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## Christ's Treatment of the Old Testament.

JOHN P. PETERS.

NEW YORK.

PERHAPS the easiest way to obtain a correct view of Christ's treatment of the Old Testament is to take up the Gospel of St. Matthew, and, following it from beginning to end, to note those passages in which reference is made by our Lord to the Old Testament, comparing them with parallel passages in other Gospels, so far as such parallels exist. It is true that this will not cover every single use of the Old Testament made, nor will it present to us Christ's use in a systematic manner, but it will, I think, give us a good and sufficiently complete picture for the purposes of argument from His use to the proper use to be made by ourselves.

The story of the temptations, contained both in Matt. iv. and Lk. iv., may be regarded as a summary of Christ's attitude toward earlier views of divine revelation, held both by the Jews and also by other peoples. In Ex. xix. we have a description of the theophany at Sinai. The mountain is to be guarded with bounds round about, because "whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death." The presence of God upon the mount is indicated by "thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud," and the mount was "altogether on smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." And the Lord bids Moses to "go down and charge the people lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, who come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them."

At the time of our Lord this was commonly regarded among Jewish theologians as the highest revelation of Himself by God to man. To be sure, we have in the prophets indications of a higher and better conception, as when in the story of Elijah we are told that the Lord is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, nor in the thunder, but in the still small voice ; or, as in Jeremiah, when we are told that

it is not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tablets of the heart that God really writes His highest law. Nevertheless, among Jewish theologians of our Lord's time, the manifestation on Sinai was considered to be a typical and the highest revelation of God's nature made to man. Now the general conception of a divine revelation which we find here was not peculiar to the Jews. It is the view of the way in which God must manifest Himself to man common in its general features to many religions, and you can parallel the essential features of this theophany out of the theology or mythology of many nations. This being regarded as the highest method of the manifestation of God to man, the expectation of the manner of the coming of the Messiah was naturally based among Jewish theologians upon this general conception of the method of manifestation of divinity, rather than upon those really higher views of divine manifestation referred to above, which are represented in many prophetic passages, and especially in the 53d chapter of Isaiah.

In His attitude toward the temptations our Lord expressly and flatly contradicts this conception of the Jewish theologians based upon Ex. xix. and similar passages. The devil that comes to Him in the theology of the Jews would bid Him cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple and descend upborne by angels. That theology demands of Him the same general method of manifestation which is narrated in Ex. xix. To this He opposed the conception of the Son of Man, of God in man. He will not turn the stones to bread, He will not cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, He will not seek to make himself king of the nations of the earth, the most powerful ruler of His time, as David had been. The highest manifestation of God to man is, according to our Lord, the manifestation of himself in man. It must be thoroughly human, and the divine must be exhibited, not in clouds and thunder, and outward manifestations of might and terror, but in the perfection in man of the divine attributes of love and truth. The temptations are a mystical setting forth of our Lord's position in this matter, and of the conflict between that position and the conceptions of Jewish theologians. It may be said that in a broad way, not merely our Lord's attitude as described in the Temptations, but His attitude as a whole as described in the four Gospels, contradicts the conception of the highest manifestation of the divine contained in Ex. xix. God in nature is what Ex. xix. sets forth ; God in man is what our Lord in the New Testament sets forth. Not that God does not cause the portents of nature, but He is not in those in the sense in which He

is in the still, small voice, speaking within the hearts of men. Comparatively speaking, the theophany at Sinai is a low conception of God. The presence of God is to be sought not in the lightning and the thunder storm, where the Hebrews in common with other peoples had sought for it, but in the perfection of the moral attributes in God's highest creation, man.

To turn from the general to the more particular. We find in the story of the temptations our Lord answering the tempter by quotations from the Old Testament, introduced by the words, "It is written." I wish to call attention to the fact that this is a phrase which may be used not only of the Old Testament, but practically of any writing, and that the attitude of the Jewish mind toward the Old Testament as an ancient written document was in part at least the same as that existing everywhere among ancient peoples regarding written documents, and which you will find at the present time among most Orientals. For instance, if in speaking to an ordinary Oriental of the Turkish Empire with reference to any fact, I am able to take any book in his own language, or in Arabic if he is a Moslem — it really matters very little what — and show him that what I have stated is written in this book, it will have upon his mind almost the effect of proof. So St. Paul, wishing to confirm what he says to the Athenians, is reported as quoting from a Stoic poet (Acts xvii. 28, "As certain also of your own poets have said"), as though it were scripture, because that for which he could refer to a written document had a double force to the minds of his hearers, or in fact was regarded by most of them as proved if documentary evidence could be cited for it. In the same way, in the Epistle of St. Jude (vs. 14), we find the quotation from the apocryphal book of Enoch, in the words, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of this," etc. One of our Lord's expressions as quoted in the Gospels is, "It is said or written by the ancients."

