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**JERUSALEM  
(NEW TESTAMENT)**

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BETHLEHEM.

*(From a Photograph.)*

The large buildings to the left are the monastery, chapel and church over the traditional site of the birthplace of Jesus.  
*(Frontispiece.)*

[Green Fund Book, No. 4.]

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# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

GIVING

CRITICAL, EXEGETICAL AND APPLICATIVE NOTES, AND  
ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN FROM LIFE AND  
THOUGHT IN THE EAST

WITH THE

COMMON VERSION, 1611, AND THE REVISED VERSION, 1881  
(AMERICAN READINGS AND RENDERINGS)

BY

*Edwin W. Rice*  
EDWIN W. RICE, D.D.

NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION

NEW ENGRAVINGS AND MAPS

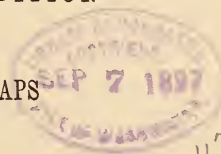
PHILADELPHIA

THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION

1122 CHESTNUT STREET

1897

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HLR 31 Aug 39

## PREFACE.

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TEN years ago this Commentary was issued, recognizing as a guiding principle in the right interpretation of the gospel, its peculiar Oriental character. This peculiarity is receiving increasing attention from Biblical students. What a few then deemed useful as side lights, the multitude have come to regard as indispensable. Without it, the gospel is almost sure to be misinterpreted. Indeed, it is safe to say that the greatest progress in solving gospel problems within the past ten years has been attained by a scientific study of the Oriental characteristics of the Biblical narratives.

The Gospels are now recognized as Oriental narratives, written by Orientals, in Oriental lands, with the warp and woof of Oriental imagery, thought and expression. Moreover, they reveal Christ who became man—a man among Orientals. Our English versions conceal these peculiarities under Occidental phrases, forms, ideas, customs and expressions which more than mar the beauty of the original Gospels—they even cause us to miss the real sense.

Therefore it has been my chief aim here to enable the student to read the Gospel according to Matthew as if he were by the Sea of Galilee, in Jericho, or on the slopes of Olivet, with the Lord, surrounded by disciples, thronged with the multitudes seeking to hear and to be healed, and watched by envious Pharisees and carping Sadducees, all of them conspicuous for their Oriental customs and manners, and expressing their ideas through Oriental forms of speech.

The Common and the Revised English versions are given in parallel columns at the foot of each page, to save the student from the necessity of referring to two or more books. He is aided in grasping the meaning of the original text through these, or, when required, through a more literal English version, and by a concise and clear statement of the results of critical learning without technical terms, and free from confusing speculations.

Adequately to present the results of Biblical learning and research in

the past ten years, I found it needful to replace large portions of the earlier editions with new material, and thoroughly to rewrite or revise the whole work.

The questions relating to the authorship, language and contents of the Gospel, the unfolding of the narratives of the birth of Jesus, the temptation, sermon on the mount, transfiguration, the last journey to Jerusalem, the conspiracy, trial, crucifixion and resurrection, have been recast, and much new matter added. Entirely new engravings and a new double-paged map have been inserted, the old ones being removed. A conscientious effort has been made to keep the work abreast of the results of the best Biblical scholarship at the close of the nineteenth century.

In rewriting the volume material aid has been gained from recent works of Prof. Albert Socin, Prof. George Adam Smith, Profs. Gloag, Morison, Stapfer, Stevens and Burton; from the publications and quarterly statements of the Palestine Fund, 1887-1897, and especially from residents of Syria. I am particularly indebted to John Tannous Haddad, a native Syrian and an accomplished Arabic scholar, who has furnished many accurate statements of Oriental life, and has enabled me to add many original explanations or illustrations of the Gospel narratives.

In this reconstructed and enlarged form the volume is again sent forth, in the hope that it will be counted worthy of the marked favor that has been so generously accorded to its predecessor.

EDWIN W. RICE.

PHILADELPHIA, September, 1897.



# INTRODUCTION.

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## I. NEW TESTAMENT.

There are sixty-six compositions or treatises in the volume of sacred writings which Christians accept as having divine authority. They are in two divisions: one of thirty-nine books, which the Jews also accepted, and the other of twenty-seven books. These make one volume, *the Bible*.

*Title.*—The two divisions are called the “Old” and the “New Testament.” This title comes from the Latin *testamentum*, “testament” or “will,” and its application to the Christian Scriptures can be traced back to the third century. Tertullian (200–240 A.D.) sometimes called them *instrumentum*, “contract,” “deed” or “covenant,” but more frequently *testamentum*, “testament” or “will,” and this title finally prevailed in the Latin and Greek churches. Eusebius (260–340 A.D.) used it, and Jerome (331–420 A.D.) adopted it in his Latin version of the Scriptures, called the Vulgate. The title was probably used also in the earlier Itala version.

Paul refers to the Hebrew Scriptures by the Greek phrase *παλαιὰ διαθήκη*, “old covenant,” translated, however, “old testament” in the Common English Version, 2 Cor. 3:14. A similar phrase in Hebrew is found in Jer. 31:31, rendered “new covenant” in English versions. Thus the Hebrew Scriptures received the title “Old Testament,” or strictly “covenant,” and the distinctively Christian Scriptures that of “New Testament.”

The title “Bible” comes from the Latin *biblia*, books, and Greek *βιβλος* and *βιβλίον*, “book,” “little book.” See 2 Tim. 4:13; Rev. 22:19. By the early Christians their sacred writings were called simply the “Scriptures,” 2 Pet. 1:20; 3:16. Jerome used the term *bibliotheca sancta*, “holy books.” Chrysostom (341–407 A.D.) called them *βιβλία*, “books,” and also *τα θεία βιβλία*, “divine books.” Chaucer speaks of “*the Bible*,” and Wyckliffe used this term in the Preface to his translation. The original plural meaning was strictly “the books,” but it has disappeared; the several books of sacred Scriptures are now in one volume, “the Bible.”

*One Collection.*—The New Testament therefore is one part of the larger collection or volume of the sacred Scriptures. The apostles and apostolic men wrote narratives and letters at different times, which were circulated among Christians. Some of them were accepted as authoritative, and were collected together either before the close of the

first or early in the second century. Peter accepted Paul's letters as of the same authority as the Jewish Scriptures. For Peter says of Paul's letters that some wrest them, as they do "the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction," 2 Pet. 3:16.

Soon after the last of the twenty-seven books was written, the majority of the books were received by all Christians as the rule of faith. About 140 A.D. Marcion, who had been excluded for heresy, or immorality, was the cause of a controversy during which over twenty of the present New Testament books were cited as of apostolic authority. Gnostic writers as early as 125 A.D. also indicate that there was a collection of apostolic writings equal in authority to the Jewish Scriptures at that time. About eight ninths, or twenty out of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament, were accepted without question from the time of the apostles themselves. Comparatively few questioned two books in the third century, but they were generally accepted by Christians. The other five letters (2 Peter, James, Jude, 2 and 3 John) were less widely circulated, were very brief works, and not frequently quoted in the earliest Christian writings that have been preserved to us. They were counted by some in the third century as *antilegomena*, "questioned," literally "spoken against"; yet even these were universally admitted to be a part of the Christian Scriptures before 400 A.D. Their brevity—since they form about one thirty-sixth part only of the New Testament—and their more limited circulation would cause them to be slower in coming into universal acceptance than the larger books. Yet all the books—and no others—now in our New Testament were thus accepted before 400 A.D. The same fourfold Gospel narratives have been uniformly received as the sacred Scriptures since the time of the apostles.

The early Christian Fathers and the general councils of the early Church did not strictly attempt to decide what books ought to be included in the sacred Scriptures, or what should be accepted as of divine authority; but rather they declared what in fact were so accepted by all Christians who held to the doctrines and customs taught by our Lord. Thus the general Council of Nicæa, 325 A.D., stated which books were universally accepted as of divine authority. The general Council of Laodicæa about 360 A.D. made a list of the books thus used in the Church as the rule of faith.

The Christian Scriptures called the New Testament were the outgrowth of the needs of early Christians and of divine inspiration. The exact order in which they were written is not certainly known. The Christian Fathers do not agree respecting the dates of composition of the Gospels. For example, Theophylact places the date of writing of Matthew at 41 A.D., Eusebius puts it at 44 A.D., Nicephorus at 48 A.D., and Irenæus after 60 A.D. The same diversity prevails in respect to

the other Gospels, and in fact in regard to all the other books. The following are only approximate dates :

BOOK.	WHERE WRITTEN.	DATE.	BOOK.	WHERE WRITTEN.	DATE.
1 Thessalonians,	Corinth,	52 A.D.	Acts,	Rome,	63 A.D.
2 Thessalonians,	"	53 "	1 Peter,	(?)	64-66 "
Galatians,	Ephesus,	52-57 "	1 Timothy,	Macedonia,	63-66(?) "
1 Corinthians,	"	57 "	Titus,	Epirus,	" "
2 Corinthians,	Philippi,	58 "	2 Timothy,	Rome,	63-68 "
Romans,	Corinth,	58 "	2 Peter,	(?)	67, 68 "
James,	Jerusalem,	45-50 "	Matthew,	Judæa,	55-60 "
Philippians, } Ephesians, } Colossians, } Philemon, } Hebrews, } Luke,	Rome,	61-63 "	Mark,	(?)	44-55 "
			Jude,	Jerusalem,	68-70 "
			John,	Ephesus,	78-90 "
			1, 2 and 3 John,	"	97-100 "
			Revelation,	Patmos,	66-96 "

HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT WAS PRESERVED.—The compositions included in the New Testament were copied and circulated for the instruction of Christians from apostolic times. Some of the Pauline and perhaps other apostolic letters were thus circulated, and are referred to as "*Apostolicon*." Especially the Gospels, then often called "memoirs" or "memorabilia," were widely read. Besides the great libraries of Assyria and of Alexandria and Egypt, recent explorations have brought to light the existence of extensive libraries in Palestine at a very early period, even before its conquest by the Israelites. In libraries like these the Jewish, and later the Christian, Scriptures might be preserved.

The Christian sacred writings were joined with the Jewish Scriptures in one volume quite early after they were written, and were also circulated separately in whole and in parts, even as now.\* After the period of Alexander the Great, book-scribes and book-vendors were numerous, and large numbers of trained copyists were employed to multiply copies of books that were in demand. A copy of any work could be readily obtained by any person willing and able to pay the cost of copying it. The multiplication and preservation of the sacred Scriptures thus became an easy and common matter, though not as cheap and universal as in our times by the printing press.†

Thus the New Testament writings have been providentially preserved, not by miracles, nor by direct divine agency, but by the loving hearts and hands of the followers of Christ. God committed these authoritative sacred writings to the care of his people, and led them to use the best means in their power to preserve them entire and uncorrupted for the guidance of his children. The means used were in many cases

\* See Rice, *Our Sixty-six Sacred Books*, chap. vi.

† See Prof. Sayce in *Gateways to the Bible*, chap. ii., 1897.

similar, yet more varied and better than those employed to preserve the ancient classic works that have been handed down to us. There are *three* ways by which they were preserved :

1. Written copies of the sacred books were multiplied for the use of Christians scattered over the Roman empire.

2. They were also early translated into other languages from the Greek, and copies of these translations are still extant.

3. Again, the books were quoted and commented on by a great number of writers, believers and opposers, in the first three or four centuries. Large portions of the works of these writers are now found in great libraries and collections. So copious are these quotations that a distinguished English scholar declared that if every copy of the New Testament were destroyed, he could reproduce the whole of it from the writings of the early Christian fathers. He did actually gather the greatest portion of it in this way, and was sure he could find the rest after a little further research. In these three ways the books have come down to us.

What has become of the original copies of the New Testament books written by the evangelists and apostles, or under their dictation? They have all been destroyed or lost. The original copies of the ancient classics have likewise perished. There are several ways of accounting for the loss of the apostolic autographs.

1. *They may have been worn out by use.*—If the originals were written on *χάρτις*—paper made of papyrus, as most of them doubtless were (2 John 12), since that was not as durable as our common linen or cotton paper—it would soon wear out by constant handling and use.

2. *They might be destroyed by enemies.*—In the many persecutions of the early Church, great efforts were made to destroy the Christians and their works. The New Testament books, especially any copy suspected to have been made by the apostles, would be hunted out by the persecutors and burned or otherwise destroyed with the martyrs themselves.

3. *They may have been otherwise burned or lost.*—They would be exposed to the ravages of war, of fire, of moths and mice. The valuable libraries of Alexandria, which must have contained Greek copies of the Hebrew Scriptures, and may have had some of the originals of the New Testament books, were burned. Again, the early Christian fathers who received the original copy of any New Testament book may have hidden it, to secure it from enemies. The place where it was hidden may have been forgotten or lost by the sudden martyrdom of its possessor, and thus the copy itself lost.

The method of preservation of the New Testament books may be illustrated by that of the ancient classics. All the famous Greek and Latin classic books, excepting perhaps those of Pliny the Younger,

Juvenal, Suetonius, Quintilian, Plutarch and Tacitus, were written, read and admired before the New Testament books appeared. Ancient classic literature had reached its highest state of perfection. After the greatest classic writers had won the admiration of the world by their wisdom, the Christian Scriptures were sent forth, telling the simple story of the cross, and claiming to point out the truth, and the only way by which man could become wise unto salvation.

Classic and sacred writings were alike preserved, before the invention of printing, by copies written by hand. The paper most in use early in the Christian era was made from papyrus, as already stated. Parchment, made from the skins of animals, was also in use, but was not as common as paper. 2 Tim. 4: 13. Among the Greeks and Romans the labor of transcribing their books was committed to slaves, and sometimes to virgins, who were skilled in the art of writing. Copies of the New Testament books were rapidly multiplied, as the early history of the Church abundantly testifies. Norton has made computations showing that not less than 60,000 of the Gospels were circulated among Christians at the end of the second century. See *Genuineness of the Gospels*, vol. i. pp. 28-34. Origen was aided in multiplying copies of Christian books by virgins skilled in caligraphy. Eusebius was ordered to make fifty copies of the Scriptures, by Constantine.

A written Greek copy of the entire New Testament, called the Sinaitic, made in the fourth century of the Christian era, is now in the library of St. Petersburg, Russia. Scrivener says, "we have no complete copy of Homer himself prior to the thirteenth century." There are fragments, it is true, of the fourth to the sixth century, and a few fragments ascribed to the first or second century, B.C. The noted copy of Virgil in Florence is not complete, but there are two copies in the Vatican of perhaps the fourth century of our era. There is a fragment of Euripides perhaps as old as the first century B.C., but no complete copy.

An old copy of *De Republica* by Cicero, of the second or third century, has Augustine's comments on the Psalms written over it on the same parchment. A partial copy of Virgil at Verona has a comment on the book of Job written over it. In an old volume of manuscripts in the British Museum is a palimpsest of four thousand lines of Homer's Iliad, and in the same volume, written by a different hand yet quite as old as the portion of Homer, is a large portion of the Gospel of Luke.

Besides the Sinaitic complete copy of the New Testament, there is the Vatican copy, nearly complete, of about the same age, and more than a score of copies of great portions of the New Testament made in the fifth and sixth centuries. "Manuscripts of the most illustrious classic poets and philosophers," says Scrivener, "are far rarer and comparatively modern. . . . More than one work [classic] of high and deserved

repute has been preserved to our times only in a single copy." *Introduction*, p. 4.

The greater the number of ancient written copies of a work that have come to us, the greater will be the accuracy with which we can ascertain the probable original text. If a large number of copies contain the same reading, or substantially the same, and these copies were made with care near the time of the original copy, then by a comparison of these copies we are able to ascertain with great confidence what the author actually wrote in his original copy.

The early Christians made copies of their sacred books with painstaking care, and yet little errors might creep in, just as there are typographical errors now in the most carefully-printed book. Where two sentences close together ended in the same words, the copyist's eye might fall on the words at the end of the second sentence and lead him to suppose he had already copied it, and pass on to the next, when he had copied the first sentence only. Thus the second sentence might be omitted altogether. But in comparing several early copies such errors would be detected. This work of comparing or collating ancient manuscript copies of valuable works has become a special study in recent years, and as a result of it, more accurately-printed copies of the Greek text of the New Testament books have been issued.

THE TEXT.—The three sources of the text of the New Testament, as already intimated, are—I. The written copies in Greek, or the manuscripts. II. The early translations. III. Quotations from the text in the Fathers and early Christian writers.

I. *The Greek Manuscripts*.—The most important Greek manuscripts of the New Testament now known are those written in capital letters, and called uncials. Although the autograph copies by the apostles have been destroyed or lost, yet the number, antiquity and evident general fidelity of the copies which we possess give greater confidence in the accuracy of the text than we can have in the accuracy of the text of any classic. Tischendorf asserts, "In all classical literature there is nothing which may be compared, even distantly, in riches with the textual sources of the New Testament." Westcott and Hort declare, "In the variety and fullness of the evidence on which it rests, the text of the New Testament stands absolutely and unapproachably alone among ancient prose writings."

The number of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament is variously computed by scholars, owing to the different methods of computation. Some reckon each manuscript, though only a fragment, as one; others count those fragments now separated but which they suppose to have been originally together as only one. The total number is usually reckoned to be between 3000 and 4000; and new copies or fragments have been discovered in greater numbers in recent years than for a

century following the Reformation. Westcott and Hort (*New Testament*, vol. ii. p. 75, *seq.*) state that the Gospels are contained in *fair completeness* in 19 uncials; the Acts in 9; Catholic Epistles in 7; Pauline in 9 and 2 transcripts; the Apocalypse in 5. But these figures do not include a number of manuscripts containing more or less considerable fragments of books. They add that about 30 cursive manuscripts contain the whole New Testament, and, "if each manuscript is counted as one, irrespectively of the books contained, the total number [of cursives] is between 900 and 1000." Other trustworthy computations of the known manuscripts of the New Testament place the number of uncials at 110, and of cursives at over 3500. Scrivener (1883) noted 97 uncials and 1997 cursives; Abbot (1885) 92 uncials and 1600 cursives; Schaff (1888) 91 uncials. But Gregory (*Supplement to Prolegomena of New Testament*, 1890) noted 87 uncials, described 22 new ones, making 109 uncials, and gives a table of 3553 cursive manuscripts.

These cursive manuscripts, or *minuscules* ("small letters"), are written in a small running hand, richly illuminated. About 30 are known to contain the New Testament entire, 600 the Gospels, 300 the Pauline Epistles, 200 the Catholic Epistles, 100 the book of Revelation and 350 lessons from the Gospels.

The chief uncial manuscripts are :

Ⲙ. *The Sinaitic*, found by Tischendorf in 1859 in the Convent of St. Catharine, Mount Sinai. It is now in St. Petersburg, Russia. It consists of 346½ leaves of thin vellum, 13½ inches long by 14⅝ inches wide. On 199 leaves are portions of the Greek version of the Old Testament. The 43 leaves found in 1844, and published under the title *Codex Fridericico-Augustanus*, are also a part of the Sinaitic manuscript, and contain parts of the Old Testament. The remaining 147½ leaves have the whole of the New Testament, the so-called Epistle of Barnabas, and a part of the Shepherd of Hermas. Words are not always written out in full, but are often abbreviated by a line over the letters, though the abbreviations are less frequent than in some other old manuscripts. The words are written without spaces between them, making

ΤΟΤΗΘΕΥΘΕΒΕΙΑΣ  
 ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ  
 ΟΣ

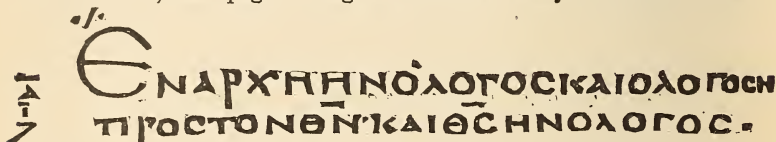
το της ενσεβειας | μυστηριον [θε late corr.] ος ε. 1 Tim. 3 : 16.

SPECIMEN OF THE SINAITIC MANUSCRIPT.

a line look like one continuous word, and the line sometimes ends with the next to the last letter of a word, the last letter beginning the next line; this makes it more difficult to read. Since the copy was first made, probably in the fourth century, other copyists have inserted corrections, which can be distinguished from the first writer's copy by the

different handwriting and the different inks. The text of this manuscript has been published in four volumes, in imitation type, and the New Testament portion in an octavo edition in ordinary Greek type.

A. *The Alexandrian Manuscript*, in the British Museum, is now bound in four volumes. It consists of 773 leaves,  $12\frac{3}{4}$  inches high by  $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches broad, each page having two columns of fifty lines each. The

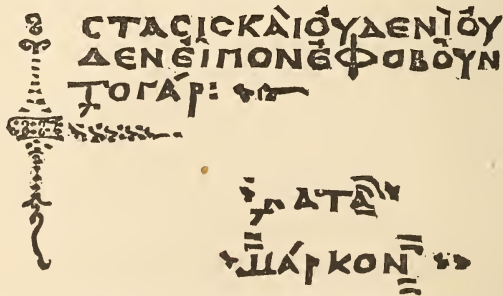


Εν αρχη ην ο λογος και ο λογος η [ν] | προς τον θ[εο]ν και θ[εο]ς ην ο λογος  
John 1 : 1.

SPECIMEN OF THE ALEXANDRIAN MANUSCRIPT.

Old Testament is on 639 leaves. Matthew 1 to 25 : 26 is wanting ; two leaves are lost from John's Gospel, and three from 2 Corinthians. Following the New Testament books are a copy of the First Epistle of Clement of Rome (of which another copy was discovered by Bryennios at Constantinople, in 1875), and part of a second epistle of his of doubtful authenticity. This manuscript has initial letters and the first four lines of each column on the first page of Genesis in vermilion ink. It was originally written about the middle of the fifth century.

B. *The Vatican Manuscript*, No. 1209, in the Vatican Library at Rome is probably older than the Sinaitic, and was written in the fourth



στασις και ουδενι ου | δεν ειπον εφοβον | το γαρ : Mark 16 : 8.

SPECIMEN OF THE VATICAN MANUSCRIPT, 1209.

century. It is a quarto vellum volume of 759 leaves (142 containing the New Testament), 10 by  $10\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and having three columns of forty-two lines each to a page. The first part of Genesis to chapter 46 : 28 is wanting, and also the last part of the New Testament, after Heb. 9 : 14, that is, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Revelation



are missing in the original, and have been added in a comparatively recent handwriting. It has been issued in six volumes by Vercellone, Cozza and Sergio (vol. vi. to contain the notes, etc.).

There are other Vatican manuscripts: No. 2066 of Revelation, and No. 354 of the Gospels; the latter a folio of 234 leaves in oblong uncials or capitals; also containing an Epistle of Carpianus and the Eusebian Canons.

C. *The Ephraem Manuscript*, in the National Library of Paris. This is a palimpsest, that is, the original writing was partially erased and some Greek works of Ephraem, the Syrian father (299–378 A.D.), were written over it. This has portions of the Greek version of the Old Testament on 64 leaves, and of the New Testament on 145 leaves. It has all of the Gospels except about 37 chapters. About 15 chapters of Acts, 45 of the Epistles and 11 of the Apocalypse are also missing. It has been worked over by three correctors between the sixth and tenth centuries.

D. *The Greco-Latin Manuscript of Beza*, in the Cambridge Library, England, is a quarto volume 10 by 8 inches, one column on a page, the Greek text on the left hand page and the Latin version on the right hand, being parallel. It contains the Gospels and Acts, but is marred by eight or nine correctors, and is not regarded of great value in textual study.

There is a large number of uncial manuscripts of less importance than these just described; one of the latest discovered is

Σ. *Codex Rossanensis*, a purple vellum, containing Matthew and Mark, beautifully written in silver letters, the first three lines at the beginning of each Gospel being in gold. It is also illustrated with eighteen water-color pictures representing scenes in the gospel history. It is

ΠΟΝΗΡΟΥΤΙ  
 ΣΟΥ ΕΣΤΙΝ Η ΒΑ  
 ΣΙΛΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ Η ΔΥ  
 ΝΑΜΙΣ ΚΑΙ Η ΔΟ  
 ΞΑ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΑΙΩ  
 ΝΑΣ ΑΜΗΝ  
 ΕΑΝ ΓΑΡ ΑΦΗΤΕ

Doxology to the Lord's Prayer. Matt. 6:13.

κονηρου οτι | σου εστιν η βα | σιλεια και η δυ | ναμις και η δο | ξα εις τους αιω |  
 νας αμην. | Εαν γαρ αφητε

SPECIMEN OF THE CODEX ROSSANENSIS.

supposed to belong to the sixth century, and contains the doxology to the Lord's Prayer, Matt. 6:13, which is not found in the Sinaitic, the Vatican or the Beza manuscript.

The increased interest in the study of ancient texts, and the thorough research skilled palæographers are making in convents, monasteries and other ancient literary storehouses of the old world, make it quite probable that other copies of the New Testament may be found, and some perhaps older than any yet known. Nor is it quite so impossible as some would lead us to believe that portions may yet be discovered written if not by the apostles themselves, at least by their immediate disciples. This will not seem without the range of possibility when we remember the severe persecutions of the early Church and the diligent efforts made to destroy its sacred books, which would naturally lead to as diligent efforts in placing the works beyond the reach of their enemies, and in secret places, caves, tombs and crypts under churches.

The cursive manuscripts, or those in running hand, now known are very numerous. They are not older than the tenth century and extend to the fifteenth or later, when they were superseded by printed copies of the Scriptures. The number of cursives now known has already been given on pages 11 and 12.

Of the different printed editions of the Greek New Testament, Dr. Schaff gives a list of nine hundred and twenty-three, more or less critical, of which it is estimated that not less than a million of copies have been issued. These have been based on the manuscript copies, the best critical printed editions being made by carefully collating a large number of the best manuscripts, and also by correcting any apparent errors, by early translations and citations of an older and presumably a purer text in the writings of the Christian fathers.

II. *Early Translations.*—A second source of the text of the New Testament is the early translations made from the Greek. Some of these translations were made from a text older than any Greek text now extant. These translations are grouped in six classes:

1. *The Syriac Versions.*—The most important of these are—(a) *The Curetorian Syriac*, a fragment of the Gospels consisting of 82½ leaves, which Alford calls “perhaps the earliest and most important of all versions,” but Scrivener counts this a bold assertion. The best English critics are inclined to regard it as the oldest form of the Syriac version. (b) *The Peshito* or *Peshitto*, that is, the “simple,” revised in the third or fourth century. (c) *The Philoxenian* or *Harclean* version, a literal and servile translation named after Philoxenus, a Syrian bishop (488–518 A.D.), and Thomas of Harkel (616 A.D.), also a Syrian bishop. (d) *The Jerusalem Syriac*, of the fifth century.

2. *The Latin Versions.*—Of these there are—(a) *The Old Latin* (Itala), not complete, but originally made between 150 and 200 A.D. It was the basis of the Latin version made by Jerome. (b) *The Latin Vulgate*, or common Latin version, made by Jerome (died 419). He used old Greek manuscripts in making his revision, which was opposed as too

radical in its changes, but finally won its way to acceptance. This Latin version was the first book printed—the so-called Mazarin Bible—about 1455.

3. *Old Egyptian (Coptic) Versions.*—These exist in three dialects, (*a*) the Thebaic or Sahidic, (*b*) the Memphitic or Bahiric and (*c*) the Bashmuriac. The first dialect belongs to Upper Egypt, and fragments of the version have been published. The second dialect belongs to Lower Egypt, and the version contains all the books of the New Testament except Revelation, and even that is found in some later copies. Of the version in the third dialect only fragments have been discovered.

4. *The Gothic Version* was made by Ulphilas or Wulfila, bishop of the Goths (311–381 or 313–383), and exists in three fragmentary manuscripts, which have been edited for critical scholars.

5. *The Ethiopic Version*, belonging to the fourth, or, as some say, to the sixth century, has been printed in Walton's Polyglot. It has the Gospels complete, but not all of the Acts.

6. *The Armenian Version* belongs to the fifth century and contains the entire Bible. The Slavonic, Saxon, Persian and Arabic versions are of comparatively recent date, not being as old as several existing Greek manuscripts.

III. *Quotations by the Early Fathers.*—A third source of the text of the New Testament is the numerous quotations from the Scripture found in the writings of the early fathers. Those who wrote in Greek cited directly from the Greek text; those who wrote in Latin usually quoted from the old Latin translation. Among those who wrote works in which they cited the Scripture were, Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Polycarp, Papias and Hermas, who were pupils of the apostles themselves. Few citations by them have come down to our time, although we have the so-called Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas. Justin Martyr, Irenæus and Tertullian follow in the second century. Those by Irenæus are now in Latin, and are noteworthy because he accepts the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel. Tertullian also cites from the old (African) Latin translation of the New Testament. In the third century were Clement of Alexandria (died 220), and, foremost of all as the father of biblical exegesis, Origen (died 254), Cyprian, Lactantius and Hippolytus. In the fourth century flourished Eusebius (died 340), Athanasius, the two Gregorics, Ephraem of Syria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, Basil the Great, Chrysostom (died 407), and Jerome (died 419), and in the next century the distinguished Augustine. These writings are not of great importance for making up an independent text of the New Testament books; but in attempting to settle the question of a disputed reading, their testimony is often of great value.

## II. MATTHEW.

The Gospel according to Matthew has uniformly been placed at the beginning of the collection of Christian Scriptures called the New Testament. Why it has been so placed is not certainly known. The Gospels would naturally be accorded the leading position in any collection of the New Testament; yet it is not easy to see why Matthew should have been placed first, and not Mark or Luke, unless because it was first circulated, and because it was written by an apostle.

*Title.*—It is evident, from fragments of the writings of the early Fathers which have come down to us, that Matthew wrote some account of our Lord's teachings, which they refer to as "Memoirs" or "Memorials." Whether the account thus designated was identical with the Gospel by Matthew which we now have, is still keenly discussed. Many modern critics hold that these terms applied to briefer and earlier writings.

Yet the Gospel in the form now preserved is not strictly a *history*, nor a *biography*, nor indeed a formal memoir. It is rather memorials, or memorabilia, that is, concise accounts of events familiarly written, as the dictionaries now define those terms. In accord with this is the earliest known heading or *title* to the first Gospel. It ran *κατὰ Ματθαίου* = "according to Matthew." The general caption or title which sometimes preceded this was *εὐαγγέλιον* = "Gospel." But more frequently this was not expressed.

This omission of the general title may, and no doubt does, imply that the early Christians regarded the four narratives as one Gospel in four-fold form. This, at least, we know from other testimony, was their view. They looked upon them collectively as a unit. They formed the solid evangel, four square. After a time, and quite early, not later than the age of Justin Martyr, they were spoken of as *Evangels*, *Gospels*.

The longer title now common at the head of Matthew's, and of the three other books of the Gospel, is not found in the oldest extant manuscript copies. The oldest copies favor the short form, and it so appears in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts. And Justin Martyr refers to the *Evangels* and *Memoirs* of our Lord, though some think that he does not refer to our *Gospels*, but to some similar briefer records now lost. But in his apology for Christianity written to Antoninus Pius he calls certain apostolic writings then current *Memoirs*, and at the same time says they were designated *Gospels*: "those *Memoirs* written by the apostles which are called *Gospels*." He adds that these writings or *Memoirs* were read in the assemblies of Christians "on the day called Sunday." In a dialogue with Trypho the Jew he designates these writings more particularly as the *memoirs* which were written by

our Lord's apostles and their companions. He cannot therefore refer simply to the supposed "logia" or earlier record by Matthew, for he speaks of apostles (plural) and of their companions who have written such memoirs. Irenæus (130-202 A.D.), for many years a contemporary of Justin, makes numerous citations from the first Gospel, and distinctly ascribes his quotations to Matthew the apostle. The learned Origen, a few years later (185-254 A.D.), wrote a commentary on the Gospel, and says the first Gospel, to which his commentary referred, "was written by Matthew, formerly a tax-gatherer, but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ." These accumulated facts seem strongly, if not convincingly, to prove that the Memoirs referred to by Justin were the same as our Gospel according to Matthew. This, however, does not prove that Matthew did not write some earlier record called "logia," as modern critics affirm, or an earlier Gospel in Hebrew, as early Christian writers affirm. It rather aids in perceiving why the short title to this Gospel was used in early times.

The general title not expressed was *Εὐαγγέλιον*=Gospel. In Homeric Greek it signified a *present given for good news*, "Let this reward, *Εὐαγγέλιον*, be given me for my good news."—*Ody.* 14:152. In later Greek it was applied to the *good news* itself, and in the New Testament it means the *good news* of the Messiah's kingdom. Thus the inspired narratives which record the life, work and teaching of Jesus the Christ were called *Εὐαγγέλιον*=good news. They are called "gospel" in English from "gōd" or "good," and "spell" from *spellian*, "to tell," hence, a story or tidings. Thus "gospel" means "good news," or "good tidings," of salvation through Jesus Christ. Here we have that Gospel "according to Matthew," or as it was written by that evangelist. The ancient general title to the four records then was not "the holy gospel" nor "the gospel," but simply "gospel." The old title to the first Gospel was not "according to St. Matthew," but simply "according to Matthew."

THE AUTHOR.—The first Gospel was ascribed to Matthew with great uniformity by the early Christian Fathers. Irenæus (130-202 A.D.) says, "Matthew the apostle declares that John, when preparing the way for Christ, said to those who boasted of their relationship to Abraham, O generation of vipers, who hath shown you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit meet for repentance."\* The Didachè, or Teaching of the Twelve, a very ancient church manual, written between 120-160 A.D., has more than twenty almost exact quotations from Matthew's Gospel. And these are not from the sermon on the mount and other teachings of our Lord only, but from other portions of the Gospel, making strong confirmatory evidence that the Gospel existed substantially in its present form when the Didachè was

\* *Adv. Hær.* iii. 9, 1.

first prepared. Clemens Romanus (96 A.D.) also makes distinct quotations from the same Gospel. The so-called Epistle of Barnabas, confessedly of very great antiquity, whether actually written by Barnabas or not, also makes clear citations from Matthew's Gospel; and the same is true of the epistles of Ignatius. Papias (120 A.D.) likewise says, "So then Matthew composed the sayings in the Hebrew dialect. Each one interpreted them as he was able." The Gnostic heretics also give citations from and references to Matthew's Gospel.

In recent times some learned men have held that the work referred to by Papias and some other early Christian Fathers was an original writing by Matthew, but not the Gospel in the form we now have it. This theory they think accounts better for the historic references to passages in the Gospel than the common one, that they are citations from the Gospel in its present form.

This theory is that there was a collection of sayings (*logia*) of our Lord written in Hebrew, probably by Matthew, which were incorporated into our present Gospel and Matthew's name therefore transferred to the enlarged composition, as the greater part of it was originally his collection. Some hold that associates or helpers of the apostle, or later unknown persons, completed the Gospel in its present form. This view substantially is supported by Schleiermacher, Eichhorn, Meyer, Holtzmann, De Wette, Davidson, Dods, and Sanday, among others. But a larger class of learned critics dissent from this view, and hold that it does not as satisfactorily explain the external testimony as the view that Matthew wrote the Gospel in the form we now possess it. This will be more fully considered under the *language* of the Gospel.

Meanwhile it should not be overlooked that those who suppose the Gospel, or the chief portions of it, to have been first written in the Hebrew dialect, the Aramaic, and those also who hold that the present form is a Greek translation of some lost Hebrew original, also concede that the Greek copy now extant is substantially the same as the lost Hebrew copy, so far as that went, and that Matthew was surely the author.

WERE MATTHEW AND LEVI THE SAME?—Matthew was a publican, a tax-gatherer of Galilee, and one of the twelve, Matt. 9: 9; 10: 3; Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 15. This much is certain.

Now the three Gospel narratives relate substantially the same facts in regard to Levi as in regard to Matthew. Compare Matt. 9: 9-13 with Mark 2: 14-17 and Luke 5: 27-32. But Mark and Luke, who mention the call of a publican named Levi, do not place that name in the list of the twelve, but give Matthew in the list the same as it stands in the first Gospel. Some infer from this that Matthew and Levi were two distinct persons, one an apostle, the other a disciple only. So Clement of Alexandria and Origen held in early times, and several noted Ger-

man scholars in recent times. But the majority of learned men hold that these are two names for the same person. The form of Christ's call to Levi given by Mark 2:14 is the same as that used in calling the apostles. If Levi is not the same as Matthew, then Levi did not become an apostle, as the form of his call would imply. Again, the circumstances related of Levi, as his call, his feast, and the designation of Matthew by himself as the publican, form very strong circumstantial evidence that Matthew was known before his call as Levi, and that his name was changed after his call from Levi to Matthew. Instances of a change in name are mentioned of other apostles. Peter was first called Simon; Thaddæus was also called Lebbæus; and there is little doubt that Bartholomew was first known as Nathanael. It does not, however, in any degree affect the authorship nor the apostolic authority of the first Gospel should it be proven that Levi was a different person from Matthew. It is the concurrent testimony of the three Gospel narratives that Matthew was an apostle, and one of the twelve.

Matthew's occupation as a toll- or tax-collector caused him to be intensely hated by the Jews. Yet it was a calling requiring accurate business habits, and giving an opportunity to gain a wide knowledge of human nature. These would fit him for his great work as an apostle; and the writing usually needful in making custom reports would further give him some mastery of languages, as Aramaic and Greek, useful in making the inspired gospel record. In collecting taxes, a knowledge of the vernacular of the people, the western Aramaic, would be a necessity. Almost equally necessary would be a familiarity with the Greek language, in making reports of revenue taxes to Roman officials. If this be so, then his early business would appear to have required bilingual writing. The bearing of this on the Gospel will appear in considering the language in which it was written.

It is more than probable that Matthew was appointed by Herod Antipas, and responsible to that ruler. This would put him in somewhat different relations to the Jews, and to the Messianic hopes, than if he were regarded as a direct representative of the Roman emperor.

Little is known of Matthew after his call to be an apostle. He made a feast to the Master. For the narrative of the feast in Matt. 9:10-13 seems to imply that "the house" was Matthew's, even if it be assumed that the feast by Levi in Luke 5:27 was on a different occasion, and that Levi was not the same as Matthew. He appears to have continued faithfully with Jesus until his ascension, and was in the apostolic company at the election of Matthias, Acts 1:13. One tradition is that Matthew remained in Jerusalem or Palestine for about fifteen years after the ascension. Eusebius records that "Matthew also having first proclaimed the gospel in Hebrew, when about to go to other nations committed it to writing in his native tongue, and thus supplied the lack

of his presence to them by his writings."\* Socrates the historian says he preached the gospel in Ethiopia, and died there. Clement of Alexandria asserts that he became an ascetic, living on seeds, nuts and vegetables without flesh food, and died a natural death. There is a later legendary tale that an attendant of the king of Ethiopia thrust the evangelist through the back while at prayer. Nicephorus says that Matthew suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia. Other traditions represent him as laboring in upper Syria, in Macedonia—where some say he died—in Persia, and even in India. The Roman Latin Church accepts the story of his martyrdom, which it commemorates September 21. The Italian painters represent him as dying by the sword of an executioner. The Greek artists portray him as ending his life peacefully, in accordance with the early traditions of the Greek Church.

IN WHAT LANGUAGE WRITTEN?—This is one of the most difficult problems relating to the first Gospel. The difficulty has been greatly increased in modern times by the apparent conflict which learned men have believed they find between the external and the internal evidence. The historic or external testimony is very strong, and nearly uniform, that Matthew first composed a Hebrew or more exactly an Aramaic Gospel. The internal evidences, gained from a careful literary study of the Gospel in its present form, perhaps favor a Greek original rather than a translation into Greek from the Hebrew.

(1) *In Hebrew.* The historic evidence for a Hebrew or Aramaic Gospel by Matthew is too strong to be broken. The Christian Fathers are practically unanimous in their testimony to its existence. Papias (120 A.D.) says, "Matthew wrote the sayings in the Hebrew dialect, and each one interpreted them as he was able"; that is, every one not familiar with Hebrew translated them, or got them translated, as best he could. Irenæus (180 A.D.) testifies, "Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect." Pantænus found among the Indians the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, which Bartholomew the apostle was said to have carried to them, so Eusebius relates. Origen (230 A.D.) tells of the tradition in his time, that Matthew, an apostle, wrote the first Gospel for Jewish believers, in the Hebrew language. Cyril of Jerusalem (345 A.D.) speaks of Matthew, the author of the Gospel, which he wrote in the Hebrew language. Jerome (331-420 A.D.) affirms that he possessed a copy of Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew, and that he translated it into the Greek. Later he speaks of it as the Hebrew Gospel which the Nazarenes and Ebionites use, "and which is called by most the authentic Gospel of Matthew." In fact the Christian Fathers from Papias to Jerome and Theophylact assert that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew vernacular, and imply that the Greek Gospel which we have is a translation; or at least they make no allu-

\* Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 24.



sion to an original Greek copy. Greisbach, Tregelles, Westcott, and many other able critical scholars, regard the evidence for a Hebrew Gospel by Matthew as incontrovertible.

(2) *In Greek.* But modern critics declare that the present Gospel has the marks of an original work and not of a translation. Some even attempt to discredit the historic testimony for a Hebrew Gospel by Matthew. They urge (1) that the Hebrew Gospel, if one existed, has disappeared, leaving no traces behind; (2) that the ancient evidences for it are confusing if not conflicting; (3) that the Greek version has been received as authoritative from very early times; (4) that its similarity of style with Mark and Luke indicate a Greek, not a Hebrew, original; (5) that the style of the Gospel bears the stamp of originality.

The theories proposed to solve this apparent tangle of facts are numerous. They may be reduced in the main to three: (1) It was written first in the Hebrew vernacular, that is, western Aramaic; later it was translated into Greek, either by Matthew or by some other hand possibly with the authority of Matthew. (2) It was written in Greek; the supposed Hebrew copy, if it ever existed, being some other work, or some reputed copy, which was mistaken for the genuine Gospel of Matthew. (3) The Gospel was a bilingual work; that is, that Matthew wrote it first in the Hebrew vernacular for Palestine Jews, and then composed (not translated simply) the Gospel in Greek for use among Jews in Greek-speaking countries.

We conclude: The evidences for a Hebrew Gospel by Matthew cannot be successfully questioned, although no such work is now extant. The originality of the Greek copy cannot be decisively settled by any appeal to the style of the Greek Gospel, for many scholars discover what they regard as marks of a translation; for example, the uniformity of style, the even distribution of Hebraisms, the paucity of Hebrew terms and the mode of citing from the Old Testament, all indicate a translation. The *third* view seems therefore the one which best meets the conditions of the problem.

For a plain way through all these difficulties is to accept the uniform testimony of the early Church, that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, and to accept also the internal evidences showing that the Greek Gospel which has come down to us was written by Matthew. Josephus in A.D. 75-90 wrote some of his works in Hebrew vernacular and then rewrote them in Greek; see *Pref. Jew. War*, § 1. It is a fact that Matthew as a publican or tax-collector doubtless gained some familiarity with the two languages. Thus he would be prepared to write a bilingual Gospel. The loss of the Hebrew original has an exact parallel in the works of Josephus. Their Hebrew original is likewise lost. The ancient copies of Matthew's Gospel which have been preserved are in Hellenistic Greek. It is the Greek of the Septuagint version of

the Old Testament, and of the works of Josephus. In any case it is certain that the Greek copy of the Gospel is of apostolic authority, and a trustworthy account of the life and teachings of our Lord.

SOURCES OF THE GOSPEL.—Assuming that Matthew wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is quite consistent to suppose that he, like Luke, may have used any written or oral narratives current when he wrote his complete Gospel. Luke declares that when he composed his Gospel many such accounts were extant. Matthew, however, gives no definite hint of his knowledge of similar narratives. The only information that can be obtained must be gained from others, and from undesigned references in the Gospel itself. Putting these together, we may distinguish three chief sources: 1. *Personal knowledge.* Matthew was one of the twelve. He heard the teachings and witnessed most of the events which he narrates. Again, he was trained to make reports, and would naturally note many things at the time of occurrence. Some, indeed, suppose that he was the secretary of the apostolic band. At any rate he would not be a mere compiler of the sayings and events of our Lord's life from others; he would narrate what he heard and witnessed. 2. *Oral reports.* The several apostles must have repeated the teachings of Christ, and accounts of his chief miracles and the important events of his life, many times over. These would naturally assume a somewhat fixed form even before any considerable portion was written. 3. *Written documents.* It is quite evident that Matthew had access to some written records. The genealogy in chap. 1 is clearly copied, or based upon a copy of public family or tribal records. The greater fullness of the report of the sermon on the mount in his Gospel would be also a natural result of notes taken by Matthew at the time. These memoranda would most likely be made in Hebrew vernacular, and it is reasonable to suppose that they would be worked into his Gospel narrative both in Hebrew and in Greek.

RELATION TO OTHER GOSPELS.—The similarities of narrative in the first three Gospels are so numerous and so striking, that many scholars have supposed there was a framework common to the three. The agreements and peculiarities in the contents of the first three Gospels, often designated "synoptics," have been presented in various ways. According to Westcott, the proportion of agreements in each is: Matthew,  $\frac{5}{100}$ ; Mark,  $\frac{9}{100}$ ; Luke,  $\frac{4}{100}$ ; the proportion of peculiarities or portions of each not in others is: Matthew,  $\frac{4}{100}$ ; Mark,  $\frac{7}{100}$ ; Luke,  $\frac{5}{100}$ . This is on the basis of counting the total contents of the three Gospels at 100. Or again, taking the whole number of distinct sections in the three Gospels at 150, Westcott holds that about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the contents of the Gospels are common to the three, and that the parts peculiar to one or the other of them are little more than one third of the whole. Mark has not more than 24 verses to which parallels do not exist in Matthew or Luke.

These concordances and divergences have led to several theories respecting their origin, known as the synoptic problem, which belongs to an Introduction to Luke's Gospel.

DATE.—Early Christians placed the date of writing of Matthew's Gospel all the way from 41 A.D. to later than 60 A.D. Modern critics (not of the rationalistic school) suggest dates from 37 to 100 A.D. The evidences give strong presumptive reasons for placing it between 55-60 A.D.

FOR WHOM WRITTEN.—It was a prevalent belief of the early Christians that Matthew first wrote his Gospel chiefly for the Hebrews. Internal evidence in the book itself also points to this conclusion. The thought, expression, argument and application in the Gospel all indicate that it was not only written in a Jewish atmosphere, but primarily for Jewish readers. Yet it is not without intimations that a wider class of Grecian Jews or even pure Greeks was sometimes in the mind of the writer. Though the instances are comparatively few, yet he does sometimes add explanations for the information of other than Jewish readers; see Matt. 1: 23, 27; 8: 33, 46. It is important to keep these facts in mind in interpreting some passages of the Gospel.

DESIGN AND PLAN.—The chief design of the Gospel by Matthew was to convince his readers that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ. It is the uniform testimony of the early Fathers that he wrote it for Hebrew Christians; not only those in Palestine, but those also scattered throughout the Roman empire. Hence it has above all the other Gospels a flavor of the Old Testament. There are more than seventy quotations or references to the Hebrew Scriptures in this brief Gospel. It emphasizes over and over again the Messiahship of Jesus. It insists that the life of Jesus is a fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies.

The events are not always arranged in chronological order, but are often grouped or narrated according to some principle of natural association. Matthew passes over the Judæan ministry, and presents chiefly the ministry in Galilee. In connection with Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, he records the closing labors and teachings of Jesus in Peræa and Judæa, chapters 19-25.

*Symbol.*—The Fathers and mediæval writers conceived that the four-fold Gospel was a mysterious symbolic intimation that it would extend to the four quarters of the globe. This also led them to think of some earlier types or symbols that would fittingly represent the four evangelistic writers. The four-faced cherubim of Ezekiel were seized upon for this purpose. So Jerome, Ambrose and others; and thus the symbol of Matthew was a man, of Mark the lion, of Luke an ox, of John an eagle. Irenæus, however, gave the eagle to Mark and the lion to John. Augustine assigned the lion to Matthew, a man to Mark, an ox

to Luke and an eagle to John. Some others gave the ox to Mark and the lion to Luke; and still others an ox to Matthew and a man to Luke. But the prevailing cherubic symbols followed the order in Ezek. 1:10 in the order of the Gospels, as adopted by Jerome and Ambrose.

*Order or Place in New Testament.*—The order of the Gospels now found in the New Testament has come to us from early times. In the Muratorian Fragment of the second century there is a passage which implies that the prevailing order of the four Gospels was then as now, namely, Matthew first, then Mark, Luke and John.

Matthew gives the gospel for the Hebrews; the gospel of the Old Testament, the birth and mission of the Messiah. It is the "kingdom of heaven," the Messianic kingdom, set up on the earth. So the first Gospel omits an account of the ascension. Jesus is Messiah, the ever-ruling and ever-present King. Mark presents the gospel for Gentiles; the supernatural power of Christ, a graphic, swift sketch that fills the reader with amazement and awe. His is the story as Peter preached it, of "Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him," Acts 10:38, R. V. Luke presents an authentic and orderly account of what Christians believed, for the instruction of Gentile Christians. John gives us the mystery of faith in his Gospel; he reveals as none other the very heart of Christ. The first Gospel is Oriental and Hebrew, the second is Roman and graphic, the third is Greek and cultured, the fourth is contemplative and heavenly-minded. The first sets forth Jesus as Messianic and kingly, the second as the mighty wonder-worker, the Son of man, the third as the world's Redeemer, and the fourth as the Son of God, the Light of the world.

Matthew shows how the Old Testament comes to full fruition in the New, and thus it naturally and historically is placed first, the "reception room" of the New Testament. From its ample gateway we look back upon the grandeur of the prophetic symbols, and from its royal windows we look forward to the yet coming glories of "the kingdom of heaven," to see Messiah "upon the throne of his glory," "and all the holy angels with him," and before him "gathered all nations," awarding to the righteous "life eternal." Matt. 25:31, 46.

[For "Harmony" and "Contents" see pp. 313-315.]

# PEOPLE'S COMMENTARY

ON THE

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

### CHAP. I. GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST. VS. 1-17.

Compare Luke 3 : 23-38.

1. the generation of Jesus Christ] This verse is properly a title or heading; not to the whole Gospel nor to this chapter, but to this list or table of the ancestors of Jesus taken from the family record of the lineage of Joseph. Similar tribal and family birth-lists were carefully kept and handed down from father to son in the East. The rights of property, of a priest to office, and many civil and social questions, were often settled by appeals to these family birth-records. Hence the Hebrews counted them of high value.

The Greek word for book, βιβλος, primarily signifies a plant, the papyrus, then paper made from it, and lastly, as here, the writing on the paper. So it meant the book or roll on which the public record of the origin or ancestry of Jesus was found. The Greek word for "generation" means literally "origin," "lineage" or "birth."

"Jesus" means "saviour," and is the Greek word for the Hebrew Joshua, a contraction of Jehoshua, and sometimes written Jeshua, Hoshea and Oshea. The Hebrew word means "Jehovah helps" or "saves." "Christ" is the Greek word for the Hebrew "Messiah," meaning "anointed," a common way of inducting one into a kingly or priestly office. Every Jew would ask about one claiming to be the Messiah, "Is he the son of David?" It was the first step towards proving that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah—a chief purpose of Matthew in writing his Gospel.

2-15. THE FAMILY RECORD.—This record of the ancestry of Joseph shows that Jesus, son of Joseph and Mary, is the son of David. In this list

#### COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. I.—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 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;

6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

#### REVISED VERSION.

1 THE book of the <sup>2</sup>generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his

3 brethren; and Judah begat Perez and Zerah of Tamar; and Perez begat Hez-

4 ron; and Hezron begat <sup>3</sup>Ram; and <sup>3</sup>Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon; and Nahshon begat Sal-

5 mon; and Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab;

6 and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the

king.

And David begat Solomon of her *that*

<sup>1</sup> Or, *The genealogy of Jesus Christ*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *birth*: as in v. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *Aram*

there are—1. *Omissions.* Why these omissions occur we do not know, nor is it important; the list is given from the records well known at the time. It was not necessary to give every link in line; enough were given to prove the real line from Abraham and David to Joseph and Jesus. 2. *Variant names.* The forms of some names are not as they appear in the Old Testament, due to the English version of 1611 following the Greek mode of spelling some names. These variations have been removed in the Revised Version of 1881. 3. *Women named.* Four women are named in the record, an unusual thing among Orientals and rare among the Hebrews. Two of the women mentioned—Rahab and Ruth—were not Hebrews; and two were stained with sin—Thamar, and Bath-sheba the wife of Uriah. There is no attempt to hide the dark characters in this pedigree. Many of the kings named were also guilty of great sins. Jesus Christ came to save sinners; he is a great Saviour, coming in the form of our sinful nature. 4. *Names inserted.* Some not in the line are mentioned, as the brethren of Judah, Zerah a son of Judah, and the brethren of Jechoniah. Perhaps Judah's brothers were mentioned to remind the readers of the unity of the Hebrew race. And Jechoniah's brethren may have been noticed because Jeremiah says "write this man childless," Jer. 22:30, that is, he shall have no successor on the throne of David. We know that he was not literally childless from 1 Chron. 3:17, 18, where Salathiel is named as one of his sons. Why others are named and some omitted is not certainly known.

16. husband of Mary, of whom was born] Why this change in the form of the record? If Jesus had been begotten as those preceding him, we would have expected the record to have continued, "and Joseph begat Jesus." Does not the peculiar form of the record here indicate that Jesus was born of Mary different from other births; that he was not a mere man?

The names are put in three groups of fourteen generations in each group. The first group begins with Abraham and ends with David, and appears to include him. The second group begins with David and ends with

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
7 And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;	7 <i>had been the wife</i> of Uriah; and Solomon begat Rehoboam; and Rehoboam begat
8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;	8 Abijah; and Abijah begat <sup>1</sup> Asa; and <sup>1</sup> Asa begat Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat
9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;	9 Joram; and Joram begat Uziah; and Uziah begat Jotham; and Jotham begat
10 And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;	10 Ahaz; and Ahaz begat Hezekiah; and Hezekiah begat Manasseh; and Manasseh
11 And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon;	11 begat <sup>2</sup> Amon; and <sup>2</sup> Amon begat Josiah; and Josiah begat Jechoniah and his brethren, at the time of the <sup>3</sup> carrying away to Babylon.
12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zerobabel;	12 And after the <sup>3</sup> carrying away to Babylon, Jechoniah begat <sup>4</sup> Shealtiel; and <sup>4</sup> Shealtiel begat Zerubbabel; and Zerubbabel
13 And Zerobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;	13 Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat
14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;	14 Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and
15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;	15 Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom
16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.	was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Asaph.*<sup>2</sup> Gr. *Amos.*<sup>3</sup> Or, *removal to Babylon*<sup>4</sup> Gr. *Salathiel.*

Jechoniah and the captivity at Babylon. The third group again begins with the captivity and Jechoniah and ends with Christ, whom it identifies with Jesus. While the periods of time are unequal, only fourteen generations are counted in each period.

17. fourteen generations] Some links are omitted to make this reckoning, yet the line is kept sure, and by this grouping the record could be much more easily retained in the memory. The tribal and family records were usually kept in the towns where scribes were to be found. Notice, that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem for enrollment, where the official record of their family lineage would be kept or known. As great portions of local history and of family annals would be kept in memory, the facts, grouped like this family lineage, might be more surely remembered.

In giving this family record of Jesus' ancestry Matthew evidently followed records known to the Jews of his time.\* Had he made serious errors the Jews would have surely pointed them out; for the great purpose of quoting this record was to prove that Jesus was their Messiah.

The genealogy given in Luke 3:23-38 differs in several details from this of Matthew. The explanation of these differences belongs properly to a work on Luke's Gospel. It is sufficient here to note that several modes of reconciling the discrepancies have been proposed: 1. That Luke gives the natural descent or pedigree of Joseph, while Matthew gives the legal succession as to inheritance and the regal succession as to the throne. So Grotius, Calvin, Lord Hervey and many others. 2. That Matthew gives the ancestry of Joseph, while Luke gives that of Mary. So Luther, Lange, Robinson, and perhaps a majority of modern scholars. 3. That Matthew and Luke both give the line of Joseph. That Jacob and Heli were brothers, and Matthan and Melchi were grandfathers to Joseph. That Matthan married and had a son Jacob and died. Then his widow married Melchi, who had Heli by her. That Heli married and died, and Jacob married his widow and had Joseph. This view was widely held by the early Christian fathers. But the second view seems more satisfactory. If neither list gives the ancestry of Mary, we have no proof here that Jesus was a son of David.

BIRTH OF JESUS. VS. 18-25.

BETHLEHEM, B.C. 5-4.

18. the birth of Jesus Christ] Note how Matthew says "Jesus Christ," thus identifying Jesus as the Messiah. He begins the biography of Jesus

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
17 So all the generations from Abraham to David <i>are</i> fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon <i>are</i> fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ <i>are</i> fourteen generations.	17 So all the generations from Abraham unto David <i>are</i> fourteen generations; and from David unto the <sup>1</sup> carrying away to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the <sup>1</sup> carrying away to Babylon unto the Christ fourteen generations.
18 ¶ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on <sup>1</sup> Or, <i>removal to Babylon</i> <sup>2</sup> Or, <i>generation</i> : as in v. 1.	18 Now the <sup>2</sup> birth <sup>3</sup> of Jesus Christ was on <sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read <i>of the Christ</i> .

\* That there were such records we know from what Josephus says of his lineage: "I give the descent of our family exactly as I find it written in the public records."

with the betrothal of Mary and the angel's visit to Joseph. Luke tells of the angel's visit to Mary and her visit to her cousin Elisabeth; of the birth of John, and what brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus. But Matthew tells of other facts relating to the divine origin of Jesus, and by the phrase "on this wise" implies that it was unlike the birth of those already named in his ancestry; for the Greek word for "birth" leads the mind back to a *genesis*, the genetic origin.

**his mother Mary was espoused]** Or, "had been betrothed" to Joseph. From betrothal she was treated as if actually his wife, according to Oriental custom; see "husband," v. 19, and "thy wife," v. 20, and compare Deut. 22:24. Parents arranged for the marriage of children and settled their betrothals, with or sometimes even without the consent of the parties, who were supposed to act by their representatives.

Between betrothal and actual "coming together" the bride remained in her own home, and seldom saw her husband, nor he his wife. Possibly in Galilee life might have been more primitive and free; but the communications were through a "friend." See John 2:3-9 and 3:29.

The verb "was found" does not imply that she was detected or discovered, as if she were trying to hide her condition; for the angel Gabriel had foretold this miraculous event to Mary, Luke 1:26-40. The fulfillment now became known to herself, and through friends to her betrothed husband.

**19. not willing to make her a public example]** The "betrothed" must be divorced by the same mode before as after the marriage feast. This marriage feast occurred when the bride was brought to the house of the husband to live. According to the Talmud this was a full year after the betrothal in the case of virgins, but for widows it might be only one month after; but see Gen. 24:55. Joseph was a "just" or "righteous" man; he believed it was not right to retain her for his wife; and he was "not willing" (a strong Greek word); he was decided against making her a public example, defaming her. So he "was minded" (a weaker Greek word), he "wished" or "was disposed" to give her a "writing" or "divorce" privately, and without stating reasons; a mode the law allowed, Deut. 24:1-3.

**20. Joseph, thou son of David, . . . take unto thee Mary]** Notice the angel calls Joseph a "son of David," appearing to him when he was

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, an 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 <sup>1</sup>conceived in <sup>21</sup>her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *begotten*.



thinking what to do with his betrothed Mary. The angel directs him to take Mary as his wife without fear, explaining that she had done nothing to forfeit her right to be his wife. Adam was the direct creation of God; the human nature of Jesus was by the creative act of the Holy Spirit.

21. she shall bring forth a son . . . Jesus] The angel repeats the words of Gabriel to Mary, Luke 1: 31. Probably they had been reported to Joseph by mutual friends, and caused him great perplexity. The angel now confirms the truthfulness of the message to Joseph. The prophecy concerning a virgin bearing a son in Isa. 7: 14 might have come to Joseph's mind, but the angel left him in no doubt about it; for the words of vs. 22 and 23 should be counted those of the angel and not of the evangelist, as appears clearer in the Revised Version, "Now all this is come to pass," etc. The angel directs Joseph to call the child "Jesus," "Saviour," and gives the reason. The rabbis mention six persons whose names were given to them before their birth: Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, Josiah and the Messiah. Jesus was declared to be Immanuel—"God with us," that is, a *divine* Saviour.

24. Joseph . . . did as the angel . . . had bidden] Or, "commanded him." He "arose from his sleep"; his mind was cleared of doubts. He received Mary his wife. The Greek word is intensive: he received to himself, joined to himself, in his home Mary his wife. A marriage ceremony, a formal rite or pledge before a priest and other witnesses, might be expected among us, but such is not the custom in Oriental lands. There is no such ceremony, but simply a marriage feast, when the bride comes permanently to the home of her husband. This may be implied in the phrase "took" or "received unto him his wife."

25. brought forth her firstborn son] Or, "brought forth a son," R. V. The meaning of this verse has been stoutly disputed for centuries. The correct reading of the Greek text is also disputed. The reading of a majority of the oldest manuscripts supports the rendering in the Revised Version, which omits "her firstborn." The text has a direct bearing upon the question whether Mary the mother of Jesus had other children. The reading "she brought forth her firstborn son" is found in Luke 2: 7, and there it is beyond question the true reading. Jerome and Augustine among

## COMMON VERSION.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, And they shall call his name <sup>1</sup>Immanuel;

24 which is, being interpreted, God with us. And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him,

25 and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth a son: and he called his name JESUS.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Emmanuel*.

early Christian Fathers, and Roman Catholic writers, zealously insist that Mary never had other children. The Romanists hold that celibacy is a more holy state than marriage, and hence they believe that Mary continued a virgin, and interpret all the statements of Scripture in conformity with their preconceived doctrine. Some Protestant writers also maintain that Mary had no other children. But a large number of able scholars have maintained that many passages in the New Testament compel us to conclude that Mary was the mother of other children, and that Jesus had brothers, and sisters also. The unprejudiced mind cannot well resist this conclusion. But observe: 1. The use of the word "till" cannot be counted in favor nor against the view, yet it prepares the mind for the context, which does imply, particularly in Luke 2:7, that there were others, for we would have expected "only-born" and not "firstborn" had the evangelist intended to represent Mary as not the mother of other children. 2. Then Matthew speaks of "brethren" or "brothers," for so the Greek reads in Matt. 12:46, and he reports the names of these brothers in Matt. 13:55; compare also Mark 6:3 and John 7:5. Some explain away these statements by suggesting that these may have been children of Joseph by a former wife, or by a levirate marriage in accordance with the rule in Deut. 25:5, or that they might have been cousins. These, however, are conjectures. The Scriptures do not clearly decide the question; and we also must leave it undecided. Joseph called the son Jesus, as the angel commanded. He also became the human guardian and the legal father of the holy child.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Through Jewish family records and dry genealogies our faith in Christ may be confirmed. 2. Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. 3. Mary's faith was sorely tried; so God often tries the faith of good persons. 4. Joseph, in his perplexity, was given divine direction; so God often comforts and guides his perplexed saints. 5. Mark the providence that called Joseph to Bethlehem, so that the infant Jesus was born there; and how marvellously Scripture was fulfilled. 6. Christ became man to save us; we believe this incarnation of the divine Saviour, but we cannot comprehend it; for we cannot comprehend God.

#### CHAP. II. VISIT OF THE WISE MEN. vs. 1-12.

##### BETHLEHEM, B.C. 4.

*Analysis.*—Magi or wise men come from the east to Jerusalem seeking the King of the Jews, led by a star, vs. 1, 2. Herod learns from the priests that Christ should be born at Bethlehem, vs. 3-6. He sends the wise men there to find the infant King, pretending that he too would worship him, vs. 7, 8. The men see the star again, find Mary and her child, make gifts to the child, and return another way home, vs. 8-12. Warned by an angel, Joseph escapes with the mother and child into Egypt, vs. 13-15. Herod slays all the boys two years old and under in Bethlehem, vs. 16-18. After Herod was dead, Joseph, Mary and the child return to Nazareth in Galilee, vs. 19-23.

The visit of the wise men is related by Matthew only; he presents it as another proof that Jesus was the Christ.

**1. Jesus was born in Bethlehem]** Prophecy declared that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem. Matthew now narrates how Jesus was born in that town, and who came to seek him. The wise men came because they had been divinely informed that the Jewish Messiah, whom they, too, had long expected, was born.

Bethlehem is about two hours (six miles) south of Jerusalem. It is still called *Beit-Lahm, house of flesh*, while the Hebrew Beth-lehem means "house of bread." It is prettily perched upon a limestone or chalky ridge of hills having steep terraced slopes. The place was not large, though it now has about 8000 population, chiefly Christians. Its old name, before the Hebrews settled in Canaan, was Ephrath or Ephratah, Gen. 48:7. It was also called "Bethlehem of Judæa" to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in Zebulun, Josh. 19:15. Bethlehem has an ancient and honorable history. Near it Rachel died, Gen. 35:19, and her tomb is still shown about a mile away in the valley toward Jerusalem. It was the home of Naomi, of Boaz, and of Ruth; and Bethlehem was also the birthplace of David, 1 Sam. 17:12. It was rebuilt or fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. 11:6, and lastly it was the birthplace of Jesus.

The town has no natural water-supply, but there are numerous cisterns; a rock cistern to the northwest is pointed out as the traditional well from which David's warriors brought him water, 2 Sam. 23:14-16. There is also a small spring about half a mile east of the convent. The people are industrious and thrifty, having numerous flocks and herds, and their vineyards are counted among the best in the country. The valleys to the north and south of the town are deep, but the slopes are terraced, and covered with olive, fig and other trees, and with vines. The main street is about half a mile long; the other streets are short and narrow, generally leading into the main street. The convent and the "Church of the Nativity" and "Church of St. Mary" are in the west part of the town. The monastery or convent is fortress-like, and within it is the church, occupied by Greeks, Latins and Armenians. The old basilica of Constantine tradition says stands on the site of the stable where Christ was born. It is the oldest church in Palestine, and the place was noticed by Justin Martyr in the second century. The "Grotto of the Nativity" is beneath the chancel of this ancient basilica, and is reached by two winding staircases. The grotto is about 40 feet long by 10 or 12 feet wide. At the north end of the crypt is shown the room or study where Jerome spent about thirty years in making a Latin translation of the Bible, called the Vulgate. The tradition which locates the birthplace of Jesus in this "grotto" is much clearer and stronger than many other local traditions in the Holy Land, and is accepted by Greeks, Latins, Armenians,

## COMMON VERSION.

**C**HAP. II.—Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

## REVISED VERSION.

**2** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, <sup>1</sup>wise men from the east came

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Magi*. Compare Esther 1:13; Dan. 2:12

and by many modern scholars. It is however regarded as of doubtful value by Stanley, Robinson, and many other recent explorers.

It is quite certain that the birthplace was a *khan* or Oriental inn, and in that part of it assigned to mules and other animals of travellers. The *khan* is usually in form a hollow square, with arches at the sides within, where mules and muleteers rest, while over these arches are rooms for the travellers themselves. As the "rooms" in the Bethlehem inn were full, Joseph and Mary found shelter with the beasts, where muleteers now usually find rest. The shepherds found the babe in the manger. When the wise men came, some days later, the mother and child had found room with some hospitable persons in "the house."

It is remarkable that neither Jesus during his ministry nor the twelve ever visited Bethlehem, so far as Scripture records show.

DATE OF CHRIST'S BIRTH.—The year when Jesus was born is not stated in Scripture, and is not certainly known. The beginning of our Christian era was fixed by Dionysius, a monk who lived in the sixth century. He reckoned it from the *incarnation* (about nine months before the actual birth) of Christ. He assumed that the birth was in the year of Rome (A.U.C.) 754, and upon December 25 of A.D. 1. But it is now known that Herod died before the Passover in the year of Rome 750. Yet Jesus was born some time before Herod died. Hence our present date is over four years too late. The true date of the birth of Jesus cannot be fixed later than the year of Rome (A.U.C.) 749. There is often much confusion in changing dates from the Roman era to the Christian era, owing to the year B.C. 1 and the year A.D. 1 coming together. This table will make the change clear:

A.U.C. (Roman),	749	750	751	752	753	754	755	756	...	780
B.C. (Christian),	5	4	3	2	1	A.D. 1	2	3		27

Since Herod died before the Passover A.U.C. 750, and after Jesus was born, the birth of Jesus cannot be fixed later than the last part of the year 749 A.U.C. or B.C. 5. He was therefore four years old at the beginning of our Christian era, and over thirty-three years old at the time of his crucifixion in A.D. 30. These dates are accepted as approximately correct by nearly all recent Biblical scholars.

The *day* of Christ's birth is more uncertain than the year. The early Christians did not observe any day as Christ's birthday. Clement of Alexandria about A.D. 215 speaks of some who placed the birth about May 20. Others thought April 19 or 20 the truer date. Some eastern Christians kept January 6 as the day of Christ's baptism and birth. In the fourth century the western Church began to celebrate December 25 as Christmas, Christ's birthday, and this custom gradually spread into the East, for Chrysostom speaks of the custom in his day as having come from the West. There is nothing in the Gospels to enable us to fix the date with any certainty.

**wise men from the east came]** Or, literally, "magi from the east arrived at Jerusalem." "Wise men" still come from the east into Syria. Persian physicians are still in repute throughout Turkey. Hindu magicians and enchanters still wander into western Asia. The magi are an ancient

class in the East. The word may be of Median origin, where it originally signified "a priest," though Schrader and Müller regard it as Babylonian. Herodotus tells us the magi formed one of the six tribes into which the Medes were divided, a sacred and priestly class, like the Levites among the Hebrews. They were students of the stars, and of all occult matters. So the Greeks, as Plato and Philo, regarded the magi as observers of the heavens and students of the mysteries of nature. This class were numerous and influential in Chaldæa, for Jeremiah speaks of Rab-mag, or the chief of the magi, Jer. 39 : 3, 13 ; and Daniel frequently mentions classes of them, and was himself counted among them, Dan. 2 : 2, 18 ; 4 : 7. There is a mediæval tradition that these wise men were three kings, representing the three great families of Shem, Ham and Japheth. It is also said that their names were Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, and that they were from Arabia. This was perhaps due to a misinterpretation of Ps. 72 : 10, since the kings of Seba and Sheba are there spoken of as bringing gifts. The Romanists have added to the legend, and profess to show the skulls of the three kings carefully preserved in the cathedral of Cologne on the Rhine!

2. Where is . . . King of the Jews?] Or, literally, "Where is the born-king of the Jews?" the newly-born King. For Herod was not a *born-king*. They would naturally expect to find the Jewish King in their capital city. It was clear they did not refer to Herod, but to the coming Messiah. The captive Jews in Babylon would leave there some knowledge of this hope of a great prince or ruler, which the magi might hand down as among the mysterious things to be watched. So when the Maccabæan princes took the throne, the rights of the Messiah were reserved. See 1 Mac. 14 : 41. This title "King of the Jews" appears again, on the cross, Matt. 27 : 37.

his star in the east] That is, the star which was the sign of his coming. Orientals are great readers of the stars. They believe the stars have great power over all human affairs. Even the Jews demanded a "sign from heaven" to attest the mission of Jesus, Matt. 16 : 1. Zoroaster (centuries before the Christian era) predicted that a mighty person should arise in the latter days, and that his posterity should see a star which would herald his coming. Much speculation has been given to the question what this star was. Kepler the great astronomer suggested that it might be a new star, and a conjunction of the planets Saturn and Jupiter A.U.C. 747, similar to a conjunction of the planets which he observed in 1604. But Pritchard and others have shown that the two planets would be separated by twice the apparent diameter of the moon, and would not appear as one star. Nor would an ordinary comet answer the conditions of the narrative ; for at its reappearance the "star" "went before them, till it came and stood over where the

## COMMON VERSION.

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Where is the King of the Jews that is born?*

<sup>2</sup> The Greek word denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to man (see chap. 18 : 26) or to God (see chap. 4 : 10).

## REVISED VERSION.

2 to Jerusalem, saying, <sup>1</sup> Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are come to <sup>2</sup> worship

young child was," v. 9. The whole account shows some special movement of the star, and implies a miraculous appearance.

**3. he was troubled]** Seven Herods are named in the New Testament. This one is known as "Herod the Great," though he was not so called during his life. He was the son of Antipater, an Edomite; the Roman Antony made him tetrarch, and the Roman senate later made Herod king of Judæa. He was shrewd, suspicious, violent, malicious, cruel and barbarous. He had ten wives and several sons; but Augustus the emperor said of Herod, "I would rather be his *sow* than his *son*." He ruled about thirty-seven years, and at seventy years of age died a miserable death in Jericho, 4 B.C. The news of a "born-King" of the Jews caused great excitement in Herod's court, and among all Jews.

**4. the chief priests]** The Mosaic law provided for only one "chief priest," but it was a rich and influential office; the Romans deposed and appointed them for political reasons, so there were several ex-high priests. Perhaps the chiefs of the twenty-four courses were also so called. See Ezra 8: 24; Neh. 12: 7. Josephus gives the title chief priest to all who had been high priests, and even to some who never were actually in that office, but who belonged to the family from which that person was chosen, and was therefore eligible to the office. Luke appears to follow a similar custom in naming John, Alexander and Sceva, Acts 4: 6; 19: 14, neither of whom was ever known to have been appointed high priest.

**and scribes]** The scribe (Hebrew *sopher*, from *saphar*, "to count," because he counted the letters of the law) held an office that often made him more influential than the priests; for he copied and interpreted the holy law, was eligible to the Sanhedrin, and looked upon as expert to settle difficult questions. As a class the scribes became arrogant, and their decisions, "traditions," of more authority than the law, Matt. 15: 3.

**6. that shall rule my people]** Or, "who shall be shepherd of my people," R. V. The priests and scribes knew the prophecy; they could answer Herod without hesitation and point him to the text in their Scriptures, Micah 5: 2. They cited it as to sense rather than in precise words. Homer also calls kings the shepherds of the people. So Jesus calls himself the good Shepherd, John 10: 11.

## COMMON VERSION.

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

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 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 shall rule my people Israel.

## REVISED VERSION.

3 him. And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem

4 with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ 5 should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlechem of Judæa: for thus it is written through the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlechem, land of Judah, art in no wise least among the princes of Judah:

For out of thee shall come forth a governor, Who shall be shepherd of my people Israel.

**7. Herod . . . inquired . . . diligently]** Herod was crafty. He secretly calls the wise men, "learned of them carefully," R. V., or, literally, "learned to the [last] point," that is, accurately, the time that the star appeared. This would suggest to him how old the infant King might be. Then he pretended to want to worship this newly-born King also; so he sent them to Bethlehem and bid them seek carefully, to find the right one, and report to him.

**8. Go and search diligently]** Or, "Go and search out carefully concerning the young child," R. V. Herod was cruel and arbitrary. He formed his bloody purpose quickly and secretly. He was full of such terrible plots. About that time he set a golden eagle over the doorway to the temple. Some Jews dared to tear it down and break it in pieces, but Herod discovered them and ordered them burnt alive. He arrested several of the best and most prominent citizens of Jerusalem, put them in prison, and gave secret orders that they be assassinated the moment he himself died, so that some one would be in mourning at his death. His bloody order was not carried out.

**10. saw the star]** As the wise men went from Herod the star reappeared to them. How long before they had lost sight of it, is not stated, but the words imply that it was unseen for the greater part of their journey. But now it "went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." This cannot well refer to Bethlehem only, but to "the house," v. 11. Their joy was great, which also implies they had not seen the star for some time.

**11. come into the house]** The family would not stay long in the stable of an inn; they were now in "the house," though the visit of the wise men is usually but wrongly pictured in art as in a stable or inn. The crowd of the previous days would be away, and lodgings easily found in a private house.

**presented unto him gifts]** Or, "offered unto him gifts." They fell

COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

7 Then Herod privily called the<sup>1</sup> wise men, and learned of them carefully<sup>2</sup> what time

8 the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search out carefully concerning the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word, that I also may come and worship

9 him. 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

10 young child was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding

11 great joy. And they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts, gold and frank-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Magi*. Compare Esther 1:13; Dan. 2:12.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the time of the star that appeared*

down before him as before a king, and did the "young child" (literally, "the little child") homage. Then they opened their "treasures," caskets, and presented gifts suitable for a king. The magi regarded the infant Jesus as a royal child. Gold has always been esteemed as a proper gift to royalty. Frankincense was one of the fragrant gums used in making the holy oil to anoint priests at their consecration, Ex. 30:34, and was burnt as a sweet savor on the altar, Lev. 2:2. The gum was from a tree common in Africa and Arabia. "Myrrh" also was used in preparing the holy anointing oil, Ex. 30:25. When mixed with cinnamon and aloes it formed a valuable perfume, widely esteemed in the houses of the great. Thus frankincense and myrrh were highly prized for yielding a delicious fragrance. The ancient Fathers thought the number of the gifts signified the Trinity: the triad of Christian graces, faith, hope and love; that gold was a symbol of our Saviour's royalty, frankincense of his divinity, and myrrh of his death; but such interpretations of Scripture, though showing a devout spirit, are now commonly regarded as fanciful.

12. being warned of God] Or, literally, "they having received an answer from God"; or, "having been divinely instructed." The Greek word primarily means "to do business with another." The term clearly implies that the wise men had sought counsel of God. Having presented their gifts, and completed the purpose of their journey, they receive divine instructions not to return to Herod. They return home "another way," avoiding Jerusalem.

Some old expositors have written pages to prove that it was right for the magi to break the promise to return to Herod. But the Scriptures do not say that the magi ever made a promise to return, and it is pure assumption to hold that they agreed to do *all* that Herod bid them. As they were ignorant of the cruel and bloody purpose of Herod, which he artfully concealed from them, it is quite natural to suppose that they thought the king's words sincere. But perhaps something in this strange king's manner had aroused their suspicions, and they long for counsel. In this perplexity divine instruction is given and followed. This visit of the wise men must have comforted Joseph, and confirmed his faith, if it needed strengthening, in respect to the purity of Mary and the lofty character of her child.

Since the fifth century, the visit of the wise men has been commemorated by the "Epiphany" or feast of the "Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles." But that feast was first connected with the baptism of Christ, and the miracle at Cana. To fix the feast only twelve days after the nativity, as now, and regard it as a commemoration of the visit of the wise men, is not consistent with the course of the sacred narrative. Matthew alone notes the visit of the magi, and Luke alone the visit of the shepherds. In some old paintings and pictures we have the double blunder of the adoration of the

## COMMON VERSION.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 incense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.



shepherds and of the magi at the same time, and while the infant Jesus was lying in the manger. The shepherds' visit was at the time of the birth of Jesus, and they saw him in the manger. Luke 2: 11, 12. But the visit of the magi was some time, probably forty days, after the visit of the shepherds, and not while the child was in the manger.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. All things are for Christ; even the heavens declare his glory. 2. "Christ is wont to catch every man in the way of his own craft—magians with a star, fishers with fish."—*Chrysostom*. 3. All science will yet point to Christ, and all true seekers will find him. 4. Even a bad man, serving his own wicked ends, may unwittingly help others to Christ. 5. The Old Testament tells us of Christ. 6. There may be seekers for Christ where we least expect them. 7. Evil and crafty men are full of trouble, and spread trouble about them. 8. The cunning of Herod failed; the sly plots of the wicked often fail. 9. This life is full of "stars," pointing us to Christ. 10. Take our best to offer Christ. 11. Are we rejoiced or troubled at the coming of Christ's power? 12. God warns and shields his own from danger. 13. Deceit in religion is the greatest mockery. 14. God guides those who seek him.

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. vs. 13-23. Compare Luke 2: 39, 40.

BETHLEHEM, EGYPT, NAZARETH, B.C. 4.

The flight into Egypt and the cruel murder of the babes in Bethlehem by Herod are mentioned in Matthew only. The flight to Egypt must have followed the presentation in the temple, Luke 2: 22-39, and the visit of the wise men. It was probably in January or February of B.C. 4. Three events are here narrated by Matthew to prove that Jesus was the Messiah: 1. The flight. 2. The murder of the children. 3. The return to Galilee. Each of these narratives ends with a statement that it is a fulfillment of prophecy.

**13. flee into Egypt]** After the wise men departed, and no doubt very soon after, for Herod would not be long ignorant of their departure, an angel warns Joseph in a dream to take the child and his mother, and escape into Egypt, and remain there until again warned by an angel, because Herod wanted to kill the child. Egypt was a common refuge for dwellers in Palestine. Jeroboam fled thither, 1 Kings 11: 40, and Johanan, Jer. 43: 5-7, and many Jews had settled about Alexandria. It would be a journey of about one hundred miles by the coast route, the safest one for Joseph.

**14. by night, and departed]** Travelling by night is the usual custom in Syria. He may have joined a caravan, and that would start early, by two

COMMON VERSION.

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 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:

REVISED VERSION.

13 Now when they were departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I tell thee: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until

or three o'clock in the morning, to escape the heat of the day. In the East it might not imply haste, as it would with us.

**15. Out of Egypt have I called my son]** The holy family may not have remained in Egypt more than a few months. Herod died at Jericho, before the Passover, B.C. 4. Yet many stories about the journey to and the sojourn in Egypt are found in the apocryphal gospels. It is said that idols fell before the divine child; a spring burst forth where he stopped; robbers attacked the party, and one of the band rescued the family, and he became the penitent thief on the cross, and so on. Tradition says, perhaps truly, that the holy family fled to Matarëeh, near Leontopolis, in the district of Heliopolis, where there were many Jews, and where, 150 years before, Onias, a priest, had built a magnificent Jewish temple in imitation of that in Jerusalem. The prophecy in Hos. 11: 1 is quoted as being fulfilled by this flight into Egypt. The words were originally spoken of Israel as a people, and many explanations have been given to show how this event fulfilled those words. The simplest and most satisfactory view is that Israel, as God's national son, included the true Israel, and the Christ, the Son of God, who is the head of that Israel. This is upon the principle stated long ago by Augustine, "the New Testament lies concealed in the Old Testament, and in the New the Old Testament lies revealed."

**16. Herod . . . slew all the children]** Or, "slew all the male children," R. V. When Herod "saw that he was mocked of the wise men"—not that the wise men really "mocked" or "held him up to derision," but that he looked upon their not returning to him as deriding him—then his anger was furious for even a Herod. He sent his soldiers to kill all the boys of two years old and under in Bethlehem and "in all the borders thereof," R. V., believing from his accurate inquiries of the wise men that this "newly-born King" could not possibly be two years old. The town and vicinity could not have had a large population at that time. The number of boys killed can only be conjectured. Some have supposed there were twenty; others upwards of an hundred.

**18. Rachel weeping for her children]** Again Matthew points to a

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
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.	the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son. Then Herod, when he
16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the 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.	saw that he was mocked of the <sup>1</sup> wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had carefully learned of the <sup>1</sup> wise men. Then was fulfilled
17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,	that which was spoken through Jeremiah 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.	18 A voice was heard in Ramah, Weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; And she would not be comforted, because they are not.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Magi*.

fulfillment of prophecy; it was in Jer. 31: 15. When the people were brought together in chains at Ramah, a few miles north of Jerusalem, whence they were carried away captive in gangs, Jer. 40: 1, to Babylon, there was lamentation and weeping and great mourning. This scene was a type of the later sad scene in Bethlehem when the little babes were suddenly torn from mothers and slain before their eyes by the soldiers of the cruel Herod. Again a similar heartrending wail went up from the mothers, figuratively called "Rachel," as if she were the mother of all the Bethlehem mothers. Then, too, Ramah and Jerusalem were within the territory of Benjamin, and Rachel was the mother of Benjamin. There was fitness in this symbolic impersonation of Rachel.

**19. an angel . . . to Joseph in Egypt]** This is the third recorded appearance of an angel to Joseph, probably within about one year. Whether Joseph had heard of the death of Herod before the angel announced it is not stated, but the inference is that he had not. And as such an event would very soon be known in Egypt, it is probable that the divine command to return to the land of Israel came not long after Herod's death.

**20. they are dead which sought the young child's life]** Or, literally, "they have died who were seeking the life of the little child." For this reason Joseph while asleep or in a dream receives the command, "Arise, and take [the Greek means 'take with you'] the little child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel." Here again we have the type fulfilled, "Out of Egypt" into the promised land. The plural "they" is probably the plural of colloquial speech, referring only to Herod. A similar use of the plural occurs in Ex. 4: 19, where Jehovah tells Moses to return to Egypt, "for all the men are dead which sought thy life."

**22. when he heard that Archelaus]** It is evident that Joseph did not expect Archelaus would succeed Herod as ruler in Judæa. That news seems to have reached Joseph either just before he started or while on his return.

**23. He shall be called a Nazarene]** Not a Nazirite, as some erroneously suppose. John the Baptist belonged to that class, but Jesus did not. Herod the Great had four sons who are mentioned in the New Testament: 1. Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist. 2. Archelaus, who suc-

COMMON VERSION.

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

REVISED VERSION.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead that 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. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judæa in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned of God in a dream, he withdrew into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene.

22 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.

ceeded his father as ruler of Judæa, not with the title of king, but as ethnarch. These were the sons of Malthace, Herod's fourth wife. 3. Herod Philip, who lived in private life, Mark 6:17. 4. Herod Philip II., tetrarch of Iturea, Luke 3:1. Two other sons Herod ordered to be slain. Archelaus was as treacherous and cruel as his father. About nine years later he was deposed and banished to Gaul. Herod Antipas ruled in Galilee, and was regarded as milder in temper, but voluptuous and reckless in character. At this time he was probably in Rome. So Joseph again in perplexity "was divinely instructed," for so the Greek for "warned of God" literally means. It is the same term used in respect to the wise men in v. 12. Thus instructed "he withdrew into the parts of Galilee," R. V., where he would be more secluded and the child better shielded from envious rulers. Moreover, his removal to Nazareth was a fulfillment of prophecy, and not any peculiar mode of life. It was the place that gave him the title. And Matthew points again to the title "Nazarene" as a fulfillment of prophecy. It seems to be the substance of several predictions. The reference was no doubt well understood at the time Matthew wrote, but is not clear to our times. Some think the reference is to a lost prophecy; but this is not very probable. The Hebrew word for "branch" or "shrub" is *netzer*; and in Isa. 11:1, Christ is referred to as *Netzer*, the "branch." Some suppose that the name Nazareth signifies "a place of shrubs," from the same Hebrew stem. Here then there would be a play on the words, referring to the town and to the person as a "branch" or shrub. This view is as old as Jerome. Others suppose that the title comes from a word that means "to watch"; and as Nazareth is upon hills, suited for watching, so Jesus was the "watched" or guarded one. But this is not easily fitted to any prophecy. The lowliness or humble character of Jesus and of the town is the chief thought. This region was not under the rule of Archelaus, but of another son of Herod.

Of the childhood of Jesus after the return to Nazareth we have this brief note only: "And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him:" Luke 2:40, R. V. Then of his boyhood only one incident is given: that of a visit to the passover at Jerusalem when he was twelve years old. Then eighteen years are hidden, as the previous twelve years were, under a single statement of about a dozen words: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men," Luke 2:52. From Hebrew history and rabbinic literature we know how Jewish boys of that period usually spent their time. It is natural, and perhaps right, to infer that Jesus spent his boyhood similar to those of his age in the better class of humble Hebrew homes. He was early taught by both parents in the law of Moses, as was Timothy, 2 Tim. 3:15. The rabbins required that a child should begin to learn the law by heart at five years old. At twelve or thirteen years of age he became a "son of the law." This is all we know of the childhood and youth of Jesus.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The aim of Matthew is to show that Jesus fulfilled prophecy, and hence was the true Messiah. 2. Every event



NAZARETH. POPULATION, 7,500.  
Looking northward; the ancient town was a little higher up the hill.

*(From a Photograph.)*

in the life of Jesus fulfilled God's gracious purpose; so ought every event in our lives. 3. Parents and guardians should take children away from evil men and their influences. 4. The world is hostile to Christ. 5. Those who try to deceive others may themselves be the victims of their own plots.

CHAP. III. JOHN'S MINISTRY AND BAPTISM. vs. 1-12. Compare Mark 1: 1-8 and Luke 3: 1-18.

WILDERNESS OF JUDEA, A.D. 26, 27.

The ministry of John lasted about a year and a half; the events in this chapter took place probably in the summer and autumn of A.D. 26. Matthew now leaps over nearly thirty years in the life of Jesus. Luke mentions only one incident, the visit to Jerusalem, in this period. Archelaus had been deposed and banished; and Quirinius (Cyrenius), as ruler of Syria, was given the rule over Judea and Samaria. The subordinate officer in Judea was the "governor"; Pontius Pilate, the sixth in order of these procurators or governors, being appointed in A.D. 26. Herod Antipas still ruled in Galilee and Peræa, and Herod Philip II. in Iturea. Augustus Cæsar died in A.D. 14, and Tiberius ruled as despotic emperor of Rome, A.D. 14-37. The learned Philo was, at this period, a mere boy in the schools of Alexandria.

Matthew, pursuing his purpose to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, now relates the ministry of John, the second Elijah, foretold by Malachi, and John's testimony to Jesus. In this chapter John the Baptist is described, vs. 1-4; his preaching, vs. 5-10; his announcement and baptism of Jesus, vs. 11-17. In his boyhood we may believe that Jesus was industrious, working at the carpenter's trade; and that he gained such scriptural and moral education as a Jewish boy of the humbler class usually received. He knew the ancient Hebrew, for he quotes it; and must have known the Aramaic, then spoken by the Jews; and no doubt learned the Greek, in which the Old Testament had been current for two centuries.

**1. John the Baptist, preaching]** In that long period, or, as the Gospel writer says, "in those days," while Jesus was living at Nazareth, John the Baptizer "comes forward," crying in the wilderness of Judea. Luke gives an account of John's birth. His Hebrew name, *Johanan*, means "Jehovah is gracious." John's preaching was like that of a herald crying, when he makes a public proclamation; it was not "preaching" as we understand that word now. The "wilderness of Judea" was a thinly-settled region of open country, southeast from Jerusalem, on the west side of the Dead Sea, and extending to the Jordan. It was not a desert, nor a densely-wooded tract, such as we sometimes mean by a wilderness.

**2. Repent . . . the kingdom of heaven is at hand]** This was the burden of John's proclamation, "repent." The Greek word here used by

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. III.—In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

<sup>2</sup> And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

REVISED VERSION.

