—among many other things no doubt,—Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself: "O execrable, most execrable!" exclaims Chrysostom. They, as it were, said, *We understood that you were a wonderful wonder-worker! You could destroy, you used to say, the temple up there with a mere word of your mouth, and build it again in three days! Well, then, pray do something of the kind! Step down; and walk off! Do that, and then we shall believe in you!* "O execrable! most execrable!" Had they not hold of even a vestige of the Divine idea, that the desert of sin, and of their sin, and the degradation to which it leads, needed to be atoningly endured? Could they not see, in what the innocent One was willingly suffering, a partial representation of what they themselves deserved to suffer? If Thou be the Son

God, come down from the cross. 41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, 42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will

of God: In our Authorized version, as well as in many other versions and editions, this clause is regarded as the commencement, or 'protasis,' of one of two parallel taunts; and the conclusion, or 'apodosis,' is supposed to be given in the succeeding words, *Come down from the cross*. In the 1611 edition of our Authorized version, there is a colon after *save Thyself*, and *if* begins with a capital letter. It is remarkable, however, that in the Sinaitic, Alexandrine, and Cambridge manuscripts (N A D), as well as in the Peshito Syriac, and the Jerusalem Syriac, there is the conjunction *and* before the expression *come down*; so that it is probably the case that Matthew had summed up the tauntings to which he refers into a single representation, with a twofold 'apodosis': *Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself, if thou be the Son of God, 'and' come down from the cross*. This is the way in which Fritzsche understood the passage, although he did not regard the *and* as authentic. Lachmann however gives the *and*, and Tischendorf, but not Westcott-and-Hort. Little did the blasphemers realize that it was grandly befitting that both the pain and the ignominy of the cross should be endured to the full, if the Son of God was to place Himself, for the emancipation of the sons of men, on the lowest plane of condition to which they were gravitating, if He was to go down to the depths of their degradation and woe, the depths that mark and measure the natural descent of sin.

VER. 41. In like manner the chief priests, mocking with the scribes and elders, said: Forgetting in their unholy zeal, not only what was due to justice, but also what was due to dignity. Nothing is so low as sin, nothing so mean, so vile, so vulgar. The real spirit of the rabble was raging in the breasts of these dignitaries.

VER. 42. He saved others! Himself He cannot save! It will be noted that these undignified dignitaries did not address our Lord Himself. They did not deign to do that! They had done, as it were, with Him! But turning to the crowd, they spake at Him: *Aye, aye, you see, friends, how the case stands! You all know what a great profession of 'saving' He constantly made! He had come, forsooth, to seek and to 'save' every one of us! And great 'saving' cures He wrought on people's bodies! So it was said! Often did He say, we understand, to the poor folks who went to Him with their sores, "Thy faith hath 'saved' thee!" He was great at 'saving' others, it seems; but, men and brethren, note this remarkable fact, which is now patent to every one of you, 'Himself He cannot save!' True, in a certain sublime sense. In a certain grand relationship of things, He could not save Himself. For, if others were to be saved, He must suffer, and be self sacrificed. The wellspring of the life of the sons of men in general could be found only in the death of the Son of man in particular. Death must be endured. Sin had encircled sinners with penalty; so that He who would save them must needs pass through it. He must run the gauntlet. He must suffer. Thus He could not, as a Saviour, save Himself. If He is the king of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross: It is not unlikely that the *if* is an addition to Matthew's text. It is wanting in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts (N B D), and in L, and 33 "the queen of the cursives."*

believe him. 43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. 44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort omit it; and both Fritzsche and Meyer approve of the omission. When it is omitted, there is a greater harmony effected between the cast of the two taunts contained in the verse. *He saved others! So at least it is said: He is the king of Israel! So at least He professed!* They might continue in spirit as follows: *We never have seen, we must confess, any great signs of royalty about Him! Where is His throne? Where is His crown? Where are His palaces and paradises? Where His officers? Where His arms and armies? We see none of these magnalia. Really, is it not a mockery for Him to profess to be a king? But let Him come down now from the cross, and that will suffice for us. Is not that candid? It is added, and we shall believe on Him:* (The true reading seems to be, as Bengel gives it, *καὶ πιστεύομεν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ*.) The preposition with the dative denotes that their faith would rest on Him. So they said; but doubtless they spoke either at random, or in ignorance of the ingenuity of their own unbelief. If He had descended from the cross, they would have adroitly jumped to the conclusion that the wonder happened in some illusory way by His own power of legerdemain, or by the help and hand of some collusive agent and arch-wizard such as Beelzebul himself. See chap. xii. 24.

VER. 43. He trusted upon God: The preposition (*ἐπὶ*), with the accusative, intimates that His trust went out to God, that it might rest upon Him. He let His trust go out upon God, surely the right way of dealing with trust. Let Him rescue Him now, if He wishes Him: Such seems to be the correct translation of the correct reading. Tischendorf, in his eighth edition, reads thus, *Let Him now, if He will, rescue Him* (*ῥυθάρθω νῦν εἰ θέλει αὐτόν*). It is the reading of the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts, and of 33 "the queen of the cursives." It is the reading too of the Vulgate, and hence Wycliffe's version, *delyvere He Hym nowe, gif He wole*. But it is nevertheless, we presume, a tinkered text, tinkered to make it smoother. The more rugged reading is undoubtedly the original. It is taken from the Septuagint version of Ps. xxii. 8, and means, *Let Him now rescue Him if He has pleasure in Him*. We may suppose that the words of the psalm came, in a manner, unwittingly to the insulters' lips. It was a psalm that was not recognised by them as Messianic. Comp. for the construction, Deut. xxi. 14, Ps. xvii. 22, xl. 12. See also Ps. xxxiii. 12; xxxiv. 31; xxxvi. 24; xxxix. 9; l. 17; lxvii. 34; cviii. 16. For He said, I am God's Son: And thus He claimed—was it not, men and brethren, the height of insolence?—to be of a nature far higher than our own, higher than human. Is He not now reaping the richly merited reward of such ridiculous and blasphemous assumption? In some such way would the insulting dignitaries give vent to their spleen.

VER. 44. The robbers also, who were crucified along with Him, cast the same in His teeth (*τὸ δ' αὐτὸ—ὠνειδίζον αὐτόν*). An exceedingly graphic translation, and more exact than Luther's, which runs thus, *In like manner the murderers reviled Him* (*Desgleichen schmäheten ihn auch die Mörder*). Yet Principal Campbell's version corresponds with Luther's, *The robbers too upbraided Him in the same manner*. The expression in the original, which means the same, refers

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

to the things that were thrown in our Saviour's teeth, not to the way in which they were thrown. Our Authorized version came down from Tyndale, and was reproduced by Coverdale and the Geneva. The robbers would seem, at the beginning, to have gone hand in hand in taunting our Lord. They were united, and perhaps had been for long united, in their hatred of spirituality. (Comp. Mark xv. 7; Luke xxiii. 41.) And hence they, not only unitedly, but also repeatedly, flung their coarse insults at our Lord (the verb is in the imperfect tense, *σπειδιζον*). But by-and-by the loftiness of the bearing of Jesus, and His transparent purity and remarkable meekness, seem to have opened, to one of the two, a window, as it were, into a new scene of things. He looked through the opening, and looked again, and kept looking, till in God's light he saw clearly; and thus he discovered the true King of Israel hanging by his side. See Luke xxiii. 40-43.

VER. 45. But from the sixth hour: That is, from about noon, and therefore after our Lord had been hanging for about three hours on the cross. The affixing to the cross took place about the third hour of the day, that is, about nine o'clock in the morning. See Mark xv. 25. As to John's computation, chap. xix. 14, it is to be accounted for on the principle that he followed the Roman method of enumeration. The Romans, like ourselves, commenced their civil day, as distinguished from the natural, at midnight. John follows this method, whereas the Synoptics reckoned by the natural day. (See McLellan's *masterly note*, pp. 737-743. See also Westcott's *Additional Note*, John xix., p. 282.) The Jews, like the Greeks, and the Babylonians before them (*Herodot.* ii. 109), divided the natural day, that is, the period of daylight, into twelve equal parts, which, in the Greek language, were called *hours*. In our English language we have borrowed the Greek term, although we measure and number our hours on a more scientific principle, astronomically and equinoctially. The termination of the sixth hour, in the Jewish computation, would be coincident with the turning point of noon. There was darkness: To what degree we know not; and how produced we know not. It is enough that we rest assured that the Great Creator's hand had to do with the phenomenon. That hand was the hand of a Free Agent, who might choose indeed, and who had chosen, to act in an exceedingly uniform way within certain spheres of things, but who assuredly had not chosen to bind Himself never to do anything that would diverge either to the right or to the left from the straight line of uniformity. If there was anything Divine at all in or about Jesus, if He was Divinely sent, if He was Himself personally Divine, and if He accomplished anything Divine by His life and death, anything that involves the Divine possibility of salvation from the penalty of sin, and from sin itself, then there must already have been Divine action, aside from, and on the right side of, the line of absolute, unvarying uniformity. And, this being the case, why hesitate to see the hand of the same Divine Agent casting its dark shadow around the cross? That shadow, not only sublimely veiled the Crucified One in the time of His tenderest weakness and sorest agony, it was fitted to strike awe into the hearts of the hostile and the heedless; and, on a higher plane of relations, and according to a law of correspondence, or the principle of a significant inter-communion between the spheres of the spiritual and the material, it was adapted to symbolize that 'horror of great darkness,' which had temporarily passed away in Gethsemane

but which, having now returned in its climax, had settled down on the spirit of the Atoner, while suffering for the sin of the world. (*See next verse.*) Many expositors and theologians, both ancient and modern, have supposed that the darkness was occasioned by an astronomical eclipse of the sun. And it has been often contended that this eclipse was historically referred to by Phlegon, the Trallian, a freedman of the emperor Hadrian, who, in the 2nd century of the Christian era, wrote *Annals of the Olympiads*. The book is now lost, but it was quoted by Julius Africanus and Eusebius. The latter of these authors transferred to his *Chronicon* the passage supposed to bear upon the darkness recorded by the evangelist; but unhappily that part of the *Chronicon* has got mangled, and the passage is no longer extant in it. It is preserved however by Syncellus; and it is translated by Jerome in his Latin version of the *Chronicon*. It is preserved too in an Armenian version of the *Chronicon*. Phlegon says that *in the fourth year of the CCII olympiad, an eclipse of the sun took place, greater than all that had been previously known. It became night at the sixth hour of the day, so that the stars appeared in the sky. There was a great earthquake also in Bithynia, doing much damage in Nicæa.* There is certainly a remarkable approximation to a coincidence of the two events, the event specified by Phlegon, and the event specified by the evangelist. But if we assume that Phlegon refers to a real astronomical eclipse, it is impossible to make the coincidence precise. Phlegon's eclipse, if a real astronomical eclipse, could not have lasted for three hours. And, besides, it could not have taken place at all on the day of our Lord's crucifixion, for the moon was then full, and consequently not between the earth and the sun, but in the opposite direction. The illustrious Dr. Samuel Clarke had made use of Phlegon's historical remark in his Boyle Lectures on the *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*. Before Clarke's death, however, Dr. Sykes induced him to suppress the reference, as anachronistic and inapposite. Whiston was displeas'd with this interference on the part of Dr. Sykes, and characterized his objection to the use made of Phlegon's testimony as "groundless." Dr. Sykes then published *A Dissertation on the Eclipse mentioned by Phlegon; Or, an inquiry whether that eclipse had any relation to the Darkness which happened at our Saviour's passion* (1732). To this Dissertation Whiston published, in the same year, a reply, entitled, *The Testimony of Phlegon Vindicated; Or, an account of the great Darkness and Earthquake at our Saviour's passion, described by Phlegon: including all the testimonies, both heathen and Christian, in the very words of the original authors, during the first six centuries of Christianity, with proper observations on those testimonies.* Dr. Sykes replied, and the controversy went on, widening as it progressed, and drawing into its current various other authors besides the original disputants. (*See a full account of it, and a list of the publications, in the English edition of Bayle's Dictionary, vol. viii., pp. 385-387, sub voce "Phlegon."*) Dr. Sykes was undoubtedly right in disjoining the two events, if it be necessary to suppose that Phlegon made reference to a regular astronomical eclipse. The darkness had far more significancy in it, than if it had been simply the result of such an eclipse. Over all the land: The same expression is translated in Luke xxiii. 44, *over all the earth*, and this is the translation which is given here by Wycliffe, and Coverdale, and in the Rheims. Sir John Cheke's version corresponds, *al the hool earth was derk*. Wesley, in his *Translation*, uses the same word *earth*. Bengel too. So does Alford in his *Translation*; and he defends the rendering in his *Commentary*, though limiting the reference to "that part of the earth over which there was day." Theophylact defends the same extensive reference

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* that is to say, *My God,*

of the term; and many others besides. Luther however gives *land*, and Tyndale, and Beza. Calvin too gave it, and defended it. So also quite a multitude of modern expositors, inclusive of Bishop Wordsworth. Rightly, provided the term *land* be not distinguished from the term *earth* by too sharp a line. The evangelist had no intention of pitting the idea of *land* over against the idea of *earth*; and indeed he was not thinking at all either of *land* as we understand the term, when we speak geographically, or of *earth* as we understand that term, when we make reference to our planetary globe. He was thinking, indefinitely and indeterminately, of the terrestrial region of which Jerusalem was the centre. Over all that region, its limits being left vaguely undefined, the darkness prevailed. Unto the ninth hour: That is, until about three o'clock in the afternoon, when it would be about time for the evening sacrifice to be presented in the temple.