This general attitude of the mind toward written documents must be carefully borne in mind in studying the quotations from the Old Testament in the New. In regard to our Lord's own quotations I really do not need to enter this caveat; but in the consideration of the use which St. Matthew and other New Testament writers make of the Old Testament it should be very carefully borne in mind.

The next passage to which I wish to call your attention, is the Sermon on the Mount. In Matt. v. 17 our Lord is represented as saying, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." And in vs. 18

it is added, "For 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." This is frequently quoted as an assertion of what is ordinarily known as literal, or verbal, inspiration; as though every jot and tittle of the words of the Law were sacred and eternal. But our Lord's treatment of the Pentateuch in His expositions of the Law, as recorded in that same document of discourses which we know as the Sermon on the Mount, should show the most casual reader that, so far from maintaining any such literal inspiration, our Lord unhesitatingly condemns and abolishes those portions of the Law and of the Old Testament as a whole which contradict what we now know as the moral law, the law of love. His exposition of the sixth and seventh commandments shows that the jots and tittles of the law to which He refers are of a moral, not a formal nature. The law must be obeyed in the extremest minutiae of its moral application; but the moral law and that only is sacred and eternal. Whatever was written by Moses or by those of olden times which is not consistent with that moral law is to be condemned and rejected.

So in Matt. v. 31 He quotes from Deut. xxiv. 1 the words (which are also contained in substance in Jer. iii. 1), "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement," and affirms unhesitatingly that this is not the word of God, but in contradiction to that word: "But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery." That is, such divorce is a breach, or involves a breach, of the seventh commandment when interpreted according to its spirit and not merely its letter. There is no question as to our Lord's position in this matter, for not only is the passage contained in the Gospel according to St. Matthew; it appears also in the other two synoptic Gospels, and is again taken up at more length in Matt. xix., where our Lord, going further still, lays down monogamy as the law of God, deducing it spiritually from the story of the creation, and asserting it as a part of the divine plan, and thereby tacitly passing a condemnation on Law and Prophets, saints and seers of the past. They did not have the word of God in this matter; they were in error. This is expressed in his statement that the commandment of Deuteronomy in the matter of divorce was given because of the hardness of their hearts; that is to say, that man's knowledge of God's will depends upon the condition of his own heart. If the heart of man is hard, — that is, ignorant, wilful, dark, barbarous, — his conception of God must be accordingly. What he is reported as

saying in Matt. xix. 8, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives," when transferred into our phraseology means nothing more nor less than, 'In the times of your barbarity, when your conceptions of God were low and imperfect, the law, which was leading you up to something higher, was of necessity itself low and imperfect.' Their conception of God was imperfect, and hence their conception of the moral law was imperfect.

To the use of the name of Moses which we find in that nineteenth chapter, I would say in passing that it is nothing more than a technical designation by which the Pentateuch was known, precisely as the plays, sonnets, etc., of Shakespeare are known to us by the term 'Shakespeare.' The name was given, it is true, because of the belief, generally held, that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch; but the use of the term by any given individual may be a mere means of identification of a given passage, and does not in itself imply the acceptance by that individual of such authorship, any more than the use of 'Samuel' as the designation of the books of Samuel means that Samuel was their author. If I wish to quote from Shakespeare, I quote, 'Shakespeare says,' without any one's supposing that I commit myself to the theory of Shakespearian authorship for that particular place or passage. The matter of authorship is not in mind. The object in view is identification of the passage quoted. If the line of argument which treats the use of Moses in such passages as an assertion on our Lord's part of the Mosaic authorship were to be accepted, then logically when in Matt. v. 33, where our Lord quotes one of the commandments of the Decalogue, with the introduction, "It was said by them of old time," it is fair to argue that He did not believe that this was by Moses.