**3** And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, saying, Repent ye; for the king-

Matthew means literally "to think differently after" looking at the facts; a change of mind, of conduct and of life. In relating the remorse of Judas, Matt. 27:3, "repented himself" represents another Greek word. The Greek word *μετανοέω* has been variously translated. Wycliffe and the Rheims versions read "do penance," following the Latin Vulgate. Luther's is nearly the same. The old Syriac means "turn ye," and the Dutch versions are the same. The latter are the better renderings. It was an accenting of the Old Testament eall, "turn ye" "with all your heart," Joel 2:12. This call was now repeated with intense force: return to God; think again; take a new view, a re-view; turn back! It meant more than *reformation*, more than an outward offering, gift or worship. It had the force of the old proverb, "to obey is better than sacrifice," 1 Sam. 15:22. "Do penance" is putting sacrifice in the place of obedience, which Jehovah condemned under the law and rejects under the new covenant of grace. The heart must be changed, made anew, and turn to God. This turning is in the New Testament idea of repent.

The reason for the call to repent was, the "kingdom of the heavens" (for the word is plural, a Hebraism) is nigh. The Messiah you have so long expected is now come. The "kingdom of heaven" is a favorite expression with Matthew, and with him only of New Testament writers; he uses it thirty-three times. In Mark and Luke the favorite phrase is "the kingdom of God." Though these expressions would not be obvious in their meaning to Gentile readers they would be very forcible to Hebrews, for whom Matthew was writing. To avoid any misapprehension he declares that John the Baptist fulfilled the prophecy through Isaiah of the voice crying in the wilderness, "make ready the way of the Lord," "make his paths straight," R. V. Isa. 40:3.\* When any conqueror or great man journeyed through the land he sent a herald to announce his coming, and to mend the road and prepare it suitably so that there should be no interruption in his journey. The Oriental rarely makes a road unless compelled to do so. If a rock falls across a *path* even, or if a bridge breaks, no one removes the rock or replaces the bridge. The traveller of the East simply goes around the obstacle or fords the stream. There are few great roads, and one railway, in Syria. The country is conspicuous for the absence of good carriage roads. The common people journey on mules, camels or horses, or go on foot. When a great man comes there must of necessity, therefore, be a general repair of roads, paths and bridges. This requires an order from some public officer. Even when the

## COMMON VERSION.

3 For this is he that was spoken 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

3 dom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, saying,  
The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
Make ye ready the way of the Lord,  
Make his paths straight.

\* The old punctuation is after "wilderness," but the parallelism seems better to punctuate, as in the Revision of Isa. 40:3, "The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord."

cavalcade is to go on horses or mules, the paths require to be cleared and the bridges repaired and strengthened.

4. **John had his raiment, etc.]** The hair of camels is long and strong of fibre, well suited for weaving into garments. The Arabs make their tents of goat's hair. The wild Arab sheikh now wears a dress much like that of John. The "*aba* or outer cloak," says Dr. Post, "is usually of goat's hair, but may well be of camel's wool. The girdle is a rope of leathern thongs or twisted hair. Around the head is a *keffiyeh* or turban of close texture, to keep out the sun, and fastened by a hair cord around the forehead. The feet are bare, or shod with coarse, untanned leathern boots. Such a figure, with the gaunt aspect, dark flashing eye, and ascetic diet and habits, will always have a powerful influence on the human mind." The locusts were the "grasshoppers" of the East, still eaten in that land, and allowed as food by the law, Lev. 11 : 22. The carob pods of the so-called locust tree are not found in the wilderness of Judea, though they are in some parts of Syria, and are sometimes eaten by the poor. Some suppose that these carob pods were John's food, and the monks of Palestine now call them "St. John's bread." But the Greek word designates an animal, not a vegetable. Locusts are a common food for the poor of the East, according to Burekhardt, Thomson and Van Lennep. They are still eaten by the Bedawin of Arabia and Syria, who throw them into boiling water well salted. After cooking they are dried, and eaten after frying in butter and mixed with honey. Sometimes they are ground and mixed with flour, and eaten with milk of the camel or goat, or with honey. Van Lennep speaks of such food as the habitual fare of those who lead a life of isolation and poverty. The Mosaic law allowed the Hebrews to eat four kinds of locusts, Lev. 11 : 22. The wild honey may have been that made by *bees*, which is still found in the country, or it may have been a sweet gum, sometimes called honey, which is also sold for food in Mardin. It is found in the oak, the tamarisk and other trees of the East, and occasionally seen in the markets. The wild honey that was so abundant in olden time, however, causing it to be counted a "land flowing with milk and honey," and which is said to have flowed from hollow trees and rocks, is not now so abundant.

5. **Jerusalem, and all Judea]** John's manner and message aroused men. His fame spread to Jerusalem, to all parts of Judea, and to the adjacent region along the Jordan. Thence crowds kept coming; he continued to baptize those who confessed their sins. His act of baptism was understood to imply consecration, a forsaking of sin, and a desire to be cleansed from it. Washing, as a ceremonial form of purification, was known to the Jews. It is more likely that John's baptism was thought to have a similar

## COMMON VERSION.

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's 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 Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

## REVISED VERSION.

4 Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and

5 wild honey. Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region

6 round about Jordan; and they were bap-



significance, than that it was referred to the baptism of Jewish proselytes, since it is probable the latter custom was introduced at a later date. John's baptism was evidently regarded as of divine authority, from Christ's question: "The baptism of John; whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" Matt. 21: 25. Yet it was different from Christian baptism, since converts who had received John's baptism were re-baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 19: 4, 5. John's was a baptism signifying repentance, and a belief in the coming Messiah; see v. 11.

**7. the Pharisees and Sadducees]** These were the two leading parties among the Jews. 1. The Pharisees were the most noted and powerful. Their name in Hebrew means *separated*. Their origin is obscure. During the rule of the Maccabees and Hyrcanus, they appear in the second century before Christ. They became very powerful during the reign of Herod the Great. They held that traditions from Moses had the same authority as written law. They also believed in the immortality of the soul, future rewards and punishments, divine providence, and the free will of man, and emphasized the traditional more than the sacrificial part of the law. They were the strict party, Jewish in politics and orthodox in religion. 2. The Sadducees (perhaps from Zadok) were opposed to the Pharisees, rejecting the above doctrines, but accepting the teaching of Moses in the written law. They denied the future life and the existence of angels or spirits. They were the "liberal" or "rationalistic" party in the Jewish nation. These parties, though bitterly opposed to each other, united in opposing Christ. 3. A third party, the Essenes, were the mystics, ascetics and the humanitarians of that day. They were not numerous, lived in retired communities, and had only a limited influence in the nation. Josephus places the origin of the Pharisees and Sadducees in the time of Jonathan successor to Judas Maccabee (160-140 B.C.). From 1 Macc. 2: 42; 7: 13, and 2 Macc. 14: 6, some infer that the Pharisees were first called *Chasidim*, "the pious" ones, and that the Sadducees called themselves *Tzaddiquin*, "the righteous" ones. The doctrines of the "Essenes" are traced usually to a Persian origin. They were "outsiders," so their name is interpreted. Neither the Sadducees nor Essenes have any writings remaining to our times; all that we know of them is from the writings by those of other sects.

**generation of vipers]** "Ye offspring" or brood of vipers was a stinging reproof of these leading religionists of the Jews. The viper is one of the most poisonous of the venomous snakes of Syria. It is of small size and gives no warning rattle, and its color closely resembles the rocks where it lives. This makes it more dangerous, for it darts upon its victim unawares. This treacherous habit of the viper, and the deadly poison of its bite, gave point

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 ¶ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

## REVISED VERSION.

tized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth

<sup>1</sup> Or, for baptism

to the comparison. The deceitful teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees were as dangerous and deadly as vipers. There may be an allusion to the serpent of Genesis, and to them as the true children of that old serpent, the devil.

**who hath warned you]** John exposes their sly, scoffing and treacherous character by his question, "Who hath secretly pointed you to flee from coming wrath?" As if they had been privately warned, and, without confession of sin, were thinking to slip away from coming wrath so slyly that God and his messenger would not see them. But they must make confession, and more, they must show some fruit of true repentance.

**9. We have Abraham]** The boast of the Pharisees was that they were Abraham's children, and therefore sure of God's favor. There is an old Jewish legend that Abraham sat guard at the gate of hell, and did not allow any of his circumcised children to enter there. This illustrates the proud feeling of the Pharisees and Sadducees. To rely upon *inherited religion* is the tendency of Asiatics, and they make little of *personal piety*. Pointing to the stones near the Jordan, John declared that God could raise from these stones children to Abraham, to fulfill his promise. So their boasted claim would not save these self-righteous scoffers. They must repent or the axe would fall.

**10. now . . . the axe . . . laid]** In the East this figure was well understood and forcible. In Palestine wood is very scarce. A fruitless or useless tree is at once cut, not at the stump, as with us, but from the *roots*. Neither stump nor roots are left, where labor is so cheap and fuel so scarce. So of the wicked and unrepentant; the cutting and burning would be complete, branch, trunk and root.

**11. with the Holy Ghost, and with fire]** John declares his water baptism is a sign of repentance. The "you" of this verse does not refer to the Pharisees, but to the multitude. One was then coming after him who was stronger and so much greater that John did not count himself worthy to do the most menial service to this mighty Master. In the East the shoes are removed on entering the house. The lowest servant of the rich unlooses and takes off his master's shoes. The shoes now worn in the East are sandals, or more properly slippers, with no heel band, a mere sole with a pocket

## COMMON VERSION.

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

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, 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:

## REVISED VERSION.

therefore fruit worthy of <sup>1</sup>repentance:

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 even now the axe lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down,

11 and cast into the fire. <sup>2</sup>I indeed baptize you <sup>2</sup>in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not <sup>3</sup>worthy to bear: he shall baptize you <sup>2</sup>in the Holy Spirit

<sup>1</sup> Or, your repentance    <sup>2</sup> Or, with    <sup>3</sup> Gr. sufficient

for the toes. In comparison with the coming One, John was unworthy to do this lowest servile work of bearing his shoes. He, the Christ, "shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and *in* fire." That is, while John calls them to repent, and can only baptize them in water as a sign of repentance, Christ would give them a baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire; a true purification from sin, and a true gift of the spirit and fire of divine life.

**12. purge his floor, and gather his wheat]** Or, "whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse [cleanse through and through] his threshing-floor," R. V. The threshing-floor in the East is usually on some hill. It is a level, circular spot near some village, sometimes within its limits. The ground is beaten hard, clay often laid over it and rolled down, and often bakes hard in the heat of the sun. The size of the floor depends upon the number of persons that are expected to use it, or upon the heaps of grain that must be threshed at one time. The "garner" or "granary" is not usually near the threshing-floor. The "floor" must be upon some elevated spot to be exposed to the wind, to facilitate the separation of the grain from the straw and chaff. Hence most of these floors noticed by modern travellers in the East are upon the top or side of the hill. Dr. Robinson found five such floors near the site of old Jericho, to which the grain was brought, and trodden out by oxen, cows and young cattle arranged five abreast and driven around in a circle or in every direction over the floor, treading out the grain. Sometimes a sledge is drawn by the cattle, which aids in breaking up the straw and freeing the grain from the ears. The sheaves of grain were brought to the threshing-floor on donkeys, asses, and rarely on camels. The donkeys were often so covered by the load that they could not be seen, and appeared like a mass of sheaves moving along by its own momentum. The floors were always under the open sky, for in the harvest season no rain falls nor showers come; so the ground is hard and dry. The fan is a broad winnowing-fork, by which the straw and grain, that has been separated by the drag or threshing instrument drawn over it, can be tossed into the air. The wind blows aside the chaff and the fine straw, while the wheat falls back on the hard beaten ground or floor. "Thoroughly purge" means a complete separation of wheat from chaff: of the righteous from the wicked. The *garner*, in Syria, is not a barn, but a funnel-shaped bin, usually in the farmer's house. It is made of basket-work, plastered inside and outside with mud. The grain is poured in at the top, and drawn out from a small opening at the bottom. The wheat is gathered; even the straw is saved and fed to the cattle. Only the useless chaff is burned by the poor Syrian peasant: so the unrepentant will Christ destroy as chaff, and with "unquenchable (*asbestos*) fire." It is not the same as the fire of v. 11, in which his people are baptized as at the day of Pentecost, but the fire of his judgment.

## COMMON VERSION.

12 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 and *in* fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

JOHN'S BAPTISM OF JESUS. vs. 13-17. Compare Mark 1: 9-11; Luke 3: 21-23.

THE JORDAN, A.D. 26, 27.

**13. Then cometh Jesus . . . unto John, to be baptized]** During John's mission, and probably in the autumn or winter of A.D. 26, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptized by John. Here several difficult questions spring up: 1. Why was Jesus baptized by John? He was sinless, and did not need baptism as a sign of confession or of forsaking sin. The question is an old one; something like it seems to have troubled John himself, and led him to hesitate, a fact told us by Matthew only. 2. Why did John object? He seems to say, "I knew him not," John 1: 33, before his baptism. Dr. John Hall suggests that John may have meant, "There has been no collusion, no understanding between us," but this is an unusual use of "knew" or "recognize." He did know that the Messiah was soon to be manifested: he was looking for him. In the innocent majesty of this new presence he may have had a feeling that here was the expected One. Being his cousin, and their mothers having long before met and rejoiced over the angelic revelations to each, it is not unlikely that John would have some special expectations concerning Jesus, though not yet divinely *assured* that he was the Messiah. This brings us to the answer which Jesus himself gives to John for his baptism.

**15. thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness]** This answer has been variously explained. It has been supposed to mean—(1) A recognition of John in his official mission; (2) A renouncing of past employment and entering upon his Messianic mission; (3) A compliance with Jewish law; (4) His human nature was passing through stages of growth, and so an outward ordinance was the door to his full spiritual power; (5) That by it he identified himself more closely with his people. Geikie holds that John's baptism was a part of God's command or "righteousness." His description of Jesus, as he appeared to John, is graphic and rhetorical, but wholly founded on conjecture. John's baptism is not found in the Mosaic law. No definite account of its appointment by God is recorded. Though no divine command is noted, it was doubtless of divine authority, as was the whole mission of John. Thus Jesus would not merely make himself one with his people by this act; and mark his entrance upon his holy mission: he would also fulfill all that was right or pleasing in God's sight, and make himself a servant in submitting to this new sign of the new dispensation.

COMMON VERSION.

13 ¶ Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbade 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 he suffered him.

REVISED VERSION.

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer <sup>1</sup>*it* now: for

thus it becometh us to fulfil all right-

<sup>1</sup> Or, me

**16. the heavens were opened]** Having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down as a dove, and coming upon him. As a dove, may mean the manner, or the *shape*, in which the Spirit descended. The latter is more in harmony with Eastern thought. The dove is a fit emblem of the harmless and peaceful character of Jesus.

**17. This is my beloved Son]** As the Spirit descended, behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my Son, the beloved, in whom I am well pleased. Here was triple testimony to the character of his mission: (1) The heavens were opened ("torn open" or "rent," Mark says); (2) The Spirit, in visible form like a dove, came upon him; (3) A voice from heaven owned his wonderful mission. Matthew's account implies that all this was revealed to Jesus himself, and Mark and Luke declare that the voice spoke to him; but John says that he also saw the Spirit descend upon Jesus, John 1:33, 34. Neither of these accounts excludes or is inconsistent with the other. If Jesus saw and heard, that does not imply that John failed to see and hear.

On the mode of baptism there has been much controversy. The Baptists hold that it should be administered to believers only on profession of Christ, and that immersion is the only true mode of baptism. Pedobaptists hold that it may be administered to adult believers and to their children; and that sprinkling, pouring or immersion, in the name of the Trinity, is valid baptism. In the Greek Church baptism is by immersion three times; in the Roman Church by sprinkling or pouring. "The Greek Catholics in Syria," says Dr. Post of Beirut, "the Armenians and the Armenian Catholics baptize by immersion. All the Oriental sects, however, baptize children as well as adults."

The so-called Apostolic Constitutions says nothing about the mode of baptism. The seventh chapter of the *Didache*, or "Teaching of the Twelve," which many place between 120 and 160 A.D., says, "Now concerning baptism, thus baptize: having spoken all these things, baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, in living [running?] water. But if thou hast not living water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if both [neither] thou hast not, pour water upon the head thrice, into the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. And before baptism let the baptizer and the baptized fast, and whatever others can. The baptized thou shalt command to fast for two or three days before." It will be observed that while this gives some latitude in cases of necessity, the real question respecting the mode it does not clearly settle.

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

16 eousness. Then he suffereth him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened <sup>1</sup> unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, <sup>2</sup> This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *unto him*. <sup>2</sup> Or, *This is my Son: my beloved in whom I am well pleased*. See ch. 12: 18.

While Christians continue to differ upon this subject, few evangelical Christians would now insist that one particular mode was absolutely necessary to salvation. Whoever sincerely believes in Christ, and is baptized according to the mode that he conscientiously believes to be taught by Scriptures, will be saved. And if he cannot be baptized, true faith in Christ alone will save him.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. God has his workmen in training for his work, though long unknown to the world. 2. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is yet at hand. 3. A teacher from God will be bold and plain in his work. 4. Self-righteous scoffers are a generation of vipers; cunning, deceitful, true children of the old serpent, the devil. 5. Public confession of sin should be accompanied by fruits of repentance. 6. Inherited religion, without personal piety and faith in Christ, will not save us. 7. There is a "fire" of divine life in believers; there is an "unquenchable fire" for the wicked. 8. Christ gives the baptism of the Spirit to his people. 9. John felt his unworthiness; the greatest saints have a similar sense of their unworthiness before God. 10. Heaven is open to Christ; he opens heaven for us. 11. The heavens testify to the Son of God.

CHAP. IV. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS. vs. 1-11. Compare Mark 1:12, 13 and Luke 4:1-13.

WILDERNESS OF JUDEA, A.D. 27.

*Analysis.*—Jesus was led into the wilderness; fasted forty days, when he was tempted of the devil, vs. 1-10; he resisted the temptations, and was strengthened by angels, v. 11; he hears that John is cast into prison; leaves Nazareth to dwell in Capernaum, vs. 12-16; preaches repentance, calls four disciples—Peter, Andrew, James and John—and teaches and heals the people through Galilee, vs. 17-25.

The first Adam had a conflict with the tempter, and was overcome; Christ, the second Adam, had a similar conflict, and was victorious. Neither of the evangelists specifies the precise order of the temptations, nor do they give any details. Luke places the temptation of the kingdoms of this world from the top of the high mountain, before that on the pinnacle of the temple at Jerusalem. Mark strikingly remarks of Jesus, "he was with the wild beasts," Mark 1:13, R. V.

Of the character of the temptation, it is clear that it was not a dream nor a vision, but an actual scene. The devil is represented as a real personal being, and he really came to Jesus, but in precisely what form the Scriptures do not say. These were not the only temptations of Jesus, for he says to his disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations," Luke 22:28.

The temptations in the wilderness comprehend all forms of temptations to humanity, we may well believe. They appealed to the threefold nature of man—to his physical, his mental and spiritual natures. The temptation to Adam and Eve came through their appetites, their physical nature, as appears

from the narrative in Genesis. One form of the temptation to Jesus was through hunger: an appeal to satisfy his appetites. Another was through ambition for power: to satisfy the mental aspirations of man. A third was apparently to the loftier spiritual aspirations: to spiritual pride, touching the spiritual nature of man. The apostle John has also given three forms, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life," 1 John 2:16, R. V. Milton in *Paradise Regained* gives a sublime poetic description of these terrible conflicts with Satan, placing that in Jerusalem last, as the highest proof of the divine character of Jesus. Having thus been "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," Jesus is able to sympathize with and to succor all who are tempted. For Jesus is "not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," having himself suffered "being tempted," Heb. 4:15; 2:18.

**1. to be tempted of the devil]** The mission of the Messiah was to save men, and to destroy the works of the devil. As he began his Messianic labors, therefore, his first work was a conflict with the great tempter, the devil. The reason for this trial or conflict is elsewhere given. Having been himself tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. See Heb. 2:18; 4:15. He was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit for this purpose. So Philip was led by the Spirit. Acts 8:29, 39. It was an influence distinct from his will, yet not opposed to it, which led him. The several gospel accounts of this strange and awful conflict tell us of an actual historical event. They cannot be made to signify anything less without violently wresting their language from its most obvious meaning. The narrative is too clearly historical to give any place to the conjecture that it might have been a parable, a vision, or a dramatic picture. It is the clearest, simplest account of a real conflict with a spiritual personal tempter, Satan. The Scripture here, as uniformly elsewhere, assumes the devil to be a personal evil spirit. This does not make it necessary, however, to adopt the bald, medieval conception that the devil appeared to Jesus with horns, darts, hoofs, and wings, belching fire, and that, flying, he bore Jesus through the air to the pinnacle of the temple and back again to the mountain. Jesus was made in all things like unto his brethren, and in all points tempted as we are. Heb. 2:17; 4:15. The devil appealed to him through his human nature, and used the human powers of Jesus as a medium to forward the temptation. How Christ, the sinless one, could be tempted is as hard for us to understand as to comprehend how he could become man. We reverently accept the fact, though the mode may be a mystery to us.

**2. when he had fasted]** Jesus having fasted forty days and forty nights, as Moses and Elijah had, Ex. 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8; at the end of this period he felt the fierceness of hunger. This fast was perhaps a total

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. IV.—Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward a hungered.

## REVISED VERSION.

4 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the 2 devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered.



QUARANTANA : *Jebel Kārāntūl*, SUPPOSED MOUNT OF TEMPTATION.  
Looking west ; a few miles northwest of Jericho.

(From a Photograph.)



abstinence from ordinary food, for Luke says, "he did eat nothing;" though this language does not necessarily mean entire abstinence any more than when Jesus himself said, "John came neither eating nor drinking," Matt. 11:18, by which Jesus meant to contrast John's exceedingly spare diet with his own. So eating nothing may mean no ordinary meal, but keeping a fast for the whole period. Matthew evidently implies that he did not feel the pangs of hunger until the close of the forty days' fast.

**3. If thou be the Son of God]** Three forms of temptation are described: two of them are introduced by this doubting piece of flattery; If thou art the Son of God. The first clause of this verse does not mark the beginning of the temptation, as the common English version implies, but "the tempter having come, said to him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves." The first form of the temptation was to *distrust God's providential care*; it was to unbelief. Jesus was suffering from hunger. Satan suggests, if he is the Son of God, he can turn the stones, which bore some resemblance to the flat cakes or loaves of bread of the East, into real loaves, and thus satisfy his hunger. The aim of the temptation was not merely to lead Jesus to gratify taste, nor was it to give a vain display of miraculous power. It was, as the answer of Jesus implies, to bring about distrust of God's care for man.

**4. Man shall not live by bread alone]** It is worth noting that Jesus overcame the tempter each time by referring him to the word of God. Deut. 8:3. It is also specially noteworthy that each of the three times Jesus cites the words from Deuteronomy: the very book of the Old Testament against which certain critics now are directing their most destructive criticism. When our divine Lord quotes the book three times, in this most solemn and awful conflict with the tempter, and is victorious, we need not be disturbed by rationalistic attempts to discredit the deuteronomist's record.

**5. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city]** The main point in this the second form of the temptation was the opposite of that in the first. That was doubt, unbelief. Now it is *presumption*; presuming on God's power miraculously to interpose, and save him from being killed by rashly throwing himself from the wing of the temple. "Then" seems to mark the order of the events; which here varies from Luke, who notes this scene last. Matthew's order is most natural, and the reply in v. 10 a most fitting end to the temptation. The holy city is Jerusalem; the pinnacle or wing of the temple was probably at the southeast corner, where the wall is exceedingly

## COMMON VERSION.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou 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 mouth of God.

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

## REVISED VERSION.

3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command

4 that these stones become <sup>1</sup> bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man

shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth

5 of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the <sup>2</sup> pin-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. loaves.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. wing.

high above the Kedron valley, and the lofty columns, surmounted by a roof, would add to its giddy height, and justify the language of Josephus: "The valley was very deep, and its bottom could not be seen if you looked from above into the depth; . . . the cloister stood upon that height, insomuch that if any one looked down from the top of the battlements he would be giddy." Antiq. xv. 11:5.

6. And saith . . . it is written, etc.] Satan quotes Scripture in a way to make it appear to serve his evil purposes. He here cites from the Hebrew of Ps. 91:11, 12. Though he omits a short clause, "in all thy ways," it is gratuitous to say that he had a design in the omission. The substance of the passage is given in the portion quoted, and Jesus does not charge him with misquotation. The evident object of the tempter in quoting it was to suggest the promise of God's preserving power; and hence that it would be only a fair test of that promise for Jesus rashly to throw himself down. His miraculous preservation would at once attest his character as the Son of God to the multitudes about the temple; so the devil assumes to argue. To suppose that Jesus was "taken to the holy city and set on the temple *in thought*," as some hold, is to take all the point and meaning out of this form of the temptation. To cast himself down "in thought" or in imagination would involve not the slightest bodily harm, and indeed would render the request wellnigh absurd. The devil is no fool; his suggested temptations are not transparent absurdities! Again Jesus replies by a text from Deut. 6:16, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Thou shalt not needlessly presume upon his promises or his power. All *display* of our faith in him, all reckless hazarding of our lives in the expectation that God will save us from harm, is sin.

8. Again, the devil . . . sheweth him all the kingdoms] The third form of the temptation was to gain worldly power and glory; it was an appeal to his *ambition*. The "exceeding high mountain" where the last temptation took place is not named in either gospel narrative. It might have been Olivet, Pisgah, the traditional mount of temptation Quarantana, or Hermon, which is the highest mountain in Palestine. The vision would be wide, and all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them may have been made to appear by a voluntary or miraculous extension of his vision, or by a combination of the actual view with a verbal description of the

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself 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 unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy 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;

## REVISED VERSION.

6 nacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written,

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee:

And on their hands they shall bear thee up,

Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not try the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the

powers and their greatness and glory, as J. A. Alexander suggests. Baffled in the two suggestions, to distrust and then to presume upon God's promise, the devil now takes a bold step. He seems to reason: this Jesus wishes to regain the rule over the world; now I will offer it all to him; give up all my title to it; only let him do me homage for the gift. It was a shrewd thought. It would look as though the arch-liar would let Christ establish his kingdom without the cross. But in reality it would be to own Satan as supreme rather than God. With just indignation Jesus resents the suggestion, and exclaims, Begone, Satan! Tyndale renders it "Avoyd, Satan." The Greek word is very expressive, literally, "Get under," as if he had said, "Get under where you belong." Instead of suggesting that I fall down and worship you, you owe me worship; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. This is from the Greek version of Deut. 6: 13.

11. the devil leaveth . . . angels came] With the last bold assault Satan risked all and lost. He leaves the sorely-trying and suffering Son of God. He has exhausted his Satanic resources for this time, and retires to await another and, as he may hope, a more favorable time. And behold angels came and served Jesus, by providing food, no doubt, and by strengthening him as afterward they did in the awful trial in Gethsemane. As the angels were personal beings, good spirits, and in this character appeared to Jesus, so the devil, as a personal being, the evil spirit, appeared to him, and tempted him. Both were actual historical occurrences. It is, however, no more necessary to assume that the devil took on a physical form or shape visible to the natural eye, than it is to hold that good angels always took such a form. And on the other hand, if it is supposed that the angels took a material form and appeared to the natural eye, there is no greater difficulty in supposing that the devil also appeared in a similar form, like an "angel of light."

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—For a realistic and poetical picture of this scene, see Milton's *Paradise Regained*, book iv. 1. The temptation followed the descent of the Spirit: great trials may follow great blessings. 2. The soul, on coming into special communion with God, may expect a visit from Satan. 3. The devil has particular spite against those just setting out for God. 4. We should not expose ourselves to temptations or trials, but, when they come, submit to them in the fear of God. 5. Satan aims to have us distrust or disobey God. 6. Satan uses the wants, burdens, cares and afflictions of life, to discourage disciples and to lead them to doubt that they are true

## COMMON VERSION.

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

9 glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 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. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

disciples. 7. Meet the devil with Scripture. 8. The devil knows the Scripture: so a man may have his head full of it, while his heart is full of hatred towards God. 9. We must not doubt God in trial. 10. The best of saints may be tempted to the worst of sins. 11. The devil is the enemy of saints, but he is a beaten enemy. 12. Though there is a world of malicious spirits fighting against believers, there is a world of holy angels engaged for them. 13. Christ having been sorely tempted knows how to succor those that are tempted. 14. The threefold temptation a regular progression in evil: (1) appeal to satisfy hunger; (2) to love of sympathy and admiration; (3) to noble ambition perverted. The first called for a miracle, the second for an ostentatious miracle and was presumptuous, the third called for a blasphemous denial of God. The first was deceptive, the second plausible, the third audacious. Thus Satan deals with souls now.

**GALILEAN MINISTRY: CALLING DISCIPLES.** vs. 12-25. Compare Mark 1: 14-20; Luke 5: 1-11.

GALILEE, A.D. 28.

Matthew now passes over nearly a year. Among the events omitted are the call of six disciples, the marriage at Cana, first cleansing of the temple, talk with Nicodemus, and with the woman at the well. See John 1: 35 to 4: 42. He now narrates the Galilean ministry of Jesus, beginning with the spring of A.D. 28.

**ANALYSIS.**—John arrested; Jesus goes to Galilee, v. 12; dwells at Capernaum, vs. 13-16; begins his Galilean work, v. 17; calls four disciples, vs. 18-22; teaches and heals in Galilee, vs. 23-25.

**12. heard that John]** Jesus was teaching in Judea, where he spent most of the first year of his ministry. But having heard that John was arrested by Herod, Jesus went up into Galilee. Matthew marks the time of going to Galilee, without necessarily implying the reason of it. John implies that Jesus went into Galilee to avoid the plots of the Pharisees. John 4: 1-3. Had he feared that Herod would arrest him also as he had John, he would have stayed out of Galilee, for that was in Herod's jurisdiction, while Judea was under Pilate. It was not, therefore, to avoid Herod, but to avoid the Pharisees.

**13. he . . . dwelt in Capernaum]** So having left Nazareth, where he was rejected, Luke 4: 16-30, he dwelt in Capernaum, by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. Again, Matthew notes this fact to point out another fulfillment of prophecy, proving that Jesus was the Messiah. The exact site of Capernaum is disputed. It was on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee, within five miles of where the Jordan enters the lake. The

COMMON VERSION.

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:

REVISED VERSION.

12 Now when he heard that John was delivered up, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the

two chief places urged as its site are *Khan Minieh*, about five miles south of the Jordan, where there is a small mound and few ruins, and *Tel Hum*, about two and a half miles south of the Jordan, where the ruins are extensive and numerous, and appear to be more ancient than those at Minieh. Among the many basaltic stone pedestals, columns and pillars scattered about Tel Hum are also the ruins of an ancient Jewish synagogue, the lintel of a door with a figure of a pot of manna carved on it. One of the chief objections to Tel Hum as the site of Capernaum is, that no living water is now found on the spot, as some infer from Josephus that there was in Capernaum. But there is water near by. The objection to Khan Minieh is, that the few ruins and pottery so far found are too modern to belong to Capernaum, and the spot is too far from the Jordan and the sea to meet the needs of some statements of Josephus. Khan Minieh is supported, however, as the site by eminent scholars, as Robinson, Porter, Conder, Merrill and George Adam Smith, and others; Tel Hum has also equally famous support in Dr. J. Wilson, W. M. Thomson, Stanley (latterly), Sir Charles Wilson, Prof. Socin, Dr. Schaff, Delitzsch, Ritter and others. The location of the site is a question quite evenly balanced between these two leading places. See *Schaff's Dictionary of the Bible*.

14-16. The prophecy fulfilled is found in Isa. 9: 1, 2. It is a free quotation from the Hebrew, and in an explanatory form, to show its application more closely. Those portions of Palestine that were in contempt, that were in spiritual darkness, were the portion allotted to Zebulon and Naphtali, by the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. This would include all the region around the Sea of Galilee and along the Jordan valley, and northward to or beyond the sources of the Jordan, and called Galilee of the nations because it bordered on the Gentile nations north. The people in all this region, represented as in darkness and ignorance, and with little religious life or light, now had Jesus, the "true light," to fill their hearts with heavenly truth.

17. to preach . . . Repent:] From that time—that period to which the writer had just referred, the arrest of John—Jesus began to declare the same truth, and make the same call to repentance on the same basis that John had. Jesus had been teaching and preaching in Judea for some

COMMON VERSION.

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthaliin, 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.

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

REVISED VERSION.

14 borders of Zebulun and Naphtali: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

15 The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,

1 Toward the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the 2Gentiles,

16 The people that sat in darkness

Saw a great light,  
And to them that sat in the region and shadow of death,  
To them did light spring up.

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

1 Gr. *The way of the sea.*

2 Gr. *nations*: and so elsewhere.

months; now he begins the work in Galilee, and continues to proclaim John's ringing call, for John had been compelled by his arrest to cease his labors.

**19. I will make you fishers of men]** Simon Peter and Andrew were seen by Jesus as he walked along the sea-shore. He calls them: "Come ye after me; and I will make you fishers of men." This seems an abrupt call. But months before they had seen Jesus and acknowledged him as a great rabbi. Jesus had then given Simon his new and significant name Peter. John 1:40-42. This was a fresh call to follow Jesus, and to catch men out of the troubled sea of evil in the net of the new doctrine of Christ.

One of the oldest hymns of the Church, ascribed to Clement of Alexandria, applies this figure to Christ:

"Fishers of men, the blest,  
Out of the world's unrest,  
Out of sin's troubled sea,  
Taking us, Lord, to thee;  
Out of the waves of strife,  
With bait of blissful life,  
Drawing thy nets to shore  
With choicest fish good store."

It requires skill, practice, strength, patience, hopefulness, endurance, to be a successful fisherman. So all these qualities would be needed in this higher kind of fishing for men's souls to which they were called. The winner of souls may well be called a "fisher of men."

**20. left their nets]** At this fresh call of Jesus, the two brothers at once leaving the nets followed him. There are two kinds of nets used in the East: the *cast-net* (of v. 18) and the *draw* or *drag-net*. The cast-net is circular, about ten feet in diameter, and weighted with pellets of lead around the rim. A line is fastened to the centre to haul the net in. The fisherman wades into the water up to his waist, and watches for a sign of fish. Seeing a ripple or any other sign, by a dexterous twirl he throws the net free, causing it to rotate in the air, so that it falls flat and spreads to its utmost breadth on the water, over the shoal of fish. The leads cause the rim of the net to sink quickly to the bottom, and enclose any fish which have not escaped. He now slowly draws the cord or line at the centre of the net, and captures any fish enclosed. This mode of fishing requires rare skill, and is very interesting work. The *drag* or *draw-net* (see Matt. 13:47) is a long strip of netting, often hundreds of feet in length and about six or eight feet wide. The rims at each side have long ropes running along them. One side is made to sink by leaden weights, and the other side to float by bits of cork. The net is sometimes stretched between two boats. The boats are

## COMMON VERSION.

18 ¶ And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

18 And walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers.

19 And he saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left the nets, and

rowed so as to drag a large circle of the sea, then to approach each other drawing in the net-ropes, thus forming the net into a kind of bag enclosing the fish. Sometimes one end of this net is fastened, and the other end brought around in a great sweep by a boat, or by the fisherman wading or swimming around with it, hauling in any fish within its sweep. This mode of fishing is often alluded to in the Gospels.

The nets were liable to be broken on the jagged rocks, or to get into a tangle on the branches of trees swept into the lake by the freshets of the rainy season. The fishermen therefore spent much time in "mending," v. 21, or "righting" and fixing (for the Greek is a word of wide meaning) their nets. Even a heavy haul of fish was in danger of rending their net. See John 21: 11. Two of the miracles mentioned in the Gospels are of wonderful catch of fish: the first early in our Lord's ministry, when the disciples had spent a night of toil in fishing to no purpose, but in the morning at the command of the Master they let down the net once more, and to their surprise caught such a multitude of fish that "their net brake," Luke 5: 1-11. The other was on the same Lake of Galilee, when after his resurrection he directed them one morning which side of their boat to cast their net, and again they caught 153 great fish, yet "the net was not broken," John 21: 3-11. A third miracle in fishing on the same Galilee was when Peter said his Master would pay the temple-tax. Jesus commanded him to cast a hook into the Lake of Galilee and take up the first fish and he would find a *stater* in its mouth, which would be sufficient to pay the temple-tax for himself and his Master, Matt. 17: 24-27. The Sea of Galilee still abounds in fish, but the fisheries are nearly deserted; this industry has died out. The Bedawin dislike and dread the sea; scarcely a fisher's boat is to be seen on the lake.

**21. he saw . . . James . . . and John . . . and he called them]** Continuing his walk along the sea-shore, Jesus again saw two brothers, John and James, in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. These brothers he called; and they at once leaving the boat and their father followed Jesus. Like Peter and Andrew, John had before seen and acknowledged Jesus as a great teacher. For there is no doubt that John was one of the two spoken of in John 1: 36-40. On the form of the "ship" or "boat," common on the Sea of Galilee, see notes on Matt. 8: 23, 24. Zebedee their father was a chief fisherman, rich enough to have hired men (Mark 1: 20), and therefore not dependent on his sons. Nor did they leave him destitute or in want, but we may well believe that his sons went with his approval.

**23. went about all Galilee, teaching]** It is quite characteristic of

COMMON VERSION.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son of* Zebedee, and John his brother, in a 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

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Jacob*: and so elsewhere.

REVISED VERSION.

21 followed him. And going on from thence he saw other two brethren, <sup>1</sup>James the *son of* Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him.

23 And <sup>2</sup>Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preach-

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *he*.

eastern rabbis and public men to have permanent followers or attendants. If rabbis, their attendants are usually disciples. This shows that the call to the four by the sea was natural, and in accord with the custom of the country. "It would have seemed as strange in Palestine," says Dr. Post, "to see an itinerant going alone on tours of instruction and wonder-working, as it would be to see a circuit-rider in our newer states with twelve students accompanying him in all his journeys." Starting with these disciples, he makes a tour in Galilee, stopping in the villages to teach in the Jewish synagogues, which would be open on the Sabbath for any teacher of repute. His teaching and preaching centered on the good news that the kingdom of heaven had now come. To attest the truth of his teaching and preaching, he added to his teaching the healing of all kinds of diseases and of sickness. Those who have seen the multifarious diseases which afflict the common people of Palestine now, and their dejected, hopeless and wretched condition, can have some idea of the stir which the work of such a wonderful healer as Jesus must have made in all Galilee. His disciples must have found their work more wearisome than fishing in the lake. In saying that Jesus healed "all manner of disease" the writer means, of course, all kinds that were brought to him. None were found, and brought to him, that he could not heal.

#### 24. sick . . . diseases . . . torments . . . possessed . . . lunatic . . . palsy]

The healings spread the fame or report of Jesus. The report of him, or, as the Greek has it, "the hearing of him went forth into all Syria." The curiosity and love of news-telling, which are specially strong in Asiatics, would easily and very speedily carry "the hearing" or report of this wonder-working to the remotest corner of the Roman province of Syria. As a result, greater crowds of diseased, crippled, possessed, crazy, epileptic and paralyzed people are borne to this new teacher. And the simple record is, "he healed them." There is a progression in the severity of the various forms of affliction mentioned. Sickness is less serious than disease, and "torments" imply forms of disease attended with acute pain. The possessed with devils, or more properly demons (for it is not the same word that is used for devil in the former part of the chapter), were those over whom evil spirits had gained such special power that the person could not always control his own motions or acts. See Matt. 8: 28. The "lunatics," or, as the Greek term means, "the moon-struck," were so called because the people of the East believed that the moon had some subtle influence over this form of

#### COMMON VERSION.

the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease 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.

#### REVISED VERSION.

ing the <sup>1</sup> gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the report of him went forth into all Syria: and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, <sup>2</sup> possessed with demons, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *good tidings*; and so elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *demoniacs*



disease, which was probably like modern epilepsy. These were the conspicuous afflictions in Palestine. And all these and many more are prevalent now, with the exception, perhaps, of demoniacal possession.

25. there followed him great multitudes] This also is particularly characteristic of the East. Any great rabbi, or wonder-worker, would have a whole town out after him, following him day after day. It is quite natural that Jesus, a wonder-working teacher, should be followed by multitudes. The excitable character of the Orientals would call out a surging mass of people, full of the most extravagant demonstrations so common to the Asiatic temper. There were representatives from every part of the land. Decapolis was a Roman district on the southeast of the Sea of Galilee. The name means "ten cities," and was given because of the ten chief cities included in the district. Pliny gives the names of the ten cities, as Scythopolis, Hippos, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia, Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Raphana and Damascus. Only Damascus is of any importance now.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. When John is cast into prison, Jesus takes up his work: one worker falls; God raises a greater to fill the place. It was said of the martyrdom of Huss, "You roast a goose to-day; but from his ashes a swan will arise." (The word "Huss" meant a "goose," and the swan was the armorial device of Luther.) 2. Without Christ is darkness and death; the gospel brings Christ, the great light. 3. The light springs up to us; we do not make the light. 4. Repentance is a gospel doctrine; it was the burden of John's and of Christ's teaching; it should be the burden of ours also. 5. Christ calls industrious poor men; teachers and pastors are fishers of men. 6. We must follow Christ to be fitted for his work. 7. We must leave all to follow him. 8. Evil spirits may have special power over human souls at times. 9. Miracles attested the mission of Jesus. 10. Many may attend on Christian teaching without being saved by it.

CHAPS. V., VI. AND VII. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. Compare Luke 6:20-49.

GALILEE, NEAR THE SEA OF GALILEE. POSSIBLY "HORNS OF HATTIN." A.D. 23.

*Analysis.*—The THEME is the kingdom of heaven—Messiah's kingdom.

(1) Subjects of the kingdom—who are blessed, chap. 5:1-12; their influence, vs. 13-16.

(2) The law rightly and spiritually interpreted, vs. 17-48.

(3) Principles to guide subjects of the kingdom—in giving, chap. 6:1-4; concerning prayer and forgiveness, vs. 5-15; concerning fasting, vs. 16-18; concerning treasures, service and daily cares, vs. 19-34; concerning judging others, chap. 7:1-5; concerning holy things, and conduct towards others, vs. 6-12; warnings about the way to life and the way to death, and about

COMMON VERSION.

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

REVISED VERSION.

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

false teaching, vs. 13-20; about false professions, vs. 21-23; and about hearing and not doing, vs. 24-27. The effect of the sermon, vs. 28, 29.

*The Time.*—This discourse was certainly spoken after a tour of teaching and healing in Galilee, and after the calling of certain disciples by the Sea of Galilee. Nor was it until Christ's public teaching had attracted crowds from Galilean towns and from regions far away in Judæa and beyond the Jordan, Matt. 4:18-25. Yet it was comparatively early in his Galilean ministry.

Harmonists generally place it *after* the choosing of the twelve apostles, an event which Matthew does not notice until after he reports the sermon. See Matt. 10:1-14. On this account some would place the sermon *before* the choosing of the twelve. Those who do so also hold that the discourse reported in Luke 6:17-49 was spoken at a different time and place.

But Matthew appears to be narrating the sending away of the twelve upon some important teaching tour, apart from their Master, in chapter 10; and as he had not before mentioned the names in the band, he records their selection in connection with this tour. In that case the twelve might have been actually chosen *before* the sermon on the mount. Assuming that the discourse reported by Luke was the same as this given by Matthew, then we may infer the following probable order of events:

Jesus left Capernaum in the evening, went into the mountain and spent the night there alone, Luke 6:12. In the early morning a company of disciples came to him; from these he chose the twelve apostles, Luke 6:13. Meanwhile the multitudes were gathering; and, seeing the crowds, Jesus sought an elevated spot upon the side of the mountain, sat down with the twelve, and taught the people, Matt. 5:1, 2. This is now usually placed in the spring or early summer of A.D. 28.

*The Place.*—The scene of this event was certainly in Galilee, and not far from Capernaum. The Gospels give no intimation, however, of the direction from that city. It appears to have been a mountain well known to the disciples. Delitzsch calls it "the Sinai of the New Testament." Matthew says Jesus "went up into the mountain," Matt. 5:1. Luke says, also, that Jesus "went out into the mountain to pray," and was there all night in prayer. In the morning after choosing the twelve "he came down with them, and stood on a level place," and multitudes came to hear him and to be healed of diseases. After healing them he looked upon his disciples, and spoke the sermon which Luke then records. See Luke 6:12-20.

It is evident that these two descriptions *might* apply to the same discourse, at the same time and place. Given a peak of a mountain, with a level place in the mountain below the peak, and both descriptions are substantially met as to the place. The Latins have a tradition, reaching only to the twelfth century, however, that the Beatitudes and this sermon were spoken on the "Horns of Hattin," a short mountain ridge, precipitous on the north side, and about 400 feet high. At the eastern end of the ridge is an elevated peak or "horn" rising about 60 feet above the plain, and a less higher peak at the western end. At a distance these give the ridge the appearance of a saddle.



THE JORDAN. (From a Photograph.)  
Traditional place of the baptism of Jesus, near Bethabara.



TEL HUM, SUPPOSED SITE OF CAPERNAUM. (From a Photograph.)  
The large blocks of stone in front are part of the ruins of the White Synagogue.

"But the singularity of this ridge is, that on reaching the top you find that it lies along the very border of the great southern plain, where this latter sinks off at once by a precipitous offset to the lower plain of Hattin."—Robinson, *Researches*, I. 370. Stanley says the place "so strikingly coincides with the intimations of the Gospel narrative as almost to force the inference that in this instance the eye of those who selected the spot was rightly guided." He adds, "it is the only height seen in this direction from the shores of the Lake of Gennesareth. The plain on which it [the ridge] stands is easily accessible from the lake, and from that plain to the summit is but a few minutes' walk. The platform at the top is evidently suitable for the collection of a multitude, and corresponds precisely to the 'level place' to which he [Jesus] would 'come down' as from one of its higher horns to address the people. Its situation is central both to the peasants of the Galilean hills and the fishermen of the Galilean lake, between which it stands, and would therefore be a natural resort both to Jesus and his disciples." "None of the other mountains in the neighborhood could answer equally well to this description."—*Sinai and Palestine*, 360.

Geikie and Edersheim suggest some of the mountain ranges to the north of Capernaum, but do not indicate any particular one. Sepp thinks the scene was somewhere in Decapolis or Peræa. Robinson thought there were a dozen mountains near Capernaum suitable for the scene; but later explorers do not find them. It is not possible certainly to identify the place; that the "Horns of Hattin" answer the requirements is all that can be said.

*The Hearers.*—These were not the chosen disciples alone, as some have inferred from Luke 6:20, but were "the multitudes" of people that had gathered "to hear" and to be healed. Compare Matt. 5:1, 2 with Luke 6:12-20. The audience was a mixed multitude, some of whom had been healed, and many perhaps of whom had become disciples.

*The Structure.*—A great variety of views have been held respecting the structure of the sermon. Some have said that it was a compilation by the evangelist, or by some earlier writer, from various discourses of Jesus given at different times and places and to different audiences. The chief argument in support of this view is internal, based upon a *supposed* lack of connection or unity in the truths presented. But a careful study of the sermon itself by means of a simple literary analysis like the one before given reveals the *unity* of the sermon, and an orderly sequence of subjects under the great theme of the discourse.

It is essentially *Oriental* in form and character. The teaching in the East was *interlocutory* in form; not a continuous address as in Christian churches with us. The teacher thus interrupted by questions might be compelled to make digressions from his chief theme at times. Allowing duly for the mode of Oriental teaching, the sermon on the mount is remarkable for unity of purpose in setting forth the new kingdom, and in a logical progression of thought to the end.

*The Sources.*—The truths in the sermon bear the stamp of the divine mind.

No doubt germs of these great truths might be dimly discovered in ancient Persian, Chinese, Sanscrit and Hebrew literature; but no human mind that has not first known the Christian Scriptures has been able to formulate nor to see these truths clearly in any other ancient writings. Much labor has been expended by the learned to pick out certain phrases in the rabbinic lore that has come down to us, which are believed to resemble certain truths in the teachings of Christ. The aim was to show that Jesus was greatly indebted to the literature of his time for the marvellous truths he proclaimed. How signally this effort has failed to establish any such conclusion may be seen by the exhaustive discussions of the subject in German theological treatises of this century. Edersheim gives a condensed view of this subject, and says, "One by one, as we place the sayings of the rabbis by the side of those of Jesus in this sermon on the mount, we mark the same essential contrariety of spirit, whether as regards righteousness, sin, repentance, faith, the kingdom, alms, prayer or fasting."—*Life and Times of Jesus*, Vol. I. 535.

The identity of the sermon on the mount with Luke's report of the sermon on the plain has been much discussed. The apparent difference respecting the "mountain" of Matthew and the "level place" of Luke has already been removed. It has been shown that these two accounts might have referred to the same spot, like the top of the ridge called the "Horns of Hattin." It has also been shown that the apparently different circumstances attending the sermon on the mount and that on "the level place" disappear upon close examination; and that both were probably in or upon "the mountain." The only remaining objection to regarding the two accounts as relating to the same event is the internal structure of the sermons. But the truths taught are manifestly so similar in thought, if not substantially identical in expression, that few have attempted seriously to press this; hence we may conclude that the two evangelists give us reports of the same discourse. Nor are their reports more variant than would be those of two competent reporters of a sermon in our day. That they were two distinct sermons has been advocated by Erasmus, and by Roman writers generally (except Maldonatus), by Gresswell, Lange, Brown, Plumptre and others. That the two records relate to the same sermon is the view maintained in some form, substantially, by Grotius, Calvin, Meyer, Tischendorf, Tholuck, De Wette, Bengel, Wordsworth, Olshausen, Stier, Neander, Wieseler, Robinson, Schaff, Mansel, Edersheim, Geikie and Westcott, among many others. Augustine thought they were the same discourse, spoken first to disciples on the mount and repeated soon after to the multitudes below. But his view has not met with favor; the general opinion is that the two are reports of the same discourse at the same time and place.

#### CHAP. V. THE BEATITUDES. VS. 1-16.

##### SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM AND THEIR INFLUENCE.

The theme, the kingdom of heaven, is opened fitly by a statement of who are the subjects and what influence they should exert upon the world.

The sermon on the mount begins with the beatitudes, so called from *beatus*, the Latin word for blessed. The beatitudes are usually reckoned as seven in number, though the word "blessed" is repeated nine times, and there are nine paradoxical or antithetical statements. Those who count only seven, treat verses 10 and 11 as applications of the previous aphorisms. Others count the number as eight; some make the number ten, regarding the beatitudes as a counterpart of the ten commandments. But the opening expressions and the forms make the more natural number nine. There is a regular progression upward.

These truths are taught in the Old Testament, but were then, as now, often overlooked. See Ps. 51 : 6, 17; Isa. 66 : 2, 13; Eccles. 7 : 23; Ps. 37 : 11; 17 : 15; 65 : 4; Prov. 4 : 23. The character of the "blessed" or "happy" is declared; they are subjects of the "kingdom."

**1. seeing the multitudes]** The connection of thought, though not necessarily of time, is closely related to 4: 23-25. He saw the ignorance, the guilt and the sin of these multitudes that were following him day after day. He had healed them as he stood on the "plain," literally, "level place," as we learn from Luke 6: 17-19. Now he goes up the mountain; and having seated himself, his disciples gather close about him. In the East, teachers and laborers almost uniformly sit. "Stone-cutters, carpenters, turners, bread-makers, washerwomen, and many other artisans, who would stand at their work in the West, sit at it in the East." Even when one wishes another to serve him, he would say, "Will you sit with me and cook, or wash, or take care of my horse?" This sermon was a familiar conversation, and sitting would be the fitting and customary position of the teacher.

**2. he opened his mouth]** An expression common in Hebrew and in classical writers, as Æschylus and Aristophanes; it indicates the beginning of formal and important instruction. So Jesus invites attention by his manner as well as by his speech.

**3. Blessed . . . the poor in spirit]** The teaching of the Pharisees and of other religious rabbins of that day seemed to favor the idea that the kingdom of heaven was most easily gained by the rich and the noble. They could rigidly pay tithes, and attend to outward forms of ceremonial worship. They could bring valuable offerings for the temple service. But Jesus strikes down this error. The kingdom of heaven is for the poor, not the proud beggars who claim charity as a right, but for the truly poor in spirit—those who feel that they have no personal holiness to merit or claim the kingdom. But the spiritual "pauper" may *think* himself "rich" in spiritual life. See Rev. 3: 14-17.

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. V.—And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain: and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4. **Blessed . . . they that mourn]** Sorrow goes with poverty. The prevailing thought then as now was, religion is a duty for the rich and the noble to perform; so comfort is for these classes, not for the sorrowing and the distressed. Thus again Jesus corrects the mistaken ideas of the world. The sorrowing are blessed, the comfort is for them. "They that mourn" are not those only who are troubled and sorrowing over their sin, but the much wider class, it may be, in deep spiritual sorrow, sorely longing for God and for his grace. Yet, sitting in darkness, they grope about, knowing not where they may find him. Like the magi, the star of Bethlehem may arise to comfort their souls; or the comfort may refer to the work of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Those who glory in their religion boastfully, as the Pharisees, will get no soul-comfort.

5. **Blessed . . . the meek]** There is little meekness in the typical Syrian of to-day, as there was none in the Pharisee of that era. The Syrian artisan boasts he is superior to any of his trade in all Europe. A Syrian official once gravely asked a missionary if Syrian boys could not learn as much in one year as American boys could in two. Those who are tranquil in mind, who esteem others better than themselves, are in a frame of mind best to enjoy, and thus in the truest and highest sense to inherit, the earth. For to be meek means more than to be mild or gentle; it is more than good-tempered, and than having a good natural disposition. It implies a soul that has been subdued, schooled by suffering and discipline until it has been brought under the divine will, and is patient and forbearing from the highest religious motives. The proud, the ambitious, the rich, may appear nominally to have much of earthly things, but they do not really enjoy them; only the meek take in all the true benefits to be drawn from the earth. This beatitude is a repetition of Ps. 37:11.

6. **Blessed . . . they that hunger, etc.]** Compare Isa. 51:1; 65:13. This seems like a reflection from the awful experience in the temptation. As if Jesus recalled the awful pangs of hunger, and the sorer spiritual distress and trial from the devil, and the succeeding blessed ministrations and bountiful filling of the hungry body and soul brought to him by the angels! So not those who have a conceited fullness of religion, but those who have an indescribable longing, like hungering and thirsting, for righteousness, will be most "thoroughly satisfied" or filled with it.

7. **Blessed . . . the merciful]** This thought is in Ps. 18:25. How wide this experience was from that of this world is seen in the trials of Jesus

## COMMON VERSION.

4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

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

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

## REVISED VERSION.

4 <sup>1</sup>Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 <sup>1</sup>Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 <sup>1</sup>Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 <sup>1</sup>Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities transpose vs. 4 and 5.

and of Paul before the Jewish priests and the Roman rulers. Mercy was unknown or little regarded by either ruler or priest. "The Christian stands between mercy received and mercy needed." In the kingdom of heaven not harshness, not the severest penalty of law, but pity, kindness, compassion for the suffering and for the condemned, would be the rule. And in this spiritual realm those who show compassion would obtain mercy. The parable of the good Samaritan illustrates this truth.

**8. Blessed . . . the pure in heart]** Closely like this is Ps. 51: 10. The leaders in Jewish religion laid great stress on outward cleanness and purification; Jesus puts the great emphasis on inward purity. This does not refer chiefly to chastity, as Romish interpreters imply. It calls for purity from all forms of sin in the thought. It requires sincerity, truthfulness, chastity, love of God; in fact all that is included in a "new heart." The pure possess the spiritual eye that will see God.

**9. Blessed . . . the peacemakers]** The Jews thought that the Messiah would come as a temporal king; by war, conquest and mighty armies of his people he would restore the power to Israel. Jesus faces this error with the opposite principle. The best subjects in my kingdom will be peacemakers. Not only will they have a peaceable mind in themselves; they will actively make peace among the quarrelsome. Sin is disturbing, dividing, contentious, and makes war. The godly are peaceful and peacemakers; see the case of Abram with Lot, Gen. 13: 7-9. Those having this spirit shall be called the sons of God—the highest condition granted to the blessed subjects of his kingdom. They are to be joint-heirs with Christ himself.

**10. Blessed . . . they . . . persecuted for righteousness' sake]** Like the first, the reward here is the "kingdom of heaven." Not the character but the condition of the subjects is here defined. Some have thought this a change in the beatitudes, and not in harmony with the former one; but it closely resembles the fourth class, who hunger and thirst, and even the second, who mourn, as these also express the condition as well as the character of the blessed. To be godly in this world would bring on fierce persecution. Yet martyrs and confessors would have the kingdom. So Elijah and the old patriarchs had gone into it.

**11. Blessed . . . ye . . . for my sake]** The godly, whether Jew or Gentile, had suffered persecution. But now the disciple of the Master would be slandered, reviled, falsely accused in all manner of ways, persecuted, not for being godly, but for being Christian; for Christ's sake. So they brought

## COMMON VERSION.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: 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 theirs 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 falsely, for my sake.

## REVISED VERSION.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

10 Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil



lying witnesses to condemn the Lord himself; and the disciple need not expect to be above his Master. In this final beatitude, Christ identifies himself with his people; calls on them to rejoice, for the coming reward is great. What a word of comfort is this to the abused, reviled, persecuted souls suffering for Christ's sake! Elijah was pursued, Jeremiah in prison, Daniel among the lions, and Isaiah sawn asunder. The persecuted of to-day are in the great company of prophets and holy men that have gone before, and in the company of the souls "under the altar," soon to stand before the Lamb in white robes; Rev. 6:9; 7:9.

**13. Ye are the salt of the earth]** Having stated who are the subjects of the kingdom and their leading traits of character, Jesus now declares some of their passive duties. Salt is to preserve things from spoiling and corruption. Christians are to preserve the world and human society from corruption. Moreover salt gives flavor and "character" to food. If the salt has lost its saltiness, then it is worthless; it hastens rather than stays the corruption. So with the disciple; if he loses his Christian character and becomes worldly, he is worthless. The salt of Palestine now comes chiefly from Cyprus. Its importation and sale are monopolized by the Turkish government. Salt there is not all pure and white as with us, but most of it is impure, dark and dirty, being mixed with lime, magnesia, iron and other earthy matter. Some salt is also derived from the evaporation of sea-water, which is comparatively pure and will retain its savor. But the bulk of the salt there is from natural deposits and impure, and therefore easily loses its savor. It is this kind to which Jesus referred. The modern use of salt in a covenant is also of great antiquity. To eat salt with one makes mutual friends, even though it be secured by accident or strategy. Macgregor, in "Rob Roy on the Jordan," describes his capture and that of his company by Bedouins. Their sheikh, mistaking Macgregor's salt for white sugar, tasted a pinch of it. Seeing his mistake, he made a wry face at being thus unwittingly made his friend and prevented from robbing him; and his company also laughed at their sheikh in spite of their disappointment in losing the expected booty. But the crude natural salt of the country, losing its flavor, is worthless, and no man will allow it to be cast on his field. The only place for it is the street, where it is trodden under foot.

**14. Ye are the light of the world]** Their light was from Christ, the true Light, which lighted every man, John 1:9. Light opposes darkness and dispels it; so holiness in the Christian tends to overcome wickedness and

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

## REVISED VERSION.

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

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden

14 under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be

dispel it. Salt keeps that on which it acts from decay; light fosters life and growth. Believers are to do more than prevent decay; they are to promote life. The Christian is a light; like a city set on a hill, he cannot be hid. Jesus may have pointed to some such city in sight. From the Mount of Beatitudes or Horns of Hattin, Safed, counted one of the four holy cities of Palestine, is distinctly visible; and the top of Tabor can also be seen, on which are ruins of ancient buildings, so that either of these could have answered for the illustration.

**15. light a candle, . . . under a bushel, . . . a candlestick]** Or, "Neither do *men* light a lamp, and put it under the bushel [the measure], but on the stand," R. V. This verse is a striking illustration of how our Occidental modes of life and of thought obscure the meaning of Scripture. "Candles," "bushels" and "candlesticks" were unknown in Syria; but every house was provided with a lamp and a house-measure.

The ancient lamp was of various shapes and materials. The rich had lamps of ornamented terra-cotta, bronze, silver and gold. The poor had plain earthenware lamps, saucer-like in form, with an edge or spout turned up on one side to hold the lighted part of the wick, and having a handle on the opposite side. They burned oil, or grease of any kind. The "bushel" was the common "measure" of every house, usually holding about a peck. A lamp, which often was not taller than a tea-cup, could as easily be placed under as upon this measure. The lamp-stand was usually a tall article of furniture placed upon the floor like a small stand. In Oriental lands now it is made of wood or brass, often highly ornamented, and of artistic design. The top is sometimes pentagonal, and from the centre a rod projects upward two or more feet. To this rod a movable arm is affixed, upon which the lamp can be placed at any height to suit those in the house.

**16. Let your light . . . shine]** If the light is in you it will shine, if you will let it. You can hinder it from shining. But you may let it shine to the glory of your Father in heaven, because men observe Christians closely. Where one man reads his Bible a hundred read Christians. And the world is more apt to judge Christianity by the conduct of its professors than by the doctrines of its Founder. Your light is to shine, not to glorify self, but to glorify God.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Luther said to a teacher of his day, "Get up boldly; open the mouth widely; be done quickly." 2. When Jesus speaks, our hearts should be open. 3. Who are the blessed? "The poor in spirit: not the poor in spirituals."—*Henry*. 4. Not the merry but the mourning are comforted: godly sorrow; eternal comfort. 5. The world is

COMMON VERSION.

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

REVISED VERSION.

15 hid. Neither do *men* light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

possessed not by might but by meekness. 6. The bread of heaven is for the spiritually hungry. 7. Kindness brings its own reward. 8. It is the perfection of life to see God. 9. Sin makes war; godliness makes peace. 10. Reviling believers is persecuting them. 11. Christians ought to preserve and give flavor to human society. 12. Believers are lights: beacon lights to the erring; comforting lights to the holy. 13. The works of saints will glorify God.

### JESUS AND THE LAW. VS. 17-26.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

**17. Think not that I . . . destroy the law, or the prophets]** Jesus had just spoken of good works which would glorify God. Thus Jesus is naturally led to explain his relation to the law. I came not to "loosen" or "let down" (the figure is that of taking down a structure) the law or the prophets. These two phrases, "law and prophets," are used to designate the whole written law, the Old Testament, and are not to be taken separately, as Meyer, Lange and the German critics generally interpret them. I came to fulfill the types and predictions of the Scripture. To show how Jesus did this was the chief object of Matthew in writing his Gospel.

**18. one jot or . . . tittle]** Instead of having come to destroy the law, verily, the law is indestructible until fulfilled. The *amen*, transferred from the Hebrew to the Greek, and rendered "verily" in English, is an ejaculatory word, expressing the certainty of a thing, or sometimes, as at the end of a petition, a desire or wish that it be sure or certain. The "jot" is literally the smallest Greek letter "iota," *iota*, as "yod," *yod*, is the smallest letter in Hebrew, which is often a silent letter, or strictly an adjunct of a letter. Yet its presence might make an important change. It makes the difference between Sarai and Sarah, Hoshea and Joshua, and is the first letter in Jehovah. Tittle is literally "a little horn" or point, such as would distinguish the Hebrew letters *daleth* and *resh*, corresponding to the English *d* and *r*, or a breathing in Greek which would give a letter the aspirate sound. The words refer to the written, not printed, language. "Till heaven and earth pass" is an emphatic form of expression, for "never" will the law pass away until all its mission is done; for Jesus is not here referring to the ceremonial law specifically, but to the moral law. Its obligation will remain and be binding as long as heaven and earth remain. So Meyer and others justly maintain.

**19. break one of these least commandments]** As a deduction from

#### COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

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.

#### REVISED VERSION.

17 Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto

you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accom-

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

what he has just said of the enduring obligation of the moral law, this follows. Whoever "breaks," or literally, whoever "looses" or "lets down" (see Mark 1:7, where the Greek word is rendered "unloose"), one of these smaller points in the law, and shall teach such errors, by any mistaken or vicious interpretation, or in any other way, he shall be the smallest in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever will do and teach the law with conscientious and accurate fidelity, extending to even the smallest points, he shall be called great in the kingdom.

**20. exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees]** These classes were the "holy ones" of that day. They boasted about observance of the law. How they were regarded we may see from a similar class of "holy ones" in Palestine to-day. "The most familiar spectacle in Syria is one of these sallow, lean, sour-faced fanatical sheikhs, walking with fixed downcast eyes through the crowd, muttering his prayers, while the passers by reach out for his hand or the borders of his garment to kiss. It is nothing that he is dirty, ill-mannered, surly, ignorant of everything but his narrow circle of ideas; proud, cruel, vindictive. He is a holy man, and belongs to a holy caste. All that Christ said of the Pharisees and scribes may be well said of these provincial hypocrites of Asia."—Geo. E. Post, M.D., in *The S. S. World*, vol. xx. p. 45. The latter are a powerful, dangerous class, that stir up revolts and tumults; depose and instate sultans; create and rule such public sentiment as may reign among Asiatics. No wonder Christ called not merely for *more righteousness along their lines*, but for a vastly *higher kind* of righteousness, to enter his kingdom!

**21. it was said . . . of old time, Thou shalt not kill]** Jesus now illustrates his meaning by special cases. This is taken from the sixth commandment. The citation is from the Greek version, which implies that Jesus was familiar with it. Who were "them of old time"? Some say Moses and the inspired teachers who followed him. Then Christ would contrast the law, as given and interpreted by Moses, with his own interpretation of it. The reading "to them of old time" of the Revised Version favors this view. But it seems to be in some measure inconsistent with what Jesus had said about his coming to fulfill the law. For in this view his exposition would amount almost to a new law. Others maintain that the "ancients" refer to scribes and others following the great captivity, who arranged the later code and added many traditional features to it. The reading "by them of old time" of the Common Version favors this view, and it is in keeping with the context. The other view makes it difficult to explain the phrase "whoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment," for this is manifestly

## COMMON VERSION.

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, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

## REVISED VERSION.

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

21 Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the

a citation from traditional, not written, law. The point of Christ's teaching is directed not against the original commandment, as given at Sinai, but against this vicious "loosening" or "letting down" of the law condemned in v. 19.

22. I say . . . whosoever is angry] Over against the traditional gloss, which hides and perverts this command, Jesus sets the true meaning of it. In rabbinical interpretation, anything short of actual killing was a secondary matter. Even actual killing might be "compounded" by money, as often now in the East. But Jesus strikes at the murderous thoughts in their very beginning. Unrighteous anger towards a brother would expose a person to judgment of the lower spiritual court. Deut. 16: 18. Calling him "Raca," "empty-head," "blackguard," exposed one to the higher spiritual court, the council; and calling a brother a "fool," as if condemning him as an atheist (see Ps. 14: 1), made one liable to "the hell of fire." Here is an evident climax in the offences: 1, angry thoughts; 2, angry words; 3, angry condemning words. And there is a similar climax in the penalties: condemnation in 1, lower spiritual court; 2, higher spiritual court; 3, in hell fire. The "hell fire," or "the hell of fire" as in the Revised Version, is literally the "*Gehenna of fire*," a phrase used by the Jews, especially the Pharisees, to represent the place of future punishment. Observe that Jesus does not mention actual "murder," nor any outward murderous act. But this awful punishment applies to murderous thoughts and murderous words. He seems not to contemplate the possibility of any subject of his kingdom committing actual murder. Harboring the thought of murder breaks the sixth commandment, and puts a soul in danger of the awful punishment of the "hell of fire." This climax or gradation agrees well with the "beaten with many" and "with few stripes." Luke 12: 47, 48.

23. Therefore if . . . thy brother hath aught] "Therefore," to illustrate and apply this teaching, he says that even when you have an offering at the altar, and remember that your brother is offended with you, you must leave the gift (which the traditions of the elders forbid one to do), and be first reconciled to your brother. For as the outward offering must be without blemish or it will be rejected, so the heart must cast out all feeling of sin, or that will vitiate the acceptance of any outward offering, no matter how perfect it may otherwise be. The reconciliation is more than getting the ill-will out of our own hearts; it also includes confession and amends to our brother, so as to bring about a reconciliation.

## COMMON VERSION.

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his 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 rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

## REVISED VERSION.

22 judgement: but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother<sup>1</sup> shall be in danger of the judgement; and whosoever shall say to his brother, <sup>2</sup>Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, <sup>3</sup>Thou fool, shall be in <sup>4</sup>danger of the <sup>5</sup>hell of fire. If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath

<sup>1</sup>Many ancient authorities insert *without cause*. <sup>2</sup>An expression of contempt. <sup>3</sup>Or, *Moreh*, a Hebrew expression of condemnation. <sup>4</sup>Gr. *unto or into*. <sup>5</sup>Gr. *Gehenna of fire*.

25. Agree with thine adversary quickly] Or, literally, "Be well-minded toward thy prosecutor quickly." The Greek word for "adversary" means primarily "one who speaks against" another in a lawsuit. The Asiatics have long blood-feuds, often handed down from father to son for several generations. But Jesus said to his followers, Make concessions rather than insist upon the last penny justice might warrant you in claiming.

Falling into the judge's hand is an event always deplored in the East. What with bribes, delays, subterfuges and perversions of justice in the courts there, a person seldom escapes without heavy losses; often stripped of everything. If the judge hands him over to the "officer," a subordinate minister of law like a sheriff or a constable, and he is cast into prison, he seldom gets out without ruining himself and all his friends.

"Farthing" here and in Mark 12 : 42 stands for the Greek spelling of the Latin *quadrans*, "quarter," a Roman coin so called because it was one fourth of a larger coin called *as*. It was equal to two *lepta*, or about three quarters of a farthing English money, or about one quarter to one half a cent American money. Cicero calls the *quadrans* the smallest Roman coin of his time. The "farthing" of Matt. 10 : 29 and Luke 12 : 6 represents another coin worth about four times as much as the *quadrans*, here counted a "farthing" also.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Jesus destroys the works of the devil, not the law of God. 2. The true reformer builds up the true. 3. It is a dangerous thing to "let down" or misinterpret in the least God's holy law. 4. Our righteousness must be different in kind and degree from that of hypocrites and formalists. 5. A religion which does not reform and change the heart will not bring men into the kingdom. 6. The soul that hates is a murderer. 7. Murder is in the thought, the angry feeling, the insulting word, as well as in the hand that kills. 8. To call our brother a "fool" is to show a murderous spirit. 9. Love is the root of all true religion; we cannot bring gifts to God while we hate our brother. 10. The worshipper must obey the law of reconciliation to be accepted. 11. Piety without love is spurious piety. 12. We are to live not merely peaceably but lovingly towards our fellow men.

PURITY OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH. THE EXTENT OF LAW. vs. 27-37.

GALILEE, A.D. 28.

27. Thou shalt not commit adultery] After explaining the sixth

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
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.	24 aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come
25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.	25 and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art with him in the way; lest haply the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge <sup>1</sup> deliver thee to the officer, and thou be
26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.	26 cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the last farthing.
27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery :	27 Ye have heard that it was said, Thou

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *deliver thee*.

commandment regarding murder, Jesus exhibits the true meaning of the seventh commandment. By the Mosaic law both parties guilty of adultery were stoned to death, except when the woman was a slave or not betrothed. If she were a slave she was not to be put to death, and the man was to offer a trespass-offering. If she were not a slave, and not betrothed, the man was to pay a ransom to her father and marry the damsel. Lev. 20: 10; 19: 20; Deut. 22: 22-27. If there was no outward criminal act, then the scribes held that there was no sin. But Jesus declares that whoever gazes lustfully on a woman has already broken the seventh commandment. For adultery is of the heart; not alone of the outward evil act.

**29, 30. right eye . . . right hand offend]** If any member of the body causes the man to stumble, it profits or benefits a man to lose that member rather than allow it to lead to the destruction of the whole man. Any sense that leads us to sin is an evil. The loss of that sense, whether it be of sight, hearing, refined taste, or æsthetic perception, if it brings us into sin, would be a gain. This is the law of self-restraint.

**31. Whosoever shall put away his wife]** Divorce is rightly based on the seventh commandment. The rabbins had made the law of divorce as shamefully loose as it is now in some of the United States. The school of Hillel declared, "If any man see a woman handsomer than his wife, he may dismiss his wife and marry that woman." If a wife cooked her husband's food badly, by over-salting or burning it, he could put her away. But Jesus allowed only one ground, that of fornication, for divorce. This Christian rule of the family will be treated more fully in Matt. 19: 3-9.

**33. Thou shalt not forswear thyself]** Jesus next corrects a perversion of the third commandment. He is not setting aside the moral law as obsolete: he is scraping off the rusty traditions which the religionists of that

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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, 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 perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

## REVISED VERSION.

28 shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not

30 thy whole body be cast into <sup>1</sup>hell. And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole

31 body go into <sup>1</sup>hell. It was said also, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him

32 give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.

33 Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *Gehenna*.

day had allowed to gather upon it. He was bringing out that law in its original lustre. The rabbins said, If you do not swear falsely, nor use the name of God, but perform your oaths to the Lord, you are without guilt. By coupling together parts of two commands the rabbins nullified both. "Thou shalt not forswear thyself" is drawn from Lev. 19 : 12 as an interpretation of the third commandment, Ex. 20 : 7 ; "but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths" is based on Deut. 23 : 23, where the command relates to vows. To forswear one's self is "to swear falsely." I may not swear *falsely*, said the rabbin, but if it is true I may swear. I may not *profane the name* of God, said he, but if I swear by heaven, by earth, by my head, or by Jerusalem, I do not use the *name* of God, and so am guiltless. Thus the law of God was jesuitically handled and destroyed. Swearing is the commonest vice of the East. The Arabs can hardly assert the simplest truth without some form of oath. The Turkish for "yes" is "yes, by," a short form for an oath. That similar expressions were common in Christ's day we infer from the Talmud. Maimonides gravely declares that swearing "by heaven, by the earth, by the sun," etc., though a man may thus under these words swear by him who created them, yet *it is not an oath*. The early Waldenses, the Friends and some other Christian sects maintain that Christ here forbids all judicial oaths also. Others hold that he did not intend to exclude these, for (1) The moral law by Moses allowed them ; and to forbid them would be to annul that law, which Jesus declared was not his purpose. (2) Jesus himself answered under such an adjuration, Matt. 26 : 63, 64. Jesus was condemning irreverent and vain words in common speech. Therefore he said, let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay. Be so truthful that no one will think that vain objurgations strengthen your statements.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The law is spiritual: it regulates the conduct through the heart. 2. Outward morality does not satisfy the law. 3. The purity and stability of the family lie at the foundation of all good society. 4. The family is to be broken up only on the ground of sin against the marriage vow. 5. Lust in the eyes or in the heart is breaking the seventh commandment. 6. The third commandment forbids all vain "use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words and works." 7. Jesus forbids all use of blasphemous words and expressions. All appeals to God in common speech are sinful. So are the semblances of them. Boys often say "deuce," "dickens," or "old Nick take it," short for "the devil take

COMMON VERSION.

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:  
 35 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.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *toward* <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *But your speech shall be*. <sup>3</sup> Or, *evil*: as in v. 39; 6 : 13.

REVISED VERSION.

34 Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor <sup>1</sup> by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. <sup>2</sup> But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of <sup>3</sup> the evil one.



it;" or "darn," "dang," etc., vulgar contractions for damn, and a multitude of like phrases heard in low life, and sometimes in so-called high life: these are all very thin forms of swearing, and are sinful. 8. Even judicial oaths show an evil society; for if the truth were always told, as it ought to be, in society, there would be no need of the judicial oath.

LOVE REQUIRED BY THE LAW. VS. 38-48.

GALILEE, A.D. 28.

**38. An eye for an eye]** The *lex talionis*, or the law of retaliation, was a restraint put upon private revenge. Revenge is a specially strong trait in Eastern character. Not to revenge a wrong was considered a disgrace. The laws given by Moses on this subject took the matter out of the hands of the individual, and regulated it by judicial statutes. But this had been perverted in two ways: (1) by using it to justify private revenge, and (2) by corrupting and annulling justice in their judicial decisions. Jesus strikes at both; and exhibits the spirit of the law on which such judicial permissive retaliations were based. Subjects of Christ's kingdom are to suffer wrong; not to retaliate nor harbor ill-feeling towards the offender. They are not even to exact judicial vengeance on their neighbors. "Lynch law," "striking back," contentions, are all in the face of Christ's rule, to "resist not evil." That is, all his people are to be subject to the law of love. Better to turn the other cheek than to take private revenge.

**40. sue thee at the law,** or "go to law with thee," and he that "sues thee" (for this is the better legal phrase) to get thy "coat" or "tunic," let him have thy "cloak" or outer garment also] The "coat" or "tunic" is a loose under-garment, made of silk, or cotton and silk. The "cloak" or *aba* is the large square outer garment of goat's hair, linen, cotton or silk, open in front and embroidered about the shoulders and neck, and is wrapped about the person at night. Hence the law did not allow this garment to be retained by a creditor over night, Ex. 22: 26, 27, for it was the chief bed-covering.

**41. compel thee to go a mile]** In early time distances were reckoned not by miles but by *hours*, as now in Palestine. During the Roman rule, the Roman military roads with their mile-posts made the *mile* a temporary mode of counting distance during the early part of the Christian era. Even in these minute historical allusions, the gospel writers show that they are faithful witnesses. The Roman mile was 142 yards shorter than the English statute mile. Persons were often compelled to forward despatches or help forward messengers and travellers in the East. See 2 Chron. 30: 6, 10.

COMMON VERSION.

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

40 And if 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.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *evil*

REVISED VERSION.

38 Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I

say unto you, Resist not <sup>1</sup> him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right

40 cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee,

and take away thy coat, let him have thy 41 cloak also. And whosoever shall <sup>2</sup>compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *impress*.

**42. Give to him that asketh]** We are to give by the law of love. But this does not mean to enforce indiscriminate giving. Alford well remarks: "To give everything to every one—the sword to the madman, the alms to the impostor, the criminal request to the temptress—would be to act as the enemy of others and ourselves."

**43. love thy neighbor, . . . hate thine enemy]** This was another detestable gloss on the law. It is a gross perversion of Lev. 19: 18. The rabbins made it appear that if it is right to love our neighbor, then it is right to hate our enemy. The Jew knew only the Jews as his neighbors, not Samaritans or the Gentiles. The latter could be soundly scorned and hated, in their view, without sin; nay, it was a sin not to despise them. Jesus sets down one law of love toward all. Hate in the heart is murder begun. The follower of Christ is to return love for hate, blessing for cursing, good for evil, prayers for persecution. Two clauses in v. 44 are omitted in the Revised Version, but the general principle taught is not changed by the omission.

**45-48. That ye may be]** Three reasons are attached to this requirement to love our enemies: 1. It is like God; 2. Despised publicans love those that love them (on the publicans, see Matt. 9: 9); 3. The godless Gentiles greet those that greet them. Christ's people are not to be like these: they are to be like their Father in heaven in the completeness of their love. As he is perfect or complete (in Luke it is "Be merciful, as your Father is merciful"), so his children should have like completeness. As his love embraces the godless, his enemies, and as he sends upon just and unjust alike sun, rain, and temporal blessings, so his people are to be controlled by the same law of love in their acts and feelings toward all men. They are to be as complete in their love and mercy, including enemies as well as friends, as their Father is complete in his love and mercy.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1.** The law of private retaliation is the law

COMMON VERSION.

42 Give to him that 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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

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

43 Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine

44 enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that perse-

45 cute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the un-

46 just. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the

47 publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more

48 than others? do not even the Gentiles the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

<sup>1</sup> That is, collectors or renters of Roman taxes: and so elsewhere.

of the world, not of heaven. The laws of Draco (700 B.C.) punished every crime, even petty theft and idleness, with death. The laws of Solon and of the twelve Roman tables prescribed that the punishment should be *as the offence*. 2. The Mosaic law of judicial "retaliation" was partly permissive, not compulsory. The injured might require retaliation through the magistrate, but in most cases he might accept money damages for the injury. 3. Believers are to be controlled by love and kindness. 4. They are to love enemies; see Ex. 23: 4, 5. 5. Saints are to be like God.

#### CHAP. VI. GIVING AND PRAYING. VS. 1-15.

HORNS OF HATTIN (?), A.D. 28.

**1. Take heed that ye do not your alms]** or righteousness. Jesus, in the first part of his discourse, exposed the perversions of the law by the Jewish religionists, and their jesuitical casuistry in interpreting and applying the commandments. He had shown how the spirit of even the old law reached the heart, and thus was spiritual, not external. He now takes up outward religious acts upon which the Pharisees prided themselves, and points out the utter emptiness of their religion in this respect also. The three great duties of religion, according to Jew, Moslem and Romanist, are alms-giving, fasting and prayer. Jesus introduces his teaching on these subjects by stating the true principle or motive underlying all such duties. Believers are not to practice their "righteousness" (see Revised Version) to have men admire and applaud them. It is more probable that Jesus used the broader word "*dikaiosunēn*," "righteousness," as in the Revised Version of v. 1, not *eleemosunēn*, alms, and meant to include all of religion. He then gives three examples—alms-giving, fasting and praying—to illustrate the general principle. He first gives two cautions, then two counsels.

**2. doest . . . alms, do not sound a trumpet]** The scribes, like the Moslems and Roman Catholics of now, held that alms-giving was meritorious before God. The rabbins said, "For one farthing given to the poor, a man will gain heaven." The names of large givers to the poor were announced in the synagogue. The religion of that day was ostentatious, for display. Jesus unmasks this pharisaical "acting" in religion by setting over against it the spirit of true worship. When thou givest alms do not "trumpet the fact before thee," as the hypocrites, literally the "actors," do in the synagogues and in the streets. There is no clear evidence that the Pharisees actually sounded a trumpet to announce their alms, either in the synagogue or in the street, though the latter custom is not uncommon now in some parts

##### COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. VI.—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.

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.

##### REVISED VERSION.

**6** Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

**2** When therefore thou doest alms, sound not 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 received

of Egypt. Nor is it likely that this refers to the sound of the coin falling into a trumpet-shaped box. Nor is it strictly a mere figure of speech; it is rather a dramatic illustration. Great men passing through the street often had a trumpet sounded to open a way for them through the crowd, and to warn the common people to do them proper homage. In giving, do not "trumpet" the act (so Alexander renders), do not imitate their love of admiration and display. Augustine likens those who boast of their good deeds to the foolish hen, who has no sooner laid her egg than, by her cackling, she calls some one to take it away.

**have their reward]** They get all they seek—the admiration of men. They get no reward from God, for they aim at none. Do not be like them, is the first caution.

**3. let not thy left hand know]** The precept is enforced by a graphic figure, drawn perhaps from a common practice of counting out money from the right hand into the left. Let your method of giving be great secrecy, the opposite of display. Give with such modesty, secrecy and silent quietness that not even the left hand will know what the right hand is doing. There is an Oriental proverb, "If thou doest any good cast it into the sea; if the fish know it not, the Lord knows it." The hypocrites sought the praise of men in giving, as in all their devotions; they got it, but they missed gaining the praise of God.

**4. reward thee openly]** Or, "recompense" thee; for the thought is of repayment rather than of reward. The Revised Version omits "openly," as it is not in many older Greek texts. Giving, which some think must be known to gain due credit for it, the Lord says must be done in the spirit of secrecy, not display, to gain due recognition of the Father. He sees in secret; for he is the ever-present Being, and he will repay, or, literally, "will give over" or "give back to thee," to the full.

**5. when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites]** The hypocrite, "the pretender" or "actor" in religion, loves to pray where he can be seen. It is so now in the East. The Moslems break off a bargain or talk to say prayers, all the while, it may be, glancing about to see what is going on. The prayers said, they plunge into bargains, cheating, lying or conversation again with the same zest and worldliness. The Jews usually say prayers standing, with head bowed and eyes upon the ground. The rabbins say, "In prayer the head must be covered and the eyes cast down." Again, "The disciple of the wise looks down when he stands to pray." "If

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

## REVISED VERSION.

3 their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have

a man prays in the temple he looks toward the holy of holies; if elsewhere, he looks toward Jerusalem." So Maimonides and the Mishna direct.

**6. enter into thy closet]** The Greek word for "closet" means "store-room." It was not unusual for the apostles to retire to the housetop to pray. Acts 10:9. The "closet," or "inner chamber," is a small room within a room. This well represents the opposite of display, the idea of secrecy, which Jesus emphasized. Yet one may be so ostentatious in seeking and coming from a secret place of prayer as completely to destroy the pretended secrecy, and thus annul the rule Jesus lays down. The point of the teaching is, you are not to play the "actor" in prayer, but from the heart sincerely offer your prayers to God alone. Some ministers make serious mistakes in this line, perhaps from lack of due thought. Said a reporter once, of such an exercise on a public occasion, "The Rev. Dr. — uttered the most eloquent prayer ever *offered to a public assembly!*" Prayers in public ought to be so framed in word and spirit that even a worldly-minded reporter would feel that they were offered to God and not to the audience.

**7. use not vain repetitions]** The word in the original suggests "stammering," and so repeating syllables, or words, in speaking. In the East and West this habit in prayer widely prevails. The howling dervishes of the East will yell "Allah," "Allah," "Allah" (their word for God) for an hour, without any praise or petition. So Baal's priests cried for many hours, "O Baal, hear us," "O Baal, hear us." 1 Kings 18:26. So the Roman Catholic "Rosary of the Virgin" notes: "Our Father," etc. (*once*), "Hail, Mary," etc. (*ten times*), calling on the devout Romanist to repeat these words ten times; and phrases in the "Rosary of Jesus" are to be repeated an equal number of times. The rabbins held that he who multiplied his prayers was sure to be heard. That the heathen of the most cultured nations were given to "vain repetitions" in prayer we see from the Greek poet Æschylus, who, in one place, has nearly a hundred verses filled with a repetition of the same invocation to the gods.

**8. for your Father knoweth]** The object of prayer is not to inform God of our wants. It may, then, be asked, Why pray? Believers pray—1, to own their need of God; 2, their dependence on him; 3, to plead his promises; 4, to show their belief that he will supply their needs; 5, to prepare their hearts to receive his blessings. Vain repetitions would in no wise further either of these ends. "Prayer is not designed to *inform* God, but to

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recom-

7 pense thee. And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their

8 much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them: for <sup>1</sup>your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *God your Father*.

give man a sight of his misery, to humble his heart, to excite his desire, to inflame his faith, to animate his hope, to raise his soul from earth to heaven, and to put him in mind that *there* is his Father, his country and his inheritance."—*Quesnel*.

9. After this manner, or "thus"] Jesus gives a pattern or specimen of true prayer. Thus it was understood by nearly all the early fathers and by the majority of evangelical Christians. Some hold that he gave this as a *formula* always to be used. Others say this is against his teaching in v. 7; and that he did not make the use of this particular form obligatory on his followers. There is no historical evidence, so far as known, that it was used as a *formula* of prayer by the apostles themselves. It is to be accepted as a proper mode of prayer, and it may be used in the worship of God privately or publicly, but always and only in accord with the principle already declared by Jesus—not to use display or vain repetitions in praying.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

**Our Father]** "The Lord's Prayer," so called because the Lord gave it as a pattern, might more accurately be called "The Model Prayer." It is usually divided into *three* parts: 1, preface; 2, petitions; 3, conclusion. The Latin fathers and the Lutheran Church make the number of the petitions *seven*. The Greek and Reformed Churches and the Westminster divines make the number *six*, by making only one petition of the first part of v. 13, while the others divide it into two petitions. The works written on this "Model Prayer" would make an immense library. *The Preface* is literally "Father of us, who *art* in the heavens;" "our," not *my*, implying the brotherhood of the human race, especially of believers. The "fatherhood of God" was an old thought in the Jewish worship. It seems a common thought of the race. The Vedas of India, the Zend-Avesta of Persia, Greek literature, as Plato and Plutarch, and the older Baal worship, have the same idea. It seems to be a relic of God's earliest revelation of himself in patriarchal times. But Jesus brings it into a new form and touches it with a new life.

*First Petition. Hallowed be thy name]* That is, help us and others to revere, hallow, sanctify and make holy God's name and being. Reverence lies at the foundation of all true prayer.

10. *Second Petition. Thy kingdom come]* This asks that God's kingdom may come into the hearts of its subjects on earth as completely as it reigns in the hearts of the hosts of heavenly beings. Satan's kingdom will to that extent be overcome and Messiah become the universal King.

*Third Petition. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven]* A petition that God's will may be done as perfectly in us and in all others on the earth as it is by the angels in heaven. It implies that we readily and cheer-

#### COMMON VERSION.

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

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it* is in heaven.

#### REVISED VERSION.

9 ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven,

10 Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven,

fully submit ourselves to all his providential dealings with us, to his discipline of us, and to his holy and wise training of us into conformity to his image and character.

**11. Fourth Petition.** Give us this day our daily bread] This petition has puzzled critical scholars, chiefly because the word for "daily" is unknown elsewhere in sacred or classical Greek. It occurs only here and in the parallel text, Luke 11 : 3. The chief explanations are: give us this day, 1, bread for the present day, the day just beginning; or, 2, bread for tomorrow; or, 3, bread of subsistence. Explanation two fails to express the thought in Luke, "day by day," and seems inconsistent with the first part of the clause in the petition. Of the other explanations the first is preferable, and the one naturally accepted by the common reader of our English version. The primary thought is also "bread" for the body; "bread" being put in the East for food in the general sense. Yet the idea of spiritual bread is not to be excluded from the petition.

**12. Fifth Petition.** And forgive us our debts, as we forgive (or "have forgiven") our debtors] "Forgiven" has elsewhere the force of "sent" or "put away," and "debts" are our sins. All our failures in duty are debts due to God. But to gain this "putting away" of our debts to God, we must have "put away" our debts against man, or forgiven our debtors—all who have done wrong toward us. If we have an unforgiving spirit we cannot expect an answer to this petition; nay, we cannot truly pray this prayer. This is in harmony with the teaching in the earlier part of the discourse. Matt. 5 : 23, 24.