VER. 46. But about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice: The fact of the *loud voice* incidentally evinces that there was a vigorous element of vitality still inherent in our Lord's physical frame. He was by no means in the condition of one who was simply 'wearing away,' or nearing the natural terminus of life, in consequence of a natural ebbing of vitality, as the effect of crucifixion. The *loudness* of the voice indicated, at the same time, the terrible intensity of the inward agony, through which our Saviour had been passing, and which had now risen, apparently, to its climax. Saying, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* that is to say, *My God, My God, why forsook'st Thou Me?* Such is the literal translation. Our Saviour had been bearing His inexpressible 'agony' in sublime silence of soul, until its very climax had been reached, and it was just about to be completed and concluded. The word *forsook'st* indicates that the Lord looked back to the point of time at which the Divine *forsaking*, or *leaving*, had become an accomplished fact. He gazed across the awful gulph, through which He had waded and weltered. He gazed down into the 'horrible pit,' in whose depths He had struggled, and up whose beetling and apparently insurmountable sides He had been painfully ascending, till now at length He was nearing the point of emergence and deliverance. And, as He gazed, and reflected on the dread moment when He was left to thread His way, amid darkness and the hosts of darkness, He exclaims, *My God, My God, why forsook'st Thou Me?* It was not, of course, a metaphysical forsaking on the part of His Father, to which the Saviour refers. Such a forsaking was impossible. The essence of the Father's personality was for ever, and is for ever, present everywhere. It was a moral forsaking to which the Saviour refers; and a moral forsaking in the sphere of that particular department of morals, which constitutes Divine politics, or the rules that regulate the administration of the Divine moral government. The temporary dereliction of Jesus, on the part of the Father, was a matter of moral government. It belonged to the political economy of the kingdom of heaven. It occurred for great and grand political ends in the moral administration of the universe. Jesus was 'left' as the voluntary bearer of the sins of the world. He was 'left' just that He might *bear* the sins, in all their woful weight, that the sinners themselves might be saved. His whole being, while thus 'left,' was, as it were, absorbed into the act of *bearing*. All other exercise of energy seems to have been virtually suspended. Outgoings of spirit into the surrounding borderland of happy experiences, and thus into the delights of

my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47 Some of them that

conscious fellowship with His Father, were, it would appear, for the time being, arrested. It was sins, sins, sins that pressed in, on this side and on that, behind and before, from beneath and from above, all round and round. The Sin-bearer had to *bear* them, and still to *bear* them, and to continue still to *bear* them, in utter loneliness to *bear*, so far as it was a possibility, the Divine penalty due to them, the Divine 'curse' that had gone out against them, the political desertion of the Father that was their due, or, the withdrawal from *consciousness* of the joys that are wrapped up in the Father's favour, fellowship, and smile. That Divine smile, indeed, would be beaming forth toward Him, personally considered, in all its inexpressible intensity of sweetness. The Father was approving of His Son's glorious undertaking, approving with ineffable approbation and satisfaction. The fulness of the love of the Father's heart would thus be rolling out toward Him, as personally considered, in undiminished and indiminshable tide. The Father was most emphatically well pleased with His beloved Son. But within the sphere of the Saviour's consciousness, as He stood on the plane of sinners, and in their place, mountains upon mountains of sins encircled Him as with frowning and impassable barriers, which shut out from Him the ingress and the swell of the Father's sympathy; while, overhead, 'clouds of iniquities,' not His own but 'ours,' darkened the whole sky, and intercepted the sunshine of the Father's pleased and 'pleasant countenance.' Jesus, in short, was 'left' alone with human sin, 'left,' or 'forsaken.' *My God, My God*: Note the 'My,' indicative of the tenacious clinging of His heart to His Father. The conscious reciprocity of intercommunion might, for a season, be intercepted, for the Saviour's human consciousness was limited, but the relationship continued for ever, unseverable. His Father was the object, moreover, of the adoration of His humanity, 'My God.' *Why forsok'st Thou Me? Why? For what end? Literally, In order that what (might take place)? (Ivart)* It was the cry, of course, of the humanity of our Saviour, not of His Divinity; or, to put the case in another form, it was the cry of our Saviour's heart, as it realized itself on the human side of His being, for it was on that side of His complex personality that His propitiatory sufferings were endured. His humanity cried 'why?' partly, perhaps, because it could only gradually open itself up, in consciousness, to a complete comprehension of the heights and depths of the sufferings that were involved in the fulness of propitiation; and hence partly, perhaps, to hold the subject meditatively before the eye of the intelligence. *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* The words are a quotation from the first verse of the twenty-second psalm, and would, most likely, be uttered by our Lord in the original Hebrew form. Perhaps He had again and again uttered them inwardly, before giving outward vent to His anguish in the irrepressible cry. Doubtless His mind would be hovering over the entire contents of the psalm, and realizing that they were the anticipative flickerings, and prophetic pencillings, of the awful realities of atoning suffering through which He had to pass. *Eli, Eli*: These are the fine old Hebrew words, occurring in the original psalm. *Lama*: Or rather, according to the great majority of the important manuscripts, *Lemá*, or *Límá*. Tischendorf gives *Lemá* (the reading of N B L, 33). *Lema* or *Lima* represents the Chaldee form of the Hebrew *Lama*, meaning *why?* or *wherefore?* *Sabachtháni*: It is the Chaldee form of the compound Hebrew word occurring in the psalm.

VER. 47. And some of them that stood there, when they heard it, said, He

stood there, when they heard *that*, said, *This man* calleth for Elias. 48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

calleth Elias: The pronoun, which we have rendered *He*, and which is too feebly thus rendered unless the *He* be pronounced emphatically, is demonstrative in the original, *This (ὁὗτος)*. Tyndale rendered it *This man*, the rendering accepted by our Authorized translators. Wycliffe has simply *This*. Coverdale, the Rheims, Sir John Cheke, Wesley, all give *He*. The persons who spoke would be pointing either with their hands, or with their eyes, or by some other gesture, to Jesus, discriminating Him from the others who were hanging beside Him. Calvin, Beza, Baxter, Meyer, Alford, and many others, suppose that they spoke in heartless mockery. "It was not," says Alford, "a misunderstanding of the Jewish spectators, who must have well understood the import of *Eu*." We rather think, however, that the period of heartless mockery was past, and that a weird kind of awe would be enveloping the minds of most of the mob that still lingered about the cross. We need not suppose, besides, that they caught very exactly the precise words of the Saviour. Neither indeed need we suppose that the words would be uttered with rhetorical precision, being uttered by the lips of one who was on the eve of expiring. We should suppose therefore, with Erasmus, that the persons referred to were sincere; and we may, reasonably enough, assume, with Theophylact, that they were also rude and unlettered, and, we may add, superstitious. The idea of Euthymius Zigabenus is quite aside from likelihood, that the remark was made by the Roman soldiers.

VER. 48. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge: Which would be at hand for the very purpose of giving drink, as might be required, to the crucified individuals. There was not an utter extinction of the feelings of humanity on the part at least of the soldiery, who were entrusted with the executions. And filled it with vinegar: Or what the Romans called *posca*, the common drink of the Roman soldiers. It was a thin, sour wine, which was mitigated in its acidity, and rendered more palatable by being mixed with water. And put it on a reed: A generic term for any kind of rod or stick. It was, says John, a hyssop stalk. And gave Him to drink: They kept pressing it to His lips. Such is the idea; as is evidenced by the fact that the verb in the original is in the imperfect tense. It would appear that our Lord accepted the sip; and perhaps asked for more. See John xix. 28. The person who gave it to Him would doubtless be one of those who thought that He had called Elijah (Mark xv. 36), and very likely he may have superstitiously imagined that it would be well that the Saviour's strength should be refreshed and revived, so that He might hold out till Elijah, if he were really coming at all, should have time to come. He would be thinking within himself: *Perhaps after all Elijah may come, in answer to the cry! This is no ordinary Personage. That is abundantly evident, let people say what they choose. I should not, for my part, be in the least surprised though Elijah did come in a moment or two, to take Him down, and carry Him away!*

VER. 49. But the rest said: The rest of the Jews that were keeping clustering around, waiting, in a sort of twilight of awe, to see what the end would be.

50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Let be: An idiomatic expression, intended to throw the mind into a waiting attitude. Wycliffe renders it *Suffre thou*; Sir John Cheke, more idiomatically, though familiarly, *Soft!* The idea is, *Don't do anything; just wait.* It is added, *Let us see if Elias comes: Or is coming.* The idea of the immediate is expressed; not the idea of the indefinite future, as in our free Authorized translation. They perhaps saw that the Saviour was on the very brink of departure, and hence it must be *now or never* with Him, so far as Elijah's coming was concerned. **To save Him:** Or more literally and participially, *about to save Him.* They would perhaps be saying to one another, or thinking within their own spirits: *Let us look sharply all around! Yonder to the east! yonder to the west! and to the north, and south! and right aloft too! Who knows from what point of the sky the great prophet will come, if He does come at all, flying to the rescue? And why should he not come this very minute?*

VER. 50. But Jesus cried again with a loud voice: Not however re-uttering the words *My God, My God, why forsook'st Thou Me?* That 'horror of great darkness' had passed away. The moral crisis, the crisis of the world, was past. The victory was won. The atonement was completed. The words would no doubt be different, such as, *It is finished; Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.* (John xix. 30; Luke xxiii. 46.) And yielded up the ghost: Or, as Trapp gives it, *let go His spirit*; but the meaning really is, *expired.* (See the Greek word in Mark xv. 37, 39.) The phrase, as a phrase, does by no means necessarily mean *voluntarily expired.* It was a phrase in common use to denote death in ordinary circumstances. (See Kypke's *Observationes*, in loc.) It was therefore applicable to cases in which the idea of voluntary departure was altogether inadmissible. But still, as there must have actually been, in the mind of our Lord, a subjacent element of perfect voluntariness in His submission to death, we see a fine fitness and propriety in the evangelist's selection of a phrase which readily admitted, in its very nature, the idea of free choice. (*Suffixus, spiritum cum verbo sponte dimisit, prævento carnificis officio: TERTULLIAN, Apologeticus, § 21.*) When it is said that our Lord dismissed His *spirit*, we are not to assume any substantive distinction between His *spirit* (*πνεῦμα*) and His *soul* (*ψυχή*). That which was His *spirit* in one aspect of its essence, was, in another aspect, His *soul.* And our Saviour submitted to the sundering of the connection between it and His material frame. He *died*, so far as it was possible for Him to die. He "tasted death." He did not merely faint, or swoon away, as some, such as Paulus and Bunsen, have contended. The water and the blood, which flowed from His side when it was pierced by the Roman soldier's spear, is evidence that His heart had been previously ruptured, so that the blood had flowed into the heart sac, or *pericardium*, and had collected there, and was separated into its natural constituents, the watery *serum*, and the blood clot, or *crassamentum.* (See John xix. 34, 35.) The Saviour literally died of a broken heart. His recurrent agony thus culminated in a violent dissolution. His 'soul' was made 'an offering for sin' (Isa. liii. 10). Within the temple of His body, He poured out in sacrifice His own atoning blood. He gave Himself, and laid down His own life, an offering for sins, a ransom for the souls of men. (See Dr. Stroud's *Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ.*)

51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies

VER. 51. And lo: For what follows is wonderful. And yet, when viewed from another and a higher standpoint, it is not wonderful. The true wonder was the decease which had just transpired, the sacrifice which had just been completed. When this surpassing wonder is duly realized, the mind ceases to regard it as wonderful that, around the central wonder, there should have been little planetary wonders, or coruscations of attendant wonders. The veil of the temple: The magnificent curtain, or screen (whether single or double, *see Lightfoot*) which hung in front of the Holy of Holies, and which was moved aside, for the high priest's ingress, only once a year. Jerome mentions that in the *Hebrew Gospel of the Nazarenes*, instead of the word *veil*, a term was used (Lat. *supertiminare*) which denoted the grand entrance façade of the sanctuary, an erection that towered aloft far above all the other buildings of the temple. The Hebrew translator had allowed his imagination to vault into the chair of interpretation. Was rent into twain from top to bottom: Namely, by the Invisible Hand. It was a finely significant symbol. *The way into the heavenly Holy of Holies was now consecrated.* It was opened. It was free. (See Heb. ix. 7-12.) It was no longer a secret way, a hidden passage, a mystery through which one needed to thread one's way within a maze of intricate adumbrations and types. The dispensation of foreshadowings was completed, and ready to be superseded, ready to vanish away. (Heb. viii.) And the earth was shaken: Not of course the whole 'earth'; but there was, to some undetermined extent, an *earth-quake* at and around Golgotha. It was chiefly subservient, apparently, to what is recorded in the 52nd and 53rd verses. And the rocks were rent: Certain rocks more especially, in which there were sepulchres hewn out. See next verse.