Continuing our Lord's exposition of the Law as recorded in Matt. v. and following chapters, we find in chapter v., vs. 38, 39, these words: "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, that ye resist not him that is evil," etc. The same passage appears in Luke vi. 29. Here, again, so far from preserving the jots and tittles of the Law in the verbal sense, our Lord reverses and repudiates the Law. It is worth while to observe that what is true of the manner of the theophany at Sinai is also true of the *lex talionis*. It is in no sense peculiar to the Hebrews. We find the same law in actual practice among all ancient nations, and in written form it occurs in all of the early systems of law; such as the Laws of the Ten Tables, the Laws of Solon,

the Laws of Lycurgus, the Law of Manu, etc. In the Old Testament it appears in every stratum of the legislation: in the Book of the Covenant (Ex. xxi. 24); in Deuteronomy (xix. 21); and in Leviticus (xxiv. 20).

In Matt. v. 43 we find a further similar passage. Our Lord says: "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies," etc. Here the words, "Ye have heard that it was said," do not introduce the quotation of any individual passage of the Old Testament. Our Lord is contradicting the general spirit of many passages and the inferences that had been drawn from them; and also reflecting on certain acts of Israel and its leaders which are recorded without apparent condemnation in the Old Testament. In Deut. xxiii. 6 the commandment with regard to the Ammonite and the Moabite is, "Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days forever"; and Psalms lxix., cix., etc., contain imprecations in the spirit of that verse of Deuteronomy. All such parts of the Old Testament are rejected by our Lord as not of God in the sense in which he is of God.

A similar rejection of the Old Testament Law by our Lord is found in Matt. xv. 11 ff., a passage which occurs also in Mark vii. 15-19. The Pharisees and Scribes have complained because our Lord's disciples do not follow the school rules in regard to clean and unclean, failing to wash their hands before they eat. Our Lord, starting from this as a basis, goes on to lay down the spiritual law of clean and unclean, and in doing so demolishes completely not only the structure that the Scribes had built upon the Old Testament, but also the Old Testament law of clean and unclean. The apostles are very much astonished, and cannot believe that He means what He says in a literal sense, so that "Peter answered and said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable."

Indeed, even after our Lord's death His meaning was not grasped for many years. St. Peter was the first to realize His meaning, in the vision at Joppa, but even then his Jewish prejudices were too strong for him to put the teaching into practice with any degree of consistency. Nevertheless, our Lord's statement, as quoted both by St. Matthew and St. Mark, is sufficiently explicit: "Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which proceedeth out of the mouth." Deut. xiv. and Lev. xi. both go by the board. The peculiar holiness of Daniel for not eating the food of the Chaldeans (Dan. i.) ceases to exist. In point of fact, the notion of clean

and unclean, as contained in Deut. xiv. and Lev. xi. and glorified in Dan. i., was common to the Hebrews with the nations about them. Every one of these had its law of clean and unclean, and every nation ascribed these laws of clean and unclean to its god. Our Lord seizes on the spirit of the law behind the letter. There is a clean and unclean ; but such laws as these that have been promulgated in the name of my Father, 'Thou shalt not eat oysters, or swine's flesh, or camels, or the like, because they are unclean,' are not the law of my Father which is in Heaven ; "For not that which entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth a man." Not one jot or one tittle of the law of God shall, or can, pass away, but the notions of the Jews, as much as those of the Greeks and Arabs and Syrians and Babylonians, were all alike overturned by Him who came to reveal the perfect will of a spiritual God. Compare with this treatment of divorce, *lex talionis*, clean and unclean, etc., our Lord's treatment of the question of the place of worship, in the conversation with the woman of Samaria, as recorded in the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. He refutes and repudiates Law and Prophets alike in His denial of the special sanctity of the temple at Jerusalem and in His assertion that "neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father."

Turning back to Matt. xi. 10, we find our Lord quoting as a prophecy of John the Baptist Malachi iii. 1, and at the same time denying the literal truth of the words of the prophet as contained in iv. 5. Malachi had said, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come"; and the Jews, holding the Old Testament to be literally and verbally inspired, expected to see Elijah come. Our Lord, in asserting that St. John was Elijah, practically affirmed that the prophets were not inspired literally and verbally, that their inspiration was of a spiritual nature. What Malachi looked for in the way of a preparation for the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord was fulfilled in the work of John the Baptist. No more literal fulfilment of Malachi's words was to be expected. Literally Malachi's prophecy was untrue, spiritually interpreted it was true. (This passage of the Gospel according to St. Matthew appears also in Luke vii. 27 ff.)