**13. Sixth Petition.** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil] God does not "tempt" any one, in the sense of inducing him to sin. The old sense of the word (as of the Greek) is "to test," "to put to trial." God tests our faith, he puts us to trial, to prove and to strengthen our characters and to develop our Christian life. He may lead us, as the Holy Spirit led our Master, where the devil or his servants, or even where our own imperfect hearts, may tempt us to sin. But God's purpose is not sin but holiness in us. We may well shrink from having God test us, and pray not to be exposed to temptation. And so the other member of this petition, connected by "but" and showing the antithesis, falls in harmoniously to make one petition. We pray not to be "led" into temptation. We are never to go voluntarily into temptation, for that is the sin of presumption. But suppose we are thus "led" by something outside of ourselves? Then we ask God to deliver us from evil, or, according to another reading, "the evil one." See Revised Version. The Greek will admit of either reading.

## COMMON VERSION.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.  
12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

## REVISED VERSION.

11 so on earth. Give us this day<sup>1</sup> our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we  
13 also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver

<sup>1</sup> Gr. our bread for the coming day, or, our needful bread.

But the neuter "evil" gives a profounder sense, for it includes "the evil one," Satan, and all forms of evil.

*Conclusion.* **For thine is the kingdom, etc.]** This doxology, which is omitted in the Revised Version, seems a not inappropriate conclusion to the prayer, and is of great antiquity. It is not found in the oldest written copies of the Scriptures, nor in the writings of the earliest Latin fathers in the Church, and even the Greek commentators pass it in silence. It is found, however, in the oldest extant versions of this Gospel, as in the Syriac Peshito, Sahidic and Thebaic versions; but its presence there, and its absence in what are called the "best manuscripts" in Greek, cannot be satisfactorily explained until we have more light on the early history of the Church. The English, Greek and Gallican Churches alike retain it in their forms of worship. The doxology corresponds closely to a common Jewish ascription.

**14, 15. For . . . if ye forgive not]** Lest some dull hearer should misunderstand the petition about forgiveness it is repeated, and more particularly and fully stated. Repentance is necessary to forgiveness, but repentance implies a forgiving spirit; so this is one of God's eternal principles—forgive as you would be forgiven.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Genuine piety is in the heart; spurious piety is on the outside only. 2. Spiritual pride and spiritual vanity go together. 3. The false professor is only a "religious actor," a hypocrite. 4. He usually gains what he seeks—the praise of men. 5. "When we take least notice of our good deeds, God takes most notice of them."—*Henry*. 6. It is not so much publicity as display that makes our prayers valueless before God. 7. Giving and praying to be seen of men is "religious play-acting," not religion. 8. Not the number nor the length of our prayers, but their character, God regards. 9. Long prayers, if true prayers, are not condemned, for Jesus was all night in prayer. 10. Prayer is the telephone that enables us to speak into God's ear. 11. Give and forgive—the constant cry of man: "One is the cry of want, the other of guilt."—*W. R. Williams*. 12. If we are unforgiving, we shall be unforgiven.

PIETY WITHOUT DISPLAY, OR HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS. vs. 16-23.

**16. when ye fast]** Jesus had given two examples illustrating the principle that righteousness or religion must be without ostentation. He now

COMMON VERSION.

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 sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

REVISED VERSION.

14 us from <sup>1</sup>the evil one.<sup>2</sup> For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Fa-

15 ther will also forgive you. 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 sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

<sup>1</sup> Or, evil. <sup>2</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, but with variations, add *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*



gives a third example under fasting. Fasting in private or public was to be done, like alms-giving and praying, without display. Believers are not to be like hypocrites or "actors," of a doleful countenance, disfiguring their faces to be seen of men to fast. In the original there is a play here upon words which cannot well be put in English. "Disfigure" and "appear" are represented by the same root-word. The English reader would get a little idea of it if we say "their faces they make to disappear, that they may appear;" that is, they conceal their faces, the more plainly to make them appear to be fasting.

**17. when thou fastest, anoint . . . wash]** An Asiatic going to a feast would anoint his head and wash his face. So Jesus would have us keep our fasts before God, but appear as usual before men. Luther has the true idea: "If thou fastest between thyself and thy Father alone so that it pleases him, thou hast rightly fasted. Ceremony for the sake of applause and to hood-wink people with a holy demeanor is to be rejected." God who sees secret acts and secret thoughts will reward such service in fasting, as Jesus had declared already that he would reward alms-giving and praying.

**19. Lay not up for yourselves treasures]** From laying up good works as treasures, Jesus naturally turns now to speak of hoarding any kind of earthly treasures. Riches, in the East, consisted chiefly in costly apparel, jewels, gold and silver, and flocks and herds. The apparel would be consumed by moths and the metals by rust, and all would be liable to be stolen by thieves. The thought is, lay not up treasures that perish—be not a miser.

**20, 21. treasures in heaven]** What these heavenly treasures were Jesus had just been stating, and these riches could neither be eaten by moth or rust nor stolen by robbers. And the reason for this counsel is that where the treasure is the heart will be. What a man seeks with all his soul will carry his soul with it. Judas had his treasure in his bag; Lot's wife had hers in Sodom; neither had a heart for heaven, but only for this world.

**22. The light of the body is the eye]** Literally, "the lamp of the body is the eye." The eye is the only organ of the body which can take in

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

## REVISED VERSION.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face; that thou be

not seen of men to fast, but of thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee.

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves<sup>1</sup> break

20 through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not<sup>1</sup> break through nor steal:

21 for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also. The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single,

thy whole body shall be full of light.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. dig through.

the light; if this organ be "single," that is, devoted to this work alone, taking in the light, then the body will be full of light.

**23. if thine eye be evil.]** If the eye fails to perform its proper office, the body is in darkness, and how great that darkness! There is no possibility of light when the eye is helpless or destroyed. It is only a trifle better when it gives a distorted or perverted view of all objects.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. A sour face is no part of a religious fast; it may be a cloak of hypocrisy. 2. Fasting is humbling the soul; see Isa. 58: 5. 3. Worldly-mindedness is as fatal a sin as hypocrisy. 4. To whatever treasures a man gives all his mind, those he makes his god. 5. There are treasures in heaven as surely as treasures on earth. 6. Earthly treasures are shadowy and fleeting; heavenly treasures are substantial and abiding. 7. The single eye helps us to hit the mark we aim at; the double eye misses it.

THE HEAVENLY FATHER'S CARE. vs. 24-34.

**24. No man can serve two masters]** After saying that one must not hoard treasures of this world, Jesus next declared that one cannot have two objects, or, literally, be a slave to two masters. A free man might render such service, but here it refers to a slave. No man can be a slave to two masters, for a slave must render entire obedience, and the claims of masters will conflict. For it does not contemplate two partners, but two distinct masters, and none can render obedience to two conflicting orders at the same time. So we cannot serve God and mammon—mammon being an Aramaic word for wealth or riches, which are personified here. Thus Milton represents Mammon as one of the lost spirits. "Paradise Lost," bk. 2, l. 228.

**25. Take no thought]** or, "Be not anxious for," as in the Revised Version. The point is, do not spend your energies in getting wealth or in hoarding things for to-morrow. Do not even worry about your bread and butter, nor how you shall be clothed, nor where you shall live. Anxiety for this life is needless; anxiety for the life to come is needful. This does not mean to favor idleness and prevent industry, but only to prevent distraction of mind from God's service.

**Is not the life more]** The meaning is, cannot God, who has given you life, be trusted to give food to sustain that life? For life is greater than food or raiment. This refers primarily to physical life; but the thought of

COMMON VERSION.

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!

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, 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?

REVISED VERSION.

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

fore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, 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 the food, and the body than the rai-

spiritual life and spiritual food must not be overlooked. The Jews had a proverb, "Every one who has a loaf in his basket, and says, 'What shall I eat to-morrow?' is of little faith." But this teaching of Jesus goes far deeper than this proverb.

**26. Behold the fowls]** or "birds." Jesus now gives a particular illustration of the principle he has laid down. The birds are very numerous in Palestine. They flock about human dwellings. Sparrows, swallows and kites seek the abodes of men. Crows, ravens and vultures frequent the fields; the latter are thieves and scavengers; they store no food for themselves; their living seems the most precarious possible, yet they are fed. And if God feeds them, will he not feed man, whom he has made in his own image?

**27. Which of you . . . can add one cubit]** A boy cannot make himself grow by thinking about it, or by saying, Now I will grow an inch this week. He has no power to *will* himself to grow. He puts himself under proper conditions to grow, and nature and God do the rest. The Greek word rendered "stature" is applied to the increase of Jesus in "wisdom and stature," and to the size of Zachæus, "little of stature," Luke 2:52; 12:25; and to the perfection of the believer, "of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph. 4:13. It is also used in speaking of the blind man, "he is of age," John 9:21-23; and of Sarah, "when she was past age," Heb. 11:11. Some suppose that here our Lord meant "one cubit to his age," that is, no one by thought could prolong his life. Yet by thought and due attention to the laws of health, one may be said and is said to prolong his life. To suppose the addition of a "cubit to one's age" also seems a needless confusion of thought in the figure, and the rendering of the Common and of the English Revised Versions is to be preferred. The reading of the American revisers, "the measure of his life," avoids the confused figure, but is a gloss or a paraphrase rather than a translation of the original.

**28. Consider the lilies]** Having drawn an illustration respecting food from the birds, he now draws one respecting clothing from the lilies and the grass. Exactly what flowers are meant by lilies cannot be determined, nor is it important. Dr. Post says there are several varieties of flowers coming under this general name of lilies, such as "tulipæ oculi-solis, gladiolus, illyricus, various species of iris, many gay and beautiful colchicums and crocuses." God clothes these flowers, and they are better arrayed than was Solomon in all his riches and glory. Why then should a child of the heavenly kingdom be anxious about his raiment? And this question was asked

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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:

## REVISED VERSION.

26 ment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?

27 And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto<sup>1</sup> the measure of his life?

28 And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow;

<sup>1</sup> Or, his stature

of a people who counted their garments with their money, as a part of their wealth. With how much more force might the question be asked of us ?

**30. if God so clothe the grass of the field]** Or, of the open country. It does not usually refer to fenced "fields," for those are rarely, if ever, seen in the East. Baking is done in a kind of earthen pot narrowing from the bottom upward. Dried grass and other fuel were put *inside* so as to heat the walls, and then the dough was put on the *outside* of the heated jar-like oven and baked at once. Sometimes the oven is a conical-shaped hole in the ground plastered with clay. The grass, coarse flowers and weeds were beautiful to-day and burned to-morrow, though more beautifully clothed than Solomon himself. If God so care for and adorn the grass, how much more will he care for us! Do not then worry, but trust him.

**31. What shall we eat ?]** Seeking and worrying for what we shall eat and drink and wear, is to put the needs of the body before the deeper needs of the soul. Jesus shows that in having such worry and care for food and clothing the Pharisees were doing just as the Gentiles, with no higher aims and no loftier spirit.

**32. your heavenly Father knoweth]** To worry with anxious thought about our food is to distrust God. Distrust and worldliness are heathenish. God's people are not to be like heathen, for God knows that we have need of these things. They are to be industrious and prudent, and then to trust God.

**33. seek ye first the kingdom of God]** or "his kingdom." We are not only to seek this kingdom first, in order of time, but it is to be uppermost in our thoughts all the time. We are not merely to seek the present, but the spiritual; not this life, but the other, is to be foremost in the thoughts of men.

**34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow]** or, "Be not therefore anxious for the morrow." See Revised Version. The morrow will bring its own cares, and the work of to-day is enough for this day. Trust God for the future. Do not borrow trouble. Do not cross a bridge till you get to it. The wisdom of this world echoes the same truth, but bases it upon entirely different ground, and urges it for a totally different reason, and urges it for a totally different end. *Carpe diem*, "seize to-day"—make the most of now—

## COMMON VERSION.

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of 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.

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

34 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

29 they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of

30 these. But if God doth 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 Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink?

32 or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;

33 for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be

34 added unto you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

is the ancient proverb, but it meant Epicurean self-indulgence. Anxious thought brings possible evils of to-morrow as a burden for to-day. They may never become real evils, and if they do, we bear them to-day in imagination and to-morrow in reality, and thus carry two burdens where God calls us to carry only one. The rabbins had a proverb, "Care not for the morrow, for ye know not what a day may bring forth. Possibly on the morrow he will not be, and have been found caring for a world which is not his."

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. If no man can serve two masters, much less can he serve two gods. 2. God says, be content with such things as ye have; mammon says, grasp all you can. God says, defraud not, lie not, be honest; mammon says, cheat anybody if you can gain by it. God says, be benevolent; mammon says, be miserly; this giving makes you poor. God says, be unselfish—love your neighbor as yourself; mammon says, take care of yourself first, and look out for "number one." 3. "A man's life is a greater blessing than his livelihood."—*Henry*. 4. God bestows life, the greater blessing; he will give food and raiment, the lesser blessing, to the prudent that serve him. 5. Fine clothing is like the beauty of the grass, it may be burned to-morrow. 6. "Knowledge and grace are the perfection of man, not beauty, much less clothes."—*Henry*. 7. God and religion are the principal concern of man on earth. 8. Concern for our soul is the best cure for concern about the things of this life. 9. We need not pile up evils borrowed from to-morrow upon to-day; to-morrow may not be ours, or may bring no evils with it.

CHAP. VII. OF CENSURE AND OF THE WAY INTO THE KINGDOM.  
VS. 1-14.

HORNS OF HATTIN (?), A.D. 28.

The connection between the counsel with which this chapter opens and that which has gone before has puzzled many critics. The order of thought seems to follow the law of natural association, on which the whole sermon is constructed. Those who are worrying over themselves and how they are to get food and clothing are apt to be severe and censorious in their judgment of others. This is true also of those who grow formal, narrow and selfish in their religious life. At last it takes on two extremes, great severity and great laxity of judgment. If not of their way, severity; if of their way or church, laxity. Witness the awful terrors of the Roman Inquisition, and the shameful practice of selling indulgences, as historic examples. This is consistent also with the conjecture that some Pharisees in the audience sneered at the previous teaching of the discourse, and Jesus takes this mode of reproving them.

1. Judge not] Censorious and wrong judgments are characteristics of the East, but not of there only. We are not to judge—1, wrongly; 2, censoriously; 3, needlessly. This is not against—1, proper *official* judgments,

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. VII.—Judge not, that ye be not judged.

REVISED VERSION.

7 Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be

but is opposed to *officious* ones; 2, right opinions of others, but is opposed to uncharitable opinions. It forbids all needless, arbitrary, blind or exaggerated judgment or fault-finding respecting our neighbor.

2. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged] This may have a double meaning. Perhaps it was meant to have a double application. It resembles the old law of "an eye for an eye," referred to in chap. 5:38. It would then mean, the world will act on this rule; you judge others harshly, they will judge you severely. It may refer also to the censorious spirit as contrary to the law of love, and which will be condemned when God enters into judgment with us. "Truth and equity are elastic; and in the moral order of things, an unjust blow will recoil on him who has dealt it."—*Lange*. The Talmud has a similar proverb.

4. Let me pull out the mote] The Greek word for "mote" does not apply to the small particles of dust floating in the air, as Meyer has justly shown, but to the bits of twigs and sticks that birds use to build into their nests. We are slower to see our greatest sins than our neighbor's smallest ones, and are forward enough in pointing out his motes and in offering to pull them out. The smallest blemish in another we quickly discover; to the mammoth faults in ourselves we are blind. One may have a powerful microscope on his neighbor's short-comings, and officiously propose to pick out each particular one, which his censorious sight magnifies about a thousand diameters. But seldom do we see our own faults, though they are as painfully conspicuous as a beam in our eye. The case is not represented as a real but an ideal one. The first reform is self-reform. If you wish to be a religious reformer, begin with your own sins. Paul counted himself the chief of sinners; the Athenians he charitably called "too superstitious," that is, "too religious," not too wicked, idolaters. "While we are blind with self-deceit, we are but bunglers in dealing with the faults of others."—*Plumptre*. The rabbins had a similar proverb relating to reproof: "If one said, 'Take the mote out of thine eye,' he would answer, 'Take the beam from out thine own eye.'" Similar expressions occur in several passages of the Talmud, showing that it was a common proverb.

6. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs] The opposite of cen-

## COMMON VERSION.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 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.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, 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.

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

seriousness is laxity of opinion—utter indifference to what a man is, what he believes, or what his character may be. The Romanists compounded sins, and made repentance and godly living null by indulgences; so other errorists now weaken or destroy saving truths by loose views on probation, future punishment and the finished work of Christ for believers. The illustration may be drawn from a supposed casting of sacrificial meal to the wild Syrian dogs, the scavengers of the streets, though Meyer strongly contends against this view. The dogs in the East are without owners, run wild in the streets, are filthy, snarling, vile creatures, living upon the garbage. They go in clans, and will drive off or kill any dog of another clan that trespasses upon their “preserves.”

**neither cast ye your pearls before swine]** Swine, like dogs, were unclean animals under Jewish law. Swine, in their hoggish nature, seek only to gorge themselves with food. Pearls might look like peas or beans. The hogs would only be enraged “at finding what they took for grain was only pearls.” Then, too, swine abuse precious things as pearls. Trampling them under foot they would rend the giver. So the holiest truth is not to be offered to scoffers, for they will swinishly trample on it. See Prov. 9:7, 8. The wise sayings of Eastern sages were called “pearls” of wisdom.

**7. Ask, . . . seek, . . . knock]** *How to enter the kingdom:* 1. By prayer, seeking, knocking. 2. By obedience, vs. 12-14. Having forbidden the harsh and the loose opinions which spring from a selfish, care-burdened worldly mind, Jesus now reverts to the thought in chap. 6:34. You are not to have this anxious care about worldly things, nor about the future, nor even about spiritual needs. Then how are we to get all these? Jesus tells us: ask, seek, knock. Here are three figures intended to set forth the steadily-increasing intensity of our prayers to God. Those who ask receive; those who seek find; to those who knock the gate is opened. This is true with men. How much more will it be true in our intercourse with God!

**9, 10. bread, . . . stone, . . . fish, . . . serpent]** An illustration from common life enforces the commands of v. 7. An earthly father will not deceive his son. The “loaf” or flat cake of the East might resemble a round flat stone, as some fish, eels for example, do serpents. But no father would thus trifle with a son wanting food. Bad then as you are, if you know how to give good gifts, how much more will the infinitely holy and good God give good things, temporal and spiritual—to whom? Not to swinish men or moral curs, who do not want them, and would only trample on them and turn and curse the giver, but to those *that ask him* for them. He may give temporal mer-

## COMMON VERSION.

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?

## REVISED VERSION.

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

cies, as he does to the wicked, but they have no assurance and no promise of their continuance unless they become seekers for them. There is a curious illustration of these proverbs in the Talmud. In time of drought a rabbi urged the people to benevolent deeds. A man gave money to his divorced wife who was in want, and the rabbi used this deed as a plea in prayer, that much more should God care for the children of Abraham than this man for his divorced wife. It is said a plentiful rain followed!

**12. Therefore all things]** *The golden rule. The second condition of entering the kingdom, obedience.* The "therefore" points to the conclusion of the foregoing statements. The connection of the subjects in this section is obvious enough. Apply the golden rule to the successive points: you would be judged charitably, then do not censure others. You would not have your precious things or yourself treated with contempt, then do not expose the precious truths of God, or your holiest experiences of them, to be trampled upon by others. Be careful to treat holy things with reverence yourself. You would not expect an earthly father to give you, his son, a stone for bread or a serpent for fish. Much more then will your heavenly Father give you good things when you ask for them. Similar maxims in the *negative* form are found among heathen writers, before and since Christ's time. The rabbins said, "What is offensive to you, do not to another; for this is the whole law." But they applied it only to Jews, not to Gentiles. It was only a reflection of "love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." It was found in Socrates, B.C. 400, Menander, B.C. 275, and more explicitly in Confucius, B.C. 550. In the Doctrine of the Mean, Confucius says, "What you do not like, when done to yourself, do not do to others." Book i. 13:3. In his Analects he declares, "What you do not want done to yourself do not to another." Book xv. 3. This old Chinese teacher might profitably be studied in America, on the treatment of others, and especially of his countrymen. The rule is also found in the apocryphal book of Tobit, 4:15; and the Mosaic law declared, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Lev. 19:18. Jesus alone gave this rule a positive form, made it universal as the race, showed its reasonableness, and, grandest of all, pointed out the relation between our duty to man and our duty to God, and declared that duty to God outranks all other moral and spiritual requirements.

**13. Enter ye in at the strait gate]** There are two roads and two gates. In these the two kinds of religious people go. *Those making no pretence to*

COMMON VERSION.

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

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 be which go in thereat:

REVISED VERSION.

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

12 All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.

13 Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *is the gate*.



*religion are not directly included.* There are many references to these roads and gates in Jewish writers, and the contrasts are familiar in Eastern life. The gardens and houses have small narrow gates, perhaps to keep out horse-men, and to avoid attracting attention to the wealth of the owners. Or, the reference may be to the public way or street, as contrasted with the private way for the few. The wide gate leads to—1, a broad road; 2, a well-trodden road; 3, to multitudes on the road, it is popular; but 4, it goes to destruction. The narrow gate leads to—1, a narrow way; 2, to few in the way, it is not popular; but 3, it leads to life. The self-righteous, and all those possessing an apparently religious manner, yet who are not religious before God, go in at the wide gate. Only those who sincerely do God's will, in the spirit of love, find the little strait gate, or keep in the narrow way.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Selfishness blinds us to our own faults, and makes us sharp respecting our neighbors.' 2. What would become of us if God should be as exact in judging us as we are in judging our neighbors? 3. Reprovers should first free themselves of faults—"the snuffers of the sanctuary were to be of pure gold." 4. "Christ knocks at our door, and allows us to knock at his."—*Henry*. 5. Men can get into the wide gate with all their lusts, sins and self-righteousness. 6. Men can enter the strait gate only by repentance, regeneration and obedience to God. 7. It is not safe to go with the multitude in religious practices.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE. vs. 15-29; 8:1.

**15. Beware of false prophets]** This is an application of what had gone before. This is one way of avoiding the wide gate and entering the strait gate. The false teachers could only lead you into the broad road; outwardly they appear as true Christians in the guise of sheep; inwardly they are wolves. You cannot tell them by their appearance, but you can tell them by their fruits. Watch what they do and the motive which prompts them to do it. Changing the figure, you do not pick grapes from thorns, nor figs of thistles; the "thorns" being of numerous kinds in Palestine; the "thistles" strictly are the "caltrop," a prickly plant, growing in dry and desert places. One species of Syrian thistle has heads two or three inches in diameter, set round with thorns, in the midst of which is a beautiful blue flower. The fig is smooth, the opposite of thorns. So do not judge men by their professions, but by their practices.

COMMON VERSION.

14 Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

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 fruit.

REVISED VERSION.

14 are they that enter in thereby. <sup>1</sup> For narrow *is* the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it.

15 Beware of false prophets, that come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do *men* gather grapes of

17 thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *How narrow is the gate, etc.*

**18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit]** Jesus implies that you need not be misled; it is not possible for evil fruit to be on a good tree, or good fruit on an evil tree. So a man corrupt at heart cannot show the fruits of true religion, nor can a man with a new heart constantly bring forth that which is evil. Neither kind can conceal their true character; the bad man, no matter what his professions or his pretensions to goodness, will show his moral rottenness somewhere and somehow. The good man, no matter how great his humility, will not be able to keep his goodness from shining. The bad tree is cast into the fire, like the chaff in chap. 3: 12.

**21. Not every one that saith . . . Lord]** Not profession, not calling on the name of the Lord, as an empty form, but doing the will of the Lord, is the essence of true religion. Not outward service, nor formal service, nor numberless prayers, but obedience, is required of us if we will become subjects of the kingdom.

**22. have we not prophesied in thy name?] or, did we not prophesy?** "In that day" may refer to v. 19, meaning the great day of the Lord—the day of judgment. To prophesy, in the New Testament sense, means not merely to predict future events, but includes the whole work of gospel teaching.

**in thy name have cast out devils?] or, by thy name, as if it had been by authority of Christ.** They would use the power of his name to expel "demons," for this is the strict meaning of the word for "devils," and perhaps use his name as if it had some spiritual charm, and in like manner they would claim many wonderful works, usually meaning miracles. Even false professors in the early Church appear to have shared this power. As Schaff remarks, "their self-deception continues to the very bar of final judgment."

**23. then will I profess]** They made a false public profession of Christ; he will make a true public profession concerning them, namely, that he never knew them. See Matt. 25: 12.

**24. Therefore whosoever heareth . . . and doeth]** This is a sum-

COMMON VERSION.

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? 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

REVISED VERSION.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth

19 good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast

20 into the fire. Therefore by their fruits 21 ye shall know them. 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 who is in

22 heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out

23 demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto

24 them, I never knew you: depart from 24 me, ye that work iniquity. Every one therefore who heareth these words of

<sup>1</sup> Gr. powers.

mary, a final application, of the teaching. We are all to hear with attention, and we are to make profession, and also to confess Christ before the world. But neither of these will make us true subjects of the kingdom; only doing his will can mark us as his true people. This is like building on a rock. The floods in the East are often sudden and sweeping; they tear up the soil, bear away great boulders, and lay waste gardens, orchards and houses in their course. It is needful to have a house founded upon a rock; they must dig down to the rock-bed, and build upon a strong foundation. Buildings founded upon the sand, whether slight or grand, are swept away like cockleshells when the floods come. The rock is Christ; the sand is the self-righteous teaching of the Pharisees; the rain, flood and wind are the various trials and temptations to which the Christian life is subjected in this world. The house on the sand falls, and great is the fall of it. All the money, care and anxiety of the owner have been lost. The house on the rock stands, the owner and his treasures are safe.

**28. the people were astonished]** The Greek is a strong word; literally, "strike out," or "driven out of their senses" by the teaching.

**29. For he taught them as one having authority]** It was not merely the subject of his teaching, but also the manner of it, which astonished his hearers. The rabbins were accustomed to teach, but supported their statements by innumerable references to others. Jesus spoke as one who seemed to have knowledge within himself; and his manner and his tone, as well as the subject of his teaching, indicated his superior power and his superior knowledge.

**8: 1. When he was come down from the mountain]** Literally, "and with him coming down from the mountain many crowds followed him." The connection with the close of the foregoing chapter is made very clear by the original construction of the first word, "and to him descending from the mountain," as Alexander justly observes. And this verse properly closes Matthew's account of the sermon on the mount.

## COMMON VERSION.

likened him unto a wise man, which built his 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.

**C**HAP. VIII.—When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

## REVISED VERSION.

mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house

25 upon the rock: 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 the rock.

26 And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built

27 his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes.

8 And when he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. A wolf may appear in sheep's clothing, but he is still a wolf; a sheep may foolishly put on wolf's clothing, yet he is not a wolf, but a sheep still. Some Christians may have a rough exterior, but be Christians still. 2. "Every hypocrite is a goat in sheep's clothing, but a false prophet or teacher is a wolf in sheep's clothing."—*Henry*. 3. Sticking apples and bunches of grapes on a thorn bush does not change the bush; so a few kind words and acts will not change the heart of a bad man. 4. "A man may cast devils' out of others and yet have a devil—may be a devil himself."—*Henry*. 5. A teacher may help others to heaven, yet come short of it himself. 6. One may have a great reputation for piety, among men, yet be a worker of iniquity before God. 7. Building on the rock requires labor, and building a character on Christ requires diligent doing. 8. There is a storm coming which will test the character we have builded. 9. Persons may admire good preaching, and be astonished by it, yet stick to their sins.

#### CHAP. VIII. JESUS' POWER OVER DISEASE. VS. 2-17.

GALILEE, A.D. 28.

The order of the miracles and events here narrated in the eighth and ninth chapters varies in the three Gospels. The true chronological order is a matter of conjecture, and harmonists do not agree as to that order. The Evangelists do not give a definite order, and therefore, any one of two or three orders may be consistent with the requirements of the several narratives. The place in Galilee at which the leper was healed is unknown. The healing of the centurion's servant and of Peter's wife's mother took place at Capernaum.

**2. behold, there came a leper]** The healing of the leper is placed after the healing of Peter's wife's mother, by Mark and Luke. Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-15. Matthew here does not make a definite note of time. The healing of this leper is the first specific miracle described by Matthew. It had relation to the Mosaic law, and incidentally would prove what Jesus asserted, that he came not to destroy the law, see v. 4. On leprosy, as a disease and as a type of sin, see special note at the end of this chapter.

**if thou wilt, thou canst]** "Wilt and canst are not merely auxiliaries, but distinct and independent verbs."—*J. A. Alexander*. If thou art willing thou art able to make me clean, is the meaning of the leper.

**3. Jesus . . . touched him, saying, I will]** To touch a leper would defile one, but here infinite purity touched finite impurity, and the impurity was healed and became pure. In response to the prayer of the leper, Jesus, having stretched forth his hand, touched him, saying, I will, be thou cleansed, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

##### COMMON VERSION.

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, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

##### REVISED VERSION.

2 him. And behold, there came to him a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou made clean. And straightway his lep-

4. See thou tell no man] Similar silence was enjoined upon the blind man, chap. 9: 30, 31, and upon the man cured of an impediment in his speech. Mark 7: 36. One reason for this silence appears in Mark 1: 45, for the leper, disobeying Jesus, published the miracle, and he could no more openly enter into the city. The publicity of the miracle hindered Jesus in his proper teaching work. Alexander suggests that the command was only temporary, meaning that he should first show himself to the priest, and have his cure attested lawfully before telling of it. The gift that Moses commanded was: 1, two birds alive, and clean; 2, cedar-wood; 3, scarlet; 4, hyssop. Lev. 14: 4-7. On the seventh and eighth days further purifications were to be had. See Lev. 14: 9-32.

for a testimony unto them] Some hold that this testimony was a proof to the priests that Jesus revered the law; others that it was to be a proof to the people. It is better to take it in the broadest sense; the leper's cure could only be established by official examination, and the testimony following it would be a public proof to both priests and people that he was cured.

5. there came unto him a centurion] Luke relates this case more fully, Luke 7: 1-10. In Luke's narrative it follows closely the account of the sermon on the plain or "level place." Some have supposed that the two accounts relate to two distinct healings, because Luke speaks of *messengers*, while Matthew implies that the centurion came *himself* to Jesus. Both these things, however, would be in accord with Oriental custom. An Oriental of prominence would be expected to send messengers to announce his coming and his errand in advance; then he would be expected to follow himself to urge his request. Matthew states that Jesus having entered into Capernaum a centurion came to him; he does not mention the messengers coming first. The centurion humbly begged, "Lord, my boy lieth in the house sick of the palsy, grievously tormented," that is, in great pain.

The centurion was captain of a Roman company nominally consisting of an hundred soldiers, hence his title "centurion," one over "an hundred." The Roman army was divided into legions, like our army corps. A legion ordinarily comprised 6200 footmen and 730 horsemen; but often it varied in numbers from 3000 to 6000. This legion was divided into ten cohorts, commonly designated "bands" in the New Testament, and these cohorts into centuries, each commanded by a centurion, as captains now have 100 soldiers for a company. The word for servant is literally "my boy." Luke says "his slave," and his favorite one.

Paralysis in its most common form was seldom painful; but some forms, when attended with contraction of the muscles, are accompanied with extreme pain, and this is the meaning of "grievously tormented." The

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

5 ¶ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

## REVISED VERSION.

4 rosy was cleansed. 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.

5 And when he was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion,

case seems to have awakened the pity of Jesus, for he immediately said, "I will heal him."

**8. I am not worthy]** And the centurion, answering, said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, but only speak the word and my boy will be healed. Some suppose that the centurion, though a Roman officer, was a proselyte of the gate.

**9. I am . . . under authority]** The centurion gives a reason with his message: even I am a man under power, and also having under myself soldiers, and I say to this one go, and he goes, and to another come, and he comes; and to my servant do this, and he doeth it. The meaning is obvious enough: the centurion believed that Jesus had command over disease, just as he had command over soldiers; therefore Jesus could order the disease away and it would go at his bidding, as a soldier would go at the bidding of his captain. There is no hint here that the centurion referred to angels or to angelic messengers, as some have needlessly supposed.

**10. Jesus . . . marvelled]** Having heard the answer, Jesus marvelled and said to those following, truly I say to you I have not found so great faith in Israel. It was a remarkable testimony to the faith of a Roman. A similar instance of faith in a similar officer is found in Acts 10: 1-8.

**11. many shall come from the east and west]** The passage in this and the next verse is not in Luke, and hence some suppose these thoughts were spoken in some other connection. But they seem to fall in naturally here, as a more full statement of the truth which he had just announced. Matthew, writing to the Jews, pointed out their rejection because they had no faith. Luke, writing to the Gentiles, omitted this application. To enforce the statement of the greatness of the faith of the centurion, Jesus added, I say to you that many shall come from the east and west (literally, from risings and settings), and they shall recline with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, but the sons of the kingdom shall be thrust out

COMMON VERSION.

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 shouldst 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 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:

<sup>1</sup> Or, boy <sup>2</sup> Gr. sufficient. <sup>3</sup> Gr. with a word. Luke 7: 8. <sup>5</sup> Gr. bondservant. <sup>6</sup> Many ancient authorities found so great faith. <sup>7</sup> Gr. recline.

REVISED VERSION.

6 beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my <sup>1</sup>servant lieth in the house sick of the

7 palsy, grievously tormented. And he saith unto him, I will come and heal

8 him. And the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not <sup>2</sup>worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but only say <sup>3</sup>the word, and my <sup>1</sup>servant shall be

9 healed. For I also am a man <sup>4</sup>under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my <sup>5</sup>servant, Do this, and he do-

10 eth it. And when Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, <sup>6</sup>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 the west, and <sup>7</sup>sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and

<sup>4</sup>Some ancient authorities insert *set*: as in Luke 7: 8. <sup>6</sup>Many ancient authorities read *With no man in Israel have I found so great faith.* <sup>7</sup> Gr. recline.

into the dark, the outermost; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. The description is that of a great feast, where multitudes from the east and west should come to recline at the table, while many of the Israelites of that day, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were called sons of the kingdom, because legally sons of Abraham, but having no faith, and not worthy to be sons, would be cast out into the utter dark without. A similar picture of the torments of the wicked in outer darkness is found in other religious works. The Institutes of Menu state, "The wicked shall have . . . agony in utter darkness, . . . they shall suffer alternate afflictions from extremes of cold and heat, . . . pangs of innumerable sorts, and lastly, innumerable deaths." The Zend-Avesta declares, of the place of the wicked spirits, that it is of darkness, the germs of the thickest darkness. Milton describes a similar region in such forcible and awful language as to make the strong man shiver even in midsummer. See *Paradise Lost*, book ii. l. 586.

**13. as thou hast believed]** The message of Jesus to the centurion was, as thou hast believed so let it be done to thee; and his boy was healed in that hour. The faith was equal to the healing and the healing equal to the faith. There is a variation in the account of this healing as given by Luke. Matthew seems to imply that the centurion came in person; Luke says he sent the elders of the Jews. There is no contradiction; the explanation is as old as it is simple; what one does by another he does by himself. Matthew's account is brief; Luke's is more full. Matthew credits the centurion with doing by himself what in reality he did by another. So Pilate is said to have scourged Jesus, but certainly not with his own hands. Jesus is said to have baptized, but he did it by his disciples. See John 4: 1 and 19: 1.

**14. when Jesus was come into Peter's house]** Mark and Luke imply that this was on the Sabbath, and place it before the healing of the leper. Peter and Andrew, though born in Bethsaida, appear to have resided in Capernaum. The cities were near together, on the Sea of Galilee.

**wife's mother]** Peter, who according to the Roman Catholic Church was the first pope, was married. Tradition says the mother's name was Perpetua or Concordia, and her daughter was called Petronella. The mother had been stricken down with a great fever, with sudden prostration; and the high fever, as described by Luke, may imply something like our typhus.

**15. he touched her hand]** The recovery was sudden, and cannot be

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

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

## REVISED VERSION.

12 Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of

13 teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And the <sup>1</sup>servant was healed in that hour.

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother lying

15 sick of a fever. And he touched her

<sup>1</sup> Or, boy

explained by natural causes. After such a fever a person would ordinarily be weak and unable to rise for work when the fever was broken.

16. When the even was come] In the cool of the evening, and after the Jewish Sabbath was past, for it ended at sunset of the seventh day, the people brought their sick and those possessed with demons to be healed; and Jesus cast out the spirits by a word, and healed all their sick, and so was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:4. The citation is from the Hebrew version, giving the sense of the original prophecy, and implying that in some way Christ removed these diseases by bearing them in his own person. See 1 Peter 2:24.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. "Faith ever says, if thou wilt, not if thou canst."—*Gerlach*. 2. Sin is the leprosy of the soul. 3. The greatest sinner, if penitent, Christ can and will forgive. 4. The soul redeemed from sin should testify of its Redeemer. 5. Great men's families cannot escape sickness. 6. The greatest of men must come to Christ on the same footing as beggars. 7. Soldiers may be men of great faith. 8. Christ commended the centurion's faith, though a Roman; we should give due praise to Christian character, whether in our Church or another. 9. Christianity is a religion of kindness to the sick and afflicted. 10. The touch of Christ can cure from the fever of sin.

THE POWER OVER MEN, THE SEA AND DEMONS. VS. 18-34; 9:1.

SEA OF GALILEE, A.D. 28.

The topics in this section are: Following Jesus, 18-22; The Storm, 23-27; The Gadarene Demoniacs, 28-34.

19. a certain scribe came] A scribe, who acknowledged Jesus as a teacher, came and said, Teacher, I will follow thee wheresoever thou mayest go. And Jesus saith to him, The foxes (all the fox family, but here reference is especially to jackals, that were common in Palestine) have holes or dens, and the birds of heaven have lodging places or shelters (a broader word than nests), but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. It implies that Jesus had no house or home of his own. Yet he never was in want of a lodging-place.

COMMON VERSION.

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.

18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he 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.

REVISED VERSION.

hand, and the fever left her; and she 16 arose, and ministered unto him. And when even was come, they brought unto him many <sup>1</sup> possessed with demons: and he cast out the spirits with a word, and 17 healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases.

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. And there came <sup>2</sup> a scribe, and said unto him, <sup>3</sup> Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou

<sup>1</sup> Or, *demoniacs*    <sup>2</sup> Gr. *one scribe*.    <sup>3</sup> Or, *Teacher*



**21. suffer me first to go and bury my father]** Another of his disciples said to him, Lord (not Teacher, as before), permit me first to go away and bury my father. The ancient tradition reported by Clement of Alexandria says this disciple was Philip, the apostle. Bury is used in the wide sense of all the funeral ceremony. Allow me first to attend to that, then I will follow thee. But Jesus saith to him, follow me, and leave the dead to bury their dead. The great work of discipleship is to follow Christ. Let those dead in sin bury their own dead in body. Or, if "dead" be taken in the same sense in both cases, then it means let the dead bury themselves; that is, better let them be unburied than to neglect following Christ. But the first interpretation is preferable.

**24. there arose a great tempest]** And he entering into a boat, his disciples followed him, and behold a great tempest arose in the sea, so the boat was being covered by the waves, but he continued asleep. Mark graphically adds, there were other boats with him; a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the boat, and Jesus was asleep on a pillow or cushion. The ship or boat was no doubt an ordinary fishing-boat on the Lake of Galilee. Only one or two boats are now to be found on that sea.

**25. his disciples . . . awoke him]** The Master, who had not where to lay his head, could sleep on a cushioned seat in a boat and in a storm. The disciples' cry was, Lord, save, we are perishing.

**26. he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea]** Reproving them for their fear and lack of faith, Jesus rises, rebukes the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm. The men marvelled, exclaiming, what manner of man is this? This does not mean what country is he from, but what kind of power has this man? Even the winds and the sea obey him. This implies that they knew other things obeyed him, as diseases, but now, even the wild elements, that were supposed to be under God's special control, obey this person.

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

23 ¶ And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

## REVISED VERSION.

20 goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven *have*<sup>1</sup> nests; but the Son of man

21 hath not where to lay his head. And another of the disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my 22 father. But Jesus saith unto him, Follow me; and leave the dead to bury their own dead.

23 And when he was entered into a boat, 24 his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the boat was covered with

25 the waves: but he was asleep. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying,

26 Save, Lord; we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a

27 great calm. And the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *lodging-places*.

THE LAKE OF GALILEE is frequently noticed in Scripture as "Sea of Chinnereth," "Chinneroth," Num. 34:11; Deut. 3:17; Josh. 11:2; 12:3; 1 Kings 15:20; "sea" and "Sea of Galilee," Matt. 4:18; 8:24; 13:1; 17:27; "Lake of Gennesaret," Luke 5:1; "Sea of Tiberias," John 6:1, and in the apocryphal books "Gennesar," 1 Macc. 11:67. It is now called *Bahr Tubariyeh*—*Lake of Tiberias*.

It lies in a deep basin or depression of the great Jordan valley, about 680 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, and is about thirteen miles long from north to south, and from four to eight miles broad from west to east. The depth of the water is from 150 to 230 feet except at the north end, where it is over 800 feet in depth. The lake is the shape of an inverted pear, the large end toward the north and the large swell to the west.

The lake is surrounded by a wall of hills, here and there broken by ravines. The hills are of limestone and basalt, with volcanic rocks and marks of volcanic action, as hot springs and occasional earthquakes; yet it is not proven that the "great ditch" or basin of the lake is of volcanic origin.

The river Jordan enters the lake from the north, and colors its waters for more than a mile. It runs out again at the south end, coursing its way through the deep valley to the Dead Sea. The water has a slightly salty taste, but is drunk by the people and is wholesome. Fish abound in its waters still as in the days of Christ, and are of many kinds; large shoals of them are frequently seen. There is one fish of peculiar character which carries eggs and its young about in its mouth, and another kind which emits a sound. The fisheries on the lake which were extensive in the time of Christ are unknown now, and there is only one sail-boat and a few miserable fishing-boats to be found on the lake. The finest beach is on the northwest, where was the plain of Gennesaret, and the sites of the celebrated cities of Capernaum, with Bethsaida and Chorazin near by.

Corder describes the beach as narrow except on the northwest, where the cliffs recede forming the fertile plain of Gennesaret, watered by several fine springs. The pebbly open shore on the north is broken into numerous bays fringed with dark oleanders. On the southeast side is a palm grove, and a few palms on the western shore. On the east are steep slopes bare and desolate, but the clear water of the lake in calm weather mirroring the surrounding hills and shining in the sun presents a beautiful scene. The hot springs are near Tiberias.

The deep hollow in the earth in which the lake is situated makes it like an oven, giving it a sub-tropical climate, hot, with a steamy atmosphere. There were not less than nine cities and villages on its shores in the time of Christ, chiefly on the west side. The hills were then no doubt covered with trees; for "cypresses, oaks, almonds, firs, figs, cedars, citrons, olives, myrtles, palms and balsams" are enumerated by a contemporary of Jesus as adorning the valleys or hills. In many spots they were then like a splendid garden, "oleander bushes with flowers of the loveliest colors, figs, vines, grain fields, and meadows fringed the banks, and while fruit trees and leaves covered the hills, the shores were dotted with waving palms." So Josephus describes it.

The deep sunken situation of the lake and the ranges of hills with which it is surrounded make it subject to sudden and violent storms. Dr. Manning describes how gusts of wind rush down from the mountains into the rarefied air below and raise storms of extraordinary suddenness and fury: "One of these I experienced which illustrated many of the details of New Testament history. I had taken a boat, on a bright, cloudless morning, to explore the eastern shores and the point where the Jordan enters the lake. There was not a ripple on the water, not a perceptible current in the air. Almost without warning the wind rose; the waves, crested with foam, began to break over the sides of the boat. I was sitting on a cushion, or 'pillow,' on the flat, raised stern, 'in the hinderpart of the ship,' and watched the crew 'tolling and rowing.' But all their efforts were in vain. They were unable to make any way, for 'the wind was contrary.' At length one of them jumped overboard, and, partly swimming, partly wading, towed the vessel ashore, close to the site of Capernaum."<sup>1</sup>

**28. into the country of the Gergesenes]** or "Gadarenes," as the Revised Version reads. It is said that the reading "Gergesenes" was inserted in the text at an early day, on the authority of Origen. The name varies in the three Gospels. Good authorities read in Matthew "Gadarenes," as in the Revised Version. In Mark 5:1, "Gerasenes," or "Gadarenes"; in Luke 8:26, there are three textual readings: "Gerasenes," "Gergesenes" and "Gadarenes." The explanation of the variations probably is that Gadara being a large city it may have had jurisdiction over the adjoining district and was more widely known. Gerasene is perhaps a corruption of Gergesene, or derived from the city *Khersa* or *Gersa*, in the same district. The miracle could not have occurred at Gadara, which is too far from the lake. It was doubtless near the modern *Khersa*, or *Gersa*, where are rocks and caves used for tombs, and a steep descent near the edge of the lake, corresponding exactly to the circumstances of this miracle.

**two possessed . . . exceeding fierce]** Mark and Luke mention one. Luke adds that he was naked and had been afflicted a long time, and Mark that no man could bind him with chains, and that he cut himself with stones. Mark and Luke doubtless mention the more fierce and terrible of the two, and their particulars harmonize with Matthew, who says that no man might pass by that way. On demoniacs see note at the end of the chapter.

**29. to torment us before the time]** Their cry, what have we to do with thee, literally, "what to us and to thee, Son of God?" means what cause of quarrel is there between us? They recognized Jesus as a holy being, the Son of God. Art thou come too soon to judge us? They did not of necessity imply that the time of their judgment was fixed in the future. They opposed and defied condemnation, for it is consistent with the demoniacal spirit thus to oppose and defy God's judgments.

**31. suffer us to go away into the herd of swine]** Swine were unclean to the Jews, and are still unclean to the Moslems and to some Christians. This herd may have been the property of Gentiles, but more likely was owned by Jews, who might be raising them for the Gentile market. If the demons were to be cast out they desired to enter swine; anywhere rather than their place of punishment.

**32. the whole . . . herd perished in the waters]** Jesus would not

## COMMON VERSION.

28 ¶ And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no 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 a herd of many swine 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

## REVISED VERSION.

28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, there met him two<sup>1</sup> possessed with demons, coming forth out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 Now there was afar off from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31 And the demons besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine.

And he said unto

<sup>1</sup> Or, *demoniacs*



KHERSA, OR KERSA (Gergesa).  
Supposed place of the destruction of the swine; east shore of Lake of Galilee.

*(From a Photograph.)*

parley with demoniacal spirits. He ordered them to go out of the poor afflicted men. It may imply also that he suffered, that is, did not forbid, them to go into the swine. See Luke. The herd of swine, possessed with the demons, at once rushed down the steep bank, two thousand of them, as Mark tells us, and were drowned in the lake.

**33. they that kept them fled]** In fright and astonishment the swineherds ran to the town and reported the loss of their swine and the cure of the two possessed with demons. This brought nearly the whole city to see Jesus. They may have felt condemned for keeping swine, and for their methods of gaining property generally. So they preferred to have a holy being with the power of Jesus, on the other side of the sea, and they besought him to depart from their borders.

**9:1. came into his own city]** This verse concludes the account of Christ's journey over the sea, and belongs to chap. 8. It is not connected with what follows in v. 2. Christ's own city was Capernaum. See Luke 8:40.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Resolutions made without due consideration of the cost are soon broken. 2. Christ, who prepares heavenly mansions for his people, had no home on earth for himself. 3. Some are kept from becoming Christians because of undue anxiety for their relatives. 4. An unwilling mind can always find an excuse. 5. Christ is master of the storms of life. 6. Demons and devils are hard masters. 7. Demons have a fearful expectation of judgment. 8. Demons acknowledged Christ's power. 9. When Christ appears, wicked men and devils alike are full of fears. 10. The Gadarenes preferred their hogs to Christ; so with some men now.

LEPROSY, MODERN AND BIBLICAL.

BY PROF. GEO. E. POST, M.D., OF SYRIA.

The leprosy of the Bible is not the disease now known by that name, and generally supposed to be the cause of ceremonial uncleanness. Lev. 13 and 14 are the chief authorities on that subject. If any one will take the trouble to follow the descriptions of the rise, spread and decline of the malady as there given, he will see that the essence of it is a white or lurid or gleaming spot, producing more or less baldness in places covered with hair, often

COMMON VERSION.

they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled, and 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.

CHAP. IX.—And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

REVISED VERSION.

them, Go. And they came out, and went into the swine: and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep into the sea, 33 and perished in the waters. And they that fed them fled, and went away into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to them that were 1pos-

34 sessed with demons. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart from their borders.

9 And he entered into a boat, and crossed over, and came into his own city.

1 Or, demoniacs

arising from a boil. Now, in point of fact, the *aleppo button*, which is in appearance much like a boil, and which lasts for many months—often for a year or more, so that the Arabs call it *Habbat es Siny*, the *year boil*—is frequently followed by a tetter or lepra, a spreading scabby eruption, following much the course described in Lev. 13:18-23. As these often occur in the face, they greatly disfigure their unfortunate victims by eating away a portion of the nose or cheek or lip, or by leaving an unsightly scab, and after years a lurid contracted cicatrix. The same disease—*lepra*—occurs from other causes. It is a malady having some tendency to wear itself out and get well. This is in accord also with the description of the disease of the Bible. By simply waiting, the unfortunate unclean often become clean. No modern leper ever wore out his malady.

On the other hand, none of the well-known signs and appearances of the greater leprosy are described in Lev. 13 and 14.\*

The writer is aware that the adoption of this view would take away the force of innumerable commentaries and fine poetic allusions to the deadly elephantiasis of the Oriental lepers. But it will not in any way diminish the force and point of the ceremonial distinctions in regard to leprosy. *Lepra vulgaris*, especially the spreading chronic form of it, is a more visible and disgusting disease than elephantiasis, very intractable, and suitable as a legal and ceremonial illustration of moral uncleanness, incurable by ordinary medical means, loathsome to the beholder, and impairing the usefulness of those parts of the body which are attacked. It may still further be compared to sin in the fact that it is not a painful disease to its possessor, and but for its objective repulsiveness would perhaps attract little of his solicitude, and in the fact that it tends to spread, and involve the whole person. After all these considerations, however, the choice of leprosy among all other diseases, as the type of uncleanness, must revert to the simple will of the law-giver, a point emphasized by the fact that a man *covered* with leprosy from *crown to sole* was clean. Lev. 13:13.

The sick man of Matt. 8:2-4, Mark 1:40 and Luke 5:12 was *full of leprosy*, but apparently not up to the standard of the ceremonial law. The fact that, being *full of it*, he could walk to Jesus, would forbid the supposition of elephantiasis.

Had the leper been one of the greater type Christ would have said, v. 3, "be thou whole," instead of "be thou clean." Allusion would likewise have been made to the restoration of lost and deformed members, rather than to the departure of a disease which we may consider to have scaled from the surface of the body. Naaman, though a leper, was a mighty captain, and able to travel a long journey to see Elisha. 2 Kings 5:6-9. He thought that Elisha would place his hand over the *place*, as if a patch of tetter. When he washed, v. 14, his *flesh came again as a child's*, and *he was clean*. This looks more like the cleaning off of an eruption than the remaking of

\* See Dr. Post's articles in *The Sunday-School World*, Feb. 1881, Sept. 1885, and in *Sunday-School Teacher*, London, May, 1880, in which arguments for *lepra inveterata* as the disease intended are given.

carious bone and the re-creation of lost members. Gehazi went out, v. 27, as white as snow—an exact description of a man with lepra, and not at all accurate of a victim of elephantiasis. Miriam also, Num. 12:10, became as white as snow.

The differences between the leprosy of Leviticus and the *Elephantiasis Arabum*, so commonly thought to be the disease of leprosy noted in Scripture, may be most conveniently set forth in a tabular form.

LEPROSY OF LEVITICUS 13, 14, AND  
OTHER SCRIPTURES.

1. A disease of the skin, never going any deeper, principally manifesting itself in scaly patches, which on separating sometimes leave a reddish excoriation.

2. It produces no constitutional disturbance, nor any effect on the deeper tissues.

3. Not hereditary.

4. Not contagious.

5. Sometimes cured, though obstinate. Sometimes getting well of itself.

6. Never fatal.

ELEPHANTIASIS ARABUM.

1. A disease sometimes beginning in the skin, but never in the form of scales and reddish spots, but in the form of nodules or folds, usually of a livid or lurid hue.

2. Often beginning with numbness of the affected part; in the tubercular cases, soon produces deep ulcerations, with caries of bones and dropping of fingers and toes, great deformity, and ultimate crippling of the whole body. In the later stages, often accompanied with fever and profound constitutional disturbances.

3. Hereditary.

4. Thought by some to be contagious.

5. Incurable, never getting well of itself.

6. In the end fatal.

The ceremonial view of the scriptural leprosy was one arising from the piebald, mixed character of the skin, and had the same basis as the refusal of a piebald animal for sacrifice, or a patched garment for a priest. Once a man was covered with leprosy he was clean. It would be monstrous to say this of a man with his whole body covered with the gangrenous sores and carious bones of *Elephantiasis Arabum*. Naaman's office, as a great military leader, precludes the idea of a malady more than skin-deep. The intractable character of the leprosy mentioned in 2 Kings 5:7 does not militate against the above view of its true pathology.

DEMONIACAL POSSESSIONS.

Dwellers in Syria have none of the difficulties of western Christians respecting the belief that men were possessed with demons or devils. The Moslems believe in three classes of created spiritual beings—angels, devils and genii. The genii are a class between angels and devils. Devils are believed to be

very numerous, and to have qualities similar to those ascribed to Satan in the Scriptures. In Arabic tradition, devils appear to have little to do with human beings; genii, on the contrary, good and bad, act in and on men. The belief of the Semitic race in devils and genii is now as fresh and as powerful in its influence on the popular character as it was in our Lord's time. In addition to this belief the insane are also regarded as demoniacs. Many of the characteristics of the insane in Syria, twenty-five years ago, would correspond to the Gospel picture of demoniacs. They wandered about naked; dwelt in rock-cut tombs; were sometimes noted for prodigious strength and for their ability to break even chains. The Hebrews believed that demons tortured human beings, and Jesus accepts and acts upon this belief. Putting the various Gospel narratives together, it appears—

1. That possession of devils or demons was different from any bodily disease now known.

2. It was actual and bodily possession by personal evil spirits. It was not a mere prevalence of the power of *general evil*, nor a mere *belief* that persons were so afflicted, but it was an actual physical fact. This view accords (a) with the plain meaning of the narrative; (b) with the scriptural representation of the malignity of Satan, especially at the time of the coming of the Saviour; (c) it explains the confession of our Lord's divinity by the devils or demons, which implies superhuman knowledge. Nor is it altogether certain that this possession of men by demoniacal spirits has ceased. Instances of what seems to be a similar affliction are noted by many modern writers, the latest and fullest treatment being by Dr. J. L. Nevius, *Demon Possession*, 1896. See also Schaff's *Dictionary of the Bible*, and Appendix to Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus*.

#### CHAP. IX. POWER TO FORGIVE SIN. vs. 2-8.

CAPERNAUM, A. D. 28.

It does not come within the scope of this work to attempt to harmonize all the details of events in the several Gospel narratives. The order of the facts again varies so widely in Matthew, Mark and Luke that this chapter well illustrates the difficult and conjectural work of the harmonists. Most of them place v. 1 as following the cure of the Gadarene demoniacs, and as closing that narrative; vs. 2-9 they put several months earlier, and following the cure of the leper of chap. 8: 2-4; vs. 10-34 are again placed as following in order the Gadarene demoniacs; and vs. 35-38 as following a second rejection at Nazareth, noted in 13: 54-58. The historic truthfulness of the Gospel narratives does not depend upon the discovery of the actual chronological order of the events.

2. sick of the palsy] See Mark 2: 1-12; Luke 5: 18-26. He was a

##### COMMON VERSION.

2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

##### REVISED VERSION.

2 And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Child*.



"paralytic," and hence helpless, depending upon his friends to bring him. Four of them bore him to Jesus in a house of Capernaum, so Mark tells us. He is not said to be "grievously tormented," like the case in chap. 8:6. The disease here was apparently of the benumbing and painless type.

**Jesus seeing their faith]** Not merely the faith of the helpless man, but of his friends, who, finding it impossible to push through the crowd, took him upon the roof and let him down on his mattress in front of Jesus; so Mark and Luke inform us. Jesus speaks a word of healing first to the man's soul. He speaks tenderly, "Son [or 'child'], be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven." The Greek has a partly reversed order, which is more graphic and tender, "Be of good cheer, child, thy sins are forgiven." We are sure that the greatest need of his soul, as of every soul, was forgiveness. His afflictions may have led him to a penitent frame of mind, and have prepared him to receive the forgiveness so unexpectedly offered. The current Jewish belief was that sin brings misery, and they also held the converse of that proposition, "every bodily affliction was a judgment from God for some special sin." Jesus in effect declares, I put away sin; and to prove that I have power to do it, I also put away the bodily disease.

**3-8. the scribes said within themselves]** The scribes' thoughts took a double direction: it was blasphemy; and again it was pretending to do what God only could do. Why not heal the helpless man? thought they. It is easy to say, "Thy sins are forgiven." Jesus answers their thoughts: Why is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven, than to say, Arise and walk? Or whether is it easier to say that or this? Then accepting the challenge in their thoughts, but not spoken, Jesus attested his right and power to forgive sin on earth, by saying to the helpless man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." The eastern bed was a thin rug or mattress, without bedstead or framework, and could be rolled up and easily carried under the arm. So the man arose and went away. The vast crowd were filled with awe. They saw the power of Jesus, and glorified God, for they believed his power came from God. See notes on Mark 2:1-12.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus is pleased with a strong, active faith in him. 2. A strong faith rises over all obstacles in approaching

COMMON VERSION.

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.  
 4 And Jesus 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 multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

REVISED VERSION.

3 sins are forgiven. And behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves,  
 4 This man blasphemeth. And Jesus<sup>1</sup> knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise and walk?  
 5 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they were afraid, and glorified God, who had given such authority unto men.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *seeing*.

Christ. 3. As sin is the cause of sickness, so repentance will often bring cure of the body as well as of the soul. 4. Christ knows what we think. 5. Some of the most dangerous sins are in our thoughts. 6. It is part of our duty to praise God for mercies given to others.

THE FRIEND OF SINNERS. vs. 9-17. Mark 2:13-22; Luke 5:27-39.

GALILEE, CAPERNAUM, A.D. 28.

*Analysis.*—The call of Matthew, v. 9; the feast, vs. 10-13; the question of John's disciples about fasting, vs. 14-17.

9. he saw a man, named Matthew] Luke gives his name as Levi, and Mark adds that he was the son of Alphæus. On the identity of Matthew and Levi, see Introduction. So Peter was also called Simon; Lebbæus was named Thaddæus; Paul was called Saul. The addition of a name, or the change of a name, was common in Palestine. Matthew was a tax collector, of the hated class of publicans. Their methods of extortion were many. He was sitting, literally, "at the custom-house," a kind of "toll-booth," near the lake, probably collecting a tax on the fish or produce that made up the trade of Capernaum. The pictures of Bida and others, representing Matthew as coming out of a four-story modern bazaar or warehouse, at the call of Jesus, are misleading if not absurd. At this call, Matthew arose and "left all," as Luke tells us—his position, his business—and followed Jesus. He may not seem to us to have had much to leave, but no man can leave more than his "all."

10. sat at meat in his house] The feast of Matthew or Levi here appears to follow next after the call. So Meyer, Lange and others incline to fix it. But some harmonists place it several months later. The feast looks like a welcome to his new Master and a farewell to old friends, and as such would be fitting as he entered upon his new calling. No strict Jew would eat with publicans, or recognize them in society. They were social outcasts. That Jesus and his disciples should break over this social bar, and recline at meat with a "great company" (so Luke adds) of these despised persons, could hardly escape the sharp eyes of the Pharisees. The feast was in Matthew's house, not in the house of Jesus as Meyer erroneously supposes. Jesus had declared that he had no home. 8:20.

12. whole need not a physician, but . . . sick] The legally righteous,

COMMON VERSION.

9 ¶ And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith 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, 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

REVISED VERSION.

9 And as Jesus passed by from thence, he saw a man, called Matthew, sitting at the place of toll: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 And it came to pass, as he <sup>1</sup>sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus

11 and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your <sup>2</sup>Master with the publicans and sinners? But when he heard

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *reclined*: and so always. <sup>2</sup> Or, *Teacher*

and you who claim to be righteous, do not need a spiritual physician, but the sinners do. Jesus appears to take the Pharisees at their own estimate of themselves, and so ironically turns this proverb against them. They regarded outward legal righteousness as satisfactory to God. But to undeceive them, Jesus adds, v. 13, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." See Hosea 6 : 6. That is, legal sacrifices without the acts and the heart of mercy will not please God. Sacrifice represented God's mercy to the offerer, and needed to be offered in a merciful spirit. And then comes the plain assertion, without any figure of speech, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

14. Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft] Besides keeping the great fasts, the stricter Pharisees fasted two days every week, and found innumerable occasions for fasting in connection with special objects, either to secure some good or to avert some evil. This question on fasting may have been asked while at the feast, though this is not certain. Jesus shows that fasting is a mode of mourning. The children of the bride-chamber, that is, the friends of the bridegroom, who went to conduct the bride from her father's house to the house of the bridegroom, would not mourn. They go in joy, with festive dress, with bright lamps, lively music, and have a marriage feast on their arrival. So while Jesus the bridegroom is here, the disciples, forming the Church, which is the bride, rejoice rather than fast.

16. new cloth . . . old garment] These two figures are clear to Syrian readers. The raw, not fulled, cloth, used to piece an old rotten garment, would shrink as soon as it was wet, and by shrinking would make a fresh and greater rent in the old garment. The old skin bottles, weak and partially rotted by previous use, would not be strong enough to bear the strain of fermentation of the new wine, and so wine and bottles would both be lost. The first figure may have a double application. The disciples of John thought they could patch up the old forms of Judaism with the new religion. Jesus means to teach them that this is impossible. The old garment may also refer to the common sinful life of men. This cannot be patched up by fasting and other outward forms of religion. The whole garment, the life, must be made anew. The old skin bottles represent the ceremonial religion of Judaism. You

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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 then they shall 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

it, he said, They that are <sup>1</sup> whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what *this* meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

14 Then come to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast <sup>2</sup> oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then

16 will they fast. And no man putteth a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment; for that which should fill it up taketh from the garment, and a worse

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *strong*.<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *oft*.

cannot put the new covenant of Christianity into the old ceremonial forms of Judaism, as some of Christ's own disciples sought to do afterward. The old forms will burst in the attempt, and the new religion will be lost. Forcing the old ceremonial rites upon Gentile Christians made them hate Judaism, and brought loss to Christianity. Compare Acts 15: 1-30. Christ did not come merely to reform Judaism, as the Pharisees and John's disciples thought to do, but to found the new "kingdom of heaven." So the old forms of Romanism could not hold the new truths of Protestantism. It required new and freer forms for the new truths.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ's call comes to us while engaged in our worldly business. 2. Inviting Christ means inviting his disciples also. 3. It is easy to cavil at the conduct of Christians. 4. Those who would not allow others to share God's grace with them have little of that grace themselves. 5. "Bad men often seek to set good men by the ears."—Henry. 6. New truths often require new forms of expression; so a new religion often requires new modes of worship. 7. An attempt to patch up an old corrupt religion may result in the loss of the old and of the new.

RAISING THE RULER'S DAUGHTER AND CURE OF THE WOMAN OF AN ISSUE OF BLOOD. vs. 18-26. Mark 5: 22-43; Luke 8: 41-56.

CAPERNAUM, A.D. 28.

These two miracles are narrated with more detail by Mark and Luke, who mention them immediately after the healing of the Gadarene demoniacs. But the connection appears to be closer and more definitely fixed in Matthew, with the feast and talk about fasting.

18. there came a certain ruler] As Jesus was saying these things about fasting to John's disciples and others, "one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name," as Mark tells us, having come, fell down and prayed earnestly, saying, "My only daughter, twelve years old, is just dying, or even now may be dead, but having come and placed your hand upon her, even she shall live." So Jesus arose and with his disciples followed the ruler. The synagogue had a number of elders, presided over by a ruler, who had charge of its services and affairs. This ruler had an urgent case, but his faith was strong enough to believe that even if his daughter were dead, the touch of Jesus would cause her to live again. So Christ goes from the house of feasting to the house of mourning.

COMMON VERSION.

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles 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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

17 rent is made. Neither do men put new wine into old <sup>1</sup>wine-skins: else the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins perish: but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins, and both are preserved.

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came <sup>2</sup>a ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did

<sup>1</sup> That is, skins used as bottles.    <sup>2</sup> Gr. one ruler.

20. a woman . . . diseased . . . twelve years] Her disease was one which doubtless made her ceremonially unclean. Hence she came unobserved behind Jesus and touched him. It is a curious coincidence that the ruler's daughter, now dead, was *twelve years* old, and that this woman had suffered *twelve years* from her grievous disease. She touched the "border" or fringe of his garment (see Luke 8 : 44), and the touch of faith cured her. The question of Jesus and the discovery of the cure are noticed more fully by Mark and Luke. Matthew simply relates that Jesus, having turned and looked at her, assured her that her faith had made her whole. The cure was instantaneous, "from that hour," or, as we would say, "from that moment."

23. the people making a noise] Of the scene which Jesus must have witnessed in this eastern house of mourning, we of the western world can have only a faint idea. The flute-players, the loud cries, the wailings, the gesticulations and the noise and confusion would shock our nerves. Prof. Post gives a graphic description of a similar scene which he witnessed in Syria. He was called to see a man who had fallen sixty feet into an old quarry, injuring his spine and producing paralysis of the lower portions of his body. The man lingered for a week. On calling again Dr. Post found the hands and feet cold and the pulse nearly gone. While he was watching the effect of stimulants on the nearly lifeless man "the wife fell on her knees at her husband's feet and began to weep and beat her breast." Soon "the sister burst into the room like a maniac, shrieking with anguish, and threw herself down by her brother's side as he lay on his bed on the floor, seized his hand, and implored him to give her one look. Immediately, while he yet breathed, the crowd of women surged into the room and filled it with their loud wailings, tossing their arms in the most extravagant gesticulations. At first the men pressed back the wife and sister, and endeavored to check the shrieks until the sick man should expire. But presently they too yielded to the infection and joined in the tumult. No voice of remonstrance or sympathy could be heard, and no strength of will or power of persuasion could restrain the wild, swaying mass which now filled the room and clogged the approaches to the house. The chief mourners tore their hair, rent their garments, beat their breasts, threw themselves wildly on the ground, invoked the dead, implored the bystanders, did everything but pray to God for patience and comfort. Little children added their sobs and screams to the clamor,

COMMON VERSION.

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 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. 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,

REVISED VERSION.

20 his disciples. And behold, a woman, who had an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the border of

21 his garment: for she said within herself, If I do but touch his garment, I shall be

22 <sup>1</sup>made whole. But Jesus turning and seeing her said, Daughter, be of good cheer; thy faith hath <sup>2</sup>made thee whole. And the woman was <sup>1</sup>made whole from

23 that hour. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute-play<sup>r</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, saved

<sup>2</sup> Or, saved thee

and I was glad to retire from the harrowing scene, and to reflect on the blessings of a calm trust in God and a patient resignation to his will. These wailings last for hours, and but for the speedy burial of the dead would end most disastrously to the living."

**24. the maid is not dead, but sleepeth]** An old explanation of these words was, She is in a stupor, or syncope; only apparently dead. Another, now generally accepted, is, The maid, though really dead, is only temporarily so; she will soon be brought to life, and so may be regarded as only sleeping. Compare similar words respecting Lazarus. John 11: 11-14.

**25. took her by the hand]** The noisy crowd having been put out of the room—not by Jairus, as Schaff and Riddle infer, but by the act of Jesus, as Mark quite distinctly declares—and quiet and order being secured, Jesus grasped, as with divine, life-giving power, the maid by the hand, and she arose. How simple, graphic and sublime the act and the narrative! And the record that follows is a plain statement of a historic fact. There is no attempt to magnify the miracle, or to excite curiosity by the arts of rhetoric—features often found in ordinary human writing—but here facts are given simply and majestically, as exactly befits the truth they convey.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The highest church dignity must come to Christ on the same footing as the humblest disciple. 2. In sorrow and bereavement fly to Jesus for comfort. 3. The touch of faith brings a blessing. 4. The touch of Christ gives life.

#### HEALING THE BLIND AND DUMB. VS. 27-34.

CAPERNAUM(?), A.D. 28.

**27. two blind men]** This is the first mention in the Gospels of the cure of the blind. There are four particular cases of blindness mentioned as healed by our Lord. Each is clearly different from the other. Here are two blind and the healing was near Capernaum; a blind man was healed near Bethsaida, Mark 8: 22-26; a man born blind was healed at Jerusalem, John 9: 1-41; and two blind men were healed near Jericho, Matt. 20: 30-34. Besides these particular cases there are several notices of curing this class with others, so that the prophecy to which Jesus pointed (Matt. 11: 5) had an abundant fulfillment. Blindness is a very common affliction in the East. The hot sun, the burning wind, the limestone dust filling the air, and sleeping in the open air, are among the many causes of blindness in the East. The blind

##### COMMON VERSION.

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him 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.

##### REVISED VERSION.

24 ers, and the crowd making a tumult, he said, Give place: for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed

25 him to scorn. But when the crowd was put forth, he entered in, and took her by

26 the hand; and the damsel arose. And <sup>1</sup> the fame hereof went forth into all that land.

27 And as Jesus passed by from thence, two blind men followed him, crying out, and saying, Have mercy on us, thou son

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *this fame*.

crowd the public roads, sit by the wayside begging, sing and call to attract passers by; and since hospitals have been opened in Syria, by mission effort, full half those coming for treatment are the blind.

**28. Believe ye that I am able]** The healing was deferred until he entered the house, partly to try their faith, partly to get away from the crowd and avoid that publicity which would hinder his teaching work. After their confession of faith, he says, "According to your faith be it;" that is, in proportion to your faith, not because of your faith. And their eyes were opened—a proof of the force of their faith.

**30. Jesus straitly charged them]** He strictly or sternly charged them to tell no man. The Roman Catholic writers, true to their casuistic methods, praise the blind for disobeying the Lord; and some of the ancient writers declare that Jesus did not intend the charge to be obeyed. We may see the gratitude which led the blind to speak, without approving their flagrant disobedience of Jesus. There can be no good excuse for disobeying any of our Lord's plain commands.

**32. they brought to him a dumb man]** It is generally held by harmonists that this miracle is not elsewhere recorded. Yet it is not certain that it may not be identical with the case noted in Luke 11: 14, which is usually identified with the one in Matt. 12: 22. But in the latter case the dumb man was blind, a fact not noted by Luke; nor was that the case in the instance here. The demon being cast out, the man's speech was restored—a miracle more wonderful than any before known respecting the demoniacs in Israel. The wonder of the crowd is set over against the sneering and blasphemous charge of the Pharisees, who said that Jesus cast out demons by the arch-demon, a charge repeated now, and which he answered on another occasion. Matt. 12: 25-28. A similar belief now prevails in the East respecting some possessed, as they suppose, with evil spirits, and which are professedly cast out by incantations.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1.** The spiritually blind must come to Jesus for sight. **2.** He may test the faith of the comer, but never denies a request made in faith. **3.** The sinner is blind, deaf and dumb to the spiritual world until Christ casts out the demon of sin from him.

COMMON VERSION.

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.

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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

28 of David. 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 say

29 unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your

30 faith be it done unto you. And their eyes were opened. And Jesus <sup>1</sup>strictly charged them, saying, See that no man

31 know it. But they went forth, and spread abroad his fame in all that land.

32 And as they went forth, behold, there was brought to him a dumb man possessed of a demon. And when the demon

33 was cast out, the dumb man spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was

<sup>1</sup> Or, sternly

THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE: (1) THE HARVEST; (2) THE LABORERS;  
(3) THE TWELVE. VS. 35-38; 10: 1-4.

GALILEE, A. D. 29.

**35. Jesus went about all the cities and villages]** This verse describes what has been called the third circuit of Jesus in Galilee. It also is a fitting introduction to the mission of the twelve, and is therefore closely connected with the contents of chapter 10. For a similar preaching tour, see Matt. 4: 23.

**36. when he saw the multitudes]** The misery and neglect in which Jesus found the people of Galilee stirred his heart with compassion for them, for he found them "distressed," or "harassed" as the better text followed in the Revised Version declares. The received text says "fainted," as in the Common Version. They were also "scattered," or more strictly "cast down," like weary, tired-out sheep, and so appeared like a lost flock, without a shepherd. For in the East every flock of sheep required a shepherd to care for it, and this is also the case in parts of Scotland.

**37. The harvest truly is plenteous]** The meaning is, great multitudes are to be gathered into the spiritual kingdom, but there are very few teachers. Pray therefore to the Lord of the spiritual kingdom that he will send forth, literally, that he will "cast out" or "drive forth," laborers into his harvest. The original word is the same that is used in v. 25, and it is also often applied to the casting out of demons, or to "forcing" one to do what he is otherwise reluctant to do. It is used in Mark 1: 12, where it is said that the Spirit "driveth forth" Jesus into the wilderness. Did our Lord have any reference to the reluctance with which modern Christians undertake the work of teaching in the Sabbath-school, or of preaching the gospel at home or abroad? Must we pray that teachers be "driven" into the Sabbath-school? that missionaries be driven to preaching the gospel at home and abroad? This seems to be the charge.

**10: 1. called unto him his twelve disciples]** This event is called the mission of the twelve; the choice of the twelve had been made before, Luke

COMMON VERSION.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

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.

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 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.

CHAP. X.—And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them

REVISED VERSION.

34 never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, <sup>1</sup>By the prince of the demons casteth he out demons.

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all

36 manner of sickness. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not hav-

37 ing a shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth labourers into his harvest.

10 And he called unto him his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal

<sup>1</sup> Or, *In*



6: 13. They were given power to cast out unclean spirits and to heal every kind of sickness and of disease. This power to heal was not the most important part of their mission. In fact it was only incidental to their mission and was to be used as an attestation of their commission and of their preaching. See v. 7.

2-4. the names of the twelve apostles are these] The New Testament gives us four lists of the apostles. Each list varies in the order, but agrees with others in the names given. This may be seen from the following table:

	Matt. 10: 3.	Mark 3: 16.	Luke 16: 14.	Acts 1: 13, 26.
I.	1. Simon Peter,	Simon Peter,	Simon Peter,	Peter,
	2. Andrew,	James of Zebedee,	Andrew,	James,
	3. James of Zebedee,	John,	James,	John,
	4. John,	Andrew,	John,	Andrew,
II.	5. Philip,	Philip,	Philip,	Philip,
	6. Bartholomew,	Bartholomew,	Bartholomew,	Thomas,
	7. Thomas,	Matthew,	Matthew,	Bartholomew,
	8. Matthew the publican,	Thomas,	Thomas,	Matthew,
III.	9. James of Alphæus,	James of Alphæus,	James of Alphæus,	James of Alphæus,
	10. Lebbæus surnamed Thaddæus,	Thaddæus,	Simon the Zealot,	Simon the Zealot,
	11. Simon the Cananæan,	Simon the Cananæan,	Judas of James,	Judas of James,
	12. Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	(Matthias).

In all these lists the names fall into three groups, each group containing four names. Peter stands at the head of the first group in all the lists, and Philip at the head of the second group, while James the son of Alphæus keeps a similar position at the head of the third group. Further, each of the four lists has the same names in each group, except that Matthias takes the place of Judas Iscariot in the list in Acts. For Peter is the name which Jesus gave to Simon. Andrew is a Greek name, as also is Philip; they are mentioned in connection with Greeks in the temple, John 21: 22, and are common names in classic Greek. Lebbæus, Thaddæus and Judas or Jude, the son or brother of James, are four names of one and the same person. Bartholomew means the son of Tolmai, and is no doubt identical with Nathanael. Simon the Canaanite is sometimes supposed to have been named after the place of his birth or home, but it is more probable that Canaanite

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.	all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.
2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;	2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;
3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddæus;	3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphæus, and Thaddæus; Simon the <sup>1</sup> Cananæan, and Judas Iscariot, who
4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.	4 Simon the <sup>1</sup> Cananæan, and Judas Iscariot, who

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Zealot*. See Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 13.

or Cananæan comes from the Hebrew which means Zealot. Hence he was called Simon the Zealot, and perhaps he came from the extreme radical and revolutionary party in the Jewish nation known as the Zealots. Judas Iscariot is often said to be the only apostle who did not come from Galilee, but this cannot be certainly proved. For a more detailed account of each apostle, see Schaff's *Dictionary of the Bible* and Rice's *People's Commentary on Mark*, p. 51.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Jesus has compassion for his people. 2. There is still an immense spiritual harvest, but few to gather it. 3. Pastors, evangelists, teachers, missionaries and Christian workers are found in answer to prayer. 4. Christians are so reluctant to enter Christ's harvest field that prayer must be made to God to "drive" ("force") them in. 5. Christ calls and sends out his missionaries. 6. He gives them power against the devil and his agencies. 7. He appoints those of widely diverse natural gifts and dispositions; he would have all used for his glory.

THE CHARGE TO THE TWELVE. vs. 5-15. Mark 6:8-11; Luke 9:2-5.

GALILEE, A. D. 29.

5. **These twelve Jesus sent forth]** For the choosing of the twelve see Luke 6:13-16. This charge to them is worthy of careful study. It may guide teachers now in their gospel work in the Sunday-school, the home and by the way. The charge may be divided into three parts: 1. Counsels for this temporary mission; vs. 5-15. 2. Counsels suitable to this and to future missions; vs. 16-28. 3. Counsels for wider service for Christ; vs. 24-42. For these directions extend to the end of this chapter. In this first section we consider those relating to the present mission in particular. It closes with a "Verily I say unto you," and each of the three divisions of this remarkable charge closes in the same words. See vs. 15, 33 and 42.

**Go not into the way of the Gentiles]** The first part of this charge may likewise be divided into three topics: 1. To whom to go. 2. What to say. 3. How to conduct themselves. In this temporary mission, the Gentiles and the Samaritans were to be avoided; only the lost of Israel were to be sought. The reason for this is not given, but it is not difficult to see. The gospel was first to be offered to the promised children of Abraham. When they were called, or when they refused to hear, the mission would then be extended to the Gentiles. Compare the conduct of the apostles, Acts 13:46. It might no doubt have tended to close the hearts of the Jews to the gospel had it first been preached to the Gentiles, as Lange and others have suggested; but the reason for the limitation is rather to show the Jews and all God's people his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises.

COMMON VERSION.

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 sheep of the house of Israel.

REVISED VERSION.

5 also <sup>1</sup> betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and charged them, saying, Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep

<sup>1</sup> Or, delivered him up: and so always.

**7. The kingdom of heaven is at hand]** This is the old watchword, the great battle cry of the early messengers. John the Baptist startled all Judea with it in the wilderness. Jesus took it up when John was arrested, and now the twelve are charged to re-echo it again throughout all Judea and wherever lost Israelites are to be found. What that meant the disciples had heard in the sermon on the mount. They were not to tell what they did not know, but they now knew much of the weakness and defects of the Judaism of that day, and of the need and of the character of the new religion. This they could proclaim.

**8. Heal the sick]** This may be called their *credentials*. A minister or missionary has some certificate or paper from the church or churches where he is known, which he can show in new regions as evidence that he is properly appointed to preach. So Jesus gives his disciples the power to heal the sick, cure lepers and cast out demons, as a certificate of their authority and proof that their preaching was approved of God. The clause "raise the dead" is omitted in some good MSS., but is retained in the Revised Version. Although there is no mention of raising the dead during this mission, there is later. Acts 9:40.

**9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass]** or, more accurately, "Get you no gold, nor silver," as in the Revised Version. The "brass" refers strictly to "copper," the smallest copper coins. Every traveller in Syria is painfully aware of the elaborate preparations deemed necessary for a tour through that land. There are no hotels in the country towns. The khans or caravansaries offer bare rooms only, without furniture, bed or food. Each traveller who expects to lodge in them must carry bed, food, cooking utensils, and be encumbered with much baggage.

The "purses" were "girdles," as the Greek signifies. This girdle was thus a long, wide strip, which when folded and bound about the loins, see Luke 12:35, would make a safe and convenient place to carry money.

Thus the delays usual in getting ready for a tour would be wearisome. Jesus would not have the twelve delayed or burdened with any special preparations. They need not get money for their journey; not even so much as the smallest copper coins in their "purses," or "girdles." For in the East the folds of the girdle are used to carry their money as we use purses. They were not to take a "scrip" (the old English name for a leather wallet, or bag) to carry food, nor two "coats." The dress of Asiatics is so different from ours that it is difficult to find words to describe their garments exactly. The "coat" with them was the "tunic," not an outer but an inner garment; so that "coat" is misleading to American readers. The "tunic" more nearly resembles a long waistcoat that might have short sleeves and would reach nearly to the knees like a shirt. To wear more than one "tunic" was a mark of wealth or

## COMMON VERSION.

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 received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses;

## REVISED VERSION.

7 of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven

8 is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely ye received, freely give. Get you no

gold, nor silver, nor brass in your

luxury. The twelve were not to get "shoes." Some suppose these were forbidden as more luxurious than sandals, which were permitted. See Mark 6:9. But it is not certain that there was any such distinction then between "*podemata*," shoes, and sandals. The disciples were to go with what clothes they had, and not delay to provide extra things for the journey, as tunics, shoes and a staff. If they already had these, they were to take them, but not delay to get fresh ones. The laborer being worthy of his food, they would be provided for by the way.

**11. who in it is worthy]** How are we to be supplied? the apostles might ask. Jesus answers, In any town "search out who in it is worthy," and stay there. Suppose "the house," R. V. (not "a house")—the house we have searched out—is not worthy. If the house is unworthy, your salutation or peace, which is a prayer for a blessing, will have no answer. A "worthy" house was one ready to receive the gospel.

There is a curious passage illustrating this text in the "Teaching of the Twelve," written in the second century: "Every apostle who cometh to you, let him be received as the Lord: he shall not remain but one day; or if there is need, then the next day; but if he remains three days he is a false prophet. . . . If he asks silver [money] he is a false prophet. . . . Not every one speaking in the spirit is a prophet, not unless he has the conduct of the Lord."

**12. salute it]** The seventy were not to salute any man by the way, Luke 10:4. It was often a wearisome custom, taking much time. Jews and Moslems do not salute those of another faith. Response to salutations implied sympathy. But they were not to follow a rejection of their salutation with an anathema. They were to keep their peace ("let it return to them") in sweetness of temper. On leaving they were to shake the dust from their feet as a witness. This was a symbolic act in the East, expressing a total renunciation of fellowship, and of responsibility in respect to the town and its people. The Jew, when he had set foot on heathen soil, shook the dust from his feet, so that nothing unclean should cling to him.

**15. more tolerable for the land of Sodom]** The persons who have the highest spiritual privileges will have the severest judgment if they reject or

## COMMON VERSION.

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 shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into a 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.

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 Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 <sup>1</sup>purses; no wallet for *your* journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the labourer is worthy of his food.

11 And into whatsoever city or village ye shall enter, search out who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go forth.

12 And as ye enter into the 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.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye go forth out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of

15 your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, than for that city.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *girdles*.

neglect those privileges. Sodom had no such invitations as the twelve were to carry. Those who refused them would suffer more than Sodom. The people of America have greater religious light than Sodom, or Tyre, or even the Syrian towns to which the twelve were sent. Their loss will be greater and their judgment more awful than any of those of the olden time, if this light is not heeded.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Teachers get their commissions to teach from Christ. 2. Those who give themselves to gospel work are worthy to live by the gospel. 3. The gospel teachers are not to be burdened with anxiety about how they are to live. 4. They are to preach the kingdom of heaven. 5. They are to discover the worthy. 6. Contempt of the gospel goes with contempt of gospel teachers. 7. Those who refuse the gospel must one day account for their refusal.

THE CHARGE TO THE TWELVE CONTINUED: COMFORTS IN TRIALS AND PERSECUTIONS. VS. 16-31.

*Topics.*—Trials in the world, 16-18; defence in them, 19, 20; persecution, 21-23; the disciples suffer as their master, 24, 25; fearlessness of man and fear of God, 26-28; God's care, 29-31.

16. I send you] The "I" is emphatic: I, the head of the new kingdom and who know all the trials before you, send you out as sheep among the wolves of this world. The wolves may fairly represent persecutors. The twelve would find some "sheep," some lost "sheep," of Israel, and their mission was to them. It is contrary to the main thought to infer, as some do, that they were sent to the wolves. They were to become habitually as "wise" or "prudent" as the serpents, which are noted for their caution in avoiding danger, and as "harmless" or "simple" as the doves, which are equally noted for their gentleness and their love.

17. beware of men] Literally, "Hold yourselves from the men," that is, men who will be hostile to your work. It cannot mean all men in the absolute sense, as Alexander holds, for some would be disciples and therefore co-workers. The next clause shows clearly what men were meant. For "they," these men of whom you are to beware, will deliver you up to councils, or the local provincial courts; and in their synagogues will scourge you. The officers of the synagogues had power to inflict some punishments, of which scourging was one. But the scourging must not exceed forty stripes. Deut. 25:3. Five times Paul received thirty-nine stripes of the Jews. 2 Cor. 11:24. This was not the same, but less severe than the Roman scourging which Jesus received.

## COMMON VERSION.

16 ¶ Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

## REVISED VERSION.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise

17 as serpents, and <sup>1</sup>harmless as doves. But

beware of men: for they will deliver you up to councils, and in their synagogues

<sup>1</sup> Or, *simple*

**18. before governors and kings]** This and similar allusions in this section, vs. 16-24, show that the charges here referred to the future rather than to this temporary mission of the twelve. The apostles were before governors, as Felix and Festus; and before kings, as Herod Agrippa I. and II., and Cæsar. Acts 24-26. Thus they were to be a witness unto rulers and to nations (not properly "against" them). They were to witness of the truth and of Christ before all these.

**19. take no thought]** Have no anxious thought, when they deliver you up, how or what ye shall answer, for it shall be given you what ye shall speak. But when the grounds of their faith were sought, they were elsewhere directed to be ready to give an answer to every man. 1 Pet. 3:15. So Chrysostom suggests while "the contest is among friends, he commends us to take thought; but when there is a terrible tribunal, and frantic assemblies, and terrors on all sides, he bestows the influence from himself." It is a gross misapplication of Scripture to quote this text as authority for making no preparation for preaching or teaching, and as enjoining extempore sermons.

**21. brother . . . the brother . . . father the child]** See Micah 7:6. This is a graphic picture of the bitter hostility against the gospel. It would divide families. Brother would deliver up brother, and father child, and children parents, not to immediate death, as the language might suggest, but to what must and would result finally in their martyrdom. This proved true in multitudes of cases during the Neronian and other persecutions. Why all this would be done is explained in v. 22. But he that endures, is faithful in his confession of Christ, to the end, as long as the trial lasts, or to the end of his life, would be saved in the highest sense. He might not be rescued, or delivered from his trials, as Alexander implies, but he might be relieved by death and be "saved," receiving a martyr's glorious crown.

**23. flee . . . into another]** This retreating before persecution would call into exercise the prudence or wisdom of the serpent. When a disciple could honorably escape persecution he was to do so. In thus preaching and escaping persecution, they would not have gone through the cities of Israel until

## COMMON VERSION.

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for 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 hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

## REVISED VERSION.

18 they will scourge you; yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and

19 to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it

20 is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. And

21 brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and <sup>1</sup>cause

22 them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same

23 shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

<sup>1</sup> Or, put them to death

the Son of man should come. The meaning of this clause is obscure, but seems to be a phrase caught from Dan. 7 : 13, 14, in the prophecy of the founding of Christ's kingdom. It may mean until Jesus himself would follow and overtake them; or (2) until his second final coming; or (3) until Christ would come in temporal judgment on Israel, as at the destruction of Jerusalem; or (4) until Jesus would be manifested as the Messiah or Son of man to the world. Each view has able and scholarly advocates, but neither is very satisfactory. They would not complete their wider mission until Christ's new kingdom was fully set up; indeed mission work would not end until Christ's final coming to judge the world. See also under Matt. 24 : 14.

**24. disciple is not above his master]** Now to comfort them under the gloomy prospect of such trials, Jesus declares that he has and will suffer like trials with them. They need not expect less nor greater privileges than their master. If he willingly shares trials with them, so ought they to share them with him. If they have called him, the Master, Beelzebub, or Beelzebub, how much more readily will they revile his household servants! "Beelzebub" means "lord of flies;" Beelzebub" is "lord of mist" or "lord of the dwelling;" but either reading and interpretation refers to the evil one, Satan.

**26. Fear them not]** Have no fear of these persecutors, not even their secret plots, dark inquisitions or hidden tortures. I know them all; one day they shall be revealed to the gaze of angels, men and devils. I share your trials. You need not hide any truth, for all your conduct will also be laid open.

**27. What I tell you in darkness]** Jesus often spoke in parables and enigmatical sayings to the people, but he explained these to his disciples. See parable of the sower, 13 : 1-23. The simile here may refer to a custom in the synagogue schools, where the master whispered in the ear of an interpreter, who repeated what he heard in a loud voice. So Lightfoot suggests in *Hor. Heb.* The housetops are often used in the East from which to proclaim important official edicts, and to announce the hour of prayer.

**28. fear not them which kill the body]** The disciples seem to ask, But what if this course costs us our lives? Jesus answers, True; but they

COMMON VERSION.

24 The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant 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 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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

24 A disciple is not above his <sup>1</sup>master,

25 nor a <sup>2</sup>servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his

<sup>1</sup>master, and the <sup>2</sup>servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house

<sup>3</sup>Beelzebub, how much more *shall* 26 *they call* them of his household! Fear

them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and

27 hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak ye in the

light: and what ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops. And be not

28 afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and

<sup>1</sup> Or, *teacher*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *Beelzebub*: and so elsewhere.

can only destroy the body; their power ends there. You need not fear them. The body is only the house the man lives in, not the man himself. Fear him only who has power to destroy both soul and body in hell. It is absurd to suppose with Steir that this refers to the devil. The Scriptures nowhere teach us to fear the devil; they teach us to resist him. Nor is this destruction equivalent to annihilation, but is consistent with Matt. 25: 46.

29. two sparrows sold for a farthing] Sparrows are everywhere in Syria. They are caught in many ways, and in great numbers sold cheap in the markets of Jerusalem and other cities. But the word for "sparrows" is a diminutive, "little sparrows." They are offered for sale now in long strings fixed on wooden skewers.

