

The Crowned Christ

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The Deity of Christ

For one who is in possession of the New Testament, it scarcely needs to quote a text to prove the deity of Christ.

It is only will that can fail to find it there; though it would be another thing entirely to say that there are no difficulties in the comprehension of it. Of course there are difficulties. That a babe born in Bethlehem, growing in wisdom and stature in the carpenter's house in Nazareth, should be at the same time the God of all men, this is a difficulty which no one thinks of denying. The Old Testament states it, however, and draws attention to it twice over, for the wonder of it, in words that were written, as every Jew is clear, long before the day of Christ. So Isaiah (9:6): "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace." And again, Micah (5:2): "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall He come forth to Me who is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Mystery it surely is, but no less clear that the fact is affirmed, and affirmed of One to whom from the beginning, as the "Seed of the woman," the generations of men looked forward,—to whom, since He came, the generations have looked back; and He the unique Man in human history! The marvelous explanation suits well the marvel of fact, while it concentrates every faculty of the soul upon it. He who made the world, from whom it

had slipped away, has entered it again, in strange guise indeed, but so as to show the most tender interest in it. When we know Who it is, the self-abasement, the child-speech of the Eternal, learning the conditions of creature-hood, but so far removed from paradise: what a revelation is in this obscurity He has assumed!

Himself has come after us! who, after all, so likely as He? Shall we measure Him by the height of His throne—and then He is far from us indeed; or by the depths of a divine nature, which has planted even in man (capable of being seen in him still, spite of his ruin) the capacity of a self-sacrificing love, which can only be the dim reflection of his Maker?

Can it be another than He - a creature - to whom He has left it to win our hearts away from Himself by the glory of so great a work achieved for us? No, impossible! And when we realize this work, not as provincial merely, as done for a mere corner of creation, but as under the eyes of angelic principalities and powers, “that He might show in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness to us,” — how impossible for it to be any other than Himself who should do this! — for it to be no manifestation of God at all, but of some creature merely; God, in His central glory of being, yet unknown!

“All things were created by Him and for Him” (Col. 1:6) is said of Christ; and such sayings are almost more positive affirmations of His Godhead than the most direct statements could be. How impossible to imagine a mere creature centre for the universe to revolve about! or even an inferior God! Go back to the account of creation, and how naturally it reads now of Him who is God and with God, as the gospel of John declares Him,

“Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.” Or again, look forward in thought to where we are carried in that prophecy of Isaiah with which we began, by that title of His, not “the everlasting Father,” as the text of the common version has it, but as the Hebrew and the margin of the Revised, “the Father of eternity:” the One who having made all things at the beginning, shall give them at the last their final shape.

Thus we realize that at the Centre of the universe there is not merely a Power that controls and holds it together—which is again true of Him “in whom all things consist” (Col. 1:17),—but a Heart: perfectly told out as the moral Power which is manifested now as the “Beloved” of “Love” Itself. Here in the Incarnation and Atonement it is told out to us. There could be no other. It is no satellite which has become a sun, but the diffusive Sun itself,—yea, the Sun of all suns.

Think of One who could say of Himself that He was the “Light of the world,”—excluding all other! Light—self-witnessing, as light is: so that rejection of it could only be on the part of men who “loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” And this light was not merely that of His sayings, a message that He brought, a revelation which was committed to Him, though there was that also: but He was Himself the Light, as He says, in the exactest possible way defining this,—“As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world” (Jno. 9:5).

His sayings would, indeed, live after He was gone; the revelation He made remain for other days. None the less, it would be night for the world when He was gone out of it. Nothing could replace the Sun. Of course,

there are little “lights” enough—torch-lights, bon-fires, here and there a calcium light: but no one of these could be confounded with the sun. Even the moon shines by its light, and nature itself bears witness which we do well to listen to, that the light of the world must be a light outside the world; nothing bred of it is competent for its illumination.

“God is light:” and here is One who claims to be in the world so absolutely that, that if a disciple express still a desire to have the Father shown to him, He can rebuke him with “Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” (Jno. 14:9).

Nothing could be more absolute in statement that as to God Himself, morally, there was none else to see,—there was no one back of Him, who was “the brightness”—or, as in the Revised Version, “the effulgence of (the Father’s) glory, the exact image of His Person” (Heb. 1:3), “the Image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15).