Turning to Matt. xii. 38 ff., we come to the famous passage of the sign of Jonah, which is so often claimed as an assertion on our Lord's part of the historical fact of the swallowing and vomiting up alive of Jonah by a great fish, as told in that noble parable of the book of

Jonah. To begin with, the principle on which such a meaning is drawn from our Lord's words is in itself false. I have never found occasion to make any argument from what is known as the *kenosis*. The question of the limitation of our Lord's understanding as a man has never seemed to me to be really involved in any of the critical questions with regard to His use of the Old Testament. He is compelled by the conditions of those to whom He speaks to speak to them in their own language. He cannot speak Greek to Hebrews, nor can He speak in a nineteenth century tongue to people of the first century. He cannot use the language of the Copernican system to those whose whole idea of the universe is based on the Ptolemaic theory; nor can He speak with the tongue of the higher critics to men who have not the slightest conception of the ideas of the higher criticism.

Without touching the question of *kenosis*, we find a limitation outside of Himself in the conditions in which He is laboring. If He wishes to quote the Pentateuch, He must quote it as Moses; if He wishes to speak about the changes of day and night consequent upon the movement of the earth on its axis, He must speak, in order to be understood, of the 'rising and setting of the sun'; and if He wishes to draw a moral lesson out of the stories of the Old Testament, He cannot enter into the question of their literal, historical accuracy, but, without opening that question at all, He must refer to them as though they were facts, precisely as every one else did. No teaching could be derived from our Lord's words in such matters, unless He were to state explicitly, which He does not, that an object of His citation is to affirm the historical character of the fact alluded to. To base an argument as to His belief in a given case solely on the fact that He uses the ordinary language of His time and country is to build upon false principles. But in this particular case a comparative study of the Gospels seems to make it probable that our Lord never uttered the words in question.

In Luke xi. 29 ff., we are told that when the multitude were gathered together, our Lord began to say: "This generation is an evil generation; it seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of Jonah, for even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so also shall the Son of Man be to this generation. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall stand

up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah ; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here." This passage is perfectly clear. "The sign of Jonah," to which our Lord refers, is not the sign of his being swallowed by a great fish, and vomited up alive after three days, but that in regard to which he was a sign to the Ninevites. According to the narrative in the book of Jonah the Ninevites heard nothing of Jonah's adventures. He came to them to declare against them the judgment of God. They accepted the sign that God was wroth with them for their evil doings, and repented and were saved, heathen though they were. He, Christ, has come to the Jews with a similar message from God. He is a similar sign, but they have rejected Him. That this is the meaning of the passage is shown by the further reference to Solomon and the queen of Sheba. The whole tone of the passage reminds one of the comparison by our Lord of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida with Sodom and Gomorrah ; of unbelieving, self-satisfied Jews with the Gentiles whom they despised.

The passage in St. Matthew's Gospel is not equally clear. There we are told that certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying : "Master, we would see a sign from Thee. But he answered and said unto them : An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonah. (For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so must the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.) The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it ; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

It will be observed that in a slightly different order the Gospel according to St. Matthew has three verses identical with those in St. Luke ; namely, the statement that an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and shall have no sign given it but the sign of the prophet Jonah ; the statement that the men of Nineveh shall stand up in judgment and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah ; and the statement that the queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the most distant part of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

But there is a fourth verse in the Gospel according to St. Matthew which is not in the Gospel according to St. Luke, and that is the statement, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Comparing the two passages, and considering what the connection of thought is, it seems to me quite clear that this verse is an addition of St. Matthew's. A comparison of St. Matthew's reports of our Lord's sayings and doings with the treatment of St. Mark or St. Luke, will show that St. Matthew always seeks to find a Bible verse appropriate to the occasion, which he introduces into the narrative. For an instance of this, compare the accounts of the parable of the Sower, as given in the two Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Luke. In Luke viii. 10 we read, "And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand," — words in which our Lord clearly quotes the sense of Isaiah vi. 9. With this agrees substantially Mark iv. 11, 12. Turning to Matt. xiii. 13 we read, "Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing see not, and hearing hear not, neither do they understand"; and then there is added, in verse 14, these words, "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive." Does St. Matthew mean to put these words into the mouth of our Lord? It seems to me that his method of reporting our Lord is this; that where our Lord referred to the Old Testament, he seeks to give the quotation, and — which is perfectly proper according to the ancient idea of an historian in recording the words of a speaker — he sometimes puts the passage which he himself has taken from the Old Testament, into the mouth of our Lord. Where he is dealing with the acts of our Lord, the Old Testament verses cannot be put into His mouth, but they are introduced into the narrative with the statement that whatever was done, was done 'in order that it might be fulfilled which was written, saying,' etc.