The Greek word here used for "farthing" is the same as the one used in Matt. 5: 26. It is *assarion*, which was at an earlier date the unit in Roman money. In the time of Christ there was a Greek coin of Antioch in Syria called *assarion*, and also a Roman coin inscribed on one side "S. C.," that is, "Senatus Consulto," "by decree of the Senate." It is not certain which of these coins is here intended. The coin was worth about one cent to one and a half cents American money. Not one of these "little sparrows" falls without your heavenly Father's notice. And over you God's care is so minute that every hair of your head is numbered.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ suffers trials for and with his people. 2. Hatred of Christ's disciples is hatred of him. 3. The fields are abundant; the gospel laborer, driven from one, may easily find another field of labor. 4. The disciple need not expect to fare better than his master. 5. Christian truths are no secrets nor hidden mysteries. 6. God is mindful of the comfort of his people. 7. God only is to be feared. 8. The soul is of infinitely greater value than the body.

THE CHARGE TO THE TWELVE CONCLUDED. PERILS AND REWARDS OF CONFESSING AND FOLLOWING CHRIST. VS. 32-42 AND 11: 1.

32. shall confess me before men] The "whosoever" or "every one" is a wide-meaning word, not allowing any exception, nor any one to escape the rule laid down. Public confession of Christ on earth will be followed by Christ's confession of us before God in heaven. A public denial of Christ here will be followed by Christ's denial of us in heaven. Hence the Christian is to do his work fearlessly on earth.

COMMON VERSION.

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.

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

REVISED VERSION.

29 body in <sup>1</sup>hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your

30 Father: but the very hairs of your head

31 are all numbered. Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many spar-

32 rows. Every one therefore who shall confess <sup>2</sup>me before men, <sup>3</sup>him will I also confess before my Father who is in hea-

33 ven. But whosoever shall deny me be-

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *Gehenna*.   <sup>2</sup>Gr. *in me*.   <sup>3</sup>Gr. *in him*.



**34. Think not that I . . . send peace on earth]** The persecutions are not accidents. They are the natural result of Christ's work on earth. He did not come to "send" or "cast," or, stronger still, as the Greek implies, "coerce" or "compel," peace on earth. He came to cast a sword, the sword of truth, into a world of falsehood. It was Christ against the devil. Strife, contention, wars, must be the natural result; for the devil and the wicked will fight against the truth. To show how general and how furious the contest would be, he gives a specimen of the effect of the gospel in a single household, similar to that already noted in v. 21. There it is the worldly fighting the disciple; here it is the disciple forced to differ from the worldly. The "daughter-in-law" is strictly a "young bride," who in the East is subject not only to her husband, but also to her mother-in-law. The gospel would make members of the same home the bitterest foes to the disciple in the home. How true that became we know from multitudes of cases in times of religious persecutions then and in later days.

**37. loveth father or mother more than me]** The disciple is not to love father or mother less than is due, but he is to love Christ supremely. Love for God may rend families, because some in the family hate God; but love to Christ is higher than love to friends or parents, for God is our Creator and Redeemer. He is divine; they are human.

**38. his cross . . . after me]** The Roman custom required the condemned to bear his own cross to the place of execution. As Christ bore his cross, so every disciple will have a cross which must be borne for Christ's sake. The cross must be *taken*. Cross-taking and cross-bearing are the lot of the disciple.

**39. He that findeth his life]** But here again the disciples say, "This means death; what then?" Jesus answers, Saving the natural life for the sake of self or the world is to lose your true life; losing your natural life for the sake of Christ is to save your real, your true life. Life is used in a double sense, which gives the force to the paradox.

COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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, 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.

REVISED VERSION.

fore men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.

34 Think not that I came to <sup>1</sup>send peace on the earth: I came not to <sup>1</sup>send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man

at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes *shall be* they of

37 his own household. 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

38 me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that <sup>2</sup>findeth his life shall lose it; and he that <sup>3</sup>loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *cast*.    <sup>2</sup> Or, *found*    <sup>3</sup> Or, *lost*

40. receiveth you receiveth me] What a wonderful statement! Receiving a disciple is receiving Christ, and receiving Christ is receiving the Almighty, who sent him. But what does receiving imply? Befriending persecuted and weary disciples, sympathizing with them, and accepting their message in the life and heart.

41. a prophet's reward] Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive not merely the reward that a prophet can give, but the reward that a prophet receives. Their act indicates a holy spirit, and those who receive the righteous for the righteous' sake will have the reward the righteous receive. By the same rule God will reward the smallest service, like a cup of cold water to a disciple.

11: 1. he departed thence to . . . preach] This verse properly belongs to chapter 10. It notes the close of the charge to the twelve. Jesus then makes another preaching and healing tour in Galilee. Placing this verse in chapter 11, and connecting it with the coming of John's two disciples, leads the ordinary reader to suppose that this visit followed the "charge." He must remember, however, that the "chapters" were not made by the evangelist. This preaching is probably a continuation of the tour mentioned in 8: 35, and therefore of the third Galilean circuit. The time of the visit of John's disciples is more definitely noted by Luke as coming earlier than the mission of the twelve (Luke 7: 1-35).

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. An ungodly life is the strongest kind of a denial of Christ. 2. A godly life is the best of confessions of Christ. 3. Death of the body for the life of the soul is small loss for eternal gain. 4. "No cross, no crown." 5. Rightly receiving a disciple is receiving God. 6. We may entertain Christ in one of his disciples. 7. God rewards the slightest service to his children

CHAP. XI. JESUS' WITNESS TO JOHN. vs. 2-19. Luke 7: 18-35.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

2. when John had heard in the prison] Why John was in prison is explained in 14: 1-12, and referred to in 4: 12. The "now" of this verse

COMMON VERSION.

40 ¶ He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

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.

CHAP. XI.—And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of 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,

REVISED VERSION.

40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him

41 that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a right-

42 eous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

11 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and preach in their cities.

2 Now when John heard in the prison the works of the Christ, he sent by his

marks the beginning of a new topic in the narrative, but does not fix the time. From the other Gospels we learn that this visit came before the mission of the twelve, as stated above. The "prison," Josephus says, was the strong fortress or castle of Machærus, about nine miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. It was the strongest citadel in Palestine outside of Jerusalem. Its ruins can still be traced, and are described by Tristram and other modern travellers. John sent the message through his disciples; Luke distinctly says through "two." The reading "two" in Matthew is omitted in the Revised Version, but the change is unimportant.

**3. Art thou he . . . ?]** Why did John ask this? The answers given are—(1) To convince his disciples; or (2) To induce Jesus publicly to avow his Messiahship; or (3) To confirm his own faith in Jesus as the Messiah. The first is an old explanation held by Greek and Latin fathers from Chrysostom, Origen and Jerome to Calvin and Bengel. The second is advocated by Lightfoot (*Hor. Heb.*) and by several German critics. The third is proposed by Tertullian and held by many recent writers. It seems more natural to conclude that the question was prompted in part by each of these three reasons. John, languishing in prison for months, was discouraged, as was natural to such a bold, active spirit. Elijah, in whose spirit John came, was sorely depressed after the contest with the Baal priests at Carmel (1 Kings 19 : 10). John's disciples would also be wavering under such adverse events. Why was their master kept in prison? Why did not the Messiah come and deliver him? Was he the Messiah? Had he declared himself to be the coming one? Why not do so if indeed he were that one? All these questions and half-doubts would trouble John's disciples and trouble John himself. He resolves to seek light directly from Jesus himself. Hence the messengers and the message.

**4. Jesus answered]** But Jesus did not reply, Yes, I am the Messiah. That would have been to declare himself publicly as the Messiah; and, besides, it would not be the most assuring answer to one in doubt or uncertainty in such a case, for any impostor might say that. But an impostor would not fulfill definite prophecies about the Messiah. Jesus did; for, as Luke tells us, in the same hour he cured many of diseases, plagues, evil spirits and of blindness (Luke 7 : 21). Then he said to the messengers from John, Go and tell him what you have seen: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and (as the highest proof, the climax of all) the poor have the gospel preached to them. These things were all foretold of the Messiah (Isa. 35 : 5 ; 42 : 7 ; 61 : 1), and to John, who knew prophecy, they would be the strongest confirmation that Jesus was the Messiah. Then in v. 6 Jesus adds a gentle reproof for the messengers and for their master: Blessed is he that finds no cause for stumbling in me. You

COMMON VERSION.

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

REVISED VERSION.

3 disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Go your way and tell John the things

expected me to come "fan in hand" to separate the evil from the just, to be bold, declaring my messianic power. Do not be offended at my mingling with publicans, my manner of work, my refraining from publicly claiming to be the Messiah. That might defeat my work. All these are the marks of a true character, and as divinely wise as true.

**7. Jesus began to say . . . concerning John]** Jesus, having testified to John's disciples of himself by pointing only to his works, now testifies to the people directly of John. His questions are so framed as to become the most emphatic testimony to John's character. Went you out into the wilderness to see a man as fickle as a reed shaken by a wind? or went you out to see a court dandy, a royal fop, in "soft," that is, in luxurious, dress? or went you out to see a bold, fearless prophet? A prophet, do you say? Yea, truly; and more, the prophetic messenger of the new kingdom. See Mal. 3:1.

**9. But what went ye out for to see?]** Or, "But wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet?" R. V. A negative answer had been assumed to the question in v. 7, and a strong negative implied to the question in v. 8. Now he comes nearer to the right expectation of the multitudes in going to see John the Baptist. They expected to see a prophet. But he was more; he was the messenger announcing the coming of Messiah, and preparing the way for his kingdom to be set up. See Dan. 2:44. The star out of Jacob, and the sceptre out of Israel, is now to appear. See Num. 24:17.

**11. a greater than John the Baptist]** Having declared that John was the divine messenger of the Messiah foretold in prophecy, especially by Malachi, Jesus next directly asserts the greatness of John. Among them born of woman (suggesting strongly the contrast "born of the Spirit") there has not arisen a greater than John. Yet he that is "lesser" (not "least" nor "but little," as the English versions read, for it is the comparative, not superlative, in Greek) in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. What does this last clause mean? Who is meant by the "lesser"? How is he

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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 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 John the Baptist: notwithstanding

## REVISED VERSION.

5 which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them.

6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall find

7 none occasion of stumbling in me. And as these went their way, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft raiment are in kings'

9 houses. <sup>2</sup>But wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,

Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that

<sup>1</sup> Or, the gospel <sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *But what went ye out to see? a prophet?*

greater than John the Baptist? Among the answers given are—1. The “lesser” refers to Jesus himself, according to Chrysostom, Augustine, Luther, etc.; 2. The “lesser” applies to any disciple in the kingdom of heaven, according to the majority of recent evangelical critics. The first view is not consistent with the other references of Jesus to himself, though it may agree with what John said of himself and the Messiah. Jesus is not described as *in* the kingdom, but as its founder and King. The last view is the more satisfactory. How is such a disciple greater than John? Greater not in official *position*, but greater in *privileges*. John was the last and greater of the prophets of the old dispensation, but only the messenger, the forerunner, of the new. He was a disciple still of the old. The disciple, trained by the Messiah, in the new dispensation would enjoy clearer and more knowledge and greater privileges than John. “John was great in nearness to Christ and rank; but in definite knowledge of Christ’s work, the feeblest disciple after Pentecost was in advance of him.”—*John Hall*.

12. the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence] From the announcing of the kingdom by John, the common people were eager to “grasp” it. Crowds followed John, and greater crowds Jesus. The figure is a military one of men grasping spoils for themselves. Similar to this is their eagerness to get into this new kingdom, and to this kingdom all the prophets and the law until John had pointed. Now we have the fulfillment of their prophecies, for John was the promised Elijah of the new covenant, if ye will accept this teaching. It seemed hard to receive this declaration when John was held in prison. So the proverb is added in v. 15. For it required thoughtful attention to “hear” and heed such teaching in such seemingly adverse circumstances.

16. like unto children sitting in the markets] or “market places.” In eastern cities the “market places” were more like our open squares. They were not only places for marketing—buying and selling, hiring and being hired—but were also places of public resort, to tell or learn the news, and to hold discussions on great public questions. The children likewise resorted thither for play and sports. The figure in this verse is that of companies of children playing at a mock wedding, and then in a mock funeral. But others would not join, with some wishing to play. The children are

## COMMON VERSION.

standing, 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 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.

16 ¶ But wherunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

## REVISED VERSION.

are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is <sup>1</sup>but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye are willing to receive <sup>2</sup>*it*, this is Elijah, who is to come. He that hath ears <sup>3</sup>to hear, let him hear. But wherunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the marketplaces,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *lesser*.    <sup>2</sup> Or, him    <sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *to hear*.

the Jews (not Jesus or John, as some think), who are in childish play, and divided, sulky and dissatisfied. The "pipers," or flute-players, were common at weddings and in mourning, as we know from the raising of the ruler's daughter. (See 9:23, Revised Version.) These children are represented as imitating grown people.

**18. For John came]** So he illustrates their dissatisfied, petulant spirit. John came as a prophet, and with ascetic habits, coarse garments and simple manners, and the Jews were not pleased. They said he is a fanatic, a demagogue in his severity and dismal prophecies. Jesus, the Son of man, comes a friendly, companionable man, not an ascetic, but eating and drinking like other men, and the Jews are not satisfied with him. They cried against the austerity of John; now they howl at the sociableness of Jesus, and call him an "eating man," a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. So the Jews were sour and fault-finding, first with one character and then with its opposite. Nothing would suit them.

**19. But wisdom is justified]** This was a proverbial expression. The reading of the Common Version may mean—(1) The children of the world are childish in their acts and judgments, but the acts of the children of wisdom are held to be right by wisdom herself; or, if the reading of the Revised Version be taken, (2) The works of wisdom justify her, or, taking the marginal reading, "was;" and the form given in Luke then—(3) In this way was wisdom justified by her favorite children, the Jews. This last is, of course, in an ironical sense. The first seems the better meaning here.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. "There may be true faith, yet a mixture of unbelief."—*Henry*. 2. In doubt seek Christ. 3. How great are our privileges under the Christian dispensation! 4. Our appearance and manner are to be consistent with our work. 5. Those who would possess the kingdom of heaven must strive for it. 6. The best ministers may be over the most complaining and fault-finding people. 7. Wise children see and receive the truth in whatever form it may come.

#### REJECTING AND RECEIVING CHRIST. vs. 20-30.

CAPERNAUM(?) OR NAIN(?), A.D. 28.

*Analysis.*—The topics are three: 1. The woes upon the three cities. 2. The words of praise to the Father. 3. The gracious invitation.

**20. Then began he to upbraid]** The emphasis is on "then," not on

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.	17 that call unto their fellows, and say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; 18 we wailed, and ye did not <sup>1</sup> mourn. For
18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.	John came neither eating nor drinking, 19 and they say, He hath a demon. The
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.	Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom <sup>2</sup> is justified by her <sup>3</sup> works.
20 ¶ Then began he to upbraid the cities	20 Then began he to upbraid the cities
<sup>1</sup> Gr. <i>beat the breast</i> .	<sup>2</sup> Or, <i>was</i>
Luke 7: 35.	<sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities read <i>children</i> : as in



KERAZEH, PROBABLE SITE OF CHORAZIN.  
Looking across the end of Lake Galilee.

*(From a Photograph.)*

“began,” and marks a change in the narrative and also in our Lord’s manner of teaching the multitude. He began to “upbraid,” reproach, chide or rebuke the cities in which his “powers,” or “miracles,” or mighty works had been done. In Luke 10: 13-16, similar words follow the charge to the seventy. The miracles of Jesus were intended to persuade men to repent, and not merely to accept his teaching.

**21. Woe . . . Chorazin! woe . . . Bethsaida!]** This was not “wishing woe” upon them, but a judicial and authoritative announcement of their hardened spiritual condition and its consequences. Chorazin is represented by the ruins at Kerazeh, about two and a half miles north of Tell Hum. Jerome places it about two miles from Capernaum. Those who suppose there were two Bethsaidas say this woe refers to the western one. But the miracles of Jesus in connection with any Bethsaida in the Gospels they concede must refer to the eastern Bethsaida. If there were two Bethsaidas so close together, would not his “woe” have distinguished the one meant by some additional title? The two Cæsareas and the two Antiochs (Acts 13:14) are thus distinguished. It is therefore more probable that there was only one Bethsaida, and that was north of Tell Hum and east of Kerazeh (Chorazin) and at the north end of the lake, on the west side of Jordan, with a new suburb, built by Philip and called Julias, across the stream on the east side. See Thomson’s *Land and Book* and Schaff’s *Dictionary of the Bible*. “Sackcloth” was a coarse black cloth made of goat’s or camel’s hair. The garment resembled a sack with holes for the head and arms. To sit in it and cast ashes on the head was a common mode of mourning and of expressing deep sorrow.

**22. more tolerable . . . than for you]** Those wicked heathen cities, Tyre and Sidon, would have repented at the sight of the miracles seen in the Galilean cities, therefore they will have a lighter punishment at the judgment. The greater the light resisted the greater the sin and the heavier the penalty.

**23. Capernaum . . . exalted unto heaven]** or “shalt thou be exalted,” as in the Revised Version. This refers to its religious privileges, if we follow the old text and the Common Version, or to the use it will make of its religious advantages, if we follow the revised Greek text and reading. So of

## COMMON VERSION.

wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

## REVISED VERSION.

wherein most of his <sup>1</sup>mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the, <sup>1</sup>mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented

22 long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Howbeit I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgement, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt <sup>2</sup>go down unto Hades: for if the <sup>1</sup>mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this

<sup>1</sup> Gr. powers.    <sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *be brought down*.



the next clause, "brought down" or "go down" to hell, yields nearly the same sense, the rejection of Christ's teaching and testimony would bring destruction upon even this, "his own city." The probable site of Capernaum is Tell Hum, for Khan Minieh has less weighty claims in its favor. The Sodomites will be less severely condemned at the day of judgment than the people of Capernaum. Prof. Plumtre aptly says, "Men are judged not only according to what they have done, but . . . according to their opportunities." They are judged according to what they might have done had their light and knowledge been greater.

**25. I thank thee, O Father]** or "I acknowledge thee." The time is not closely noted; in Luke 10:21, 22, similar words are connected with the return of the seventy. The words signify confession, with praise and thankfulness. If connected with the "woes" that precede, then this is praise and joy that God would wisely discriminate in judging different places, according to their privileges and the use made of them. The "wise and prudent," or "understanding," may refer not alone to the scribes and Pharisees, who thought themselves wise and intelligent in the law, but also to the worldly-wise and shrewd people of Galilee that rejected Jesus. These things were "hid" from them, because they despised them. No pearls are to be cast to swine. So the "babes" are those of child-like humility and teachable spirit, in contrast with the conceited wisdom of the scribes, and also of the "smart" men of the world.

**26. Even so, Father]** A paraphrase, rather than a strict translation; literally, "Yea, Father, for such was good pleasure before thee." The meaning of the Common Version is that Jesus assents to the wisdom of the Father's ways; and thus it has passed into a proverb expressive of our submission to the mysterious providences of God; or, following the Greek text, it may imply the ground for the praise, "I do thank thee, that it was thy good pleasure." The latter is closer to the sense of the original and is preferred by critical readers.

**27. knoweth the Son]** All things have been delivered over to me by my Father. Christ is creator, preserver and judge of all. No one fully knows the Son except the Father, and no one fully knows the Father except the Son. If Jesus were not divine this would seem blasphemy. The Son is the revealer of the Father.

## COMMON VERSION.

24 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 ¶ At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the

<sup>1</sup> Or, praise

## REVISED VERSION.

24 day. Howbeit 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 season Jesus answered and said, I <sup>1</sup>thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto

26 babes: yea, Father, <sup>2</sup>for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father:

and no one knoweth the Son, save the

<sup>2</sup> Or, that

**28. Come . . . ye that labor]** This is the gracious invitation. It fittingly follows a remarkable revelation of the inner mind and spirit of Jesus, that strikingly resemble passages in John's Gospel. This invitation is preserved to us by Matthew alone. The heavy laden and weary get no rest, unless they accept the call and come to Jesus. "Give you rest," literally, "I will make you cease," *i. e.*, from ceaseless toil and crushing burdens.

**29. learn of me]** or "take a lesson from me." To take one's yoke was to pass into his service. The Pharisees' yoke was too heavy to be borne. But Christ's yoke is "easy," literally "profitable," not galling, nor chafing, nor useless, as many of the requirements of the Pharisees were. "Take a lesson from me," and the lesson was "meekness" and "humility." For Jesus was truly "meek" and "lowly," not merely professionally so. Thus bringing yourselves into this spirit, rest for soul and body will follow, and "my yoke" will prove useful, and "my burden," my precepts, lightness itself.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—Few need be added here to those given above. 1. Great gifts bring great dangers. 2. Miracles failed to save Capernaum; they might fail to save us. 3. The simplicity of the gospel is hid from the wise of this world. 4. To the child-like, God reveals his light. 5. Sin is the great burden of the world. 6. The weary gain rest by *coming*, not by thinking about coming, to Jesus.

CHAP. XII. JESUS AND THE SABBATH. vs. 1-13. Mark 2:23-3:6; Luke 6:1-11.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

These events are supposed to have preceded the woes on the cities in the last section by some months. Jesus here explains the law of the Sabbath, and shows that this law allows—1. Works of necessity. 2. Works of mercy. 3. Works required in the worship of God. All these are grounded in the fact that "the Sabbath was made for man," that is, for his highest good. The healing of the withered hand illustrates this interpretation.

**1. Jesus went on the sabbath day]** or "on the sabbaths." There were no fences in Palestine, and few hedges. Paths were made through the fields of grain; wagon roads were unknown, except the few great military roads made by the Romans. Whither Jesus and his disciples were going on this Sabbath the narrative does not state, but they may have been going to a synagogue service. On this or the following Sabbath he was at such a service;

COMMON VERSION.

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, 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 find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

CHAP. XII.—At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were a hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

REVISED VERSION.

Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomso-

28 ever the Son willeth to reveal *him*. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy

29 laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am

30 meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

12 At that season Jesus went on the sabbath day through the cornfields; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to

see v. 9. Going on a path through the grain, the hungry disciples picked the ears of wheat, "rubbed them," as Luke 6:1 tells us. This act was not stealing, for it was expressly permitted by the law, Deut. 23:25.

**2. that which is not lawful]** The Mosaic law did not forbid this on the Sabbath, but rabbinic tradition did. To pluck ears was reaping, to rub them out was threshing, and reaping and threshing on the Sabbath were forbidden; so Jewish tradition said. One Jewish book names thirty-nine acts and many subdivisions of each which were unlawful on the Sabbath. "Corn" is the general word in England for any kind of grain, and does not mean maize or "Indian corn," as in America.

**3. what David did]** The three gospel accounts of this event show that Jesus used five arguments to defend the disciples: 1. Example of David. 2. Of the priests. 3. Mercy required before sacrifice. 4. Sabbath made for man. 5. Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. The case of David and his men shows that *works of necessity* may be done on the Sabbath. The case of the priests is similar: *works necessary* for religious worship may be done on the Sabbath. The priests were guiltless, for in serving about the temple on the Sabbath they were obeying an explicit command of God.

**6. in this place is one greater]** or, "a greater (thing) than the temple is here." For the Greek is neuter. It may be Jesus pointed to his body as he said this. See John 2:19-21. So too the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit: greater than any church, cathedral, or even the temple at Jerusalem.

**7. I will have mercy]** Quoted from Hos. 6:6, the second time. See Matt. 9:13. It is merciful to allow hungry disciples to eat on the Sabbath.

**8. Lord even of the sabbath]** Jesus had declared himself greater than the temple in v. 6. He now declares himself Lord of the Sabbath. His authority is superior even to the law of the Sabbath. Yet he does not abolish it, but interprets its right use and points out its holy aim. For an excellent discussion of the whole Sabbath question, see *The Lord's Day*, a

## COMMON VERSION.

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 a hungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, 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, 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 pluck ears of corn, and to eat. But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was a hungered, and they that were with him; how

he entered into the house of God, and <sup>1</sup>did eat the shewbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the

5 priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and

6 are guiltless? But I say unto you, that <sup>2</sup>one greater than the temple is here.

7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *they did eat.*    <sup>2</sup> Gr. a greater thing.

prize book by Prof. Waffle. Compare also my *People's Commentary on Mark*, pp. 45, 46.

9. went into their synagogue] Matthew does not say this was on the same Sabbath, as Meyer infers; Luke says it was another Sabbath. The synagogue belonged to his enemies and was in some town, but not probably Capernaum, for Mark says he afterward withdrew to the sea, and Capernaum was at the sea, Mark 3: 7.

10. Is it lawful to heal] The rabbins said it was only lawful to heal on the Sabbath when life was in danger. They wished to arrest Jesus as a law-breaker. He answers their question by counter-questions given by Mark and Luke: "Is it lawful to do good?" etc. Then he points out their inconsistency. For they would help a sheep out of a "pit" (or, more broadly, any "hole") on the Sabbath; then why not help a man in affliction? A man is better than a sheep. Luke notices this argument at another time; see Luke 13: 15; 14: 5. No doubt Jesus used this familiar illustration more than once. Acts of mercy are lawful on the Sabbath.

13. Stretch forth thine hand] What caused the hand to wither we are not told. There are various causes now known that might produce it. The man had no power in the arm to obey the command. But, as he tried, he received power: the hand was made whole like the other. So the sinner is commanded to obey God's law, but he lacks the power in himself; yet as he tries sincerely to obey, he is granted power from God.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Harsh and uncharitable judgments spring from ignorance. 2. Christ came not to abolish the Sabbath, but to free it from traditionalism. 3. The Sabbath is to be used to promote man's highest spiritual welfare. 4. Feeding the hungry and caring for the sick are lawful on the Sabbath. 5. We are not to cease doing good because some oppose or criticise our motives.

THE FOES OF CHRIST. vs. 14-37. Mark 3: 7-12, 20-30; Luke 11: 17-23.

GALILEE, A.D. 28.

Analysis.—1. The plot, v. 14. 2. Patience of Jesus, vs. 15-21. 3. Healing the blind and dumb demoniac, vs. 22, 23. 4. Charge of Satanic agency,

COMMON VERSION.

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, 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.

REVISED VERSION.

9 And he departed thence, and went into their synagogue: and behold, a man having a withered hand. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? that they might accuse

11 him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be of you, that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man of more value than a sheep! Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the sabbath day. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was

vs. 24-30. 5. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, vs. 31, 32. 6. Pharisees rebuked, vs. 33-35. 7. Judged by our words, vs. 36, 37.

**14. Then the Pharisees went out]** This was a conference of the Pharisees with the Herodians; a conspiracy to slay Jesus. See Mark 3:6.

**15. withdrew himself]** The conspiracy of the two strong parties to destroy Jesus led him to escape their malice. He left for quiet places by the sea. But crowds came to him. He worked many miracles of healing, charging the healed not to report him, probably lest it should stir up the opposition of his foes. It is wise for Christians to avoid needlessly rousing enmity against the gospel.

**17-21. That it might be fulfilled]** The prophecy in Isaiah 42:1-4 is freely cited from the Hebrew. As Jesus fulfilled this prophecy, here was another proof that he was the Messiah. "Servant" is applied to Israel in Isa. 41:8, but here to Jesus. "Judgment" is used in the wide sense of rule of right, or perhaps the "law of Christ," and not as a declaratory sentence of God. The reference to the Gentiles is supposed by some to imply that Jesus went to the borders of Tyre and Sidon at this time, and hence that withdrawing to the sea means to the Mediterranean. Compare Mark 3:8. His gentleness and tenderness are set forth by the figures of the "bruised reed," which he would handle so carefully that it would not be broken, and the "dimly-burning wick," almost expiring, he would not put out. The souls now bent under the Pharisaic exactions he would relieve; the spiritually weak, helpless and hopeless he would not drive to despair. The truth would finally overcome all resistance and gain a glorious victory. And because of what his name as the Messiah implies, the nations would have hope.

**22. one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb]** The demoniac

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 judgment to 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, till he send forth judgment 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 restored whole, as the other. But the Pharisees went out, and took counsel against him, how they might destroy

15 him. And Jesus perceiving *it* withdrew from thence: and many followed him;

16 and he healed them all, and charged them that they should not make him

17 known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah 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 declare judgement to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry aloud; Neither shall any one hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, And smoking flax shall he not quench, Till he send forth judgement unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles hope.

22 Then was brought unto him <sup>1</sup> one possessed with a demon, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the

<sup>1</sup> Or, a demoniac

of 9:32 was simply dumb; here the man is blind also. A similar, or the same, case is noted in Luke 11:14-23. Mark does not note this healing, but does note a similar conversation. Mark 3:22-39.

**23. the Son of David]** Nothing is more marked in this Gospel than the references to Jesus as fulfilling prophecy concerning the Messiah. In this case it points out the prevalent view of the people at that time.

**24. but by Beelzebub]** See 10:25. The wicked charge appears to have been spoken in an undertone, or whispered among the Pharisees.

**25. knew their thoughts]** Jesus answers their thoughts, thus showing them that he knew how evil they were. He does not assert that the kingdom of Satan is a unit, but only that if it is acting as they say, it must fall. We know that in fact sin divides, that evil powers are often at war among themselves. Yet they often do temporarily agree to oppose Christ and his people. The works of Jesus were not merely at war with some, but with all forms of evil, and all kinds of wicked beings.

**28. by the Spirit of God]** If I by Beelzebub cast out demons, how do your children cast them out? See Acts 19:13. But if by the Spirit of God I cast out demons, then the kingdom is suddenly come among you, come unawares.

**29. how can one enter]** The thought is, Satan is an enemy, but a vanquished one, like a strong man bound. The disciples of the new kingdom may enter in and spoil or destroy the possessions of Satan.

**30. not with me is against me]** There are in fact only two kingdoms in this world; every man is a member of the new kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of Satan. There is no middle kingdom. There is no neutral ground.

**31. blasphemy against the Holy Ghost]** or "the Holy Spirit."

COMMON VERSION.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?

24 But 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 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore 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 he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, All man-

REVISED VERSION.

23 dumb man spake and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed, and said, Can

24 this be the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This man doth not cast out demons, but <sup>1</sup> by Beel-

25 zebub the prince of the demons. And knowing their thoughts he said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall

26 not stand: and if Satan casteth out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?

27 And if I <sup>1</sup> by Beelzebub cast out demons, <sup>1</sup> by whom do your sons cast them out?

28 therefore shall they be your judges. But if I <sup>1</sup> by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come

29 upon you. Or how can one enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then will he spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. Therefore I say unto you, Ev-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in*

There is no more comforting assurance in the Scripture than this: that every sin may be forgiven. And there is no more awful declaration than the words set over against it: that blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Speaking against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven, literally "either in this age or in the coming age." There can be no fair inference from this that *other* sins not forgiven in this life may be forgiven in the next world. It only distinctly asserts in the strongest possible language that there is no forgiveness for the sin of blasphemy against the Spirit. But it is fair to infer that *retribution* for sin never ends; for this sin at least will never be forgiven. A library of volumes has been written to define the "unpardonable sin." It is not needful to speculate on its precise character.\* Nor is it worth while to waste words in regard to the guilt of the Pharisees' sin at this time. It is certain that willfully charging the work of the Spirit as due to the agency of Satan was coming dangerously near to that sin, if it were not committing it. It is enough to say, of this awful sin, that willful antagonism to the Spirit's work, and treasonable words springing from a treasonable heart in a disciple against the Spirit of God, would speedily bring one into such a hardened state that he would never want forgiveness, and never be forgiven. The Jews hoped that every sin would be atoned for by death. Hence Jesus in opposition to this added that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit would not be pardonable here, nor in the coming world by death.

**33. make the tree good]** Either honestly admit that the tree and the fruit are good, or that the tree and the fruit are bad. The tree cannot be good and the fruit bad, nor can the tree be bad and the fruit good. See 7: 17.

**34. generation of vipers]** "offspring" or brood of vipers or snakes. John had used this language; now the gentle Jesus applies it to the hardened Jews. See 3: 7. And he explains the figurative language of v. 33 by this direct assertion. A man cannot belie his character; if he is evil, he must bring forth evil in his life.

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ner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy <i>against</i> the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.	ery sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.
32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the <i>world</i> to come.	And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this <sup>1</sup> world, nor in that which is
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 <i>his</i> fruit.	33 to come. Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is
34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.	34 known by its fruit. Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance
35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things:	35 of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his good treasure bring-

<sup>1</sup>Or, age

\*The sixteenth Article of 1552 says: "Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is when a man of malice or stubbornness of mind doth rail upon the truth of God's word manifestly perceived."

**36. every idle word]** The Pharisees might reason to themselves, We are not so corrupt. So Jesus seems to answer such a thought. Not merely blasphemous, but "idle" or "useless" words will be reckoned in the day of judgment. Though you may not be *active* in evil, if you waste your words in "idle," purposeless talk, bringing no good, you will be condemned. And because these "words" indicate the character and heart out of which they spring, therefore they will become the basis of acquittal or sentence at the last day.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. If our gospel work arouses such anger as to hinder its progress, we may change our field of labor. 2. "The bruised reed: a soul bowed down under a sense of sin; smoking flax: a soul in which a spark of divine life is still left."—*Heubner*. 3. Christ is to destroy the works of the devil. 4. "The worst devils are those who pretend to be the most spiritual."—*Lange*. 5. "An evil treasure, a wretched possession."—*Heubner*. 6. Acts and words are an index to character; by them we shall be judged. 7. A sin that is forgiven is forgiven eternally; a sin that is unforgiven, and unforgivable, remains unforgiven forever.

**WRONG VIEWS ABOUT CHRIST.** vs. 38-50. Compare Luke 11:16-36 and 8:19-21; Mark 3:31-35.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

*Analysis.*—A sign wanted, v. 38; sign of Jonah, vs. 39-41; the queen of Sheba, v. 42; the unclean spirit and the seven spirits, vs. 43-45; our Lord's mother and brethren, vs. 46-50.

**38. we would see a sign]** This does not imply that Jesus had worked no signs or miracles. The Pharisees charged that those "signs" came from him, or might come from hell. They demanded a sign which surely came from heaven. Luke 11:16.

**39. adulterous generation]** "Adulterous" is a frequent word in the Old Testament for "idolatrous," and is doubtless so used here. Signs enough had been given; a sign to confirm their false views of the Messiah could not be given. So the only sign or type was that of Jonah. As he was three days in a "whale," or, more accurately, a great "sea monster"—probably referring to the white shark, found sixty feet long in the Mediterranean—so Jesus

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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 judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 ¶ Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

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eth forth good things; and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, <sup>1</sup>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 Jonah the prophet:

<sup>1</sup>Or, *Teacher*



would be in the "heart of the earth," meaning the grave, for the same time. This temporary death and the resurrection would prove his Messiahship.

**41. they repented]** The men of Nineveh repented when warned by Jonah; but the Jews resisted one far greater than Jonah, even Jesus. See Jonah 3:5.

**42. queen of the south]** That is, the queen of Sheba, 1 Kings 10:1, which is supposed to be Sabara, a fertile district in Arabia bordering on the Red Sea. This heathen queen came from these remote parts of the earth to hear Solomon; but this generation will not hear a greater than Solomon. So the Ninevites and this queen by their conduct have condemned, and at last will condemn, this generation, for they heard persons much less in authority than Jesus; how much more then would they have heard him, if they had stood in the place of the Jews of Jesus' time!

**43-45. the unclean spirit]** This illustration of the unclean spirit may apply to—1, the Jewish nation; 2, that generation; 3, Christian peoples; 4, individuals. The idolatrous spirit had been cast out of the Jewish nation. They ought to have been in a state to receive the Messiah's kingdom. But the evil spirit, wandering about in a state of unrest, decides to return. He finds the Jewish nation in a condition that invites his return. The traditions and formalism made it as suitable as if empty and swept for him. So he takes seven other evil spirits with him, and the nation becomes sevenfold more wicked and possessed with demons than before. The Jews reject Christ, and even utter blasphemies against him. In a similar way it may apply to the partial reforms at different times in the Church of Rome, or partial reforms in individuals, ending in a worse state.

## COMMON VERSION.

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment 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 judgment 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.

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: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

## REVISED VERSION.

40 for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the <sup>1</sup>whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41 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, <sup>2</sup>a

42 greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the 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, <sup>2</sup>a greater than Solomon is

43 here. But the unclean spirit, when <sup>3</sup>he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth it not. Then <sup>3</sup>he saith, I will return

44 into my house whence I came out; and when <sup>3</sup>he is come, <sup>3</sup>he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth <sup>3</sup>he,

45 and taketh with <sup>4</sup>himself seven other spirits more evil than <sup>4</sup>himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this evil generation.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. sea-monster. <sup>2</sup> Gr. more than. <sup>3</sup> Or, it <sup>4</sup> Or, itself

46. mother and brethren] or "brothers," for the Greek word *adelphoi* has that meaning. The inference is that these were real brothers, as the mother was his real mother. There are various views on the meaning of "brethren," and the question of whether Jesus had natural brothers has been long disputed. 1. Roman Catholic writers say he had not, because of their idea of the holiness of Virgin Mary. 2. The Greek Church admits that the "brothers" were sons of Joseph by a former marriage. 3. Most Protestant writers say they were children of Joseph and Mary. See 13: 55.

49. toward his disciples] The preceding discourse appears to have been in some house. The mother and near relatives are alarmed by the excitement of the Pharisees, and by Jesus' incessant labor. They seek to speak a word of caution to him privately, perhaps. They want him to rest, as well as to be prudent in speech. Their wish to see him is made known by the crowd. Compare Luke 8: 19; Mark 3: 21, 31. Jesus seizes on this incident to declare his spiritual relationship to the disciples, and to show how close it is: nearer even than the dearest natural ties of family, of brother, sister and mother.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Signs may attest, but will not surely make us believe, the truth. 2. Heathen often shame those in Christian lands, by their faith and conduct. 3. The half-converted, relapsing, become sevenfold worse than before. 4. Obedient believers are the nearest relatives of Christ. 5. To be disciples is to be members of Christ's family; how great the dignity and the privilege!

CHAP. XIII. PARABLE OF THE SOWER. vs. 1-23. Compare Mark 4: 1-20; Luke 8: 4-18.

NEAR CAPERNAUM, A.D. 23.

This is the great parable chapter of the New Testament. It contains seven parables on the kingdom of heaven. The first four were spoken to the multitudes from a boat on the Lake of Galilee; the last three to the disciples in a house. The explanation of the tares was also given to the disciples alone. It is suggested that the parable of the sower is an introduction to the whole, while the remaining six fall into pairs—the second and seventh, the third and fourth, and the fifth and sixth, corresponding to each other. Each

COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

46 While he was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak to

47 him. <sup>1</sup>And one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, seeking to speak to thee. But he

48 answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth

49 his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren!

50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit v. 47.

pair sets forth the same general truth. This and the sacred number *seven* can hardly be accidental.

PARABLES.—*Meaning? interpretation? why used?* These three questions call for answers. 1. *What is a parable?* Parable, from the Greek *parabole*, means "putting side by side," hence "comparison." It is sometimes used to translate the Hebrew *meshal*, which is strictly a "proverb." Yet many eastern parables are expanded proverbs, and some proverbs are condensed parables. Roughly then, a parable is a real or supposed natural and probable incident, used to set forth some analogous but higher spiritual truth. It differs from the *proverb*, which puts truth in the form of a maxim or aphorism; from the *fable*, which teaches some moral truth and includes unnatural and improbable things, as brutes reasoning and talking; and from the *allegory*, in *veiling* spiritual truth which requires interpretation. 2. *How to interpret a parable?* In harmony with the spiritual truth to which it relates. This may usually be ascertained from the context. (a) It is not to be regarded as the origin or prime source of dogma or doctrine. This must be sought in other direct statements of Scripture. (b) A meaning is not to be sought for every minute detail of the parable, nor (c) need the meaning always be limited only to one main point. Yet it is a sound maxim, "Every comparison must halt somewhere." Tillotson said a parable and its interpretation are not two planes, but often a globe and a plane touching at one point. But Jesus gives us the best guide in his own interpretation of the sower and of the tares and the wheat. Study them and learn to interpret others. 3. *Why teach in parable?* See vs. 10-17. Fuller says "these parables [in this chapter] are not unlike the pillar of cloud and fire, which gave light to the Israelites, but was a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians." They illustrate the truth, and more: they prove the truth to those who are seeking for it. They conceal it from those who are determined to destroy or not to accept the truth. Jesus says this would be the effect of his speaking in parables in this chapter. Compare Matt. 11: 25; 16: 17; Mark 4: 11, 12.

The *seven parables* in this chapter were probably, though not certainly, spoken on the same day. They were not given in a continuous discourse, for some were spoken from a boat and some in a house. A unity of thought runs through the whole seven. They all relate to the kingdom of heaven. They indicate the principles and methods which characterize the progress of that kingdom. But the view of Lange, following Bengel (and apparently adopted by Schaff), that these parables foretell historical eras of the Christian Church is untenable. He makes the sower represent the apostolic age; the tares, the ancient Catholic Church with its heresies; the mustard seed, the Church in the era of Constantine the Great; the leaven, the influence of the Church in mediæval ages; the hid treasure, the period of the Reformation; the pearl, Christianity and modern culture; and the drag-net, the last judgment. This is very ingenious, but would for the most part be utterly meaningless to the multitudes and to the disciples to whom these parables were originally spoken. The unity of thought consists in the parable setting forth principles of universal application in all eras and in all periods of the

progress of the kingdom of heaven on the earth. Four of these parables are found in Matthew only: the tares, the hid treasure, the pearl, and the dragnet.

1. The same day] This seems to fix the order of events. It is true that the word for "day" is sometimes used in the same broad sense as with us, to mean a "period" or "season;" but the context is decisive here for the narrower sense. This also marks a change in the methods of Christ's teaching. Compare Luke 8:11 and Mark 4:12. From this time he frequently uses the parable in speaking to mixed multitudes.

2. into a ship, and sat] or "into a boat." This was a strikingly picturesque scene. The smooth lake, the shelving beach with boulders, the background of hills and the city near by, the crowds standing on the shore, a little boat a few yards out on the lake, Jesus with his disciples sitting in the boat, the divine Teacher speaking to the listening multitudes on shore! Thomson says, "As if on purpose to furnish seats, the shore on both sides of these narrow inlets [near Tell Hum, or Capernaum] is piled up with smooth boulders of basalt." But Matthew says the "multitude stood on the shore." On the custom of teachers sitting while teaching, see 5:1. The boat was no doubt a fishing-boat, perhaps belonging to Peter and Andrew. Jesus may have sat in the prow or front end; the boat gently rocking as he spoke, though the waters of Galilee are often quiet and smooth as those of a pond.

3. spake . . . in parables] On the meaning of parable and its interpretation see introduction to this chapter. Behold . . . sower. "The sower" might perhaps have been seen from the boat, scattering his seed on the hillsides above the lake. Jewish tradition gives two forms of sowing, one by hand, the other by throwing a sack with small holes and full of seed, on the back of an ox or ass, so that as the animal moved along the seed would be thickly scattered. Sown in this way the seed might fall on all kinds of ground; but the other form of sowing by hand answers all of the conditions of the parable.

4. he sowed . . . by the way side] In this parable the seed is all good. There are *four kinds of ground* in which the seed fall. Only narrow hard foot-paths, not fences, divided one field from another. Some seed would naturally fall in this path. The birds, very plentiful in Palestine and watching the sower, quickly swoop down and devour the seed. The hard path

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XIII.—The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by 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 he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

REVISED VERSION.

13 On that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And there were gathered unto him great multitudes, so that he entered into a boat, and sat; and all the multitude stood on the beach. And he spake to them many things in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured them:

represents a hard, dull mind hearing the word, but not understanding it; the birds, representing the evil one, the devil (Luke 8: 12), come and snatch away the seed, the words sown in its heart. See v. 19.

5. **fell upon stony places]** or "others [of the seed] fell upon the rocky places." It does not refer to soil filled with stones, but to large rock covered with very thin soil. The seed in such a warm spot would grow quickly, and as quickly wither in the sun. This is the heart that very zealously accepts the truth, yet, swayed by strong impulse only, gives up as soon as its zeal cools or trials come. See vs. 20, 21.

7. **fell among thorns]** Thorns are remarkably abundant and of gigantic size in Palestine. They grow with wonderful rapidity. Grain would soon be stifled, choked down by the thick thorns. This thorny soil represents those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the eager desire to be rich choke out the word, as the thorns do the wheat. See v. 22. Mark adds, "the lust of other things," and Luke "the pleasures of this life." The thorns stand for any and all worldly influences from without the man.

8. **fell into good ground]** The soil properly prepared is fruitful in different degrees. It represents the heart that receives and understands the word. The fruit-bearing varies in different persons according as native ability and gifts of grace vary; and it also varies at different periods in the same believer. See v. 23.

10. **the disciples came]** This seems to imply that it was after they had left the boat. The words are not such as would naturally be applied to a request from the disciples while together in a boat.

11. **to know the mysteries]** The secret or hidden things of the kingdom were imparted only to the initiated, the disciples. Those who willfully resist and fight the truth do not have it forced upon their attention. Again it is an illustration of the proverb, no "pearls before swine."

## COMMON VERSION.

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprang 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:

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a 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 mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up, because

6 they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root,

7 they withered away. And others fell upon the thorns; and the thorns grew

8 up, and choked them: and others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some

9 thirty. He that hath ears<sup>1</sup>, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in

11 parables? And he answered and said unto them, Unto you it is given to know

the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever

hath not, from him shall be taken away

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities add here, and in v. 43, *to hear*: as in Mark 4:9; Luke 8:8.

13. Therefore . . . in parables] The heart ready to hear the truth has it offered; to the one resisting or perverting it, the truth does not come, or comes only veiled in parables. See introduction, *Parables*, p. 138.

14. is fulfilled the prophecy] The words describing the mission of Isaiah are here applied also to the effect of Christ's mission and teaching. Here again Matthew points out how Jesus proves himself the Messiah in the fulfillment of prophecy.

15. lest . . . they should see] Their spiritual dullness and resistance to the truth bring on further moral inability to perceive it.

16. blessed . . . your eyes] This was said to the disciples. There is blessedness in a right disposition towards the truth, as willingness to receive it, even before we know what it is.

17. many prophets and righteous men have desired] The Old Testament saints looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. For further notes on why Jesus taught in parables, see general note at the beginning of the chapter. On vs. 18-43, see notes on vs. 3-8.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Teach wherever you have an opportunity, by the seaside, in the house, or on the road. 2. There are mysteries in the kingdom of heaven. 3. They are not revealed to unbelievers, but are known to believers. 4. The seed is the word; the four kinds of soil are four general conditions of the heart. 5. There is (1) the heart that is like a highway, hard; (2) the shallow heart, like the shallow soil on the hard rock; (3) the thorny heart, full of worldly cares; (4) and the good heart, ready to become fruitful. 6. There are grades of gifts and of graces, and degrees of fruitfulness in Christians.

COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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.

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13 even that which he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith,  
 By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand;  
 And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive:  
 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed;  
 Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,  
 And hear with their ears,  
 And understand with their heart,  
 And should turn again,  
 And I should heal them.  
 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see;  
 17 and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not. Hear then ye the parable of  
 18 the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been

## PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE TARES. vs. 24-30, 36-43

Given by Matthew only.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

**24.** sowed good seed] In the parable of the sower all the seed was good. The sower was the same. The soil varied—path-trodden soil, thin soil on the rock, thorny soil and good soil. Here all the soil is alike good, but there are two kinds of seed, and two sowers—one good, the other bad. This parable sets forth—(1) The mixed character of the kingdom on the earth; (2) The patience and wisdom of the head of this kingdom; (3) The artful ways of Satan; (4) The final separation of the righteous from the wicked. It will be most convenient to treat the parable and the interpretation together. Here, then, the sower is “the Son of man;” the seed are the children of the kingdom; the field is the world. See vs. 37, 38.

**25.** while men slept] That is, during the night, the time for sleep. The enemy was hidden by the darkness when he sowed the tares; so the devil is veiled as a spiritual being when he sows evil seed in the heart. The servants of Christ would not see him, perhaps, if they were awake. The men are not blamed for this. It is quite gratuitous to suppose that this implies culpable negligence or stupor, as D. Brown and Lange suggest. The Church may often be guilty of this, but Jesus does not here charge the men with it, nor allude to this part of the figure in his interpretation. Hence it is probably a part of the dress of the parable, and means simply “at night.”

his enemy . . . sowed tares] “The enemy is the devil” (v. 39); “the tares are the children of the wicked one” (v. 38). Malicious neighbors in

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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 a 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 seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 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 thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

## REVISED VERSION.

sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the way side. And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he

that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth

because of the word, straightway he stumbleth. And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that heareth the word; and the care of the <sup>1</sup> world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the

word, and he becometh unfruitful. And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his

field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed <sup>2</sup>tares also among the

wheat, and went away. But when the blade sprang up, and brought forth fruit,

27 then appeared the tares also. And the <sup>3</sup>servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow

good seed in thy field? whence then

<sup>1</sup> Or, age<sup>2</sup> Or, darnel<sup>3</sup> Gr. bondservants.

the East often sow tares among the wheat secretly at night out of revenge for some real or imaginary injury. An obviously strong point in the parable is the close resemblance of the tares to the wheat. At first they cannot be distinguished apart; but when the stalk is half-grown, the slender stem and narrow leaf of the tares enable an experienced husbandman to separate them from the stouter stem and broader leaf of the wheat or barley. But there is a bearded darnel or tares which closely resembles the true grain, until the head appears. In this case the tares were not easy to be detected until the grain was ready for harvesting.

So for a time it is not easy to detect the hypocrite, the false professor from the true. Again, if the darnel or tares should be mixed and ground with the wheat, as sometimes occurs in Syria now, the bread made of this adulterated flour is unwholesome, producing dizziness and a species of intoxication resulting in serious illness. Then too, if, as some (Edersheim) suppose, the ancient Syrians believed the tares to be a degenerate kind of wheat, there would be added force in the figure.

The Greek word for "tares" is a Greek spelling of an Oriental term. The writers in the Talmud call it *zunin* and the Arabic name is *zuwn*. Thomson says the taste of Syrian tares is bitter, and it often acts as a violent emetic. In fact it is a strong soporific poison, and must be carefully winnowed and picked out of the grain before grinding. The plant is specifically different from wheat, and not of an allied family, as Trench was misled by older writers to suppose. The "sowing over" the field with such seed showed deep malice, the spirit of a demon. It also implied that the field had been previously sowed with some seed. The servants might think a blight or "evil eye" had come upon the field; but the master understood an enemy had done it, and so declared.

28. Wilt thou . . . gather them up?] The enemy sowed the tares, and went his way, so his work would not be known. Thus the devil comes into the Church, sows his tares, and goes his way. He does this so secretly that no one is aware of the devil's presence. He leaves his seed to do its Satanic work. When the wheat comes to fruit, then the tares, the counterfeit of the wheat, are noticed. Shall we root them out? Nay. Are we to give up all church discipline then? Nay. For observe, the "field" is the world, not the Church. The "bond servants," like the Roman Catholics, with more zeal than discretion, would root out and burn all the "heretics," the tares, from the field. The great Head of the Church forbids any such attempt to purge the whole world. Nor need the Church expect a pure communion in its militant state. The destructive methods of extirpating the evil from the "field," the world, by inquisition, sword, fagot, are positively forbidden by the householder, the owner of the field. The kingdom is to

COMMON VERSION.

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

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *A man that is an enemy.*

REVISED VERSION.

28 hath it tares? And he said unto them,

<sup>1</sup>An enemy hath done this. And the

<sup>2</sup>servants say unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he

<sup>2</sup>Gr. *bondservants.*



remain to some extent of a mixed character until the angel reapers come. It is another form of the truth taught elsewhere—in the world, but not of the world. See John 17:14, 15. Leave the “good and bad” together in the field until the Son of man orders a separation by competent spiritual agents.

**30. I will say to the reapers]** The reapers are not the “servants,” but the “angels.” They know the “tares,” and they know the wheat. They are to gather the tares first. V. 41 indicates that there are several kinds of spiritual tares. But the angel reapers will not leave any of them, nor will they mistake any wheat for tares. Tares will be bound for burning. Compare vs. 30, 42 and 7:19 with 25:46. The *harvest* is the end of the world—of this age or dispensation.

**gather the wheat]** After the tares are gathered, the Church purified by the angel reapers, then the righteous will shine forth—a figure reminding us of Dan. 12:3. Men cannot make a perfect separation between those who simulate discipleship and those who are true disciples. The final judgment will make such a separation. This truth is again taught in the parable of the drag-net (vs. 47-50), and in 25:28-46. The figures in this parable then, briefly explained, are—the sower of the good seed is the Son of man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom. The sower of the tares is the devil, the tares are the wicked, his children; the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers the angels; then the wicked will be finally punished and the good finally rewarded.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The world is Christ’s “field,” and therefore the place for his servants to labor. 2. There will be tares and wheat growing together in this field until the end of the world. 3. The devil sows the seeds of evil in the world. 4. The Master has great patience when his servants have only rash zeal. 5. There will be a final separation of the wicked from the righteous.

#### FIVE PARABLES ON THE KINGDOM. vs. 31-35; 44-50.

The mustard seed, vs. 31, 32; the leaven, vs. 33-35; hid treasure, v. 44; pearl of great price, vs. 45, 46; the drag-net, vs. 47-50.

Compare Mark 4:30-32, Luke 13:18-21, on the first two parables; the last three are given by Matthew only.

The kingdom of heaven is represented—1. In its external growth. 2. Its pervasive and internal power. 3. It is providentially found. 4. Its subjects are sought. 5. There will be a final separation between its subjects and the subjects of Satan’s kingdom; between the righteous and the wicked.

#### COMMON VERSION.

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.

#### REVISED VERSION.

saith, Nay; lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.

**31. a grain of mustard seed]** The mustard is very common in Palestine. The *Sinapis nigra* and *alba*, or eastern mustard, grows wild, and is also cultivated. It is a shrub growing as high as a horse's head, and bears pods, the first kind having black, the latter white, seed. It is often large enough for birds to lodge and to make nests in its branches. Some have supposed that the *S. Persica* and the East India *Khardal* was the mustard of Scripture. Dr. Royle, an eminent botanist, wrote a treatise in favor of this view. He says it is a large plant growing to the height of some 25 feet. Lightfoot also speaks of old writers who say that a man could climb into it, as into a fig tree. Trench (on Parables) and Stanley adopted this view. But Dr. Hooker and other later botanists say that the *Khardal* does not grow in Palestine. The *Sinapis* or eastern mustard is plentiful in Syria, and as it answers the conditions of the parable it is now quite widely accepted as the plant intended by mustard of the Scripture.

**32. least of all seeds]** Or, "less than all seeds" that are sown, and greater than the herbs, becoming so large as to be classed with trees. There was a rabbinical proverb, "small as a mustard-seed," current in our Lord's day. This parable sets forth the rapid growth of the kingdom from very small and humble beginnings, speedily commanding attention by its size and the comforts it offers to the homeless spiritual wanderers on earth.

**33. like unto leaven]** This parable has been variously understood and misunderstood. Some have held that the woman represented the Church, as the agent depositing the leaven; others that the leaven represents evil; and others still that the three measures of meal represent the threefold nature of man, "body, soul and spirit." Does leaven or yeast here represent evil or truth: the diffusive power of evil or of righteousness, that is, in the "kingdom of heaven"? In other passages of Scripture leaven or yeast does represent the power of evil, except in Lev. 23: 17. Compare Ex. 12: 15; Lev. 2: 11; 1 Cor. 5: 6-8. In the passover service one essential point commemorated was the haste with which the Israelites were to depart from Egypt. They had no time to wait for leaven to work, so unleavened bread was to be used. Then leaven commonly in Scripture is used to represent the diffusive power of wrong teaching by religionists. The language here is explicit: the "kingdom of heaven is like leaven." Some infer that it is

COMMON VERSION.

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.

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.

REVISED VERSION.

31 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a

32 man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three <sup>1</sup>measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

<sup>1</sup>The word in the Greek denotes the Hebrew seah, a measure containing nearly a peck and a half.

like leaven in having the power of evil introduced into it. But if this were the meaning, Jesus would have said it is "like three measures of meal;" and thus we should be forced to the conclusion that evil is finally to triumph in the "kingdom of heaven," for all the meal becomes leavened.

The right interpretation is the simple one, that here the kingdom of heaven is likened, in its diffusive and pervasive power in any community, to leaven in meal or dough: it permeates every part of the community and of the soul. It is not unusual for the same natural object to be used to represent the power of evil and of good. The lion is a symbol of the devil, 1 Pet. 5: 8, and also of Christ, Rev. 5: 5. It must be noted also that in 1 Cor. 5: 7 it is the *old* leaven that is to be put out. The yeast in the parable is a figure of the pervasive, assimilating and transforming power of the kingdom of heaven. As yeast turns dough into nourishing and palatable bread, so the power of this kingdom would transform humanity. Then too it is often "hidden" as the leaven, and it is doing its work unobserved, but surely. The "three measures," or "seahs," were equal to an ephah, or over thirty quarts; a very large quantity, showing how pervasive and powerful was the influence. This wonderful power of the kingdom was internal, noiseless, and yet effective as long as there was any material left to be transformed by it.

**35. That it might be fulfilled]** Ps. 78: 2. Again the fulfillment of prophecy is noted as proof that Jesus was the Messiah.

On vs. 36-43, see above.

COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

34 All these things spake Jesus in parables unto the multitudes; and without a parable spake he nothing unto them:

35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation <sup>1</sup>of the world.

36 Then he left the multitudes, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Explain unto us the

37 parable of the tares of the field. And he answered and said, He that soweth the

38 good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one;

39 and the enemy that sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is <sup>2</sup>the end of the

40 world; and the reapers are angels. As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in <sup>2</sup>the

41 end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity;

42 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the

43 righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears, let him hear.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities omit of the world.

<sup>2</sup> Or, the consummation of the age

**44. like treasure hid in a field]** The parables of the mustard seed and of the leaven form a pair; this and the parable of the pearl naturally fall also into a pair. The narrative implies that this pair and the parable of the drag-net were spoken to the disciples alone in the house. In countries like Palestine, where governments were weak and treasures of all kind insecure, it was common for people to hide their treasures. About forty years ago several copper pots containing gold coin of the age of Philip of Macedon were found by workmen digging in a garden in Sidon. A friend showed me one of these coins, which had kept bright, though showing every other mark of great antiquity. The owner probably hid them two thousand years ago; so they were now practically without an owner, and the property of the finder. Compare Thomson, *Land and Book*, vol. i. p. 197. Selling all, as the apostles had done, is one needful requirement to gain the treasure. Buying the field would be regarded as an effort to act honestly, according to the judgment of eastern conscience. Jesus does not imply that all these acts are absolutely honest. The design of the parable is to teach the great value of the kingdom, and that some find who do not seek for it. To this class the woman of Samaria, the jailer at Philippi, the centurion, and the lame man at the temple belonged. This fulfills the prophecy, "I am found of them that sought me not," Isa. 65: 1.

**45. like unto . . . seeking goodly pearls]** In this parable the great value of the kingdom is again set forth as in the hid treasure. But now the travelling merchant or jeweller is seeking the precious jewels. It is the merchant (not "merchantman," which now means a trading vessel) to whom the kingdom is like. Such travelling jewellers, "merchants," are still common in the East. They search for pearls and jewels of particular purity, precious and of the highest value, so that their wealth may be easily carried and easily concealed. The meaning of the parable usually given is that it represents those who are seekers after God. They have many pearls, as morals, desires for holy things and the like. They find the one pearl Christ, and sell all to get him. But this requires us to regard the pearl and the merchant as together representing the kingdom. It gives us a confusion of figure and lacks the clearness of the other parables, if this is the meaning. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant" (see Revised Version) is the explicit language. It is not said the kingdom is like the pearl of great price. The merchant may be the kingdom as represented in Christ, seeking his people; the pearl, his chosen Church, for which he lays aside his glory, and his life on the cross, to secure redemption and to found his Church on earth.

COMMON VERSION.

44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid 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.

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls:

REVISED VERSION.

44 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and <sup>1</sup>in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking

<sup>1</sup> Or, for joy thereof

47. like unto a net] A drag-net or seine was a common mode of fishing in the Lake of Galilee. See notes under 4:20. This parable closely resembles that of the tares in its general teaching. Like that it distinctly teaches the final separation of the wicked from the righteous. It differs, for the tares teach that good and evil are to continue to grow together side by side, which is not necessarily taught in the drag-net. This implies and pictures the missionary zeal and work of the Church, gathering into the gospel net all that can be reached. And then the final separation of the two sorts gathered is the chief point of the parable, as Jesus himself has explained it.

52. every scribe . . . instructed . . . is like . . . a householder] The scribes were to interpret the law. He was "instructed," literally "discipled" or taught, to do this. As the householder brought from his stores or storehouses, new and old, grain just gathered and grain that had been kept and hardened for use, so the scribe would bring forth truths from the old law and the newer gospel; old truths in new forms, with new explanations and applications, the new agreeing and being in harmony with the old. Ederheim observes that these parables were not only un-Jewish but anti-Jewish in their teaching. Whence came these ideas of the kingdom of heaven to Jesus of Nazareth? Whence, if not from him as the Son of God?

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The grace of God in the heart springs up into a life of usefulness. 2. God's grace in the soul permeates all the faculties and powers of the man. 3. The gospel diffuses itself into every part of society, and if not hindered will transform it. 4. The gospel is a rich treasure, of more value than philosophy, science, or the richest jewels. 5. All are seeking goodly pearls; Jesus gives his life for his Church—to him the pearl of great price. 6. The gospel net gathers every kind: some are good, some utterly worthless. 7. The utterly bad will be cast out.

## COMMON VERSION.

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

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 weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these 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* a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.

## REVISED VERSION.

46 goodly pearls: and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a <sup>1</sup>net, that was cast into the sea,

48 and gathered of every kind: which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away.

49 So shall it be in <sup>2</sup>the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous,

50 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea. And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who

hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, that bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *drag-net*.

<sup>2</sup>Or, *the consummation of the age*

## THE CARPENTER'S SON. vs. 53-58.

**53. when Jesus had finished these parables]** This also implies that they were all given on the same occasion or day. His departure was to Gadara, and later to the region of Nazareth as noted in the next verse.

**54. into his own country]** A former visit to Nazareth is noted by Luke 4: 16-31. The incidents are not identical, and it is natural to expect that Jesus would visit the home of his childhood more than once during his years of ministry in that region.

**55. the carpenter's son]** Mark says they asked, "Is not this the carpenter?" 6: 3. Every Jew taught his son a trade, usually the one he had been taught himself. Even the learned rabbins had some trade. This was not asked to throw contempt on him as a carpenter, but only to indicate that Jesus had not been educated as a scribe.

**56. his sisters, are they not all with us?]** The natural meaning of these words is, that as Mary was his natural mother, so natural brothers and sisters are here mentioned. Except for the assumption that Mary should ever remain a virgin, no other interpretation would probably have been proposed. That the "brethren" and "sisters" were (1) cousins, or (2) children of Joseph but by a former marriage, has no foundation except conjecture. See 12:46 and Mark 6:3. "Joses" is the Greek form for Joseph, a son named after the father. As J. A. Alexander pertinently says in regard to whether Jesus had own brothers and sisters or not, "It is not so much a matter of reason or faith as of taste and sensibility." The language naturally leads the common reader to understand that Jesus had own brothers and sisters then dwelling at Nazareth.

**57. they were offended]** They were made to stumble; were led into error and sin, not so much by what he said and did as by their own hard and unbelieving hearts.

**A prophet is not without honor]** This proverb was frequently used by our Lord. See Mark 6: 4; Luke 4: 24; John 4: 44. We have similar proverbs: "Familiarity breeds contempt;" "Distance lends enchantment to the view."

## COMMON VERSION.

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, insomuch 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 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, save in his own country, and in his own house.

## REVISED VERSION.

53 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

54 And coming into his own country he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom,

55 and these <sup>1</sup>mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were <sup>2</sup>offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *powers*.

<sup>2</sup>Gr. *caused to stumble*.

**58. did not many mighty works because of their unbelief]** A disposition to believe was a condition required by the Lord in working miracles. Lack of faith may hinder some of the most powerful displays of God's grace. Alexander supposes that this unbelief kept the people of Nazareth from bringing their sick and helpless to Jesus to be healed, and not that Jesus declined to heal them when brought to him. In either case it was unbelief that prevented many cures; as now many spiritual healings are prevented by a similar unbelief of the Church.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Men of God ought to be honored in every place. 2. Envy of others leads into serious sin. 3. Sceptics who cannot account for religion on natural causes reject it. 4. To condemn those who do great good, because they were of humble origin, is a mark of a proud, unbelieving mind. 5. Unbelief is the great obstacle to the conversion of the world, and to the salvation of a soul. 6. If there are no great revivals, it is due to want of faith, not to the lack of grace in Christ.

CHAP. XIV. JOHN BEHEADED. VS. 1-12. Compare Mark 6:14-29 and Luke 9:7-9.

GALILEE AND MACHÆRUS IN PERÆA, A.D. 29.

**1. At that time]** Probably during the missionary tour of the twelve. See Mark 6:7-29. This would place the events of chapters 9:35-38 and 10 between chapters 13 and 14. In chapter 14 the events are narrated in their supposed chronological order.

**Herod the tetrarch]** was Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa. He was son of Herod the Great, and his mother was Malthake, a Samaritan woman. He was brought up at Rome with his brother Archelaus; married a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia; afterward rejecting her he married Herodias, the wife of his half-brother Philip who lived a private life, and is not to be confounded with Philip the tetrarch of Ituræa. Herod beheaded John, sent Jesus back to Pilate, was finally charged with crimes, deposed by the emperor Caligula, and banished to Lyons in Gaul. "Tetrarch" means ruler of a fourth part or district of a province.

**2. John . . . is risen from the dead]** This implies that Herod was not a Sadducee, for the Sadducees denied any resurrection. It also indicates the alarms of a guilty conscience. The "mighty works," literally "powers," are active in him.

**3. in prison for Herodias' sake]** John was in the prison of Machærus,

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
<p>58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.</p> <p><b>C</b>HAP. XIV.—At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,</p> <p>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.</p> <p>3 ¶ For Herod had laid hold on John, and</p>	<p>58 And he did not many <sup>1</sup>mighty works there because of their unbelief.</p> <p>14 At that season Herod the tetrarch 2 heard the report concerning Jesus, and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore do these powers work in him.</p> <p>3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and</p>

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *powers*.

as Josephus tells us. The cause of this enmity of Herodias is given in the next verse, and in Mark 6 : 17-20. See also Luke 3 : 19, 20. Herod appears to have been residing in or near the castle of Machærus, in order to carry on a war with Aretas, who was offended because of the indignity put upon his daughter by Herod. In this war Herod was completely defeated, owing, in popular opinion, to his wicked treatment of John the Baptist. The castle of Machærus was a fortress on the south boundary of Peræa, towards Arabia, and about nine or ten miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. It was built by Alexander Jannæus, but destroyed by Gabinius in the wars of Pompey. Herod the Great restored, enlarged and strengthened it, so that, strong by nature, it became almost impregnable. A town was built below the fortress. There is now a line of stones showing the old Roman paved road to Machærus. There are also some remains of the old royal palace of Herod still to be seen.

**4. It is not lawful for thee to have her]** To marry thy brother's wife. See Mark 6 : 18. To marry Herodias was a crime against his brother, whose wife she was; a crime against Herod's first wife still living, and against the law forbidding incest, since Herodias was his niece, whom he had no right to marry. See Lev. 18 : 16; 20 : 21.

**5. he feared the multitude]** When Herod was willing to kill John to please Herodias, he was afraid of the popular indignation that it would arouse. Then, wicked as he was, he liked to hear John, and respected his stern, honest character. He was held in check by these influences, when through courtly intrigues others were plotting for his destruction.

**6. daughter of Herodias]** Herod's birthday may refer to the anniversary of his coming into power; but as the Greek word meant in older writers a day kept in memory of the dead, it more naturally implies the anniversary of his natal day. The daughter of Herodias was Salome, afterward the wife of her uncle, Philip Herod, and at his death the wife of Aristobulus, a grandson of Herod the Great. She danced alone, and no doubt, as was usual on such occasions, with an indecent exposure of her person before the revelling court attendants. "To dance before the court," says Prof. Post, "was an indecorum more shocking to Asiatics than that proposed by Ahasuerus to Vashti. . . . It is an extremely immodest display of the person, with various indecent gestures and motions. It is practiced by reputable women only in each others' presence, except in the rude society of villages. In fact social gatherings of the East are confined to one sex." It was a sacrifice of dignity and decency by Salome, and ministering to the lower passions

COMMON VERSION.

bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his 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, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

REVISED VERSION.

bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's  
4 wife. For John said unto him, It is not  
5 lawful for thee to have her. And when  
he would have put him to death, he  
feared the multitude, because they count-  
6 ed him as a prophet. But when Herod's  
birthday came, the daughter of Herodias  
danced in the midst, and pleased Herod.



of Herod and his court, to secure the wicked designs her mother had against John the Baptist.

8. Give me here] The daughter, "before instructed," or more accurately "put forward" as in the Revised Version, conveys the idea not of a previous agreement between the mother and daughter, but rather that the mother pushed forward her daughter to please Herod and thus to gain her ends. The "charger" in old English was a large dish; in Greek the word means a board and then a wooden trencher, and finally a dish of any material. Having the head on a platter, as if she would devour it, appears like a hideous jest.

9. the king was sorry] Herod's opposite traits of character come out here. He was voluptuous, wicked, cunning and superstitious, fearful of the consequences of his acts. His sorrow sprang from moral weakness and from fear of the popular outcry against so heartless a murder of John. But his "oaths," as he probably repeated his promise with his oath, stood before him, and he was ashamed to recall the pledge before his court. He consented to a wicked act rather than risk a charge of fickleness by breaking his rash pledge, even when he saw it led to this great sin. If the feast was held in Galilee, then some time must have intervened between the order and the execution at Machærus and the giving of the head to the girl. But if the feast was in the castle, it might all have been done in an hour, and this seems to be implied in the narrative here. Nor is there anything in Mark's account against the latter view; for the great men of Galilee might have gathered at the castle in Perea on such an occasion.

12. his disciples . . . went and told Jesus] Herod allowed the disciples to bury the body decently, so there was a little sense of forbearance left in his mind. Then in their sorrow the disciples sought Jesus, telling him the sad story that he might be warned and comforted.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Many hear of Jesus now, as Herod did, only to reject him. 2. Christ's followers are faithful in rebuking sin in high places and low. 3. Voluptuous pleasures and drinking lead to rash conduct and often to greater sins. 4. A cunning, vicious woman is a dangerous associate. 5. Oaths and promises that lead us to sin are to be avoided. "God

## COMMON VERSION.

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 charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*.

10 And he sent, and beheaded 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she should ask. And she, being put forward by her mother, saith, Give me here in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was grieved; but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat with him, he commanded it to be given; and he sent, and beheaded 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. And his disciples came, and took up the corpse, and buried him; and they went and told Jesus.



TIBERIAS.

Looking across a portion of Lake Galilee ; the city lies to the right.

*(From a Photograph.)*

would rather have us break *our* word than *his* word."—*Gossner*. 6. In all our trials and sorrows we will find true comfort if we go and tell Jesus.

FIVE THOUSAND FED. vs. 13-21. Given in all the Gospels. Compare Mark 6: 32-44; Luke 9: 10-17; John 6: 1-14.

NEAR BETHSAIDA(?), A.D. 29.

13. When Jesus heard of it] Several events led Jesus to retire from the crowded towns at this time—(1) the death of John; (2) the return of the twelve; (3) the popular excitement springing from his teaching and from the death of John. He therefore went across the lake either to (1) the region of Bethsaida or (2) the region of Tiberias. If "belonging to . . . Bethsaida," in Luke 9: 10, be omitted, since the form of the reading is disputed, and the undisputed reading of John 6: 23 be followed, the miracle would be placed near Tiberias. This would remove the difficulty respecting two Bethsaidas, which are not clearly distinguished by any New Testament writer. The multitudes that followed him *on foot* would not then need to cross the Jordan, as they would be compelled to do if the miracle were beyond the so-called "eastern Bethsaida." There is an old ford still in use at low water, about two miles before the Jordan enters the lake. But the miracle was clearly on "the other side" from Bethsaida, v. 22, Mark 6: 45.

14. Jesus went forth] This seems to imply, what is clearly stated in John 6: 3, that he had retired to some mountain. They brought their sick to be healed. He could not, therefore, have been remote from villages.

15. when it was evening] This is the only miracle related by all the four evangelists. In dividing the day, the Jews had two evenings. It is inferred that the first ended about 3 P.M. and the second began about 5 P.M. In this verse the first, and in v. 23 the second, evening is meant. The disciples, seeing the day was nearly gone, urged Jesus to send the crowd away to get food in the market villages; but Jesus answered, "Give ye them to eat." He had his own plan for feeding them; for when Philip asked where the disciples would get enough to feed such a crowd, since they had only five barley loaves and two fishes, Jesus ordered that the multitude be seated on the grassy places, and they were seated by hundreds and by fifties. There would be "grassy places," as it was near the time of the passover, or about our April, though later the grass would be burned up with the heat. Then with public thanks to heaven he broke and distributed the food. All ate and were

## COMMON VERSION.

13 ¶ When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into 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 away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

## REVISED VERSION.

13 Now when Jesus heard it, he withdrew from thence in a boat, to a desert place apart: and when the multitudes heard thereof, they followed him <sup>1</sup> on foot from

14 the cities. And he came forth, and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion

15 on them, and healed their sick. And when even was come, the disciples came to him, saying, The place is desert, and the time is already past; send the multitudes away, that they may go into the

<sup>1</sup> Or, by land

fully satisfied from these loaves and fishes, and they gathered up in their travelling-baskets the fragments that remained over twelve baskets full. These baskets, *κόφιννοι*, were of willow or wicker work, of the poorer sort, and in common use. Alexander suggests that these fragments were not portions left by the people of that which was distributed to them, but fragments left of the loaves broken by our Lord, which were not needed or distributed, so bountifully did Jesus multiply the bread and fishes.

**21. about five thousand]** Matthew alone tells us there were five thousand, beside women and children. The other narratives do not speak of the presence of women or children, but do not, on the other hand, say that none were present.

**22. straightway Jesus]** It was doubtless late in the day, and it was necessary for the crowd to be persuaded promptly to start for the villages for lodging. His disciples were directed to take the boat and row to the other shore, toward Bethsaida.

Compare notes in my *People's Commentary on Mark*, pp. 81-85.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. It is right to escape from the fury of enemies when God opens a door of escape. 2. Jesus has great compassion on sinning, suffering souls. 3. Those who have Christ for a friend have all things needful. 4. God can make the poor man's little go further than the rich man's abundance. 5. When Christ feeds the hungry soul he satisfies it. Ps. 37: 19.

WALKING ON THE WATER. vs. 22-36. Compare Mark 6: 45-56; John 6: 15-24.

LAKE OF GALILEE, A.D. 29.

*Analysis.*—The disciples and multitudes depart, v. 22; Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, v. 23; he walks on the stormy sea at night, vs. 24-27; Peter attempts to walk on the water, vs. 29-31; the storm ceases, v. 32; the disciples worship Jesus, v. 33; he heals the sick of Gennesaret, vs. 34-36.

Peter's attempt to walk on the water is narrated by Matthew only.

**22. go before him]** Mark adds "unto Bethsaida;" John says they

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.	16 villages, and buy themselves food. But Jesus said unto them, They have no need
17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.	17 to go away; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but
18 He said, Bring them hither to me.	18 five loaves, and two fishes. And he said,
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.	19 Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass; and he took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up that which remained over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.
20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.	21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.
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.
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.	22 And straightway he constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side, till he

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *recline*.

went "toward Capernaum." If the miracle was east of the supposed eastern Bethsaida, then this order seems to mean to go before Jesus and await his coming at western Bethsaida. But if this was the intent of the order, then the narrative lacks the usual clearness of the gospel writers. If the miracle of feeding the five thousand was in the region of Tiberias, the command is more intelligible. The disciples were to proceed along the shore north-westward, toward Bethsaida and Capernaum, and he would join them later. This obviates the perplexity of two Bethsaidas also.

23. went up into a mountain to pray] or "the mountain," probably the same mountain from which he had come forth, John 6 : 3. The narrative naturally points to a region west of the lake in the vicinity of Tiberias. Others, however, think it was some miles southeast of where the Jordan enters the lake, though there are no "mountains," but only hills, in that region. This habit of prayer alone is frequently mentioned in the ministry of Jesus. Why he, the divine one, should feel the need of such seasons of devotion is no more mysterious than his incarnation. His example is one all his disciples should copy. The people were about to take him by force to make him king (see John 6 : 15), and this season of prayer and meditation was a suitable preparation for such a trial. It was the old temptation of Satan. The evening here mentioned is the "second evening," and after sunset, see v. 15. He remained there nearly all night in prayer, that is, until toward the "fourth watch," or almost morning. Meanwhile the disciples were in the boat toiling and rowing against a contrary and boisterous wind.

25. walking on the sea] Not along the sea, on the beach, but upon the water. And the disciples, seeing him walking on the sea, were terrified, crying out, "It is a '*phantasma*,'" phantom or apparition, an unreal appearance of a real person. It is not *pneuma*, the Greek word commonly used for "spirit."

27. it is I] Jesus spoke in his familiar voice, which they would recognize. "Courage; I am; fear not." I am a real person, not a spirit; dismiss your fear. The voice would calm them more effectively than the words.

28. Peter answered] Peter was always forward, as his impetuous nature led him to be. So he, impressed by the "I am" of Jesus, responds,

COMMON VERSION.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes 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; 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,

REVISED VERSION.

23 should send the multitudes away. And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when even was come, he was

24 there alone. But the boat <sup>1</sup>was now in the midst of the sea, distressed by the

25 waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night he came

26 unto them, walking upon the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is an apparition; and they cried out for

27 fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; 28 be not afraid. And Peter answered him

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities read *was many furlongs distant from the land.*

“Lord, if thou art”—a real person and no spectre—call or command me to come to you upon the water. Peter wanted a sign to assure him. And Jesus said, Come. And going down from the boat, Peter walked around upon the water and went toward Jesus. But seeing the wind he was fearful, and beginning to be “submerged,” he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Peter was probably going against the wind, which may have been “boisterous,” though that word is omitted in some of the best authorities and in the Revised Version. When Peter looked to Jesus, he walked securely on the waters; when he looked to the wind and waves, he began to fear and to sink.

**31. wherefore didst thou doubt?**] Jesus straightway, having stretched out his hand, caught Peter; then reproves him. He saves first; rebukes afterward. “Little faith,” in what didst thou doubt? That is, from what cause didst thou doubt? When the two were in the boat the wind suddenly ceased. Then those in the boat worshipped him, declaring that Jesus was the Son of God.

**34. they came into the land of Gennesaret]** This was a small strip of land on the northwest shore of the lake, and about four miles long by one or two miles wide. It had great fertility and beauty, and corresponded to the plain *el-Ghuweir*.

**35. brought unto him all that were diseased]** The “place” and “villages,” as Mark adds, were in the plain of Gennesaret. It was a very populous district in those days, as we learn from Josephus. “That place” could hardly have been Capernaum, or its name would have been given in the usual way. It was doubtless one of the several villages through which Jesus passed, as implied by Mark, while on his way to Capernaum. They only touch the hem of his garment and are healed, like the woman in the crowd when Jesus was going to raise the ruler’s daughter. Verses

COMMON VERSION.

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, 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 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.

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities read *and came*.

REVISED VERSION.

and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the waters. And he said,  
 29 Come. And Peter went down from the boat, and walked upon the waters, <sup>1</sup>to come to Jesus. But when he saw the wind<sup>2</sup>, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me.  
 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and took hold of him, and saith unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were gone up into the boat, the wind ceased. And they that were in the boat worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.  
 34 And when they had crossed over, they came to the land, unto Gennesaret. And when the men of that place knew him, they sent into all that region round about, and brought unto him all that were sick;  
 36 and they besought him that they might only touch the border of his garment: and as many as touched were made whole.

<sup>2</sup>Many ancient authorities add *strong*.

35, 36 are a general description of Christ's ministry. There are three other similar descriptions of it by Matthew. See 4: 24; 9: 35; 11: 1.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. When Christ commands we are to obey. 2. Seek to be alone in prayer with God. 3. Believers may not recognize Christ's presence. 4. Christ comes in time of trouble. 5. Difficulties and trials may stand in the way of our duty, but need not drive us from it. 6. Looking to Jesus gives security; looking to our trials gives doubts and fears. 7. Christ's cures are never by halves; "whom he heals, he heals perfectly."

CHAP. XV. JESUS AND JEWISH TRADITION. vs. 1-20. Compare Mark 7: 1-23.

GALILEE, A.D. 29.

This chapter records a fresh attack of the Pharisees and scribes. These attacks were frequent. A hint of them is given early, in the sermon on the mount, 5: 17-20. Of open hostility there are numerous examples, as (1) when Jesus was at the feast with publicans, 9: 10-12; (2) when the dumb man was healed, 9: 34, 35; (3) when his disciples plucked the corn on the Sabbath, 12: 1-5; (4) on another Sabbath in the synagogue, 12: 10-14; (5) again, when the blind and dumb man was healed, 12: 24-28; (6) when they demanded a sign, 12: 38-45; (7) in the synagogue in "his own country," 13: 54-57; (8) on traditions, as in this chapter; (9) a sign wanted from heaven, 16: 1-4; (10) on divorce, 19: 3-9; (11) when they demanded his authority for doing these things, 21: 23-27, 45, 46; (12) when they formed a plot to catch him in his talk, 22: 15-34; (13) their final conspiracy to slay him, 26: 3-5, 47-57. All these instances are given by Matthew. This chapter may also be regarded as beginning a new epoch in the ministry of Jesus. For this discussion on tradition is followed by the narrative of his one recorded mission to the Gentiles, in the region of Tyre and Sidon.

**2. transgress the tradition]** These scribes and Pharisees were a company, perhaps a secret deputation from Jerusalem watching and acting as spies upon Jesus. The tradition was the unwritten law, and was held to be binding on all Jews. "Elders," some suppose, designates the official rulers of the nation then living, as Hillel, Shammai and other noted priests and rabbins. But it is more natural to take "elders" in a wider historical sense, as the fathers and founders of the nation, whom the rabbins often quoted with authority. Many current traditions were frivolous, and some were contrary to the written law, as Jesus proceeded to show them. Their charge was not that Jesus and his disciples ate with soiled hands, but with hands ceremonially unclean. They might have touched a heathen, or some cere-

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XV.—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 eat bread.

REVISED VERSION.

15 Then there come to Jesus from Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their

monially unclean thing in the market, or reclined on a couch where a Gentile had lain before them. This in the Jewish view would make them unclean, until they had ceremonially washed.

5. ye say . . . a gift] or "given," that is, devoted to the temple or God by a vow. See Revised Version. The tradition of the scribes in substance was: if a man made a personal or religious vow, he might put the use of property and things of others out of his own reach, or he might put his own property, time and talents out of the reach of another. When he had made this vow, tradition held that he was under no obligation to support his parents. Thus they had annulled the fifth commandment. "He shall be free," in verse 6, is inserted by English translators, but is not necessary to the sense. See Revised reading.

7. well did Esaias prophesy of you] The words are a free citation from the Greek version of Isa. 29:13. The idea is, they are punctilious in outward worship, but are regardless of the spirit of true heart worship.

10. he called the multitude] It is a startling act to turn from the official interpreters of the law to the common sense of the people. It indicates the popular character of the kingdom and the clearer perception of some religious truths by the unprejudiced common mind.

12. that the Pharisees were offended] The disciples thought it a serious thing to differ with the acknowledged Jewish teachers, and more serious to offend them. They were yet in bondage to pharisaism, and feared for the popularity, if not for the safety, of Jesus.

13. Every plant] Not every wild one, but every cultivated tree or plant

## COMMON VERSION.

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 me;

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. 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.

9 But in vain do they 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?

13 But he answered and said, Every plant,

## REVISED VERSION.

3 hands when they eat bread. And he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God

4 because of your tradition? For God said, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother,

5 let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have

6 been profited by me is given *to God*; he shall not honour his father<sup>2</sup>. And ye have made void the word of God because

7 of your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did *Isaias* prophesy of you, saying,

8 This people honoureth me with their lips; But their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain do they worship me, Teaching *as their* doctrines the precepts of men.

10 And he called to him the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth

12 the man. Then came the disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were <sup>4</sup>offended, when they

13 heard this saying? But he answered

<sup>1</sup>Or, *surely die*    <sup>2</sup>Some ancient authorities add *or his mother*.    <sup>3</sup>Some ancient authorities read *law*.    <sup>4</sup>Gr. *caused to stumble*.



which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. The Pharisees are not of his planting and they will be rooted up, is the application.

14. blind leaders of the blind] Leave them to themselves; when the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Palestine was full of wells, cisterns, pits, quarries, often unguarded, and it abounded in blind persons. Such events as the blind falling into them could not have been uncommon. So the Pharisees were spiritually blind, and were trying to lead a people spiritually blind; both must fall into the ditches of error and sin.

15. Declare unto us this parable] It was not the parable respecting the blind guide, but in regard to defilement (v. 11), which Peter asked Jesus to explain. For this was the matter that had offended the Pharisees. See Mark 7: 17.

19. out of the heart] The thoughts, motives and fully-formed ideas and purposes of the heart or mind are what affect a man's character. The outward acts are merely the expression of what is in the man. The sin is born in the heart, and comes forth from there. These thoughts, not hands that are merely ceremonially unclean, defile the man. Only those things which involve some moral principle affect moral character. A heart defiled by any sin renders a man unholy, profane in God's sight; no amount of ceremonial washings of the hands will cleanse a man while his heart is bad.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Church traditions must be tested by God's word. 2. Zeal for our creed must not outrun zeal for God's word. 3. The hypocrite honors God outwardly; he draws nigh to him in worship, but gets no further. 4. Not mere *profession* of religion, but *possession* of religion, is what God requires. 5. Not the physical but the moral touch of the sinful is defiling. 6. Sin, not food cooked by Gentile hands, is defiling to the soul. 7. Washing our hands will not cleanse us from the pollution of sin, but if Christ washes our souls we shall be clean.

COMMON VERSION.

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 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, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

REVISED VERSION.

and said, Every <sup>1</sup> plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit. And Peter answered and said unto him, Declare unto us the parable. And he said, Are ye also even yet without understanding? Perceive ye not, that whatsoever goeth into the mouth passeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But the things which proceed out of the mouth come forth out of the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: these are the things which defile the man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not the man.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *planting*.

## THE CANAANITISH WOMAN. vs. 21-28. See Mark 7: 24-30.

BORDERS OF TYRE AND SIDON, A.D. 29.

21. departed into the coasts [parts] of Tyre and Sidon] The enemies of Jesus were becoming violent. He withdrew partly on this account to the remoter regions on the borders of Tyre and Sidon. From thence he journeys on, possibly through Sidon and around toward Lebanon, into the northern region of Decapolis, which included Damascus, according to Pliny, or Casarea Philippi, according to others. While in the region of the latter city the transfiguration took place.

22. a woman of Canaan . . . cried, . . . my daughter is grievously vexed] Mark calls her a Greek, a Syrophœnician by race. Canaan, the lowlands, applied to all Palestine in early times, was sometimes limited to the plain of Phœnicia along the sea. She was a "Greek," that is, a heathen, and from the people devoted to Baal worship. Canaan signifies her race by birth; "Greek," her religion, possibly also her speech; Syrophœnician, her residence or provincial home. This is the essential point in the incident. "My daughter," she cries, "is grievously vexed with a demon;" literally, "is badly demonized."

23. Send her away] These words and the context imply that they wished him to grant her request and dismiss her. "She crieth after us" need not be understood as a complaint against the woman, but only as reminding Jesus of her eagerness to gain a hearing. He answers his disciples by reminding them that he was sent to the lost of Israel. For I did not allow you to go to the Gentiles nor to the Samaritans even. So if I heal her, it will be exceeding the limits of your former commission. Or, some suppose the hesitation was in order to teach the woman his true character as the spiritual Messiah.

26. It is not meet to take the children's bread] The Jews regarded all outside of their race as unclean. The Moslem calls all outside of his religion dogs. So the "children" are the Jews, and the "little dogs," for that is the force of the Greek, are the Gentiles. Gifts intended for Jews could not properly or fittingly be given to Gentiles. This is good logic in

## COMMON VERSION.

21 ¶ Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of 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, 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

21 And Jesus went out thence, and withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a Canaanitish woman came out from those borders, and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed

23 with a demon. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for

24 she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I was not sent but unto the lost sheep

25 of the house of Israel. But she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 And he answered and said, It is not meet

to take the children's <sup>1</sup> bread and cast it

<sup>1</sup> Or, *loaf*

the East to-day, and Jesus simply applies the common reasoning of the people to the woman, without necessarily approving it as right.

**27. the dogs eat of the crumbs]** The woman takes Jesus at his word. She accepts the position of reproach in which his illustration seems to place her. Then she says in substance, Even the dogs get the crumbs from the master's table. I do not ask for the loaves, only the crumbs or bits of bread thrown to the dogs.

**28. be it . . . even as thou wilt]** Jesus commends this poor Gentile woman for her great faith, as he had the Gentile centurion (8:10), and grants a request equal to her faith. Her faith is proved to be great, for her daughter was healed from that hour.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Opposition and cavils against the gospel often cause Christ to withdraw from us. 2. The troubles of children are troubles and anxieties for their parents. 3. Christ is pleased with strong faith. 4. Those seeking mercy may be content with crumbs. 5. But the crumbs from Christ's table are of more value than many loaves of the world. 6. Faith even in a Gentile may break over all barriers. 7. When Christ speaks it is done.

FEEDING THE FOUR THOUSAND. vs. 29-39. See Mark 7: 31 to 8: 9.

REGION OF DECAPOLIS, A.D. 29.

**29. Jesus departed . . . unto the sea of Galilee]** Finding that he could not have rest even on the borders of Phœnicia, Jesus continues his journey northward, then east and south toward Decapolis and the Sea of Galilee. See under v. 21. He had probably spent several days near the Phœnician territory. There were several passes through the mountains eastward; but Jesus may have taken the great route from Sidon eastward, through the mountain peaks and across the Leontes, a rapid river, and thence into the valley of the Jordan, and eastward of the lakes—a journey which might have occupied several days. Here he seeks "the mountain" to rest.