He is thus the Revealer, or (according to the title which John alone gives to Him,) the “Word of God.” The opening of his gospel, which is that in which the divine glory of Christ is the peculiar theme, presents Him in this character. “In the beginning”—when anything that had beginning began,—the Word (not began, but) was. Revelation began with creation: the work must necessarily in some sort bear witness of the Worker; but this is not enough to say here; for the Personal Word, there at the very beginning of creation, speaks of design on God’s part that He should be known. He must intend, therefore, to have those to whom He can speak; and the

Word of God is thus the Creator: "By Him were all things made; and without Him was not anything made that was made." Creation is, in scarcely a figure, the actual speech of the Word of God.

"The Word was with God"—a distinct Person; "and the Word was God"—a divine Person; and "the same was in the beginning with God"—always personally distinct, as always in communion with the Father.

It is too little remembered—to some seems to be unknown—that the Word was the Creator. The so-called Apostles' Creed ascribes creation solely to the Father. Scripture says of the Father, "of whom are all things," and of the Lord Jesus Christ "by whom" (1 Cor. 8:6). Paul in Colossians, as already quoted, declares of Christ that "all things were created by Him and for Him" (1:16). John may enable us to understand better this last expression. As the Word, the Revealer, we can see that He has special relation to what He has made; so that when we find that it is He, the "Word," who is "become flesh," this coming into His own creation, with all the wonder of it, has a divine suitability; and we, "created for Him," are thus to have the whole heart of God declared to us, and to be brought nigh in accordance with the eternal counsels of love, in which all the Persons of the Godhead have their part.

We pass on to John's epistle, and we find Him there before us as the "Word of life," where the same idea of revelation attaches to it: "for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." This is thoroughly in keeping with

the character of the epistle, but we have not yet reached to this.

And once again, in the book of Revelation, Christ is presented to us as the Word of God, where He is still manifesting God as ever, but in judgment. Here as Rider upon the white horse, the sword of judgment proceeds out of His mouth.

For us how blessed to realize in this title of the Son of God, the divine purpose, from eternity, of revelation, and that we were given of the Father to the Son, from the beginning of creation according to this purpose —“created for Him.” The Lord’s words in His prayer to the Father for those given to Him out of the world, though seeming to have a narrower scope, only show us the same purpose in progress, now defining itself in view of human sin and its fatal consequences. To those given to Him He manifests the Father’s name, and communicates the Father’s words. One who had his place with them had dropped out; but he was a “son of perdition.”

There is no need to entangle ourselves with the questions that arose early in the Church with regard to the doctrine of the Word or Logos. Scripture is transparently clear with regard to it; and upon such subjects not a ray of light is to be got elsewhere.

Being, then, such as we see, we do not wonder that He claims to be the self-existent One, as in His words to the Jews: “Before Abraham was I am” (Jno. 8:58). This is the incommunicable name of Deity, by which He revealed Himself to Moses and to Israel: “I am hath sent me to you” (Exod. 3:14). Being always the Word, the Revealer, this older voice was, of course, His own. He is thus the

Abiding, the Unchangeable, the Eternal. Jehovah is but the synonym of this; and so the glory of Jehovah, which Isaiah saw in his day, is declared to be His glory: “these things said Esaias when he saw His glory, and spake of Him” (Jno. 12:40, 41 with Isa. 6:9, 10). The Old Testament thus, as well as the New, is full of His Presence; only that now He has taken that tabernacle of flesh to display His glory in, in which all His purpose to be near us, all His delights with the sons of men, have fully come out. He is now truly Immanuel, “God with us;” and the blessedness of that for us will fill eternity.

That He should claim equal honor with the Father Himself is in this way clearly intelligible, as it of itself also declares fully who He is: “that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father” (Jno. 5:23) is the most emphatic assertion of equality; which Thomas “my Lord and my God” (20:28) yields Him, with full recognition on his part of the truth of his too tardy faith.

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Christ - The Eternal Son

That Christ is Son of God no one who believes in Scripture can for a moment deny or question. But the moment we come to consider how and in what sense He is the Son of God, we begin not merely to encounter the strife of tongues with which unbelief has ever assailed His glorious Person, but to experience also the mystery of it, which faith itself most thoroughly confesses. Nor only this, but we find from Scripture this title of His as Son of God to be twofold—His title in Deity and His title in humanity; and we have got to ask ourselves its import in both ways, and to consider in what sense each scripture is speaking, if we would rightly understand what is revealed concerning Him.