In Matt. xxi. 2 ff., where our Lord has told the disciples to go into the village over against them, and to take a she-ass which they will find there, He says to them: "If any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them, and he shall send them. Now this is come to pass that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass, and upon a

colt the foal of an ass." The quotation from Zech. ix. 9 might be supposed to be put, according to the Revised Version, into our Lord's mouth. When we turn to Mk. xi. and to Lk. xix., and read the same narrative, we do not find the quotation used at all. The King James version gives the verse in question as from St. Matthew, and not from our Lord, — "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." There is, in fact, a certain ambiguity in the phraseology of St. Matthew, for he would not feel the necessity for making the distinction which we make between a quotation inserted by himself and one actually used by our Lord.

So, in the passage with regard to the sign of the prophet Jonah, St. Matthew has simply introduced a statement of his own which summarizes that which is to all readers, at first sight at least, the most striking thing in the story of Jonah, and this statement is put in the midst of our Lord's words, so that it seems to the modern reader to be put into the mouth of our Lord in the same way as in the other cases to which I have referred. This verse, therefore, as the comparison of passages shows, is not to be taken as the words of our Lord, but as the explanatory comment of St. Matthew, who sees in the story of Jonah a sign of our Lord's resurrection. Use a modern device, bracket the verse, and the difficulty vanishes at once.

The designation of the sources of our Lord's quotations from the Old Testament in the different Gospels is an interesting and rather curious study. In Matt. xv. 4 our Lord is quoted as saying, "For God said, Honor thy father and thy mother, and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death." The same passage is quoted in Mk. vii. 10, in this form, "For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother, and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death." The intention is to quote the passage as of divine authority. In the Gospel according to St. Mark it is quoted with the technical designation of 'the Law,' that is, Moses. In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, it is quoted with reference to the source of inspiration of the Law; namely, God. But what were the words our Lord used? Did He say, "God said," or "Moses said?" I do not suppose we know, and it is a matter of complete indifference. He might with perfect propriety have used either form. There is a similar case in Matt. xxii. 23-33, where, in our Lord's answer to the argument of the Sadducees, Ex. iii. 6 is quoted. St. Matthew represents our Lord as citing it with the introduction, "Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by

God, saying?" In the parallel passage in Mk. xii. 18 ff. our Lord is represented as saying, "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the Bush, how God spake?" and in the same passage in the Gospel according to St. Luke (xx. 27 ff.) our Lord's words are represented to be, "But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the Bush."

The important truth in these cases is the divine authority of the statement, and those who report the words of our Lord agree substantially in that, although they differ so markedly in the manner in which they introduce the quotations. These passages confirm my previous assertion that we cannot lay any stress on the use of such formulæ as 'Moses said,' etc.

With regard to the difference between St. Matthew and the other Gospels in the matter of Old Testament quotations, I may here refer to Matt. xxiii. 35, "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar." Now, in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, we are told that a certain Zacharias, son of Jehoiada, the priest, was stoned with stones at the command of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord. If this is a quotation from Chronicles, it is incorrect, and either he that quoted it or the Chronicler is in error. If it refers, as some of the best commentators suppose, not to the event recorded in Chronicles, but to the murder in the midst of the Temple, by two of the most daring of the zealots during the Jewish war, of "Zachariah son of Baruch," recorded by Josephus (*Bell.* iv. 6, 4), then it occurred a generation after our Lord's death. Did our Lord use these words? It is noteworthy that this whole twenty-third chapter, the chapter of the denunciations, is wanting in St. Mark and St. Luke. It looks as though, in the same way that St. Matthew gathered a great amount of similar material together in the Sermon on the Mount, so he had gathered together here all the scattered words of denunciation spoken at one time or another and edited them after his manner as one discourse, with such references to the Old Testament (and possibly even to recent contemporary history) as he could make. Such passages as this thirty-fifth verse, I should suppose, are not to be taken as words of our Lord, but are due rather to St. Matthew's manner of supporting what he reports of our Lord's words by Old Testament citations and the like, which he weaves in as though they were part of the discourse.