VER. 52. And the sepulchres were opened: "The sepulchres," those, to wit, in which the rending of the rocks took place. There would be an appropriate principle of selection Divinely observed, though it is veiled from our knowledge. And many bodies of the saints, who had fallen asleep, were raised up: Not at that particular point of time, apparently, but after our Lord's own resurrection. See next verse. The earthquake happened, it would appear, just immediately on the occurrence of the Decease, and thus, in the rending of the sepulchres, preparation was made for the ensuing resurrections. But the re-animation of the bodies was fittingly postponed till after the resurrection of Him who is Himself at once 'the Resurrection,' and 'the First-born from the dead' (Col. i. 18), 'the First-fruits of them who sleep' (1 Cor. xv. 20). Matthew, however, by a perfectly warrantable principle of anticipation, gives, in his narration, the linked particulars in the form of a single group. The key to the whole circle of occurrences, a key that is indispensable, on the one hand, to an intelligent conception of the reality, and that unlocks, on the other, if rightly handled and applied, all the perplexities of the case, is to be found in the profound symbolism of the events. A great spiritual crisis had occurred, the greatest by far that has ever transpired on earth, perhaps the greatest that has ever transpired in the universe. It was meet that some appropriate gleams of its significance should burst through the surrounding incrustations of materialism. *In the Death of Christ is the true victory over death, and the true entrance into life. His death was the death of death, and the genesis of life everlasting.*

of the saints which slept arose, 53 and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that

It was, consequently, the point of conciliation, in which the moral contraries that are universally realized, among men, in the inter-relations of flesh and spirit, matter and mind, are brought into glorious harmony. Christ is 'the Resurrection,' and 'the Life.' As the centre of humanity, He vitalizes and harmonizes all who gather around Him. To every unit of the race there is, in Christ, the possibility of the restoration of humanity to a state of permanent completeness. In working out this state of permanent completeness, and the consequent harmony of the constituent elements of our human nature, there will yet be a shaking of the universal earth. The little earthquake that happened in and around Calvary was but the forerunner of a world-wide revolution, and a universal resurrection. By-and-by all things will be renewed. There will be 'a new earth,' domed magnificently by 'heavens' that are 'new.'

VER. 53. **And came out of the sepulchres after His resurrection:** Our translators, following Erasmus, Stephens, and Beza, have rightly punctuated the original (putting a comma before *εξῆλθον*). The word rendered *resurrection* is active, meaning *raising*, rather than *rising*. But the phrase does not mean *after His raising (of them)*. It refers to Christ's own personal resurrection, His *raising (of Himself)*; thus bringing interestingly into view His voluntary action in the event. There was the action of other Agents indeed. But there was His own concurrent action besides. He raised Himself. (John ii. 19.) He took His life again. (John x. 18). **And went into the holy city:** That is, into Jerusalem. Comp. chap. iv. 5. Possibly the evangelist, while thinking of the risen saints, wrapped in their 'spiritual bodies,' felt His mind instinctively rising into the conception of the New Jerusalem, the everlasting abode of the holy. And hence, perhaps, the principle of association, that determined His selection of the particular designation which He here gives to the Jerusalem that then was. A different, but equally natural principle, that of contrast, may have determined the employment of the same designation in chap. iv. 5. **And appeared unto many:** Possibly hidden ones and lowly, but holy. It would be easy to ask questions on such a subject and to imagine answers. But it is better to keep on this side of the veil which the evangelist himself has drawn.

VER. 54. **But when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus:** The *centurion*, or *hunderder* as Sir John Cheke has it, was the Roman officer, who had command of one of the sixty 'centuries,' which constituted a legion. The 'century,' as the name indicates, consisted, originally, of a hundred men; but in later times the number varied, according to circumstances, from fifty to a hundred. **By they that were with the centurion,** we are to understand the *quaternion* or *quadruplet* of soldiers (see John xix. 23), who had been detailed to act as guard over Jesus, and the others who were crucified with Him. Jesus however was so manifestly the prominent individual, that the others are shaded out of sight, and it is simply said of the soldiers that they were 'watching Jesus.' **Saw the earthquake, and those things that were done:** Or, *Those things that took place*; namely, as the effects of the earthquake, the creaking, and cracking, and rending of rocks, etc., here and there in the district

were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which

around. Instead of *those things that took place* (τὰ γινόμενα), Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, read *those things that were taking place* (τὰ γινόμενα). They are supported in their reading by the Vatican and Cambridge manuscripts, and by 33 "the queen of the cursives." The other reading however has the support of the overwhelming body of manuscripts, inclusive of the Sinaitic and Alexandrian. According to the common reading we are introduced into a scene at the conclusion of the wonderful external phenomena. According to the reading of the Vatican and Cambridge manuscripts, the scene is pitched in the midst of the marvellous occurrences that signalized the decease of our Lord. **They feared greatly**: They knew not what might be about to happen. And then, not unlikely, their consciences might be smiting them severely for having taken part in the cruel mockeries that had been inflicted on the wonderful Sufferer. They would be thinking in their hearts, and perhaps saying to one another: *There was something about Him, all through, quite unlike what we have ever witnessed in any other person. He was evidently above us, and above all others too, of whatever rank. They said, Truly this was the Son of God: Or rather, Surely He was God's Son.* Our Authorized translation, though in some respects exceedingly literal, is just a little hyper-emphatic, and thus overdoes the strong asseveration of the pagan soldiers. *Truly* is good as a literal translation; but *surely* is better, conventionally, in such a case as this. It is Sir John Cheke's translation. Wycliffe has *verrely*; and so has Coverdale. Tyndale has *of a surete*. The pronoun *this* (ὁὗτος), that is *this* (male person), is just strongly definitive or demonstrative. It points, as it were, with an outstretched finger, to the individual referred to, as an individual to be contradistinguished from the other individuals, who were, in some outward respects, in the very same plight. If we utter the pronoun *He* with an emphasis, the idea of the original is, as nearly as may be, realized. *He* is Sir John Cheke's translation. The phrase *the Son of God* is too definitive. There is no article in the original. But it is swinging unnecessarily far on the other side, when Dr. Daniel Scott (see his *note*) introduces two indefinite articles, *a Son of a God*, or even when Wakefield and Brameld introduce one, *a Son of God*. Yet such too is Meyer's translation; and he says that the heathen soldiers could only mean that he was a *demigod*, a *hero*. Possibly. Probably indeed. Only, most likely, not very precisely so. They had heard from the lips of the insulting chief priests, scribes, elders, and others, that He had claimed to be *God's Son*. See vers. 40, 43. And, without attempting to settle precisely in their minds what the Jews might be intending by such a designation, or what Jesus Himself might be meaning by His claim, for they knew well that the Jews had peculiar notions about the Divinity, they could not help, in this the moment or climax of their awe, coming to the conclusion that there was something more in Him than what was merely human. They thought that now, however, it was all over with Him: "Surely after all He was God's Son," or "Goddis Sone" as Wycliffe has it.

VER. 55. And there were there many women:—Pure-hearted, and devoted, and more faithful to Him by far than all His other adherents. They would be bewildered, indeed, by the events that had transpired. They would not be able

followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him : 56 among

to construe the occurrences into 'systematic theology.' But something in their hearts kept them right, and thus kept their attachment steadily vibrating toward their Lord, like the needle to the pole. Beholding from afar : Or, *looking on from a distance*. The verb rendered *beholding* is translated *looking on* in Mark. They kept modestly *at a distance*. It became them. Who followed, or, more freely, *who had followed*, Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him : *Ministering* all along the way, as He required. They seem to have been possessed of material 'means,' and they 'ministered unto Him of their substance' (Luke viii. 3). Doubtless they would ply, at every halting place, and all along the route, their busy ministering fingers to provide for the seemly accommodation of our Lord, and such refreshment as He required ; attending also to all those etceteras of comfort which ladies' minds alone can properly contrive, and ladies' hands alone can properly execute. Some of these daughters of Israel would, we presume, have Martha's hands. All of them, we may hope, would have hearts like Mary's.

VER. 56. Among whom was Mary Magdalene : Or rather, *Mary the Magdalene*, that is, *Mary of Magdala* (Matt. xv. 39). Such is most probably the meaning of the word *Magdalene*. The other interpretation of the term, namely, *plaiter of hair* (see Lightfoot), an interpretation which proceeds on the assumption that she had been a harlot, who had devoted herself, under the influence of improper motives, to the excessive cultivation of her personal charms, is utterly fanciful and unlikely, and has no better foundation than some gross and malignant mythical fabrications of anti-christian rabbis. The history of *Mary of Magdala* had been, indeed, peculiar. "Out of her went seven demons" (Luke viii. 2). But there is not the slightest evidence that any of these demons had to do with the specific impurity which is so often associated with the name *Magdalen*. In a true sense all harlots are demoniacally 'possessed.' But in Scripture phraseology harlotry and demoniacal possession lie on different lines within the domain of evil. There is nothing of the 'gay,' nothing of the 'gaiety' that is pure, or of the 'gaiety' that is impure, in the demonism of the New Testament. There was more of the morbidly melancholy and the mad. Mary of Magdala had been, in some respects, a great sufferer, and sorely bruised in spirit. She had been subject to miserable 'moods.' Often, most probably, had she felt herself hopelessly sinking in a bottomless slough of despondency and despair. But she was healed. The demons had been cast out by our Lord. And thus she was in her own person a living monument of His grace and power. No wonder that she had followed Him from Magdala, and thus from Galilee, ministering to Him, and that she hovered near Him as He hung upon the cross. From what has been said, it may be inferred that the ecclesiastical tradition, prevalent in the 'western' division of 'the church,' though not in the 'eastern,' that Mary the Magdalene was "the woman who was a sinner," mentioned in Luke vii. 37-48, is baseless : and the connection consequently of *Magdalen asylums, penitentiaries, and reformatories* with her name is exegetically unfortunate. The affiliated idea that she was Mary of Bethany, and that Mary of Bethany was "the woman who had been a sinner," is doubly baseless. Both Mary of Bethany and "the woman who had been a sinner" poured perfume on our Lord as he reclined at meat (Matt. xxvi. 6-13 ; Luke vii. 37-48) ; but at different places, and in different circumstances : and *Mary of Magdala* was neither the one nor the other. When Lightfoot, and many others, insist that

which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of

she was Mary of Bethany, they forget, for the moment, that the evangelist is speaking of the "women who had followed Jesus from Galilee." And Mary the mother of James and Joses: Instead of *Joses*, the Sinaitic and Cambridge manuscripts, and some other considerable authorities, read *Joseph*; and Tischendorf has, in his eighth edition, received this reading into the text. On insufficient data, however. The great body of the manuscripts, uncial and cursive, read *Joses*. But there is no necessity for identifying this *Joses* with the *Joses* mentioned in chap. xiii. 55. His brother James had been apparently small in stature, and hence, to distinguish him, either from some other James in the same circle, or from the various other Jameses in inter-related circles, he was often called 'James the Little.' (See Mark xv. 40.) Mary, their mother, need not be confounded with the sister of our Lord's mother, for it is probable that in John xix. 45 four persons, not three, are referred to, and it is unlikely that our Lord's mother and her sister would, each, be simply called Mary. Whether, again, *Mary the mother of James and Joses* was *Mary of Cleophas*, or rather *Clopas* (John xix. 25), and whether the name *Clopas* was but another form of *Alphæus* (Matt. x. 3), we need not here discuss. The idea of Fritzsche, however, that the Mary who is here said to be the mother of James and Joses was herself our Lord's mother, is, to the last degree, improbable. And the mother of Zebedee's children: That is Salome, mother of John and James. See Mark xv. 40; Matt. iv. 21, xx. 20.