This responsibility, it is plain, God puts upon us, and from it we must not seek escape,—that of understanding the word of God. People seek refuge from it in what they think simplicity, but which often is mere vacancy of thought. They believe the statements: they think it wise not to look too closely into them. They are so afraid of error that they dare not inquire as to the truth; but the truth itself is the only bulwark against error. “Thy words were found,” says the prophet, “and I did eat them; and Thy words were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” (Jer. 15:16.) The strong expression intimates the kind of reception that the word of God requires,—to be laid hold of, broken up, analyzed, not the outside of it but all that is in it assimilated and made our own. Thus is it that it nourishes us, and we grow by it, and it becomes indeed the “joy and rejoicing of the heart.”

We cannot but remember that the Lord uses the same striking figure in reference to Himself. He is the bread of life: His flesh is meat indeed; and His blood is drink indeed. What a deceit of Satan has it not been to persuade the people of God that this is just the literal taking of the Lord's Supper, or what is involved in it,—turning into partaking of an ordinance (even though they may qualify this by insisting on the necessity of faith) that which is the entering into and appropriating of Christ in His fulness for us. Here there is no death for us, but only life, and the strengthening and perfecting of the life which divine love has communicated to us.

For this we must seek to know, and ever better, the truth as to Christ. We could not know Him at all but by revelation: it is by revelation we must still go on to know Him. Texts are the thoughts of God in which He is enshrined for us,—the ministry of the Spirit of God (though not independent of His direct personal energy) to make Christ practically our own. Let us then search Scripture fervently and perseveringly, better to know the knowledge in which eternal life is; and may there be given to us with deepening knowledge a deepening joy in Him which shall be fuller communion with the Father, and power to reflect the brightness that we gaze upon.

Adam was by creation a son of God; and, though the fall has marred the likeness, yet the apostle could quote approvingly to the Athenians a “prophet of their own” that “we are His offspring.” (Acts 17:28, 29.) We are this, not merely because created by Him,—for He is not the Father of the beast,—but as possessors of a spiritual nature which fits us for companionship with Him who is Spirit. If “He maketh His angels spirits,” they too are spoken of as “sons of God.” (Heb. 1:7; Job 38:7.)

But “that holy Thing” born of Mary, the new Adam of a new creation, is affirmed to be “the Son of God” as not conceived in the ordinary way of nature, but by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 1:35). And as Adam, while the father of his race, was yet from the divine side but the “First-born among many brethren,” so too is Christ among those “born of the Spirit” and thus “sons of God” upon a higher plane than that of nature. The “last Adam,” while, as this means, the Head of a race also, is yet the “First-born among many brethren.” (Rom. 8:29.)

This is not our theme at present, and I do not further dwell upon it here, except to observe that this is all the title “Son of God” implies when given to Christ, for some who earnestly protest against its being applied to Him as a divine Person. [1] They urge that “Sonship” implies derivation and thus inferiority to the Father; and confounding the passages which speak of Him as begotten in time (Ps. 2:7) with those which we must presently consider, maintain that He is only “Son” in His official character.

But one direct text of Scripture outweighs all possible arguments; here surely if anywhere, where we know nothing but by revelation. And it is given as proof of the greatness of divine love, in one of the most familiar texts to all of us, that “God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). This by the Lord Himself; while the apostle who records it, preaches upon it in his epistle: “Herein was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent His Only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He

loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9, 10).

The depth of this love is shown then in this, that the Father sent His Son into the world for us: it is perfectly plain then that Christ was the Son before He came into the world. The appeal to our hearts is simple, who know in ourselves, though fallen, something of what a father's love is. And if we look back to the time when God was pleased to show forth in Abraham's case something of the reality of sacrifice, we feel it as a trial beyond nature when we hear the measured words, every word an agony, "Take now thy son,—thine only son,—Isaac,—whom thou lovest; and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him up there a burnt offering upon one of the mountains I will tell thee of" (Gen. 22:2).