**30. lame, blind, dumb, maimed]** The crowds follow him, bearing the sick and afflicted with them, seeking healing. It must have been a motley crowd of Gentile and Jewish peasants, some crippled, some blind, some speechless, many deformed, and with various afflictions, seeking the great Healer. The helpless were laid at his feet. This Gentile crowd were

COMMON VERSION.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

28 Then Jesus 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 them:

REVISED VERSION.

27 to the dogs. But she said, Yea, Lord: for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall

28 from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it done unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour.

29 And Jesus departed thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and he went

30 up into the mountain, and sat there. And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed

amazed at the wonders which Jesus performed, and they glorified the God of Israel. This is specially noted because they were not all of Israel.

**32. I have compassion on the multitude]** The great crowd gathered around Jesus, and clung to him for days. In the mild climate of the East, and with their simple habits, sleeping in the open air in the summer was a natural and comparatively easy thing for the people. But their food would be scanty. If sent away hungry in the hot sun—for it was toward midsummer—they would suffer from heat and want.

**33. his disciples say, . . . Whence . . . bread]** It is the old question, Where can so many loaves be found in the wilderness for so great a crowd? So we often say of the crowded populations in city and country, How can all these be fed? They all are fed. God feeds them.

**34. Seven, and a few little fishes]** The loaves of the East were thin, round cakes. The fishes were doubtless from the lake. The differences between this feeding of the four thousand and that of the five thousand should be carefully noted. Jesus here came from the borders of Tyre and Sidon by the way of Decapolis, Mark 7: 31, until he was "near to," or literally "beside the Sea of Galilee." Here on the east side the crowds appear to be partly Gentiles; while the five thousand appear to have been mainly Galilean Jews. Here four thousand, there five thousand, are fed. Here they sat on the *ground*, for the hot summer sun had burned up the grass; there they sat on the *grass*, for it was early in spring. Here are seven loaves and some small fishes; there only five loaves and two fishes. Here seven large (grain) baskets (*στυβάδας*) of fragments were left; before twelve small travelling-baskets (*κοφίνους*) of pieces were left. So far all is clear. This miracle of the four thousand was in the Decapolis. Those who place the feeding of the five thousand near the supposed eastern Bethsaida would bring it near to the scene of the feeding of the four thousand. If the former be placed near to Tiberias, John 6: 23, then it would be on the opposite side of the lake from the feeding of the four thousand, and also "the other side" from Bethsaida, as stated in Mark 6: 45. There were four thousand here "besides women and children," literally "little children," for the Greek is a diminutive.

## COMMON VERSION.

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? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

## REVISED VERSION.

31 them: inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 And Jesus called unto him his disciples, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat: and I would not send them away fasting,

33 lest haply they faint in the way. And the disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so many loaves in a desert place,

34 as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few

**37. did all eat, and were filled]** Or, literally, "they all ate and were satisfied; and they took up of what ran over of the broken pieces, seven basketsful." Here is a basketful of fragments for every loaf; there a basketful of fragments for every apostle. The meal began with the Master's blessing and ended with a hungry multitude entirely satisfied.

**39. took ship, and came into . . . Magdala]** or Magadan, as the Revised Version, or Dalmanutha, as Mark reads. The place or district has not been surely identified, but it is probably on the southwestern shore of the lake, in the region of Tiberias; now perhaps *el-Mejdel*, where is a miserable Moslem village, from whence Mary Magdalene may have come.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Jesus rests upon a lonely mountain, sitting on the ground. 2. Crowds come to Jesus even in the wilderness. 3. The greatest attraction for sin-sick souls is to present Jesus to them. 4. All diseases of the body and of the soul are subject to Christ's power. 5. God can feed his people in the greatest spiritual wilderness. 6. Jesus notes the wants of his people. 7. Christ is never niggardly in his bounties. There are baskets full of supplies left over at all his feasts.

CHAP. XVI. FALSE TEACHING OF THE PHARISEES. vs. 1-12. See Mark 8: 10-12; Luke 12: 54-57.

AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE, A.D. 29.

**1. Pharisees . . . Sadducees came]** This is the first mention of an agreement between the Pharisees, leaders in the synagogue, and the indifferent Sadducees, dominant in the temple, in opposition to Jesus. In the dispute about the Sabbath, and the later one about defiled hands, the scribes and Pharisees only appear. Now there is a coalition of two opposing sects against the divine Teacher.

**a sign from heaven]** They make this demand to tempt or try him. All his miracles did not satisfy them. They did not wish to believe, so it was easy to be skeptical. There might be some power above nature that he possessed, to cast out demons, cure the sick, feed the hungry, and yet not divine power. So they pretended to think. Hence, they sought for a sign direct

COMMON VERSION.

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.

CHAP. XVI.—The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

REVISED VERSION.

35 small fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground;

36 and he took the seven loaves and the fishes; and he gave thanks and brake, and gave to the disciples, and the dis-

37 ciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up that which remained over of the broken

38 pieces, seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside

39 women and children. And he sent away the multitudes, and entered into the boat, and came into the borders of Magadan.

16 And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and trying him asked him to shew them

from heaven, which he might give if he were the Messiah. For according to the rabbins, when Messiah came there would be such signs; a rainbow filled with light would span the world, and other wonders would be seen in the heavens. Let him bring fire from heaven like Elijah, thunder and rain like Samuel, or bread like Moses. See 1 Kings 18: 33; 1 Sam. 12: 18; Ex. 16: 12.

**3. ye can discern the face of the sky]** or, "ye know how to discern the face of the heaven." Verses 2 and 3 are omitted in two of the oldest MSS. of the Gospel, the Vatican and the Sinaitic. The words seem quite closely in harmony with the context, and do not bear any internal marks of interpolation. It is easier to see how the copyists of those old MSS. should have in some way omitted this part of the answer than to see how it found a place here in many copies, bearing such significant marks of being original. The "sky" of the Common Version obscures the point of the answer. You profess to read the signs of the physical heaven and forecast coming events; how is it that you, spiritual teachers, cannot read the greater signs in the spiritual heaven? The fact was they looked for a *temporal* rather than a *spiritual* Messiah, and to have granted their request would have confirmed them in their error. On verse 4, see 12: 39.

**5. to the other side . . . forgotten to take bread]** The sharp opposition of these two powerful sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees, threatened the safety of Jesus and his followers. He withdrew over the sea, and probably in the haste of the departure the disciples forgot to take bread or food with them.

**6. beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees]** Having reached the opposite or eastern shore of the lake, the disciples are warned against the "leaven" of both the dominant Jewish sects. This seems to

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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, 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?

## REVISED VERSION.

2 a sign from heaven. But he answered and said unto them,<sup>1</sup> When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather: for the*

3 heaven is red. And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to-day: for the heaven is red and lowering. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the 4 times. An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonah. And he left them, and departed.*

5 And the disciples came to the other side

6 and forgot to take <sup>2</sup> bread. And Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sad-

7 ducees. And they reasoned among them-

8 selves, saying,<sup>3</sup> We took no <sup>2</sup> bread. And Jesus perceiving it said, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves,

<sup>1</sup>The following words, to the end of v. 3, are omitted by some of the most ancient and other important authorities. <sup>2</sup>Gr. *loaves*. <sup>3</sup>Or, *It is because we took no bread*

have reminded them of their lack of bread, and they whispered among themselves that Jesus was warning them not to buy bread of the Pharisees or Sadducees, when they had forgotten to provide food from any source.

9. Do ye not understand] or "perceive." Do you not perceive that I could not be thinking of buying food? For only a few days ago there was bread enough for five thousand and twelve hand-baskets (*κοφίνους*) full over, and soon after food for four thousand and seven large grain-baskets (*σπυρίδας*) full over. For we have here the same distinction of kind in the baskets that is made in the accounts of the miracles. This verse shows how shallow is the supposition of some learned rationalistic critics, who say that Matthew really relates only one miracle. They imagine that writing of the feeding of the five thousand in the fourteenth chapter, he forgot it and related the same miracle again, with some variation as to the number fed, in the next chapter! But here he carefully contrasts the two in the words of our Lord, showing the two different events. See also 15: 37. Not loaves, but teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees, are what you ought to avoid. The disciples were in error in thinking (1) that Jesus referred to bread, and (2) that he intended to rebuke their forgetfulness. His aim was to guard them against being misled by the erroneous views of the Messiah and of Jesus expressed by Jewish parties. They were trying to corrupt the hearts of his followers, and draw them from Jesus.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Spiritual signs are as readily discerned by the eye of faith as natural signs by the natural eye. 2. No signs will come even from heaven, when they would only confirm us in error. 3. Unbelief would receive no signs except such as favor its opinion. 4. Disciples sometimes greatly misunderstood their Master. 5. The apostles were not over credulous; it required long teaching and many proofs to establish them in the faith.

CONFESSING AND CROSS BEARING. vs. 13-28. Compare Mark 8: 27-38; Luke 9: 18-27.

REGION OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, A. D. 29.

*Analysis.*—Views of men about Jesus, vs. 13, 14; Peter's confession, vs. 15, 16; declaration of Jesus, vs. 17-19; Jesus foretells his death and resurrec-

COMMON VERSION.

9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took 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.

REVISED VERSION.

9 because ye have no <sup>1</sup> bread? Do ye not yet perceive, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how

10 many <sup>2</sup> baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and

11 how many <sup>2</sup> baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not perceive that I spake not to you concerning <sup>1</sup> bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and

12 Sadducees. Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of <sup>1</sup> bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *loaves*.

<sup>2</sup> *Basket* in vs. 9 and 10 represents different Greek words.

tion, v. 21; is rebuked by Peter, v. 22; Peter is rebuked, v. 23; cross-bearing, vs. 24-27; prophecy of Christ's coming, v. 28.

THE RETIREMENTS OF JESUS.—Not less than seven conspicuous instances of the retirement of Jesus from his foes are noted in the Gospels:

(1) From Judæa, Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14; John 4:1, 3. (2) From Nazareth, Matt. 4:13; Luke 4:30. (3) To and from Gergesa, Matt. 8:18; Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22, 37. (4) After the death of John, Matt. 14:13; Mark 6:31; Luke 9:10; John 6:1. (5) Into Tyre and Sidon, Matt. 15:21; Mark 7:24. (6) After the coalition of Pharisees and Sadducees, Matt. 16:13; Mark 8:27. (7) Into Ephraim, John 11:54.

The one here noted by Matthew is perhaps the most marked of them all. The Pharisees and Sadducees had attempted to entangle him. Herod Antipas, having beheaded John, was also troubled by the reports in regard to Jesus, thinking that he was John come back again to life to avenge his death. Herod would be quite willing to use the Pharisees and Sadducees to rid himself of this new teacher. Jesus had retired to the region of Tyre and Sidon for a time; but on his return, finding the excitement still strong, and that the Pharisees and Sadducees had combined against him, he again withdrew to the region of Cæsarea Philippi.

This region, like that of the Decapolis or "ten cities," was outside of the reach of Herod Antipas and within the territory ruled by Herod Philip. In the latter region he would be safe from the plots of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and he would also be beyond the reach of Herod Antipas.

REGION OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI.—A satisfactory itinerary of the various journeys of Jesus during his ministry has not been, and probably cannot be, constructed from the accounts in the Gospels. Parts of these journeys, however, can be satisfactorily determined. This is partially true of the journey into the region of Cæsarea Philippi.

We know that Jesus was on the northeast side of the Lake of Galilee, near to Bethsaida (Julias). From thence it is plain that he went northward on the east side of the Jordan valley. That road was a good one, dotted with hamlets and villages, and was wholly within the tetrarchy of Philip. It is now the shortest road to Baniyas, the site of Cæsarea Philippi. Mr. J. T. Haddad, a native Syrian, tells me that he has frequently travelled over this route in the government service. There are still a number of villages along the road, and marks of ancient towns. Readers should not be misled by writers of the life of Christ who describe the road on the west side.

The region about ancient Cæsarea Philippi is one of the most delightful resting spots in all Palestine. Springs of water abound. The chief source of the Jordan bursts forth from a cave-spring in a full, silver-clear stream. Countless smaller streams call into life a luxuriant vegetation. Woods and green shrubs shade the streams. Vines, olive, mulberry, apricot and fig trees clothe the foot of the mountain. Higher up are grain fields, then come the pear and the oak, and lastly dwarf shrubs and rocky ravines.

Above Baniyas is the lofty castle *Subebeh*, commanding a magnificent view; it is an old castle. On one of the spurs of this greatest mountain of Syria the transfiguration undoubtedly took place.



From Banias to the first spur of Mount Hermon is over one hour's walk, and to the second and more secluded peak, about three hours.

**13. came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi]** or "into the parts" or "villages of Cesarea Philippi." See Revised Version and Mark 8 : 27. Cesarea Philippi was a town about twenty miles north of the Sea of Galilee, and toward Damascus. Its Greek name was Panias, now Banias. The rocks in the region indicate an old worship of Baal and Pan. One important branch of the Jordan has its source in a spring in a cave near the town. The city was enlarged by Philip and named after him to distinguish it from the other Cesarea on the Mediterranean; was improved by Herod Agrippa II. It now has many ruins and about fifty houses. It was the northern limit of our Lord's journeyings.

**14. Some . . . John . . . Elias . . . Jeremias]** The question of Jesus was intended to call attention to the popular views of himself and to correct them. And there seems to be a plain reference to the prophecy of Daniel (7 : 13) in the question, as indicating the character of the Son of man. Herod Antipas and his court said that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, 14 : 1, 2. But some said he was Elijah, whom the Jews expected to reappear, as he was taken to heaven without dying; others that he was a new Jeremiah, or prophet, sent to herald the coming of some great deliverance, or possibly of the Messiah.

**16. the Christ, the Son of the living God]** Peter sees Jesus as the promised Messiah, and also recognizes his divine nature, the Son of God, the living one. Peter speaks for all the apostles, and his great confession is recorded in slightly-varied phrase by all the evangelists. It is important to note—(1) Peter spoke what all the apostles confessed; (2) the confession recognized the Messianic and divine character of Jesus.

**17. Simon Bar-jona]** Simon, son of Jonah. Jesus here calls Peter by his earlier name, calling to mind his former religious state as contrasted with his present remarkable confession which now entitled him to be called truly Peter (a rock). Not "flesh and blood," that is, not man, but God had revealed this truth to him and to them, and this is the occasion of the remarkable declaration of Jesus which follows.

COMMON VERSION.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son 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 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 heaven.

REVISED VERSION.

13 Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say <sup>1</sup> that the

14 Son of man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah: and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But who say ye that

16 I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the

17 living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who

<sup>1</sup>Many ancient authorities read that I the Son of man am. See Mark 8 : 27; Luke 9 : 18.

18. and upon this rock I will build] This passage is the rock on which Papists and Protestants split. What does this declaration of Jesus mean? In explaining its meaning, the great confession of Peter which was the occasion of it must be borne in mind. Jesus uses two distinct figures: (1) the formation of a building; (2) a steward, porter or custodian of a building. v. 19. While the two are interpreted separately, the interpretation of the one is closely linked with that of the other. A careful reading will make it clear also that Jesus is here describing the human organization of the Church, and therefore the *human*, not *divine*, element in its foundation. If this is kept firmly in mind, it will aid in gaining a right understanding of this much-disputed passage. The declaration respecting the foundation will be considered first, and then the power of the keys.

Among the explanations of the foundation are—I. *The Romanist*, that Jesus referred to Peter only as the future official head and primate of the Church. But that Peter was bishop of Rome is disputed, and that the bishops or popes of Rome are his successors rests upon assumption. Upon this assumption are based the amazing pretensions of the pope of Rome. View I. is presented by Baronius, Bellarmine and other papal writers. It is directly contrary (1) to all other Scripture; (2) to Peter's own claims, 1 Pet. 5: 1-3 and 2: 4-6; (3) to the position actually accorded him by the apostles, Gal. 2: 7-14; (4) to that given by Jesus himself to other apostles, Matt. 18: 18, John 20: 23; and (5) it is inconsistent with the figure here used, since a foundation is not transferable. II. That Jesus referred not to Peter, but to *his confession only*, which may be indicated by the supposed play on the Greek words *Petros* and *petra*. It is favored by Huss, Calvin, Luther, Gregory the Great, Ewald and others. This is the extreme opposite of the Romanist interpretation, but is surrounded with many difficulties. The Church is not founded of nor on confessions alone, but of and on living persons. III. *That Jesus referred to himself*. This he did when he said "destroy this temple" (John 2: 19-21), perhaps adding a gesture to make the meaning definite. It is an old view favored by Jerome, Augustine in later life, Fabricius, A. Clarke, Calovius, Wordsworth, and apparently J. A. Alexander. It is a truth; Christ is elsewhere called the "foundation" (1 Cor. 3: 11), and also the "chief corner-stone" (Eph. 2: 20-22). The reference in John 2: 19 is expressly explained there as referring to Jesus. Here there is no such explanation, and the context does not favor such an interpretation. And since Jesus probably spoke Aramaic, not Greek, it is "begging the question" to assume that the change in the grammatical form of the word *Petros* favors it. Moreover "upon this rock" points to Peter, not to Jesus. See Meyer *in loco*. This view seems to require us to read into the text the gesture or something not there. IV. *That Jesus referred to Simon in view of his great*

## COMMON VERSION.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *Petros*.

## REVISED VERSION.

18 is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art <sup>1</sup>Peter, and upon this <sup>2</sup>rock I will build my church; and the gates of

<sup>2</sup>Gr. *petra*.

*confession*. He was rightly named Peter—"a rock"—because of his rock-like faith and life, given him of God. As such a divinely-renewed soul living in Christ, Peter would become the first human foundation stone built into the Church; not first in importance necessarily, but first in the order of time. This is not building the foundation of the Church on a confession, but constructing it of a redeemed person, redeemed in Christ. For in weighing these interpretations it is important to remember—(1) That Christ is elsewhere represented as the *divine* founder, and also the *divine* foundation, of the Church. (2) That in the Gospels he is usually the founder, not the foundation, Matt. 28 : 18, 19; Mark 16 : 15; Luke 24 : 46, 47; John 15 : 16; Acts 1 : 8. (3) In other New Testament books he is more especially the foundation, 1 Cor. 3 : 11; Eph. 2 : 20-22. Christ must then be accepted as the divine founder and the divine foundation of his Church. His reference here is plainly to the *human organization and foundation of his Church on earth*, not to the *divine foundation*. In the human elements going into his Church, Peter, from his remarkable confession given him of God, is declared as in order of time the first living stone. Compare Peter's own words, "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house," 1 Pet. 2 : 5. This honor of being of the first lively stones, and the power of binding and loosing, he shared with the other apostles, as will be seen later. Compare 18 : 18 and Eph. 2 : 20-22; Gal. 2 : 9; Rev. 21 : 14; John 20 : 23. Peter was prominent at the Pentecost and in other labors in spreading the Church in Judæa. But this prominence is widely different from the monstrous assumption of papal primacy for him and for an endless chain of successors claimed by Rome. There is no satisfactory evidence that Peter or any other of the apostles had OFFICIAL successors. This *fourth* view gives full sense to the expression used by Jesus in his declaration, and is consistent with other Scripture and with the early history of the Church. It is favored substantially by many of the fathers, by Alford, Meyer, De Wette, Lange, Olshausen, Grotius, D. Brown, Schaff, Whedon and many others, although some of them do not clearly distinguish that here Jesus describes the *human* as distinct from the *divine* foundation, and hence confuse it with view number 2, above.

**my church]** The Greek word for Church occurs only thrice in the Gospel, here and twice in Matt. 18 : 17. It is used to translate the Hebrew word for congregation, and implied that Jesus was intending to found, (1) an assembly of followers; (2) it was to be organized in some form resembling the Jewish "congregation," or "*ecclesia*." The Church thus founded would never be overcome; not even the "gates of hell" would ever prevail against it. This must be understood of the Church in its completeness; for local churches do die, but the Church of Jesus Christ lives. All the forces of death and hell have not overpowered and will not overpower it.

**19. give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven]** Here the

## COMMON VERSION.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in

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19 Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt

figure changes from a "foundation" to a "porter" or "doorkeeper." The "kingdom of heaven" must refer to the same thing as the *ecclesia*, "my Church," in v. 18. The same "power of the keys" is afterward given to the apostles in common, thus superseding any supposed claim of Peter to the sole power of the keys, as now asserted by the pope of Rome. The steward of a house bore the key, as a symbol of authority. So Peter, as steward, was to open the gates of the Church to the Gentiles, hitherto virtually closed against them. So Peter himself explains his conduct with Cornelius. See Acts 15:7. From Matt. 18:18 and John 20:23, we infer that Jesus conferred on Peter and then on the apostles the authority to make specific rules for the organized Church. They would be authorized to release those in the new kingdom from the binding authority of the Pharisees and the ceremonials of the Jewish ritual, and to bring them into the freedom of true men in Christ Jesus, subject only to his teachings. The "binding" and "loosing" were phrases common in the Jewish schools, implying that whoever "bound" had the power to declare an act forbidden by a rule or law. Whatever they "loosed" was allowed by law. So "binding" and "loosing" in the new organization signified the authority to declare who might be admitted, and what the members of the new order could and could not properly do. By proclaiming the gospel as directed in the final commission, the apostles opened the "kingdom" to those willing and fitted to enter. That the apostles had any official successors, and that this "power of the keys" could be transmitted by them, are points that are stoutly disputed. The prevalent evangelical view is that so far as this "power of the keys" can now be authoritatively used, it belongs to the Church. Good men differ about how this power ought to be exercised. Some hold it must be by the direct act of the entire membership in each case, because, if it may be done by a few, it might be by one, which ends in primacy. Others hold that the Church may govern through representatives, since it is difficult, if not impossible, to have direct voting by each member in every case. But whatever be the view on these points, it is clear from Scripture that the Church has a divine authority for self-government in some form, subject only to its founder, Christ.

**20. tell no man . . . he was . . . the Christ]** The people had become zealous in his support, and might again try to make him king by force. This would be rebellion against Rome. The Pharisees on the other hand were watching for a chance to catch and destroy him. This would be their opportunity. To allow his disciples to declare him to be the Messiah would bring a collision with the dominant Jewish sects, thus prematurely ending his work.

**21. shew unto his disciples]** Now that the disciples began to realize

## COMMON VERSION.

heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20 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

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bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ.

21 From that time began <sup>1</sup>Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities read *Jesus Christ*.

the true character of Jesus, this conflict and final issue could not long be avoided. He saw the end approaching, and desired to strengthen their faith for the trial by foretelling the coming events, the dark, cruel end, and the final triumph—the resurrection.

**22. Peter . . . to rebuke him]** The foremost to confess is now the foremost to oppose his Lord and to thwart his purpose. This shows how imperfect a conception Peter had of the Messiah's work on the earth.

**23. behind me, Satan]** Peter, taking the place of the tempter, is now addressed as Satan. From being authorized to carry the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he is suddenly counted by the same divine Master as the head of the kingdom of hell. When he makes the great confession, he is a foundation stone of the Church; when he would dissuade Jesus from the Messianic work, even unwittingly, he becomes a leader in the kingdom of darkness, an "offence," a "stumbling-block" to the divine Founder of the Church. "Savourest" or "mindest" is in the Greek "to have one's mind on a thing," and in political phrase implied "to take a side." Hence the meaning is, thou art not on God's side, but on man's.

**24. take up his cross]** From a final trial of the cross which he was to endure, Jesus is naturally led to speak of the trials and the crosses which all his followers will be compelled to bear. On verse 25 see 10 : 39.

**26. what is a man profited]** The word for "soul" is the same in this verse as the word for "life" in v. 25. See Revised Version. Of what profit would it be to a man to gain or acquire by trading the whole world, and lose his own life? Or, if his life be lost, what shall he give to recover or redeem it? When the bargain is made, closed, the life gone, what has a man left to redeem it with? It is the picture of Satan giving all a worldly man desires, and demanding the "soul" or life, which the man gives. Now when his life is thus gone, what has the man to redeem his life with? He has nothing; for the question involves the hopeless contradiction of a dead man redeeming anything.

COMMON VERSION.

go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an 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 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, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

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unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, <sup>1</sup>Be it far from thee,

<sup>22</sup> Lord: this shall never be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

<sup>23</sup> Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

<sup>24</sup> For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose

<sup>25</sup> his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his <sup>2</sup>life? or what shall a man give in ex-

<sup>1</sup> Or, God have mercy on thee

<sup>2</sup> Or, soul

**27. For the Son of man shall come]** The self-denial of saints will be temporary, their cross-bearing not long, for the Son of man will finally come to reward their suffering for his sake; and if them, then those also who have foolishly bargained away their spiritual life for ease and luxury will be rewarded. "Every man according to his doing." The "work" or "doing" as an expression of character will be a basis of judgment.

**28. shall not taste of death, etc.]** This cannot well refer to the final coming of Christ, spoken of in v. 27, for all the apostles and those to whom the words were addressed have died; and the expression, too, is not the same as in v. 27. It must here refer either (1) to the transfiguration seen by Peter, James and John, or (2) to the coming of Christ through the Holy Spirit as on the day of Pentecost, or (3) to his coming in judgment on Jerusalem at its fall. Or it may have reference to all these events as a proof of his coming to establish his kingdom. For some of the apostles lived to see all these events. Each of these crises was a significant proof of the coming or establishment of the kingdom of Christ.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. An apostle even cannot confer faith upon another; it is a gift of God. 2. Our view of Christ is a test of our Christian character. 3. To know him as the divine Redeemer and to confess him are steps to salvation. 4. The Church on earth is built of the redeemed. 5. The Holy Spirit in the Church guides in the right use of the "keys of the kingdom." 6. No human or church authority can shut a soul out of heaven. It may bar one from the Church, but unbelief in Christ alone will exclude from heaven. 7. The final awards and punishments are sure.

CHAP. XVII. THE TRANSFIGURATION. vs. 1-13. Mark 9: 2-13; Luke 9: 28-36.

REGION OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, A.D. 29.

**1. after six days]** Three evangelists give this remarkable event. Each marks a definite time. The six days of Matthew and Mark exclude, and the eight days of Luke include, the day before and after the interval. Six days of toil and work, followed by a seventh day of glory; this is the order of God in creation, as in manifestation.

**into a high mountain]** A tradition reaching back to the fourth century, mentioned first by Cyril of Jerusalem, places the transfiguration on Mount

COMMON VERSION.

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every 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.

CHAP. XVII.—And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart,

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27 change for his <sup>1</sup>life? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his <sup>2</sup>deeds.

28 Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

17 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a

<sup>1</sup> Or, soul

<sup>2</sup> Gr. doing.



BANIAS SPRING (*Cæsarea Philippi*). (From a Photograph.)  
One source of the Jordan; the small building above the cave spring is a shrine.

Tabor. An earlier tradition places it on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem. Neither tradition is of much value. The historical evidences are strongly against both. Little solitude could have been found on either at that time, as both had buildings—Tabor a fortress and stronghold. Jesus was in the region of Cæsarea Philippi; Tabor is not there, nor is it a “high mountain.” Some peak or spur of Hermon in the vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi is the most probable scene of the transfiguration. Hermon is the highest and most conspicuous mountain in Palestine. Jesus took with him Peter, who had made the great confession, and James and John, the two who were always prominent in the apostolate. These three disciples were chosen with the father and mother to witness the raising of Jairus’ daughter, Mark 5:37, 38, and later to be witnesses of the awful agony in Gethsemane, Matt. 26:37. Three witnesses were all the law required to certify to any fact, Deut. 17:6, and enough under Christian rule, 18:16.

2. **transfigured before them]** Literally, “metamorphosed”; it implies more than a mere change of outward appearance. This transformation came on as he prayed, as Luke tells us. They had gone up the mountain towards evening. While Jesus prayed night came on; the disciples, overcome with weariness and sleep, appear to have wrapped themselves in their abbas, or cloaks, and reclined on the ground. His face became bright, as did the face of Moses when he came from the mount of the law, and his raiment was as the light.

3. **appeared . . . Moses and Elias]** Moses represented the law, and Elijah the prophets. This account is not that of a dream or an ecstatic vision; nor is it a highly-colored legend. The entire narration is in simple historical language, the farthest removed from imaginative or colored statements. The appearance of Moses and Elijah was a real yet spiritual appearance, no doubt similar to that of Jesus to the disciples after his resurrection. How they could, as spiritual beings, thus become visible to the disciples, and how they could be recognized, it is useless to speculate. It is useless also to conjecture by what process Jesus could be so transformed as to resemble a being of light and glory. The facts are stated by competent witnesses, and in the inspired Gospels; and we reverently accept them, as we do hundreds of other facts, even in nature, which the human mind is utterly unable to explain. The great subject of conversation between Moses, Elijah and Jesus was the death of Christ at Jerusalem; blessed and comforting words from the celestial world on this coming trial!

4. **three tabernacles]** Peter, impulsive and ready for every good work, proposes to make three booths, similar to those built by Palestine peasants,

COMMON VERSION.

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias 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 taberna-

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2 high mountain apart: and he was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light.

3 And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him.

4 And Peter answered, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, I will



for shelter from the sun and for a lodge at night. They were also the shelter used during the seven days of the feast of tabernacles. Lev. 23: 42. Peter would prolong their stay by making this shelter of boughs, and so enjoy and have his Master enjoy this heavenly feast. Christ teaches us that on earth his people are not to seek high and ecstatic spiritual enjoyment merely, but to descend and do the Master's work and will.

**5. a bright cloud overshadowed them]** Instead of the booths which Peter would make, they were given a bright cloud. Luke says, "they entered into the cloud," meaning that the cloud hid Moses and Elijah from the disciples. There seems to be no Scripture warrant for the magnificent picture of Raphael, which represents the three floating in the air upon a cloud. The voice from the cloud was as the voice at his baptism, 3: 17.

**8. save Jesus only]** The frightened disciples fell on their faces before the glory of this revelation, and the voice from the cloud. Jesus came and touched them, as the angel did Daniel. Dan. 8: 17, 18. Partially recovered from their fright, they look up and see Jesus alone. The heavenly visitors were gone, and probably the brightness and visible glory also. They saw Jesus in his ordinary form and appearance.

**9. Tell the vision to no man]** The "vision" is strictly what God enables us to see, as here and in Acts 7: 31. It sometimes indicates a spiritual trance, Acts 10: 3, 10-17, but the meaning is to be determined by the context. They were not to tell of this sight until Jesus had risen from the dead. See 16: 20. This reminds the three disciples of the current views of the rabbins that Elijah would come, and, according to Lightfoot, was expected to reconcile the differences between the Jewish schools, and bring back the pot of manna and Aaron's rod, before the dead were raised and Messiah's reign began. Hence if you are the Messiah, they seem to say, and we are to tell no one of this appearing of Elijah, how is it that Elijah did not come first, that is, before you did? and why this secret and brief stay? Do the scribes rightly interpret prophecy?

## COMMON VERSION.

cles; one for thee, and one for Moses, 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 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 asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto

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make here three <sup>1</sup>tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Eli-

5 jah. While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, save Jesus only.

9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead. 10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first

11 come? And he answered and said, Eli-

<sup>1</sup> Or, booths

12. Elias is come] Yes, Jesus answers, the scribes correctly say Elijah indeed comes to restore all things, that is, restore or recall men's minds to God and his kingdom, as Malachi foretold. Mal. 4: 6. And the expected Elijah has come and they did not recognize him nor his work, but they treated him just as they wished; that is, they allowed him to be put to death. The Son of man will suffer the same willful treatment at their hands. Then the disciples understood that he spake of John the Baptist as Elijah.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The transfiguration is a prophecy of the resurrection. 2. Divine glory may be filling the land, celestial voices singing in the air, and our eyes be too dim to see the one and our ears too dull to hear the other. 3. The conscious existence of the departed; Moses and Elijah converse with the living. 4. The light, glory and joy of the heavenly world are so great that even the Christian may be beside himself; for Peter knew not what he said. 5. The touch of Jesus brings us to ourselves and removes fear. 6. Here we are in the land of the dead and dying; in the heavenly world we shall be in the land of life. 7. There was a voice from a cloud, the speaker unseen; so there are voices in the deepest mysteries that tell of the unseen One.

THE WEAK FAITH OF THE DISCIPLES. vs. 14-27. Mark 9: 14-29; Luke 9: 37-45.

REGION OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, A.D. 29.

*Analysis.*—The lunatic child cured, vs. 14-21; Jesus again foretells his death, vs. 22, 23; the half-shekel tax found in a fish's mouth, vs. 24-27. (The miracle of the stater is given by Matthew only.)

14. they were come to the multitude] The four, Jesus, Peter, James and John, came down from the mount of transfiguration in the morning, having spent the night in the mount. See Luke 9: 37. A man had brought his afflicted child, and, not finding Jesus, asked the nine disciples to heal the lunatic or epileptic boy, possessed also of a demon. The disciples were not able to cure him. This failure led to a dispute with the scribes, which was going on as Jesus and the other three disciples came down the mount. So the man prays Jesus to cure his son, and tells a sad story of his falling into the fire or water, as an epileptic might do. He then innocently adds the failure of the disciples as a further reason for appealing to Jesus.

COMMON VERSION.

them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12 But I 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 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 oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

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jah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things: but I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they listed. Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a man, kneeling to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is epileptic, and suffereth grievously: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oftentimes into the water.

**17. O faithless and perverse generation]** This exclamation of grief, disappointment and rebuke was intended for all, for the disciples, the scribes and the crowd. It was a reproof to the disciples for their little faith. The added expression, how long shall I bear with you? is very significant. It indicates that Jesus' life was one long-continued suffering from the faithlessness of his followers and of the people. It also gives a hint of his speedy departure from them; then they must get along alone.

**18. the child was cured]** The expressions of grief and pain from Jesus ended with a call for the child. The boy was brought, and seeing Jesus, he fell into a violent convulsion, foaming at the mouth, a dumb, helpless child. Mark tells us more particulars. He had been afflicted from a little child, was dumb and often powerless to control his own movements, or to keep from destroying himself. And the father implores help; it is offered if he will believe. The poor father cries out "I believe," but lest his faith should be too little, like that of the nine disciples, he adds, with tears, "help thou mine unbelief." Then with a word Jesus rebukes the demon, and the child is instantly cured. All the people were amazed at this mighty power of God. Luke 9 : 43.

**19. Why could not we cast him [it] out?** Mortified and ashamed of their failure, and not taking in the reproof of v. 17, the nine disciples ask Jesus, as soon as they are alone with him, why they failed. He repeats what he had said, only in another form. Faithlessness, unbelief, was the cause of their failure. If they had a growing faith, like a mustard seed (13 : 31), they would not fail. Faith would succeed anywhere, in any work for Christ. Though the obstacle were as great and seemingly as immovable as the towering mass of Hermon, it would disappear at their word if they had faith. But true fasting and prayer alone could bring such mighty results. Not the mountains of difficulties, but the molehills of faith, bring failure to God's servants.

**22. be betrayed]** The disciples had been only faintly impressed with

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16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with 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 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.

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:

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16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and 17 they could not cure him. And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse

generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked

18 him; and the demon went out from him: and the boy was cured from that hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast it out?

20 And he saith unto them, Because of your little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.<sup>1</sup>

22 And while they<sup>2</sup> abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be

<sup>1</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 21, *But this kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting.* See Mark 9 : 29. <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *were gathering themselves together.*

the coming sorrows, and needed to have their minds again prepared for those events. So Jesus again very plainly states how he will be delivered to his enemies, slain, and raised again on the third day. Even this great plainness of speech only made them very sad, but they did not really understand what he meant by it, as Luke tells us, and were afraid to ask him.

24. they that received tribute] From the region of Cæsarea Philippi to Capernaum was a journey of about thirty miles. It may have occupied, however, several days. There were villages on the way. Preaching and healing would make the journey a slow one. At Capernaum Peter is asked if his Master does not pay the temple tax. The collectors imply that he had, but now was neglecting it. In his zeal Peter tells them his Master does pay it. When they came into the house Jesus "spake first"—"anticipated" Peter, asking whether sons or "subjects" paid tax. He would show Peter that he as Lord of the temple, and his disciples as servants of the temple, could claim to be free of such tax. The temple tax was in early times a half shekel, Ex. 30 : 13, 15. The poverty of the people caused the tax to be reduced in Nehemiah's time to one third of a shekel, Neh. 10 : 32. In New Testament times it again became a half shekel, equal to the *didrachma*, the Greek word rendered "tribute" in the Authorized Version and "half shekel" in the Revised Version. This tribute could not be enforced by civil law ; it was voluntary tribute, which gives added significance to the Lord's question to Peter. The value of the *drachma* was about twenty cents, hence the *didrachma* or half shekel was about forty cents.

27. cast a hook] This is the only mention of fishing with a hook in the New Testament. The "piece of money," or "shekel" as the Revised Version reads, is literally a "stater." The gold stater was worth about five to six dollars. But the temple tax for Peter and Jesus would be only four drachmas, or about seventy-five to eighty cents. This silver *stater* taken from the mouth of the fish was equal in value to four drachmas. Hence it was exactly the amount needed. This was to be paid. Jesus would not have

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23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he 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 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?

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 a hook, and 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.

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23 delivered up into the hands of men; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised up. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received the <sup>1</sup>half-shekel came to Peter, and said, Doth not your

25 <sup>2</sup>master pay the <sup>1</sup>half-shekel? He saith, Yea. And when he came into the house, Jesus spake first to him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? the kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute? from their sons, or from stran-

26 gers? And when he said, From strangers, Jesus said unto him, Therefore the sons

27 are free. But, lest we cause them to stumble, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a <sup>3</sup>shekel: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *didrachma*.

<sup>2</sup>Or, *teacher*

<sup>3</sup>Gr. *stater*.

even the scribes suppose that he despised the temple or its worship. He would not needlessly wound their consciences in this matter. In non-essentials he would yield, for peace, and not insist upon his rights. For Christ, the Messiah, Matt. 16:16, was King of the temple, and not subject to the customary temple tax. The tribute was gathered by messengers (Hebrew *shelilim*) who went out in the spring, visiting each town or district at an appointed time. Probably at the time fixed for Capernaum Jesus was away from the city. The urgent demand upon Peter implies some apparent neglect to pay, as the collectors supposed.

Peter was directed to take the *stater* from the fish's mouth and pay the tax for himself and his Master, literally, "instead of me and thee." The payment was regarded as a redemption of the person paying it, Ex. 30:12. Here is unexpected proof of the precision of the evangelist. The *didrachma* as a coin had fallen into disuse, and the *stater*, the Greek term used by Matthew, had taken its place; it was the exact equivalent of the shekel.

Peter, no doubt, promptly obeyed his Master, caught the fish and paid the tax, though no record is made of it. Had it not been done, the scribes would have been sure to charge this against Jesus. It would teach Peter and the others a lesson, not to expect to be exempt from bearing a share in the support of the services of the sanctuary.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Sense of misery may bring men to Christ. 2. Parents may bring their children to Jesus to be healed of sin and of the works of the devil. 3. Christ will help us even in our partial faith, or unbelief. 4. Faith can remove all obstacles in Christian work. 5. The sanctuary worship is to be sustained, even though the worship may be imperfect.

CHAP. XVIII. CHRIST'S CARE FOR HIS LITTLE ONES. vs. 1-20. Mark 9:33-48; Luke 9:46-48; 15:3-7; 17:3, 4.

CAPERNAUM, A.D. 29.

*Analysis.*—Greatest and least in the kingdom, vs. 1-4 (Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48); Christ's little ones, vs. 5, 6; offences, vs. 7-9; parable of the lost sheep, vs. 10-14; forgiveness of an erring brother, vs. 15-20.

1. Who is the greatest] or, literally, "Who then is greater in the kingdom of the heavens?" Compare the Revised Version. "At the same time," or "in that hour," refers to the time when Jesus was having that conversation with Peter about the temple tax. The disciples had disputed who should be the greater in the kingdom of heaven, that is, the new kingdom of their Master. Jesus knew of it, asked them about it, as Mark says, and then they referred the matter finally to Jesus, as Matthew states. This question is the key to the teaching of Jesus which follows in the chapter.

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XVIII.—At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

REVISED VERSION.

18 In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is <sup>1</sup>greatest in

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *greater*.

**2. called a little child]** Here Jesus gives the twelve an "object lesson" on humility. The "object" is a child. An old tradition says the little one was Ignatius, afterward bishop of Antioch. But the tradition is not trustworthy. The instruction was given in the house. The house may have been Peter's. The child may have been his too. See Mark 9: 33-36.

**3. be converted]** literally, "except ye be turned"—see Acts 7: 39, 42—from your unholy ambition and from your sin, and become child-like, teachable, and get a moral disposition as innocent and simple-hearted as young children, you will never get into the kingdom; much less become greatest or great in that kingdom. With your ambitious spirit you cannot enter this kingdom. Moreover, the whole tenor of this teaching implies that hierarchical domination could have no place among the members of Christ's kingdom.

**4. humble himself as this little child]** The most child-like, unassuming character will be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And receiving such a child-like Christian for Christ's sake, Christ will reward as if he had himself been received. An old writer remarks, "the little child does not humble himself; he is humble." But man has to "humble himself." The humblest is the greatest. Here is a marvellous Christian paradox in respect to rank. The greatest descends upward! Chrysostom supposes it was a very young child, free from the mania for glory. An old tradition says the child was the afterwards famous Ignatius of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom in Rome about A.D. 107. But this story is not well supported.

**6. a millstone]** Offending such child-like and Christ-like character would be so severely punished that it would be a gain to such an offender if he were drowned in the sea, with a large millstone (which only an ass or animal could turn) hanging about his neck. This form of punishment was not Jewish. It was known in Greece and Rome, as a swifter penalty for crime than death by the cross. Jerome states that it was practiced in Galilee by the Romans.

**7. Woe unto the world . . . offences!]** There would be obstacles, stumbling-blocks to the faith of Christ's weak ones, in the world. But woe

COMMON VERSION.

2 And Jesus 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 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 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 be that offences come;

REVISED VERSION.

2 the kingdom of heaven? And he called to him a little child, and set him in the

3 midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into

4 the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the <sup>1</sup>greatest in the

5 kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name

6 receiveth me: but whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that <sup>2</sup>a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in

7 the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it

<sup>1</sup> Gr. greater.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. a millstone turned by an ass.

is pronounced upon those who willfully or carelessly are the cause or the occasion for such stumbling. On verses 8 and 9, see notes under 5: 29, 30.

**10. that ye despise not one of these]** One almost thinks he sees a contemptuous smile on the faces of some of the disciples as they looked at the child to which Jesus pointed while giving them this "object lesson." Soon after the disciples rebuked those bringing little children to Jesus. This shows their low notions on training children. So Jesus rebukes their spirit, and warns them against undervaluing the child-like, the weak, the ignorant, who have friends in heaven. They have powerful angel guardians there. On the idea of guardian angels, compare Ps. 34:7; 91:11; Heb. 1:14 and Luke 15:7; 16:22; John 20:12.

**11. come to save]** This verse is omitted in the Revised Version and in many old MSS. of this Gospel. The same words are found in another connection in Luke 19:10, where there is no question of their genuineness.

**12. a hundred sheep, and one . . . be gone astray]** This parable appears in another connection in Luke 15:3-7. It is quite natural and probable to suppose that Jesus used the same illustration on more than one occasion. Here the shepherd seeks the lost sheep in the mountains; in Luke he leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderness. But the slight variations are unimportant. It is a fine picture of eastern shepherd life. The shepherd has his flock feeding on the hills. He misses a sheep. He leaves the flock, that is comparatively safe, and seeks the lost. If it comes to pass that he finds it, his joy is greater of finding the lost one than over the ninety-nine. The meaning is that God's pity and love go out for these "little ones," "erring ones," "lost ones," and his grace specially seeks them, not wishing them to perish. God's care for these little ones then being so great, you should take heed not to offend or despise them. The connection here would imply that the one spiritually astray was a member of the flock. But in Luke

COMMON VERSION.

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 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 Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 How think ye? if a man have a 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 astray?

REVISED VERSION.

must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh! And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the <sup>1</sup>hell of fire. See 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 who is in <sup>2</sup>heaven.<sup>2</sup> How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray?

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *Gehenna* of fire. <sup>2</sup>Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11 *For the Son of man came to save that which was lost.* See Luke 19:10.

our Lord makes a broader application of it to a sinner, not before in the flock.

15. if thy brother shall trespass] "And if thy brother sin against thee," see Revised Version. The connection is: you must not despise one of these little ones, and if one of them, as your brother, sin against you, then you are to tell him his fault alone. The fault supposed is a private and personal one; so it is to be brought to his conscience by a private interview between the offender and the offended alone. If that private admonition is successful, you have gained a brother—not merely gained him as a friend, but saved him from being lost by his sin; gained him for the kingdom of heaven. The rabbins required an offender to seek forgiveness by owning his fault. If he could not obtain it by going alone, he was to take others with him. But Jesus requires the one who suffers the wrong to show his humility by his kind and patient love in seeking to reclaim the wrongdoer.

16. take . . . one or two more] If you fail in the private admonition, then take one or two members of the kingdom, as advisers and witnesses, and try as before to win him from his error. This is in accord with the old law. Lev. 19: 17; Deut. 19: 15. See also 1 Cor. 6: 5.

17. tell it unto the church] If still the offender refuses to listen to admonition, then tell it to the Church, the "*ecclesia*," literally and accurately, to the "congregation;" not Jewish but Christian, whether general or local, formally organized or merely an assembly of believers. Even Alford concedes that this cannot mean the Church represented by a hierarchy or rulers. See verses 19, 20. If the offender refuses to listen to the admonition of the "congregation," then you are to cease fellowship with him. This is not the *institution* of excommunication; it is rather the principle from which excommunication may be deduced and on which it may be founded. You are to treat the offender as you would any non-member of the kingdom, or any sinner. He is unworthy of your Christian fellowship.

18. Whatsoever ye shall bind] Here the "power of the keys," which

COMMON VERSION.

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.

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 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 church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye

REVISED VERSION.

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not

14 gone astray. Even so it is not <sup>1</sup>the will of <sup>2</sup>your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 And if thy brother sin <sup>3</sup>against thee, go, shew him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast

16 gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three

17 every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the

18 church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican. Verily I say unto you, What things soever ye shall

<sup>1</sup>Gr. a thing willed before your Father. <sup>2</sup>Some ancient authorities read *my*. <sup>3</sup>Some ancient authorities omit *against thee*. <sup>4</sup>Or, *congregation*



had been conferred on Peter, 16:19, is now conferred on the twelve, or, more widely, on "the disciples"—all members of the "kingdom of heaven." That the power is the same is evident from the similarity of expression. See notes under 16:19.

**19. if two of you shall agree]** As proof that you shall have this power of binding and loosing, of spiritual discipline in the new society of believers, I give you a further promise. If any two of you truly mine will agree to make any request of God, he will grant it. Of course, spiritual conditions are understood. For spiritual children, like all true children, will ask in accord with the will and for the glory of the divine Father. These are the only limitations. The promise is unlimited along all the lines of spiritual needs. Geikie limits this to discipline in the Church, but the language makes no such limitation. It includes discipline, and whatever grows out of associated Christian life. See Acts 4:31; 12:5, 16. For the promise is that where the two are together in Christ's name, he also is there. So wherever there are two such souls, there are three persons. The divine Presence sanctions the gathering. The "power of the keys" is there. Where Christ and two disciples are, there is a Christian church.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. "Primacy in the kingdom of heaven belongs to obscure children."—*Lange*. 2. "He who is lowest in his own eyes, and in those of the world, is greatest before God."—*Zeisius*. 3. Training children must give joy to angels. 4. Private offences should be privately rebuked. 5. Not numbers, but the presence of Christ, gives power to the Church. 6. Christians are not to fellowship incorrigible offenders. 7. Unity and prayer among Christians bring Christ and all the power of heaven to their help.

**FORGIVENESS. vs. 21-35. Luke 17:1-4.**

CAPERNAUM, A.D. 29.

*Topics.*—Peter's question, How oft forgive? vs. 21, 22. Parable of the king's servants, vs. 23-35.

**21. Lord, how oft shall . . . I forgive]** Peter seems to have been troubled over the command in v. 15. The rabbins said one must ask forgiveness three times, but need not ask it a fourth time. Peter had gained an idea that Jesus requires more than they, so he fixes upon the sacred or complete number seven, and asks if he must forgive his brother seven times.

**COMMON VERSION.**

shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed 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.

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

**REVISED VERSION.**

bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 Then came Peter, and said unto him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?

22. Jesus saith . . . Until seventy times seven] Peter wished to find the limit to this duty, being sure there must be a limit somewhere. The answer implies that there is no limit; for, as Chrysostom says, Jesus does not here intend to imply a limited number, but that the number of times a brother must be forgiven is unlimited. Forgiveness is to be continuous and everlasting. Compare Luke 17: 4; Mark 11: 25; Matt. 6: 14.

23. a certain king] This parable of the "unmerciful," or more accurately "the unforgiving, servant" enforces the duty of having always a forgiving mind. In the parable, the king represents God, the servants mankind, the debt to the king our sin against God, the debt between the fellow servants our wrong against each other; the reckoning is not the final judgment, but the law of God brought home to the conscience and convicting of sin. Some points in the parallel must not be pressed too closely.

24. begun to reckon] It is a graphic picture of an Oriental court. The king had not gone far in settling with his servants. Such reckoning with farmers of taxes and other officials was common. The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a "certain king," literally "a human king," so unlike to the heavenly King that only a few acts of the former bear any resemblance to those of the latter. Among the first brought before him is a prominent servant, perhaps a revenue collector, or governor of some province, who owed ten thousand talents. If the silver Attic talent was meant, the sum would be from ten to twelve millions of dollars. The Syrian talent would be smaller, but the gold talent a much larger sum. The ten thousand talents owed may suggest the ten commandments which the sinner ought to have kept.

25. to be sold] The picture, remember, is of a heathen court. Yet the Mosaic law allowed a debtor and his family to be sold. Lev. 25: 39-41; Deut. 15: 12; 2 Kings 4: 1. The debt for an ordinary citizen would be hopeless. If he were an under officer or governor, the promise of payment might be made with some possibility of meeting it. But it is clear this debtor had not before realized the immense sum he owed. He may have pleaded for time, and made extravagant promises, as is common in eastern courts to this day.

## COMMON VERSION.

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 ¶ Therefore is 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 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

<sup>1</sup>Or, seventy times and seven <sup>2</sup>Gr. bondservants.

£240. <sup>4</sup>Gr. bondservant.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until <sup>1</sup>seventy

23 times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would make a reckoning with his

24 <sup>2</sup>servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, who

25 owed him ten thousand <sup>3</sup>talents. But forasmuch as he had not *wherewith* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that

26 he had, and payment to be made. The <sup>4</sup>servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And

27 the lord of that <sup>4</sup>servant, being moved

<sup>3</sup>This talent was probably worth about

28. Pay . . . that thou owest] or "pay what thou owest." The "hundred pence" is literally "hundred *denarii*." A denarius was equal to 15 cents. So the sum owed was equal to about \$15. This he wished paid at once; such arbitrary and forcible collection being common in eastern life. This servant makes precisely the same plea which the other had made to his king. The king granted the request. The forgiven servant refused to forgive or to grant any time for payment of the debt due him.

30. cast him into prison] Usually imprisonment in the East was temporary; yet it was sometimes extended to years for debt. The master had ordered the servant and his family to be sold into slavery. The servant casts his fellow servant into prison. Now the master spares the family, but hands the unforgiving servant to the tormentors.

34. his lord was] Having been forgiven, the servant refused to forgive; so he is called up for rebuke and judgment. God's promise of forgiveness is based on our forgiving our fellow men. See 6: 14, 15; James 2: 13. The debt is remitted on the implied condition that he will be forgiving. Violating this condition, the debt declared forgiven holds against the debtor. The main point which the parable is meant to enforce must be kept in sight. It is that there is no more limit to the forgiveness we are to grant to a fellow man than there is to the forgiveness we seek from God. The forgiving spirit must be as continual in us as our desire for forgiveness. We may be also reminded of the immensity of our debt to God, as compared with the insignificance of that which any person can owe to us.

35. if ye from your hearts forgive not] So God will not forgive

## COMMON VERSION.

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 a hundred 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, until he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow servants 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 Shouldest not thou also have had 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

with compassion, released him, and for-  
28 gave him the <sup>1</sup>debt. But that <sup>2</sup>servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a hundred <sup>3</sup>shillings: and he laid hold on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay what thou  
29 owest. So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience  
30 with me, and I will pay thee. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was  
31 due. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto their lord  
32 all that was done. Then his lord called him unto him, and saith to him, Thou wicked <sup>2</sup>servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me:  
33 shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had  
34 mercy on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was  
35 due. So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *loan*. <sup>2</sup>Gr. *bondservant*. <sup>3</sup>The word in the Greek denotes a coin worth about eight pence halfpenny.

us, unless we truly forgive others. This is the main point, and is in harmony with Matt. 6: 14, 15. The parable cannot safely be pressed to teach more. God is ready to forgive; but upon condition that we imitate him by having a forgiving spirit.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. We ought never to have an unforgiving spirit. 2. Sin is the debt we owe to God. 3. It is so great a debt that we will never be able to pay it. 4. The pardon of sin is due to God's grace. 5. Because we have received forgiveness we should be ready to forgive. 6. We must forgive from the heart. 7. If we do not thus forgive, we cannot hope to be forgiven of God.

CHAP. XIX. JESUS ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY. VS. 1-15. Mark 10: 1-16.

PERÆA, A.D. 30.

*Analysis.*—Jesus leaves Galilee, v. 1: on divorce and marriage, vs. 2-12; children brought to Jesus, vs. 13-15.

CONNECTION OF EVENTS.—Jesus left Galilee when he had finished his discourse on forgiveness. Matthew notes that he went into Peræa, on the east of Jordan, and was followed by great multitudes. He did many miracles of healing. But were these successive acts which Matthew mentions, without other intervening events? The narratives here and in Luke 9: 51 to 17: 11, and in John 7: 8 to 11: 54, are very difficult for the harmonists. Many of them suppose that here vs. 1, 2 cover several months of our Lord's ministry, the particulars of which are to be learned from the above passages in Luke and John. According to Robinson, Jesus sent out the seventy from Capernaum; went himself through Samaria to Jerusalem to the feast of tabernacles; the seventy return to him there; he retires beyond Jordan; returns and raises Lazarus; again retires to Ephraim and Peræa, where the teachings and incidents in Luke 13: 10 to 18: 14 took place, followed by this instruction on marriage and the family. Matt. 19: 1-15 and Mark 10: 2-12.

1. came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan] Some understand by this that Jesus came into *Judæa* by way of Peræa, avoiding Samaria. So the Cambridge Bible interprets it. But it is more consistent with the language of Matthew to understand that Jesus came into *Peræa*, on the coast or borders of Judæa. So Matthew says he went into the borders of Tyre, 15: 21. This account omits his visits to Jerusalem and to Bethany to raise Lazarus.

3. Is it lawful . . . to put away his wife for every cause?] Mark omits "for every cause." The question was intended as a trap to catch Jesus.

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XIX.—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.

3 ¶ The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it

REVISED VERSION.

19 And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words, he departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of 2 Judæa beyond Jordan; and great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

3 And there came unto him 1 Pharisees,

<sup>1</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, insert *the*.

John the Baptist had offended Herod Antipas on this point, and was finally beheaded. Jesus was now in Herod's dominion. The Mosaic law said a man might divorce his wife if "he hath found some uncleanness in her," or, as the Revised Version reads, "hath found some unseemly thing in her." Deut. 24:1-3. What did this mean? The school of Hillel said it allowed divorce for any cause, at the judgment or discretion of the man. The school of Shammai held that it allowed divorce in the case of adultery only. In Greece and Rome a man might dismiss his wife at his pleasure, without any judicial decree. So Cicero dismissed Terentia, who had been his wife for thirty years, and Cato gave his wife to a friend.

**4. Have ye not read . . . at the beginning]** Mark tells us that when the question was asked, Jesus answered by asking what Moses commanded. They tell him. He then points them to this earlier law as evidence that Moses did not *command*, but merely *permitted*, this putting away of a wife, because of the low state of morals and the wickedness of those times. See v. 8.

**5. shall be one flesh]** In the beginning God created mankind, male and female. This relation of man and wife was as important as, and at maturity took precedence over, that of child and parent; for the twain shall be one in all earthly relations and in life. Thus the tie cannot be broken during life. Only death can sunder it; it is of divine appointment. See *People's Commentary on Mark*, 10:1-12.

**7. Why did Moses then command]** They are not satisfied. They see a good opportunity for bringing Jesus into collision with Moses. Jesus answers in substance, Moses did not *command*, he *suffered*; that is, he threw upon you the responsibility of sundering this tie, because of your bad hearts. It was not the highest moral rule; it was the best you would be likely to respect. This is a great principle. Laws may be relatively, not absolutely, good. This is still in many directions true. Public interpretations of the law of marriage in this Christian land are frequently about as lax as those of the school of Hillel. We have yet to learn the law of Christ on this subject.

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

trying him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who <sup>1</sup>made *them* from the beginning made them male and female,

5 and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become

6 one flesh? So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore

7 God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the begin-

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *created*.

9. Whosoever shall put away his wife] Compare 5: 31, 32. The Greek word for fornication is a derivative of a common word that stands for harlot or prostitute. So Milton, who held lax ideas on divorce, holds that "fornication meant the common prostitution of the body for sale." His definition of this, which is no doubt the correct one, makes the rule respecting divorce more strict than is commonly stated by evangelical writers. From this it seems that Jesus recognized adultery in its worst form only as a ground of divorce. This was the law for the disciple. No man could marry a woman put away for any other cause than fornication, without committing adultery. And no man who has put away his wife for any other cause can marry again without committing adultery. This is the law of marriage and the family for any and every Christian community. There is no reservation, legal or mental, in Christ's rule.

10. If . . . so . . . it is not good to marry] If a man is bound so indissolubly to a wife, said the disciples, it is no gain to marry. The school of Hillel seems to have been more popular than the stricter one of Shammai. The former held that a man might put away his wife if she spoiled or burned his dinner. So Milton, who wanted to divorce his wife, reasoned that it was a great hardship for a man to be bound to a wife who had become repugnant to him. And men now prefer to interpret the law of divorce so as to please their tastes, passions or desires. The number of divorces granted in American courts, and the number of trivial causes upon which they are often obtained, ought to be a burning disgrace to any decent heathen country. The disciples jumped to the opposite extreme, that it might be better to reject marriage, or not to marry, if the marriage tie was so strong. But Jesus at once points out the difficulty and the danger of such a position. Only a few could follow such advice as theirs and keep pure.

12. eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake] The Greek for "eunuch" means literally a "bed-keeper." Such persons were chiefly employed as house-servants in eastern harems and by dignitaries of the court. In this verse Jesus appears to use the word eunuch in a broad sense to in-

COMMON VERSION.

9 And I say 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.

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 them, All men cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born 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*.

REVISED VERSION.

9 ning it hath not been so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, <sup>1</sup>except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: <sup>2</sup>and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery. The disciples say unto him, If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, but <sup>12</sup>they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, that were so born from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, that were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, that made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities read *saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress*: as in ch. 5: 32. <sup>2</sup>The following words, to the end of the verse, are omitted by some ancient authorities.

clude all those who are unfit for the married state, and also those who master the desire so that they may be fairly counted spiritually incapable of being conquered by carnal desire. There are three classes: (1) those born incapable of the marriage state; (2) those who are made so by misfortune and by wicked men; (3) those who deliberately choose this condition for some higher ends. The word then does not necessarily imply a condition of natural unfitness for the marriage state. Paul voluntarily chose to remain unmarried. He treats this question in 1 Cor. 7. But he there says he gives merely his own opinion, not a specific command from the Lord. Though his teaching implies that in certain conditions of society, as in times of persecution and trial in the Church, celibacy may be advantageous, yet it is not the rule. Marriage is the rule, celibacy the exception. There is no warrant for imposing celibacy upon a whole class of persons. There is no good ground for the Roman Catholic doctrine of enforced celibacy of their priests. Some of the apostles we know were married, as Peter and others (1 Cor. 9: 5), and marriage is used in Scripture as a symbol of Christ's union with the Church. Rev. 19: 7-9.

**13. brought unto him little children]** They were too small to come of themselves, so they were brought, carried, to Jesus. Luke says they were "infants," or "babes." They were brought, not to be healed, but to be blessed. The Jews and others in the East were in the habit of carrying their children to holy men, great rabbis, to be blessed. The blessing was usually bestowed by placing the hands upon them and praying for a blessing to come upon them. The disciples were unwilling to have their Master bothered with children. He had work enough with adults. So when modern Sunday-schools were first proposed some good men opposed them.

**14. Suffer [the] little children]** Jesus welcomed the children. He commanded his disciples to give an easy road for the children to come. The reason annexed is, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Some say this means only that those who are child-like Christians get into this kingdom. This is the point emphasized in Mark 10: 15 and Luke 18: 17.

But that truth is there apparently a corollary or inference from the preceding statement, which is the same as here in Matthew. There is no serious question in respect to the inferential truth; the great point is to know what was the primal truth intended. This turns upon the force of the last clause.

**of such is the kingdom of heaven]** Does this mean that "little children" are the "kingdom of heaven"? The answer turns partly upon the meaning of "such." The Greek word is *τοιούτων* = *toiouton*, which in classic

## COMMON VERSION.

13 ¶ Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

## REVISED VERSION.

13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray; and the disciples

14 rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for <sup>1</sup> to such belongeth

<sup>1</sup> Or, of such is

speech signifies "of this kind" or "this sort." It is frequently so used in the New Testament. Paul uses it to designate persons of the same character or class, thus: "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly," 1 Cor. 15: 48. Referring to those who questioned his apostolic authority, he adds: "Let such a one reckon this," etc., 2 Cor. 10: 11, R. V. It is applied to a *class* of deeds, "who judgest them that practice such things," Rom. 2: 3, R. V. Once it is rendered "like," but there it designates persons of the same class or occupation, "with the workmen of like [the same] occupation," Acts 19: 25. It is quite clear that the strict grammatical sense demands that this clause here be understood to include all comprised by the term "little children." They are of the "kingdom."

To suppose that it means those who are *like* children merely, is to narrow and limit the clear sense of Christ's words. It would make him say in effect, as Morrison has keenly suggested, "Hinder not these little ones from coming unto me. True, I am training adults only. My kingdom is no place for children; it has no real little children in it; only such as are and act *like* children. I have no special favors for little children. Yet they are innocent little things, and serve as a mirror to reflect the character of those who are my true subjects, and so I am pleased with them!" What bitter irony would this have been to loving mothers! It is impossible to believe the Saviour meant this. He loved little children, because they were of his kingdom; belonged to it; were in it. Little children at death would not be shut out of heaven; they would not be snatched away of the devil to become his companions. They would still be Christ's, taken into his arms!

Note further the term "kingdom of heaven," Matthew's familiar phrase. Mark and Luke say "kingdom of God," the more common phrase with them. But neither evangelist says "of the church." The "kingdom of heaven" and "the church" are not identical terms in the Gospels. The "kingdom of heaven" and "the kingdom of God" designate the true body of Christ, whether on earth or in heaven. The "church," Greek *ecclesia* or "assembly," designates usually the congregation of Christ's professed followers on earth, the outward organization. It is the "kingdom" Christ came to set up; over it he is Messiah, the anointed King. Of that realm are little children, so he distinctly declares. This is the truth, and the only truth, presented here by Matthew. Elsewhere he notices that Jesus taught the other truth, that Mark and Luke declare was inferred from the first important statement. When the disciples were having an unseemly dispute about which should be the greatest, Matthew points out the other phase of this doctrine, Matt. 18: 1-3. Therefore we conclude the Saviour taught both views. There may be multitudes of children lost in Adam, but saved in Christ, who were born with a sinful nature, yet never lived to years of accountability, and so never became sinners by their own conscious act. (See "belongeth" in the Revised Version.) Jesus lays down a plain rule, intending to impress on us the importance of bringing children to him. We are to use every known and warranted means of grace in the home, Sunday-school and church to this end. It was no



superstitious act, for Jesus laid his hands on them. He granted their wish; he blessed them.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The family was founded at the creation. 2. The law at the beginning was one wife for one man. 3. The law at the beginning gave no sanction for easy divorce. 4. The purity and stability of the family need to be preserved. 5. The family is the rule, the single state the exception, in God's plan. 6. In either state chastity and purity are required. 7. We may glorify Christ by bringing children to him. 8. Christ is tender toward the young. 9. Christ blesses children.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN. vs. 16-26. Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27.

PEREA, A.D. 30.

*Analysis.*—The rich young man's question, vs. 16-22; disadvantages of riches, vs. 23-26.

This event is narrated by three evangelists. The account of Mark is more full than the others; yet Matthew almost equals Mark in fullness of detail.

16. that I may have eternal life] Luke tells us the young man was a ruler, and Mark that he came "running and kneeling" in his earnestness. He was evidently a moral young man. He was in the synagogue—a ruler. He was rich. He had leisure for thought. He could have given himself to worldly enjoyment. His conscience was not satisfied. He longed for something better than his wealth and his membership in the Jewish Church; so he hastens to Jesus with the great question, "What shall I do?"

17. keep the commandments] Jesus perceives that the young ruler wants to *merit* the kingdom; to do something to inherit eternal life—that is, receive it as of right, not of grace. So he tells him, "keep the commandments," given by the good One. See the Revised Version. With an air of surprise at the simplicity of the answer, he asks, "Which?" He would know to what class of the many commandments enjoined by the rabbins, and to which one, our Lord referred. Jesus puts first in his reply, duties to our neighbor. He cites the substance of the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth commandments; he omits the tenth, relating to covetousness and hoarding wealth. He then adds the fifth, and a summary of the second table. This looked fair and reasonable to the moral young man.

COMMON VERSION.

15 And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

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 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,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher* <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *Good Master*. See Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18.

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read *Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God*. See Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19.

REVISED VERSION.

15 the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

16 And behold, one came to him and said,

12 Master, what good thing shall I do,

17 that I may have eternal life? And he

said unto him, <sup>3</sup>Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? One there

is who is good: but if thou wouldst enter

18 into life, keep the commandments. He

said unto him, Which? And Jesus said,

Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not com-

mit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou

20. All these . . . have I . . . what lack I yet?] These are not new. I have tried to find peace by observing all these. In what do I fall behind yet? I seem to lack something. The words "from my youth up" are omitted here in the Revised Version. They are found in two other Gospels, where they are undoubtedly genuine.

21. sell . . . give to the poor . . . come . . . follow me] The young man made a frank statement. He followed it by a second honest question. He was a candid inquirer. Mark adds that Jesus having looked upon him loved him. In kind, loving tones he said, "one thing thou lackest." If you really wish to be perfect, complete within the kingdom of heaven, sell all you have. Put aside love of wealth, covetousness—keep the tenth commandment. Show that you have the spirit the commandment requires, by giving all you possess to the poor. Then you can have some treasure in heaven. Come, follow me. As my disciple, you will learn further what it is to gain eternal life. The test was a severe one. The seeker had discovered the hid treasure. He could not decide to part with his all to buy. The young man was a legalist. He wanted to *earn* a right to the kingdom. So Jesus put the test in this legal form, to reach his conscience. All we have is to be held subject to Christ. He is to be supreme over all and in our hearts.

22. he went away sorrowful: for . . . great possessions] Poor, rich, moral young man! He wanted eternal life; but he wanted his wealth more. He was very rich. It was not the greatness of his possessions, but the greatness of his love for them, that drove him from Christ. Wealth was the real idol—the god in his heart. He was moral. His life was all right up to this point, so far as tested. Jesus does not question his assertions. Here, between Christ and Mammon, he failed. He did not then choose Christ. Did he ever do it? We are not told. From the words of Jesus that follow, his case seems about hopeless.

24. easier for a camel] The difficulty is not in riches of themselves, but in a man of wealth being able to keep his riches from gaining and holding the supreme place in his heart and life. The proverb here used

## COMMON VERSION.

19 Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt 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 *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.

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 the kingdom of God.

## REVISED VERSION.

19 shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt

20 love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I observed: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure

22 in heaven: and come, follow me. But when the young man heard the saying, he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.

23 And Jesus said unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom

by our Lord pictures it as quite impossible naturally for a rich man to get into the kingdom. This proverb has been weakened by various untenable views, as—(1) that the reading should be *κάμυλον*, cable, for *κάμηλον*, camel; (2) that a small gate by or in the large gate of a city was called the “needle’s eye.” Through this small gate foot-passengers entered a city, and it is supposed a camel stripped of all burdens might squeeze through it. The text and the facts are against both these views, and favor the literal sense. A similar proverb is found in the Talmud: a man even dreaming did not see an elephant pass through the eye of a needle. The Latins had a like saying, and the Koran also has it. Compare “swallow a camel,” in 23: 24.

**25. Who then can be saved?** If this is the case with the rich, how can any of us be saved? We all have some worldly possessions. If this ruler of the synagogue, who seems learned and candid, and has been prudent and provident, not wasting his wealth, finds it so utterly impossible to gain eternal life, how can we common fishermen ever hope to be saved, with our worldly possessions? Jesus answers in substance, You cannot be saved on your plan. Salvation is not of man. The grace of God is needed to save any soul. Any man burdened with worldly things cannot get into the kingdom as easily as a camel could get through the eye of a needle. But God can help him to throw away his worldliness, God can give him spiritual life. So God opens the kingdom and enables souls to enter it.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The moral young man wants to be saved by his “doing.” 2. If man could earn or merit salvation, why was not the young ruler saved? 3. Obedience to commandments does not give peace of conscience. 4. There is one thing needful yet. 5. To leave Christ for Mammon does not give joy, but sorrow. 6. Great riches are a great danger. 7. If man were naturally holy, riches might be less dangerous; but it is because man is not holy that riches are one of the greatest obstacles to salvation.

**THE DISCIPLES’ REWARD AND PARABLE OF THE LABORERS.** 19: 27-30 AND 20: 1-16. Compare Mark 10: 28-31; Luke 18: 28-30.

PERÆA, A. D. 30.

*Analysis.*—The reward of disciples, 19: 28-30; the laborers in the vineyard, 20: 1-16. The parable of the laborers is related by Matthew only.

**27. what shall we have]** The disciples were troubled. The rich young man, a ruler in the synagogue, had gone away sorrowful. Possessions are a great obstacle to those wishing to enter the kingdom. It is difficult for the rich to get in. All might fail of eternal life if the conditions

COMMON VERSION.

25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

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 therefore?

REVISED VERSION.

25 of God. And when the disciples heard it, they were astonished exceedingly, saying, 26 Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon *them* said to them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are 27 possible. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have?

were so strict. So Peter asks a definite personal question on this point. We have left all. They did not have great possessions, but what they had they left. No man can forsake more than his all. What reward shall we have? This looked like expecting some equivalent for what they had given up. It had a mercenary air; making the best bargain; getting heaven on merit, not by grace. Yet Jesus first assures them that all sacrifice for him will be duly rewarded. Next he shows by the parable that the reward is not measured solely by the sacrifice, nor by the length of service, but by the will and grace of the giver.

28. *ye . . . in the regeneration*] "Ye" refers to the apostles. "In the regeneration" means literally "in the re-becoming," the renovation, Titus 3:5, the restitution, Matt. 17:11, when the new kingdom would be established. This would be set up in time. At the end of this work, when the Son of man should appear in glory, the disciples should share in that glory and in the work of judging. See Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 6:2. "The twelve tribes of Israel" can scarcely be taken literally and limited to the Jewish nation. It is better to take them in the wider sense of all the Israel of God, all claiming to be of Israel, under the old and under the new dispensation. Matthias or Paul might take the place of Judas to make the twelve complete.

29. *every one that hath forsaken*] or left. Seven things are named (an eighth in the Common Version also) as representing all kinds of sacrifices for Christ's sake. The promise is without limitation to all making these sacrifices. This "forsaking" is not to be urged as authority for unrighteously neglecting aged parents, or those dependent on us for daily bread. Nor does it imply that we are to rush into a convent or nunnery. The apostles had left their chances of worldly gain, the comforts and ease of home, for Christ's work. There is no evidence that any of them left any dependent upon them in a starving or helpless condition. They sacrificed their own comfort, their personal pleasure, to follow Jesus.

*shall receive a hundredfold*] Mark adds "in this time"; and some copies read "manifold" for "a hundredfold." The promise evidently refers to rewards in this life and in the next. It would be absurd to take it in the strictest literal sense, since no one would think of having a hundred mothers or a hundred fathers. Yet there is a sense in which it is true. When one

## COMMON VERSION.

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 every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many *that are first* shall be last; and the last *shall be first*.

## REVISED VERSION.

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the

29 twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother,<sup>1</sup> or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive<sup>2</sup> a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal

30 life. But many shall be last *that are first*; and first *that are last*.

<sup>1</sup>Many ancient authorities add *or wife*: as in Luke 18:29. <sup>2</sup>Some ancient authorities read *manifold*.

comes into the new kingdom, his spiritual sympathies multiply his relationships. He has new eyes. The earth is new. He has new homes, fields, friends, joys, possessions. His spiritual renewal brings manifold experiences. His love and joy in his earthly relationships are immeasurably increased. So this promise has a literal fulfillment.

**20: 1.** *Parable of the laborers.* Of this parable Trench says it "stands only second to that of the unjust steward in the number of explanations . . . if indeed second in the difficulties which it presents." The difficulties are—1. To harmonize it with the proverb which introduces it, 19: 30, and also ends it, 20: 16. 2. How the murmurers of v. 11 can be regarded as in the kingdom. The same difficulty is found in the elder brother of the parable of the prodigal son. 3. If they are *not* regarded as members of the kingdom, why should they have labored all day, and have borne away their reward? 4. What is the main lesson of the parable?

Let us begin with the last difficulty. As Dean Mansel judiciously observes, "if the parable taken by itself is beset with difficulties, the context by which it is introduced is comparatively plain." Interpret the parable by the context, not the context by the parable; for it is a safe rule to interpret the more difficult by the less difficult text. The parable is introduced by the proverb in 19: 30, and that was spoken to conclude the answer of Jesus to the question of Peter about the reward of the disciples, 19: 27-29. To illustrate his teaching on this subject, Jesus gives the parable. In substance he had said: 1. Those who have left all for my sake shall have a reward. 2. The forsaking all may sometimes be accompanied by such a spirit that not even the first to follow will gain a higher reward than others who come after them. (Notice the different order of the statements in 19: 30 in the Revised Version.) This is one point illustrated by the parable. Another is that the reward is of grace, not of merit.

**1. kingdom of heaven is like . . . a householder]** This parable is a graphic picture of eastern laboring life. The market-place by the gate is where all wishing employment would gather. The householder goes out to hire. The laborers are of the common class.

The "penny" here is the Latin *denarius*, a Roman coin named in twelve passages in the New Testament as: "an hundred pence," Matt. 18: 28; in this passage it is repeated four times; the tribute money to Cæsar was "a penny," Matt. 22: 19; Mark 12: 15; Luke 20: 24; "two hundred pennyworth of bread," Mark 6: 37; John 6: 7; "five hundred pence," Luke 7: 41; "two pence" to the host, Luke 10: 35; "a penny," Rev. 6: 6. The *denarius* was a silver coin worth about fifteen cents. It was a liberal pay for a day's labor, and the ordinary pay of a Roman soldier in those days. It was therefore not niggard, but fair and liberal wages for the work. He "agreed"

## COMMON VERSION.

**CHAP. XX.**—For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the labour-

## REVISED VERSION.

**20** For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that was a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had

with them for a denarius a day. The "third hour" would be about 9 o'clock A.M.

4. Go ye also into the vineyard] Only with the first did he make any definite agreement. All the others went to work trusting the honor of the householder as to the amount of their pay. To those engaged at the "third hour" he promises simply to give what is "right," literally what is "just" or "righteous." But to those engaged at the sixth, ninth and eleventh hours not even this promise is formally made; for the last clause of v. 7 is a doubtful reading, and is omitted in the Revised Version. As the third hour was about 9 A.M., the sixth hour would be 12 M., the ninth hour, 3 P.M., and the eleventh hour, 5 P.M. The day's labor would end at sunset, or about 6 P.M.

6. Why stand ye here all the day idle?] Whoever is not in the Lord's vineyard in some capacity is idle. Their answer is accepted as in a measure justifying them: "No man hath hired us." They knew not of any work. They had not heard of the Lord's vineyard, or of the need of work in it. This excuse might be a plea in a heathen, but not in a Christian, land. But the command to "go into the vineyard" often comes to persons in Christian lands late as well as early in life. Thus even this point has its application to those where the Church has been long established.

8. beginning from the last] This order of the householder to the steward in regard to payment also points to the main teaching of the parable. The last were to be paid first. They were paid the same amount as the first agreed to receive. When the eleventh-hour laborers were paid a denarius, the morning-hour laborers thought they would get more. But they also received only a denarius.

COMMON VERSION.

REVISED VERSION.

ers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

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 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; and they likewise received every man a penny.

agreed with the labourers for a <sup>1</sup>shilling a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing in the market-

4 place idle; and to them he said, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went

5 their way. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did like-

6 wise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he saith unto them, Why stand ye

7 here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vine-

8 yard. And when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and pay them their

9 hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were

10 hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a <sup>1</sup>shilling. And when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise

<sup>1</sup>See marginal note on ch. 18 : 28.

12. thou hast made them equal unto us] This is their grievance. They could not say that he had not kept his agreement. They were envious because the last had spent only one hour, while they had wrought through the burning heat of the whole day. If these last have earned a denarius, surely we have earned something more, they would say.

13. didst not thou agree with me] Again the point of the teaching comes out. Turning to the disciples he appears to say, You wanted to know just what you will have. Now see to what your spirit would bring you. These first laborers are to take their stipulated reward. Now learn that it is right for me to do what I will with my own. To one of the laborers the householder says, Are you envious because I am just? You consented to labor the whole day for a denarius. The others made no conditions. They trusted me to do what was right. Their reward is according to my will. So you see the last are first and the first last.

16. many be called, but few chosen] This clause is omitted in the Revised Version here. The same words are found after the parable of the wedding garment, where they have a closer application. If they are retained here, they are difficult to harmonize with the drift of the parable, but may mean that this envious, mercenary spirit, though not excluding persons from the "called" in the kingdom, would keep them from becoming the "chosen," those few who are "greater" in the kingdom. In the parable of the wedding garment they must be differently interpreted.

THE LESSONS.—The spiritual meaning and lessons of the parable chiefly turn on what is meant by the denarius. Some say it means—1. *Temporal* reward. So Luther, Stier, Nast and Wordsworth hold. But the pay did not come until work in the vineyard was done, not until the end of life here. 2. The denarius means *eternal* life. This was what the rich young man sought. It is the thought out of which the discourse on riches and this parable grew. It is the thought plainly stated in 19: 23, 29, which introduces it. So Origen, Augustine, Meyer and most modern commentators understand of denarius. It is objected that eternal life is a gift of grace, not pay for service. But it is called "a reward" here, as in many other passages: as, "great is your reward in heaven," 5: 12. And there is a reward

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

## REVISED VERSION.

11 received every man a shilling. And when they received it, they murmured

12 against the householder, saying, These last have spent but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat. But he answered and

said to one of them, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a

14 shilling? Take up that which is thine, and go thy way; it is my will to give

15 unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with

mine own? or is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and

the first last.

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on ch. 13: 28.

<sup>2</sup> Or, hot wind

of grace as well as of merit, as Schaff aptly says. To sum up then: the householder represents God; the steward, Christ; the vineyard, the kingdom of God on earth; the laborers represent those in the kingdom; the denarius, their reward. The main teaching is—1. That priority of entering service does not insure priority of reward. 2. The reward is not in proportion to the length of service. 3. Nor to the burdensome nature of that work. 4. Working *expecting* a reward for sacrifices and because of long service will place one last, not first, in the kingdom. 5. Entering at the last call, trusting the Master implicitly, may place one before those who entered first in a spirit which looked for so much pay for so much service. And lastly, 6. The highest reward is dependent on the will and grace of God.

TRUE AND FALSE GREATNESS, AND HEALING TWO BLIND MEN NEAR JERICHO. vs. 20 : 17-34. Mark 10 : 32-52; Luke 18 : 31-43.

*Analysis.*—Jesus going to Jerusalem, v. 17; a *third* time foretells his death, vs. 18, 19 (see 16 : 21; 17 : 23); ambitious request of the mother of Zebedee's sons, vs. 20-23; envy of the ten, v. 24; reproof by Jesus, vs. 25-28; healing two blind men, vs. 29-34.

17. Jesus going up to Jerusalem] All harmonists agree that this was the last journey of Jesus to Jerusalem. They do not agree upon the events preceding this. Some hold that between vs. 16 and 17 of this chapter the "abode beyond Jordan," the raising of Lazarus, and the retirement to the city of Ephraim occurred. John 10 : 40 to 11 : 54. Then followed a return to Peræa, and next this journey to Jerusalem. Robinson places the raising of Lazarus earlier, between 18 : 35 and 19 : 1, and immediately after the feast of dedication, from which feast he supposes Jesus to have retired to Bethany beyond Jordan. John 10 : 22-42.

18. they shall condemn him to death] Compare Mark 10 : 32-34; Luke 18 : 31-34. Jerusalem was to be the scene of his trial, suffering and death. He would be betrayed. By whom? The rulers in the old Jewish Church, now effete and dying, would condemn and deliver him to the Gentiles; they would scourge and crucify him. Jew and Gentile would unite in this work of condemnation. The third day he shall rise again. All this seems clear to us, after the events. But how dark and unintelligible to the disciples! They understood none of it. Luke 18 : 34. They had the Jewish view of the Messiah, as coming to set up an earthly kingdom. Peter's question, which led to the parable of the laborers, indicates this view. The request of the sons of Zebedee and their mother, which follows in vs. 20-23,

## COMMON VERSION.

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 to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

## REVISED VERSION.

17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples apart, and in the way he said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify; and the third day he shall be raised up.



shows more clearly that they looked for a temporal reign, and wished to have the highest places as members of his cabinet or court.

**20. Then came to him]** The mother of Zebedee's sons was Salome, as we may see by comparing 27: 56 with Mark 15: 40. Some believe she was the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus, and hence his aunt. She and her sons seem to have vaguely imagined that his prediction of rising had some reference to the setting up of a temporal rule.

**21. Grant that these my two sons]** or "command." Priority of place is the aim. This throws light on the previous parable. The right hand and the left hand of the king were the highest places of honor. If James and John were granted these places, the other ten must be content with secondary positions. The sons evidently joined in the request. See v. 23.

**23. Ye shall drink indeed of my cup]** See Revised Version. They must share in his sufferings. James was the first martyr in fact, and John was a martyr in spirit, and suffered banishment to Patmos. In allusion to the question "drink of the cup," there is an apocryphal story that John drank off a whole cup of poison without harm; and Tertullian has a legend that the same apostle was thrown into boiling oil, but was refreshed by the bath and miraculously saved from death. The clause "and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with," and the corresponding clause in v. 22, are omitted in some critical editions of the text and in the Revised Version. Similar words are found in Mark 10: 38, 39, where there is no question about their genuineness. The crucifixion was the baptism to which Jesus there referred,—a baptism of suffering.

**is not mine to give]** This remark of Jesus has been variously understood. 1. It is not mine to give except to those for whom it hath been prepared, etc. So Chrysostom, Grotius and Alford hold. But this is not in accord with the grammatical construction, nor with the obvious meaning of the Greek connective *ἀλλὰ*, *alla*, "but." 2. Not mine as man to give. So Augustine, and, substantially, Bengel. But Christ is the founder, and will be final Judge in the kingdom. 3. It is not mine to give, but is for them for whom it is prepared. That is, it will be given not arbitrarily, but upon conditions already fixed,—those eternal conditions of right and righteousness

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

20 Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, worshipping *him*, and asking a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wouldst thou? She saith unto him, Command that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand,

22 in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? They say unto him, We are able.

23 He saith unto them, My cup indeed ye shall drink: but to sit on my right hand, and on *my* left hand, is not mine to give, but *it is for them* for whom it hath been



ELISHA'S FOUNTAIN : SITE OF O. T. JERICO. (*From a Photograph.*)



SITE OF MODERN JERICO. (*From a Photograph.*)  
The N. T. Jericho was probably West of this, and toward the O. T. Jericho.

long ago settled by my Father. It is for those who have the Christ-like spirit and character. The answer was understood to be a *present* denial, but possibly hinting at something in the future. Hence arose the envious feeling of the ten. Theirs was not holy indignation, but the low jealousy and anger of rivals.

26. let him be your minister] or, literally, "your bond-servant." Notice the clearer reading of the Revised Version in vs. 25-28, which removes the need of further comment. Disciples are to imitate their Master in serving others, not striving to become grandees, to be waited upon. Unholy ambition for the highest place has no place, not even the lowest, in his kingdom. We are to give ourselves for others, not expect others will give up the best for us.

HEALING TWO BLIND MEN NEAR JERICHO.

29. as they departed [went out] from Jericho] Jesus was on his way from beyond Jordan to Jerusalem. He would join the vast caravan going up to the passover. The way from Jericho to Jerusalem was dangerous. Robberies were common on that road. Jericho has occupied more than one site. 1. *Jericho of the Old Testament*, destroyed by Joshua, was near the spring called "Elisha's Fountain." This is about a mile and a half northwest of the modern hamlet *Eriha*. 2. *Jericho of the Gospels* is identified by the Palestine Survey with *El Aleik*, about a mile and a half west of *Eriha*, and the same distance west of south of "Elisha's Fountain." 3. *Jericho of the Crusading period* is identified with *Eriha*, a wretched mud hamlet surrounded by a thorny briar, known as the Christ thorn. See Schaff's *Dictionary of the Bible*. The Jericho of Christ's time was again a "city of palms." It had been beautified by Herod the Great with palaces and public buildings. It was restored by Archelaus, and was surrounded by a plain of great fertility. It was about five miles from the Jordan, but in the valley.

30. behold, two blind men sitting by the way side] Mark and Luke

COMMON VERSION.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against 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 ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

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, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

REVISED VERSION.

24 prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation concerning the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall

26 it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your

27 <sup>1</sup>minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your <sup>2</sup>servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

29 And as they went out from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, Lord, have

<sup>1</sup> Or, servant

<sup>2</sup> Gr. bondservant.

mention only one. Mark gives his name—Bartimæus, son of Timæus. It is wholly unnecessary to assume contradiction here because Matthew speaks of two, while Mark and Luke mention only one. If there were two, then surely there was one healed. The chief difficulty is that Matthew and Mark place the healing as Jesus went out from Jericho, while from Luke it appears to have occurred as he came to the city. Some commentators regard the differences too great to harmonize. So Meyer, De Wette, Alford and Plumptre hold, and make very questionable suggestions which weaken the authority of the gospel writers in this instance. Norton, Olshausen and others deem the difference unimportant. Of the ten or twelve prominent ways of accounting for these differences, the most satisfactory are—1. That one blind man cried to Jesus as he entered the city, but was not healed until Jesus went from the city, when the blind man was joined by a companion. Luke records the healing as connected with the request made when Jesus entered the city. 2. That Jesus remained some days at Jericho. See Mark, "they came to Jericho." Jesus would naturally visit "Elisha's Fountain" and other places near the city. Luke connects the healing in a general way with their arrival; Matthew and Mark more precisely with some "going out" during the stay; and Luke 19: 1 refers to the final departure. For other solutions, see my *Commentary on Mark*.

**31. Have mercy on us]** Rebuked by the crowd, the poor blind men cried out the more. So blind men do now in that very region. If there is any possibility of alms or any kind of help, the more you try to keep them quiet the louder and more urgent will their entreaties become. The cry of the blind at Jericho has become the cry of the Christian world. It has gone into the litany of the Church, "Lord, have mercy on us."

**34. touched their eyes]** Though Mark's account is in the main the fullest in detail, Matthew alone mentions this. How tender, compassionate and marvellous the touch of Jesus! Who that is spiritually blind could fail to imitate the blind men at Jericho in their cry, if thus they might realize the gentle, compassionate, creating touch that would give them spiritual sight? And how could they fail to follow Jesus, glorifying God?

**BLIND IN SYRIA.**—The number of the blind in Syria, as in nearly all Asiatic communities, is so great as to form a conspicuous element in Oriental life. Those who have become familiar with the multitudes of these unfortunate persons in that land have not the least difficulty in accepting the accounts of the healing of the blind at Jericho.

## COMMON VERSION.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

31 mercy on us, thou son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, that they should hold their peace: but they cried out the more, saying, Lord, have mercy

32 on us, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I should do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. And Jesus, being moved

with compassion, touched their eyes: and straightway they received their sight, and followed him.

"At the gate of every Oriental town," says Prof. Post of Beirut, "and on the principal roads leading to it and through it, are always seated blind and lame beggars, who gain their living from travellers. They grope their way through the crowded thoroughfares guided by their staff. They are by every roadside, calling down blessings on passers-by. They do everything but work. There is no one to teach them any useful calling." "So familiar is this sight of a blind man by the wayside in sunny Syria that it excites no remark. You see him begging at every wayside turn. Many sing to attract notice and to stir the pity of the charitable. They do not always ask directly for alms; they exclaim, May God bless you! and look for a gift." If the passer-by is known to be rich, he is asked directly for a gift. If he is supposed to be a doctor, or *hakeem*, healer, piteously will the blind cry for his aid.

In view of the multitudes of blind persons now in Syria, as of olden times, a healer like Jesus would be quite sure to find one blind on one side of the way, and a few steps further two on the other side, when he entered Jericho, and several as he went out. Mark fixes his attention on the one whose name he knew; the other evangelists report the healing, but not the names of the blind whose sight was restored. You can put the three accounts together; and if there were three or five blind persons, the number would be found in any fair-sized town of Syria to-day, either upon entering or departing from it.

Old Jericho, the Jericho of Herod and of New Testament times, and the city known to the Crusaders, were all on the table land near the foot of the mountains. The city that Jesus visited was possibly near the banks of the Kelt, where crumbling aqueducts, lines of foundations and arches indicate a town. But the palace and hippodrome of Herod have disappeared, perhaps covered under some of the several mounds lying about, and containing rich antiquities which the spade alone can reveal. The road along the Kelt, over which Jesus must have journeyed, was then no doubt a fine avenue of sycamores, palms and balsams. There are some sycamores now in the ravines. There are groves of thorny shrubs, the thorny balsam, and the sisyphus, Christ-thorn; and the plain, though desolate, has its charms in the running water and singing birds. The great kingfishers, some blue with white throats, flutter over the stream, and the sun-birds dart about like little black wrens. These enable us to imagine the natural scenery as it appeared to the eyes of Jesus and his disciples.