In Matt. xxiv. 15 we read, "When therefore ye see the abomina-

tion of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand)," etc. In the same chapter (vs. 36 f.), we are told that no one knows of the day of the second coming, not even the angels of Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only ; and, as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. In Mk. xiii. 14, the parallel passage, we do not find any formal citation of the prophet Daniel, although we find the reference to the abomination of desolation, and the whole of the reference to the days of Noah is omitted. In St. Luke's account of the same (xxi.) we find neither the reference to Daniel nor the reference to Noah. The argument would seem to be, that the quotation of Daniel, and the citation of the story of Noah, are part of St. Matthew's regular method of reinforcing or explaining our Lord's words by references connecting them with the Old Testament.

In Matt. xix. 16-22 we find the story of the man who came to ask the Master what good thing he should do to have eternal life. Our Lord quotes to him the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and fifth commandments from the Decalogue, following this with a citation and application of Lev. xix. 18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," which citation is put along with the commandments of the Decalogue as though it were itself one of them. The parallel passages, in the Gospel according to St. Mark and St. Luke, omit the citation from Lev. xix. 18. (St. Luke differs from the other Gospels in quoting the commandments after the order of the Septuagint, instead of the Hebrew order, that is, placing the seventh commandment before the sixth.) Now, Lev. xix. 18 is a favorite passage with our Lord, and it seems probable that in this case St. Matthew has introduced, along with the commandments which our Lord quotes, that summary of those commandments which our Lord used on other occasions.

In Matt. xxii. 36-40 one of the Pharisees asks our Lord, "Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?" and our Lord is quoted as answering him by a citation, not from the Decalogue, but from Deut. vi. 5, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc., and Lev. xix. 18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He turns to the spirit behind the Decalogue, not to the Decalogue. In the parallel passage in the Gospel according to St. Mark, Deut. vi. 4, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," is quoted, as well as Deut. vi. 5 ; and this is one of the few passages where there is more of the Old Testament put into our Lord's mouth

in the Gospel of St. Mark than in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Strictly speaking, there is no parallel passage in the Gospel according to St. Luke, but in Lk. x. 25 we find on another occasion a certain lawyer represented as tempting our Lord, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" whereupon our Lord quotes Deut. vi. 5, and Lev. xix. 18, just as he is represented as doing upon this occasion in St. Matthew and St. Mark.

It is worthy of note that our Lord in His quotation of Lev. xix. 18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," gives a very different sense to those words from that which they have in the connection in which they appear in the book of Leviticus. The commandment there concerns the Israelite only; that is, the neighbor referred to is the Israelite. It is part of a series which directs a different treatment of the Israelite from that of the foreigner. Our Lord takes the spirit of these commandments and expands their force by changing the conception of God's relations to man, and hence of man's relations to his fellow-men. What in the school of the Law they learned to do and to feel toward their Israelitish brothers, they are now ordered to do and to feel toward all men, because all men are brothers, children of one Father which is in Heaven. It is a spiritual not a literal interpretation of the Law. Indeed, it rejects and repudiates the letter.

I have noticed the method in which St. Matthew uses the Old Testament, and his efforts to connect everything with the Old Testament. It may be remarked in passing, that this is more noticeable where he is recording the events of our Lord's life than where he is recording His words, and in the introductory chapters of his Gospel we are almost amazed at the method of treating the Old Testament which we find. He endeavors to connect everything in our Lord's life in one way or another with some particular passage in the Old Testament; accordingly a passage must be found which shall connect our Lord in some way with the town of Nazareth. Now in Is. xi. 1 we read, "And there cometh forth a shoot from the stock of Jesse, and a branch (*nezer*) from his roots beareth fruit." Here the Messiah is called a *nezer* (branch), therefore, St. Matthew says, it was prophesied that "He shall be a Nazarene." It will be understood that there is absolutely no connection between *nezer*, meaning branch, and the word Nazarene. The similarity in outward form is a pure accident.

I might call attention at this point to the tendency which showed itself very early in the handling of the Scriptures to introduce modi-

fications or explanations into the text on the part of those who transcribed it. So, in Matt. v. 22, the received text reads: "But I say unto you that whosoever shall be angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." The correct text has no 'without a cause,' but simply says: "Whosoever is angry with his brother is in danger of the judgment." The person who wrote in the words 'without a cause' did not appreciate the whole meaning of our Lord's words. But evidently the body of the Church was in sympathy with him in feeling the need of a modification of our Lord's very radical statement, and consequently his correction, or marginal note, crept into the text in ordinary use. A better-known example of text corruption, which will come to the mind of every one of you, is 1 Jn. v. 7, where the doctrine of the Trinity is asserted in the famous passage of the three that bear record in heaven. Another instance is the doxology to the Lord's Prayer, which appears in the received text in St. Matthew's version of the prayer. It is now traced back, I believe, to the North of Africa. It was a doxology added to the Prayer in liturgical use, and from that it crept into the text.