We can realize a little what this meant for Abraham. Should the glory of Deity hide from us somewhat or emphasize the appeal of that love in which "God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all"? Could it make no difference to be told that "Son" is here no title of relationship; that it does not mean all and much more than it meant for Abraham?

Does not "His own Son" look as if it were meant to negative this, and to assure us that nothing less than real relationship could be intended?

But the apostle adds that it was "His only-begotten Son" whom He sent forth; and if the title "Firstborn" shows that He has "brethren," that of Only-begotten as decisively excludes them. He was this before He came forth,—eternally the Son, and thus divinely: of course, without fellows. The "Only-begotten" shows that He was Son by nature; and we must not leave out any part of

that by which the Spirit of God has chosen to set Him forth.[2] Here the stranger the term looks as relating to the blessed Lord, the more closely must we adhere to what is certainly scripture. Here our thoughts can only follow, and not lead: we are safe under the guidance of the Spirit of God,—safe nowhere else.

Moreover the apostle John is the only inspired writer applying this term to the Lord, and he is known by all as the one whose special theme is His divinity. He introduces it also in the very place in which he speaks of the glory of God which has been now unveiled for us in Christ: “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). This is the common version; but the expressions are really stronger than these words convey. The word “dwelt” is really “tabernacled,” thus carrying us back to that tabernacle or tent in which of old God had gone with His people. The tabernacle now is that “flesh” or humanity of Christ, in which the Word, who is God, was pleased to dwell among us. Thus the glory is divine glory; but with Israel of old it was veiled,—it is now unveiled: “we beheld His glory.” What was it like? It was “glory as of an Only-begotten with a Father”—“from with,” literally: it was just that character of glory, as of an Only-begotten come from the place which yet He never left, of perfect nearness in relationship and love to God as Father.

This in its effect for us the eighteenth verse expresses: “the Only-begotten Son who is”—literally, “the One being” or “abiding”—“in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him” (told Him out). The unchanging intimacy of the eternal relationship is here that which qualifies

Him as the perfect Revealer of God; according to what He was before made known to us to be—"the Word made flesh."

Thus we have the sweetest and most competent Witness of God that can be,—ourselves put in the place of children to the Father, that we may be fit to receive such a communication. There is thus made for us a little heaven within, as for the earth the firmament of the second day, through which the glorious Heaven beyond may shine in upon us. Not from afar off, nor in cold luster, but with the warmth with which our Sun, the Ruler of the day, blesses and gladdens us. Love which is Light: such is the revelation. How could we do without those precious words "Son" and "Father," back of all dispensations, all economic display, to show what is the nature of God in itself eternally,—the absolute verity of that which has now been revealed?

He is not "love" for an occasion, however great may be the occasion. Nor is the Son become Son for display, however glorious. The Father had no beginning as the Father; nor the Son therefore as the Son. If otherwise, then after all we have not a revelation of eternity, nor of God as He is, but only as He is pleased to become—a very different thing. Thank God, it is not so. We know how God dwelt in love eternally: we have the Object of that love made known to us; we are made to know, not eternal silence in the House which now has such glorious music for returned prodigals, but a communion into which we are now admitted, and are privileged in our measure to become partakers.

Nay, the very relationship taken up on earth, as First-born of the heavenly family, is but, as now we can see,

the representation of the eternal relationship upon an earthly plane, where the “many brethren” may realize and rejoice in it. The eternal reality embodies itself in time, and is made, as far as possible, visible to us. The reaching forth of divine love to us—its eagerness to have us enter into it, how it is seen in all this.

We shall not here dwell longer upon it; but when we fully receive the blessed truth of “the Word made flesh,” we shall find from this humanity of His itself divine light break forth for us,—“that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us,” and “the Life the Light of men.”

[1] For example, Adam

Clarke and Albert Barnes, the commentators.

[2] It has been said that μονογενής, “only-begotten” is the word used by the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew jachid or “only one,” (in Psa. 22:20; 35:17,) “darling” in the common version. But this cannot rule as to the inspired Greek of the New Testament, which is precise and accurate, as the Septuagint is often far from being; and least of all can it do so in what relates to the Person of the Son of God.