The city was large and populous, multitudes of priests making it their home, as we know from Josephus. The blind beggars no doubt thronged every approach to the town, as they do now about every Syrian city.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. God often gives us intimations of coming sorrow and trial, but our hearts are too dull to perceive them. 2. Parents may desire the highest worldly positions for their children, from pride or ignorance. 3. Ambitions and envious feelings may creep into Christian hearts. 4. Service, not being served, is the lot of a true Christian. 5. Greatness comes from imitating Christ in humility. 6. The blind are wise in crying to Jesus for help. 7. The touch of Christ gives sight.

CHAP. XXI. THE KINGLY ENTRY AND THE CHILDREN'S WELCOME. vs. 1-17. Mark 11:1-18; Luke 19:29-46; John 12:12-19.

JERUSALEM, A.D. 30. PALM SUNDAY.

*Analysis.*—Two disciples are sent for an ass and its colt, vs. 1-3; prophecy fulfilled, vs. 4-6; joy of the multitude, vs. 6-11; the temple cleansed a second time, vs. 12-14; joy of the children, vs. 15, 16.

LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.—After the raising of Lazarus narrated by John, Jesus again retired into Perea, where he spent the latter part of the winter in the quieter regions less disturbed by Jewish rulers. From thence he joined the annual crowd of pilgrims to the great Jewish feast, the passover, at Jerusalem, in the early spring.

The following description of the route is given me by Mr. John Tannous Haddad, a native Syrian, familiar with the region, who has been many times over the road:

Jesus went up to Jerusalem across the Jordan by way of Jericho, and up the steep ascent about 3700 feet in 15 to 18 miles. The modern route is from Es-Salt southwest to a ford of the Jordan, passing up from the river over a sandy flat with some shrubs mixed with *nebbuk*, popularly called Christ's thorn. In a mile or two the road ascends the second table, and runs along this beach to the southwest for about five miles. In spring this part of the road is beautiful with young grain and wild flowers. Near Jericho the road ascends to a third table land on which is Er-Riha, near which was Jericho of the Gospels. The great spring Ain es-Sultan is about a mile northwest from Er-Riha, by which the ancient city was supplied with water. The route is now, as 3000 years ago, up the dark ravine of the wady Kelt, probably the "brook Cherith," 1 Kings 17:3, 5. This brook has water the greater part of the year. The scenery is wild, the gorges deep and winding; deeper ravines putting out here and there in bewildering fashion, suggestive of brigands, robbers and wild beasts.

From Jericho the road now goes along the plain west, then ascends southwest up a rocky, rough ascent for an hour, when it grows narrower, the hills on either side steeper and higher, where the caves and robbers were found in Herod's time, and the road is still dangerous. Higher up is the ruin of a *khan* tradition calls the Samaritan's inn. Then the valley of the Kelt widens, and the road crosses to the south side of the stream (no bridge) and follows up the valley for an hour and a half. Then the traveller comes to an open space, with hills on the left. Then the road curves to the north, first level, then descends a little and ascends to the northwest, and in fifteen minutes one reaches Bethany.

The views on this road are noted for their magnificence. Above Er-Riha the entire valley with the Jordan lies below. To the south stretches the Dead Sea with its cliffs; the eye takes in the view far across the plains to the mountains of Moab. From the top the view widens to the north and to

the east, stretching away over the tops of the mountains, even beyond the Jordan; but the rest of the road is rough, hard, and the traveller feels as if he were enclosed in frowning cliffs or between the dark walls of a prison. The road is usually hot, close, with an occasional breeze after the middle of the day.

The site of Bethany was near the modern *El-Azariyeh*, "the Lazarus," on the southeastern slope of Mount Olivet. It is a cultivated spot, having fine grain fields, and some fig, olive, almond and carob trees. There are three routes from Bethany to Jerusalem. The most frequently travelled route by natives is the one that bends around to the southward, and reaches the Kedron valley after passing the Latin Gethsemane.

ORDER OF EVENTS.—There is some difficulty in ascertaining the order of events during this passover week. The following order is accepted by the best harmonists. The healing of the blind men at Jericho was followed by the visit to Zacchæus, and the parable of the ten *minæ* or pounds. The Jewish days are reckoned from *sunset* to *sunset*. For example, Friday would begin on Thursday night at *sunset* and end Friday night at *sunset*.

1. *Friday*, 8th Nisan (March 31), A.U.C. 783 and A.D. 30. Jesus goes from Jericho to Bethany. 2. *Saturday*, 9th Nisan (April 1), Jewish Sabbath. Jesus rests at Bethany. 3. *Sunday*, 10th Nisan (April 2). The supper and anointing at Bethany on *Saturday night after sunset*; hence after the Jewish Sabbath was past; the conspiracy of the chief priests. John 11:55 to 12:11; Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9. The kingly entry into Jerusalem, on so-called Palm Sunday. Return to Bethany for the night. 4. *Monday*, 11th Nisan (April 3). Jesus goes to Jerusalem early in the morning; barren fig tree cursed; the temple cleansed the second time; the blind and lame healed; the children cry Hosanna. 5. *Tuesday*, 12th Nisan (April 4). Returns to Jerusalem; the withered fig tree noticed by the disciples; Christ's authority questioned; question about John's baptism; parables: two sons, wicked husbandmen, king's son; questions about tribute to Cæsar? resurrection? chief commandment? the widow's mite; the Greeks; the foretelling of coming events; parables: ten virgins, five talents, and other teachings; returns to Bethany. 6. *Wednesday*, 13th Nisan (April 5). Conspiracy of rulers and bargain with Judas (made on Tuesday night after sunset); Jesus appears to have spent the day in retirement at Bethany. 7. *Thursday*, 14th Nisan (April 6). Jesus sends two disciples to Jerusalem to prepare the passover supper; goes to the city in the afternoon; the supper was eaten at night. 8. *Friday*, 15th Nisan (April 7). [Some of the events under this day took place *after sunset Thursday*.] The passover meal in the upper room; the Lord's Supper instituted; discourse, John 14 to 17. *In the night*, after Thursday: in Gethsemane; betrayal and arrest (near midnight); brought before Annas; then Caiaphas; before Pilate; before Herod; again before Pilate; is condemned and crucified (before noon); laid in the sepulchre before sunset. 9. *Saturday*, 16th Nisan (April 8). Jewish Sabbath—day of rest. 10. *Sunday*, 17th Nisan (April 9, Jewish first day of the week). Early in the morning Jesus rises from the dead; visit of the women and of the

two disciples at the sepulchre; Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene; to two going Emmaus; to Peter; to the ten.

The chief points of difficulty are the time of the anointing and supper at Bethany, and of the passover meal. Matthew and Mark mention the anointing in connection with the conspiracy of the priests and the treachery of Judas. John places it following Jesus' arrival from Jericho. Some therefore hold that (1) John mentions it by anticipation, hence that it was on Tuesday or Wednesday night. So Newcome, Robinson in his later edition, Da Costa, Owen, Geikie. (2) Others place it on Saturday night (*after sunset*), and hence after the Jewish Sabbath had ended. So Alford, Andrews, Edersheim, Ellicott, Robinson in his earlier edition. See Riddle's Robinson's Greek and English Harmonies, and others. As Matthew and Mark make a less definite note of time here than John, the apparent difference is easily explained by accepting John's order, and noticing that the other evangelists mention the anointing by the law of mental association in connection with the treachery of Judas. There is no ground for supposing with Lightfoot that there were two anointings at Bethany within a few days.

The time of the passover meal will be noticed in 26:17-35. For more full statement of various views see my *Commentary on Mark*, pp. 160, 161.

**1. come to Bethphage]** And when they drew near to Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, to the mount of Olives, says Matthew; and Mark and Luke add "to Bethphage and Bethany." From these accounts we learn that Bethphage and Bethany were near each other, and that both were on the Mount of Olives, and near Jerusalem. Bethany we know was scarcely two miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho. It was situated just over the shoulder of Olivet, on its eastern slope. It is now represented by twenty rude stone houses. The water is good, and olive, fig, almond and carob trees abound. The reputed site of Simon's house and that of Mary's, and of the tomb of Lazarus under a church, are pointed out now, but are scarcely trustworthy. The site of Bethphage is unknown. From the order in which it is named by Mark and Luke in the journey from Jericho to Jerusalem, it might be inferred that it was nearer to Jericho than Bethany. Some, however, place it west rather than east of Bethany. So Alford and Greswell infer. The latter places Bethphage *on* the road, and Bethany a little to one side, off the direct route. Farrar places Bethphage a little south of Bethany. So also Geikie seems to place Bethany off the direct route.

Jesus made this kingly entry because he was a king. In this act he reveals himself to his people in that royal yet simple majesty which is characteristic of all his earthly doings. Nor is it inconsistent with this to suppose that in thus entering the holy city, he had some consideration for the great expectations and the human weaknesses of his followers, who were looking upon him as the Messiah who might deliver Israel, Luke 24:21.

## COMMON VERSION.

**CHAP. XXI.**—And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

## REVISED VERSION.

**21** And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and came unto Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two



The entry, in the peculiar manner it was made, would restrain present impetuosity on the part of his disciples, and teach them to see the true character of his kingly authority, in the near future.

2. Go . . . into the village over against you] What village this was, neither evangelist tells us. It is natural to infer that the company left Bethany on foot, and approached Bethphage on the most southerly of the three routes to Jerusalem over Olivet. Then Jesus directed two disciples to go into Bethphage just before them, and get the ass and her colt. The description of the place where the animals would be found was very minute. See especially Mark 11:4, "They found the colt tied at the door without in the open street" (Revised Version), an unusual place; for beasts were usually led *within* the house or court and tied there. No man had ridden the colt. A king must not ride another's beast. It is not as formidable a thing to ride such a colt as it would be to ride an unbroken colt with us. Animals that had never been worked were put to sacred uses. Num. 19:2; Deut. 21:3; 1 Sam. 6:7. The eastern ass was highly esteemed. The white variety was among the royal beasts in some courts. As the horse was a beast from Egypt and a symbol of war, this animal was the Jewish national beast and a symbol of peace. If the owner or those in charge of the animals objected to let them go, the disciples were to say, "The Lord hath need of them," and permission would at once be granted. This implies that the owner was a disciple; for the language is against the supposition that the animals were hired.

4. that it might be fulfilled] Again Matthew points to the fulfillment of prophecy proving that Jesus was the Messiah. The citation is freely from two prophecies, Isa. 62:11 and Zech. 9:9. These many instances of the minute fulfillment of prophecies, some of which were not familiar to the common people, would be recognized as soon as they were pointed out. They could not be mere chance coincidences. They must be a designed fulfillment. This prophecy, like several others, was too obscure for an impostor to have copied out and planned to fulfill. Only one who was the true Messiah could have so exactly met these conditions.

7. put on them their clothes] or "garments." This is a characteris-

COMMON VERSION.

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over 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 aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, 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 their clothes, and they set *him* thereon.

REVISED VERSION.

2 disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring

3 *them* unto me. And if any one say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will

4 send them. Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, Meek, and riding upon an ass,

And upon a colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did even as

7 Jesus appointed them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their

tic eastern scene. Bringing the colt, the disciples throw their abbas or outer cloaks upon the animal. Jesus sat upon the colt. Some disciple led the animal. At once, in the enthusiasm of the crowd which would be coming along the main route that passed Bethphage, the people spread their abbas and outer garments in the way to honor the great Galilean prophet and healer. Others cut green branches from the trees to aid in carpeting the road before the Master and Lord. This is still a customary way to welcome any great person in the East. Robinson says that the people of Bethlehem threw their garments under the feet of the horses when the English consul entered their city. Dr. Post notes an instance of the people spreading *themselves* in the way when a great Moslem sheikh entered a town.

**9. cried, saying, Hosanna]** This was no political cry. It is evident that those who started it began to have some idea of the spiritual character of the King and kingdom. Therefore, it was now time for Jesus to permit a public recognition of his power and character as king. The great crowd going before him, and the scarcely less crowd that followed, shouted in answering joy to each other from the great Hallel, Ps. 113-118, Hosanna, save, we pray. Later, the "children," the "boys," in the temple made the same joyful cry. See v. 16.

**10. when he was come into Jerusalem]** This grand and joyous procession probably wended its way down Olivet by the southerly route. Tradition makes our Lord to have crossed the very summit of the mount, and marks a spot about half way down its western slope, where the procession halted while Jesus wept over the city. The tradition is not generally accepted, and the southern route, still the easier and main one, is the more probable one. They passed nigh Gethsemane, crossed the brook Kedron, and entered the city by what is now "St. Stephen's" gate. It was the pass-over. The city was crowded. It was equally full of religious fervor. No wonder all the city was stirred. Who comes? The famous prophet of Galilee. All the multitude make way, for they honor this wonderful person.

**12. Jesus went into the temple]** This second cleansing of the temple is usually placed on the next day after the triumphal entry. On the day of

## COMMON VERSION.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed *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 cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

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.

12 ¶ And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

## REVISED VERSION.

8 garments; and he sat thereon. And the most part of the multitude spread their garments in the way; and others cut branches from the trees, and spread them

9 in the way. And the multitudes that went before him, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord;

10 Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was

11 stirred, saying, Who is this? And the multitudes said, This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.

12 And Jesus entered into the temple <sup>1</sup>of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *of God*.

the entry, he looked about the temple and returned to Bethany for the night. See Mark 11 : 11-17. In the morning he returned to the city and drove out the traders.

**seats of them that sold doves]** If Jesus were to visit the reputed Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem now, he would find in its outer court traders very similar to those in the temple at his entry into Jerusalem. This court is now filled with sellers of rosaries, relics, and pictures of saints and sacred places. Jesus drove the traders from God's temple. He asserted his right to reclaim his Father's house. For his authority he referred the priests to Isa. 56 : 7 and Jer. 7 : 11. This was in fulfillment of prophecy. The trading was in the "court of the Gentiles." See plan, p. 262. They had made it a "den of robbers" by extortionate charges in exchanging money and in selling animals for sacrifice. It was not convenient for those offering sacrifices to bring the doves, sheep and animals with them; so, after the captivity, a court of the temple was assigned as a place where these might be kept for sale. Then those Jews who resided in other lands brought with them money of Gentile coinage which could not be received into the temple treasury. It must be changed for coin that could be paid into the temple. This the money-changers did, often at heavy charges. But more especially had they robbed the Gentiles by turning the place appointed for them as a place of prayer into a market for beasts and a place for money-changers and general temple traffic. Similar cheating and rapacity are yet found in holy places of the East. Dr. Post says that on a visit to Jerusalem he was charged six per cent. by the money-changers for simply changing the current coin. At the same visit he heard the priests *sell at auction* the privilege of the *first* place in the resurrection procession, which takes place on Easter day. The buyer paid sixty napoleons; the priests crying out, "Who will give that which is temporal for that which is eternal?" For a description of the temple, see note at the end of this chapter.

**14. the blind and the lame, . . . and he healed them]** The selfish traders expelled, the infirm and blind enter the temple courts. The "house of prayer," purged of the profane robbers, now becomes a "house of mercy."

**15. the children crying]** On the entry to Jerusalem the disciples and the multitudes make this shout of rejoicing. Here the "children," literally the "boys" (for the Greek word is masculine), in the temple take up and re-echo the joyful shout. The chief priests and scribes were very indignant. They appeal to Jesus. He answers their anger by an appeal to

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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.

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 displeased,

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13 seats of them that sold the doves; and he saith unto them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer:

14 but ye make it a den of robbers. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. But

when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children that were crying in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were moved with indig-

prophecy, Ps. 8:2, which they could not misunderstand. The Messianic bearing was too plain. Night coming on, Jesus retires to Bethany. The chief priests and scribes retire to consider how this popular leader can be arrested.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Christ is the world's true King. 2. Some acknowledge him, some welcome him; others reject and hate him and his coming. 3. He came not as a warlike conqueror, but as the prince of peace. 4. He will come by and by as a majestic and awful conqueror. 5. He asserts his majesty in his Father's house. 6. He turns a house of robbers into a house of prayer and mercy. 7. The "children" welcome the Lord into his temple. 8. The worldly and the hypocritical sneer or are angry at true reformers. 9. Holiness should fill God's house and our hearts. 10. "May God in mercy protect us from such theologians and priests as are offended by children and their harmless songs."—*Heubner*. 11. Let children be trained to sing God's praises in the sanctuary.

**THE BARREN FIG TREE AND UNBELIEF. vs. 18-32. Mark 11:12-33**

JERUSALEM, Monday and Tuesday, April 3 and 4, A.D. 30.

*Analysis.*—The barren fig tree condemned, vs. 18-20; a lesson on faith, vs. 21, 22; Christ's authority questioned, v. 23; question about John's baptism, vs. 24-27; parable of the two sons, vs. 28-32.

**18. in the morning]** Turning to Mark, we find that the barren tree was seen, fruit sought and the tree condemned one morning (Monday), and the disciples noticed that it withered on the next morning (Tuesday). Matthew relates the incident and the conversation that grew out of it together. He omits to speak of the incidents that intervened, and to make a definite note of time. But an omission is not an error, nor does it contradict the account of Mark. The fig tree was condemned before the second cleansing of the temple. Matthew narrates this act, and the entry, with the hosannas of the children, together, but does not say nor imply that they occurred in that order.

**19. saw a fig tree]** He saw "one tree," or "a single tree," as in the margins of the Common Version and Revised Version. Matthew says he saw it "in the way;" Mark, that "seeing" it "afar off," literally "from a

**COMMON VERSION.**

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?

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

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, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

**REVISED VERSION.**

16 nation, and said unto him, Hearest thou what these are saying? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea: did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And he left them, and went forth out of the city to Bethany, and lodged there.

18 Now in the morning as he returned to the city, he hungered. And seeing <sup>1</sup>a fig tree by the way side, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only; and he saith unto it, Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever. And immediately the fig tree withered

<sup>1</sup>Or, a single

distance" or "from a space." The accounts are consistent with each other. Jesus might have seen the tree by the wayside before them in the distance; then he "came" to it. Being by the way, it was lawful to pick the fruit, especially to satisfy hunger. Deut. 23 : 24. This need not imply that it was the only fig tree along the way; there may have been many, since Bethphage means "house of unripe figs." But there was one that would attract the special attention of a hungry person seeking figs; for it had leaves. And as the *fruit* appears on the fig tree *before the leaves*, one would naturally expect to find fruit on such a tree. It is needless (1) to make a difficulty about condemning an inanimate object. The act did not imply any idea of moral character in the tree, but was intended to teach the disciples an impressive religious lesson. The tree was a proper and fitting object for this purpose. It might be called a significant example of object teaching. It is needless (2) to speculate how Jesus, having divine wisdom, should have sought fruit where there was none. As the Son of man, his acts are presented to us as human and in the language of humanity. And the difficulty (3) of expecting to find fruit before the time of figs (see Mark 11 : 13) disappears on a little examination. (a) The leaves gave promise of fruit, for the fruit usually appeared before the leaves. (b) Though fig-harvest came in June or July, early figs are found now as early as the passover in Palestine. The suggestion that last year's figs, or winter figs, were looked for takes the chief point out of the moral lesson. Last year's figs might be on a *leafless* tree, but here it was because the tree had leaves that fruit was looked for. Though it was too early for figs generally ("time of figs was not *yet*"), there might be some early figs. Prof. Post, of Syria, tells me that in his garden in Beirut he had young figs on two fig trees as early as January 22. One tree bore its usual crop the previous summer, cast its leaves in November and had a tuft of fresh figs in January, but the leaves were not out. The figs would ripen about the middle of March, or two weeks before passover time. Dr. W. M. Thomson says he has plucked early figs from trees in Lebanon, 150 miles north of Jerusalem, in May, though the trees are nearly a month later in Lebanon than in southern Palestine. Dr. S. Merrill tells of finding young figs on trees near Tiberias, in February. Miss Bremer found a leafless tree full of young figs near Bethlehem early in March, which, she adds, will not take many weeks to ripen. Prof. Post, in a recent letter, says: "The observations made before are accurate, and special search would confirm them." He adds: "The fig tree is a peculiarly unsightly tree until covered with leaves. Its twigs are very tender and juicy, and put forth a rosette of leaves after the appearance of the fruit bud. . . . The leaves are not fairly out until the warm days of May, when 'summer is near.'" The testimony on this point might be extended to several pages. This much has been given because it is interesting in connection with this the *only miracle of destruction* recorded of our Lord (for the destruction of the swine was not miraculous, but only permitted by Jesus), and also because my statements in the *Commentary on Mark* were at first questioned by a prominent journal, but accepted after an examination of the testimony.

**20. How . . . the fig tree withered away !]** Some read this as an exclamation, and some as a question. It is in the form of a question in Tyndale's Version and in the earlier editions of the Version of 1611, as also in the Revised Version, 1881. In the current editions of 1611 it is an exclamation. It perhaps partakes of both—being an interrogative exclamation. The disciples' remark and the lessons that followed were on the morning after the condemnation of the tree. See Mark 11 : 12, 19, 20. Trench suggests that the fig tree appears prominently in the Gospels only as a symbol of evil. Compare Mark 11 : 13 and Luke 13 : 6. An old tradition says it was the tree of temptation in Eden. Adam and Eve tried to cover their nakedness with fig leaves, to assume a false appearance before Jehovah and to hide their guilt. By having leaves it pretended to have early fruit. It seemed to be better than its fellows—a Pharisee among the trees. And having leaves without fruit was a sure proof that it would have no fruit. Hence it became a fit symbol of moral barrenness and of the punishment that would justly be visited upon such barrenness.

**21. If ye have faith]** The disciples marvelled (v. 20) at the power that could effect this blight by a word, rather than at the teaching it was meant to convey. Jesus appears to follow the turn of their thought, rather than the *direct* lesson of the miracle. So he declares this miracle is a small one in comparison with those which they could do if they had unwavering faith. Before the prayer of faith everything will give way. The greatest difficulties will be removed. Things which seem as impossible as the removal of a mountain into the sea will be no real barrier to confiding faith. Anything they will ask in believing prayer they will receive. This applies no doubt especially to spiritual things, but neither can temporal things, so far as they may affect true Christian work, be excluded. The "doubt" implied in the Greek also suggests questioning and discussion. The same word appears in Acts 10 : 20, where Peter was commanded to go with the men to Cornelius, without questioning or discussing its propriety.

**23. By what authority . . . and who gave thee this authority ?]** Here was an open conflict. The authority was disputed as (1) insufficient, and (2) it could not be from a rightful source. This was the meaning under their double question. Your authority must be human or divine. If human

## COMMON VERSION.

20 And when 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 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 who gave thee this authority ?

## REVISED VERSION.

20 away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How did the fig tree immediately wither away ?

21 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into 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 who gave thee

it ought to have come from our recognized council. If divine, who gave it to you?

**25. The baptism of John, . . . from heaven, or . . . men?]** This was a fair and common way in the East of answering an attack like this. They had three ways of meeting the counter question: 1. To say from heaven. 2. To say from men. 3. To say we cannot tell. The first would virtually acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, for John had testified to them of him. And if John's work was from heaven, then his testimony must be accepted. If they said from men, it would have aroused that popular indignation against themselves which they wished to turn against Jesus. So they confessed ignorance: "We cannot tell." Their refusal to answer the counter question left Jesus free to refuse an answer to their attack.

**28. A . . . man had two sons]** This parable is given by Matthew only. This and the two that followed it—the wicked husbandmen and the marriage of the king's son, or the wedding garment—were intended to show the unbelief of the Jews and to what wickedness such unbelief would lead. Thus they were warned by a method of teaching at once forcible, simple, not offensive, but tender and persuasive. The parables indicated—1. The stubbornness of the rulers. 2. The repentance of the sinners they despised. 3. The long spiritual rebellion of the Jewish nation. 4. Their rejection of the Messiah. 5. The welcome of Gentiles into the new kingdom. 6. The final condemnation of unbelieving Israel, 22 : 5-7, as in the punishment of those who rejected the king's invitations to the marriage feast of his son.

**Son, go work]** Here both are sons. One represents those who repented at John's call and under the ministry of Jesus. The other, the Pharisees, scribes and unbelieving Jews, who *professed* to do God's will, but did it not. There is no ground for the old interpretation that one son meant the Jews and the other the Gentiles. In broadest application one son represents all who *profess* to obey God, but in reality do not obey him. The other son represents those who openly, boldly and defiantly reject God's call, but afterward repent and obey him. The rulers, no doubt, perceived the point of the parable; but, given to "acting a part," they seemed not to see it, and

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24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I will in like wise 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, 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 he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. word.

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24 this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one <sup>1</sup> question, which if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I

25 do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why then

26 did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, From men; we fear the multitude;

27 for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We know not. He also said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. But

28 what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, <sup>2</sup> Son,

<sup>2</sup> Gr. Child.

hence gave the only answer they could give to such a case, and convicted themselves.

**31. publicans and . . . harlots go . . . before you]** The vilest and most outrageous sinners repent and get into the kingdom of God before you. The Pharisees are not shut out from repentance and the kingdom. Some did come. Paul was a Pharisee; so were Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. But the great body of ecclesiastics, when they saw the publicans and sinners believing and repenting at the preaching of John, did not even then repent nor believe the way of righteousness he preached.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus was hungry; he knows how to sympathize with the thousands who suffer for lack of daily bread. 2. Fruit trees are expected to bear fruit. 3. Barren fruit trees are worthless. 4. To pretend to have fruit and to bear none is the worst kind of barrenness. 5. Profession without piety is like having abundance of leaves without a fig. 6. A great show in religion and no work, no fruit, exposes one to the doom of the barren fig tree. 7. The Christian is to be not merely a shade tree, but a fruit tree. 8. The prayer of faith sweeps away every obstacle. 9. The gospel preacher has authority from the King of heaven. 10. There are two sorts of sons—(1) sinning but repentant ones; (2) professedly obedient ones, but confirmed hypocrites. 11. Promise well and work well.

**THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN. vs. 35-46.** Mark 12: 1-12; Luke 20: 9-19.

JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

*Analysis.*—The parable, vs. 35-40; the men condemned, v. 41; the rulers accused of rejecting Christ, and are rejected, vs. 42-44; they fear to arrest Jesus, vs. 45, 46.

This parable and its application are given in the first three Gospels. In the parable of the two sons Jesus has shown how the hypocritical and self-righteous professed but significantly failed to obey God, while the bold, open sinner hearing God's call repented, and thus in fact obeyed God before the former class. Jesus now illustrates to what lengths in evil the Jews will go, not hesitating to kill Christ, the Son of God.

**33. Hear another parable]** The hearers, the rulers, no doubt, did not

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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 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 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, which planted a vine-

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29 go work to-day in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, 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 the twain did the will of his father? They say, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I 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 way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye saw it, did not even repent yourselves afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 Hear another parable: There was a



wish to hear any more. They winced at the former parable, and hoped Jesus would let them go. But he was not done yet. So this parable, suggested perhaps by Ps. 80 : 15 and Isa. 5 : 2-7, follows. In Isa. 5 : 2 the Hebrew word means "to hew out," see R. V., of a solid rock. This is implied here.

**34. time of the fruit drew near]** or "the season of fruits drew near." This letting system is a common way of farming and cultivating vineyards in the East. The owner has the vineyard, makes needful improvements, lets it to tenants who care for the vines, pick the grapes, and make them into raisins or wine. For their labor they get from one-quarter to one-third of the produce, or they may receive an equivalent in money. They are to deliver the owner's portion to him voluntarily or at his order. In the East the owner is usually *absent* from the vineyard and land. The agent of the owner often brings animals with panniers to carry away the produce. In the parable the messengers were sent away empty, the husbandmen beating some servants and killing others. The owner, with unusual forbearance, sent one company after another, but to no good purpose.

**37. sent unto them his son]** The owner saw that his authority was despised perhaps because the messengers sent were inferior and too impatient and harsh in their demeanor to gain respect. So he decided to send his son, one only son Mark tells us. Why God, the owner, should do this, knowing what they would do to his Son, is a difficulty. But as Trench remarks, it is the same difficulty which we meet in trying to reconcile man's freedom with God's sovereignty and foreknowledge. We know they must be reconcilable, but we cannot reconcile them by our grain of wisdom any easier than we can tell how a blade of grass grows.

**39. they . . . cast him out . . . and slew him]** "killed him." This method of treating absent owners of land is not unusual in Oriental lands. Naboth was slain and his vineyard seized by Jezebel for Ahab. Tenant farmers often contest the ownership of the land with the true owner in Syria. The death of the heir not infrequently gives an opportunity for such unlawful seizure.

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yard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let 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, 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.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

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man that was a householder, who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and

34 went into another country. And when the season of the fruits drew near, he sent his <sup>1</sup>servants to the husbandmen, to

35 receive <sup>2</sup>his fruits. And the husbandmen took his <sup>1</sup>servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other <sup>1</sup>servants more than the first: and they did unto them in like

37 manner. But afterward he sent unto them his son, saying, They will rever-

38 ence my son. But the husbandmen, when they saw the son, said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and take his inheritance.

39 And they took him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him-

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the fruits of it*

**41. miserably destroy]** or, "miserably destroy those miserable men" which represents the iteration of sound in the Greek words. The application of the parable is plain, though if one seeks for some special meaning in every detail, he will be liable to run into fanciful rather than profitable ideas. It was aimed at the Jews, especially the rulers. The owner represents God, the vineyard is God's kingdom, the husbandmen are the Jewish people, the servants are the old prophets, the son is Christ, the hedge may be the ceremonial law separating them from other nations, and the fruit is the duty and obedience owed to God. The Jews had refused to hear the prophets, they were rejecting Jesus, and now he warns them that they will kill him. For further notes in detail, see *People's Commentary on Mark*, pp. 137, 140.

**42. The stone which the builders rejected]** The citation is from the Messianic Psalm 118: 22, 23, a part of the great Hillel always used at the passover. For similar reference of it to the Messiah, compare Acts 4: 11; 1 Pet. 2: 7; Eph. 2: 20. This rejection of the Son of God, at which you exclaim in the parable, is an old truth announced in your Scriptures, he seems to say. And because of this wicked conduct of your nation God will do to it as you say will be done to those wicked husbandmen.

**44. whosoever shall fall on this stone]** But notice the revised reading of this verse. It would be very hard for those who would be offended because of Jesus. These are they that would fall on the stone. But more terrible would it be for those with whom Christ would be offended. They are those that the stone would fall upon and scatter as dust.

**45. perceived that he spake of them]** The rulers could not miss the personal application of all this to them. They would have crushed him by force; have arrested and delivered him up to the Roman power. But fear of the people, and that alone, restrained them.

## COMMON VERSION.

40 When 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 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 rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

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.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

40 When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do unto those 41 husbandmen? They say unto him, He

will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, that shall render him 42 the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures,

The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner:

This was from the Lord, And it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth 44 the fruits thereof. <sup>1</sup> And he that falleth

on this stone shall be broken to pieces: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will 45 scatter him as dust. And when the

chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of 46 them. And when they sought to lay hold

on him, they feared the multitudes, because they took him for a prophet.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit v. 44.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. God finds a kingdom in this world; he has made a hedge and provided protection for it. 2. He has men to take care of it for him. 3. He has been patient and long suffering with imperfect and erring servants in his kingdom. 4. He has sent his Son to reclaim them; they killed the Son. 5. The unbelief of sinners is their ruin. 6. Those who are offended at Christ are in danger of being broken. 7. Those with whom Christ is offended will be destroyed, unless they repent.

THE TEMPLE.—The temple in the time of Christ was the *third* temple on Mount Moriah. The first temple, built by Solomon, had been often pillaged, and was finally destroyed. The *second* temple was built by Zerubbabel, inferior only in glory and magnificence but not in size to the first. This had fallen into decay, and to please the Jews Herod the Great undertook to repair or rebuild it. This *third* temple was begun about twenty years before the Christian era. Most of the structure and buildings were completed within seven or eight years, but portions of it were not finished until many years after, under Agrippa II. See John 2:20. It was within the present Haram enclosure, at Jerusalem, which was an irregular parallelogram about 500 cubits square. It was entered by five gates, the gate Shushan being opposite the temple proper. The word *temple* was often applied to the whole enclosure. Inside the enclosure were "porches" or covered walks; two rows on three sides and three rows on the south side. Solomon's Porch was on the east side, where was also Nicanor or the Beautiful Gate. The *Gentile court* was the outer court, largest on the south side; the *court of the women* was within, near the Beautiful Gate; beyond and higher fifteen steps was the *court of Israel*, and within this the *court of the priests*. At the eastern end of this court stood the *altar of burnt offering* and the *laver*. Within this court stood the temple proper. The *holy place* was a room 60 by 30 feet, having the golden candlestick, table of shew bread and altar of incense. Beyond this was the most holy place, a room 30 feet square, separated from the others by a costly veil. Within this, in the first temple, built by Solomon, were the ark and the mercy seat. Into this room the high priest entered once a year to make atonement for the nation. The temple was built chiefly of white marble, much of the sacred portions being plated with silver and gold. The Gentiles were not allowed to enter the sacred courts, but were restricted to the court of the Gentiles. A balustrade at the entrance bore a notice that any Gentile who rashly ventured to pass beyond it would forfeit his life. Such a notice was lately found. The temple was built of two or more stories, and, as some suppose, with the upper story projecting over the one below. The castle of Antonia stood at the northwest corner of the temple enclosure, from which there was a secret passage to the temple area. See Acts 21:31-34. This third temple was destroyed by the Romans, A.D. 70. The emperor Julian, the apostate, attempted to rebuild it in A.D. 363, but his plans were repeatedly defeated. A Mohammedan mosque now stands on the dome of the rock, the site of the former temple, or, as some suppose, of the altar of burnt offering.

## CHAP. XXII. MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON. vs. 1-14.

THE TEMPLE, JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

*Analysis.*—The marriage, v. 2; the first reminder to the bidden guests, v. 3; second reminder, v. 4; its treatment, vs. 5, 6; the king's wrath, v. 7; new guests bidden, vs. 8-10; guest without a wedding garment, vs. 11-13; application, v. 14.

This parable is recorded by Matthew only. The parable resembles that of the great supper in Luke 14:15-24. Indeed some of the resemblances are so marked as to lead men like Calvin and others to suppose that the two are identical. Meyer, with his usual boldness, asserts that the parable in Luke is an imperfect version of this. But the time, place, design and circumstances of the two, although having some resemblances, are quite different. The parable of the great supper was spoken at an earlier period in the ministry of our Lord than this of the marriage of the king's son. That was spoken in a Pharisee's house, this in the temple; that was on the Sabbath, this on the third day of the week; that illustrates the grace, this the judgment, of God. In Luke it is not a king's supper, there is no marriage, there is no violence by the declining guests, there are no armies and no murderers, and no destruction of those rejecting the invitation. The differences are too wide and marked for us to hold them as in any sense identical, or that either is a modified version of the other. This parable is sometimes called "the wedding garment," from the closing part of it, and sometimes "the marriage feast," from the words rendered "marriage" and "wedding" in vs. 2 and 3, which include the idea of a feast, or "marriage feast" as in the Revised Version, and from the word "dinner" in v. 4. But these are defective titles, since they do not indicate the main thought of the narrative, and the title given above is preferable. The basis of the parable here is a marriage. A similar thought is found elsewhere in the New and also in the Old Testament. God is the bridegroom and Israel the bride. Isa. 62:5. Israel is like an unfaithful wife. Jer. 2:2; 3:1-4. Again Christ is the bridegroom, and the Church the bride. Eph. 5:23-27. The marriage of the Lamb is one of the sublime pictures given of the redeemed in heaven. Rev. 19:7-9. Again the Church is the bride. Rev. 21:2; 22:17.

Keep in mind the connection and the circumstances of this parable. Jesus was teaching in the temple. The rulers questioned his authority. He had baffled and silenced them. He then turns upon them and exposes their hypocrisy by the parable of the two sons. He follows that by exposing their wicked designs and their murderous spirit and conduct through the parable of the wicked husbandmen. He now proceeds to warn them of their coming destruction and that of their nation, and the call of the Gentiles, by the parable of the marriage of the king's son. For the meaning of the guest without the wedding garment, see below.

1. Jesus answered] He continued to speak in parables, answering prob-

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXII.—And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

## REVISED VERSION.

22 And Jesus answered and spake again

ably their thoughts and their acts rather than their spoken objections. See 21: 45, 46.

2. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king] or, literally, "a man king" or "a human king," which made a "marriage" or "marriage feast" for his son. The marriage feast in the East usually lasted several days. The chief part of the ceremony clusters about the bridegroom, not about the bride as with us. The Oriental wedding of a great man is an event of great splendor. There are no cards as with us. The guests are invited by a personal call, or by servants of high rank. This is done some time before the event. As the time approaches the guests are reminded of the event, lest it be forgotten. So the servants are sent "to call them that were bidden." It was not the first invitation, but the *first reminder* that they were now expected. This is in accord with the habits of the East in all engagements. "If two have a business engagement," says Dr. Post, "one sends to the other just before the appointed time to see that he remembers the engagement." In special and important occasions this was repeated as in the parable. It was not because the king supposed their delay was due to any misunderstanding that he sent the reminder, as Trench erroneously suggests. This was the prevailing custom in the East. In Syria the greatest care is taken to notify the invited guests of their expected presence.

4. Behold . . . my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings] This is the *second reminder*. The word for "dinner" strictly signifies an early lunch taken before or about noon, and which ushered in the marriage festivities—a *marriage feast*. But it is sometimes used in the wider sense, and may here apply to the true dinner, which Dr. Post describes as often a very sumptuous meal among Asiatics. The guests are not usually at a table. The meal is served on large platters or trays. The dishes consist of immense piles of *piláf* or rice cooked with meat, of savory sauces, stuffed mutton, lamb and fowls, of a variety of soups, *leben* or curdled milk, cheese, olives, pickles and *kibby*. This dish is made of cracked wheat, meat, onions and pine seed. The meat and wheat are pounded together in a mortar, spread on a metal tray, a layer of sliced onions laid on it, covered with spices and pine seed, and another layer of wheat and meat on the top of that. It is then baked in the oven in fat. It is a very rich dish. Beside these *méjeddarah* (Esau's pottage), marrows, egg-plants, stewed and stuffed tomatoes, and a great variety of sweets, fruits, rose water, orange-flower water, and even musk,

## COMMON VERSION.

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 In parables unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, who made a marriage feast for his son, and sent forth his <sup>1</sup>servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage <sup>4</sup>feast: and they would not come. Again he sent forth other <sup>1</sup>servants, saying, Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have made ready my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come to the marriage feast.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *bondservants*.

with wine, arrack, coffee and cakes in bewildering variety and profusion, are pressed upon the guests. Meanwhile music, quite overpowering if not repulsive to western taste, adds inspiration to the scene. Often gypsies play, dance and play games to amuse the friends. The women scream their congratulations, and chant praises not always in the chastest rhyme. The bride is brought from her home to the bridegroom's on a richly-caparisoned animal, attended by a crowd of friends, with joyous shout and song.

**5. made light of it]** This was the highest possible affront. No greater insult can be offered in the East than to neglect such an invitation. A man may neglect a business engagement, fail to keep his promise in a thousand ways, and excite no remark; but the whole community would be shocked by absence from a wedding or a feast. These neglected the *first* and *second* reminder, as well as the *original* invitation. They added sneers, turning to their daily callings. Some used vile language to the servants, "entreated them shamefully," and getting into altercations, even slew them, not so rare an occurrence in the East, nor there regarded so outrageous as it would seem in the western world.

**7. destroyed those murderers]** The guests were subjects, and their acts made them rebels. Such acts of vengeance are characteristic of eastern despotic rulers.

**9. Go ye . . . the highways]** or "partings of the highways," as in the Revised Version. But neither reading gives the precise idea of the Greek word. It does not mean the corners or squares where the streets part, as Meyer has justly observed. It refers rather to places where country roads cross each other; forks in country roads. At these beggars usually sit. The servants called all, without regard to appearance or character; "both bad and good," v. 10. So guests were secured for the wedding feast.

**11. king came . . . he saw . . . a man which had not on a wedding garment]** The king in welcoming his guests saw one without a wedding garment. The king was not inspecting nor examining his guests, as

## COMMON VERSION.

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 his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then said 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 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:

## REVISED VERSION.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to

6 his merchandise: and the rest laid hold on his <sup>1</sup>servants, and entreated them

7 shamefully, and killed them. But the king was wroth; and he sent his armies,

8 and destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then saith he to his <sup>1</sup>servants, The wedding is ready, but

9 they that were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore unto the partings of the highways, and as many as ye shall find,

10 bid to the marriage feast. And those <sup>1</sup>servants went out into the highways,

and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the

11 wedding was filled with guests. But when the king came in to behold the

guests, he saw there a man who had not

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

some imagine. According to the eastern custom he was giving them a proper welcome. In doing so he noticed one who had not on a wedding garment. It is not certain, but probable, that the guests were furnished suitable robes by the liberality of the king. We know that suits of garments were common and very ancient gifts by royal and other great men. Gen. 41:42; 45:22; Judg. 14:12; 1 Sam. 18:4; 2 Kings 5:5-22; 10:22; Esth. 6:8; 8:15; Dan. 5:7. Meyer, De Wette and some others, however, reject the view that the garments were given, and it must be admitted that the custom is not widely prevalent in Syria or the East now. Yet Horace found 5000 mantles or robes in the wardrobe of Lucullus. At the marriage of Sultan Mahmood every guest had a robe furnished him at the sultan's expense. There seems to be a fitness in the supposed provision of robes for them here by the king. Rosenmuller also cites several instances of this provision. Olearius was invited to the table of a Persian king, and provided with splendid vestments to put over his dress before appearing before the king. Schulz mentions in his travels that a similar robe was provided him to visit the sultan, and another traveller mentions a similar experience. It certainly relieves the parable of a grave difficulty in interpretation. If the king had furnished no robe, and this guest had none and was too poor to buy one, he would scarcely have been speechless. He would have pleaded his poverty as a fair excuse. He could have pointed to his presence as showing his attention to the king's call. This view also furnishes a reasonable ground for the severe condemnation.

13. cast him into outer darkness] From the splendor of the wedding chamber to the darkness of the outside, he mingled with those groaning in despair because excluded from the feast. See notes on 13:42-50 and 8:12.

14. few . . . chosen] The original guests who were called belonged to many classes. They did not come. Those who did come were chiefly of one class—the obscure, humble, despised class. These few were the chosen. The Jews were repeatedly called; the Gentiles also were called. Of the Gentiles who came those were “chosen” who had on the “wedding garment,” the righteousness of Christ.

LESSONS OF THE PARABLE.—The spiritual meaning of the parable in the main is obvious. The king is God, the marriage is that of Christ with his Church, the espousals, according to eastern custom, being assumed to precede the festivities. The “bidden” guests, who are twice reminded that the feast is near, are the Jews; the reminders are the preaching of John the Baptist, and of Jesus and his apostles. The murderous persons are the Jewish

## COMMON VERSION.

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding 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 gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 on a wedding-garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding-garment? And he

13 was speechless. Then the king said to the <sup>1</sup>servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him out into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and gnashing

14 of teeth. For many are called, but few chosen.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *ministers*

rulers; their destruction and that of their city came in the fall of Jerusalem. The highways and the bad and good called are the land and people of all Gentile nations. The "wedding garment" has been variously interpreted as— (1) charity, Roman Catholics say; (2) faith, older Protestants say; (3) both charity and faith; (4) righteousness in the widest sense as given us of God. The latter is the best view. The prophet represents our righteousness as filthy rags. Isa. 64:6. The redeemed are clothed in robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. Rev. 7:14. "For fine linen is the righteousness of the saints," or "righteous acts of the saints" as the Revised Version reads. See Rev. 19:8.

THE HERODIANS AND SADDUCEES SILENCED. vs. 15-33. Mark 12:13-27; Luke 20:20-38.

THE TEMPLE, JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

**15. Then . . . the Pharisees . . . took counsel]** The Pharisees appear as the leaders in the plots to ensnare and arrest Jesus. They had hitherto aimed to destroy his influence as a religious teacher. Now they plot to destroy him by bringing him into collision with the Roman rulers. The "counsel" was sought not by a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin, but rather by an informal conference of the leaders.

**16. their disciples with the Herodians]** The Pharisees were leaders of the patriotic party opposed to all foreign rule. The Herodians were a political Jewish party attached to the fortunes of the Herodian family. Though not Romans, they were in favor of Roman rule and opposed to the political views of the Pharisees. That the latter should combine with the former shows how desperate and bitter they had become against Jesus. The Pharisees put forward their young disciples. The question to be settled was about Roman tribute. So the Herodians joined as parties and witnesses to the expected evidence of disloyalty to be wrung from the teacher.

**17. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar]** With great show of respect and true eastern volubility of empty compliments and flattery, they craftily introduced their question. You are an impartial judge. Now what do you think? Is it right to pay tribute to a foreigner, to Cæsar? Their question was intended to remind Jesus of Deut. 17:15. If he answered, It is lawful, then the patriot party and the zealots would condemn him. If he answered, It is not lawful, as they fain would have him do, then the

COMMON VERSION.

15 ¶ Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might 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 thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

REVISED VERSION.

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might ensnare him in *his* talk.

16 And they send to him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, <sup>1</sup>Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and carest not for any one: for thou

17 regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or

<sup>1</sup>Or, *Teacher*



Roman power would be upon him at once. With consummate craft they had arranged the attack. This tribute was a Roman poll-tax, and, perhaps, land-tax also, and considered inquisitorial. It had been the cause of insurrections, for it was a mark of national degradation.

19. **Shew me the tribute money]** That is, the coin in which the tribute is paid. For he saw their wickedness, hypocrisy or craftiness, as it is variously characterized by the evangelists. Their conduct, in fact, partook of all these. So they brought him a penny, or, more accurately, a *denarius*, It was a Roman coin worth about fifteen cents. It was of foreign stamp, since those struck in Judæa usually had the device of the Maccabæan period. The tax was payable in Roman not Judæan coin. By accepting this as current coin they virtually acknowledged themselves as subjects of Cæsar.

20. **Whose is this image and superscription?]** The Roman *denarius* had the head of Tiberius Cæsar on one side of the coin. The "superscription," or inscription around the head upon the same side, was in Latin abbreviated; translated it read: "Tiberius Cæsar Augustus, son of the divine [god] Augustus." Holding up such a coin and asking this question was a keen rebuke.

21. **Render . . . Cesar . . . unto God the things]** "Render," or "give back unto Cæsar" what you acknowledge is his; then give back to God the things that are his. The general truth Christ taught is, Whoever accepts the benefits of a government is bound to contribute his share in support of that government. He owes it allegiance and obedience. But this does not free him from his duty to God. He also owes allegiance and obedience to God. He is bound to give his portion to the support of God's kingdom on the earth. Baffled they left him, astonished at his words.

23. **The same day came . . . the Sadducees]** On the character of the Sadducees, see notes, chap. 3:7. The high priest belonged to this party. Jesus was regarded as teaching the Pharisees' doctrine of the resurrection, which the Sadducees denied. Seeing the Herodians baffled and the Pharisees in confusion, the Sadducees, with a lofty idea of their social position and philosophical wisdom, now propose to reduce the doctrine of a future life to an absurdity. They were the "advanced" theologians and the destructive critics

COMMON VERSION.

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, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22 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,

REVISED VERSION.

18 not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why try ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money.

19 And they brought unto him a <sup>1</sup>denarius.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say

21 unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God

22 the things that are God's. And when they heard it, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 On that day there came to him Sadducees, <sup>2</sup>who say that there is no resurrec-

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on ch. 18: 23.

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *saying*.

of their day. They propose a question based upon a command of Moses, often called the "levirate law," from *levir*, the Latin word for brother-in-law. See Deut. 25:5. This law was not peculiar to the Jews, but was recognized by other Oriental nations.

25. there were . . . seven brethren] or "brothers." This was, no doubt, an imaginary, though not an impossible, case. They mention the childlessness of the woman, perhaps to prevent the possible answer that the one to whom she had borne a child would be her husband in the resurrection.

29. Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures] These destructive critics and speakers are plainly told their errors: (1) Ignorance of the Scriptures which they quoted; (2) Ignorance of God's power.

30. For in the resurrection] Not "at the resurrection," as Meyer renders it, nor "in the rising" alone, but in the resurrection state. The argument is that in the resurrection state these conditions, as marriage, births, deaths and the like, which belong to this life, will have no place. You Sadducees are reasoning on a fallacy. There are no such analogies between this and that state of existence as you assume. To the question often asked now, Will there be a continuance, in that state, of family ties so dear on earth? the answer may be found by considering the power of God. Old relations may be brought into new conditions; old ties will be modified into angelic affections.

32. not the God of the dead, but of the living] God is not the God of the dead. The dead cannot be said to have any God. Hence God is the God of the living only. But he is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; therefore they are living. This was a proof of immortality; from this the resurrection may be deduced, as a corollary is drawn from the main proposition.

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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 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, 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 of the living.

## REVISED VERSION.

24 tion: and they asked him, saying, <sup>1</sup>Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother <sup>2</sup>shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first married and deceased, and having no seed left his wife unto his

26 brother; in like manner the second also,

27 and the third, unto the <sup>3</sup>seventh. And

28 after them all the woman died. In the resurrection therefore whose wife shall

29 she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 But Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures,

30 nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are

31 given in marriage, but are as angels<sup>4</sup> in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that

32 which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 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

<sup>1</sup> Or, Teacher <sup>2</sup> Gr. shall perform the duty of a husband's brother to his wife. Compare Deut. 25:5. <sup>3</sup> Gr. seven. <sup>4</sup> Many ancient authorities add of God.

33. they were astonished at his doctrine] or "teaching." Probably the *mode* of his teaching astonished the multitude more than the substance of it, in this case. The majority of the Jews believed in the resurrection, as against the Sadducees, so the truth was not new to them; but the form of putting it was new and astonished them.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—Some Christian people are full of ambition. They are full of prejudices. They are conceited. They would forward school, church, mission societies and other work by schemes of their own. They plot to "get behind" those in authority. They lay a trap to remove some successful worker. They undermine his influence. They come with flattering compliments. Their proposition has a fair outside; it has revolution within. It means destruction to others; power to them. In their opinion, this or that worker is wrong. The Church is not succeeding under his direction. The mission society might have millions for missions, where it has thousands. Thus they decoy others to cry for their own advancement. They care not a fig for the "tribute" to Cæsar. Destroy this popular leader, and we will get the rule then. Destroy these "orthodox teachings," then our views will have a chance. Such shameful scheming ought to have no place among the followers of Christ. It has none except among sham Christians.

THE PHARISEES SILENCED. vs. 34-46. Mark 12: 28-37; Luke 20: 41-44.

THE TEMPLE, JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

*Analysis.*—The Pharisees assemble, v. 34; the lawyer's question, v. 35; the two great commandments, vs. 36-40; What think ye of Christ? vs. 41-46.

34. Pharisees . . . gathered together] The Pharisees had proceeded warily. They had put forward their younger disciples with the Herodians. They had been content to let the Sadducees try to ensnare Jesus. Perhaps they urged on the latter in their attempt. Now the Sadducees were silenced, literally "muzzled" or "gagged." The same Greek word is in v. 12, where the guest was "speechless;" Mark 1: 25 and Luke 4: 35, where the demon was "silenced;" Mark 4: 39, where the storm was turned into a calm, and in 1 Cor. 9: 9, where it is forbidden to "muzzle" the ox that treadeth out the corn. The Herodians and Sadducees having been baffled, it now seems to the Pharisees an opportune time for them to come forward themselves with superior wisdom and astuteness. So they now put forward a lawyer, the keenest of their number, with

36. Master, which is the great commandment in the law?] The

COMMON VERSION.

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 one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

REVISED VERSION.

33 living. And when the multitudes heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

34 But the Pharisees, when they heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, gathered themselves together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, 36 trying him, <sup>1</sup>Master, which is the great

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*

lawyer, among the Jews, was not one versed in the civil code, as with us. He was versed in the Jewish divine law; hence he resembled our theologian, or professor in theology. This question was asked "tempting" or "to try" Jesus. But how try him? This has been variously answered. 1. To assail his answer on theological grounds, so Meyer. This may be true, but is too indefinite. 2. In sincerity to test his wisdom, so Olshausen and Alford. But the introduction and the fact that he represented the Pharisees are against this view. 3. That if Jesus should cite the first commandment, then they would have ground to convict him of blasphemy in claiming or accepting worship. So Lange; and to this Schaff inclines as the preferable view. It is doubtful whether the Pharisees had reached this yet, though they did reach it before the week ended. It is more probable that the aim was to force him to declare himself on the question which divided the schools. Whichever side he favored, he would surely be denounced by the opposing faction, and so the first step toward destroying his popularity with the people would be successfully taken.

**38. This is the first and great commandment]** The question did not imply, What *kind* of commandment is great? as Meyer and Plumptre suggest, for this does not suit the context. The question went deeper—What is it? that is, How much, and what, does it include? The answer of Jesus is complete. The first part of the answer comes from Deut. 6: 5; the second from Lev. 19: 18. The books of the Pentateuch, now freely pulled to pieces by certain astute critics as if not trustworthy, were authorities to which Jesus frequently appealed in proof of some of his most profound teachings. His answer was the sum of all the commandments, comprising the first and second tables of the law: 1. Supreme love to God. 2. Love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two, as on a strong hook, hangeth all the teachings in the law and in the prophets. These are fundamental; all others are expansions of these principles.

**42. What think ye of Christ?]** Again Jesus turns catechist. Having answered all their puzzling questions, and silenced his opponents, he turns upon the Pharisees. "What think ye of Christ?" is a crucial question. Jesus was skilled in asking as well as answering questions. The Jews saw the drift of the second but not of the first question. So they were at first silent. Our answer to this test question determines—1. Our creed, our the-

## COMMON VERSION.

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 as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

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.*

## REVISED VERSION.

37 commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy

38 soul, and with all thy mind. This is the 39 great and first commandment. <sup>1</sup>And a

second like *unto it* is this, Thou shalt 40 love thy neighbour as thyself. On these

two commandments hangeth the whole 41 law, and the prophets.

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question,

42 saying, What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *And a second is like unto it, Thou shalt love etc.*

ology. 2. Our idea of salvation. 3. Our Christian character and experience. As the Jews hesitated, Jesus asks, "Whose son is he?"—the Christ. This seemed a simple, harmless question. They answered promptly and correctly. But next comes a question which again baffled them as had the question about John's baptism, 21: 25-27.

43. **How then doth David in [the] Spirit call him Lord** [The citation following is from Ps. 110: 1. This is proof—1. That David was the writer of the Psalm; though Meyer rashly asserts that this is impossible. 2. That in thus writing it, he was under the inspiration of the Spirit. 3. That it referred to the Messiah. "Jehovah said unto my Lord," etc., brings out the distinction in stronger light. How then is he David's son? This the Pharisees could not understand. It was perceived later by Peter, Acts 2: 25, and fully answered by Paul when writing to the Romans, Rom. 1: 3-4. All further attempts to ask cavilling and crafty questions of Jesus ceased. The wily plotters were caught in their own trap. The wordy snares set for Jesus he had sprung upon the deceitful questioners. The people marvelled, and more strongly than ever were won to the support of this new teacher. So his opponents dare not ask further questions, for fear of worse discomfiture. But they could not so easily escape. In a short hour or two he was to pronounce woes upon them.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Supreme love to God is man's first duty. 2. Love to his neighbor springs from this and is coupled with it. 3. The law is love, and love fulfills the law. 4. Faith comes to an end in fruition; but love never fails, never ends. Love is the grace that endures. 5. What do you think of Christ? 6. Whose son is he? What is his character? What is his work for you? 7. What is Christ to you? A teacher? an example? a miracle worker? a prophet? a priest? a King? Or is he besides all these a divine Saviour?

#### CHAP. XXIII. THE GODLY AND THE HYPOCRITICAL. vs. 1-39.

*Analysis.*—The scribes and Pharisees' commands approved, their example condemned, vs. 1-7; not to be called Rabbi or leader, vs. 8-12; the seven woes (eight including v. 14) against the scribes and Pharisees, vs. 13-33; wicked treatment of God's messengers, vs. 34-36; lament over Jerusalem, vs. 37-39.

This discourse is given by Matthew only, though portions are found in

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,	43 <i>The son of David.</i> He saith unto them, How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying,
44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?	44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I put thine enemies underneath thy feet?
45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?	45 If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son? And no one was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.
46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.	

Mark 12: 38-40 and Luke 20: 45-47, and similar words were spoken earlier, Luke 11: 37-52; 13: 31-35.

*Beware of the example of the Pharisees* (23: 1-12).

**1. spake Jesus to the multitude]** This discourse to the multitude and to his disciples closed the public teaching of Jesus. Notice that it was spoken not to his disciples only. This will be a key to the right interpretation of some portions of the discourse.

**2. sit in Moses' seat]** The scribes and Pharisees were the official interpreters of the law. Moses gave the law; they as his official successors explained it. Sitting was the usual posture of teachers.

**3. whatsoever they bid you observe . . . do]** That is (1) whatever in their official character they command you; (2) whatever they bid you from the law of Moses, that do. This would not include their tradition. In either case *official* position and authority are to be respected, even when the personal character and conduct of the officer are to be censured. A minister's official position and teaching are to be regarded, even though he is not a perfect example of the truth he proclaims. Some, like the old Pharisees, say and do not. Follow their teaching rather than their example.

**4. For they bind heavy burdens]** How heavy they made the laws we know from the writings of the rabbins. They exalted tradition above the law. They introduced formalism in worship. What was light under the law was made grievous under tradition. The two great schools of the rabbins held that when there had been any increase of burden introduced it must be continued. The schools also disputed on the most trivial and hair-splitting questions, so that conscientious persons were often in great perplexity about the right. As an instance of the absurd lengths to which they would go, the two schools had a controversy upon whether it was lawful to kill a louse on the Sabbath. They laid these heavy burdens even in trivial matters on men's shoulders, but did not lift a finger toward lightening or moving them. Once on, by their rule they must remain.

**5. make broad their phylacteries]** There were two kinds of phylacteries, one worn on the forehead, the other on the left arm. The first kind were small leathern boxes, an inch or an inch and a half square, within which were inclosed four pieces of parchment, on which were written (1) Ex. 12: 2-10; (2) Ex. 13: 11-21; (3) Deut. 6: 4-9; (4) Deut. 11: 18-21. On the

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXIII.—Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

<sup>2</sup> Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

<sup>3</sup> All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

## REVISED VERSION.

**23** Then spake Jesus to the multitudes

**2** and to his disciples, saying, The scribes

**3** and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: all

things therefore whatsoever they bid

you, *these* do and observe: but do not ye

after their works; for they say, and do

**4** not. Yea, they bind heavy burdens <sup>1</sup> and

grievous to be borne, and lay them on

men's shoulders; but they themselves

will not move them with their finger.

**5** But all their works they do for to be

seen of men: for they make broad their

phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *and grievous to be borne*.

outside of the box was the Hebrew letter shin שׁ. This was bound to the forehead by a thong or ribbon, and hence called "frontlet," and worn at morning and sometimes at evening prayer. The other kind of phylactery consisted of two rolls of parchment with an inscription of texts in Hebrew, and fastened to the arm. The "borders of their garments" were properly the "fringes," and included the "tassels." See Num. 15 : 38. The "fringe" was of blue, and as a memorial was worn according to law. Jesus does not forbid wearing phylacteries or fringes, but he does forbid broadening and enlarging them for show. It was another sign of hypocrisy and of pretence to greater piety and faithfulness than others possessed. Jesus himself wore the "fringes" or "cloak with the talith," Matt. 9 : 20, but not for display.

The Greek word for phylacteries primarily signified "defences"; in later Greek it designated "amulets" or "charms." The Hebrew term *tephillim* first signified prayers or praise songs. These are still used by the Jews, and enclose ejaculations, not formal prayers. They are put on when the man is preparing for weekday services in the synagogue, or when he is to engage in private prayers as a substitute for public worship. See Mills, *British Jews*.

6. uppermost rooms] or most honorable places. It was not taking, but ambitiously seeking, these positions which is condemned. Some one *must* occupy these first places. Wait to be invited to them, not rush and scheme for them. In the time of Christ the Jews had adopted the Roman or Persian custom of reclining on couches at the meals. The wide divans or couches were on three sides of a table, and were broad enough for a person to recline his whole length across them, with his head toward the table. Each couch had its place of honor or "uppermost room," "room" being used in its old English sense of "place." This would be the reclining place next to the host. See Schaff's *Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Eating." The chief seats in the synagogue were those at the end toward Jerusalem, usually the eastern end of the building. They were commonly assigned to those of great reputation for piety.

7. called . . . Rabbi] That is, "my master," "my teacher." There were three degrees, "Rab," "teacher," "Rabbi," "my teacher;" "Rabban" or "Rabboni," "my great teacher." A teacher was not called by his name, but by his title. Yet it is a repeated saying of Shemaiah, a predecessor of Hillel, "men should love the work, but hate the title,—Rabbi."

8. be not ye called Rabbi] Ye are not to assume the authority of the teacher; that place is for Jesus only. Ye are all brethren. All ye alike are saved by grace. This thought in 20 : 25-28 is here enforced by particular examples. What did Jesus mean by forbidding them to be called "Rabbi,"

COMMON VERSION.

6 And 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.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

REVISED VERSION.

6 *their garments*, and love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the syn-

7 agogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called of men, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren.

"leader," and forbidding them to call any one "father"? Some, as Barnes (who refused the degree) and L. Abbott, say it forbids the acceptance of D.D. (Doctor of Divinity) and similar titles. But why not also of "Rev." (Reverend), of M.A. (Master of Arts), and B.A. (Bachelor of Arts), and all other academic degrees? Seeking such titles and bestowing or accepting them in a vainglorious spirit are unquestionably forbidden. Jesus addressed these words not to the disciples alone, but also to the multitude. See v. 1. He clearly draws a line between the teaching and the example of those appointed to explain the law. The disciples and the multitude were exhorted to follow the former and to avoid the latter.

Jesus meant (1) that his people should break away from the lordship of the Jewish rabbis; (2) that they should recognize him alone as supreme "teacher;" (3) that he alone should be the supreme "master" or "leader" in his Church. The disciples were not to be called "leaders." Forgetting this divided the Church at Corinth, one saying I am of Paul, another, I of Apollos, and another, I of Cephas, 1 Cor. 1: 12; (4) the heavenly Father is the only true father of every child in Christ: no one on earth is to be given any such spiritual honor by any disciple; (5) all this implies parity of privilege, though there are variety and degrees in gifts, graces and opportunities; (6) the spirit of these commands is opposed to all pride, self-seeking, vainglory and display in Christians.

It does not mean to forbid, as some say, (1) addressing our parents or the aged in terms of respect, as father, mother, etc. Stephen, before the Sanhedrin, began his address, "Brethren and fathers," Acts 7: 2. Paul began his to the Jews in the same words, Acts 22: 1; compare 1 Cor. 4: 15; 1 Tim. 1: 2; Titus 1: 4. Nor (2) a recognition of various gifts, duties and positions required in gospel work. There were "first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, . . . kinds of tongues," 1 Cor. 12: 28, Revised Version. Compare, also, 1 Cor. 12: 4-11; 14: 21-25; Eph. 4: 11; Acts 6: 3-5; Heb. 13: 17; Rom. 12: 6. Nor (3) the designation of workers assigned to various kinds and grades of Christian work by some name indicating their work. This is abundantly shown by such texts as those just cited. The necessity for it is too obvious to require more than a statement of it. Nor (4) the recognition of progress in gospel knowledge. Paul claims the titles of "preacher," "apostle" and "teacher of the Gentiles," 1 Tim. 2: 7. He made progress in gospel knowledge. The Jewish Christians are sharply censured for not having gained sufficient knowledge to become teachers, Heb. 5: 12. Paul calls Peter an "apostle of the circumcision," Gal. 2: 8, and when his own authority was not fully recognized he claims, though with great modesty, to be not a whit behind the chiefest apos-

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<sup>d</sup> COMMON VERSION.

9 And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

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REVISED VERSION.

9 And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, <sup>1</sup>*even* he who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, *even* the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the heavenly*.



bles, 2 Cor. 12: 11. Hence (5) academic and such other titles as are proper recognitions of progress in Christian knowledge come under a right principle. If they are unworthily, inconsiderately or corruptly bestowed, the true way is to correct the abuse, not attempt to abolish all distinctions in knowledge. Abuse of a good thing does not make the right use of it a sin. These degrees and titles are not marks of spiritual domination, but of industrious effort to gain biblical knowledge. Those bestowing them ought to be assured beforehand by suitable examination, as in case of entering the ministry, or in some equally thorough manner, that the qualifications indicated by the title are really possessed; and (6) honestly desiring and industriously working to possess the best qualifications, knowledge and gifts in Christian work are not forbidden. Paul urges the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts," or "desire earnestly the greater gifts" as the Revised Version reads, 1 Cor. 12: 31. Compare 14: 1.

11. greatest among you] See notes on 20: 24-28.

THE SEVEN WOES. vs. 13-36.

13. woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees] These seven woes (eight if we count v. 14, not retained in the Revision) were: *First woe*, on closing the kingdom of heaven (*woe* on oppression of the poor, v. 14). *Second woe*, on sectarian zeal in proselyting. *Third woe*, on unlawful oaths and vows. *Fourth woe*, on neglecting justice, mercy and faith. *Fifth woe*, on striving for outward, not inward, piety. *Sixth woe*, on show and hiding corruption. *Seventh woe*, against religious persecution.

These stern and heavy "woes" are quite as full of sorrow as of indignation. They have been contrasted with seven or eight beatitudes of the sermon on the mount. The Greek word for hypocrite means literally an "actor," one who "acts a part" in a play. Thus it is one who "plays a part," who is a "sham," not a real worker. You profess to hold the key to the kingdom. Jesus says in effect, You do not open the door for yourselves, and you lock it against those who desire to go in. This they did by their traditionary and false teaching.

14. devour widows' houses] This verse is omitted in the Revised

COMMON VERSION.

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! 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.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *greater*. <sup>2</sup>Or, *minister* <sup>3</sup>Gr. *before*.

REVISED VERSION.

11 Christ. But he that is <sup>1</sup>greatest among you shall be your <sup>2</sup>servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the kingdom of heaven <sup>3</sup>against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Some authorities insert here, or after v. 12, v. 14 *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, even while for a pretence ye make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive greater condemnation.* See Mark 12: 40; Luke 20: 47.

Version, and is wanting in many old manuscript copies of this Gospel. It appears in Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47, where it is unquestionably genuine. The thought it expresses is therefore undoubtedly a part of God's word. The "long prayer" may refer to the eighteen prayers which were the Pharisees' prescribed standard of devotion. Edersheim cites portions of these prayers. See *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. i. chap. x. It is bad enough to swindle the poor, helpless widow; but to do it under the cloak of superior sanctity is a most heinous sin.

**15. to make one proselyte]** "Ye compass," that is, travel about over sea and land to secure one "proselyte," one who comes to a "belief"; hence a new "convert." In early times Judaism was a non-missionary faith; but in the times of John Hyrcanus, Judaism was forced upon some of the surrounding peoples by the sword. See 1 Macc. 5:65, 66. This spirit of proselyting seems to have been strong in the days of Jesus. There were few real, but many pretended, conversions. So the converts had all the formalism of their faith, with none of its better spiritual principles. Thus they became two-fold worse than the native Pharisees themselves. They practiced all the worst outward features of the religion, and none of the better inward doctrines. They have a representative in modern sectarian zeal, that seeks to extend a particular creed more than to promote faith and life in Christ.

**16. swear by the gold]** It is not easy to see *why* the Pharisees made this distinction. The "gold" cannot refer here simply to what is "corban," "devoted," but must include any gold of the temple. The shallowness of this reasoning Jesus punctures by a question; and then he further lays open their fallacies by direct declarations in vs. 19-22.

## COMMON VERSION.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is 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 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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of <sup>1</sup> hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, who say, Whosoever shall swear by the <sup>2</sup> temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the <sup>2</sup> temple, he is <sup>3</sup> a

17 debtor. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the <sup>2</sup> temple that

18 hath sanctified the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the

19 gift that is upon it, he is <sup>3</sup> a debtor. Ye blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or

20 the altar that sanctifieth the gift? He therefore that sweareth by the altar,

21 sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And he that sweareth by the <sup>2</sup> temple,

22 sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that sweareth

by the heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Gehenna*.<sup>2</sup> Or, *sanctuary*: as in v. 35.<sup>3</sup> Or, *bound* by his oath

**23. pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin]** Jesus does not condemn the Pharisees for attention to these small matters. He reproves them because they knew enough to give attention to these smaller things, and yet neglected the more important duties. "Mint," or "sweet smell" as the Greek literally means, of several kinds, is common in Palestine. It is allied to garden sage. It was one of the herbs which tradition says was eaten at the passover. "Anise," a rendering which comes from Tyndale, more accurately "dill," has strong sedative properties. "Cummin," belonging to the fennel class of herbs, is used as a spice. The seeds are aromatic, are bruised and mixed with bread, and used to flavor soups, stews and various dishes common in an Oriental meal. See Isa. 28 : 25, 27. The Pharisees were scrupulously exact in paying a tenth of all these into the temple treasury. They gave tithes, but withheld faith, mercy and righteousness.

Our Saviour does not condemn them for being careful about these smaller matters; but for placing these smaller things before the weightier ones, so that the latter were wholly neglected. They had not only reversed the order of doing; they had given all their thought to minor matters. God had not received from them piety, faith, righteousness—the great matters of which tithes were merely the type and pledge.

**24. strain at a gnat]** Or, "strain out a gnat." The latter reading is found in earlier editions of the English Bible, as Tyndale's, Bishop's, and now restored in the Revised Version. "Strain at a gnat" may be a printer's error in the King James version, continued with singular pertinacity until now, though Alford and others dispute this, and suppose it to mean "strain (out the wines) at (the occurrence of) a gnat." It seems scarcely probable that a printer's blunder in such a book would be retained so long without notice. Similar proverbs, illustrating great punctiliousness in little things and great oversight of important duties, are common in the East. The meaning is, the Jews would strain the wine to avoid a gnat, but would swallow a whole camel, which was also an unclean animal, without a scruple.

**25. the outside of the cup and . . . platter]** The cup is strictly a side-dish. They would clean the surface of their dishes to avoid any defilement in eating, but would not hesitate to fill the dishes with the proceeds of their extortion, and to eat oftentimes to excess.

**26. cleanse first]** Fill the cup and platter with what has been honestly

COMMON VERSION.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and 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.

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 Pharisee, cleanse first that

REVISED VERSION.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe the mint and <sup>1</sup>anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other

24 undone. Ye blind guides, who strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel.

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess.

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the in-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *dill*

gained; make your life pure and righteous; without this the dishes, though they be ever so clean, will not keep you from being defiled.

**27. whitened sepulchres]** To touch a dead body or a tomb made a Jew ceremonially unclean. All the tombs were therefore whitened once a year, on the 15th of Adar,—early in our March,—that no one passing need touch them. The Pharisees' characters were like these "lime-powdered" tombs, white without, but full of foulness within.

**29. tombs of the prophets]** The burial-places of the old prophets often lay neglected for generations. Then their tombs began to be built. There are several public tombs or monuments now about Jerusalem, as the tomb of Zachariah, of Jehoshaphat, of Absalom and of Rachel. They "garnish" or adorn the tombs of the "righteous," the more "modern saints." Very promptly they recognize their sacred character. There seems to be a delicate contrast in this "build" and "garnish," as also in vs. 30, 31, these acts being a testimony against themselves and the nation.

**31. ye are the children]** or "sons of them that slew the prophets." That is, you partake of their character. You are reproducing now their spirit, and about to finish up their evil work. Jesus alluded to their secret plots against his life.

**33. serpents, . . . vipers, how can ye escape]** The force of these words is widely changed by the tones of voice in which we suppose them to have been uttered. That they were spoken in the heat of anger we do not for a moment imagine. They rather sprang from that deep sorrow, that almost unutterable grief, which must have filled the Saviour's heart at the

## COMMON VERSION.

*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 whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all 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 sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in 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.

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; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city.

## REVISED VERSION.

side of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and garnish the tombs

30 of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the

31 blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye witness to yourselves, that ye are sons

32 of them that slew the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye

33 serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgement of <sup>1</sup>hell? There-

34 fore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall ye kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city:

<sup>1</sup> Gr. Gehenna.

thought of their awful sin. And that grief and sorrow gave a subdued tenderness to his voice and a solemnity to his tone, which we may well believe were far more awful and impressive than the most violent denunciation. Many kinds of serpents or snakes and vipers abound in Syria. Over thirty species, either harmless or poisonous, have been found and described in western Palestine alone. The cerastes is a small but deadly viper. Even the horse will rear and shake with terror at the sight of it. Another species of very poisonous serpents is the hooded cobra, which is now found on the plains of Palestine. Of thirty to thirty-five kinds of serpents found in that land, six or eight are very poisonous.

**the damnation of hell]** Or, "the judgment of hell," R. V. The Greek term is *Gehenna*, a Hebrew word spelled with Greek letters. The question is stronger than the direct assertion; it means, it is impossible to escape. This word "Gehenna" originally designated a portion of the valley of Hinnom, where children were burned alive as offerings to the god Moloch. The screams of the infants and the lurid fires with the horrid rites made it to the Jews a symbol of the place of torment hereafter. The place was made more abominable to the Jews later because all refuse of the temple and of the animals sacrificed were there burned and the fire kept up continually—a fire never quenched.

**35. from the blood of righteous Abel unto . . . Zacharias]** This declaration begins in v. 34, with "Therefore." See Revised Version. Because of this confirmed wicked character of yours, as I send to you prophets and wise men, you will crucify and kill some, scourge others and persecute them. "I send" is the historical or prophetic present, often used in such declarations. A similar declaration in Luke 11 : 49 is introduced by "Therefore also said the wisdom of God," as if it might be a quotation. But there is no indication of that here, nor can such a passage be found in the Old Testament. For a similar passage see the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras 1 : 30-33. It is better to assume that Jesus here speaks in his office of prophet, and declares the judgment coming upon the Jewish nation for all their rebellious acts against God and his messengers. The Abel meant is clearly the son of Adam, the first Old Testament martyr. There is a difficulty in regard to Zacharias, since the Zechariah of 2 Chron. 24 : 20-23 was the son of Jehoiada. He was slain in the court of the Lord's house. There was a Zechariah, the son of Berechiah (Zech. 1 : 1), one of the minor prophets, but of the manner of his death neither Scripture nor tradition tells us, unless we suppose it is here related. Some suggest that it was a Zechariah son of Baruch named by Josephus, or Zechariah the father of John the Baptist, reputed by tradition to have been so slain by order of Herod. It is more probable that it refers to the Zechariah of 2 Chron. 24 : 20, and that his father or near ancestor

## COMMON VERSION.

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

## REVISED VERSION.

35 that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barakiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary

may have borne the name of Barachias. Our inability to determine this in nowise invalidates the statement. Our ignorance is no argument against the knowledge of the evangelist or of Jesus.

**36. upon this generation]** These were national sins. As such, punishment would come upon the nation. So one generation in a nation piles up guilt for the next. This is true in the operation of natural laws. It is likewise true in God's moral government of nations now.

*Lament over Jerusalem*, vs. 37-39. A similar exclamation of sorrow appears at an earlier period in the ministry of Jesus. See Luke 13: 34.

**37. how often would I have gathered]** There is a simple pathos in this lament which touches every heart. The familiar illustration of a brood of helpless chickens under the mother hen's wings may have a deeper significance than appears on the surface. Converts to Judaism were said to come under the wings of the Shekinah or cherubim. This thought may be included in the figure. Jerusalem, as the capital of the nation, is charged with the national sins. Representative of the people, her unwillingness to come to God was an index of the whole nation's rebellion; her destruction, of the final ruin of the nation.

**39. Blessed is he that cometh]** This has been understood to refer—1. To the destruction of Jerusalem. 2. To the second coming of Christ. 3. To the final restoration and conversion of the Jews. Prophecies of this character are sometimes partially fulfilled by one and partially by another succeeding event. That is, there is a continued fulfillment in history. It may be true of this one that it has a fulfillment in each of these great events, and yet not a complete fulfillment in either taken separately. How strikingly vs. 36 and 38 were fulfilled we learn from the Jewish historian Josephus. His picture of the awful sufferings, distress and woe at the siege and fall of Jerusalem is too heartrending for strong nerves to read without a shudder. Josephus, *Wars*, bk. vi. See also Farrar's *Life of Christ*, chap. 52 (close of the chapter).

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Even the scribes and Pharisees might explain the law: so imperfect men may proclaim the gospel. 2. Jesus commanded the people to do what the Pharisees bade from the law, but not to follow their example: so we are to mind the teaching of the gospel rather than the example of some teachers. 3. Good laws may be carried out by bad judges: we are not to reject the good law, though we should avoid the

## COMMON VERSION.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I 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, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

## REVISED VERSION.

36 and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her

38 wings, and ye would not! Behold, your

39 house is left unto you *desolate*. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities omit *desolate*.

example of a bad judge. 4. Seeking lordships and striving for the first positions in the Church of Christ is contrary to a Christ-like spirit. 5. There is an equality of privilege, but not of gifts and talents, in the kingdom of God. 6. The hypocritical and the pretentious have no place in true religion. 7. Using religion as a cloak to indulge in sin calls down the severest woe. 8. Show and display in religion exhibit the lack of religion. 9. National sins sometimes pile up, bringing increased punishment. 10. National warnings ought to bring national repentance. 11. In repentance and in putting away sin there is safety. 12. Christ's love follows and pleads with us in our sin. 13. There will come a time when he will leave the sinner to his own delusion.

CHAP. XXIV. THE GREAT PREDICTION. 24:1 to 25:46.

*Introduction.*—The prophecies and teachings in chapters 24 and 25 were spoken to the disciples, Peter, James, John and Andrew. It is hazardous to attempt a *definite* interpretation of prophecy in advance of its fulfillment. A portion of this great prediction of Jesus, it is generally conceded, is yet unfulfilled. The whole passage is therefore properly regarded as one of the most difficult in the New Testament. There are certain outlines of it, however, so clear that they need not be misunderstood.

Notice carefully—1. The question of the disciples which introduced the discourse. Putting together the three accounts by Matthew, Mark and Luke, the question was fourfold: (1) When shall these things be? (2) what the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? (3) the sign of thy coming? and (4) of the end of the world, or age? "These things" in the first question clearly refers to the temple and its destruction, mentioned in vs. 1, 2.

Notice—2. Our Lord makes a general answer to their questions, rather than specific answers. It is a free conversation with four disciples, not a formal and orderly discourse. He does not give a complete answer to one question and then take up another question for a similar answer, like a modern theological professor. Jesus talks with his four chosen disciples of the future in a familiar way. He kindly warns them of coming dangers; of great strife and woes; of persecutions; of escapes; of false leaders; tells them of a coming of the Son of man; of the uncertainty of the time; the need of watchfulness; illustrating all this by parables, and ends the conversation by a graphic representation of the judgment.

Notice further—3. That in this answer our Lord, besides giving warnings against being deceived and against allowing persecutions to cool their love, 24:4-41, he adds parables which enforce, and show that rewards will surely follow, watchfulness and faithfulness in the Lord's service, and that the awards in the final judgment will turn upon the love and kindness shown to Christ's disciples. 24:43 to 25:46.

Notice—4. That the most difficult portion is thus reduced to less than thirty verses: 24:14-42. It is further evident that these thirty verses contain a prediction of the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem, and of a coming of the Son of man.

5. The explanation of these thirty verses in detail turns chiefly upon the meaning given in vs. 27, 28 to the Greek word for "immediately" (*εὐθέως*), and to the language of vs. 29-31, and to the word "generation" in v. 34. Those who limit "generation" to the lifetime of those then living understand all the passage, 24: 4-42, to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem or the Jewish state, and regard vs. 29-31 as figurative and poetic language.

Among the views suggested by writers are—1. That Jesus foretells the end of the world, of which the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple were a type: the whole prophecy having a double fulfillment. 2. That the predictions are divisible: (a) fall of Jerusalem, 4-14; (b) second coming of Christ, 15-28; (c) end of world, 29-51. Or again: 3. That he foretells the fall of Jerusalem, vs. 4-22, and his second advent, vs. 23-31. 4. That the change from Jerusalem to his advent is made at v. 29, but "immediately" must be read in view of the statement that with God a thousand years are as one day. And 5. That the prophecy is so mingled that it is impossible to say which portion refers to Jerusalem or which part to his second coming.

Bearing in mind then, 1, that unfulfilled prophecy cannot safely be explained in detail, and 2, that the disciples still had vague ideas concerning the kingdom of Christ, Jerusalem, the temple and the Jewish dispensation, and 3, that their question related to different events, which seemed to be connected in their thought, and lastly, 4, that the answer is a familiar talk, the following explanations in detail must suffice.

COMING OF THE END. vs. 1-14. Mark 13: 1-10; Luke 21: 5-19.

MOUNT OF OLIVES, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

**1. Jesus went . . . from the temple]** The outward splendor of the temple remained, but its glory had departed; the public teaching of the Master of the temple had now closed. His disciples called his attention to the magnificence of the building. It was gilded, and when the sun shone the dazzling light was so brilliant that it forced those looking upon it to turn away their eyes. Then some of the stones were immense, according to Josephus forty-five cubits long, five high and six broad, or about seventy-five feet long by eight feet thick and ten feet wide. To some of these stones the disciples appear to have called attention, as if nothing could overthrow such a massive building. For plan of the temple, see p. 262.

**2. not be left here one stone upon another]** Strong as all these seem to you, they will be utterly destroyed. This was literally fulfilled. The destruction of the temple is fully given in Milman's *History of the Jews*,

COMMON VERSION.

**CHAP. XXIV.**—And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and 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 things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

REVISED VERSION.

**24** And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him to shew him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.





MOUNT OF OLIVES.

*(From a Photograph.)*

Looking from the Kedron eastward; the Latin Gethsemane enclosed in the wall in front; the trees are olive, fig, carob, and a few apricot, almond, terebinth, and hawthorns.

II. bk. xvi. Its destruction was not a probable thing, even in case of rebellion by the Jews under the Roman yoke. The emperor Titus gave an express order to save this magnificent building. A frenzied Roman soldier hurled a firebrand through one of the temple windows, which set it on fire. The Roman general used every effort to put out the fire, but in vain. It was soon one sheet of flame, and then the walls were demolished by order of Titus. Josephus narrates the frantic acts of the soldiers, the earnestness of Titus to save the temple, and its complete destruction in spite of all the Roman commander could do. So the prophecy was fulfilled by Romans, who had no regard for Scripture.

3. sat upon the mount of Olives] Jesus and his disciples appear to have gone from the temple, out of the city, across the Kedron, and up the side of Olivet. The four disciples, Peter, James, John and Andrew (Mark 13: 3), came to him aside as he sat on the mount with the temple and city in full view and asked, When shall these things be? the sign of this coming to pass? the sign of thy coming or presence? and of the end of the world or age? Compare Mark 13: 4 and Luke 21: 7. These are not to be taken as four distinct questions, but rather as one question of a fourfold character; the points having some undefined but near relation to one another in their minds. The Lord's παρουσία, presence or coming, seemed to them to have some connection with the destruction of the temple and with the end of the world. See 13: 39.

4. Take heed] The successive warnings are not a direct but an indirect answer to the inquiry of the disciples. The first warning is against false Christs. John mentions many in his day, 1 John 2: 18. They came assuming the name of Christ. The second thing was war. It was a time of peace when Jesus appeared on the earth. Soon after came wars, sieges, massacres, and a time of turbulence and trouble. The rumor of war is often more distracting and confusing and harrowing to the mind than war. See Dr. Schaff's extended note of his experience previous to the battle of Gettysburg in Lange on Matthew, p. 423. The disciples supposed that when the reign of Christ began they would be happy, peaceful and honored. As Bengel remarks, "they leave warfare out of the account, and fly all at once to the triumph." Jesus aims to correct this mistaken idea. He unfolds in a few words a panorama of history, true in every age and in every clime.

6. the end is not yet] All these false Christs, the contentions among

COMMON VERSION.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came 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 in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

REVISED VERSION.

3 And as he sat on the mount of Olives, the disciples came 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 lead you astray.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many

6 astray. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *presence*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the consummation of the age*

nations, in families, wars and every form of disturbance will come in the natural world, and yet the end will not be near. See also Luke 21: 9. They looked for the end, apparently, as soon as Christ should set up his kingdom. This was a distinct warning not to look for the end in the near future, but only after a long series of historic events.

**9. Then shall they deliver you up]** "Then," that is, during the period of these historic events, and early in the period. For Luke more definitely says, "But before all these," Luke 21: 12, which must mean that before all these other historic events his disciples would suffer severe persecutions. Mark records more fully what Jesus said about the coming trials, and how they would be enabled to meet them. See my *Commentary on Mark*, pp. 151-153.

**10. then shall many be offended]** or "stumble." This is a true picture of Christians in every age. When troubles and persecutions come, one begins to blame another for his misfortunes; fearing their own personal safety, some betray their friends, hatred springs up, Christian love grows cold, and sin abounds. Many would apostatize from the faith; the disciples were warned against this general tendency to apostasy in times of trials. In this history repeats itself a thousand times. Of the afflictions which Christians suffered under Roman rule Mr. Lecky gives a thrilling description: "We read of Christians bound in chains of red-hot iron, while the stench of their half-consumed flesh rose in a suffocating cloud to heaven; of others who were torn to the very bone by shells or hooks of iron; of holy virgins given over to the lust of the gladiator or to the mercies of the pander; of two hundred and twenty-seven converts sent on one occasion to the mines, each with the sinews of one leg severed by a red hot iron, and with an eye scooped from its socket; of fires so low that the victims writhed for hours in their agonies; of mingled salt and vinegar poured over the flesh that was bleeding from the rack; of tortures prolonged and varied through entire days."—*European Morals*, i. 497.

**12. iniquity shall abound]** "Because iniquity shall have the upper hand," Tyndale's Version reads. The wicked do seem to get the "upper hand" and the good get disheartened and give up hope.

**13. he that shall endure unto the end]** or, "he that endureth to the end." Compare the expression in Luke 21: 19, "In your patience ye shall

## COMMON VERSION.

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 are the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be 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 of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

## REVISED VERSION.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and earthquakes in

8 divers places. But all these things are

9 the beginning of travail. Then shall

they deliver you up unto tribulation,

and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated

of all the nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many stumble, and shall

deliver up one another, and shall hate

11 one another. And many false prophets

shall arise, and shall lead many astray.

12 And because iniquity shall be multiplied,

13 the love of the many shall wax cold. But

he that endureth to the end, the same

win your souls," as the Revised Version reads. The "end" here is clearly not the destruction of Jerusalem nor of the Jewish dispensation, but he that endures to the end of his trials, whenever that may come, the same shall be saved. It implies that there will be an end of trial, and the attainment of a finished salvation free from the contingencies of further trials.

14. this gospel . . . shall be preached in all the world] Compare the reading of the Revised with the Common Version: "The whole inhabited earth" here cannot fairly be limited to that portion under Roman rule. Some hold that the gospel was preached throughout all the world before the fall of Jerusalem. This is true only in a very loose and general sense of that portion under Roman dominion. But it cannot be proved that it was preached in eastern Asia, China or Japan for example, nor in more than the southern portion of Europe and the northern part of Africa, and certainly not in America, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Such a comparatively meagre fulfillment of Christ's prediction is insufficient to meet what the common reader would infer from this language; much less would it completely satisfy other divine declarations respecting the gospel. Compare Matt. 28: 19; Isa. 52: 10; Mark 16: 15; Luke 24: 47; 1 Cor. 15: 24-28. The more extended sense is more consistent with the context and with the language of the prediction. The preaching is for a "testimony unto all the nations." Those who limit this to the period before the fall of Jerusalem are compelled to interpret the phrase to mean as a testimony against the Jews, and against their wickedness in crucifying Christ. That is, according to this view, the whole world must be informed of this sin of the Jews, and then Jerusalem can be destroyed. This, as shown before, is unsatisfactory. The gospel is to be preached as a testimony to all nations, proving that salvation is offered; a testimony *against* them, if they refuse its offers. Compare Acts 13: 46; 28: 28; Matt. 21: 43. Christ does not here say that the gospel will be *received* by all nations, but only that it shall be preached to all nations.

then shall the end come] What end? Not merely the fall of Jerusalem, or the end of the Jewish dispensation, but the end of the world, or age.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ is our great prophet; this is part of his prediction. 2. Even disciples are liable to be deceived and led astray. 3. Here Christians are in the Church militant, full of troubles, dangers, perils and persecutions. 4. False prophets, false teachers and false Christs are in the world. 5. Strifes, wars and contentions are certain in human society, because good and evil are in the same world, same nation, same family, and often struggling for the possession of the same heart. 6. The *silence* of Christ respecting many things in the future is as significant as his prophecy. He says nothing to gratify curiosity. 7. His pregnant language calls for the exercise of great prudence and great faith.

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *these good tidings*

## REVISED VERSION.

14 shall be saved. And <sup>1</sup>this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole <sup>2</sup>world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *inhabited earth*.

## SIGNS OF THE END. vs. 15-22. Mark 13; Luke 21.

MOUNT OF OLIVES, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

15. see the abomination of desolation] Having given the general warnings against being deceived or discouraged because of persecution and a delay of Christ's coming, Jesus now takes up their first question, relating to the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple; as if he had said at the end of this general warning, "When, then—to answer your question—ye see," etc. The "abomination of desolation" has been variously understood to refer to (1) the standards of the Roman army, as in Luke 21: 20; these were already in Jerusalem, but not in the "holy place"; (2) the Roman eagles, to which sacrifices were offered—this is probable; (3) the defiling of the temple by Zealots; but in Daniel it refers to idol-worship. We may not know precisely what was understood by it. The sign was known to those for whom it was intended, for we know from Eusebius that the Christians escaped to Pella, in the mountains (see v. 16), before Jerusalem was sacked by the Roman army under Titus. The last clause of this verse is generally and properly regarded as a remark of the evangelist (not of Jesus), for it is not in the prophecy quoted. The remark has an important bearing on the date of this Gospel, and is a strong argument in support of the belief that it must have been written before the fall of Jerusalem.