A consideration of the methods of early writers in the handling of the text should make us extremely cautious in regard to the treatment of mere words in the Bible as though the form in which they have come down to us were literally accurate. The whole literary conception of the writers and transcribers of Bible texts was very different from our own—so different that we cannot seek from Bible writers verbal accuracy of the sort which we demand at the present day, as I think is brought out very fully the instant we compare one Gospel narrative with another.

In one case a quotation from the Gospel according to St. Mark differs from a quotation in St. Matthew and St. Luke in such a manner as to suggest a bias on the part of St. Mark. Matthew (xxi. 13) and Luke (xix. 46) in narrating our Lord's purification of the Temple, when he drove out them that bought and sold therein, report Him as quoting from Is. lvi. 7, the words, "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer." St. Mark (xi. 17) gives the quotation in a fuller form, "house of prayer for all peoples." I am inclined to suppose the quotation as reported by St. Matthew and St. Luke more likely to have been that used by our Lord, and that St. Mark, knowing of the additional words which belonged in the passage in the original, and being interested in precisely that aspect of the gospel which made it a gospel for all peoples, gave the quotation in this fuller form as spoken by our Lord.

In Matt. xxi. 42, Ps. cxviii. 22, 23, is quoted under the designation "Scriptures"; "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures," etc. St. Mark (xii. 10) quotes the same passage under the same title; but St. Luke (xx. 17) quotes verse 22 only with the preface, "What then is this that is written?" It is a written thing, a thing that is handed down in writing; that is the thought which lies in the designation 'scripture,' to an extent which we do not always recognize. "It is written"—anything that was written in times long gone by has a value and a sanction which sets it aside from the things of to-day.

I have already referred to our Lord's quotation of Ex. iii. 6, and the discussion with the Sadducees concerning the resurrection of the dead, reported in Matt. xxii., Mk. xii., and Lk. xx. It will be observed that in the discussions reported in these chapters our Lord meets, one after the other, different opponents, accepts their own basis of argument, applies their own method, and defeats them. Our Lord's object here is the same as that in the discussion with the Pharisees, recorded in the same chapter (Matt. xxii. 41-46). In the latter place, He undertakes to show the Pharisees according to their own methods, from what they accept, that their view of the Messiah is incorrect. Here He treats the Sadducees in the same way. In neither place, does it seem to me, can our Lord be understood as saying that this is the proper interpretation of the Old Testament. What He does say is, 'You accept this, now observe the logical results; your position is untenable on your own showing.'

When He quotes, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," to the Sadducees, as an argument to them that God is a God of the living, not of the dead, and that therefore the dead rise again; or when He quotes the 110th Psalm as an argument to the Pharisees that because David in the spirit called the Messiah Lord, therefore the Messiah could not be inferior to David, He is presenting to each class an *argumentum ad hominem*. It is not the sort of reasoning which He adopts in general, and on which He relies to establish the truth of His mission and to convince men of His divinity. Every passage must be interpreted in connection with its surroundings, and all words in connection with their use. It might be added with regard to the quotations from Ps. cx. 1, that whereas the Psalm, as a whole, is of very late date, and could not possibly be ascribed to David, or the period of David, it is not impossible that the first two verses are of earlier origin. There is even a bare possibility that they belonged to some old poem going back as far as the