Christ - The Word Made Flesh

We turn now from considering the deity of our blessed Lord to see how Scripture speaks of His incarnation. This, of all the Evangelists, the apostle John, the historian of His divine glory, most forcibly expresses: "The Word became flesh," he says, "and tabernacled among us." "Flesh" characterizes humanity by that which is its lowest part; and the depth of this condescension, is the glory of the revelation which this expression—the "Word was made flesh"—so perfectly conveys. In His human personality Christ was Himself the gospel that He preached, as "Son of man" was the title He so loved to give Himself.

There was an uttermost depth, as we know, beyond His becoming man; but to which this was the necessary preliminary. But it was much more than this: for out of the abyss into which He descended at the cross He would again immediately ascend,—because of what He was, He could not be holden of it,—while the manhood He has assumed He retains for ever: He has assumed it into His own Person, and it is part of Himself. Upon the throne of God, with the memorials of that deepest possible descent upon Him, He will reign as the Lamb for all eternity.

What an amazing thought is this, that God should come down into the creature place, not simply for a time, and to do a work in it which, however wondrous, would be but for a time, but of His own free choice to abide in it after this manner. God and the creature—His creature—thus permanently together: clasped in an embrace that never shall be sundered! This in its profound

significance cannot be a partial or provincial manifestation. It must as a revelation be written not merely in the common tongue of men, but address itself to all intelligences and all beings capable of responding to it. And so Scripture assures us amply that it does, and that "in the ages to come He will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:6.)

Could the depths of divine love be shown out anywhere or anywise to creature-ken, without all creatures being affected by it? That surely would be impossible.

"Destruction and death" must say, "We have heard the fame of it with our ears." The hosts of heaven, learning it but as grace to others, even thus must recognize it as tenderest goodness to themselves, who so learn with deepening adoration their own glorious God. And the worship of the Lamb must indeed have raised the whole worship of heaven immeasurably above all that could have been before it.

We have an intimation of this, and of more than this, where the apostle tells us that "from the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ [1] every family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:15). Every family finds its place in relationship with Him who is thus revealed as the Father of Christ. The revelation of God in Christ makes their own relationship to Him as it were a new thing.

Yet "He layeth not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He layeth hold;" and in this connection it is that the apostle speaks of the incarnation as the necessary step towards the cross. "For it became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of

their salvation perfect through sufferings...Inasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise took part in the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”(Heb. 2:10-16).

Here we see why His taking flesh is emphasized sometimes as if it were the whole thing. The flesh was that “vessel of earth” in which the “bird of heaven” was to die, and alone could die. (Lev. 14:1-7.) Flesh is the expression used for humanity in its frailty and mutability; and thus suited to express the depth of the divine condescension, which was on this account also the full display of the glory of God. Hence, “the Word was made flesh,” and “a body hast Thou prepared Me;” which last words the apostle again connects (as perfectly in the line of Hebrews) with His priestly sacrifice: “sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me.”

In the quotation from the second chapter it is “flesh and blood” of which the children are partakers, and in which He therefore takes part; and still more in 1 Cor. 15:50, is the present mutable condition of humanity emphasized: “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;”—not from evil in it, for as such God created it, but because of that mutability unfitting it for that which is eternal. It is of the eternal form of the kingdom that he is speaking; and blood is for the supply of waste: it is identified with change,—with the wearing out of material,—with the temporal, therefore, instead of the eternal.

Hence the body that the Lord assumed, to fulfill that sacrificial law which in the volume of the book was written of Him, was not yet in the condition suited to the new creation, though He was Himself the “last Adam” and the Head of it. The body He took was “psychical,” as “natural” should rather be read (1 Cor. 15:44), and not yet “spiritual.” These terms are indeed little understood, and we can at best understand but little of them; yet we may understand enough to avoid some mistakes which are often fallen into. A “spiritual” body does not mean a body formed of spirit, any more than a psychical body means a body formed of psyche (or soul). The two phrases are exactly parallel in Scripture, and used so as to show this: “There is a psychical body and there is a spiritual body: and so it is written, the first ‘man,’ Adam, ‘was made a living soul’; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit” (1 Cor. 15:44, 45).

Here the apostle’s quotation shows us the psychical body as in suited relation to man as a living soul—a term by which the beast is designated as well as man. Yet man has—as the beast has not—spirit as well as soul; but while in the present body he is not designated by that which is the higher part. Out of the body, he is a “spirit;” in it a “soul.” The psychic body—it is a pity we have not a better adjective for soul—seems to veil his spirit faculties; the soul (which is the sensuous, animal like part, though far higher than the animal) dominating so as to characterize it.