17. him which is on the housetop] The eastern housetop in ordinary weather is the most frequented spot of the house. The roofs were flat, with "battlements" or balustrades to prevent persons from falling. Here they sat, walked, chatted, worked at light work, or found recreation or retirement. From the outside, a stairway led to the ground, so that one could descend without going down into the house. Those on the housetop were to escape with the greatest haste. The danger would be near; delay would be at the risk of safety. Nothing from the house could be carried away. So one in the field would have no time to return to the house for his raiment. He was to flee at the alarm given by these signs.

19. woe unto them] or more strictly the thought is "woe for them." It is an exclamation of pity and compassion rather than of condemnation. Mothers with very young children did suffer untold horrors. See the awful picture by Josephus of a woman eating her own child, *Jewish War*, Bk. VI. 3, 4.

## COMMON VERSION.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand.)

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on 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!

## REVISED VERSION.

15 When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in<sup>1</sup> the holy place (let him that readeth un-

16 derstand), then let them that are in Ju-

17 dea flee unto the mountains: let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house:

18 and let him that is in the field not return

19 back to take his cloke. But woe unto them that are with child and to them

<sup>1</sup> Or, a holy place

**20. neither on the sabbath day]** In the winter the poor refugees might perish from exposure and hunger. So if compelled to flee on the Sabbath they might find gates closed and avenues of escape cut off. It can scarcely refer to any scruples the Jewish Christians might have against travelling on the Sabbath in such a terrible time of distress and in order to save their lives.

**21. shall be great tribulation]** Josephus, a learned Jew, was an eye-witness of the awful sufferings which befell the people of Jerusalem during the siege. He would not be inclined to write a fulfillment of Christian prophecy. Yet no one can read his graphic description of that siege without noting how literally this prophecy came to pass. It would be difficult to find a parallel to the awful calamities which came upon that devoted city. According to Josephus 1,100,000 Jews were slain; 97,000 taken captive, many of whom were cut in pieces or were otherwise tortured to discover the gold they were believed to have swallowed. Thousands were destroyed by famine and pestilence. "Our city, Jerusalem," he exclaims, "had arrived at a higher degree of felicity than any other city under the Roman government, and yet at last fell into the sorest of calamities. It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to those of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were. This makes it impossible for me to contain my lamentations."—Pref. *Jewish Wars*.

Several coins were struck by the Roman emperors Titus, Vespasian and Domitian, in commemoration of the capture and fall of Jerusalem. Three coins by Vespasian have been found. On the obverse side of one is a figure of a soldier standing guard over a sitting captive. A palm tree stands between the two, and beneath are the words "*Jud. Capt.*," that is, *Judæa Capta*, "Judæa captured." The two letters "S. C." also appear on some of the coins, *Senatus Consultum*, "decree of the Senate." On another the captive has his hands tied behind him, and a trophy of arms upon a spear or ensign stands in the place of the palm tree. These figures upon the coins strikingly illustrate the predictions of Scripture respecting Judah and Jerusalem, "she being desolate shall sit upon the ground," Isa. 3 : 26.

**22. for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened]** The siege of Jerusalem was shortened in several providential ways: 1. The completion of the walls was stopped by an order of Claudius, A.D. 42 or 43. 2. The Jews, divided by factions, neglected to make preparations for a siege. 3. The provisions and stores were burned before the arrival of Titus. 4. The sudden coming of Titus caused the Jews to abandon some of the strongest fortifications. 5. Josephus says that Titus ascribed the speedy taking of the city to God. It cost Nebuchadnezzar a sixteen-months close siege to capture the city. The

COMMON VERSION.

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

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.

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.

REVISED VERSION.

20 that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter,

21 neither on a sabbath: for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until

22 now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be short-

Romans took it in less than five months. Jesus says the time was shortened for the sake of the "chosen," the remnant of the Jews who had become Christians or were truly godly.

SECOND WARNING AGAINST BEING DECEIVED. vs. 23-31.

**23. if any man . . . Lo, here is Christ]** Jesus had given them a general warning against being led astray by false prophets and false Christs. He now repeats it. They need not be deceived by any Millerite folly, though there might be danger that some true disciples would be misled by such delusions at that early day. Such pretenders will proclaim the coming of Christ here and there with great signs and wonders. But mark these, for "I have" plainly told you about them. You need not run into the wilderness nor hunt in hidden places for Christ, as those of old hunted for Moses and for Elijah.

**27. so shall also the coming of the Son of man be]** The *παρουσία*, presence or coming of the Son of man, will be as plain and conspicuous as the lightning which fills the heavens. All can see it, and none will doubt it. Luke 21: 24, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down, . . . until the times," etc., indicates a long interval between its fall and the end of the world.

**28. wheresoever the carcass is]** Notice that the connective "For" is omitted in the Revised Version, as also in some of the best manuscripts of this Gospel. Some interpretations of this proverb may be easily set aside as incongruous and fanciful, as—1. That the carcass means Christ, and the eagles his angels and saints; 2. That where the Jewish people are, there the Roman eagles or armies will be gathered; 3. That where false Christs are, there false people will gather. There may be a truth in 2 and 3, but not the truth intended by this proverb, which is broader and deeper. See Job 39: 30. Wherever there is corruption, there devouring judgments will gather. Sin brings together the vultures of its own destruction and punishment. Compare Deut. 28: 49; Jer. 6: 22, 23; 48: 40; 49: 22; Lam. 4: 19; Hos. 8: 1; Hab. 1: 8. For "eagles" read more exactly vultures. The great griffon vulture may be included in the word. It is very abundant in Palestine, a carrion feeder and a well-known bird of prey.

COMMON VERSION.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inasmuch 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.

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.

28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

<sup>1</sup> Or, him      <sup>2</sup> Or, them

REVISED VERSION.

23 ened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Here;

24 believe <sup>1</sup>*it* not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the

25 elect. Behold, I have told you before—

26 hand. If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner

27 chambers; believe <sup>2</sup>*it* not. For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the <sup>3</sup>coming of the Son of man.

28 Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the <sup>4</sup>eagles be gathered together.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *presence.*      <sup>4</sup> Or, *vultures*

**29-31. Immediately after the tribulation]** Nearly all the theories which attempt to find a definite fulfillment for every detail of this prophecy before the fall of Jerusalem and end of the Jewish dispensation break down here or in the next paragraph. They concede that this is either poetic or pictorial language if it represents the fall of a city by Christ sending "his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds." But if this is to be counted poetic language, then I cannot see on what principle of interpretation it can be said that the language of chap. 25:31, and on, is not poetical. Neither there nor here has the language any such a setting as to lead the ordinary reader to think he is reading poetry. It is the plainest, simplest prose in form and in its surroundings. Those who imagine that Christ's talks and conversations must be as orderly as a proposition in geometry are often driven to this "poetical" theory. His conversations are orderly, but it is the order of mental association, not of the rhetorician's logic. He was holding a familiar conversation with four intimate disciples. His talk was not in enigmatical phrases, nor in the hair-splitting terms of the critic or the logician. His friends were of the common people, and he talked for them, and through them to the great mass of common people of all generations. The obscurity here is just the obscurity that inheres in all unfulfilled prophecy.

Immediately after that period of tribulation mentioned in the first general warning, vs. 4-18, and repeated in vs. 24-28, an indefinite period of trial, then these signs shall appear. Compare Joel 2:31; Amos 5:20; Rev. 6:12-17. Notice how closely the language here resembles that in several passages in the book of Revelation. See 16:15-18; 19:17-19; 1:7; 4:5; 6:13, 14, etc. That the portents and events attending the fall of Jerusalem, remarkable as they were, fully answer to this majestic and awful description, few readers will maintain. Its complete fulfillment is clearly in the future. When it comes to pass there will be no dispute or doubt about it. All Christ's people will see eye to eye in regard to it. As Jesus elsewhere said, I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. John 14:29.

COMMON VERSION.

29 ¶ Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

REVISED VERSION.

29 But immediately, after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send forth his angels <sup>1</sup>with <sup>2</sup>a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *with a great trumpet, and they shall gather etc.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *a trumpet of great sound*



## PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE. vs. 32-35.

**32. learn a [the] parable of the fig tree]** The disciples were doubtless still debating in their minds about the time when these events would take place, and their relation to them. Jesus appears to answer their thought by this parable. The fig tree first puts forth its fruit, then the twigs become tender, the buds start, the leaves come out, and summer is indeed at hand.

**33. know that it is near]** or "that he (or it) is nigh," as the Revised Version reads. But to what does "it" or "he" refer? 1. Some, as Lange, say the *παρουσία* and the end of the world. 2. Others, as Grotius, De Wette and Meyer, say the Messiah. 3. Still others, the judgment. But Luke says definitely "the kingdom of God" is nigh. Luke 21 : 31. Then to what may "these things" refer? Manifestly to the same as in vs. 1, 2 and 3. In the conversation Jesus reverts to their first question, respecting the destruction of the temple, which had given them such surprise.

**34. This generation shall not pass]** The interpretation here turns on the meaning of "generation." Among the meanings given are—1. The human race, so apparently Jerome. 2. The Jewish nation: Dörner, Stier, Alford, Abbott, and substantially Wordsworth and Schaff. 3. The body of believers: Origen, Chrysostom, Paulus. 4. Those who know and discern the signs: Lange. But this is substantially the same as No. 3. 5. The generation then living: Meyer, De Wette, and substantially Luther, Starke, Gerlach and Wesley.

The Greek word (*γενεά*) for "generation" occurs about forty times in the New Testament. In the Common Version it is uniformly rendered "generation" in the Gospels; "time" and "times" twice, in Acts; twice "ages," in Eph. 3 : 5, 21; once "nation," in Phil. 2 : 15. But in all these passages the Revised Version reads uniformly "generation" or "generations." It cannot be denied that in most of these passages the context fairly limits the meaning to the "generation" then living. It seems natural to suppose the disciples would so understand it, and so undeniably the ordinary reader now accepts it. As the whole conversation has been explained above, there is no difficulty in this view. See also remarks v. 42. It is not applied to the race; and to say that this foretells the perpetuity of the Jewish nation until the end of the world, appears to hide the plain sense and discover obscurity in the simplest declaration. To apply it to the body of believers to the end of time is also a most unnatural rendering of speech. The common and ordinary sense has the fewest difficulties and is the best.

## COMMON VERSION.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, 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 fulfilled.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye

33 know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see all these things, know ye that I he is nigh, even at the

34 doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these

<sup>1</sup> Or, it

**35. Heaven and earth shall pass away]** This verse is not in the Sinaitic MS., and Tischendorf omits it. It is in the parallel passages of Mark and Luke, and hence an unquestioned part of the conversation. This verse is put into the form of a maxim or proverb, similar to v. 28. It is therefore a general aphorism, applicable to all that Jesus said. It is not a part of the parable. The aphorism appears more like a parenthetical remark; yet by the law of mental association it leads on to the next thought in v. 36.

TIME OF THE END NOT REVEALED. vs. 36-51. Compare Mark 13:22-37; Luke 17:20-37.

**36. of that day and hour knoweth no man]** or "no one." "That day" or season is here in contrast with "these things" of v. 34. "That day," used absolutely, as here, generally refers to the day of judgment, the final award. See Matt. 7:22; Luke 10:12; 1 Thess. 5:4; 2 Tim. 1:12, 18; 4:8. It is "that day" when heaven and earth shall pass away. Of that time no one only the Father knoweth. The Revised Version adds here, and Mark 13:32 specifies, "neither the Son." See also my *Commentary on Mark*, p. 159. Notice that Jesus does not tell his disciples when the end will be, nor "confound the destruction of Jerusalem with the end of the world." The attempts of Millerites and others like them to calculate from prophecy the precise day when the end of the world will come are contrary to the spirit of Christ's solemn words, and utterly vain.

**37. so shall also the coming of the Son of man be]** Here again is the Greek word *παρουσία*, coming, applied to the Son of man. This word occurs about twenty-four times in the New Testament. Four or five times it refers to the "coming" or "presence" of men; as the "presence" of Paul, Phil. 2:12; 2 Cor. 10:10; of Titus, 2 Cor. 7:6; of Stephanus, 1 Cor. 16:17. But it generally refers to the coming or presence of Christ. It occurs four times in this chapter, vs. 3, 27, 37, 39, but nowhere else in the Gospels. Some refer it (1) to an invisible spiritual coming, others (2) to a second coming to reign a thousand years with his people, known as the pre-millennial view, or (3) to his final coming at the end of the world. See 25:31. At his coming people would be as heedless as when the flood came. Noe is the Greek form of Noah, a needless variation in the English, which the Revised Version removes.

## COMMON VERSION.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 ¶ But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of 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,

## REVISED VERSION.

35 things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words

36 shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, <sup>1</sup>neither the Son, but

37 the Father only. And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the <sup>2</sup>coming of the

38 Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah en-

<sup>1</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, omit *neither the Son.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *presence.*

**39. knew not]** The world would go on eating, drinking, marrying, indicating that all their usual social, pleasurable and festal customs would be kept up until the very hour of his coming, and hence that day would take them by surprise, as the flood took the generation in the time of Noah.

**40. two be in the field]** This unquestionably has reference to the separation then to take place. The same truth is repeatedly taught in earlier instructions of our Lord, as in the parables of the wheat and the tares, and of the drag-net, 13: 36-52. Compare similar language in Luke 17: 30-37. Though verse 36 is there omitted in the Revised Version, vs. 34, 35, which are retained, present the same thought.

**41. Two . . . grinding at the mill]** The mill here named is the small hand-mill generally used by women. At present, in the East, the mill consists of two small circular stones about two feet in diameter. One stone is placed upon the other. The upper stone has a hole in the centre into which grain is poured, as in our common flouring-mills. It also has a strong pin of wood or of metal at one side, by which the upper stone is whirled around on the under one and the grain crushed. This work is usually done by women in the East. That one shall be taken and the other left again sets forth the sifting process of the judgment. To suppose that it refers to the escape of one and the capture of the other by an army is to put a most unnatural sense upon the words, and strains the meaning of the context. The predictions are intended to cover representative cases. In v. 40 the reference is to two men; here it relates to similar representative types in two women. Nor is it reasonable to limit it to slaves, as Meyer proposes; for in fact both slaves and free women were very frequently engaged in preparing grain for the household by grinding. It usually required two to work the mill, so they would be working together, one a believer, the other an unbeliever, hence the separation. There are few mill-streams in Palestine, hence hand-mills are a necessity. The phrase and the connection are unlike the warning to flee from temporal calamities of vs. 16-18. The older English versions bring out the meaning or contrast with greater sharpness: "The one shalbe received, and the other shalbe refused," says Tyndale; "left alone," reads the Bishops' Bible.

**42. Watch therefore]** Why were disciples to watch? Because no one knew when he would come. This thought had been repeated in varied phrase and illustration, lastly by the sudden coming of the flood in the days of Noah. So would the coming of the Son of man be; therefore, watch.

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

41 Two *women shall be grinding at the mill*; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 ¶ Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

## REVISED VERSION.

39 tered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the <sup>1</sup>coming of the

40 Son of man. Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left:

41 two women *shall be grinding at the mill*; 42 one is taken, and one is left. Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *presence*.



SYRIANS GRINDING GRAIN IN A HAND-MILL.  
The person at the left, in front of a bag of grain, is probably the owner.

*(From a Photograph.)*

But what coming of the Son of man? To destroy Jerusalem? Disciples, in that event, did not see or recognize any such coming as is described in vs. 29-31, or even in vs. 36-41. They are to watch because destruction or judgment will come on all unexpectedly.

43. if . . . had known . . . he would have watched] At this verse Robinson, Owen and others find a transition to predictions and instructions relating to the day of judgment. All up to this, in their view, relates to the fall of Jerusalem. For difficulties of this view, see notes on vs. 29-31 and summary at end of this chapter. The "goodman of the house" is simply "the master of the house." "Goodman" is probably from the Anglo-Saxon *gummann*, or *guma*, a man. Paul gives the same thought that Christ's coming is as uncertain as that of a robber at night, 1 Thess. 5: 2. Had he known when the thief would come, he would not have allowed his house "to be broken up;" literally, "digged through." See 6: 19, 20; Luke 12: 39; Mark 2: 4. The idea seems to be that of a thief getting upon the flat roof of the eastern house, perhaps by the outside stairway, and digging through the soft earthy covering, and thus entering the house to steal. So at an unlooked-for hour Christ will come. How true this is also of death!

45. Who then is a [the] faithful and wise servant [bond-servant] This is meant for all disciples. In the East the steward was a bond-servant, or slave. The master selected him because of his fidelity and watchfulness. The "steward" or "ruler" over a Roman estate or household had charge of the master's property, the payment of wages, the furnishing and distributing food and supplies to all the household. The faithful thus found watching when Christ comes will be confirmed in their stewardship. Apostles and ministers are called "stewards of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. 4: 1. Compare Titus 1: 7; 1 Pet. 4: 10.

48. if that evil servant] In the former instance the servant was represented as faithful. Now the servant is "evil" because he neglects to be faithful; and his unfaithfulness springs from his unbelief. He thinks his lord will not come, or says mockingly in his heart, He is putting off his

COMMON VERSION.

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 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 that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

REVISED VERSION.

43 your Lord cometh. <sup>1</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be <sup>2</sup> broken through.  
 44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is the faithful and wise <sup>3</sup> servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them that <sup>4</sup> food in due season? Blessed is that <sup>5</sup> servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath. But if that evil <sup>6</sup> servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarrieth;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *But this ye know*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *digged through*.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

coming. Tyndale quaintly renders, "My master wyll differ his commynge;" *i.e.*, will put his coming away, or vary it.

49. shall begin to smite . . . and to eat and drink] He begins (1) to abuse his fellow servants, then (2) to drink and riot with the dissolute outside whom he makes his companions.

51. cut him asunder] or "severely scourge him." The Greek word means, literally, "to sever," "to cut in two." Tyndale has it "devyd," divide him; Coverdale, Cranmer and Bishops' versions read, "hewe him in pieces;" the Genevan version, "cut him off." Evidently severe personal punishment is indicated. His portion would be with "hypocrites," whom even the rabbins condemn to gehenna or hell. In Luke 12: 46 his portion is "with the unbelievers." He is cut off from God's people and presence for his unbelief and unfaithfulness.

SUMMARY AND REVIEW.—In conclusion: vs. 1-3 relate the occasion of the conversation and the question of the disciples; vs. 4-14 are not in answer to the question, but a general warning against being led astray; vs. 15-22 foretell the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem. In vs. 23-28 again are warnings against being led astray by false Christs and false teachers. From these Jesus naturally refers in vs. 29-31 to events attending his coming. In vs. 32-34 he illustrates vs. 15-22 by a parable (as if answering the thoughts of the disciples still lingering on the first point of their inquiry, the destruction of the magnificent temple). Having spoken the parable (as it were parenthetically), Jesus proceeds in vs. 36-42 to declare the unexpectedness of his coming and of the end, it being unknown by the angels and known only by the Father, therefore all are to watch. This need of fidelity and watchfulness is enforced by a parable of the master and his steward.

This view is consistent with the nature of such a free conversation, is simple rather than subtle, and accepts the obvious and full import of the language in every verse. It does *not* attempt to give any details of the unfulfilled portion of the prophecy. It obviates the almost unanswerable difficulties of those who hold that the chapter refers to only two things, the fall of the temple and of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, and assert (1) with Sherlock that there is a clear transition at v. 23, or v. 29 as others say; or (2) with Robinson, Owen and others that the transition is at v. 43. While having great respect for the profound learning of these distinguished scholars, their view here seems untenable, because it requires us to believe the remarkable words in vs. 29-31 are poetic word-painting, not to say rhetorical exaggera-

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

## REVISED VERSION.

49 and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the  
50 drunken; the lord of that <sup>1</sup>servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not,  
51 and shall <sup>2</sup>cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *severely scourge him*

tions. The strongest argument for their view is γενεά—"generation"—in v. 34. But this rests on the inference that "these things" must refer to what *immediately* precedes, instead of referring to the same expression in vs. 2, 3. The relation of the thought is clearly to the earlier expression. Nor is there any grammatical difficulty in this case. Again, their view compels us to regard vs. 29-31 as highly "figurative language"—poetry, not prose—imbedded in language without the form of poetry or otherwise appearing as other than the plainest prose. This is an insuperable objection to their view.

The view of Stier, Olshausen, Alford and others who favor pre-millenarianism, and find a *double sense* running through the chapter, may be fairly dismissed with Alford's very sensible remark in the sixth edition of his Greek Testament. He says: "I thought it proper to state in the third edition that I did not feel by any means that full confidence which I once did in the exegesis, quoad prophetic interpretation, given of the three portions of this chapter 25. . . . I very much questioned whether the thorough study of Scripture prophecy would not make me more and more distrustful of all human systematizing, and less willing to hazard strong assertion on any portion of the subject." Every judicious and reverent scholar will cordially agree with Alford in his distrust of positive interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy. It is unnecessary to say that the question as to the right interpretation of chapters 24 and 25 is quite distinct from the arguments and texts urged in favor of and against the doctrine of pre-millenarianism.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christians ought in this world to escape from the perils of the wicked. 2. "When death is at our door, delays are dangerous."—*Henry*. 3. We should pray to be delivered from great calamities. 4. Periods of trial are often shortened for the sake of believers. 5. Christ's coming will be unexpected, but manifest to all. 6. Therefore, we need not be deceived by false Christs or false teachers. 7. His people will be cared for by his angels at his coming. 8. We are to note the signs of his coming, and to be cheered by them. 9. We are not to be alarmed by temporal calamities; these must come. 10. Men's unbelief will not stay God's temporal judgments. 11. "Universal neglect of religion is a more dangerous symptom to any people than particular instances here and there of daring irreligion."—*Henry*. 12. Eagerness in pursuit of pleasure, wealth and honor is strong evidence that people are heedless of Christ's coming. 13. Christ will not put off his coming for men's worldly festivities. 14. There will be marvels of grace and of hidden sin in that day. 15. This world is full of the merry, the convivial, the drunken, who seem sneeringly to say in their hearts, The Lord delays his coming. 16. These will be surprised by his coming. 17. The warning word to all—watch.

CHAP. XXV. PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS. vs. 1-13. Given only by Matthew.

MOUNT OF OLIVES, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

This chapter may be grouped in three divisions: (1) The parable of the ten virgins, vs. 1-13. (2) The parable of the talents, vs. 14-30. (3) A

description of the day of judgment, vs. 31-46. These are a continuation and conclusion of the conversation with the four disciples, begun in the previous chapter. In the first, the main point is to teach watchfulness; in the second, fidelity; and the lesson of the third portion is to possess the Christ-like spirit which will minister to those in distress.

Those holding the pre-millenarian view, as Stier, Olshausen, Alford and others, understand the parables to apply to the period of Christ's second coming, before the millennium, and the closing portion to relate to the last and final judgment. It is not necessary to discuss the pre-millenarian views here. The difficulty of making some inferences sometimes drawn from a portion of this chapter is pointed out below.

**1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened]** The "then" connects this parable with the conversation of the preceding chapter. It plainly refers to a coming of Christ. Whether the final coming is meant, cannot be conclusively decided by the opening words.

**ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom]** The "machinery" or imagery of this parable is peculiarly Oriental. It is of the bridegroom when he goes, to give the friends an opportunity to bring the bride to his house, so that on his return he may be suitably welcomed, and go in to meet his bride. So Christ will come to see his bride, the Church, in his heavenly home. It is inconsistent with Oriental custom for the groom personally to conduct the bride to his home. He leaves his home with company long enough for the bride to be brought, and returns to find her in the woman's room of his house. The pair are regarded as "man and wife" after betrothal, though the marriage feast may not take place for a year. See notes under 1:18, 19. After a period of fasting and confession, the marriage feast is celebrated at night. The friends go to the house of the bride, to lead her with great pomp and festal music to the bridegroom's home, where the feast is held. The bridesmaids, always virgins, go forth to meet the bridegroom and accompany him to the feast. Lamps are needed, as the procession is at night. The lamps were of the ancient pattern, odd-shaped cups filled with oil in which the wick floated, an end of the wick projecting above the lamp for lighting. The lamps were suspended on sticks (but were not torches, see Edersheim, *Life of Jesus*, vol. ii. p. 455), which might be borne in the hand.

**2. five . . . wise [foolish], and five were foolish [wise]]** Notice that the Revised Version reverses the order of the Common Version, and is preferable, as it accords with the order of vs. 3, 4. The number ten has no special significance beyond the fact that it was one of the ideally complete numbers of the Jews. Ten formed a company to eat the passover. Where

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXV.—Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

## REVISED VERSION.

25 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, that took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish,

<sup>1</sup>Or, torches



there were ten Jews, a synagogue could be formed. The division of the virgins into two companies has its parallel in other teachings. The hearers and the doers, 7: 21-29; the rocky-ground hearers, and the good ground, 13: 1-8, are instances.

**4. the wise took oil]** The main thought with the foolish was to have their lamps; with the wise it was also to have oil with their lamps.

**5. the bridegroom tarried]** This is true to life in the East now. There are many delays; those that wait must needs have great patience and greater watchfulness. Wearied with waiting, they "slumbered,"—literally, "nodded," and fell asleep. If ready at call, they need not be blamed. So Christ delays his coming. His people must take some rest. If they have grace, they are ready and furnished for his coming.

**6. at midnight . . . a cry]** The joyous company run before the procession with the cry, "Behold the bridegroom!" "Cometh" is needless, and is omitted by the best texts and by the Revised Version. The cry indicates how unexpected the coming of Christ will be.

**7. trimmed their lamps]** by clearing the wicks of their burnt portions, to brighten the light. It would also include adding fresh oil. The Romans had a little hook to clear the wicks, instead of the snuffers common in the early days of our country.

**9. not enough for us and you]** The foolish virgins, startled from sleep, find their lamps "going out," not "gone out" as the Common Version reads. They turn imploringly to the wise for oil. The wise answer pityingly and kindly, "Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you." "Not so" of the Common Version is in italics, because the received Greek text omits their equivalent; but the best critical texts have it. The good have no works or grace to transfer to others, as the Romanists erroneously teach. The foolish must buy for themselves. Though grace is without money and cannot be bought, yet the sinner must surrender all for it,—in that sense pay the price, buy it. Compare buying the field and the pearl in 13: 44-46. God only can furnish the grace.

COMMON VERSION.	REVISED VERSION.
3 They that <i>were</i> foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:	3 and five were wise. For the foolish,
4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.	when they took their <sup>1</sup> lamps, took no
5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.	4 oil with them: but the wise took oil in
6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.	5 their vessels with their <sup>1</sup> lamps. Now
7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.	while the bridegroom tarried, they all
8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.	6 slumbered and slept. But at midnight
9 But the wise answered, saying, <i>Not so</i> ; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.	there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom!
	7 Come ye forth to meet him. Then all
	those virgins arose, and trimmed their
	8 <sup>1</sup> lamps. And the foolish said unto the
	wise, Give us of your oil; for our <sup>1</sup> lamps
	9 are going out. But the wise answered,
	saying, Peradventure there will not be
	enough for us and you: go ye rather to
	them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

<sup>1</sup> Or, torches

**10. the bridegroom came . . . the door was shut]** This too is true to Oriental custom. When the bridegroom comes, guests who are ready go in with him to the feast, and the door is closed. The Christian must have bodily rest; he cannot be always awake, but he can be always ready, furnished with grace whenever his Lord may come. The door would be shut to prevent interruption from gaping crowds, and to give proper seclusion to the guests and undisturbed enjoyment in their festivities. Ward tells of a parallel experience at an Oriental wedding. The company waited until near midnight; then the sudden cry, the trimming or lighting of lamps, the springing to a place in the procession,—some with lights out,—the march forward, the bridegroom carried in the arms of a friend and placed in a superb chair in the midst of the throng, the doors at once shut and guarded by soldiers. "I and others came, entreated the doorkeepers for admission, but in vain. It was too late!"

**11. the other virgins]** The foolish ones. It is not said that they now had oil in their lamps. It would be of little use now. The procession, when lamps and lights were most needed, was over. It is fair to infer that they came without fresh oil. As Augustine says, "They came looking for mercy when it was time for judgment."

**Lord, Lord, open to us]** Notice how similar to the cry of those in 7: 22, 23. See also Luke 13: 25-28. It is clear they had neglected their duty,—were not prepared to enter when they should have been. This and the next verse makes it very difficult to apply this parable to a second, as distinct from the final, coming of Christ, since, according to the usual millenarian view, all the virgins represent the Church, the saved who reign the thousand years with Christ. But the foolish virgins are denied admittance, nor is there any evidence of a second trial or probation and final admittance in their case.

**12. I know you not]** The lord of the feast does not recognize the foolish virgins as bridesmaids or guests. So many who will claim to have prophesied in his name, Christ will reject with "I never knew you." Matt. 7: 23; Luke 13: 25-27. This certainly points to a final decision and award. If this be accepted, then this parable must relate to the final coming of Christ. It seems too great a strain on the setting and drift of the whole parable to assume this to mean an exclusion from the millennium, and yet an ultimate admission to heaven.

**13. Watch therefore]** This is the moral—the great lesson—of the par-

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

13 Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterward come also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour.

able. Be always ready, always furnished with grace, whenever the Lord may come.

LESSONS OF THE PARABLE.—1. Be ready for Christ's coming. The midnight cry signifies the unexpected time of his coming; the oil, the grace of God or the life of faith; the five foolish and five wise virgins, the mixed condition of the Church on earth, as seen in the parable of the tares and the wheat; the delay of the bridegroom, the delay in Christ's coming; the closed door, the lost opportunity and the exclusion from the kingdom.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS. vs. 16-30. Compare the parable of the pounds in Luke 19: 12-27, and that of the porter in Mark 13: 34.

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The parable of the virgins impressed the duty of watchfulness while waiting for the coming of the Lord. Possibly the disciples inferred that they would have nothing to do while waiting and watching. Jesus seems to discern and to answer that question in their thought, by the parable of the talents. They are not to sit in idleness. They must be watching; they must also be *working*. He pictures the end of the idler, in contrast with the reward of the faithful workers.

14. For . . . as a man travelling] Observe that the words "the kingdom of heaven is" are in italics, having no equivalents in Greek; they were added by the translators of 1611, to make the sense clear. This parable also gives a natural picture of life in the East. The "servants" were slaves. It was common for the master to travel and to entrust his lands to be tilled, his goods to be sold, his shop to be kept and his money to be used, to his slaves. They were to account for the use of all the master's property and for his profit. Those who did well were rewarded; those who did badly were punished. Being slaves, there is no agreement to pay them anything.

15. five talents . . . two, and . . . one] The Jewish talent of silver had 660,000 grains, worth about \$1600; the talent of gold about \$25,000. The Attic talent is usually valued at about \$1000. The *relative* only, not the *absolute*, value of the money entrusted to each is of importance in the parable. Each man received according to his capacity and opportunities. All gifts and possessions are sacred trusts from God. We have no *absolute* ownership in them.

16. went and traded] The slaves could do either of two things in

COMMON VERSION.

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 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 with the same, and made them other five talents.

REVISED VERSION.

14 For *it is* as when a man, going into another country, called his own <sup>1</sup>servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey. Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

the East: 1. Use the money in trading on account; or, 2. Loan the money to money-changers or bankers who would pay interest, and reloan it at a higher rate to traders or in farming the revenues of some province. This system of "loaning" or "banking" is said to have been started by the Phœnicians. It was common in the Roman empire at the beginning of the Christian era. The slave with the five talents used it directly in trading, and doubled it for the benefit of his master.

18. he that had received] or "he that received the one." Those that had the greatest amounts improved their talents. He who had only one neglected to make use of that one. He was indifferent. So men say, Yes, religion may be good enough, but it is too much trouble to bother with it. Let us live good moral lives, and we can return what God gives us in pretty good condition.

19. After a long time the lord . . . cometh] A suggestion that the coming of the Lord would be delayed longer than some of the disciples might expect. "The pre-millennial view places this reckoning at the second advent, the general judgment occurring later, yet the wicked servant represents one who is not of Christ's people."—*Schaff*.

20. I have gained . . . five talents] The "besides them" or "upon them" is omitted in the Revised Version, not being in the best Greek text, but the sense is substantially the same. A similar omission occurs again in v. 22.

21. thou hast been faithful over a few things] This implies that disciples will be rewarded in proportion to their diligence and fidelity. The reward will consist in increased opportunities for action, in greater spiritual possessions and powers. The faithful in a few things in this life will become rulers over many things in the reward of the life beyond. Notice, moreover, that the award to the one with two talents is in precisely the same words as that made to him who had the five talents.

## COMMON VERSION.

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 deliverdest 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 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 deliverdest 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

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

## REVISED VERSION.

17 talents. In like manner he also that 18 received the two gained other two. But

he that received the one went away and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's

19 money. Now after a long time the lord of those <sup>1</sup>servants cometh, and maketh a

20 reckoning with them. And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: lo, I have

21 gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful

<sup>2</sup>servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many

22 things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that received the two

talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: lo, I have

23 gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful

<sup>2</sup>servant; thou hast been faithful over a

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

**25. I was afraid, and . . . hid thy talent]** His insolent speech and his pretended fear are put in sharp contrast. Had he possessed real fear enough to make him respectful, he would not have brought the sweeping accusation against his master. With a heedless air he flings the talent before the master. Read the master's answer as questions: "Did you know that I reap where I sowed not? And gather where I strewed not?" "Then thou oughtest," etc. This would have been wise, on your own view of the case.

**27. Thou oughtest . . . to have put my money to the exchangers]** or "the bankers." If you were too fearful to trade on your own account, as you pretend, and yet knew that I was such an exacting master, then you ought to have placed my money with the bankers, that I might have had my own with interest. He does not require him to take the risk of trading, nor to have the labor of it, but only to do what the commonest slave could do and was bound to do, put his master's money with the bankers.

**28. Take . . . the talent from him]** Unfaithful, idle, lazy servant, he had proved his unworthiness to have even one talent, so it is taken from him. This parable pictures what is true in the working of natural law. The man who neglects to use any physical, mental or spiritual gift will gradually find the gift growing less, and soon will lose it. Strength of arm, limb or brain is not merely preserved but increased by use, and lost by long-continued idleness. So v. 29 states this general law. As the muscle unused degenerates and loses its power, so the faculties of the mind long unemployed decay. And the graces of our spiritual life grow by exercise, but die by neglect. This punishment comes in strict accord with natural law, which is only another term for God's law.

**30. cast ye the unprofitable servant]** So the guest without the wed-

COMMON VERSION.

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 a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:

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 strewed:

27 Thou 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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 And he also that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering

25 where thou didst not scatter: and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own.

26 But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful <sup>1</sup>servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter;

27 thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own

28 with interest. Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto

29 him that hath the ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath

30 shall be taken away. And cast ye out the unprofitable <sup>1</sup>servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

ding garment, Matt. 22 : 13, the unprofitable servant, 24 : 51, and the workers of iniquity, Luke 13 : 27, 28, were condemned.

TEACHING OF THE PARABLE.—The parable of the virgins enforces the need of watchfulness, this of the talents, the need of working; that points out the danger of a graceless inner life, this of idleness; in that the virgins thought their duty easy, in this the wicked servant pretends his duty was too hard; they imagined the master over-kind, the evil servant counted him too severe; they were too sanguine, he too gloomy and indifferent; they presumed on his kindness, he reviled the master's severity. In the parable of the pounds, each servant receives one pound. The nobleman goes to receive a kingdom; has rebellious subjects; the negligent servant wrapped his pound in a napkin; the enemies are slain. That parable was spoken to the multitude, near Jericho, while Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. This parable of the talents was spoken a week later to four disciples, while sitting on Mount Olivet. That was intended to teach patience, for he spake it "because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." Luke 19 : 11. This of the talents impressed the need of working, of fidelity in few things, and the certainty of a righteous reward. There the master is a nobleman, here he is a rich man. There the warning is against the idea of a speedy coming, here it is against heedless lack of preparedness for that coming.

#### THE JUDGMENT. vs. 31-46.

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This is a description of the judgment. The Son of man is King and Judge. It is not a parable, but a prophecy. It is a solemn declaration of a coming judgment. The figure in vs. 32, 33 is clearly marked by the word "as," and gives added strength to the reality of the description. The Judge, the characters awarded, and the characters condemned, are all real persons. The results are represented as real as they are momentous.

31. When the Son of man shall come] or, "But when," etc. The Greek word for "shall come" is not *παρουσία*, from *πάρειμι*, as in 24 : 3, 27, 37, 39, but is *ἔλθῃ*, the word used in 24 : 30, 42, 44, 46, 48. He comes to judge. To this work Jesus is appointed, John 5 : 22; Acts 17 : 31. He judges God's chosen, Rom. 8 : 34; 1 Cor. 4 : 4, 5; and those who love not God, Rom. 2 : 14-16; 2 Cor. 5 : 10; Heb. 9 : 27; 2 Pet. 3 : 7; 2 Thess. 1 : 8; Rev. 20 : 12. The description of his coming is in almost the same majestic and awful language that is used in 24 : 30, 31, which see.

32. before him shall be gathered all nations] or "all the nations,"

#### COMMON VERSION.

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: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

#### REVISED VERSION.

31 But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the <sup>1</sup>goats:

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *kids*.

as in the Revised Version. Who are meant by "all the nations"? The words, (1) some say, mean the Gentile nations, as distinguished from the Jewish nation. This is a common but not the exclusive meaning of the phrase in the New Testament, Luke 2 : 32; Acts 26 : 17; Rom. 9 : 24; Matt. 10 : 5, where the English versions read "Gentiles." This view excludes good and bad Jews from this judgment, but there is no intimation of such exclusion, and it is contrary to the general tenor of the narrative. (2) Others say they mean "all heathen nations," in the sense of all not Christians. This is held by some who maintain the pre-millenarian view, as Olshausen, Stier, Alford (though in his later years with much misgiving), and Plumptre. (3) Still others hold an opposite view, and say the words mean Christians only, as Grotius, Meyer and others. But this is not consistent with the drift of the entire conversation. (4) The more common view is that the words mean "all nations," in the sense of the whole human race, Christians and non-Christians, a view favored by Chrysostom, Augustine, De Wette, Lange and Schaff, among many others.

In favor of its reference to the non-chosen or non-Christians only are urged the gathering of the elect in 24 : 31, 40, 41; the statements in 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17; 2 Thess. 1 : 7-10; Rev. 20 : 2-15, and vs. 37-39 here. But this view makes the foolish virgins and the wicked servant reappear in judgment, implies that some good in the world remain ignorant of the simplest elements of the gospel, vs. 37-39, and forces a meaning upon "all the nations" not common in the New Testament.

The common view that the words include all the human race is not without some difficulties, as the statement that saints shall judge or rule the world, 1 Cor. 6 : 2, etc.; but the difficulties seem less grave than those in the way of other views. The reasons in favor of it are, on the other hand, very cogent. For (1) the Greek word *ἔθνος* ("nation," "nations") is often used in the New Testament in the sense of "all the people," Christian and non-Christian. Compare Acts 17 : 26; Rev. 5 : 9; 14 : 6; Acts 10 : 35; Matt. 24 : 7; Rev. 14 : 8 and 15 : 4, etc. (2) It is confirmed by other Scripture, which represents a general judgment. Eccl. 12 : 14; Acts 17 : 31; 10 : 42; Rom. 14 : 10. (3) It is the sense the common reader would gain from the words and the context. The nations are not to appear as nations. It means all men, without exception, are to appear for judgment.

as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats] or "separateth the sheep from the goats." Sheep are more usually kept on the plains, and goats on the rough mountains. The flocks are mixed when gathered for shelter. Dr. Post, of Syria, writes : "I have often seen several flocks of sheep and goats basking in the sunshine near a fountain, . . . or browsing on the dry twigs. Presently a shepherd climbs a rock and commences to call his sheep. At once they begin to come toward him, passing with unerring instinct through the other flocks." "The sheep and goats often go together

COMMON VERSION.

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

REVISED VERSION.

33 and he shall set the sheep on his right

under the same shepherd," says Tristram, "yet they never trespass on the domain of each other. . . . When folded at night they may always be seen gathered in distinct groups, and so round the wells they appear instinctively to classify themselves apart, as they wait for the troughs to be filled."—*Nat. Hist. of Bible*, pp. 89, 90. Sheep are gentle and docile, while goats are wild, shy, and usually in mischief in the East. Their different natures and the habit of separation by the shepherd make a fitting and forcible figure of the separation at the last day. Compare also the parable of the drag-net, 13: 47-50.

**34. the King say . . . Come]** The Son of man is the king now. Christ announces and calls forth the blessed. They have been blessed (for the Greek word is in the perfect tense) and continue to be blessed. The kingdom was designed for them in the counsels of God. It was prepared; Christ went to perfect particular preparations; to make ready a room for his disciples. John 14: 2, 3.

**35, 36. For, etc.]** The award to those on the right hand is grounded upon six particulars—(1) giving the King food when hungry; (2) drink when thirsty; (3) entertaining him as a friend when he was a stranger; (4) clothing him when naked; (5) visiting him when sick; (6) coming to him in prison. These were among the lowest tests of a Christ-like spirit and character. Healing the sick and setting the prisoner free were not required; only the simple act of visiting them.

**37-40. Then shall the righteous]** They are addressed not as heathen, as unbelievers, but as "righteous." Thus Peter said to the Gentile Cornelius, "in every nation he that feareth him [God], and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts 10: 35. The answer of the righteous is the language of surprise, humility, and surely of *sincerity*. It must, therefore, be the language of those who know only in part. Their acts of love they had not thought of as done to Christ. Their fruits, however, had proved their character; the evil do not bring forth good, nor the good, evil. Compare

## COMMON VERSION.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was a hungered, 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 a hungered, 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?

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 these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

## REVISED VERSION.

34 hand, but the <sup>1</sup>goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me

36 in; naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison,

37 and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord,

38 And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And

40 the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, *even* these least, ye did it unto me.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *kids*.



Christ's words on the mount, 7 : 16-20. "The service grows out of their life. It is as if they had said, 'What else should we do?' There is no self-consciousness in the best of it. Especially they cannot realize that he whose glory on the throne dazzles, ever stood before them, poor, homeless, naked, in fetters."—*John Hall*. The explanation of the Lord is explicit in v. 40. Notice the reading of the Revised Version—"even these least, ye did it unto me." Not works of benevolence and kindness to humanity at large, but to some of Christ's followers, are made the ground of reward. There are some who will pretend to great works in Christ's name that will be finally rejected, as he expressly and solemnly declares in 7 : 21-24. Compare Luke 13 : 25, 26. Not the *works* themselves, but the love and the character of which they are the fruit, will be approved. They are evidence of faith, new birth, and a Christ-like spirit. This leads us to hope that among the heathen there will be some who, not having a personal knowledge of Christ, yet may like Cornelius have a longing desire after God and righteousness; and may possess these evidences of a God-like spirit and character, which will be revealed at the last day.

**41. Depart from me, ye cursed]** As the righteous are to be with the Lord, so the wicked are to be exiles driven from his presence. Alford aptly calls attention to the "blessed of my Father," v. 34, in contrast with "ye cursed," here, but not cursed of my Father. God is the author of salvation; man is the author of his own sin, which brings condemnation. The "eternal fire" was not prepared for man, but "for the devil and his angels." Man was made for holiness, and Christ has provided salvation for the sinner. But those who will sin, and will cling to a devilish nature and spirit, must share the punishment made for the devil.

**44. Then shall they . . . answer]** The wicked in their answer lay emphasis on "thee" and "saw." They had never perceived Christ the King in need, when they had not helped him. The wicked do not see that they have ever neglected anything. Their eyes are blinded by sin; they do not see that they have sinned. They are not charged with positive activity in evil, with persecution, oppression, murder, lying, stealing, lust, dishonesty, or any of the common forms of immorality. They neglected works and acts of love to God's people. They failed to give even this the lowest evidence of a Christ-like character. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

## COMMON VERSION.

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:

42 For I was a hungered, 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 a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

## REVISED VERSION.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, <sup>1</sup>Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared

42 for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, 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

44 in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Depart from me under a curse*

**46. into everlasting punishment]** The rendering of the Revised Version clearly represents the Greek. The wicked shall have "eternal punishment," the righteous "eternal life." Whatever idea we may have of the strict etymological meaning of the word for "eternal" here, no sane man can escape the conclusion that the duration of the punishment of the wicked is plainly declared to be equal to the duration of the life of the righteous. If the former is ever to have an end, then there will come an end to the life of the righteous also. If the "eternal life" means "endless life," then "eternal punishment" means "endless punishment." And the word for "punishment" does not mean "annihilation" or "unconscious misery," but implies here, as usual, "conscious suffering" as a penalty or punishment. The Greek word for "eternal" occurs seventy-one times in the New Testament. In sixty-four places it refers to the reward of the righteous, to God's existence, law, attributes, or kingdom. In seven places it refers to the future condition of the wicked. Endless life of the righteous is contrasted with the endless misery of the wicked.

Jesus was speaking to four disciples. They were Jews. What did they understand by these expressions? Both the great schools of the Jews, that of Shammi and of Hillel, in the time of Christ, believed in endless punishment. The perfectly wicked were "immediately written and sealed to Gehenna;" as the perfectly righteous were "immediately written and sealed to eternal life." There was a third, an intermediate, class which went "down to Gehinnom" to moan and come up again. But they were expressly distinguished from the perfectly wicked whose doom was sealed without revocation. These views were held by Jews throughout the first century of the Christian era. In the second century there was a marked divergence in rabbinic opinions on this subject, but in the third century there was a reaction and return to the former view. Dr. Edersheim cites from rabbinic literature a passage which he declares "proves beyond the possibility of gainsaying that both the great schools . . . at the time of Christ . . . held the doctrine of eternal [endless] punishment." See *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. ii. pp. 792-94. The Lord sets this awful scene before us that we may avoid fearful eternal misery and strive for blissful eternal joy.

The Essenes, who at this period were numerous and though a minority modified the religious views of the two stronger sects, pushed Jewish thinking of that time to extremes. They seemed to consider matter as a source of evil, and the body the prison of the soul. They looked on death as a return of the spirit to its true sphere, an immortal existence. They were ascetics, sparing in diet, and thought celibacy a virtue. They cherished Messianic hopes. They practiced community of goods also, as adopted by the first Christian

## COMMON VERSION.

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 everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

## REVISED VERSION.

45 thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye

46 did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.

community in Jerusalem. It is clear that the Jews (excepting the Sadducees, Acts 23 : 8, who were an aristocratic class) held to the belief in the future life and the immortality of the soul. Those to whom Jesus spoke would therefore understand his words in their literal sense; and had Jesus not intended this, he would have corrected their misapprehension.

CHAP. XXVI. THE CONSPIRACY AND ANOINTING AT BETHANY. VS. 1-16. Compare Mark 14 : 1-11; Luke 22 : 1-6; John 11 : 55 to 12 : 11.

BETHANY AND JERUSALEM, Saturday night, April 1, and Tuesday night, April 4, A.D. 30.

*Introduction.*—The conspiracy of the rulers and their bargain with the traitor Judas are now generally supposed to have been on Tuesday night, following the conversation on Mount Olivet narrated in chaps. 24, 25. Some, as Farrar, Andrews and others, suppose that Judas had two interviews with the rulers, a private one with a few of them on Saturday night after the anointing at Bethany, and again on Tuesday night, when the bargain was completed. This is possible, but not necessary to harmonize the accounts.

The anointing at Bethany is now generally assigned by harmonists to Saturday night, after the arrival from Jericho, and after sunset; hence after the Jewish Sabbath had ended. It is mentioned by Matthew (and by Mark also) in connection with the treachery of Judas, by a law of mental association. It therefore comes into their narratives parenthetically, and not in the order of its occurrence. John gives the time definitely: "six days before the passover." John 12 : 1. For this anointing at Bethany is the same as that mentioned in Mark 14 : 3-9 and John 12 : 1-11. The anointing in John 12 : 1-11 was supposed to be different from that in Matthew and Mark by Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Theophylact, Osiander, Lightfoot, Wolf and De Wette, but their arguments were not strong, and have been refuted and the three accounts ably shown to describe the same event and to agree with one another, by Robinson, Andrews, Mansel, Cook, Westcott, Schaff, Ellicott and many others. See my *Commentary on Mark*, pp. 161-164.

This anointing was different, however, from that described in Luke 7 : 36-50, though erroneously held to be substantially the same by Romanist writers and by Chrysostom, Grotius, Schleiermacher, Ewald, Bleek, Keim and others of rationalistic tendency. The differences are many and plainly marked. This one described by Matthew, Mark and John was at Bethany, after Jesus came from Jericho. It was in the house of Simon the leper. Lazarus was at the table; Martha served, and her sister Mary anointed Jesus. That in Luke was a year earlier, and soon after the message from John Baptist. That anointing was in Galilee, at or near Capernaum, in the house of Simon a Pharisee. The anointing was by a woman who was a sinner. The circumstances, time, place and person are unlike those mentioned at Bethany.

THE MESSIAH REJECTED.—Why did the Jewish rulers break with Jesus? They were looking for Messiah; why not accept him? They were quick and accurate in replying to Herod the Great when he asked where the Messiah was to be born; why were they not as keen to fit their knowledge of the

prophecies to the life and ministry of Jesus? It has been usual for writers to represent that Jesus made the final breach with the nation. But this is contrary to the general tone of the Gospel narratives. The rulers of the nation made the final breach, and with difficulty persuaded the people to support their attack.

It is worthy of notice that all the leaders in this conspiracy were of the chief priests, scribes and elders, with Caiaphas at their head. John indeed mentions Pharisees also. Compare Matt. 26:3-5, 47, 57; Mark 14:1, 2, 43, 53; Luke 22:2, 47, 54; John 18:3, 13. Now it is quite evident from a careful study of these passages that the *Sadducees* were leaders in this conspiracy. Caiaphas belonged to this sect, as did also most if not all the ex-high priests, and many members of the Sanhedrin. Their Messianic hopes were never very prominent, and in many had quite died out. The decided teachings of Jesus respecting the future life would arouse their active opposition. There were some of the Pharisees' party that would join with them from love of their traditions. Thus the conspiracy was strong, and the rulers determined to make an end of the new Teacher's mission.

The public triumphal entry, when he was hailed "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord," John 12:13, strengthened the conspiracy; for now Herodians, Sadducees and Pharisees joined in forming the plot to destroy the wonderful Galilean prophet. Then followed the singular succession of attacks, first by the chief priests, Matt. 21:23; then by certain of the Pharisees and Herodians combined, Mark 12:13; followed by a delegation of Sadducees, Matt. 22:23. Hearing that all these were silenced, a learned scribe (a teacher, "lawyer" and writer of the law) belonging to the sect of Pharisees came with a puzzling question. He was soon silenced, on his own confession. After all these artful attempts to gain false testimony to condemn him, and after the secret conspiracy, Jesus recognized that they had put the national Jewish government against him. It was then he denounced woes upon them for their hypocrisy and proselytism, Matt. 23:14-36.

1. all these sayings] All those recorded in the preceding chapters. The words probably point to the whole conversation with his disciples on Mount Olivet.

2. after two days] The day after the next day. If this was Tuesday, then the passover would be on Thursday night. Jesus foretells that on that passover night he will be betrayed and crucified.

3. Then assembled] or "were gathered together." Having spoken of

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXVI.—And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two 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, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

## REVISED VERSION.

26 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these words, he said unto his 2 disciples, Ye know that after two days the passover cometh, and the Son of man 3 is delivered up to be crucified. Then were gathered together the chief priests, and the elders of the people, unto the court of the high priest, who was called



BETHANY.

*(From a Photograph.)*

The ruin at upper right-hand corner is the so-called "Castle of Lazarus."

the prediction of Jesus concerning his betrayal and crucifixion, Matthew naturally mentions that at the moment the prediction was made the rulers were together in the "court" (perhaps in the "palace") of the high priest, in secret council, plotting the death of Jesus.

**the high priest, who was called Caiaphas]** Why this peculiar designation of "the high priest, who was called Caiaphas"? Was there another popularly recognized by the Jews as also "high priest" and known by some other name? Did that make this peculiar designation necessary? Compare John 18: 13-24.

**5. Not on the feast]** or "not during the feast." The rulers feared a tumult during the time of the feast; that is, during the whole week when Jerusalem was filled with crowds of pilgrim Jews at the passover. They intended to put off the arrest and execution of Jesus; but the traitor Judas gave them an opportunity to carry out their plan secretly and with a measure of safety to themselves. This leads the evangelist to mention the anointing as closely connected with the base treachery of Judas.

**6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper]** This does not imply that the anointing was only "two days before the passover;" for it is clearly said "when Jesus was in Bethany," but does not say what day it was. It does definitely fix the town and the house. Who this Simon was, and what his relations to Martha, Mary and Lazarus were, and why the supper was in his house, while Martha served, the evangelists do not tell us. We may be sure that Simon, if living and present, was no longer a leper. The conjectures are many about the case. Some suppose that he was living, and that Jesus had healed him. Others suppose that he was the father of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, and was dead, the children still living in the paternal home; and yet others, that Simon was the husband of Martha and was dead, she as widow retaining her husband's house, her brother and sister residing with her. These are conjectures founded on poor traditions. John says, "They made him a supper," 12: 2. The "they" may fairly imply that several friends of Jesus united in providing it, probably as an expression of their gratitude for restoring Lazarus to life. In that case a tradition that Simon was father or near relation of Lazarus might be accepted. Had he been dead, Matthew and Mark would scarcely have spoken of the feast as "in the house of Simon the leper." A dead man does not have a house, while the designation "a leper" may indicate his former condition.

**7. a woman]** John says "Mary," and the context shows clearly that he means the sister of Martha and of Lazarus. John 12: 2, 3.

COMMON VERSION.

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*.  
 5 But they said, Not 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 box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

REVISED VERSION.

4 Caiaphas; and they took counsel together that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not during the feast, lest a tumult arise among the people.  
 6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having <sup>1</sup>an alabaster cruse of exceeding precious ointment,

<sup>1</sup> Or, a flask

**poured it on his head]** So Mark says also; John says "anointed his feet." She no doubt anointed both, as v. 12 and Mark 14: 8, "my body," imply. This is not a contradiction, for the mention of one does not *exclude* the other. The alabaster flask (not "box") was so named from a place in Egypt, where these cruces were made from a mineral like gypsum. The cruse or flask was broken, as often now in the East. The nard or ointment is mentioned by Pliny, who says a pound of it cost over 400 denarii, or upwards of \$60. See *Nat. Hist.* 12: 26, 13: 4.

**8. To what purpose is this waste?]** Matthew says "his disciples" asked this question; Mark says "some" said it; John says "Judas" asked it. Each of these is consistent with the other. Several of the disciples, of whom Judas was the most bold and forward, may have said it; for Matthew does not say, or imply, that all the twelve even, certainly not all the disciples present, indulged in this censorious spirit.

**9. given to the poor]** They were more mindful of the poor than of the love to their Master just then. The spirit that prompted this reproof is given in John 12: 6. This spirit of covetousness is strong in the human heart in all ages. It was, no doubt, latent in the minds of all the disciples. The poor are better relieved often by finding employment for them than by free gifts that tend to pauperize them. But the poor the disciples could always help; Jesus in person, then only.

**10. she hath wrought a good work]** She had done better than she knew. It was her only opportunity, but that she did not know. It was for Christ's burial, and that she knew not. It was a gift of love without selfishness, and she scarcely was conscious of that. So the act had a far greater value than she knew, as all similar acts of service for Christ, prompted by love to him, possess. Giving to Christ, when not for ostentation, but from sincere love, is acceptable to him, no matter how great the gift, nor how much of a waste it may seem in the eyes of the niggardly and selfish of this world.

**11. ye have the poor always with you]** The poor are not to be despised or neglected. You will have a lifetime of opportunities to give to the poor; but this is the only one you will have to do this service for me. "I am already devoted to death. She has poured this out to embalm my body. The prediction of Jesus in v. 12, that this devotion of Mary would be told wherever the gospel should be preached, has been fulfilled to our day. The act of love is imbedded in three gospel narratives, and in a portion that is probably more frequently read than almost any other.

## COMMON VERSION.

8 But when his disciples saw *it*, they had 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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

and she poured it upon his head, as he sat at meat. But when the disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what

purpose is this waste? For this *ointment* might have been sold for much, and given

to the poor. But Jesus perceiving it said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon

me. For ye have the poor always with

14. one of the twelve, called Judas] Having completed the narrative of the anointing at Bethany, which Matthew and Mark connect with the treachery of Judas, the evangelist continues the sorrowful story of the bargain. This introduction of the anointing at Bethany in a parenthesis is easily explained by a law of mental association which would put these two acts, one of love, the other of treachery, in contrast. It is not necessary to suppose that the rebuke at the anointing fired Judas with a sudden impulse to betray the Master. He was worldly, ambitious and self-seeking, as well as avaricious, yet outwardly decent and respectful to religion and to Jesus. His disappointed ambition and the sneers of the rulers led him to be a deserter and traitor. Motives and influences not unlike these led Benedict Arnold to become a traitor to his country. Both were men of much natural ability, of some good and generous impulses, but thoroughly wanting in integrity, fidelity and religious principle.

15. What will ye give me] or "What are you willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you? Then they weighed (literally "placed" or "set") to him thirty pieces of silver." Matthew alone mentions the amount, "thirty" pieces. They paid him the thirty pieces. See 27: 3. These were probably coins: either the tetradrachma of Roman coinage, or more probably the Jewish shekels, since they debated about putting them in the temple treasury. This they would not so much as have considered had the pieces been the hated Roman coin. The coins were worth about seventy-five cents each. This was the price of a common slave. See Ex. 21: 32, and compare Matt. 20: 28, where our Lord says, "The Son of man came . . . to minister (literally, "to be a slave"), and to give his life a ransom for many."

16. he sought opportunity to betray him] or "to deliver him;" that is, to deliver him in a way that would prevent a tumult of the people. He soon found it. This evidently hastened the purpose of the rulers. The act therefore was not a sudden impulse; it was a coolly-formed and deliberate plan. This much the record places beyond question: 1. Judas sought the rulers with intent to deliver up Jesus. 2. He asked "blood money" in payment for his treacherous act. 3. He was paid a definite sum—thirty pieces—for his work. When it was paid—whether at the time of the bargain, as Matthew's record seems to imply, or after the arrest, as the words of Mark

## COMMON VERSION.

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, 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 chief priests,

15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 you; but me ye have not always. For in that she <sup>1</sup> poured this ointment upon my body, she did it to prepare me for

13 burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever <sup>2</sup> this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

14 Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 and said, What are ye willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they weighed unto him thirty pieces of

16 silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to deliver him *unto them*.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *cast*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *these good tidings*



and Luke may suggest, and whether the thirty pieces were the full price, as the answer of the priests favors in Matt. 27 : 3, 4, or only an earnest of some larger sum—are questions of comparatively small moment. Enough is recorded to show the awful sin of Judas; nothing is added to gratify our curiosity.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. There are deceivers, betrayers, traitors, in every cause—a Judas among the twelve apostles. 2. Rulers are often crafty, designing men, conspiring to destroy the good, who may, in their estimation, be in their way. 3. Some may want money to make a great display of their benevolence. 4. Giving from love to Christ, and not for ostentation, is no waste. 5. “To build a larger church or a taller steeple than our neighbors’” is a “waste,” and feeds spiritual pride. 6. To build churches, furnish Bibles and missionaries and Sunday-schools, from love to Christ and for the good of souls, no matter how costly the gift, is to have “wrought a good work.” 7. The carping spirit is often found among those in churches, mission and other societies. It causes much mischief. It is not worth while for any one to strive to beat Judas at dividing, betraying or fault-finding in a Christian organization. Better leave it, or, better still, repent and publicly ask to be forgiven. 8. The poor are always to be helped. Are Christ’s words a hint that poverty will always be the lot of some? That communists, nihilists, agrarians, who want wealth distributed evenly, that the princely liberality of the Peabodys, Coopers, Stones, Slaters and Greens, will never do away with poverty and the poor? Will struggles and contests of “labor with capital” go on, and “strikes,” “lock-outs,” “trades-unions,” “labor associations,” all fail to give a competency to some? This is the truth to which Christ’s words point. Hence “the poor” are to hang as a nightmare about the body of society in the fortieth as in the nineteenth century, and so on to the end of time. Christianity will ameliorate their condition; it fails to complete a cure only because men fail to be Christians.

THE PASSOVER AND THE LORD’S SUPPER. vs. 17–35. Mark 14:12–31; Luke 22:7–34.

JERUSALEM, Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30.

Jesus had spent Wednesday probably in quiet retirement at Bethany. One of the most difficult questions in this section continues to be, Was this passover and supper of our Lord on the 14th Nisan and beginning of the 15th (that is, after sunset of the 14th), or was it on the 13th Nisan? On this question there is yet no sign of agreement among critics and harmonists. The first view seems to be attended with the least difficulties, namely, that this passover meal was on the 14th Nisan and the evening following it, the regular and legal time for eating it. For reasons in detail, see my *Commentary on Mark*, pp. 165, 166; also Edersheim’s *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. ii. pp. 480–482. The reasons briefly are: (1) Jesus, who came to fulfill the law, would be likely to fulfill this important part of it. (2) To have had it earlier would have been to *anticipate* the passover meal. The lamb must be slain in the temple (see Deut. 16 : 5, 6), not in one’s own dwelling

as some suppose, and this act the priests would not be likely to permit before the proper time. (3) The accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke clearly point to the 14th Nisan. (4) The account in John, who omits the institution of the Lord's Supper, can be shown to harmonize with this view more naturally than the accounts of the others with the opposing view.\* It is agreed that Jesus was crucified on Friday, and that he ate the passover meal and instituted the supper the night before, that is, Thursday night. Was this Thursday the 14th or 13th Nisan? is the question in dispute. (Dr. Seyffarth, however, puts the crucifixion on Thursday, but very few adopt his view.)

17. the first . . . of unleavened bread] The words "day" and "feast" are not in the Greek. The feast of unleavened bread lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st Nisan. Strictly the "passover" means the meal of the paschal lamb, appointed "between the two evenings," Ex. 12 : 6; Lev. 23 : 5; Num. 9 : 3, 5. This is understood to mean the close of the 14th and beginning of the 15th Nisan. It would be the time between when the sun began to decline behind the horizon and when it finally disappeared and the first three stars appeared. Then the threefold blast of seven trumpets would be sounded. The Jewish day begins and ends with sunset. At sunset of the 14th Nisan the 15th began, and with it the feast of unleavened bread. The lamb was selected on the 10th, and slain on the 14th in the evening, Ex. 12 : 3-6. All leaven was removed from every house; labor ceased; a paschal lamb was provided for a household. Ten to twenty persons were regarded as a suitable number, since the entire lamb must be eaten. So the disciples ask the Master where he wills these preparations to be made. Observe the arrangements were made by Peter and John, Luke 22 : 8, the place and the plans being unknown to Judas lest the feast and supper be broken up by his traitorous act of betrayal. The room in the city would

## COMMON VERSION.

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?

## REVISED VERSION.

17 Now on the first *day* of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt thou that we make ready for

\* The narrative in John is a summary of events clustering about the paschal meal, the teachings being the most prominent in the fourth Gospel. The account of Luke is more full in some points, and ought to be carefully studied. "It is impossible to imagine anything more evident," says Edersheim, "than that he [Luke] wishes us to understand that Jesus was about to celebrate the ordinary Jewish paschal supper. . . . The designation is exactly that of the commencement of the *Pascha*, which . . . was the 14th Nisan. . . . And with this fully agrees the language of the other two synoptists, Matt. 26 : 17-20 and Mark 14 : 12-17. No ingenuity can explain away these facts. The suggestion that in that year the Sanhedrin had postponed the paschal supper from Thursday evening (the 14th-15th Nisan) to Friday evening (15th-16th Nisan), so as to avoid the Sabbath following on the first day of the feast, and that the paschal lamb was therefore in that year eaten on Friday, the evening of the day on which Jesus was crucified, is an assumption void of all support in history or Jewish tradition. Equally untenable is it that Christ had held the paschal supper a day in advance of that observed by the rest of the Jewish world,—a supposition not only inconsistent with the plain language of the synoptists, but impossible, since the paschal lamb could not have been offered in the temple, and therefore no paschal supper held, out of the regular time."—*Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. ii. pp. 481, 482.

have been a favorable or "convenient opportunity," had he known the plans in advance.

18. My time is at hand] Not "my time" to eat the passover, and hence not the usual time for it, as some infer, but "my time" to suffer, to be delivered up. The "man" is more particularly described in Mark and Luke as "bearing a pitcher of water," an unusual thing for a man to do, for that is regarded as a woman's work in Syria. Hence this would point him out plainly to the disciples. It is not necessary to suppose that a previous arrangement had been made by Jesus, without the knowledge of his disciples, nor that the man was miraculously moved to give a guest-chamber. This hospitality was accorded to Jewish pilgrims by dwellers in Jerusalem. The description of the man and the room shows our Lord's supernatural knowledge, and is in harmony with numerous other statements respecting his knowledge of the thoughts of men. The disciples found all these things as Jesus had said they would. The passover meal was made ready. In the evening Jesus with the twelve, including Judas, "sat," or "was reclining," and as they were eating, Jesus sorrowfully declared that one of the twelve would betray him, or, literally, "shall deliver me up." This was doubtless after the strife noted by Luke, and after the washing the disciples' feet mentioned by John.

22. Lord, is it I? or, "Is it I, Lord?" which is the more natural order, and follows that in the original. The plain, sad declaration cast a gloom over all, and forced the question from each in turn, except Judas, who appears to have held a dogged silence until after the further awful declarations in vs. 23, 24, when he too was forced to join in the common inquiry. Observe he puts his question in a slightly different form, "Is it I, teacher?" The others had said "Lord;" he says "rabbi," or "teacher." The answer, "Thou hast said," is a common form of assent in Hebrew and Greek. He is then directed to do his work quickly; but what work the others did not know. See John 13:28, 29. Following this, it appears probable from John 13:26-31 that Judas went out, and was not present at the institution of the

## COMMON VERSION.

18 And he said, Go 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 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 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 dippeh *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom

## REVISED VERSION.

18 thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The <sup>1</sup>Master saith, My time is at hand; I keep the passover at thy house

19 with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus appointed them; and they made

20 ready the passover. Now when even was come, he was sitting at meat with the

21 twelve <sup>2</sup>disciples; and as they were eating, he said, Verily I say unto you, that

22 one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began to say unto him every one, Is it I, Lord?

23 And he answered and said, He that dipped his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth, even as it is written of him: but woe unto that man through whom

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Teacher*

<sup>2</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, omit *disciples*.

Lord's Supper. For special reasons for this view see my *Commentary on Mark*, p. 171.

24. good for that man if he had not been born] Or, "good were it for that man if he had not been born," R. V. The Greek is more emphatic in bringing out the personal point of the remark: "Good were it for him if he had not been born, that man!" Notice the forceful repetition "that man." Judas heard it; was it not meant to stir his conscience to perceive the enormity of his crime? It is said to have been a common proverb among the Talmudists, intended to express the perversity of the man's character. He would be a beacon for others in the universe. But, alas for him! the truths Jesus taught he resisted; his heart was hardened.

26. as they were eating] The passover meal was a prolonged one, taking much time. The usual order was: (1) The guests gathered, and after the Persian custom reclined on couches. The couches were on three sides of the table. They were wide enough to allow a person to recline at full length across them, his head resting on the left hand, and the elbow on the table, with the head toward the table. (2) The head of the company took the first cup of wine and gave thanks, and the cup was drunk, and each washed his hands. (The washing of the disciples' feet probably came in here, John 13 : 4-10.) (3) The head one dipped bitter herbs in salt water or vinegar, which were eaten. (4) All the dishes were removed. (5) The question and explanation of the meaning of the feast. (6) The dishes returned to the table. (7) The meaning of the lamb, bitter herbs and unleavened bread was explained separately. (8) Hallel, Pss. 113, 114, first part, sung, with thanksgiving. (9) Second cup drunk. (10) Washing of hands. (11) Prayer again. (12) Two cakes eaten, with thanks. (13) Eating "broken cake," with bitter herbs and charoseth (the sop to Judas). (14) The paschal lamb eaten. [During the continuance of Jewish sacrifices nothing was eaten after the lamb, but a cup of wine was drunk and the last part of the Hallel sung.] (15) Unleavened cake. (16) Washing of hands. (17) Special thanks. (18) Third cup. Then sometimes (19) a fourth cup. (20) Hallel, second part, Ps. 115-118, sung. (21) "Blessing of song," two brief prayers. The order varied at different periods.

It will be seen that if Judas left immediately after the "sop" was given him,—this being the broken cakes with bitter herbs (13),—he would not be at

## COMMON VERSION.

the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 ¶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

<sup>1</sup> Gr. for him if that man.

<sup>2</sup> Or, a loaf

## REVISED VERSION.

the Son of man is betrayed! good were it <sup>1</sup> for that man if he had not been born.

25 And Judas, who betrayed him, answered and said, Is it I, Rabbi? He saith unto 26 him, Thou hast said. And as they were

eating, Jesus took <sup>2</sup> bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my <sup>3</sup> 27 body. And he took <sup>3</sup> a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read *the cup*.

the institution of the Lord's Supper, nor even at the eating of the paschal lamb. See John 13: 30.

The lamb was the essential part of the meal. It was to be roasted whole, on a spit, and must not touch the sides of the oven, or if it did, all those portions so touched must be removed. Not a bone of the lamb was to be broken, and none of it must be left over; if any were not eaten it must be burned in the fire. The present usage is to follow the eating of the lamb with a third cup of wine. The red wine was used, mixed with water. The institution of the Lord's Supper would come in naturally in connection with the third cup in the above order. The cup of Luke 22: 17 refers to the first cup of the meal; while that in 22: 20 was the third cup, instituting the new ordinance. This agrees with the cup of Matt. 26: 27.

**28. this is my blood]** Jesus, by this act, declares that he fulfills the covenants (old and new). His blood seemed already shed for the remission of sins. He was already devoted for sacrifice, our paschal lamb. His blood brought pardon. There is little in the ancient cruel blood-covenants among the heathen that is of significance, even by contrast, in the explanation of this solemn Christian ordinance.

**29. I drink it new]** This feast is a type of that joy and comfort which will be realized in the glorified life. It cannot mean that he would drink even "new wine" of the earthly make in heaven, for that life is spiritual, not material; nothing material enters heaven. The words imply that he had ended all such earthly rites. He was soon to return to the Father. He would not need "the fruit of this vine" there. The "hymn" sung at the close, v. 30, would be the second part of the Great Hallel, Ps. 115-118.

In the Greek Church and in most Reformed churches leavened bread is used in the Lord's Supper; in the Latin Church, unleavened bread. The Greek and Latin churches alike use fermented wine. This is not the place to discuss the so-called "two-wine theory." Many of the most earnest temperance people insist that Christ never made and did not here use *fermented* wine. Others, equally strong temperance advocates, and many of them able and devoted biblical scholars, hold that the wine used was the ordinary fermented juice of the grape. The Rev. George E. Post, M.D., for over twenty-five years a medical missionary and professor in the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut, writes under a recent date that he has never seen or heard of any other. He adds: "A native of Syria would be very much disgusted at the idea of taking any of the liquid which comes out of the wine or *dibs* press, until in the one case it has been purified by fermentation and in the other by boiling, skimming and concentration to the consistency of

## COMMON VERSION.

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

28 ye all of it; for this is my blood of the <sup>1</sup>covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins. But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities insert *new*.

thick molasses. The latter is no more a beverage than honey. The most esteemed kind, in fact, is a semi-solid, of the consistency of marmalade, scarcely capable of being removed from a vessel except by a spoon or other utensil. It is a pity that so good a cause as temperance should be weakened by so poor an argument as the unfounded assertion that there is in Syria an unfermented wine, and that there was such a wine in Christ's time, and that that was the fruit of the vine intended in Mark 14:25 [and Matt. 26 : 29]. The only drink made from fresh grape juice is a kind of lemonade, made from the acid juice of *unripe* grapes and sweetened to the taste. This is in common use where grapes are abundant, but is not used by the Jews in their passover, and is every way unlikely to have been the drink intended." Similar testimony is given by Rev. Drs. Van Dyck, Jessup, Thomson and others, long resident and familiar with the habits of the people of Syria. Orthodox Jewish rabbis in this country also declare that the Jews use fermented wine at the passover, and do not regard it as leaven, to be removed from their dwellings. The propriety of now celebrating the Lord's Supper with the common fermented wine of commerce, however, is quite another question.

There are several theories in regard to the Lord's Supper as a Christian ordinance. 1. The Roman Catholics hold to the dogma of transubstantiation, that is, that the bread and wine of the sacrament are miraculously changed into the real body and blood of Christ, and that only the priests should partake of both elements, the laity receiving only one of the elements, the bread. This limits to the priests the "all" in the charge "Drink ye all of it" of v. 27. 2. The Lutheran view of the real presence; that the real body and blood of Christ are with, in and under the elements during the ordinance, and that all believers partake of it. 3. The Zwinglian view, that it is purely a spiritual ordinance commemorative of Christ. 4. The Calvinistic view, that it is a real spiritual communion of believers with Christ and with each other, and a true reception of the spiritual benefits which flow from Christ. The evangelical non-ritual churches generally hold that the Lord's Supper is a commemorative ordinance, a feast of living believers with Christ, in which they partake of his body and blood, not carnally and corporeally but by faith, and receive spiritual nourishment and grace thereby. American Baptists generally hold that immersed believers only should come to the Lord's table. Some Presbyterian bodies, as the Scotch Covenanters, hold that only those of "their own faith and order" should be invited to the communion. The larger bodies of Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, Methodists and Episcopalians usually invite all to the Lord's table who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, and who have signified that love by a public profession in some evangelical church. The controversies on this subject and on baptism reach back almost to apostolic times, and have often been very violent, bitter and uncharitable. Our purpose here is merely to

COMMON VERSION.

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives,

REVISED VERSION.

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives.

state, very briefly, the historic facts. Holding the view each deems to be taught in the word of God, with firmness and love, let him exercise charity toward others whom he regards as sincere believers in Christ as a personal Saviour, yet who may differ from him on this subject.

**31. All ye shall be offended]** or "caused to stumble," as the margin of the Revised Version reads. The disciples had their minds so strongly set upon some visible reign of Messiah that they would fail to perceive the meaning of his arrest and condemnation and crucifixion, and would be "offended" or made to stumble into questionings and doubts. See the remark of the two on the way to Emmaus, "We hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel." Luke 24: 21, Revised Version American reading. In proof of this, and that it also fulfilled prophecy, he quotes Zech. 13: 7, from the Greek Version as found in the Alexandrian MS., except that the future "I will smite" is used for the imperative.

**32. I will go before you]** As a shepherd goes before his flock. Jesus keeps up the figure of the flock and shepherd used in the prophecy just quoted. He would rise from the dead, and again lead them.

**34. this night . . . thou shalt deny me thrice]** Peter, bold, ardent and impulsive as usual, declares his fidelity with great confidence. Some see a difficulty in the narrative on the ground that it was unlawful for Jews to keep fowls within the Holy City. But surely that could not apply to Romans. Even after this solemn warning Peter is still full of enthusiastic confidence. He was ready to die for his Master rather than deny him. And they all shared in Peter's overweening, self-confident fidelity. Alas, that in a few hours their boasts should prove worth so little!

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ knows where every guest-chamber is. 2. The perplexing problem with the disciples is the puzzle of Christian society now after nearly twenty centuries of experience: how to bring those who have wants and those who can supply them together. Christ can guide both. Ask the Master. 3. A traitor in a Christian company! A Judas among the twelve! So it continues to be. 4. "Is it I, Lord?" How few say that! A strong, loving rebuke for sin from the desk leads one to say, "Didn't that hit Mr. A. hard?" "I wonder if Mrs. B. didn't cringe!"

## COMMON VERSION.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the 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, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

## REVISED VERSION.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be <sup>1</sup>offended in me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am raised up,

32 I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter answered and said unto him, If all shall be <sup>1</sup>offended in thee, I will never

33 be <sup>1</sup>offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me

34 thrice. Peter saith unto him, Even if I must die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *caused to stumble*.



GETHEMENE (Latin).

*(From a Photograph.)*

Looking toward Jerusalem; old olive tree in centre; other trees are olives; wall built in 1847 by Franciscans, to whom garden belongs.



"How exactly that fitted Miss C.!" And so they go on applying the sermon to all their neighbors, but forget earnestly to ask, "Is it I, Lord?" 5. The earthly supper a type of the heavenly feast. 6. The traitor may not be present, yet there are Peters and a houseful of weak friends often in the church. 7. If ten persons read Christians where one reads the Bible, what a poor idea the world must get of Christianity! 8. Our strength is not in self-will, but in Christ's abounding grace.

IN GETHSEMANE. vs. 36-56. Compare Mark 14 : 32-52; Luke 22 : 39-53; John 18 : 1-12.

NEAR JERUSALEM, Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30.

**36. place called Gethsemane]** The Greek word for "place" implies an enclosed spot; John says it was a garden. If it was not public property, something like our city parks, Jesus must have been known to the owner and have been on friendly terms with him. Some suppose it belonged to Lazarus of Bethany or to some of his family. Gethsemane is from two words—*Geth* or *Gath*, "a press," and *Shemen* or *Shem'na*, "oil;" hence oil-press. The place was across the brook "Kedron," *Kedron* being the Greek for cedars, as if it were a "brook of cedars," or from the Hebrew *Kidron*, meaning "turbid" or "black;" that is, black water, or, more probably, black or dark trees. The Latins have fixed it, after an old tradition, on the lower slope of Mount Olivet, about one hundred yards east from the bridge crossing the Kedron and a few minutes' walk from the eastern gate of Jerusalem. The Greeks have one of more recent date higher up the slope. Professor Post and Dr. Thomson think the Latin site too near the highway. Professor Post says it should be sought in the valley to the northeast of the Latin site, but he suggests no spot. The objection does not seem strong enough to weigh against a tradition reaching back to the fourth century.

**37. Peter and the two sons of Zebedee]** Jesus often resorted to this place, Luke 22 : 39; John 18 : 2, and Judas knew the place. Jesus walked under the shade of the old olives; not those now there, for the old trees were all cut down in the times of Titus, forty years after. Young trees may have sprung from the roots of the old ones, and thus the present ones may be the successors of those old ones under which Jesus walked in sorrow. Choosing the three, Peter, James and John, Jesus leaves the others, and retires a few steps aside for prayer. It was the time of the full moon; the night would be light, darkened by the shadow of the great trees, and the deeper shades of that awful agony which Jesus suffered there for us.

## COMMON VERSION.

36 ¶ Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, 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 heavy.

## REVISED VERSION.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto <sup>1</sup>a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and sore troubled.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. an enclosed piece of ground.

38. My soul] Being "sore troubled" he calls for human sympathy. His sorrow, he touchingly and tenderly says, is so great that he is nigh to death with the grief. It almost kills him, the agony is so agonizing. He beseeches the three to watch with him. Even their sympathy would seem to bring a little comfort, a little relief from the bitter anguish.

39. fell on his face, and prayed] Even from these select disciples he withdraws a few steps and then falls into the agonizing prayer, yet submissive in the deepest sorrow. This sense of desertion, the woe of sin, the awful punishment it deserved, the loneliness of one cast off from God—all these roll upon his soul, overwhelming him as he takes the bitter cup. He comes back to find the three chosen disciples not watching, but sleeping. With a grieved tone he reproves Peter—Peter who an hour or two before had declared that he would die with his Lord. Yet how tenderly Jesus mingles gentleness with the rebuke! "The flesh is weak." Three times he goes and prays the same prayer; so Paul had three seasons of prayer for the removal of the thorn in the flesh. 2 Cor. 12: 8. Each time Jesus returned he found the disciples sleeping. They were not heartless nor insensible, but worn out with anxiety and the mental strain of the past days and the night of excitement. It must have been past midnight.

45. Sleep on now] These words are difficult to explain, and have been variously understood. (1) They may have a touch of irony: the agony is over, the victory is won; I do not need your sympathy now; sleep on; or, (2) Sleep on now, if you can, with the enemy so near, which would also have a touch of irony; (3) or, taken as a question, Can or do you sleep on still and take your rest? or, (4) Jesus is supposed to have spoken in a meditative

## COMMON VERSION.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one 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 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 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 doth betray me.

## REVISED VERSION.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:

39 abide ye here, and watch with me. And he went forward a little, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? <sup>1</sup>Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh

40 is weak. Again a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink

41 it, thy will be done. And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes

42 were heavy. And he left them again, and went away, and prayed a third time,

43 saying again the same words. Then cometh he to the disciples, and saith unto

44 them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that betrayeth me.

45

46

<sup>1</sup> Or, Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not

mood and in compassion, "Sleep on now;" thus recalling his request to watch with him, and giving permission to sleep. Then in the same moment the sight or sound of the coming enemy leads him to make the call, "Arise, let us be going;" not to escape by flight, but to meet courageously the betrayer and his company. The third is scarcely admissible from the present Greek reading. The fourth is a probable, but not very natural, explanation. The first or second is the preferable view.

**47. Judas ... and ... a great multitude]** Judas appears to have gone from the passover room to the rulers. He must have convinced them that he had a good opportunity to deliver up Jesus. They furnish him the cohort or band of soldiers and officers from their own number, probably some of the Jewish guards of the temple, armed with "swords," the short broadsword, "staves" or "clubs," and carrying "lanterns and torches." John 18 : 3. Judas guides them to Gethsemane, which he knew to be a chosen spot to which Jesus resorted. The "sign" of the kiss would be needed in the night under the shade of the trees, even when the moon was full. They could not well distinguish the Master from the disciples without it. Judas gave that "sign" before the questions of Jesus to the company, which are recorded in John 18 : 4-9. Some leading harmonists place the "kiss" after these questions, but there would be no need for it after Jesus had openly declared himself, and it would be an unnatural proceeding. It was the usual mode of salutation in the East. And Judas "kissed him profusely," so the Greek implies, as if a loving friend.

**50. Jesus said]** The question of Jesus, "Friend," etc., is the common expression in the East to this day when a friend comes unexpectedly. It may imply here a rebuke, "Friend, do that for which thou art come," see Revised Version, and so signify that Jesus spurned the kiss and would prefer to declare himself the person. John 18 : 8.

**52. Put up ... thy sword]** The name of the disciple, Peter, and of the

COMMON VERSION.

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; 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.

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, 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 thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *kissed him much.*

REVISED VERSION.

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,

49 that is he: take him. And straightway he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Rabbi;

50 and <sup>1</sup>kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, do that for which thou art come. Then they came and laid hands

51 on Jesus, and took him. And behold, one of them that were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and smote the <sup>2</sup>servant of the high priest,

52 and struck off his ear. Then saith Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword

53 shall perish with the sword. Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bondservant.*

high priest's slave, Malchus, are given by John only. The healing is related by Luke only. The assurance of Jesus that he could ask and have "twelve legions of angels" is given by Matthew only.

Matthew recalls and records this remarkable question—"How then shall [should] the Scriptures be fulfilled?" He keeps this purpose before the reader, to show that Jesus fulfills the Jewish Scriptures.

**55. I sat daily with you]** is a keen reproof of this cowardly and sneaking way of coming for him in the night. He had been several days with them in the temple, sitting and teaching; why did they not arrest him then? Their sly, secret and cowardly plans had led them unintentionally to fulfill Scripture. Isa. 53: 10; Lam. 4: 20. As the disciples were not to resist, flight seemed to be the most prudent thing left to them.

**56. the disciples forsook him]** Or, "left him." They were cast down; their hopes were dashed; they were stunned by this, to them, unexpected turn in affairs. Jesus had foretold it very distinctly, v. 31, so that they might be prepared for it; but they understood not. Matthew, writing later, points out how all this fulfilled prophecy.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Soul agony may be in contrast with the serenity of nature. 2. It was so in Gethsemane. This was at the time of full moon; the rainy season had passed; a storm then was rare; the heavens were doubtless peaceful, the night quiet and calm as "eastern skies;" there was little in nature, save the night, to harmonize with the deep and awful agony falling upon the Son of God. 3. Nature seemed rather to have an air of quiet joy that a lost race was redeemed. 4. The deepest grief is followed often by sleep so oppressive that the worn-out frame is powerless to resist. 5. How considerate is Jesus of our infirmities! In his deepest agony he understood the bodily weakness of the disciples. 6. There is no sorrow which the coarseness of the wicked will regard; there is no solemn seclusion which they will not ruthlessly invade. 7. Peter boastful, fighting, flying and denying in the same night; what a bundle of infirmities is a human soul! 8. There is little safety or comfort in trusting to self. 9. The end comes, but there is no angelic host, no dazzling glory, as on the mount of transfiguration. The Son of God arrested, and no miracle, no fire from heaven, no opening of the earth to swallow up the wicked men! Nay, it is the most stupendous of wonders, that this could occur and all heaven be restrained from blotting out the earth by a manifestation of love for the Son of God, and by coming in glory to deliver him! 10. How short-sighted is man! The Christian may often suffer, and deliverance not come; hopes

## COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

54 twelve legions of angels? How then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that

55 thus it must be? In that hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a robber with swords and staves to seize me? I sat daily in the temple

56 teaching, and ye took me not. But all this is come to pass, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples left him, and fled.

may be dashed, and no presence of heaven's glory be seen, for it is God's plan to work out the greater good and greater glory in ways grander and more far-reaching than the heart of man can conceive.

JESUS BEFORE CALAPHAS. vs. 57-63. Compare Mark 14: 53-65; Luke 22: 54-65; John 18: 12-27.

JERUSALEM, PALACE OF CALAPHAS, Friday, before sunrise, April 7, A.D. 30.

**57. led him away to Caiaphas the high priest]** The Revised Version inserts "to the house of Caiaphas," but the words "the house of" are an addition not found in the Greek text. John expressly states that, after the arrest, they "led him away to Annas first," and the reason is given, "for he was father in law to Caiaphas." Annas was the stronger character; rich, influential, an ex-high priest, he was the recognized head of the Sadducean Jews. He had held the high priest's office only five or six years, but it was filled by not less than five of his sons, by his son in law Caiaphas, and by a grandson.

Matthew, Mark and Luke make no mention of Jesus before Annas. This we learn from John. Whether there was a trial or an informal examination before Annas, and whether John intends to describe it in 18: 13-24, or whether no account of what took place there has been preserved, are questions which belong more properly to a commentary on John. Briefly it may be stated here that there are no signs of agreement on these questions among biblical scholars. There are two leading views: I. That there was but one Jewish examination, which was by Caiaphas. In that case John 18: 24 is a parenthetic clause, the verb having the sense of the pluperfect tense "had sent," as in the Authorized Version. To this it is objected that (1) the Greek verb (in the aorist) cannot be taken in the sense of the English pluperfect; \* (2) it confuses two distinct accounts in Matthew and Mark, which refer to a night examination and a morning assembly, compare Matt. 26: 57-68 with Mark 14: 53-65, and Matt. 27: 1 with Mark 15: 7; (3) it also breaks up the order of Luke's narrative, and fails to account intelligibly for the order in John. (4) The most serious objection to this theory is that, if correct, John 18: 24 is sadly misplaced; v. 24 ought to follow immediately after v. 13,

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

57 And they that had taken Jesus led him away to the house of Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders

\* This is urged in Robinson's *Greek Harmony*, Riddle's edition, pp. 258, 260. But see paper by Prof. Gardiner in *Journal of Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis*, 1886, who dissents from Prof. Riddle's view and urges with much ability that (1) the Greek aorist is sometimes used in the sense of an English pluperfect, and (2) even when accompanied by *ὄν*. His argument is very strong on the first point, but not convincing on the second point; for, even when *ὄν* denotes sequence of thought only, and not of time, it is scarcely natural to accompany it with a pluperfect. Then if it is conceded that the English pluperfect might represent the Greek aorist in some cases, it must still be shown that John 18: 24 is a case requiring such a rendering. Hence the above argument would at most merely make the theory of one examination possible and tenable; it is not a *positive* argument for this view.

instead of v. 23. It is exceedingly difficult, on this theory of one examination, to account for the occurrence of the statement in v. 24 at that point in the narrative, even parenthetically. But it would have come in naturally as a parenthetical remark after v. 13 or 14, and only there.

II. The other leading view is that there were two Jewish examinations, one before Annas and the other before Caiaphas. The objections to this view are: 1. That the denials of Peter were then partly during the examination before Annas and partly before Caiaphas, and that this is not consistent with the narrative of Matthew. But if Annas and Caiaphas dwelt in the same palace, the denials would in either case all be in the same court of the same building. Or, again, a writer narrating two events that happened at the same time must narrate one and then the other. He may not attempt to give the relative order of all the details in the contemporaneous events. This is evidently the case in the narrative of Matthew. 2. That Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas, it is said implies that he sent him some distance. But why so? Jerusalem is comparatively a very small town. The phrase implies only that Annas sent Jesus on to the legal official. It might have been to another part of the palace. These objections are less serious than those against the other view. And this view offers an explanation of the widely-different details of the examination narrated in John, from those here given. Moreover, it is consistent with the narratives to hold that there was an examination before Annas, of which we have no account, the fact being only referred to in John 18:13, 24. See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. ii. pp. 547, 548.

To sum up then, these points are generally conceded: 1. That Jesus was first brought before Annas; 2. That he was sent bound to Caiaphas with or without examination; 3. That he was condemned finally on his own confession by Caiaphas; 4. That after a morning meeting of the council Jesus was taken before Pilate and accused of three things—(1) of perverting the nation, (2) forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar, (3) claiming himself to be rightfully a king. The examination described by Matthew all agree to be that before Caiaphas. He passes in silence the fact mentioned by John that Jesus was first led before Annas.

58. Peter followed . . . unto the . . . palace] How Peter found entrance to the palace, John 18:15, 16 tells us. From this mention of Peter's presence in the palace, Matthew turns to give an account of the examination of Jesus before Caiaphas, which he completes, and then in v. 69 takes up the story of Peter's base denials, and completes it. This will largely account for the variations from the order of other evangelists.

59. all the council, sought false witness] They kept seeking for

## COMMON VERSION.

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;

## REVISED VERSION.

58 were gathered together. But Peter followed him afar off, unto the court of the high priest, and entered in, and sat with

59 the officers, to see the end. Now the chief priests and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that

false testimony against Jesus. They required two witnesses to condemn a man under the law. Deut. 17 : 6 ; 19 : 15. False testimony was forbidden by the ninth commandment, and what a false witness sought to have done to another, the law required to be done to him. Deut. 19 : 16-19. The entire court, "all the council," so far as the members were present, broke this law. But for a time they found no witnesses to agree.