VER. 57. And when evening was come: That is, after evening had set in. The Hebrews reckoned two evenings (see the margin of Exod. xii. 6, Num. ix. 3, xxviii. 4), an earlier and a later. The earlier began at the middle point between noon and sunset, that is, about the ninth hour, or, in our mode of calculation, about three o'clock in the afternoon. The later began at sunset, that is, about our six o'clock. The reference here is to the earlier evening; but the particular period within that stretch of time is left indeterminate. There came a rich man: whence? and whither? Points these that need not be debated. They are left indeterminate by the evangelist, and may be left indeterminate in our conceptions. He came in, at some point or other, upon the scene, and thus, at some point or other, he came out from among the rest of the people. Of Arimathæa: Literally, from Arimathæa; but yet the expression is to be connected not with the verb came, but with the phrase a rich man. He belonged to Arimathæa, most probably as the place of his residence, perhaps also as the place of his birth. It was the place from which he was to be traced, whereaever he might be. The site of Arimathæa is not yet settled among geographers. It is popularly identified with Ramleh, on the road between Joppa and Jerusalem. Dr. Robinson rejects this identification, with good reason apparently (see Porter's Syria, p. 263), for Ramleh lies on a plain, whereas Arimathæa seems to denote The Height, or The Double Height. (The initial A is the remnant of the Hebrew article.) Dr. Robinson, while rejecting the identification of the place with Ramleh, yet supposes that "it probably did lie somewhere between Lydda and Nobe, now Beit Nûba, a mile north-east of Yâlo," and thus not far removed from Ramleh. (Later Researches, p. 142.) Others, however, look for its situation in the direction of the remarkable mountain called Neby Samuil, or Prophet Samuel, about four miles north-west of Jerusalem. There they would locate

Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: 58 he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean

the birthplace of Samuel, called *Ramah* (that is *Height*), or, more fully, *Haramathaim-Zophim* (that is, *The Double Height of Zophim*. 1 Sam. i. 1). And as this *Ramah*, or *Ramathaim-Zophim*, is uniformly called *Armathaim* in the Septuagint, it is not unreasonably conjectured that the same place was the *Arimathæa* of the New Testament. Wycliffe's form of the word is *Armathia*; Purvey's *Armathy*. He was named *Joseph*: He was a member of the sanhedrin, and had not given his assent to the deed of the senate in condemning the Lord. (See Luke xxiii. 50, 51.) He was "a good man and a just." (Luke xxiii. 50.) He was one of those "who waited for the kingdom of God," and who thus longed for the destruction of unrighteousness, and the establishment of righteousness. (Mark xv. 43.) Who also himself was a disciple of Jesus: Literally, *who also himself was disciplined to Jesus*. He had recognised in Jesus elements that lifted Him above all other rabbis and teachers. He would be seeing only dimly indeed. It would be only gradually that the fulness of the Lord's nature, and character, and commission would be unfolding itself to his view. And hence he had hitherto been only a 'secret' disciple, 'for fear of the Jews.' (John xix. 38.) Perhaps he had ventured timidly out to Golgotha, when the awful darkness had settled down on the city. He would gaze upon the scene, first at a distance, and then nearer, and still nearer at hand. He would look upon the heavenly face. He would hear the cry of agony, and perhaps the 'Father, forgive them!' He might note too the gleams of victory and triumph that preceded the very end. At length his decision was taken to lurk in secrecy no longer. There is a strange tradition, though of course a mere tradition, that Joseph came to Great Britain about the year 63 and settled at Glastonbury, in Somersetshire, "and there erected of wicker twigs the first Christian oratory "in England, the parent of the majestic abbey which was afterwards founded on "the same site. The local guides to this day show the miraculous thorn, said "to bud and blossom every Christmas Day, that sprang from the staff which "Joseph stuck in the ground, as he stopped to rest himself on the hill top." (*Smith's Bible Dictionary*, sub voce "Joseph.")

VER. 58. He went to Pilate: *He*,—it is the same demonstrative pronoun that is rendered *this* in ver. 54. Dr. Daniel Scott and Rotherham translate it *this man*. And begged the body of Jesus: *Begged* is an admirable translation, coming down from Tyndale. Wycliffe has *axide*; and so Coverdale, *axed*; that is, *asked*. The verb is in the middle voice, and means *asked for himself*. It was customary with the Romans to let the bodies of the crucified remain on the crosses till they wasted away or were torn to pieces by birds or beasts of prey. There was, however, no law prohibiting their removal or forbidding the friends of the deceased obtaining them for decent sepulture. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered: To be given to Joseph, that it might be disposed of as he saw fit. Perhaps the high priest and his clique might have liked that the body should have been cast out, dishonoured, into Tophet, or some such place of abomination. But Pilate would no doubt be pleased that no further indignity should be perpetrated on it.

VER. 59. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen

linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock : and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

cloth : Or, still more literally, *he inwrapped it with clean linen*, that is, he wound it with swathes of clean linen. Hurried as the operations required to be, he was careful that the linen employed should be new and perfectly pure, a matter of the greatest propriety in such a peculiar case. The word rendered *linen* (*σινδών*) was of foreign origin, and is supposed by some distinguished scholars to embody a reference to *Sind* or *Ind* or *India*, as the country from which the particular kind of linen had been exported. Herodotus mentions that it was employed by the Egyptians for wrapping their embalmed bodies. He connects it with another word, which has reference to a peculiar kind of fine Egyptian linen (*κατειλισσοῦσι πᾶν αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα σινδόνος βυσσίνης τελαμῶσι κατατετμημένουςι*. —*Euterpe*, 86. Comp. the Hebrew יָבֵב).

VER. 60. Matthew proceeds rapidly with his condensed narrative. **And laid it in his new tomb :** Which happened to be adjacent (John xix. 41), and in which, therefore, rather than in any other tomb, such for instance as that of Nicodemus, or of the Lazarus family, the body of our Lord was interred. Strauss labours to make out an irreconcilable discrepancy between Matthew's account and that of John, but with no other result than the exposure of an abortive microscopic ingenuity in straining everything to find flaws. "The vicinity of the grave," says he, "when alleged as a motive, excludes the fact of possession."—§ 135. But why? There is manifestly no reason why, unless it be assumed that it must have been a foregone conclusion with Joseph that his tomb, to the exclusion of every other, should be employed. But why should there be this assumption? Surely not simply because Strauss *wills* it so to be. **Which he had hewn out in the rock :** Literally, *which he hewed out in the rock*, namely, at some former period. "The rock" is mentioned, not, as Meyer thinks, to distinguish the rock of the locality from the rock of other localities, but to specify, particularizingly (and *ex abundantia*), the substance out of which the sepulchre was fashioned. The sepulchre was a chamber, crypt, or vault, scooped out of the solid rock, having most likely niches at the sides, stretching still farther in within the rock, to be the 'lairs' of the bodies. "Every hill and valley," says Dr. Porter, "round the holy city is thickly studded with these memorials of man's mortality. The summits of Zion and Bezetha, the slopes of Olivet and Moriah, the rocky plateau on the north-west, and the deep valleys of "Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, are all cemeteries." (*Syria and Palestine*, vol. i., p. 137.) As to Joseph's new tomb, see what is said, from Conder, on pp. 587, 588. **And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed :** *He rolled*, that is, he caused to be rolled, just as, in the preceding clause, the expression *he hewed out* means *he caused to be hewn out*. The cause of the causing is the cause of the caused. The verb translated *he rolled* means *he rolled to*. The word *door* is apparently used in its primitive acceptation, as denoting, not that movable mechanical contrivance, now commonly called *door*, which either closes or opens, as the case may be, the way into the interior of a room, but the *way* itself, or the *passage* or *entrance aperture*, that led into the sepulchre. In the Jews' sepulchres in general there were *doors* in the modern acceptation of the term, doors hung on hinges. "The grooves, and perforations for the hinges, that still remain," says Horatio

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the prepara-

B. Hackett, "show that the sepulchres were furnished with that convenience." (*Illustrations*, p. 64.) But the tomb of Joseph was either constructed on a different principle, or else was as yet in an unfinished state, so that a temporary substitute for a regular door was sought in rolling to a large stone. "At the bottom of a ledge," says Horatio B. Hackett, "in the rear of the Maronite church at Nazareth, I noticed a sepulchre cut in the rock, which excited my interest the more, because it had a large stone rolled against the mouth of it, and because it was apparently new, and still occupied. It came nearer, in its exterior, to my ideal of the tombs mentioned in the New Testament, than any which I had seen elsewhere. The grave of Lazarus was closed with a stone. The one in which the Saviour was laid was closed in that manner; and because the stone was heavy, the women who were the first to go to the sepulchre, were perplexed to know how they should procure its removal." (*Illustrations*, pp. 63-4.) There is no reference in the accounts of any of the evangelists to a movable door, situated behind the stone. And the expression which occurs in John xx. 1 indicates that the great stone, rolled to, was not only at, but in, the entrance aperture of the sepulchre. It is there spoken of as "taken away out of the sepulchre." The lexicographers Bretschneider, Wahl, Robinson, Grimm, are therefore right in attributing to the word door, as here used, its primary meaning of passage or opening. Our English word door is but another form of the Greek term employed by the evangelist (*θύρα*). It is a very ancient and widely diffused word, and has a connection with the English thorough or through. The Dutch preposition for through is just door. And the Dutch word for door is deur, corresponding to the German Thür, and the Anglo-Saxon durh or dur. Verstegan says: "Dure or durh, now a door. It is as much to say as through, and not improper, because it is a durh-fare, or thorow passage." (*Restitution of Intelligence*, p. 237, ed. 1673.)

VER. 61. And Mary the Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre: *The other Mary*, namely, the mother of James and Joses, as referred to in ver. 36. This other Mary seems to have been there, especially in the character of companion to Mary of Magdala, who would be a lady in station, and of peculiar and peculiarly intense sensibility. See John xx. 1-18. She would be confounded, bewildered, inexpressibly distressed, but irrepressibly attracted to her Lord, and to all that remained of Him after the dreadful crisis of the crucifixion. She could not be enticed away from the vicinity of the sacred spot till all was obviously wound up for the night and for the following Sabbath day. "Seest thou," says Chrysostom, "women's heroism? Seest thou their affection (*φιλσοστοργία*)? Seest thou their largeness of soul, at once in giving, and in enduring even unto death? Let us men imitate the women, and not forsake Jesus in the time of trials."

VER. 62. But on the morrow that followed the preparation: Or, more literally, that follows the preparation (*ἡρῆς ἑστῆς*). The original expression is somewhat peculiar, and suggests that the day, which is thus specified, was one of a class. Hence it both was and is. Viewed as an actual occurrence, it was. Viewed categorically, it is. It is of the class referred to, the class of days, namely, which follow the preparation. It is a roundabout way for specifying the Sabbath

tion, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

day. Hence the Geneva version, *Now the next day that followed the preparation of the Sabbath.* Tyndale's version is free and picturesque, but faithful as regards the tense of the verb, *The nexte daye that followeth good frydaye.* Sir John Cheke's corresponds on the whole, *The morow after, which was the dai following the good fridai.* The reason which led the evangelist to employ such a roundabout way of specifying the Sabbath day can only be conjectured. Theophylact imagined that he avoided the hallowed word *Sabbath*, because, in relation to the wickedness of the Jews, it was *no Sabbath.* This, however, is too sentimental a reason. And yet perhaps it points, so far, in a right direction. The evangelist, on naming *the next day*, realizes indeed that it was the Sabbath; but he simultaneously realizes that the eventful day, which had just been concluded, was the Preparation for the Sabbath. And what a Preparation! It accorded, therefore, with his peculiarly solemn and revolted feelings to give chronological emphasis to that day. We need not speculate as to the period of the day, when the event, about to be mentioned, occurred. We cannot tell whether we should interpret the evangelist's language as having reference to the period of darkness preceding the rising of the sun, or to the period of light succeeding the darkness, and constituting the sun-lit day. Alford supposes that the reference is to "the evening after the termination of the Sabbath." That would be a most improbable postponement. Hammond again, and Holden, and many others, are of opinion that the reference is to the evening of the day on which Jesus was crucified. It was, says Hammond, "probably on Friday evening." "It would," says Holden, "have been absurd in the chief priests to have delayed their precautionary measures till sun rising, as the body might have been stolen during the preceding night." But it may be urged on the other hand, that it might, not unlikely, be some time ere the ecclesiastical authorities would bethink themselves of our Saviour's prediction regarding His resurrection. Some long-headed Pharisee would most probably need to move in the matter. And when he did move, and when his brethren did begin to wake up, and to bethink themselves, they would not be ready, we may suppose, to commit an outward breach of the Sabbath by going into the mansion house of Pilate (comp. John xviii. 28), more especially *as there was really no reason for haste.* If they knew anything of the prediction at all, they would know that it made reference not to the second but to the third day after the decease. To have arisen on the second day would have been as much a contradiction of the prediction as to have postponed the resurrection to the fourth or fifth day. (See *Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus.*) What then was it that took place? The chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate: *Came together*, or, more literally, *were gathered together.* Some considerable representation of their number sought and obtained an interview with Pilate. Paulus can, on no account, believe that this was the case. He regards the story, along with all the results specified in vers. 63-66, as an unhistorical legend or "Nichtfactum." He argues for his negation with the utmost zeal and earnestness, as if he were pleading for something that would be of the greatest moral moment for the weal of mankind. Surely a most unfortunate waste of ingenuity, and an unhappy and unreasonable prejudice! And yet he has had not a few followers, who have laboured hard to effect the disestablishment and destruction of the evangelist's authority, in this particular at least. (See Strauss, Ewald, Hase, Bleek, D'Eichthal, Meyer.) In vain however.