The body is thus really, according to the actual phrase in the epistle to the Philippians (chap. 3:21) “the body of our humiliation;” and that apart from the effect of the fall upon it; though the effects of the fall are not there excluded. In it the spirit is enabled to contemplate

outward things only by means of the senses; and in this way it is that slowly and laboriously it gathers knowledge for the possession of the spirit. And this kind of knowledge seems to be that of which the apostle speaks (1 Cor. 13:8-11) as “through a glass darkly” and to “vanish away” in that perfect condition in which we shall see “face to face.” The slow waking up and slower maturing of the faculties of man, as he grows in wisdom, has much, as it would seem, to do with this apparent inversion in rank of spirit and soul.

To this condition the body of “flesh and blood” is perfectly adapted as a “body of humiliation,” for the purpose of “hiding pride from man,” by making him realize day by day his dependence; while the provision for and ministry to his wants bears as constant witness to the care and tenderness of God towards His creature, so as to hold him fast to the Source of blessing.

All this is apart from the fall and its consequences: being what the “first man was made;” not what he afterwards became. The fall brought in all that could give even a moment’s distress in such a condition. The passage in the second of Hebrews carefully distinguishes between the “children’s” equal “partaking” in flesh and blood (now in this fallen state) and Christ’s limited “taking part” in it. The Greek words, if not the English, show a difference in this respect, though they do not define its exact nature. This is not difficult to realize, however, from what is added afterwards, that “it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” “In all things” declares the necessity of His taking proper and full manhood, that He might be a true

Representative of those for whom He went in to God; while for this purpose He must be absolutely free also from any personal impurity or defect. Perfect manhood must be His, without stain or fracture.

How this was secured, the Gospel of Luke bears witness for us. The power of the Holy Ghost accomplished what would otherwise have been impossible; and “that Holy Thing” born of the Virgin was, even as to His humanity, the “Son of God” (Luke 1:35) This does not of itself declare what John declares: it is not equivalent to the Word being made flesh. Luke’s is the Gospel of the Manhood, as John’s is of the Deity of the Lord. The one presents to us the First born, as the other the Only-begotten. And it is essential to His proper glory that both sides should have adequate statement. The power of the Holy Ghost was manifested in the “Man Christ Jesus” being “made in all things like unto His brethren,” while absolutely free from all the sad inheritance of the fall. It was manifested where needed: on the human side, and not on the divine.

Thus, even as to His body, it was “a body prepared,” yet “in all things made like unto” that of “His brethren,” apart from the consequences of sin which, as there was no sin in Him, He could not have in His Person at all.[2] We must carefully distinguish from this the effect of the circumstances in which He was, a paradisaic Adam in this respect, as I doubt not, but outside of paradise; no doubt, as to Adam a state difficult to conceive, and for unfallen Adam a thing impossible. Yet it may be possible in certain relations to understand and speak of it to some extent,—that is, as far as the Scripture statements carry us, and as we ourselves may be given to realize their meaning.

Adam, as we see, in the body of flesh and blood, was exactly suited to the conditional relation in which he stood to all around him. Sin would bring death upon him, as in fact it did. Mortal, as yet he was not: there was no tendency to death in his nature, no subjection to it on his part, no possibility of disease, no clouding of any faculty in this way. All was in vigour, and with capacity to retain that vigor indefinitely at least. With the knowledge growing upon us, as it is to-day, of the wonderful provision even yet perceptible in the human body for the removal of injurious elements, and for the recovery from any effect of these, it is not difficult to conceive that no poison could have affected him at all. The beasts were subjected to him. If we think of the possibility of accident, I believe we should have as to this to fall back upon the certainty of divine guardianship. He was dependent; his body to be sustained by food; and the ministry of the tree of life ordained for him clearly as additional enforcement of so needed a lesson, whatever we may conceive of its real virtues.