It must be remembered that Oriental courts are less formal than ours, and the Jewish usage formed no marked exception to that loose custom. Now, in an eastern court, questions are put loosely, cross-questioning is not keen or confusing as in some of our courts, nor does the trial proceed with that order or definite logical sequence known to us. The criminal often and indeed usually conducts his own case in the minor courts, and there is little speech-making. The result depends chiefly on the judge. He may be influenced more by political motives than by justice, and the offer of a large money bribe is usual and generally proves more potent than either position or justice.

**60, 61. two . . . said]** These two agreed in their testimony, but perverted the words of Jesus. Whether they willfully perverted them, or ignorantly, is not clear. But since they seem to refer back to the first cleansing of the temple, John 2 : 14-16, it is quite possible that they gave the confused but popular meaning attached to the words, since the Jews at the time generally misunderstood him. See John 2 : 20.

**63. I adjure thee]** The high priest sought to get some answer from Jesus that would lead to a condemnation. Failing to do this by calling his attention to the testimony, he makes a solemn adjuration, which was admissible under Ex. 22 : 11, Num. 5 : 19-22 and Josh. 7 : 19, and was an oath requiring one to deny or confess the crime charged.

**64. Thou hast said]** A form of confession that he was the Christ. And he adds a prophecy respecting his future glorious manifestation as the real Messiah.

**65. He hath spoken blasphemy]** This charge would be true if Jesus

## COMMON VERSION.

60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet 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 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 coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what

## REVISED VERSION.

60 they might put him to death; and they found it not, though many false witnesses came. But afterward came two, and said,

61 This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three

62 days. And the high priest stood up, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against

63 thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of

64 God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming

65 on the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his garments, saying, He hath

<sup>1</sup> Or, *sanctuary*: as in ch. 23 : 35 ; 27 : 5.

was an impostor. If he was the Christ, it was no blasphemy to claim to be what he truly was. The high priest and the council had no intention or desire to consider the truthfulness of his claim. They assumed it to be false, and Jesus to be an impostor in the face of his wonderful miracles of raising the dead, and in the face of his more wonderful teaching and life. So they all, that is, all who were present, at once declared Jesus guilty of death as a blasphemer.

**67. they spit in his face]** It is not certain, but very probable, that these indignities and outrages were not done by members of the council or Sanhedrin, though their spirit must have inspired and prompted them. They were most likely the acts of the officers and Jewish guards in whose immediate hands Jesus was. In all their conduct the Jews were fulfilling prophecy concerning the Messiah. See Isa. 50: 6; Lam. 3: 30; Micah 5: 1. The spitting upon, blindfolding and smiting him, and in mockery calling on him to prophesy or tell who it was that struck him, pictures a scene possible in eastern courts only. How the character and conduct of Jesus shine out in contrast with their baseness and inhumanity!

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The wicked wrest the words of Christ to their own hurt. 2. When God justifies, who shall condemn? 3. The silence of Jesus under outrage is more wonderful than speech. 4. The Christ of humiliation will be the Christ of heaven. 5. The wicked actor knows how to simulate great sanctity. 6. The wicked often fulfill Scripture, as Christ's persecutors did. 7. Silence under great outrages may sometimes best show forth God's grace. 8. How much Christ suffered for us!

PETER'S DENIALS. vs. 69-75. Compare Mark 14: 66-72; Luke 22: 55-62; John 18: 15-18 and 25-27.

HIGH PRIEST'S PALACE, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

**69. Peter sat without in the palace]** or, as Mark says, "beneath in the palace," or, more accurately, "in the court" as in the Revised Version. Luke adds that "he sat by the fire." These variations are slight and by no means contradictory. They differ just as honest witnesses would be expected to differ in giving the details of such an event, each stating some minor detail which the other omits. These variations are a strong argument for the independence and truthfulness of the different Gospel narratives. The high

COMMON VERSION.

further 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 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.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *liable to*.

REVISED VERSION.

spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard the blasphemy: what think

66 ye? They answered and said, He is

67 <sup>1</sup> worthy of death. Then did they spit in his face and buffet him: and some

68 smote him <sup>2</sup> with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou

69 Christ: who is he that struck thee? Now Peter was sitting without in the court: and a maid came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus the Gal-

<sup>2</sup> Or, *with rods*



priest's palace or house was probably a two-story building around an open court and standing on the slope of a hill. The street gate or door opens into a hall or passage way, the *προαύλιον*, or *πυλῶν*, the porch, and beyond this was the *αὐλή* or interior court, open to the sky. Peter would be in this court on a level with the lower story. Here stood a brazier of coals, casting a red glare on the faces of the men and servants, who were trying to warm themselves and catch some words from the trial going on, either in the reception-room on the same floor and open upon the court side, or perhaps in an upper room also opening upon the court. Peter was there partly from curiosity; he wanted "to see the end." v. 58.

a damsel] or a maid. The first questioner of Peter was a maidservant, the portress as John specifically says. The charge was no doubt repeated several times, with true eastern garrulity. The *first* denial may have been soon after Peter entered the court. See John 18: 15-17.

71. another maid saw him] The first denial of Peter soon brought a volley of charges upon him from this maid reinforced by others (see the four accounts), and this so thoroughly annoyed and fired his temper that he hotly denied with an oath any knowledge of his Master. This second denial seems to have given him a little respite from their taunts for an hour or more.

73. after a while . . . they that stood by] The third charge against Peter may have been started by a relative of Malchus, whose ear Peter had struck off in the garden. Others joined with him, as appears from Matthew's narrative. This time the accusation was sharper than before. The accusers were sure of their man. His speech had the peculiar accent of a Galilean. This consisted in a thick pronunciation of the guttural letters, like the change of *sh* into *th*. Thus beset for the third time, Peter lost all control of his temper and of himself. He began to curse and to swear. Doubtless this was an imprecation common among his people, to which he may have been addicted before his call to be a disciple. It is not necessary here to determine the relation of these denials to the detailed events of the trial going on at the same time, nor is it of great importance. To relate the fact that the foremost disciple did thus sadly and basely deny his Lord is the main purpose of this portion of the narrative.

COMMON VERSION.

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 *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 the man. And immediately the cock crew.

REVISED VERSION.

70 *ilæan*. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and saith unto them that were there, This man

72 also was with Jesus the Nazarene. And again he denied with an oath, I know not

73 the man. And after a little while they that stood by came and said to Peter, Of a truth thou also art *one* of them; for thy

74 speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, I know not the man. And straightway the cock crew.

**75. Peter remembered . . . and wept bitterly]** The crowing of the cock and the look of Jesus, Luke 22:61, brought, like a flash of light, a deep sense of his sin to Peter. Filled with shame and mortification, and crushed with sorrow, he rushed from the scene of his temptation and fall, into the street, and sought a place of repentance with bitter tears. There is a tradition that all his life Peter arose every morning at the hour Jesus looked upon him and prayed again for pardon, and that he never could hear the cock crow without calling to mind his awful sin. The Romish Church sometimes sets a cock upon the church steeple to remind people of Peter's sin and repentance.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Peter was self-confident; he fell. 2. To sin is human; to wallow in sin is devilish; to hate and forsake sin is Christian and heavenly. 3. Peter, the rock, became but a reed to be broken by a silly maid. 4. Some Christians can slash with a sword like Peter, but are themselves cut down easily by a sneer. 5. Show your colors; if a Christian among the ungodly, courageously own it—not evasively deny it. 6. Blessed is he who is convicted of sin by a look from Jesus! 7. The remorseful Judas dies unforgiven; the repentant Peter becomes the pentecostal preacher.

CHAP. XXVII. THE COUNCIL CONDEMN JESUS: JUDAS KILLS HIMSELF.  
vs. 1-10. Compare Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66-71; John 18:23; Acts 1:18, 19.

JERUSALEM, Friday Morning, April 7, A.D. 30.

**1. When the morning was come]** This marks a meeting distinct from and following that described in the last chapter. Whether this meeting is identical with the one noted in Luke 22:66-71 is an unsettled question. All admit that a morning meeting of the council is intended by Matt. 27:1 and Mark 15:1. It seems natural to conclude from the order of Luke's narrative, and from his language, that he intended to describe what took place at the morning meeting.

**all the chief priests]** "All" is used in the general sense of the whole council; at any meeting some might be absent. One, at least, was absent from this meeting. See Luke 23:51. They conferred together as to further measures to secure the execution of the death sentence. The Sanhedrin could not put one to death without the authority of the Roman ruler. Under Jewish law a claim to be the Messiah was blasphemy. But the Roman ruler cared nothing for blasphemy. Hence the *form* was changed, so that claiming to be the Messiah, that is, a king, was made to appear treason against Cæsar, as will be seen below.

COMMON VERSION.

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.

CHAP. XXVII.—When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

REVISED VERSION.

75 And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

27 Now when morning was come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to

2. delivered him to . . . Pilate] Judæa was attached to the Roman province of Syria, which was an imperial province governed by a proprætor or prefect, with three legates or military commanders, and a procurator who managed the revenues. The Jews being turbulent, and the country distant from Antioch the capital of Syria, the Roman emperor appointed a separate officer over Judæa with the title of procurator. This procurator or sub-prefect had the power of life and death, and of deposing and appointing the high priest. Pontius Pilate had succeeded Valerius Gratus as procurator of Judæa in A.D. 25 or 26. The Roman capital of Judæa was Cæsarea, but the Jewish capital continued at Jerusalem. Pilate was crafty, weak, wanting in courage, was accused and displaced in A.D. 36, and tradition says banished to Gaul or to Lucerne. The work *Acts of Pilate* is spurious.

DEATH OF JUDAS.

3. Judas . . . when he saw . . . repented himself] This implies that the condemnation of Jesus was an unexpected result to Judas, but he knew Jesus was innocent and himself a betrayer. See v. 4. Two words are used in the New Testament for "repent." One is μετανοέω, *metanœo*, or *metanoia*, which signifies a change of mind; the other is μεταμέλομαι, *metamelomai*, which means to care after, or to change one's care, thence to have sorrow, and hence remorse. It is this latter word which is used here in regard to Judas. He had sorrow, remorse, bitter regret, but no true repentance, that is, no reformation of life or heart, no forsaking of sin. It was not a godly sorrow, but a remorse, that sent him out to hang himself. Peter had sorrow for the cause, Judas for the effect; Peter's repentance was a change of purpose, of mind; Judas would simply escape the consequences, the punishment, of his sin.

brought again the thirty pieces of silver] The money was paid and accepted. The narrative here implies that the thirty pieces were the full amount, and not merely an earnest of a further sum. Judas testifies to the innocence of Jesus. His whole conduct in this betrayal shows a corrupt, avaricious nature and a bad heart. The supposition that he intended only to force his Master to declare his Messianic claims, and assume the temporal rule of the Jews in accordance with their expectations as to the Messiah, is not consistent with the facts.

5. he cast down the pieces of silver] Stung by the cold, heartless

COMMON VERSION.

2 And when they had bound him, they led 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 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.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in

REVISED VERSION.

2 death: and they bound him, and led him away, and delivered him up to Pilate the governor.

3 Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and 4 elders, saying, I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood. But they said, What is that to us? see thou to it.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *righteous*.

reply of the priests, which implied that he must take care of himself, they were done with him, Judas flung the pieces of silver through the partly-open veil into the temple,—*ναόν*, the sanctuary, not the *gazitih*, or council chamber, nor the public courts, but the holy place where only the priests could enter,—and then he rushed away.

**hanged himself]** So did Ahithophel, 2 Sam. 17: 23, where the same Greek word is used in the Septuagint. This and the account of Luke in Acts 1: 18, 19 briefly record his horrible death, the latter adding details of the horror not given by the former. Tradition points out a place on the cliff overhanging the valley of Hinnom, where Judas hanged himself from a tree whose boughs projected over the precipice. Hackett visited the spot, and found the precipice from twenty-five to forty feet in height, and considered the description a natural one. Edersheim suggests that Judas may have hanged himself with his own girdle, in which he carried the thirty pieces of silver, and either the girdle or the bough of the tree proving too weak to sustain his weight in the struggles of strangulation, broke, and he fell into the valley below, which crushed and burst his body, as stated in Acts 1: 18.

**7. bought . . . the potter's field]** These returned silver pieces, being regarded as blood-money, were defiled, and could not, in their view, go into the treasury, though the law, Deut. 23: 18, usually quoted as forbidding it, relates to quite different cases. The priests may have based their decision on an inference from this text. So they bought the potter's field, Jer. 19: 11; 32: 7-12; Zech. 11: 12, 13, a field of blood, Acts 1: 19, to bury strangers in. The place in our large burial-grounds devoted to the burial of strangers is still called "potter's field." Tradition points out two Akeldamas, one where Judas is supposed to have hanged himself, the other that purchased with the blood-money. This appears to have arisen from an *apparent* discrepancy between Matthew and Acts; one stating that the rulers bought the field, the other that Judas bought it. But the discrepancy is apparent only. The expression in Acts 1: 18 may be understood as a common way of saying that this man's award of blood-money bought the field. It is not likely that the evangelists refer to two fields by this name. Tradition has pointed out Akeldama, since the days of Jerome, south of the valley of Hinnom, on the slope of the Hill of Evil Counsel, and opposite the Jewish cemetery which is on the slope of Ophel. See illustration, p. 287.

**8. unto this day]** This implies that the Gospel of Matthew was not

## COMMON VERSION.

the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

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 the price of blood.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

## REVISED VERSION.

into the sanctuary, and departed; and 6 he went away and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the <sup>1</sup>treasury, since it is the price 7 of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to 8 bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *corbanas*, that is, *sacred treasury* Compare Mark 7: 11.

written until some time after the betrayal of Jesus. There are other indications that it must have been written before the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70.

9. spoken by Jeremy] or Jeremiah. The citation which follows in this and verse 10 is found substantially in Zech. 11 : 12, 13, not in Jeremiah. Of the many explanations of this, the most satisfactory is that of Lightfoot. The book of Jeremiah was the first one in the volume of the prophets as arranged by the Jews, and gave a name to the whole volume of which Zechariah was a part. Some have supposed this to be a spurious reading for Zechariah, but of this there is no proof. Origen and others suggest that it is from a book of Jeremiah now lost, but the explanation given above is preferable. A similar general reference is made by our Lord : "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me." Luke 24 : 44.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Religious fanaticism is up early and late. 2. It takes men with strong traits to make great criminals. 3. The wicked care only for themselves, not for their dupes or victims. 4. Judas as a Satanic spy and traitor testifies to the innocence of Jesus. 5. Judas had avarice and ambition and baseness ; they destroyed him. 6. Remorse drives men mad ; madness sends them to Satan. 7. Repentance drives men to seek forgiveness, and this leads them to God. Behold the awful horror to which guilt and sin lead a soul which has known about Jesus and the kingdom of heaven !

JESUS BEFORE PILATE. vs. 11-31. Compare Mark 15 : 2-20 ; Luke 23 : 2-25 ; John 18 : 28 to 19 : 16.

JERUSALEM, Friday Morning, April 7, A.D. 30.

The order of events in the trial before Pilate is not given in either Gospel. Comparing the four narratives it appears to have been—1. The Jews bind Jesus and bring him before Pilate. 2. Pilate asks what accusation they bring. John 18 : 29, 30. 3. He orders them to take and judge him, but they say they have not the power. John 18 : 31. 4. The Jews charge Jesus with treason for claiming to be a king. Luke 23 : 2. 5. Pilate asks Jesus, Art thou a king ? 6. Jesus explains his kingdom, and Pilate declares him guiltless. John 18 : 32-38. 7. The priests vehemently continue their charges. 8. Pilate wonders at the silence of Jesus. 9. They add the charge of sedition, and again Pilate declares Jesus without fault. Luke 23 : 4, 5. 10. Pilate sends Jesus to Herod. Luke 23 : 6-12. 11. Pilate declares Jesus innocent on his return. Luke 23 : 13-16. 12. Seeks to release Jesus. Matt. 27 : 13-18. 13.

COMMON VERSION.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of 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.

REVISED VERSION.

9 day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And <sup>1</sup>they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was priced, <sup>2</sup>whom certain of the children of Israel did price ; and <sup>3</sup>they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

<sup>1</sup> Or, I took <sup>2</sup> Or, whom they priced on the part of the sons of Israel <sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read I gave.

Pilate's wife warns him about Jesus. Matt. 27:19. 14. The priests and people ask the release of Barabbas. 15. Cry out, Crucify Jesus. 16. Pilate washes his hands. Matt. 27:24, 25. 17. Barabbas released. 18. Jesus scourged. 19. Crowned with thorns and mocked by soldiers. Matt. 27:29, 30. 20. Pilate shows Jesus to the people; "*Ecce homo*," "Behold the man!" questions Jesus as to his origin; yields to the public clamor and delivers him to be crucified. John 19:4-16. 21. Jesus is led away to be crucified. Matt. 27:31, 32.

Matthew alone mentions the message from Pilate's wife, the washing of hands by Pilate, and the awful imprecation of the people, "His blood be on us." Luke alone narrates the sending of Jesus to Herod, and that Pilate and Herod became friends from that time. But John's account of the trial is more full than that of any other evangelist.

THE ROMAN TRIAL.—There were two trials of Jesus: (1) a Jewish and (2) a Roman. There were two hearings in each trial, before two rulers or judges. In the Jewish trial (1) before Annas; (2) before Caiaphas. In the Roman trial first and last before Pilate, and between these before Herod Antipas. This double trial was due to the political state of Judæa. It was subject to the Roman emperor, and the power of sentencing one to death for a political crime was taken away from the Jews. The district of Judæa was a part of the Roman province of Syria, ruled by a prefect or governor. But Judæa also had a subordinate ruler called procurator, who resided at Caesarea. At the passover he often came to Jerusalem for a few days.

Hence Pontius Pilate, the procurator appointed in A.D. 26, was in Jerusalem at the time of the arrest and trial of Jesus. For when Archelaus was deposed, about A.D. 6, Judæa was placed under a procurator. Pilate was appointed during the reign of Tiberius as emperor, and held the office about ten years, when he was sent to Rome by the prefect (governor-general) of Syria and banished to Gaul. The rule of Pilate was offensive to the Jews, and he had a contempt for them. He had some sense of justice, but was weak in maintaining it even when he perceived it. The rage and fury of the populace always frightened him, so that he yielded to their clamors against the clearest convictions of what was right.

The Roman trial of Jesus had three parts: (1) before Pilate; (2) before Herod; (3) before Pilate again. It had not less than seven distinct steps: (1) the accusation and first private examination, resulting in a verdict "no crime" by Pilate; (2) the clamor which caused Jesus to be sent to Herod and returned to Pilate; (3) Pilate's proposal to scourge and acquit Jesus; (4) proposal to the people to release a prisoner; (5) Pilate washes his hands after hearing his wife's message; (6) second private examination and effort to release Jesus, but is accused of treason to Cæsar; (7) shows Jesus scourged to the people; his final sentence.

This trial was in the *second* great period of Roman legal history: the learned age of jurisprudence, which began with Cicero. But the famous *Codes*, *Pandects* and *Institutes* were not yet worked out, and the splendid system of laws of the Justinian age was scattered through 2000 treatises and

in endless numbers of records. The Jewish rulers hoped that Pilate would simply ratify the sentence of their court without inquiry. But their trial had been secret, not public as the Roman law required. Finding that invective was useless, the Jews hastily framed a charge that Jesus set himself up as king. Pilate found that he was not an earthly king, and announced him not guilty. They cried out that he proclaimed seditions even in Galilee. So Pilate sent him to Herod, who also was in Jerusalem at the passover. Herod saw only a harmless wonder-worker, and mockingly sent the prisoner back to Pilate. Pilate tried various shrewd devices for releasing Jesus, except the just one, but without success. The Jews understood Pilate, and boldly charged him with being a traitor himself to Cæsar if he let Jesus go. This aroused his fears and he yielded, giving sentence of death contrary to his convictions of justice.

**11. Jesus stood before the governor]** There is some question about the Greek here, whether the true reading is *ἔστη* or *ἑστάθη* (was placed). In either case the term is a legal one for "arraigned" or "put on trial." It need not imply that Jesus was standing during all the trial. In Roman trials a seat was provided for the judge, and seats were usually provided for the accusers. In this instance the Jews would not enter Pilate's court-room. John 18:28. Whatever may be the meaning of *πάσχα*, *passover*, in John 18:28, entering a heathen house would not have so defiled them as to have prevented them from eating the paschal lamb that evening. For reasons see Edersheim, *Life of Jesus*, Bk. V. chap. xiv. Pilate sought to escape from trying Jesus by throwing the case back upon the Jewish court. See John 18:29-31. The Jews rather surlily reminded him that the power to punish by death had been taken from them. They charged Jesus with forbidding tribute to Cæsar, and with claiming to be a king. Then Pilate went in to ask Jesus, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" Jesus explained his claim to Pilate in the judgment hall, while his accusers were outside. John 18:29, 33-38. Matthew does not report this full explanation, but only that Jesus admitted that he was a king.

**12. he answered nothing]** Contrast the loud clamor of his accusers with the calm silence of Jesus! In an eastern court, the storm of angry words from the accusers and accused, their shouts and clamor, make a babel of noise equalled only by the yells in a modern stock or gold-room. The wonder of Pilate at the silence of the accused, in contrast with the usual noisy denials, is therefore most natural. Jesus appears to have been placed so that he could hear the clamorous charges; indeed, it would be difficult not to hear them. His continued silence, after Pilate reminded him of the

COMMON VERSION.

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor 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?

REVISED VERSION.

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art

12 thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused by the chief priests and

13 elders, he answered nothing. Then saith Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

multitude and the vehemence of the charges, was a marvel to the governor. Pilate was perplexed over so strange a prisoner.

**15. was wont to release . . . a prisoner]** Weak and wily, Pilate again sought to escape from deciding the case, through the custom of releasing a prisoner at the feast. How or when it originated is not known. All the evangelists refer to it, although the direct reference in Luke is doubtful. See Luke 23:17, 18, Revised Version. John says the feast was the passover. John 18:39. The release was no doubt a concession of the Roman power to the subjugated Jews, and intended to gratify them during their great national festival. We learn from John's Gospel that Pilate proposed that he release Jesus unto them, in accord with this custom. Probably this offer produced some confusion among the Jews. Some of the common people may have assented to it. The rulers preferred Barabbas. This led Pilate to press the matter by the question Matthew records.

**17. Whom will ye . . . Barabbas, or Jesus]** Of this strange, notorious man, Barabbas, nothing is known beyond the statements in the Gospel narrative. His name means Bar=son, and abba=father, that is, "son of his father." Some manuscript copies of Matthew add "Jesus" to the name of Barabbas, but the reading is not generally accepted. He was charged with robbery and murder in an insurrection, and was in prison with others of his band. He and his band may have been "zealots," a class of fanatical Jewish patriots, violent in their opposition to Roman rule. This would account for the apparent ease with which the people were persuaded to prefer the release of Barabbas to that of Jesus. And yet Pilate, by this appeal to the people, hoped to rescue Jesus from the envy of the priests.

**19. Have thou nothing to do with that just man]** or righteous man. Matthew alone mentions this message from Pilate's wife. Tradition says her name was Claudia Procula; an apocryphal gospel claims her as a convert to Judaism, and the Greek Church has enrolled her in its list of saints. She had been alarmed by a distressing dream about Jesus, and, regarding him as a good man, urged her husband to have nothing to do with his condemnation. What great contrasts at the trial of Jesus! A heathen woman declares his

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And he answered him to never a word; inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto 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 called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 And he gave him no answer, not even to one word: inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at <sup>1</sup>the feast the governor was wont to release unto the multitude one prisoner, whom

16 they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 When therefore they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or

18 Jesus who is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered

19 him up. And while he was sitting on the judgement-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream

<sup>1</sup> Or, a feast



righteousness; the priests of God's chosen people are clamoring for his death as a seditious traitor. Pilate's wife uses the term *δικαιος*—*dikaios*—righteous, which Plato, Aristotle and other Greek writers used to describe their ideal, perfect man.

**20. the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude]** The multitude were not ready to unite upon the release of Barabbas. They required persuasion by the rulers. The narrative seems to imply that some of the multitude would have preferred the release of Jesus. The entreaties of the rulers soon prevailed; for when Pilate repeated his question, "whether of the twain," that is, "which of the two," shall I release? they answered, Barabbas. This answer seems to have taken Pilate by surprise. Perhaps he thought the multitude had yielded to the persuasion of the priests to ask for Barabbas, but did not desire the condemnation of Jesus. So Pilate again appealed to the people, "What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ?" He was careful to word his question so as to touch the pride of the Jewish people, and awaken their interest in behalf of Jesus. Again he was disappointed. The Jewish rulers had already beaten him in artifice. The people cried, "Let him be crucified."

**23. Why, what evil hath he done?]** Startled by their cry, and alarmed by the message from his wife, Pilate now appealed directly to the people's sense of justice. The mysterious bearing of the prisoner, the known envy and rancor of the Jewish rulers and the alarm of his wife preyed upon the weak and superstitious mind of Pilate. He showed his weakness by attempting to reason with a crowd when he ought to have used the authority of a judge and of an honorable governor. Seeing his weakness and their advantage, the people answered his reasoning by a wilder cry, "Let him be crucified."

**24. he took water, and washed his hands]** So loud was the tumultuous cry of the multitude, and so profound was the impression of the innocence of Jesus made upon Pilate, that he determined to clear himself by a well-known symbolic Jewish rite. See Deut. 21:6; Ps. 26:6. A similar rite was known among the heathen also. Pilate had repeatedly declared the

COMMON VERSION.

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, Barabbas.

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.

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.

REVISED VERSION.

20 because of him. Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas, and

21 destroy Jesus. But the governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto

22 you? And they said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ? They

23 all say, Let him be crucified. And he said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out exceedingly, saying, Let

24 him be crucified. So when Pilate saw that he prevailed nothing, but rather that a tumult was arising, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent <sup>1</sup>of the blood of this righteous man: see ye to it.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read of this blood: see ye etc.

innocence of Jesus. Now he rises from the judgment seat, calls for water, and washes his hands in the presence of the rulers and the people. By it he pronounces the execution of Jesus in his view a judicial murder, in which he wished to take no part. The sin of executing an innocent man they must assume. Pilate could wash his hands, but not his heart, from the guilt of weakly delivering up the innocent.

**25. His blood be on us, and on our children]** In wild and mad frenzy the people, led on by their rulers, uttered this awful imprecation. "Some thirty years later," says Edersheim, himself a converted Jew, "and on that very spot, was judgment pronounced upon some of the best in Jerusalem; and among the three thousand victims of the governor's fury, of whom not a few were scourged and crucified right over against the prætorium, were many of the noblest of the citizens of Jerusalem. . . . And still have these wanderers seemed to bear, from century to century, that burden of blood; and still does it seem to weigh on us and our children." The house of Annas was destroyed by a mob in the next generation, and his son was scourged and dragged through the streets and slain. Nor did Pilate escape. Accused to the emperor, he was condemned as disloyal to Cæsar and ended his life in banishment.

**26. released . . . Barabbas . . . scourged Jesus]** The tumultuous crowd hastened the end of the awful tragedy. Barabbas was promptly released. Jesus was handed over to the Roman soldiers to be scourged without formal condemnation. So the narrative in John seems to imply. After the scourging he was delivered up for crucifixion. John 19: 1-18. Perhaps Pilate still had some faint hope that the horrors of scourging would cause the people to relent and mercifully to spare Jesus from death. The scourging was of the Roman, not the Jewish, character. The Jewish law limited it to forty lashes, Deut. 25: 1-3, but the Roman law had no limit. The scourge was made of leathern thongs loaded at their ends with bits of lead or bone, which would cut and tear the flesh of the victim in the most horrible manner. See illustration, p. 287. The condemned was stripped of his clothes, his hands tied, his back bent forward, and he was then bound to a pillar or stake near the prætorium. If he did not die or become insensible under the horrible torture, he would be led away to crucifixion. To this cruel scourging

## COMMON VERSION.

25 Then answered all the 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.

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.

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 the Jews!

## REVISED VERSION.

25 And all the people answered and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

26 Then released he unto them Barabbas: but Jesus he scourged and delivered to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the <sup>1</sup>Prætorium, and gathered

28 unto him the whole <sup>2</sup>band. And they <sup>3</sup>stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And they platted a crown of thorns and put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand; and they kneeled down before him, and mocked him, saying,

<sup>1</sup> Or, palace<sup>2</sup> Or, cohort<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read clothed.

the soldiers added bitter mocking of Jesus in the prætorium, or "palace" as the Revised Version reads. The rulers had accused him of claiming to be a king, and thus had built up a false charge of treason.

The soldiers had caught the point of the charge and vented their ill-feeling toward the Jews upon Jesus. Gathering their entire cohort or company around Jesus in the palace hall, they took off his garments and arrayed him in mock purple (the military cloak worn by emperors and officers of rank), plating a crown of thorns for his head (either the Christ thorn, or the *Calycotome villosa* a leguminous thorny plant, suggested by Dr. Post), and placing a reed, a mock sceptre, in his hand, they fell down before him in the bitterest scorn and mocked him with the cry, "Hail, King of the Jews!" To complete their indignity and contempt, they spat upon him—of all acts the most contemptuous in the eyes of an Oriental—and then smote him, as if their brutal natures were too coarse to carry the royal mockery to the end. Pilate interrupts their brutal work, as we learn from John 19 : 4-16. Once more he brings Jesus forth, bleeding, lacerated, faint from the horrible scourging, the crown of thorns on his head, and declares his innocence; but the terrible cry is again raised, "Crucify him! crucify him!" and Pilate yields. Jesus is arrayed in his own garments, a tunic and cloak, and is led away.

**30. took the reed, and smote him]** No particular kind of reed is designated. The Greek is a general term for all kinds of reeds. It was doubtless an ugly stick, used as a mock sceptre. The verb for "smote" is imperfect tense, implying repeated and continuous acts: "they were smiting him." Roman history is full of similar derisive and cruel acts of the soldiers upon victims condemned to death.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Men often put a false character upon Christ, and then oppose the Christ of their own making. 2. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, but the principles of it ought to rule in all temporal kingdoms. 3. "The best of men have often been accused of the worst of crimes."—*Henry*. 4. Silence is usually the best answer to calumny and to brow-beating accusations. 5. Professedly religious men sometimes are filled with envy. 6. Some heathen may esteem Christ higher than do the dwellers in Christian lands. 7. Men are still perplexed like Pilate over the great question, "What shall I do with Jesus?" 8. We cannot wash out the guilt of our acts by washing our hands. 9. "Sin is a brat that nobody is willing to own."—*Henry*. 10. It is an awful thing to call down the vengeance of God upon our sins. 11. The Jewish Church chose a robber and rejected and crucified its Saviour.

## COMMON VERSION.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

30 Hail, King of the Jews! And they spat upon him, and took the reed and smote him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they took off from him the robe, and put on him his garments, and led him away to crucify him.

THE CRUCIFIXION. vs. 32-50. Compare Mark 15 : 20-37; Luke 23 : 26-46; John 19 : 16-30.

JERUSALEM, CALVARY, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

**32. as they came out]** of the city. See Mark 15 : 21; Luke 23 : 26, where it is clear that the soldiers met Simon outside of the city gate, as he was coming from the country. Simon was from Cyrene, a city of Libya, in northern Africa, where many Jews had settled. He was probably a Jew, who had come to the passover at Jerusalem. Perhaps he had showed sympathy for Jesus, or was thought to be a disciple. As Jesus was faint from the terrible scourging, the soldiers may have feared that he would fall under the weight, or die on the way. Hence they compel Simon to bear the cross to the place of execution.

**33. a place called Golgotha]** Golgotha, or Gulgoeth, was the Hebrew word for skull. Luke gives the Greek word *κρανίον*—from which comes our cranium, or skull—rendered Calvary in the English Version. As Luke and John use the article in naming the place, Prof. Plumptre infers that it was "the place," *i. e.*, the well-known place. But Matthew and Mark omit the article, and in the other narratives it is not emphatic. It was outside the walls of the city, Heb. 13 : 12, but near the city and near a thoroughfare. John 19 : 20; Luke 23 : 26, 33. There was a garden or orchard by it, and in the garden a tomb. John 19 : 41. So much is definitely learned from Scripture. It is not probable that it was named "the skull" because the skulls of executed persons were lying about. The Jews were accustomed to bury or put away the bodies for fear of pollution to the living. It is more probable that the place was named because of some likeness to a skull in shape. Tradition has fixed the place of crucifixion since the fourth century at the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—that is, within the present walls of Jerusalem. If the second wall of Jerusalem, described by Josephus, ran so as to include this traditional site, then it cannot be the true one. Excavations made for large buildings in 1885-1886 exposed the course of a city wall for 120 feet, running in such a direction as to make it almost certain, in Dr. Merrill's view, that the site of the Sepulchre must have been within the city. This is strongly against the traditional site. But others hold to a sharp turn in the wall, throwing the sepulchre without the old city line. A rival site, advocated during the present century, is the skull-shaped mound by the grotto of Jeremiah, on the north side of the city. This spot answers the conditions of the gospel narrative, and a Jewish tradition points to it as a place of stoning. The tradition that Jesus was led along the street Via Dolorosa rests on a slender foundation; for if Pilate was not in the castle

COMMON VERSION.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

REVISED VERSION.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they <sup>1</sup>compelled to go *with them*, that he

33 might bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha,

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *impressed*.

of Antonia, but in Herod's palace, as the gospel narratives seem to imply, it would be a circuitous journey to any of the other sites prominently suggested for Calvary. Perhaps the site has been wisely hidden, lest the knowledge of it should lead to idolatry or superstitious profanation.

**34. vinegar [wine] . . . mingled with gall** Evidently the *olvon* ("vinegar" in the Common Version) was sour wine. The "gall" was some strong substance intended to stupefy the victim and deaden the sense of pain. It may have been wormwood, Prov. 5 : 4, or hemlock, or poppy juice. It was customary for an association of women in Jerusalem to provide some strong stupefying draught on such occasions, as a work of mercy. Jesus tasted the draught and refused it. He wished to retain possession of all his natural human faculties in this awful hour.

**35. they crucified him]** There were three forms of the cross common. See *Commentary on Mark*, p. 196. The form supposed to have been used was the *crux immissa*, which consisted of an upright post, with a transverse beam fastened at right angles to the upright, and a little below the top of the post. Sometimes the entire cross was erected and the victim lifted up to it, and bound and nailed thereto. The other method is graphically described by Edersheim: "First the upright wood was planted in the ground. It was not high, and probably the feet of the sufferer were not above one or two feet from the ground. Thus could the communication described in the Gospels take place between him and others; thus also might his sacred lips be moistened with the sponge attached to a short stalk of hyssop. Next the transverse wood was placed on the ground, and the sufferer laid on it, when his arms were extended, drawn up, and bound to it. Then (this not in Egypt, but in Carthage and in Rome) a strong, sharp nail was driven, first into the right, then into the left hand. Next, the sufferer was drawn up by means of ropes, perhaps ladders; the transverse either bound or nailed to the upright, and a rest or support for the body (the *cornu* or *sedile*) fastened on it. Lastly, the feet were extended, and either one nail hammered into each, or a larger piece of iron through the two. . . . And so might the crucified hang for hours, even days, in the unutterable anguish of suffering, till consciousness at last failed." The garments of the victim, by Roman usage, belonged to the executioners. These were divided among them, one garment to one soldier and another to another soldier. The under garment (tunic), being woven whole, could not be parted without destroying it, so they cast lots for it. This act fulfilled prophecy found in Ps. 22 : 18. The note

COMMON VERSION.

34 ¶ They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.  
 35 And they crucified him, and parted his 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 down they watched him there;

REVISED VERSION.

34 that is to say, The place of a skull, they gave him wine to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted it, he would not drink. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments among 36 them, casting lots: and they sat and

of this found in our Common Version, last clause of verse 35, is not found in some of the best ancient copies of this Gospel, and is omitted in the Revised Version. The soldiers then sat and watched, to prevent any one from taking down those who had been crucified.

ישוע הנצרי מלך היהודים  
Οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.  
*Rex Judæorum.*

THE THREE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE CROSS.

fastened above his head on the cross. It stated the crime of which he was accused and for which he was put to death.

**This is Jesus the King of the Jews]** There are four forms of this given in the Gospels, but the variations are not important. Three of the forms may be due to the three dominant languages in which the "title" was written, see Luke 23:38; and these forms at least indicate the entire independence of each of the narratives. The Latin represented dominion, power; the Greek, culture; the Hebrew, religious thought; or the three, the civil, intellectual and spiritual forces of the world.

**38. two thieves crucified with him]** or two robbers. It is not an improbable supposition that these robbers belonged to the band of Barabbas. In that case Jesus would seem to have taken the place of Barabbas. Tradition gives the names of the two robbers as Gestas or Gysmas and Dimas or Dysmas. One of them is said to have rescued Joseph and Mary from robbers during the flight to Egypt. See apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus 1:10. Matthew mentions the robbers as joining in the reviling against Jesus. Luke alone tells us of the penitence of one of the robbers, and of the gracious words of Jesus to him. Both accounts could easily be true. The repentance may have come later, as the older interpreters hold.

**39. reviled him]** or "railed on him." Four classes of persons mocked the Lord while on the cross—(1) the passers by, persons casually going on the road near by; (2) the Jewish rulers, the chief priests, scribes and elders; (3) the soldiers, Luke 23:36; (4) the robbers who were crucified with him. The first taunted him as having boasted that he could destroy the temple and build it in three days. This seems to be an echo from the false witnesses at the trial. The second class mocked him, urging him to miraculously come down from the cross, and they would believe he was the King of Israel.

COMMON VERSION.

37 And set up over his head his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

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,

REVISED VERSION.

37 watched him there. And they set up over his head his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

38 Then are there crucified with him two robbers, one on the right hand, and one on the left. And they that passed by

railed on him, wagging their heads, and

The soldiers echoed the taunt of the Jewish rulers. The robbers also mockingly called on Jesus to save himself and them.

**40. If thou be [art] the Son of God]** This was said derisively, not doubtingly. These passers by on the road caught the mocking air of the rulers. They wagged their heads, an expressive method of showing their contempt; and as if sure that the claim of Jesus was groundless and blasphemous, mockingly called on him now to prove his claim by a new miracle and save himself. The rulers said the same. Indeed, it seems natural that the priests and scribes led in the mocking, and the others merely imitated them.

**43. He trusted in God]** or "he trusteth on God." This is a singularly remarkable passage. The words bear a striking resemblance to the literal reading of Ps. 22: 8, which may be rendered, "He trusted in Jehovah; let him release him, let him rescue him, for he delighteth in him." These men judged with the mistaken judgment of the world. They had a false view of God's providential care. They thought that if Jesus was the Son of God, and that God delighted in him, then surely God would now save him. If he was not rescued from the cross, it would be incontestable proof, in their view, that Jesus was not what he claimed to be. Yet had Jesus been delivered from the cross, though apparently by a greater miracle than that of the resurrection of Lazarus, it would have been the strongest proof that he was not Messiah. He would have failed to fulfill prophecy and Scripture. He would not have died for our sins, and would not have become the Saviour of the world. The priests and scribes, though students and interpreters of the Hebrew Scriptures, missed their meaning, and asked Jesus to work a miracle in proof of his claim which they would accept—a miracle which would have been an infallible proof that he was not what he claimed to be.

**45. from the sixth hour there was darkness]** The exact note of time common among us was unknown to the ancient world. The trial was early in the morning. The final sentence or delivering up for crucifixion was probably about 9 A.M. The crucifixion would follow immediately between 9 A.M. and 12 M. For three hours, from the sixth to the ninth hour, or from 12 M. to 3 P.M., there was darkness over all the land. This may

## COMMON VERSION.

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of 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 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.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

## REVISED VERSION.

40 saying, Thou that destroyest the <sup>1</sup>temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou art the Son of God, come

41 down from the cross. In like manner also the chief priests mocking *him*, with

42 the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; <sup>2</sup>himself he cannot save. He is the King of Israel; let him now come

43 down from the cross, and we will believe on him. He trusteth on God; let him deliver him now, if he desireth him: for

44 he said, I am the Son of God. And the robbers also that were crucified with him cast upon him the same reproach.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the <sup>3</sup>land until the

<sup>1</sup> Or, *sanctuary*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *can he not save himself?*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *earth*

mean all Syria, or all that portion of the world. The apparent difference in time as noted by John 19: 14-18, and by Matthew, and Mark 15: 25, has been explained by supposing—1. That the evangelists give the extreme limit of time, John referring to the completion and the others to the beginning. 2. That it is a copyist's error in John. The first explanation is not satisfactory, and the second is not supported by the best MSS. 3. That the first three Gospels reckon time after the Jewish method, and John after the modern method which may have prevailed in the province where John lived when he wrote. This view seems the more probable. The darkness was an awful but fitting and supernatural gloom, followed by an earthquake. Eusebius, Tertullian, Origen and Rufinus appeal to the Roman archives in proof of this darkness at the time of the Saviour's death. Darkness and the earthquake often go together now; the strange, sullen darkness preceding the terrible heaving and quaking of the solid earth. This pall of darkness, we may well believe, hushed the mocking rulers, the sneering multitude and the taunting soldiers. Silence probably reigned around the cross, and silence is all we find in the sacred record concerning the greater part of these three long hours of unutterable suffering of Jesus on the cross.

46. **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?** There is some variation in the form of these words in the Greek texts. The old received text and that followed by the revisers give an exact transliteration of the first three words in the Hebrew version of Ps. 22. The last word is Aramaic in form. Westcott and Hort adopt the same Greek reading here as in Mark 15: 34, that is, Aramaic for all the words, the only variation being "*lana*," in Matthew, instead of "*lama*," in Mark.

This exclamation cannot be regarded—1, as an outcry of Christ's human nature alone; nor, 2, simply as an expression of agony in the words of Scripture; but, 3, we are not to avoid all attempts to understand the meaning, for the words are recorded for our instruction. They are evidently an expression of a similar though deeper agony than that in Gethsemane. Christ was the sacrifice for our sins. He was bearing our sins, bearing for us death, the awful wages of sin. He was bearing for us that terrible thing which separates us from God. In this mysterious and awful spiritual experience there came a sense of separation from the Father, of loneliness, which was real and horrible, though it may be inexplicable to us. In that awful moment he still clung to God as his Father, gaining that victory for us that we, in the most severe and terrible assaults of sin and Satan, might also cling to the same refuge, and, through the power and grace of Christ, win the victory for eternal life. There were seven utterances by Jesus during the six hours he hung upon the cross. The seven sayings or words are: 1. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23: 34. 2. "To day shalt thou be

## COMMON VERSION.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

## REVISED VERSION.

46 ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken

<sup>1</sup> Or, *why didst thou forsake me?*



with me in paradise." Luke 23 : 43. 3. "Woman, behold thy son! . . . Behold thy mother!" John 19 : 26, 27. 4. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. 27 : 46. 5. "I thirst." John 19 : 28. 6. "It is finished." John 19 : 30. 7. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke 23 : 46.

47. calleth for Elias] or "calleth Elijah." The Jewish attendants would not be likely to mistake the words above given, for a call to Elijah. The Roman soldiers, probably enlisted in the provinces, might have some confused ideas of Elijah and Messiah, and of their relation to the stories current about Jesus; and not having much knowledge of the Aramaic, have misunderstood the words. One soldier would relieve the sufferer. Others, more brutal, would not have any act of mercy offered the sufferer, but mockingly proposed to wait and see if Elijah would come to save him.

48. sponge . . . vinegar . . . on a reed] This was the most practicable way of giving any drink to the sufferer. A sponge was dipped into "vinegar," common sour wine, then put on the stem or reed of hyssop, possibly the caper plant, though as that is thorny, with a very short, clumsy stem, it is more probable that it was the maru plant, a spreading aromatic herb with slender stem, and growing about the walls, terraces and rocks of Syria. See Mark 15 : 36. This merciful act may also have followed the cry "I thirst." John 19 : 28.

50. cried again . . . yielded up the ghost] or "his spirit." Jesus had gained the victory. He had declared "It is finished." He cried out again with a loud voice; he surrendered his spirit into the hands of his Father, and thus in divine and holy triumph he died. His spirit was not taken from him; he yielded it up himself. John 10 : 18. Those who are interested in curiously inquiring into the immediate physical cause of the death of Jesus may consult W. Stroud's elaborate work, *Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*; he concludes that it resulted from a rupture of the heart. See also Dr. Houghton. The awful sacrifice is complete; the disciples turn away without a leader; their hope of a deliverer is crushed; in a half-conscious state of gloom bordering on despair they wait over the Sabbath, until the morning of the resurrection startles them with its bright news of Jesus alive—news too bright and joyful for them to believe.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. It is a blessed thing for a believer to be able to bear his own cross; how much more blessed to bear the cross of

## COMMON VERSION.

47 Some of them that 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.

50 ¶ Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

## REVISED VERSION.

47 me? And some of them that stood there, when they heard it, said, This man calleth Elijah. 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. And the rest said, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to save 50 him.<sup>1</sup> And Jesus cried again with a loud

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities add *And another took a spear and pierced his side, and there came out water and blood.* See John 19 : 34.

Christ! 2. "Enemies may strip us of our clothes, but . . . cannot take from us the garments of praise." 3. It is mean and wicked to sneer at the sufferings of others. 4. Christ bore our sins on the cross. 5. Sin separates us from God. 6. The sufferings of Christ show us how terrible a thing sin is. 7. Christ is a divine Saviour.

THE EARTHQUAKE, BURIAL AND WATCH. vs. 51-66. Compare Mark 15: 38-47; Luke 23: 45-56; John 19: 21-42.

JERUSALEM, GOLGOTHA, Friday and Saturday, April 7 and 8, A.D. 30.

**51. the veil of the temple was rent in twain]** The Greek word for "temple" means strictly the "sanctuary." The veil which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place is intended. Such a significant event as the rending of this veil, the priests opposed to Christ would be careful to conceal. But we know that a "great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Acts 6: 7. Some of this company may have been awakened by the miraculous rending of the sanctuary veil. Jewish tradition puts two veils before the Most Holy Place, each 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and thick as the palm of the hand, and woven in 72 squares, which were joined together. The veils were said to be so heavy as to require three hundred priests to handle them. One veil was hung on the side of the Holy and the other on the side of the Most Holy Place. After making large allowances for the boastful and exaggerated language of Jewish tradition concerning the veils, we may still believe that the sanctuary veil was heavy, strong and beautiful. Some similar catastrophe is alluded to by Tacitus, *Hist.*, v. 13; Josephus, *Wars*, vi. 5, 3; the *Talmud*, *Yoma*, 39, 6; and early Christian tradition. The rending of the veil signified the opening of a new and living way of access to God. See Heb. 10: 19-22. It implies all that fullness of salvation and freedom of access to God which are enjoyed in the new dispensation.

**the earth did quake, and the rocks [were] rent]** Earthquakes were not uncommon at Jerusalem. Isa. 24: 18-20; Amos 1: 1; Zech. 14: 5. This shaking of the earth must have been more alarming and significant to the people because it occurred in connection with the crucifixion.

**52. graves were opened]** or "tombs were opened." The tombs were natural caves or excavations in the rock. The earthquake rent the rock, and thus laid open the tombs. This is clear. The next sentence is not as clear. It reads, literally, "And many bodies of the sleeping saints were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection entered into the

COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

51 voice, and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the <sup>1</sup> temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks

52 were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had

53 fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city

<sup>1</sup> Or, *sanctuary*

holy city and appeared to many." This may mean: (1) the saints were raised, came out of the tombs, entered the city and appeared, after Christ's resurrection; or (2) that the saints were raised before, and came out of their tombs before, but entered the city after, the resurrection of Christ; or (3) that the saints were raised before, but came out of the tombs and entered the city of Jerusalem after, Christ's resurrection. Different punctuations will give these and other varied meanings to this sentence. The Revised Version punctuation makes it mean that the saints were raised; the tombs were opened; yet leaves the time of their resurrection ambiguous, but clearly implies that the saints did not come forth from their tombs until after the resurrection of Christ. This event is mentioned by Matthew alone. It seems fitting that Christ's entrance into the spirit world should be signaled by some outward sign. It was even more fitting that his resurrection should be marked by the coming forth of others with him from that world. Hence it seems more natural to place the raising of these saints and their coming from their graves, as well as their appearance in Jerusalem, after the resurrection of Christ. This is in harmony with the apostle's assurance, "Christ . . . the first fruits of them that are asleep." 1 Cor. 15 : 20, Revised Version. The older writers held that the saints raised up were patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament. It seems more probable that they were some who had recently died, and who would be recognized by some of the living at that time. Whether they were raised with corruptible bodies and died again, or with incorruptible ones and ascended to heaven, the sacred writer does not inform us. It appears more in harmony with the events, and with the words "appeared unto many," that their bodies were immortal, and that they had the power to manifest themselves to the living at will.

54. the centurion . . . saw] Five Roman centurions are mentioned in the New Testament as believers or as favoring those who believed: the centurion of Capernaum, Matt. 8 : 5-13; the centurion at the cross, Matt. 27 : 54; Cornelius, Acts 10 : 1-32; the centurion who warned the officer against beating Paul, Acts 22 : 26; Julius, the centurion who kept the soldiers from killing Paul, Acts 27 : 1, 43. While this confession of the centurion at the cross may be understood, in a heathen sense, as implying that he thought Jesus a righteous man, yet it is more probable that it was a confession of belief in Christ put into the common phrase of a heathen knowing little of the true God. So he exclaims, "Truly this was a Son of God;" see v. 54, margin of Revised Version; that is, Jesus was what he claimed to be.

55. many women were there beholding afar off] Matthew men-

COMMON VERSION.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

REVISED VERSION.

54 and appeared unto many. Now the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, Truly this was <sup>1</sup>the Son of God. And many women were there beholding from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee,

<sup>1</sup>Or, a son of God

tions this fact to show the faithfulness of these disciples. The women, though some of the time quite near the cross, were now "afar off," perhaps fearing some violence if known as friends. Abbott erroneously says, however, "Art, which represents them close by, . . . is not true to history." But John expressly says some of these women "were standing by the cross of Jesus," and the mother of Jesus was near enough for Jesus to speak to her. John 19:25-27. So those representations in art which place the women near the cross are fully sustained by the sacred record. The names of two of these women are given by Matthew, the two Marys, and the mother of Zebedee's children, called Salome by Mark. Three Marys are noticed by John. Their fidelity and love are shown by their following Jesus from Galilee to minister unto him. There is no ground for regarding Mary Magdalene as a harlot, or as the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus at the house of Simon the Pharisee. Nor is she to be carelessly mistaken for Mary the sister of Lazarus at Bethany.

**57. a rich man . . . Joseph]** Five things are known of the character and position of this Joseph from Arimathæa: 1. He was rich. 2. He was a counsellor, that is, a member of the Sanhedrin. Mark 15:43. 3. He had not consented to the condemnation of Jesus. Luke 23:50, 51. 4. He was a disciple of Jesus. 5. But a secret disciple, for fear of the Jews. John 19:38. Arimathæa was probably near Jerusalem. Some identify it with Ramleh, others with er-Ram, and some with a town near Joppa, but no one of them can be accepted. Tradition says that Joseph was the first to preach the gospel in England.

**58. begged the body of Jesus]** or "asked for the body." Persons put to death by Jewish councils were not buried in the sepulchres of their fathers. There was one burying-place for those malefactors who were strangled or slain by the sword, and another for those who were stoned or burnt. Joseph doubtless feared that the body of Jesus would be buried disgracefully, and hence his love for Jesus led him to avow himself a friend and ask for the body. Pilate would know of the honorable character of Joseph as a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, and of his wealth. This knowledge and his belief that Jesus was innocent would incline Pilate to grant the request; without his order the body could not be removed. When Pilate was assured by the report of the centurion that Jesus was dead, he ordered the body to be given to Joseph. The time would be before sunset, as then the Jewish sabbath began, when it would be unlawful for a Jew to remove the body. The "even" must refer to the after-part of the day. Josephus says "the Jews

## COMMON VERSION.

56 Among 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 Arimathea, 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

56 ministering unto him: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

57 And when even was come, there came a rich man from Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

58 this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate com-

used to take so much care of the burial of men that they took down those that were condemned and crucified, and buried them before the going down of the sun."—*Wars*, iv. 5. 2. This act of Joseph would then accord with the Jewish custom of prompt burial before the sabbath.

**59. wrapped it in a clean linen cloth]** The order from Pilate would give full liberty to Joseph and those with him, and possibly secure the aid of the soldiers in taking down the body of Jesus. The usual way would be to lower the cross, lay it upon the ground, draw out the cruel nails, unloose the ropes, wrap the body in a clean linen cloth and carry it rapidly to the rock-hewn tomb near by in the garden. This new tomb of Joseph probably had only one apartment or room, possibly with a corridor leading to it. On each of the sides of the apartment several shelves or niches would be cut, one above the other, in which bodies could be laid. The "apartment" was often eight to ten feet square, giving space to embalm or prepare the body before placing it in one of the *loculi* or niches. In this work of temporary preparation of the body Joseph was aided by Nicodemus, who brought a hundred pounds of myrrh and spices, which were used even in this hasty burial. John 19 : 39, 40. The apostles do not appear to have been present at the burial.

**60. new tomb . . . hewn out in the rock]** The tomb was new; one that the wealthy Joseph had hewn out in a rock, for the burial of himself or his family. Such tombs, cut out of the solid rock, are abundant around Jerusalem. They are found about the grotto of Jeremiah. See notes, chap. 28 : 1. The opening or door leading to the tomb would be small, so that it could be closed by a large stone, and would require a person to stoop quite low to enter it. See John 20 : 5. In front of this opening a shallow groove was often cut in the rock, and a large round stone, like a millstone, prepared and set on its edge in the groove. This could be rolled along in front of the opening, tightly closing the entrance to the tomb. Such a stone (it was a very large one, Mark 16 : 4) may have been rolled before the entrance to the tomb where the body of Jesus was laid. Or, it may have been a rough large stone rolled against the entrance and a second small stone placed against the large one, as Edersheim suggests. That was not uncommon, although in that case it would be more difficult to affix the seal, and it seems a clumsy arrangement for a wealthy man's tomb, such as we know this was. The words "roll away the stone" of Mark 16 : 3, 4 might apply to either method of closing. The entrance chamber to the traditional tomb of Joseph in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is seventeen feet long, and through this long ante-room or corridor is the entrance to the reputed tomb where tradition claims that the body of Jesus was laid. Again was prophecy fulfilled: "he made his grave . . . with the rich in his death." Isa. 53 : 9.

## COMMON VERSION.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

59 manded it to be given up. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the

**61. the other Mary]** The mother of James and Joses, who is named in v. 56. The two Marys appear to have remained near the cross while the body was taken down. They sat opposite to the place of the tomb, and noticed where and how the body was laid, but retired probably when Joseph did, and made ready spices to complete the embalming or proper entombment of the body. Luke 23: 55, 56.

**62. the next day]** or "on the morrow . . . after the preparation." The demand for a military guard over the tomb is mentioned by Matthew alone. He was writing for Hebrews, and naturally mentions the evil story of the rulers, that the disciples had stolen the body. He shows how impossible it would have been to steal the body, and how the story was a lie of the rulers. The preparation day was Friday, which ended at sunset and the sabbath began. Whether "on the morrow . . . after the preparation" designates the portion of the sabbath just after sunset of the sixth day, or the morning of the sabbath, is not altogether certain. It cannot mean *after* the sabbath, for that would not be the "next day" or "morrow," but the "second day" after preparation. It must have been on the Jewish sabbath that the Jews made their request. It may have been either in the early morning of that day, or at the beginning of the sabbath soon after sunset of the sixth day, corresponding to our Friday.

**63. After three days I will rise again]** The priests would soon hear of the request of Joseph and of the burial of the body, and coming together would hasten to Pilate. They seem to have understood Jesus to refer to the destruction and resurrection of the temple of his body, although they had accepted witnesses testifying that he referred to the temple in Jerusalem. They were "more clear-sighted than the disciples," who do not appear to have looked for any resurrection of Jesus, nor to have understood his prophecy. Alford remarks, "hatred is keener-sighted than love." The disciples knew of the saying, "after three days I rise again," but the *meaning* was hid from them. The rulers knew, from the raising of Lazarus, what effect the rising from the dead would have on the people. So the priests now call Jesus "that deceiver." They had long before charged him with "deceiving" or misleading the people. John 7: 12. They believed that he claimed to have power over death, and that he claimed to have power to rise from the dead. They had been "acting a part," and they were suspicious that others would also deceive.

**64. sepulchre be made sure]** They wished to prevent a fraud. It is

## COMMON VERSION.

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 preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

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

## REVISED VERSION.

61 door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 Now on the morrow, which is *the day* after the Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together

63 unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive,

64 After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure

notable that they wanted a guard "until the third day." They clearly knew the prophecy Jesus had spoken, and they rightly understood its meaning. The disciples might steal away the body and declare that he had arisen from the dead. Thus the last "deceit" will be worse than the first. There is a play upon the words "deceiver" and "error" or "deceit" in the Greek which neither the Common nor the Revised Version brings out. It is remarkable that in this act the enemies of Christ contributed a strong argument in proof of the resurrection of Jesus. They took the utmost pains, supported by the power of Rome, to prevent any possibility of deception. They cannot have expected an actual rising from the dead, or have been so foolish as to suppose that a seal and guard would prevent it.

**65. make it as sure as ye can]** Pilate, annoyed, impatiently responded, literally, "Take a guard, go away, make it as secure as you know." Here were full powers, a military guard, authority to seal the tomb and to make it as firm and secure as they knew how to fix it.

**66. sealing the stone, and setting a watch]** or "sealing the stone with the guard." The priests would not trust even the soldiers to close the tomb firmly and seal it, but they went with the guard to see that it was carefully done. They made the sepulchre sure by seeing that there was a proper stone placed to close the entrance to the tomb. They sealed it, probably in the usual way. This was by stretching a strong cord over the stone at the mouth, and fastening the ends by seals of clay or wax to the solid rock on each side of the stone used for a door. In that case the stone could not be stirred without breaking the seal. The wax securing the cord would be stamped with Pilate's official seal. A military guard was also stationed outside to watch the tomb for three days. Having made the tomb as secure as Jewish wit and Roman authority could make it, the priests returned, in satisfaction, to their sabbath duties. The disciples and the women waited in sorrow for the dawn of the first day of the week to complete their sad but loving service at the tomb.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. God's providences, as darkness and earthquakes, sometimes awaken men when his grace fails to do it. 2. The wealthy may render important service to Christ and his cause. 3. Those who use riches for the glory of God invest them securely. 4. The Jews suspected the disciples; so the fraudulent look for fraud in others. 5. "These liars and murderers fear the disciples are liars."—*Braune*. 6. The rulers leave their sabbath devotions to complete their work of malice against Christ. 7. Those who oppose God may use all their wit and power, but will be over-

COMMON VERSION.

disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error 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.

REVISED VERSION.

until the third day, lest haply his disciples come and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: and the last error will be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, <sup>1</sup>Ye have a guard: go, <sup>2</sup>make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Take a guard*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *make it sure, as ye know.*

thrown at last. 8. "To guard the sepulchre against the poor weak disciples was folly because *needless*, but to think to guard it against the power of God was folly because *fruitless*."—*Henry*. 9. On that sabbath eve we have the unrest of the sin-convulsed world, the apprehensions of boastful priests, the anxiety of loving disciples, the holy rest of the Son of God.

CHAP. XXVIII. THE RESURRECTION. vs. 1-20. Compare Mark 16 : 1-20; Luke 24 : 1-53; John 21 : 1-22 : 25; Acts 1 : 2-14; 1 Cor. 15.

JERUSALEM, Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30.

1. as it began to dawn toward the first day] This is not intended to note the exact hour. The ancients did not mark time with the precision known in our days. Remembering this, it will not be difficult to see how the several accounts which note the time of this visit of the women to the sepulchre can be easily harmonized. The whole expression of Matthew implies that it was early in the morning of the first day of the week. By "the other Mary" Matthew refers to Mary the mother of James and Joses, as in chap. 27 : 56, 61.

to see the sepulchre] It must have been outside the city walls. The gates were usually opened at sunrise. Some suppose the women lodged outside the walls; but as this was during the passover, it is quite probable the gates were open late and early.

CALVARY AND THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.—A knoll and a tomb on the north side of Jerusalem, near Jeremiah's grotto, are suggested by Dr. Merrill, Howe, and Conder, as the site of Calvary and of Joseph's tomb. They were beyond question outside of Jerusalem in Christ's day. The top of the knoll is about one hundred and ten feet higher than the top of the rock in the Haram enclosure. It commands a view over the city walls to the site of the temple. The people of the city might easily witness anything taking place on the top of this cliff. It is beside the main road to the north. The hill is quite bare, without tree or shrub, but with scanty grass and a few wild flowers covering the rocky soil. On the south the hillock is pierced by two small caves high up in the side, but is rounded on all its other sides. There is a tradition current among the Jews of Jerusalem that this knoll was "the place of stoning." The hill is circular or skull-shaped. About six hundred feet west from Jeremiah's grotto is a smaller one in which an old Jewish tomb was discovered in 1881. This tomb is suggested as the actual sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea. "It is cut in the east face of a very curious rock platform, measuring about seventy paces either way. . . . The platform is roughly scarped on all sides, and on the west is a higher piece of rock also with sides rudely scarped." In the northeast corner is a curious cistern, with a domed roof, having a man-hole, and also a door with

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXVIII.—In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

REVISED VERSION.

28 Now late on the sabbath day, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the



a passage ten feet long and three feet wide leading out eastward. "The cistern is about eight paces in diameter, and three steps lead down from the door to the level of the cistern floor." This seems originally to have been a chamber converted into a cistern, as there are sockets for door hinges and for bolts. "The ancient tomb is thirty paces further south, and the entrance is also from the east." It is rudely cut out of the rock, the doorway broken, and a loop-hole or window either side of the door. "The outer court, cut in the rock, is seven feet square, and two stones are so placed as to give the idea that they may have held in place a rolling stone before the door." On the north is a side entrance leading into a chamber, with a single *loculus*, and thence into a cave. The cave is eight paces square and ten feet high. The chamber within the tomb entrance is reached by a descent of two steps, and is six feet by nine feet. There is a further passage or corridor, with benches or *loculi* on each side for more bodies, and Mr. Conder saw human bones scattered about at the time of his visit. It is doubtful whether the door of the tomb was closed by a rolling stone or by a large rough mass of stone. Sepulchres are often closed in Palestine by rough stones, which usually indicate that bodies have been recently buried. See *Palestine Memoirs*, Jerusalem, pp. 428-435. But see also dissenting views by Schick, *Pal. Quarterly*, Jan.-July, 1893, pp. 23, 80-90, 124-128, 191; *Bib. World*, Nov. 1896.

KNOWLEDGE OF SITE OF CALVARY.—The Hebrew name for Calvary was *gulgolta* or *gulgoleth*, the word for "skull" found in Judges 9: 53 and 2 Kings 9: 35. It is from the same stem as Gilgal, which means round or rolling. Calvary is the Latin word for skull. The name gives little clue to the locality, for it is nowhere in the New Testament called a "mount."

1. The early disciples knew the place, and must certainly have retained that knowledge until the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70.

2. That knowledge *may* have been preserved after the ruin of the city by Titus and until the second destruction by Hadrian, A.D. 136. For it is known that the Christians escaped to Pella, and it is reported that some, at least, returned to Jerusalem after the destruction by Titus. That ruin was terrible but not total, such as to obliterate the possibility of recognizing such sites. Yet there is no clear tradition even that the site of the sepulchre of Jesus was certainly known in this period. For while it is said that a church was erected upon the site of the house where the last supper was celebrated, there is no such tradition of a church on the site of the "Holy Sepulchre" from A.D. 70 to A.D. 136. The absence of such tradition surely looks suspicious.

3. After the destruction of the city by Hadrian to Constantine (136 to 326 A.D.) there was an interval of 190 years. Eusebius reports a tradition that impious men had erected a statue or temple to Venus over the place. Moreover, he says the site of Calvary "had for so long a time been hidden beneath the earth" that he traced its discovery to "a miracle beyond the capacity of man sufficiently to celebrate or even to comprehend." Constantine erected a church on the so-discovered site, which was dedicated in the presence of a great council of bishops, Eusebius being among them, 335 A.D. Theodoret, Socrates, Sozomen and others of the fifth century also ascribe the recovery:

of the site to miracles attending a search for the site by Helena, the mother of Constantine, about ten years before the building of the church. This church was on the site of the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre, now within the city walls; for though the church has been partially destroyed several times, it has been built on the same spot. The difficulty of proving that this site was without the city walls in Pilate's time has caused many to question and reject it.

Some in the present century have fixed upon a site near Jeremiah's Grotto, described above. No tradition points to the place; yet in 1892 a company of Englishmen, with the approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury, several bishops, Mr. John Murray and some other laymen proposed to buy the ground near the grotto for £4000, and preserve it as the site of Calvary and the garden-tomb of our Lord. The plan called out notes of caution from distinguished Palestine explorers such as Major Conder, Dr. Thomas Chaplin, Sir Charles Wilson, Mr. Glaisher, and a candid editorial in the London *Times* against the project. Yet in 1896 it was announced that the supposed garden had been purchased for £3000 by the English association led by the Archbishop and five bishops of the Anglican Church. The plot is about 200 yards outside of the present Damascus gate. At the foot of the western cliff is a garden with an ancient well.

2-4. there was a great earthquake] or "there was a great shaking." The Greek word for "earthquake," σεισμός, primarily means a "shaking" or "commotion." It is applied to the sea in a tempest, Matt. 8 : 24; to a whirlwind, in the Septuagint Version of Jer. 23 : 19; to the confused and ruined walls of Jerusalem, Neh. 1 : 3. In Matt. 27 : 51, it explicitly says, "the earth did quake." Here the form of expression is changed to "there was a great shaking" or commotion, which describes what happened around the tomb; it may mean an earthquake, but does not necessarily imply one, as the words of chap. 27 : 51 unquestionably do. The other evangelists do not mention this fact. "The angel," as the Common Version reads, is incorrect, for the article is omitted in the Greek. It was simply some "messenger of the Lord" from heaven. It does not refer to a particular angel, as a similar phrase in the Old Testament often does; for example: "the angel of the Lord," Gen. 16 : 7; 22 : 11; Num. 22 : 23; Judges 6 : 12; 2 Sam. 24 : 16, etc. This messenger from heaven rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb, and sat upon the stone. These facts are also given by Matthew alone. They may have been reported at first by the Roman guard, or revealed by the risen Lord himself to his disciples. The appearance of the heavenly messenger and of his raiment would be known also by the women, who were afraid at

## COMMON VERSION.

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 white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.

3 His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 as snow: and for fear of him the watchers did quake, and became as dead men.

the appearance. See Mark 16 : 5, 6. The "raiment white as snow" is similar to that described in the vision of Daniel, 7 : 9, and of that seen on Jesus at the transfiguration, Matt. 17 : 2, and of the head and hairs of the Son of man in John's vision, Rev. 1 : 14. All this wonderful appearance and movements of the heavenly one made a great commotion. The soldiers on guard were filled with fear, and they did "quake" (the same word in Greek as that describing the earth quaking, chap. 27 : 51), and became "as dead." The brightness and glory of the angelic appearance prostrated them, and made them either faint away with fear or quite insensible from the dazzling light.

**5, 6. Fear not ye]** Some, as Geikie, suppose the guards had recovered from their fright and fled before the women arrived. But the use of the Greek aorist tense renders this uncertain. If the prostrate guards were still near the entrance to the tomb, as others infer, the women would see them, and it would add to their alarm. It is not probable that they had heard of the military guard, or they would not have ventured to visit the tomb at this early hour. With the prostrate guards still there, it would be quite natural for the angel to make the "ye" emphatic, as some scholars suggest. The full thought would be: these Roman guards opposed to Jesus should be filled with terror, but you, his loving disciples, need not have any fear. You are lovingly seeking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here: he has risen, as he said that he would. To satisfy yourselves, come and see the very place where he lay. They would know the place well, for they watched intently where and how his body was placed in the tomb on the previous Friday afternoon.

**7. tell his disciples]** Now having seen for yourselves that he is not here, but that he is risen, go quickly and tell his disciples (not the eleven alone, but all his disciples in Jerusalem) that he is risen from the dead. Then, as if anticipating the incredulous feeling with which this remarkable message would be received, the angel adds, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye (the disciples) see him. Again, as the women were standing dazed and hesitating, the angel further adds, "lo, I have told you." It was no time for hesitation.

**8. they departed quickly . . . and did run]** or "ran." Recovering from their amazement, filled with mingled feelings of fear and joy, they rushed away, running to bear the word to the downcast, sorrowing disciples.

## COMMON VERSION.

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 is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, who hath been crucified.

6 He is not here; for he is risen, even as he said. Come, see the place<sup>1</sup> where the

7 Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples, He is risen from the dead; and

lo, he goeth before you into Galilee; there 8 shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *where he lay*.

Whether these disciples accompanied or followed Mary Magdalene, when she went with her message to Peter, as noted in John 20 : 2, cannot be certainly determined. Lightfoot, Lardner, Newcome, Barth and others suppose that this occurred at the same time Mary Magdalene bore the news to Peter. Robinson, Da Costa, Greswell, Geikie and Edersheim (hesitatingly) would place this after Mary Magdalene had informed Peter. Although it is exceedingly difficult to make out the actual and precise order of events after the resurrection, this does not imply that the accounts of the several evangelists are contradictory, or that they cannot be fully harmonized. Indeed, the chief difficulty seems to be to choose between the many possible ways in which the narratives may be perfectly harmonized. The accounts by the three synoptic gospels are very condensed, each sacred writer keeping his chief purpose in view. In this first Gospel the aim of the writer is briefly to assert the resurrection, and to expose the origin of the Jewish falsehood that Jesus had not risen, but that his disciples had stolen the body while the guard were asleep. On the order of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection, see my *Commentary on Mark*, p. 207; also Andrews' *Life of our Lord*, pp. 571 seq.; Riddle's *Robinson's Harmony*, notes on §§ 159-172.

**9. behold, Jesus met them]** Omitting the first clause of this verse, "as they went to tell his disciples," which is not found in the best manuscript copies of the Gospel, and is therefore omitted in the Revised Version, removes one of the difficulties in harmonizing this narrative with other gospel records. Robinson regards this as the first appearance of the Lord after his resurrection. But this increases the difficulty of explaining Mark 16 : 9, "he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." It is therefore better to accept that as absolutely his first appearance, and to regard this in Matthew as the second appearance. His greeting was joyous: "All hail," literally, "rejoice ye," or "joy to you." They returned his joyous greeting by prostrating themselves in true eastern manner, and grasping his feet, adored, worshipped him. The narrative seems to imply that they were awed into silence and were trembling with fear.

**10. tell my brethren that they go into Galilee]** Quieting their fears, he repeats with greater definiteness the command of the angel. The disciples are now brethren; for the word need not be limited to the members of his family at Nazareth. It doubtless was understood to include his spiritual followers. Matt. 12 : 47-50. D. Brown holds that it must apply only to Christ's brethren after the flesh, because he was seen of the disciples in Jerusalem. But it is sufficient to reply that Christ's appearance to a *large* body of his disciples was in Galilee, and, so far as recorded, in Galilee alone. And this command is not inconsistent with his several appearances to a few

## COMMON VERSION.

9 ¶ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

9 disciples word. And behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then saith Jesus unto them, Fear not: go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

disciples in Judæa. Besides, the narrow view that he meant only his brothers in the flesh is not consistent with his spiritual teaching, Matt. 12 : 47-50; and moreover there is no record that he ever appeared to any blood relations in Galilee on any occasion separate from his appearance to his disciples. Paul uses this same word "brethren" or "brothers" in speaking of the five hundred by whom Jesus was seen, 1 Cor. 15 : 6, and this was beyond doubt in Galilee.

11. some of the watch] or "of the guard;" the Roman soldiers who were placed to watch and guard the sepulchre. This report of the military guard, and the deliberate bribe given by the Jewish council, is related by Matthew alone. Among the Jews this story of fraud would be circulated more widely than among others. Matthew, writing for the Hebrews, shows that the story was a deliberate falsehood, started by the Jewish rulers, and that they bribed the soldiers to keep them from exposing the false story. It was while the women were informing the disciples, that the soldiers on guard at the tomb recovered from their fright and promptly told all that had occurred to the council. The guard wished to escape punishment for any seeming negligence, and therefore hastened to the priests to report the terrible appearance of the angel, the commotion, the blinding light, the miraculous opening of the tomb, and their utter helplessness in the face of all these heavenly powers.

12-14. they gave large money unto the soldiers] The priests, hearing the startling report of the military guard, held a hasty consultation with the elders and some members of the Sanhedrin that were at hand, to decide what to do. Their decision was to offer a "suitable" or "satisfactory" bribe, which would be, as the English versions render the Greek, "large" or "much" money, and ask them to say, literally, "his disciples, having come by night, stole him, we being asleep." "If this come to a hearing before the governor"—if you are charged with negligence and must defend yourselves before the governor—we will persuade him. How they would "persuade him" the guard well knew, from the large bribe they were offered. Pilate had an unenviable reputation as one whose decision depended upon the amount of money paid to him. In this way they could so completely "persuade" the governor as to make the soldiers free from any concern. How they could know that the body had been stolen or who stole it, when they were asleep, were questions not considered.

COMMON VERSION.

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 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.

REVISED VERSION.

11 Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city, and told unto the chief priests all the

12 things that were come to pass. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying,

13 Say ye, His disciples came by night, and

14 stole him away while we slept. And if

this <sup>1</sup> come to the governor's ears, we will

<sup>1</sup> Or, come to a hearing before the governor

**15. this saying is commonly reported]** or "was spread abroad among the Jews . . . until this day." "Until this day" means until the day when the Gospel was written. It implies that considerable time elapsed between the resurrection and this gospel record; perhaps twenty or thirty years. The soldiers accepted the bribe money and did as they were requested to do. There are other historic evidences that this story was current among the Jews. Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, writes in answer to a Jew, Tryphon: "Ye appointed chosen men, and sent them to all the world to proclaim thus: a godless and lawless heresy has been raised by a certain Galilean impostor, and when we had crucified him, his disciples stole him by night from the tomb." A later abominable Jewish legend called the *Toledoth Jesu* reports a similar story, with additions to account for the concealment of the body. It is evident from these historic notices, as Dr. Schaff observes, that either the Jewish Sanhedrin or the early Christians invented a lie. The history, the known motives and the known character of the persons are conclusive proofs that the early Christians did not invent it.

**16. the eleven disciples . . . into Galilee]** The Greek does not imply that the eleven went immediately into Galilee, as our Common Version implies. The connecting word or particle simply marks a change of topic or of thought. We know from John's narrative that the eleven remained in Jerusalem at least eight days after the resurrection. John 20: 19, 26. Matthew and John record the appearances of Jesus, after his resurrection, in Galilee. Paul also alludes to them in 1 Cor. 15: 6. It is possible that Luke also refers to an appearance there. Luke 24: 41-44. The "broiled fish" of v. 42 suggest the Sea of Galilee, but the other incidents connected by Luke with this appearance suit Jerusalem better than Galilee.

**a mountain . . . appointed]** Some have suggested that the mountain was Tabor. More probably it was that on which the sermon was delivered. It was the place appointed by the Master for the meeting, and there we know they saw him.

**17. they worshipped . . . but some doubted]** The word "worshipped" here implies more than the homage a servant pays to his master, or a disciple to a human teacher. It means spiritual and holy adoration. The same Greek word is used to describe the worship of God and the Lamb in heaven. Rev. 5: 14; 7: 11. It describes the worship which the angel refused to allow John to pay to him when he commanded him to worship God. Rev. 22: 8, 9. Why did some doubt? It was not because they had any

## COMMON VERSION.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

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.

## REVISED VERSION.

15 persuade him, and rid you of care. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying was spread abroad among the Jews, *and continueth* until this day.

16 But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped *him*: but some

scruples about worshipping him; for the construction of the Greek does not favor that interpretation, as Meyer properly observes. They were in doubt, like Thomas, whether he really was Jesus. Their minds were so far from trying to deceive others about his resurrection, that they were not ready to believe him alive again when he stood before them, and their eyes looked upon him, and they talked with him. The language implies that the great majority of his disciples then present—and the great body of his disciples were in Galilee—believed and worshipped him. Some—a smaller number—were perplexed and of a doubting mind. Jesus came near and spoke to them, and in a way fitted to assure them of his actual presence.

18. All power is given unto me] or “all authority hath been given unto me.” It was something more than mere power that Jesus had received. It was the right to rule. It included all the authority and privileges and power of a king in heaven and on earth. He could therefore speak with divine authority. His commands were supreme over the subjects of his kingdom.

19. Go ye . . . teach all nations] or “make disciples of all the nations,” or, literally, “disciple all the nations;” for the Greek does not imply that they were to go and make some disciples out of all the nations, but it implies an absolute command to make all the nations disciples of Jesus. Was this command limited to the eleven apostles? Bishop Elliott’s *Commentary* says: “It is, to say the least, suggestive that in this solemn commission stress should be laid on the teaching, rather than on what is known as the sacerdotal element of the Christian ministry.” Alford infers that the commission was “not spoken to the apostles *only*, but to all the brethren.” As all power had been given to Christ, were the disciples to go—and subdue? “Not so,” adds Alford; “the purpose of the Lord is to bring men to the *knowledge of the truth*—to work on and in their hearts, and lift them up to be partakers in the divine nature. And therefore it is not ‘subdue,’ but ‘make disciples of’ all the nations.” They were to do more than teach: they were to teach all the nations his will, and they were also to bring all nations under his sway.

baptizing them in the name] Or, “baptizing them into the name.” He does not here say “with water,” though that may be fairly inferred. It was the continuation of what they had done under his sanction. See John 4: 1, 2. The baptizing, then, is a part of this great reformation and assimilation of all the kingdoms of this world into the “kingdom of heaven” which is here indicated. The religion of Jesus Christ is to become the universal religion of this world. It is the religion for all classes and for every nation. It was not to spread among the heathen by spontaneous natural development. The

COMMON VERSION.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 ¶ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

REVISED VERSION.

18 doubted. And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and

wicked or the ignorant would not find it, evolved out of their personal consciousness. Those whom Christ had taught and made disciples of this religion must make disciples of all the world. The Holy Spirit was promised to guide them into all Christian truth. They were to baptize them "into" (not merely "in") the "name" (not "names") of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This implies more than the adoption of the name of Christian, and more than merely calling one's self *after* the persons of the Godhead. It implies a profession and confession of the triune God, and of allegiance to him, and of fellowship in his family, and of a desire to be in loving communion with his being, his person and his attributes in all holy affection and perfection.

**20. Teaching them to observe all things]** Here the teaching is marked off in particular, but it means more than simply "imparting knowledge." It has the added force of "training" as well as teaching. The nations of this world are to be trained to observe—to do—all things whatsoever Christ commanded the disciples. All the heathen—all the nations of this world—are to be brought into a great Christian school, where Christ's people are to be the teachers. This mission field is immense. Who is sufficient to overcome the obstacles? The magnitude of the work and the obstinacy of the human heart are appalling! Listen to the cheering message of the Master!

**I am with you always]** Or, "I am with you all the days" is the forceful phrase in Greek. He does not say "I have been" nor "I will be," but "*I am*" with you: the ever-present, ever-living Leader! Not far away at times and present at other times, but present "all the days." The task is impossible to man, but "with God all things are possible," Matt. 19: 26. There are to be many failures, great tribulations, sorrows, disappointments, but a crown at the last. Dare to take up the impossible, the work of discipling all nations for Christ! Revivals, religious awakenings, will be followed by days of blight; tares will be sown with the wheat. The power and presence of the risen Lord, the glorified Son of God, shall ever strengthen the heart and the hand of his consecrated disciples. Spiritual power will steadily increase; for where Christ is there is increasing power.

**unto the end of the world]** Or, "until the completion of time." This is the most limited sense in which the phrase can be taken; the widest is the other extreme, "to the completion of the age," or "eternity." The thought goes to the end of the present age, the end of all temporal things, and until the glorious age of the new heavens and the new earth. Then all mortality shall be swallowed up of life. The glorious triumph of the Messiah's kingdom shall then be complete!

## COMMON VERSION.

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

## REVISED VERSION.

20 of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you <sup>1</sup>always, even unto <sup>2</sup>the end of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *all the days.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the consummation of the age*



CHRONOLOGICAL  
ORDER OF EVENTS  
IN THE FOUR GOSPELS.

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Annunciation to Zacharias.....	Oct.,	6	B. C.
Elisabeth conceives a son, and lives in retirement.....	Oct.-March,	6-5	"
Annunciation to Mary.....	April,	5	"
Mary visits Elisabeth, and remains three months.....	April-June,	5	"
Birth of John the Baptist.....	June,	5	"
Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem to be taxed.....	Dec.,	5	"
Jesus born at Bethlehem.....	Dec.,	5	"
The angel and the shepherds.....	Dec.,	5	"
Circumcision of Jesus.....	Jan.,	4	"
Presentation of Jesus.....	Feb.,	4	"
Coming of the Magi.....	Feb.,	4	"
Flight of Jesus into Egypt.....	Feb.,	4	"
Return to Nazareth, and sojourn there.....	May,	4	"
Jesus, at twelve years of age, attends the passover.....	April,	8	A. D.
John the Baptist begins his labors.....	Summer,	26	"
Baptism of Jesus.....	Jan.,	27	"
Jesus tempted in the wilderness.....	Jan.-Feb.,	27	"
Deputation of Priests and Levites to the Baptist.....	Feb.,	27	"
Jesus returns to Galilee.....	Feb.,	27	"
Wedding at Cana of Galilee.....	Feb.,	27	"
First Passover of Jesus' ministry; cleansing of temple.....	April,	27	"
Jesus and His disciples begin to baptize.....	May,	27	"
Jesus departs into Galilee, through Samaria.....	Dec.,	27	"
A few weeks spent by Jesus in retirement.....	Jan.-April,	28	"
The Baptist imprisoned.....	March,	28	"
Second Passover; healing of impotent man.....	April,	28	"
Jesus begins His ministry in Galilee.....	April-May,	28	"
Calling of four disciples, and healings at Capernaum.....	April-May,	28	"
First circuit in Galilee; healing of the leper.....	May,	28	"
Return to Capernaum, and healing of the paralytic.....	Summer,	28	"
Plucking the corn, and healing the withered hand.....	Summer,	28	"
Choice of apostles, and Sermon on the Mount.....	Summer,	28	"
Healing of centurion's servant at Capernaum.....	Summer,	28	"
Journey to Nain, and raising of the widow's son.....	Summer,	28	"
Message to Jesus of the Baptist.....	Summer,	28	"
Jesus anointed by the woman; a sinner.....	Autumn,	28	"
Healing at Capernaum of the blind and dumb possessed; charge of the Pharisees that He casts out devils by Beelzebub.....	Autumn,	28	"
Teaching in parables; and stilling of the tempest.....	Autumn,	28	"
Healing of demoniacs in Gergesa, and return to Capernaum.....	Autumn,	28	"
Matthew's feast; healing of woman with issue of blood [and raising of Jairus' daughter].....	Autumn,	28	"
Healing of two blind men, and a dumb possessed; Pharisees blaspheme.....	Autumn,	28	"
Second visit to Nazareth; sending of the twelve.....	Winter,	29	"
Death of Baptist; Jesus returns to Capernaum.....	Winter,	29	"
Crossing of the sea, and feeding of the 5000; return to Capernaum.....	Spring,	29	"
Discourse at Capernaum respecting the bread of life.....	April,	29	"
Jesus visits the coasts of Tyre and Sidon; heals the daughter of Syro-Phoenician woman; visits the region of Decapolis; heals one with an impediment in his speech; feeds the 4000.....	Summer,	29	"
Jesus returns to Capernaum; is tempted by the Pharisees; reproves their hypocrisy; again crosses the sea; heals blind man at Bethsaida.....	Summer,	29	"
Peter's confession that He is the Christ; He announces His death and resurrection; the transfiguration.....	Summer,	29	"
Healing of lunatic child.....	Summer,	29	"
Jesus journeys through Galilee, teaching the disciples; at Capernaum pays the tribute money, goes up to feast of Tabernacles.....	Autumn,	29	"

He teaches in the temple; efforts to arrest him.....	Oct.,	29	A. D.
An adulteress is brought before him; attempt to stone him; healing of a man blind from birth; return to Galilee.....	Oct.,	29	"
Final departure from Galilee; is rejected at Samaria; sending of the Seventy, whom he follows.....	Nov.,	29	"
Jesus is attended by great multitudes; parable of the good Samaritan; He gives a form of prayer.....	Nov.,	29	"
Healing of a dumb possessed man; renewed blasphemy of the Pharisees; dining with a Pharisee; Jesus rebukes hypocrisy; parable of the rich fool.....	Nov.-Dec.,	29	"
Jesus is told of the murder of the Galileans by Pilate; parable of the fig tree; healing of a woman 18 years sick; is warned against Herod.....	Nov.-Dec.,	29	"
Feast of Dedication, visit to Mary and Martha; the Jews at Jerusalem attempt to stone Him; He goes beyond Jordan.....	Dec.,	29	"
Jesus dines with a Pharisee, and heals a man with dropsy; parables of the great supper, of the lost sheep, of the lost piece of silver, of the unjust steward, of the rich man and Lazarus.....	Dec.,	29	"
Resurrection of Lazarus; counsel of the Jews to put Him to death; He retires to Ephraim.....	Jan.-Feb.,	30	"
Sojourn in Ephraim till Passover at hand; journeys on the border of Samaria and Galilee; healing of ten lepers; parable of the unjust judge, and of Pharisee and publican; teaching respecting divorce; blessing of children; the young ruler, and parable of laborers in the vineyard.....	Feb.-March,	30	"
Jesus again announces His death; ambition of James and John.....	March,	30	"
Healing of blind men at Jericho; Zaccheus; parable of the pounds; departure to Bethany.....	March,	30	"
Supper at Bethany, and anointing of Jesus by Mary.....	Sat., April 1,	30	"
Entry into Jerusalem; visit to the temple, and return to Bethany.....	Sunday, April 2,	30	"
Cursing of the fig tree; second purification of the temple; return to Bethany Monday, April 3.....	Monday, April 3,	30	"
Teaching in the temple; parable of the two sons, of the wicked husbandmen, of the king's son; attempts of his enemies to entangle Him; the poor widow; the Greeks who desire to see Him; a voice heard from Heaven; departure from the temple to the Mount of Olives; discourse respecting the end of the world; return to Bethany; agreement of Judas with the priests to betray Him.....	Tuesday, April 4,	30	"
Jesus seeks retirement at Bethany.....	Wednesday, April 5,	30	"
Sending of Peter and John to prepare the Passover; the paschal supper.....	Thursday, April 6,	30	"
Events at paschal supper.....	Thursday eve., April 6,	30	"
After supper Jesus foretells the denials of Peter; speaks of the coming of the Comforter, and ends with prayer.....	Thursday eve., April 6,	30	"
Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.....	Thursday eve., April 6,	30	"
Jesus is given into the hands of Judas.....	Thursday, midnight, April 6,	30	"
Jesus is led to the house of Annas, and thence to the palace of Caiaphas; is condemned for blasphemy.....	Friday, 1-5 A. M., April 7,	30	"
Mockeries of His enemies; He is brought the second time before the council, and thence taken before Pilate.....	Friday, 5-6 A. M., April 7,	30	"
Charge of sedition; Pilate finds no fault with Him, and attempts to release Him, but is forced to scourge Him, and gives Him up to be crucified.....	Friday, 6-9 A. M., April 7,	30	"
Jesus is crucified at Golgotha.....	Friday, 9-12 A. M., April 7,	30	"
Upon the cross is reviled by his enemies; commends His mother to John; darkness covers the land; He dies; the earth shakes, and rocks are rent.....	Friday, 12 A. M.-3 P. M., April 7,	30	"
His body taken down and given to Joseph, and laid in his sepulchre.....	Friday, 3-6 P. M., April 7,	30	"
Resurrection of Jesus, and appearance to Mary Magdalene.....	Sunday, A. M., April 9,	30	"
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Appearance to the apostles and Thomas.....	Sunday, April 16,	30	"
Appearance to seven disciples at sea of Tiberias, and to 500 at mountain in Galilee, April-May.....	April-May,	30	"
Final appearance to the disciples at Jerusalem, and ascension to heaven, Thursday, May 18.....	Thursday, May 18,	30	"

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The contents of the Gospel may be arranged in five divisions :

### I. LINEAGE AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

Lineage and birth, chap. 1. Visit of the wise men ; flight into Egypt, and return to Nazareth, chap. 2.

### II. FROM THE MISSION OF JOHN BAPTIST TO THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Preaching and baptism of John, chap. 3. Temptation of Jesus ; preaching in Galilee, chap. 4. Sermon on the Mount, chaps. 5-7. Miracles of the leper ; centurion's servant ; Peter's mother-in-law ; stilling the tempest ; the demoniacs of Gadara, and the palsy ; the call of Matthew ; the feast, and about fasting ; the ruler's daughter ; the woman with the issue of blood ; the dumb and blind ; the harvest and few laborers, chaps. 8, 9. Mission of the twelve ; message from John ; Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum upbraided ; the gracious invitation, chaps. 10, 11. Pharisees and the Sabbath, and casting out devils ; blasphemy against the Holy Ghost ; the sign of Jonah and of the queen of Sheba ; the seven unclean spirits ; who is my mother, chap. 12. Seven parables of the kingdom, chap. 13. John beheaded ; five thousand fed ; walking on the sea ; healed by a touch of his garments, chap. 14. About traditions and defilement ; the Canaanitish woman ; four thousand fed, chap. 15. Sign of the sky ; leaven of the Pharisees ; Peter's great confession ; Jesus foretells his passion ; cross-bearing and its reward, chap. 16.

### III. FROM THE TRANSFIGURATION TO THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

The transfiguration ; the epileptic child ; temple tax, chap. 17. Who the greatest of offenders ; the lost sheep ; of forgiveness ; the king's servants, chap. 18. Of divorce ; receiving children, and the rich young man, danger of riches, chap. 19. The laborers in the vineyard ; again Jesus foretells his passion ; the ambitious request ; two blind men of Jericho, chap. 20.

### IV. FROM THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE LAST PASSOVER.

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