days of David. I am not prepared to assert, therefore, that it is absolutely impossible that these words might have been, in substantially their present form, composed by David himself, although it is extremely improbable. As far as our Lord's utterances are concerned, however, I consider it a matter of complete indifference whether they were composed by David or Simon Maccabæus. Our Lord is simply quoting them as what the Pharisees themselves would say. If we were to translate it into our idiom, we should introduce it by some passage such as : ' You say so and so, and, on the basis of your argument, so and so follows.' But that is not the method of the Gospel writers, and I can give an admirable example of misinterpretation of a very important text for the simple reason that people have expected the gossellers to write after the manner and method of our own period, and have misinterpreted them because they did not do so. Thus in Matt. v. 21 ff. in our Lord's interpretation of the sixth commandment, " Thou shalt not kill," He says : " Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment ; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council ; and whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire." Now commentators generally have attributed to our Lord as His own the words, " and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council," which destroys the force of the passage in very large part. The meaning is really this : ' It was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever did kill was in danger of being tried and condemned by the courts appointed to execute the law. I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother is in danger of the judgment of God. You have made an application of that commandment, " Thou shalt not kill," to the use of libellous and abusive terms, and according to your legal code, whosoever calls his brother by the term " Raca," is in danger of punishment by the Sanhedrin ; but I say unto you that whosoever shall call his brother any name of opprobrium — the most general possible — is in danger of the hell of fire.' The introductory phrase, which our methods of editing would require, is not introduced, and therefore the literal interpreter is apt to make up, as he has done, a new commandment, issued by our Lord, that nobody must call any other person Raca.

To sum up briefly the results of this investigation, I would say that our Lord regarded the Old Testament as Scripture, and as contain-

ing a divine revelation to man through man, but He does not treat that revelation as complete and perfect, nor does He treat the individual men through whom the revelation has come as infallible. The revelation of the Old Testament is incomplete and imperfect, and consequently there are things in the Old Testament which are untrue, and teaching which is contrary to the absolute divine truth. Our Lord taught that the whole of the Old Testament prophesies of Him, and was preparing the way for Him, but He does not anywhere teach that individual prophets prophesied of the details of His life, or that their words are to be taken literally as utterances concerning facts in His life. He accepts the Old Testament spiritually and not literally. In the Law He accepts as divine that which also commends itself to our consciences as in itself true. The proof of the truth of any given passage is not its authorship nor its eternal claim to be the word of God, but itself. There is a moral law of which He is the highest revelation, and we, enlightened by that revelation and guided by the Spirit, are quite capable of judging of the truth of any passage in the Old Testament. We are to do what He did. He judged of the truth of Scripture by the final moral law, and in doing so taught us to do the same thing. We are to accept or reject it according to its truth, and the truth is to be determined by the law of God as revealed in the character and teaching of Jesus Christ.

With regard to prophetic utterances, He has pointed out the same general method. The prophets prophesied of Him, but it does not follow that when a writer said, "He shall make his grave with the rich in His death," if he ever did say it, he is prophesying of the circumstance of our Lord's burial in the tomb of the rich Joseph of Arimathea. The inspiration of the prophets is of a moral character, just as is the inspiration of the Law, and their power of predicting that which is to come is based on the moral character of their mission. They perceive moral features, the necessary victory of right over wrong, the victory of God; they understand better than others the nature of God's dealings with men, and of His methods of revealing Himself. It is with this side of their work that our Lord is naturally concerned. It is the morality of their predictions which He claims as foretelling Him.

The writers of the New Testament are influenced to a greater or less degree by the traditional Jewish treatment of the Old Testament, and this is particularly true of such writers as the authors of the Gospel according to St. Matthew and of the Epistle to the Hebrews. We

have to make allowance for this in considering their use of the Old Testament. The way in which we are to interpret the use which St. Matthew, or the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, makes of the Old Testament is to be determined by comparison with our Lord's use. He is the norm, not they. They are human and fallible ; but behind their method lies the reality, which our Lord had Himself declared and accepted, of the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures.

It is sometimes said, Will not this method of interpreting the Bible destroy the connection between the Old Testament and the New, and will it not rob such texts as, "They pierced His hands and His feet," or a "woman shall compass a man," of their meaning in regard to Christ? The method of interpreting the Bible which I have here proposed cannot rob any text of its meaning, nor can it destroy the connection between the Old and the New, nor does it deny the prophecies of the New in the Old. It is nothing but the application of Christ's method, rather than the method of some of the Jewish disciples of Christ. I presume that a great many individual texts, in the way in which they are ordinarily interpreted, must be relegated sooner or later to the attic, but a great many more texts, interpreted in a better and a higher way, will take the place of these, and the Old Testament, as a whole, will be more clearly seen to prepare the way for Christ, and to proclaim His coming, His nature, and His mission. The whole Old Testament will become a prophecy of Christ, rather than single and individual passages, and everything will rest on a moral basis, appealing to the conscience and the reason, rather than on a basis which must seem to any but the very faithful one of chance and caprice.