63 saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. 64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead. So the last error

VER. 63. Saying, Sir, we remember : Or, very literally, *we remembered*. They intimated to Pilate *that happily they remembered* before it was too late, and hence they had hastily made their appearance before him. That that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I rise : *That deceiver*; note the *that*. It is as if they had said, *that deceiver, of whom, sir, you have, no doubt, been thinking much, as well as we ourselves, during the day that has just come to a close*. The word rendered *deceiver* literally means *vagabond, or strolling (juggler)* as it were. The expression *after three days* does not mean *after three days have been completely ended*. It was a free popular phrase, applicable not only to the precise period of time which would be overlaid by three complete days, but also to any continuous portion of that precise period, which could be intersected, to a greater or less extent, by the three complete days. See 1 Kings xii. 5, 12; and Matt. xii. 40. *After three days I rise* : Note the *present* for the *future*. The mind has gone forward to the future and is *present with it*. The future was thus, so far as certainty was concerned, *all one with the present*. The strange affirmation of our Lord, which He had made repeatedly to His disciples, *that He would rise on the third day after His decease* (see Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 23, xx. 19), had leaked out, as was natural, to portions of the general public, and had, to a greater or less extent, become the subject of wonderment and gossip. It would in some cases, and emphatically so perhaps in high ecclesiastical circles, and especially on the gloomy afternoon of the crucifixion day, get speculatively intertwined with the mysterious saying regarding *the building of the temple in three days* (John ii. 19), and the other equally mysterious saying regarding the sign of Jonah (Matt. xii. 39, 40; xvi. 4), which had so much puzzled the Pharisees. To make a difficulty of believing that the chief priests and the Pharisees could have known anything about our Lord's prediction, or that they should have concerned themselves with it, is to postulate, gratuitously, a state of society altogether different from what is reasonably assumed in the evangelist's narrative.

VER. 64. Give orders therefore that the sepulchre be made secure until the third day : The expression *until the third day* is indefinite. Had they been asked to express their meaning more precisely, they would no doubt have said, *until the third day be ended*. Of what then were they apprehensive? Lest His disciples should come by night : The expression *by night* is, it would appear, an addition to the evangelist's text. It is wanting in all the most important manuscripts, \aleph ABCD, 1, 33; as also in EHXVΔII. It is wanting too in the Itala, Vulgate, Coptic, Gothic, and Philoxenian versions. It had been an unnecessary marginal annotation and amplification. And steal Him, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead : *He is risen*, or rather, *He rose*. Comp. chap. viii. 15, ix. 25, xxv. 7. And the last error shall be worse than the first : The word here rendered *error* (πλάγη) is closely connected with the word that is rendered *deceiver* in ver. 63 (πλάγος). And hence many critics are of opinion that it means here *deceit, deception, imposture, or imposition*. They thus give an *active* meaning to the term. *The last ruse of the set to which that Deceiver*

shall be worse than the first. 65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. 66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

belonged, and of which He was the leader, will be worse, and more injurious to the people, than the first. This active meaning is attributed to the term by the old lexicographer Hesychius (πλάνη, ἀπάτη), though not by Suidas or Phavorinus. It is given also by the modern New Testament lexicographers, Stock, Schleusner, Bretschneider, Wahl, Robinson, Grimm; and by many interpreters besides, inclusive of Dr. Daniel Scott. But it is more probable that the word has its ordinary classical import of *error*, which is, moreover, its ordinary import in the New Testament. The chief priests and Pharisees, in speaking to Pilate, took up as far as possible Pilate's own political standpoint, or what they deemed it requisite to regard as his standpoint. *If that Deceiver's body should be stolen by His disciples, the fickle people will undoubtedly leap back to their old conclusion that after all He was what He professed to be. This conclusion would be, as we all know, an 'error'; but yet it would be most injurious to the interests of Caesar. There would be more political disaffection than ever.* The idea thus unfolded lay couching in the proverbial expression, *The last error shall be worse than the first; that is, The last error (of the people) will be worse (and more difficult to deal with) than the first (into which they fell, when, on witnessing His wonderful tricks, they leaped to the conclusion that He was the long promised King of Israel).*

VER. 65. Pilate said to them, Ye have a guard: Or rather, *Have a guard; understanding the verb as in the imperative mood. By all means have a guard. I am quite willing to put at your disposal whatever number of soldiers you may deem necessary for the purpose.* This imperative interpretation is given to the phrase in the Æthiopic version, and by Le Fèvre and Vatable; by Tyndale too (*Take watch-men*), and Wolf, and Archbishop Newcome; by Paulus also, and Norton, Meyer, De Wette, Sharpe, Rilliet, Alford (fifth edition), Conder. Whether Pilate, in complying with the request of the chief priests and Pharisees, was "laughing within himself at their vain fear," as Dr. Samuel Clarke supposes, or was in a different mood of mind, we know not and need not conjecture. Go your way: Immediately, if you think proper. Lose no time. Make secure, as ye know: That is, *Make the sepulchre secure, as ye know how to do, or, as Sir John Cheke gives the last clause, ye know how, wel enough.* The verb rendered *make secure* is in the middle voice, *make secure (for yourselves).* Pilate recognised that it was in their own interest that they wished the sepulchre made sure.

VER. 66. And they went and secured the sepulchre: *Secured (for themselves).* See the preceding verse. Sealing the stone, and setting a watch: An exceedingly free translation. The literal rendering would be, *sealing (or having sealed) the stone with the watch.* Many editors, taking the same view of the construction as our Authorized translators, inclose the expression *sealing the stone* within commas, so as to connect into a grammatical unity the preceding and succeeding expressions, *secured the sepulchre—with the watch.* Such is the punctuation given by Erasmus; and by Robert Stephens in his two earlier editions, those of 1546 and 1549. It is given in all Beza's editions too; and in Henry Stephens' two editions of 1576 and 1587; in the Elzevirs also; and in

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1 IN the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward

Mill and Matthæi. But not in Bengel, or Griesbach, or Scholz, or Tischendorf. Robert Stephens omitted the second comma in his two later editions, those of 1550 and 1551. Wetstein inserts it, but in his note he gives preference to the construction that obliterates it, *sealing the stone with the guard*. This construction embodies, no doubt, the correct idea, although it involves a peculiar one-sidedness of representation. The chief priests and Pharisees, in sealing the stone, *acted in concert with the guard*. They employed, to some extent, the manipulatory services of the guard, so that the officer and his men might feel their full responsibility, and be unable, in the event of any untoward occurrence, to roll the blame over upon others. The one-sidedness of the representation consists in this, that we are left to infer, what however is sufficiently obvious, that the security of the sepulchre was provided for, not only *by sealing the stone in concert with the guard*, but also *by leaving the guard to keep watch, after the stone was duly sealed*. It follows, however, if we have correctly seized the construction of the evangelist's phraseology, that the relation of the participial clause to the indicative clause that precedes is that of ways and means, or instrumentality. They made the sepulchre secure *by* sealing the stone in concert with the guard (and thereafter leaving the guard to keep watch). The stone would be sealed, most likely, by attaching one end of a band or tie to it, and then fastening the other end to the lintel of the entrance aperture. Seals would be affixed at both ends of the bands. Or a band might be stretched across the stone from side to side of the entrance aperture, and sealed both at the extremities and in the centre. Or there might be several distinct bands employed. The substance receiving the impression of the seal would most likely be wax, or carefully prepared clay. (Job xxxviii. 14.) But "vain the stone, the watch, the seal!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VER. 1. But in the end of the Sabbath: Literally, *But late on Sabbath*, or as the 1557 edition of the Geneva version gives it, *About the latter end of the Sabbath day*. The expression has been perplexing to many critics. Hammond explains it as meaning, *The night after the Sabbath*, and Dr. Daniel Scott translates it, *After the Sabbath was over*. He did not feel, however, quite satisfied with his translation, and says in reference to the meaning given to the adverb (*ὀψέ*), "I wish I could fully support this sense by unquestionable authorities." Michaelis, who gives a rendering equivalent to Dr. Daniel Scott's, very positively says that the Greek translator of Matthew's original Aramaic Gospel has employed "a very inappropriate word" (*ein sehr unbecuemes Wort*). Le Clerc gives the same translation with Michaelis and Scott; and so do Bengel, and Mace, and Rilliet (*après le Sabbat*), and many more, inclusive of Webster and Wilkinson, and Brameld. Violently however. Others, to get quit of the supposed difficulty, have given the word *Sabbath* its secondary meaning of *week*, *But at the end of the week*. This is the interpretation of Euthymius Zigabenus, Grotius, Le Cene, Heumann, Wakefield, Rotherham, and others. It is a desperate shift, and leaves the real difficulty, if difficulty there be, exactly where it was. The difficulty vanishes if we suppose that the

the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other

method of adding diurnally the night to the day, rather than the day to the night, had got more or less into common use among the Jews, so that there were two ways of reckoning complete astronomical days; namely, *firstly* by night-days, and *secondly* by day-nights. (Comp. chap. xxvii. 63 with chap. xii. 40.) Here the evangelist was thinking of a day-night (*see next clause*), and hence *late in that day-night* would mean *about the end of the night that followed the 'artificial' day of the Sabbath*; 'artificial' in the sense in which astronomers use the term. (The 'artificial' day is that portion of the 'natural' day which is measured off by daylight, or which extends from the rising to the setting of the sun.) Such is Meyer's interpretation of the evangelist's expression; and also Lange's and Burger's. As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week: It will be noticed that the evangelist is dating the beginning of the first day of the week, or the Sunday, not from the commencement of the night, but from the commencement of the morning, or the time immediately succeeding the *dawning* of the morning light. He is thinking, in other words, of a *day-night*, not of a *night-day*. And thus we see clearly the standpoint from which we should look at the expression that is employed in the preceding clause. *The first day of the week*: The phrase, which is freely, but appropriately, thus rendered, is idiomatic, and modelled after a Hebrew phrase. It would be unintelligible if it were literally and unidiomatically rendered, *one of Sabbath*. The meaning is, *one day of Sabbath*, that is, *one day after Sabbath*. In the brief narrative that proceeds from this point onward, Matthew pursues, and as it were in haste, one single line of facts, leaving untouched many inter-related lines. He steps rapidly forward, as it were, from cluster to cluster of events, not attempting to work out a scientific chronology, but rather filling up, grouping, in his own fine "free and easy" manner, the two or three remaining biographical cartoons, on the sketching of which, as an appropriate conclusion to his *Memoirs*, he had set his heart. It would be too artificial to attempt to interweave into a perfectly consecutive harmony the resurrection records of the various evangelists; for it is not abruptly or sharply detached morsels of facts, of the nature of counterparts, that are preserved by the different narrators. Each of the evangelists recorded, in virtue of his own subjective law of selection and assimilation, what was suitable to his purpose. But their respective records, embodying their peculiar combinations of details, are nevertheless in perfect mutual harmony; though it is harmony that is by no means of an artificial kind, or as it were mechanical, or even scientifically chronological. Scope is left, in almost all of the scenes which are depicted, for the reader to supply subjectively, to a greater or less degree, the pictorial background of the representations. **Came Mary the Magdalene, and the other Mary**: See on chap. xxvii. 56. Instead of *came*, Gilbert West would translate *went*, supposing that Matthew "speaks of the women's *setting out*, and St. Mark of their *arrival at the sepulchre*." (*Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, § 5.) In the historical substrate of things, Mr. West's view was right. But his exegesis was too artificial. It is not needful to depart from the usual translation of the verb. The evangelist was certainly not intending to limit his expression to the *setting out* of the Maries. That is, he did not mean to say *went* as distinguished from *came*. But still less was he intending to indicate the precise point of time at which they arrived at the sepulchre. There is progress in his graphic representation. The Maries were early, very

Mary to see the sepulchre. 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment

early, astir, before sunrise. They were early too on the road that led to the sacred spot. And by-and-by they 'came' to the place. To see the sepulchre: Or, *To take a view of* (*θεωρῆσαι*) *the sepulchre*, perhaps in a preliminary sort of way. Their great difficulty was with the stone that had been rolled to the entrance. How was it to be moved? They felt perplexity; and yet they hoped. (Mark xvi. 3.) They evidently did not know anything of the guard of soldiers which had been set, late on the preceding day. Arrangements had been made by them for completing the embalming of the Lord's body. (Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 1. Comp. John xix. 39, 40.) These arrangements the Magdalene would be eager to see carried into execution. Her heart would be on edge and sore. Her ideas would be confused. Her feelings would be in a tumult. All her native eagerness of disposition, and clinging affection, and tenacity of purpose would be greatly intensified. Most likely, as the principal lady of the group who had been ministering to the Lord, she would take the lead in engaging the rest of the women to be present. They had agreed to meet early at the sepulchre (Luke xxiv. 1); and they resolved that they would do their best, with or without such assistance of the stronger sex as might be attainable, to get the stone rolled away. The Magdalene, and her companion, had spent a restless night, as we may suppose, and had started early, and had arrived at the sepulchre before any of the others. The sun, however, had got above the horizon line when they arrived (Mark xvi. 2).

VER. 2. And, behold: A wonderful scene burst upon their view as they approached. The preliminaries of the scene are described in what immediately follows. There was a great earthquake: In the margin it is, *There had been a great earthquake*. Dr. Daniel Scott accepts the marginal rendering, introducing it into the text; and so does Wakefield, so far as the tense of the verb is concerned. Correctly enough, as regards the underlying conception of the evangelist; but incorrectly, as regards the out-cropping form of his expression. He is not attempting to write with classical precision. He accumulates his representation, leaving to his readers the simple task of disintegrating chronologically, so far as may be needful, the details that are grouped together. As regards the underlying conception of the evangelist, the expression before us is correctly interpreted by Doddridge, "*There was but a little before they arrived there a great earthquake,*" or as Purvey in his revision of Wycliffe's version, gives it, *a greet ertheschakyng*. The phenomenon is accounted for. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door: The expression *from the door* was probably a marginal addition to Matthew's text. It is wanting in the manuscripts *N B D*, and in the Vulgate and Æthiopic versions, and in many manuscripts of the Itala. It is omitted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort. The word rendered *rolled back* means *rolled off*, or *rolled away* as Sir John Cheke gives it. And sat upon it: Intimating, as it were, that what he had done in rolling away the stone must remain an accomplished fact.

VER. 3. His countenance was like lightning: The word *countenance* is rather too free a translation. The original term does not so exclusively point to the

white as snow : 4 and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye : for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here : for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the

face. It means *aspect*, or *look*, or *appearance*. It is, in short, our word *idea* (*ιδέα* or *ειδέα*); and *idea* originally meant *that which is seen* (from *εἶδον*, *ιδεῖν*). Wycliffe's translation is *lokynng*, that is *looking* (namely, as objectively considered). It was *like lightning*, not of course as regards form, or shape, but as regards the intensity of effulgence or radiance. And his raiment white as snow : Glistening in supernatural purity and glory. *Raiment* : The Rheims has *garment* ; Coverdale, *clothinge*. The word means *envelopment* (*ἐνδυμα*).

VER. 4. But for fear of him : Or more literally, *But from the fear of him*; that is, *because of the fear which they felt in reference to him*, because of the awe and alarm, with which they were instantaneously stricken. The keepers did shake : They quaked. The verb used is cognate to the noun that is rendered 'earthquake' in the second verse. Their hearts heaved and then beat quick. And became as dead men : They became utterly unstrung in their strength, unnerved, unmanned. They would fall prostrate and collapsed to the ground.

VER. 5. But the angel answered and said to the women : We are to suppose that what is recorded in the three preceding verses took place before the Maries reached the sepulchre. When they reached it, lo, instead of the blocked up entrance to the dark and gloomy tomb, there appeared to them the angel seated upon the stone lying rolled aside! and Roman soldiers were lying around as dead men! What can all this be? A shock would vibrate through them. Their bewilderment would be intensified to the superlative degree. They had not yet dreamed of a real resurrection. *The angel answered and said to them* : He answered. Their whole being, trembling under the shock of surprise, and the accumulation of inward 'confusion worse confounded,' was interrogative, *what is all this?* The angel anticipated explicit inquiries. Fear not ye : There is, in the original, an emphasis on the *ye*. There is thus, apparently, a hidden antithesis of reference to the soldiers. *Ah! no wonder that 'they' are afraid. Well may all the Lord's enemies be afraid! But fear not 'ye.'* Then comes the explanation of the exhortation. For I know that ye seek Jesus who was crucified : Or more literally, *Jesus who has been crucified*. The expression, however, is participial in the original, and cannot be exactly reproduced in our English idiom. But it conveys the idea, that the fact of our Lord's completed crucifixion was regarded by the angel as abiding, and as thus constituting a distinctive characteristic of His person. *I know*, says the angel, *that it is love to Him, crucified although He has been, that has brought you here.*

VER. 6. He is not here : When the angel uses the word *here* he refers to the tomb. Perhaps he merely looked toward it. Perhaps he pointed to it. Perhaps he began to move toward its entrance. Matthew's narrative is exceedingly condensed. His strides onward, through the course of events, are few and long. It is, as it were, but the hill-tops of a certain line of the actual occurrences on which he touches. For He is risen, as He said : Just as the orb of day began to peep over the horizon, He fulfilled the prediction, which He uttered again and again in the hearing of His disciples, and arose from the dead. The Stone that was despised and rejected by the builders was thus raised, and raised on

place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly, and tell his

high, to be the Head of the corner. (Chap. xxi. 42.) The resurrection of our Lord is the culminating and crowning fact of Christianity. "Blot the resurrection," says Dr. Kennedy, "out of the story of the Christ, and you may as well blot out the Christ Himself. Blot out the Christ, and you may as well blot out God." (*The Resurrection of Jesus Christ an Historical Fact*, p. 175.) The event is historically incontrovertible. (See Humphry Ditton's *Discourse concerning the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*.) Even Schenkel admits that "in the early morning of the first day of the week following the crucifixion, the grave of Jesus was found empty." "That," says he, "is an indisputable fact." (*Charakterbild Jesu.*, § 7, ch. xxix.) But if it be, the question presses home, *Who removed the body?* If it was not Divinely or miraculously raised, it must have been carried off either by our Lord's friends or by His foes. If by His friends, what motive could they have had for the deed? Of what use would the corrupting carcase have been to them? In what way could it have helped to inspire them with heroic self-sacrificing resolve to go forth over the country and the world, proclaiming the resurrection as a Divine fact, and denouncing in the severest possible terms all liars and lies? If, however, it was carried off stealthily by our Lord's foes, what would or could they do with it? And how, indeed, could they be His foes, if by conveying the body out of sight, they gave His disciples the best imaginable reason to believe that He had really risen from the dead, and that He was thus all that He claimed to be? There is no alternative, but what is utterly irrational, if we reject the testimony of the apostles and evangelists to the actual fact of the resurrection of our Lord. Christianity, as an actual historical phenomenon, claims to have had an adequate cause for itself. It must have had a *sufficient reason* for its existence. And sufficient reason it could have none, if Christ did not rise from the dead. To say that the disciples stole the body and buried it secretly, and then lied about it, and not only lied, but were inspired by the lie to be the most devoted of evangelists, the purest and most uncompromising of moralists, the meekest and most unflinching of martyrs; to say all this is certainly everything the reverse of pointing to anything like a *sufficient reason*. To say, on the other hand, that the chief priests and elders and scribes entered into a league to befool themselves, and to play as accomplices into the hands of Christ's party, by themselves stealing or secreting the Lord's body, so as to get it put mysteriously out of the way, is to imagine what is really unimaginable as a fact, and what is totally inadequate to be a *sufficient reason* for the historical existence, not to speak of the moral power, of Christianity. Infatuated as the sanhedrists undoubtedly were, they could not have been so exceedingly fatuous as to act the part thus imagined. And what of the disciples? "If we cannot believe," says Brooke F. Wescott, "that the apostles deceived others, it seems, if possible, still more unlikely that they were the victims of deception." (*The Gospel of the Resurrection*, chap. i. § 50.) Come, see the place where He lay: The words *the Lord*, found in the received text, were not improbably added to the evangelist's text, as it were liturgically, or as a consequence of devotional or homiletical use. They are not found in the Sinaitic or Vatican manuscripts; or in 33 "the queen of the cursives"; or in the Coptic, Armenian, and Æthiopic versions. They were suspected by Mill; and Tischendorf has omitted them in his eighth edition. They are also dropped by Westcott-and-Hort.

disciples that he is risen from the dead ; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee ; there shall ye see him ; lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy ; and did run to bring his disciples word. 9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them,

VER. 7. And go quickly, and say to His disciples, He is risen from the dead, viz., this morning ; and, lo, He goeth before you into Galilee : there shall ye see Him : All these items seem to belong to the message which the women were to deliver to the disciples. It is assumed by the angel that the disciples would return to Galilee at the conclusion of the seven days' festival of unleavened bread. Lo, I have told you : Viz., in what I have just said. The Rheims, following the common editions of the Vulgate, renders the expression, *Loe, I have fortold you*. But this makes an unwarrantable addition to the original Greek, and is otherwise objectionable. Maldonato and Markland conjecture that we should read, *Lo, He told you* (*ειπεν* instead of *ειπον*). And such is actually the reading of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript 126. But there is no warrant for the change in any important manuscript or version. It had sprung from Mark xvi. 7, and is an obvious attempt at textual tinkering. There is no need, however, for the attempt. *The angel simply intended to give emphasis to his message*. He saw the discomposed condition of the Maries, and he assists them to collect themselves.

VER. 8. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre : (*ἀπελθοῦσαι*, instead of *ἐξελθοῦσαι*, is the correct reading, supported by N B C L, 33, and 69.) They would be intensely excited, Mary the Magdalene in particular, who was evidently of a peculiarly nervous temperament. She would move, as it were, on springs, as she departed. With fear and great joy : Both emotions simultaneously whirling in their hearts, as is often the case. The heart is not one of those vessels that can hold only a single drop at a time. It has a large capacity ; and within it there may be many heterogeneous elements blending, and perchance boiling, at one and the same moment. In the case before us, there was fear, the result apparently of the shock sustained when the supernatural scene first burst on their view. But there was great joy too, for the angel had beamed upon them with a smile, and spoken lovingly ; and he had assured them that the Lord was risen indeed. And did run to bring the disciples word : To carry the tidings to the disciples. They thus, as Matthew Henry remarks, acted as apostles to the apostles. And they could not help making "haste" on such a royal "business."

VER. 9. And, as they went to tell His disciples : The clause following the conjunction *and* is wanting in the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Cambridge manuscripts (N B D), and 33 "the queen of the cursives," and 69 the precious Leicester manuscript ; as also in the Syriac Peshito, the Jerusalem Syriac, the Armenian, and Vulgate versions, and the great majority of the manuscripts of the Older Latin version, or Itala. It is omitted from the texts of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott-and-Hort, no doubt rightly, though the omission or retention is a matter of no practical moment. Lo, Jesus met them, saying, Hail : The usual Greek salutation. Very literally translated, it is, *Rejoice ! that is, Joy to you !—I wish you joy !—May you be joyous !* It was a beautiful salutation, starting into existence in a state of society that was con-

saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

siderably in advance of that which gave birth to the Semitic *Salaam* or *Peace*! But they, approaching, laid hold on His feet, and did obeisance to Him: Identifying Him, they *approached* Him reverently and with feelings of bewildered awe (see *next verse*), but yet with the swift bound that was the natural rebound of their glad surprise. Their awe controlled their love: and hence they only ventured to touch Him at His feet. Kneeling down, with beautiful oriental facility and grace, and trembling all over with agitation, they would, after grasping His feet, passionately cling to them. Their profound obeisance would be instinctively sublimed into actual adoration or Divine worship. The translation of our Authorized version, and of the older versions, *they worshipped Him*, is hence peculiarly admirable, though archaic. The devoted women signified, by their beautifully significant and seemly acts, their deep appreciation of their Lord's *worship*. The Anglo-Saxon translation, in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, is *tha worhadon hine*, that is, *they worthed Him*.

VER. 10. Then says Jesus to them, Be not afraid: He not only saw into their hearts, and read the agitation that was conflicting with their love and joy and transport, He would feel, as they clung to Him, the convulsive throbs that were shooting through their frames. Hence He graciously seeks to soothe and calm them: '*Fear not!*' *It is all real. It is no illusion. These are My very feet. This is My very hand. You know My very voice. It is really Mine. I am the Lord. Go, carry the tidings to My brethren:* He graciously calls His disciples *His brothers*, partly, perhaps, that the designation might be reported and prove a balm to the spirits of the apostles, who would be inwardly smarting under the stings of their consciences because of their unbrotherly demeanour toward Him; and partly, perhaps, to bring forcibly before the agitated minds of the *Maries* that He was really no mere apparition, or angel, but their very Lord, with all His humanities complete, the Elder Brother of the heavenly household, their own living and loving Elder Brother. In order that they may depart into Galilee: When once, namely, their engagements in Jerusalem should be completed. It is as if the Saviour had graciously said: *Let them not suffer despondency to overwhelm them. I shall meet them in Galilee, according to the promise that I made them before My decease. My relations to them must indeed be modified by My new condition. I shall not now be ever visible in their midst. But yet I shall never forsake them. I shall guide them with My counsel. I shall meet them often; and more particularly, according to My promise, in their own home in Galilee. There shall I explain to them My behests.* Rudolf Hofmann supposes that by the word *Galilee* we are to understand not *Galilee proper*, in the north of the Holy Land, but *little Galilee*, or the northern shoulder of the Mount of Olives, the camping ground of the Galileans when attending the festivals at Jerusalem. The idea is a strain at the best; and resting on very meagre and insufficient data. It is besides altogether uncalled for as an exegetical expedient. And there shall they see Me: This He emphatically promises; though not, by any means, in such a way as to involve what is tantamount to an assertion that He would not appear to them elsewhere, and earlier. He wished them to keep in contemplation His meeting with them in Galilee, though in His own mind He intended to vouchsafe to them some sweet

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. 12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, 13 saying, Say ye, His disciples came by

anticipative surprises. (See Luke xxiv. and John xx. and xxi.) It is strange indeed that some ingenious men, inclusive even of Meyer, should have supposed that Matthew must have known nothing of our Lord's appearances in Judæa because he refers only to a certain appearance in Galilee. Is a writer bound, when writing, to tell everything that he knows? Is there no such thing as a culling of particulars, or a selection of materials?

VER. 11. But while they were going: Namely, to find the eleven, who would most probably be camping out in some part of the Mount of Olives, where they had been wont to spend their nights. The Maries would have a considerable distance to go. Lo, some of the watch came into the city, and announced (*ἀπήγγειλαν*) to the chief priests all the things that came to pass: One can easily imagine their scared appearance, as they hastened off to report the state of affairs to the high ecclesiastical authorities, or 'the prelates,' as Tyndale renders the expression in his 1526 edition. They would be affrighted, not so much at what they were likely to encounter at the hands of their superiors, as from what they had already encountered from still superior powers. How was it to be expected that they should hold out against heaven, or contend with earthquakes and angels?

VER. 12. And having been assembled with the elders, and having taken counsel: An extemporized meeting of the sanhedrin was held on the subject. And when all the peculiar incidents and antecedents of the case were taken into consideration, the longest heads among them would feel perplexed. But they seem to have come prudently to the conclusion that "the least said the soonest mended," and the less done the better. They gave large money to the soldiers; *Large money*, an antiquated expression, coming down from Tyndale. Wycliffe has *plenteuous money*, Purvey *miche monei* (that is, *much money*), the Rheims admirably, *a greate summe of money*. The literal translation is *money enough*,—Coverdale's version. 'The prelates' bribed the soldiers; but no doubt by means of some suitably pliant steward, or financial "Go between," who would manage the matter so as not to compromise, openly, the dignity or honour of the high officials.

VER. 13. Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him while we were sleeping: A 'sorry shift' indeed, as Matthew Henry justly remarks; for, if they were sleeping, how could they know that the disciples came and stole Him? Chrysostom's spirit got roused as he considered the 'shift.' "O most senseless of all men!" he exclaims. "For because of the clearness and perfect perspicuity of the truth, they are not able to make up a decent falsehood. For what they said is exceeding incredible. Their falsehood is devoid of speciousness. For, tell me, how could the disciples steal Him?—men, poor and simple, and not venturing to show themselves. Was not a seal affixed? Were there not watchers, both soldiers and Jews? Was there not, besides, a suspicion of the likelihood of this very occurrence? and were there not therefore special care, and watchfulness, and concern? And for what purpose, moreover, should they steal Him? Was it that they might feign

night, and stole him *away* while we slept. 14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. 15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

"the doctrine of the resurrection? And pray how should it enter into their minds to feign such a thing, seeing they were men who desired nothing more than that they should be let alone and live concealed? How could they, besides, have escaped detection in the presence of so many? And even although it should be granted that they were men who contemned death, is it conceivable that they would have made, in the presence of the Roman guards, such a mad and hopeless attempt? But were they such men? Were they not everything the reverse? Did not their conduct in Gethsemane prove that they were timorous? For, when they saw their Master arrested, they all turned on their heels and fled" (*ἅπαντες ἀπεπρόδησαν*).

VER. 14. And if this come to the governor's ears: Or rather, *And if this should be heard in presence of the governor*; that is, *And if this should be judicially reported to the procurator when on his judgement seat*. There is no reference to private rumour. It is assumed that the procurator would not be moving in a circle where such matters were likely to be talked of, more especially as he would soon be returning to Cæsarea. But it is also assumed that some officious informant or other might possibly call the procurator's attention to the rumour, when he was sitting in judgement. For the import of the preposition (*ἐπι*) in such a connection see Mark xiii. 9; Acts xxiv. 19, xxv. 9, 10, xxvi. 2; 1 Cor. vi. 1, 6; 2 Cor. vii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 13. We will persuade him: There is emphasis, in the original, on the *we*. The sanhedrists, as viewed relatively to the soldiers, had weight of influence and interest at court. *Persuade* is a very literal rendering. But the word was used 'euphuistically.' It meant more than it would have been quite polite to have expressed. *We shall see to it that he be satisfied. You understand us? We have the means, as you can readily apprehend, of getting such things hushed; and you may depend on us using these means.* The same verb is employed in Acts xii. 20, "*having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend.*" Men of the world have thus their price. Money, or something tantamount, can produce a wink when it is needed, or any other little favour. Tyndale's translation of the expression is, *we will please him,—please, that is appease (and please)*. And secure you: There is emphasis on the *you*: *and you we shall secure*. The expression *we shall secure* does scant justice to the original phrase, which gives the *idea of a subjective sense of security*, though based undoubtedly on objective security. *We shall care you without anxiety* (*ἀνεπιμέρους*). The same word is rendered *without carefulness* in 1 Cor. vii. 32. We have no single term in English exactly corresponding; Wycliffe's fine old version has the same imperfection as our own, *and make you sikir*. It is indeed but another phase of our own. So was Luther's (*sicher*).

VER. 15. So they took the money, and did as they were instructed: They too had their price, and even self-criminating lies could be purchased from them, if they should be well enough paid. "A profane person," says good, honest David Dickson, "will make sale of conscience, and tongue, and all, for money." And this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day: *This saying,*

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

namely, regarding the theft of the body of Jesus by the disciples, that is, *this account of the matter*. Instead of *is commonly reported*, it is, in the original, *was commonly reported*; or, as the Rheims gives it, *was brüitet abrode*. Thus there is a slight hiatus in the evangelist's statement, which the reader is left to bridge over. If the hiatus had been formally filled up, the statement would have run thus, *and this saying was commonly reported among the Jews, and continues to be reported among them until this day*. The evangelist draws attention to the fact that the report, which he specifies, was not a late or ultimate fabrication. It got into circulation among the people at the first, and thenceforward held its ground. We learn from Justin Martyr, who wrote in the second century of the Christian era, that the report was current in his day. (See his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, p. 335 of his *Opera*, ed. 1686.) In the scurrilous Jewish book, called *Toledoth Jeschu*, there is a strange jumble of things in reference to this subject; and Judas is said to have stolen the Lord's body. By-and-by he confessed that he had done so, and gave it up to the authorities! (See Eisenmenger's *Entdecktes Judenthum*, Theil i., cap. 4, pp. 190-192.)

VER. 16. Then: It is *But* in the original (*δέ*); and we are left to think quite indeterminate regarding the chronology of what follows. *But* (*by-and-by*, or *at length*) the eleven disciples departed into Galilee, to a mountain: It is *the mountain* in the original,—some specific mountain unnamed. Delitzsch, looking upon the whole *Gospel of Matthew* as the New Testament counterpart of the Old Testament Pentateuch, sees in the unnamed mountain the antitype of Nebo, even as he sees in the mount on which the initiatory sermon of Matthew v.-vii. was delivered the antitype of Sinai. It is of course a mere fancy; but when kept as a mere fancy and not pressed forward as a fact, it is piquant and pleasing. Where Jesus appointed them: That is, *where* Jesus appointed or enjoined them to meet Him. We know not *where* this was. It is altogether arbitrary to fix, with Lange, on Tabor. Neither do we know *when* Jesus made the appointment, or gave the order. It would probably be at some previous appearing. Matthew does not give us any clue; but his expression nevertheless implies that clue there was. His narrative of these final scenes is, throughout, of the nature of an abrupt summary. But, as Stier observes, he would not, in all likelihood, have made use of the expression before us, had he not been well aware that there had been other appearings of our Lord besides those which he describes. (*Dies also der Wink, welcher Matth. selber gibt, dass er nicht alle Erscheinungen berichte.*—DIE REDEN DES HERRN, Th. vi., p. 877.)

VER. 17. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: *Worshipped*, the same word that is employed in ver. 9. It is the first time, within the limits of the *Gospel*, that it is applied to the disciples, in their relation to the Lord. But whether or not they had never previously prostrated themselves before Him, we know not. Doubtless they would now feel a peculiar intensity of reverence and awe. It would be, most probably, when they first got a glimpse of Him at a distance, standing, or perhaps alighting, on the summit of the mountain, that they would throw themselves into a prostrate position. (*See next verse.*) He would be encompassed, we may believe, with some surpassing glory of appearance,—the beginning of the fulness of His glorification. But *some doubted*: An expression that has given unnecessary perplexity to many

 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is

expositors,—perplexity that has led them to devise, conjecturally, various ingenious but violent transformations and explanations. Beza, in the last edition of his *New Testament with Annotations*, the edition of 1598, published in the eightieth year of his age, has a long note on the subject, and expresses his conviction that the evangelist's expression, instead of being *but some doubted*, was *neither did they doubt* (οὐδέ instead of οἱ δέ). Of course it is an incredible transformation; for, if such had been the original reading, how could transcribers have unanimously consented to transform it into the supposed difficulty of the existing text? There is no real difficulty. The Saviour was yet *at a distance*. He had just alighted in glory, or suddenly burst into view—His appearance emerging, or, as it were, condensing itself from out of the transparency of the surrounding atmosphere. The eyes of some of the disciples,—of Peter perhaps and John and James and others,—at once saw through the glory and identified Him. Others felt a “glamour” over their eyes, and got bewildered. They could not at the moment persuade themselves that the august personage, who had just become visible, but who was as yet standing afar off, in grand and ineffable glory, could be that very same Jesus, whom they had been accustomed to see in His humbler “fashion as a man” and form as a servant. They *doubted*. They doubted for very wonderment. They were dazzled. *But all without exception prostrated themselves in the lowliest obedience, scarce adventuring to look up.*

VER. 18. And Jesus came: Or, as Purvey gives it, *came nigh*. The Rheims has it, *comming neere*. The word means that He *approached*. He advanced toward them till He stood beside them. At every step that He took, the doubts of the doubting would be taking wing, and the hearts of those who had no doubts would be beating strong and fast. **And spake unto them:** Or, *and talked to them*. So the word is rendered in Mark vi. 50; Luke xxiv. 32; John iv. 27, xiv. 30. Coverdale has it, *talked with them*. There is a fine feeling of familiarity in the word (ἐλάλησεν). When the familiar voice fell upon their ears, all remaining doubts would vanish entirely away, and every one's heart would be secretly exclaiming, *My Lord! and my God!* Grotius thinks that when it is said, in the preceding verse, *but some doubted*, the reference is specially to Thomas. He thinks indeed—but unnecessarily and violently—that that expression has a pluperfect import—*but some had doubted*. **Saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and upon earth:** It is utterly arbitrary and unnatural to suppose that these words, together with the words of the two following verses, were all the words which the Saviour spoke, while *talking* to His disciples. We form to ourselves an entirely different view of the scene. The Saviour spoke to them, we doubt not, at length, pouring comfort into their hearts, and darting light into their minds, answering their questions, and meeting their difficulties. We conceive that the evangelist only sums up, in exceedingly compressed epitome, the substance of the Saviour's remarks. The very expression, *All authority was given to Me in heaven and upon earth*, presupposes some preceding, and more or less lengthened, explanations of His mission and plans. Contrary to the anticipations of His disciples He had suffered unto death. But He had suffered “bearing the sin of the world.” From the beginning He had contemplated and intended such suffering. It was part of His heavenly scheme,—an indispensable part. Indeed, the whole tissue of sufferings that had issued in death had been the theme of His own and His

given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore,

Father's meditation, long before His baptism by John, long before His birth in Bethlehem, long before His incarnation within the virgin's womb, long before Abraham was, long before the world began. It had been eternally thought over and mutually arranged. (Rom. viii. 28-30; Eph. i. 4-6; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2; 1 Pet. i. 1, 2.) And in that arrangement, *all authority*, says He, *was given to Me in heaven and upon earth*. He was constituted, on the precontemplation of the completion of His propitiatory self sacrifice, the mediatorial Lord of the world and Sovereign of the kingdom of heaven. His one great aim, and the great aim of His Father, was to put down sin; and it was definitely agreed between them, as matter of explicit "covenant," that He should reign "till He put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25). The end is sure to be realized. Accomplish it He will,—“overturning, overturning, overturning,” till all things down that should be up, and all things up that should be down, be found in their right places. *All authority in heaven*: So that He can make use of all the resources of heaven. *All authority upon earth*: So that He can turn every institution and power and person on earth to account. *Was given to Me*: By My Father, from of old. And now, on the completion of the propitiatory part of My work, that part of it that has laid the basis of the perfect emancipation of men from the penalty and power of sin, the authority, with which I have been invested, will be wielded by Me in a sovereign way.

VER. 19. The contents of these verses embody no doubt the chief points, or summits as it were, of the Saviour's instructions to His disciples. Their minds, however, would at the first see only dimly. They would be unable to see all the way up to the heights of the heavenly things. It was long, for example, ere they clearly understood that the Gentiles were to be received, *without circumcision*, into a full participation of the privileges of "the kingdom of heaven." *Go ye therefore*: There is some doubt about the genuineness of the *therefore*. It is omitted in the Sinaitic and Alexandrine manuscripts, as also in E F H K M S U V Γ, and in quite a host of the cursive manuscripts, inclusive of 69. Tischendorf and Alfred omit it from the text; and Meyer approves of the omission. It is left out too in many quotations of the passage by the fathers. All these facts have their weight. But still we are disposed to retain the particle, and would account in part for its frequent omission in ancient authorities, from the natural custom of quoting, for controversial or homiletical purposes, the words of the 19th verse, apart from the words of the 18th. The *therefore* is found in the Vatican manuscript, and in Δ II, 1 and 33 "the queen of the cursives," as also in the Vulgate version, and the chief manuscripts of the Older Latin; in the Syriac versions too, the Peshito and the Philoxenian, and the Armenian also, and the Æthiopic. It is retained by Westcott-and-Hort. A somewhat similar word—*now* (*νῦν*)—is found in the Cambridge manuscript (D). It is certain that the idea conveyed by the particle must be mentally supplied, if it be not verbally expressed. It is in the fact that *all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Christ*, that we find the *ground* or *reason* of the commission given to His disciples. *Go ye*: Ye are at present in the centre of an immense circle. Work there, but do not stay there. Go forth, as ye are able, to all points of the circumference. *Go ye*: When we look at the subject from a high standpoint, we see that the Saviour meant the injunction not exclusively for 'the eleven,' but for His disciples thenceforward, from generation to generation. He was giving instruc-

and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

tion for the entire 'age,' that 'age' that was to remain till the inauguration of the Golden Age. *Go ye*: The expression in the original is in the aorist. It is implied that the going must be *past* before what is specified in the following clause could be realized. *And teach all the nations*: Or, more literally, *And disciple all the nations*; that is, *And bring all the nations into a condition of discipleship*, of discipleship to Me. The verb employed (*μαθητεύω*) is used in the classics intransitively, meaning *to be in the condition of discipleship*, never transitively, as here, meaning *to bring into the condition of discipleship*. It is not used in the Septuagint at all. It brings beautifully into view men's fundamental need of education under Christ. All men need to become pupils of Jesus Christ. Never, till all the nations be brought into the school of Christ, will they learn the way to be truly prosperous and wise. Never till then will "liberty, equality, fraternity" prevail. The real 'solidarity' of mankind will never till then be realized. *Disciple all the nations*: It will be noted that this expression does not mean, and cannot mean, *Make disciples from among all the nations*. It brings into view a much wider aim, an aim that terminates on men without distinction or exception. It should also be noted that the verb, translated *disciple* or *bring into a condition of discipleship*, is in the aorist, while the appositive participles that follow are in the present tense. It is implied on the one hand that it was the Saviour's desire that the discipling of the nations should be speedily an accomplished fact. *Get it done*, He, as it were, says. It is implied on the other hand that the actual accomplishment of the discipling into a past fact, was a state of things into which it would be impossible to leap at a bound. It would be conditioned on much continuous labour running on in the present. *Baptizing them*: The antecedent of the *them* is of course *all the nations*, but it is *all the nations* considered as *dis-integrated into the individual persons* who compose them. Hence the *απόδοξ*. The *baptizing* referred to is undoubtedly baptizing *with water*. There are *baptisms* (Heb. vi. 2) indeed, not only *the symbolic baptism of water*, but also *the real baptism of the Holy Spirit*. (See Matt. iii. 11; Acts i. 5, x. 45-48, xi. 15-17.) But it is God only, or, what is the same, Christ only, who can *baptize with the Holy Spirit*. The baptism which men can administer is the outer, and figurative, and symbolical. As to the nature and import of baptism, see on Matt. iii. 6. *Into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*: *Into*, not *in* as in our Authorized version, and all the preceding English versions. They all copy from the Vulgate, which has *in the name* (*in nomine*); that is, *invoking the name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*. The expression has been generally regarded as furnishing *the formula of baptism*, and thus presenting the administrant with *the form of words* which he should employ while performing the rite. And there is certainly no harm in thus making use of the words. It is seemly to employ them. They are grandly significant. But manifestly they are not a binding formula; and of course they are not the channels of any mystic virtue. They were intended by our Saviour to point out the Great Personal Being, whom he who baptizes should have in view in administering the ordinance, and into ritual or formal connection with whom the individual baptized is introduced or initiated. This Great Personal Being is tripersonal. He is thus at once One, in a certain sublime sense, and More-than-one in another sublime sense. He is "One God." He is "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," Three in One, and One in Three. In

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 teaching

Christian baptism the relation of the baptized person to this tripersonal God is recognised. So far as ritualism is concerned, it is initiated. That is, the actually existing inward or spiritual relation is outwardly or materially, and ceremonially, manifested. It is not created or produced, but manifested, because recognised as pre-existent. The baptism is *into the name* of the tripersonal God, because there is no other possible way by which finite minds can deal, in consciousness with God, than through His *name*. Not that His *name* is of any real avail as detached from His *nature*. It is not. As thus detached, it is but as an algebraic sign, or a little bit of visibility or audibility or imagination. But still without a name of some kind or other, God to us, so far as our consciousness is concerned, is Nothing. We could not think of Him. We think in words of one kind or another. Whenever we make any inward affirmation or negation concerning any object whatsoever, we join in consciousness a subject and a predicate together. If so, that subject and that predicate must be differentiated to us in some way or other. That is, they must be named. All thought is polar, and the naming of things is one end of the pole. Hence if we are to have any *conscious connection* with God at all, it must be by means of His *name*. And hence it is, that *baptizing into God*, or *baptizing into Christ* (in whom there is the fulness of the Godhead), is *baptizing into His name*. This baptizing is one of the means by which all nations are to be *disciplined*. They are to be disciplined by being baptized, etc.; that is to say, the *disciplining* is not here represented by our Lord as the antecedent, it is represented as the consequent, of the baptizing. He does not say *μαθητεύσατε βαπτίζοντες*, but He says *μαθητεύσατε βαπτίζομεντες*. The nature of the case implies, however, that, so far at least as adults are concerned, they cannot be entered into the school of our Saviour without their intelligent consent. But when Carson asserted that "newly born infants are not scholars in any school" (*Baptism*, p. 257), he singularly forgot that real education, and of course moral and spiritual education, begin with the very beginning of self-conscious existence. The first stroke of the painter's brush, when he begins his landscape or his portrait, is not a picture; but it is the beginning and the essential condition of a completed picture. The first impression on a child's mind is not a complete education, but it is the beginning of it.

VER. 20. Teaching them, etc.: This participial clause is not strictly the co-ordinate, but rather the outcome and the prolongation of the preceding one. That which is specified in the preceding one is expected by our Lord to be developed into that which is specified in this. The baptizing is not intended to be an ultimate act. It is only initiatory. It is needful that it should bud out into the flower and fruit of "teaching to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded." *Teaching*: This is the great business of apostles, evangelists, pastors, and all ministers of the Gospel. The teaching is not to be, indeed, merely by words, words, words. Still less is it to be by words of rote. The whole outgoing of the manhood of the man should teach. Nevertheless it is teaching that is needed, the conveying from mind to mind of what is suited to the moral condition of the human soul. It is that teaching in particular, which consists in the impartation of Divine love by means of the impartation of Divine light. *Teaching them*: That is, *all the nations*, each individual in the way in which his heart and conscience can be best approached and entered; adults in one way, children in another; the civilized in one way,

them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

the savage in another ; the favoured of fortune in one way, the poor waifs on the shores of society in another. All should be taught. All need to be taught in the interest of Christ. To observe all things whatsoever I commanded you : Namely, in the instructions which I have been giving you. These instructions would be the complement of preceding instructions, and the forerunners of still completer instructions, as they should be able to bear them in the future. *All things whatsoever* : Not of course in a chaotic way, putting first last, and last first, and throwing all into a jumble. But still *all things whatsoever*, in an orderly way. Ultimately these *all things* comprehend *all that is the evolution of the Great Law of love, in all its essential, and in all its incidental, and economical, relationships*. It means all this, nothing less, and nothing more. Less would be too little in spiritual teaching. More is impossible in the sphere of what is moral. And, lo, I am with you alway until the end of the age : Note, it is *I am, not I will be*. The Saviour might have said *I will be*, but He chooses to say *I am*. He is *ever-present*. There is never a time when He needs to come from afar. He is ever at hand, anticipating His servants' presence, wherever that may be. In His Spirit, in His own co-ordinate Personality, in His living loving Self, He is everywhere present, everywhere except within the consciousness of unbelieving men. He is round and round the consciousness of all men, pressing in upon them, and knocking at the door of the heart. The moment that 'the man within' opens the door, he opens it into the presence of Christ ; and, if he be not spiritually blind, that moment he stands face to face with his Lord. In the case of believers the Lord is *within*, as well as *without* and *around*, their consciousness. He is inwardly and most intimately nigh to them, a 'very present' Saviour and 'Fellow.' And if He be thus present with them, He will doubtless do to them and for them all that they really need. He will bless them to the full, perfecting His strength in their weakness, so that "through Christ who strengtheneth them, they can do all things." (Phil. iv. 13.) It is, as Chrysostom remarks, as if the Saviour had said to His disciples, "Tell Me not of the difficulties you must encounter, *for I am with you.*" *Alway* : Literally, *All the days*. The Rheims has it, *at daies* : Wycliffe, *in alle daies* : Coverdale, *every daye*. *Until the end of the age* : The Saviour's mind goes no further, for, after that, evangelizing work will cease. No man, after that, will need to teach his neighbour, "saying, Know the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 34.) *The age* referred to is *the current age*, the age that precedes *the age of glory*. All who seek, until the dawn of that age of glory, to induce their fellow men to become disciples of Jesus, have the promise of His presence and His blessing. The promise runs on with the centuries, and never runs out.

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