Mutability and dependence are seen in all this, hedged round by divine care and love; by which alone suffering and death could, after all, be absolutely excluded. Thus, let the hedge be taken away, suffering and death may come. Liability to it was implied before: it needs but the circumstances to be changed, for one like this to hunger and thirst, and suffer. With the Lord Himself, in the body of flesh and blood which we know was His, all these imply neither mortality, (in the true sense, [3]) nor any position towards God, vicarious or otherwise, to account for them. If He in His grace be pleased to come into these conditions, this is all-sufficient. He may only feel

things more exquisitely because of His perfection, and be all through in the unclouded sunshine of divine favor, as, until the significant darkness of the Cross, He ever was.

And this, being His grace, was part of that divine display which the “Word made flesh” affirms. That which looks only like the infirmity of manhood becomes in this way the glory of Godhead. “The Son of man is glorified” in this humiliation; “and God” also “is glorified in Him.”

[1] Most editors leave out “of our Lord Jesus

Christ” on the authority of some of the most ancient MSS.; but some have it, along with the Peshito Syriac version (of the second century) and the Vulgate, and it agrees perfectly with the connection here. We should read, “every family,” as in the Revised, and not “the whole,” as in the Common Version.

[2] These things as to the Lord we must keep in careful adjustment to one another: “a body prepared” “made in all things like unto His brethren.” The latter must not be strained so as to include any consequences of the fall: for in this we were not “His brethren”; and limitation is fully declared (as we have seen) with regard to His participation in flesh and blood. On the other hand a “body prepared” must not be strained so as to make it other than fully human. It is instructive in this way to remember that this is a quotation from the Septuagint which substitutes this for the Hebrew: “ears hast Thou digged for Me.” Unless we are to believe that the Hebrew text is inaccurate here, and that the correctness of the Greek is affirmed by the apostle, the latter is but a paraphrase of the former, which he accepts as giving the true meaning. But in this case the “body prepared” does

not apply to any special character of the body itself, but to its being the instrument whereby as a Man, the speaker should be enabled to hear—that is, to obey—the will of God. It is not to be supposed that the uninspired Septuagint has given us here a revelation of the nature of the Lord's humanity unknown to the inspired Hebrew.

Of course what has been said of the Lord in comparison with Adam has reference simply to his body; and the union of God head with Manhood in His Person, with the consequences of this does not come before us here. We hope to speak of these in another place.

[3] Mortal does not mean "capable of dying," (in which sense some have incautiously applied it to the Lord,) but "subject to death; destined to die" (Standard Dictionary).

Christ - His Human Spirit and Soul

We come now to consider the deeper question of spirit and soul in Christ. "Docetism," which denied the reality of His flesh, needs now no argument to be spent upon it, for it has no adherents at the present time; but that to which we are now come involves, to begin with, the question of what spirit and soul are in man; and many are not yet clear as to this. We can hardly therefore understand what true humanity involves in the Lord, except we first understand what it is in men at large.

If, for instance, we take up such a book as "Hodge's Outlines of Theology," (a book which has been praised by a justly celebrated man, lately deceased, as a "Goliath's sword-none like it" for the Christian armory,) we shall find the writer saying:-

"Pythagoras, and after him Plato, and subsequently the mass of Greek and Roman philosophers, maintained that man consists of three constituent elements: the rational spirit, (nous, pneuma, mens;) the animal soul, (psuche, anima;) the body, (soma, corpus.) Hence this usage of the word became stamped upon the Greek popular speech. And consequently the apostle uses all three when intending to express exhaustively in popular language the totality of man and his belongings: 'I pray God that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless' (1 Thes. 5:23; Heb. 4:12; 1 Cor. 15:45). Hence some theologians conclude that it is a doctrine given by divine inspiration that human nature is constituted of three distinct elements."

To which view he objects:-

"That the pneuma and psuche are distinct entities cannot be the doctrine of the New Testament, because they are habitually used interchangeably and often indifferently. Thus psuche as well as pneuma is used to designate the soul as the seat of the higher intellectual faculties-(Matt. 16:26; 1 Pet. 1:22; Matt. 10:28). Thus also pneuma as well as psuche is used to designate the soul as the animating principle of the body-(James 2:26). Deceased persons are indifferently called psychai, (Acts 2:27, 31; Rev. 6:9; 20:4); and pneumata, (Luke 24:37, 39; Heb. 12:23)."

These are all his objections, and at the first glance they are very unsatisfactory. How much of the precision and trustworthiness of Scripture must disappear if we are at liberty to credit apparent distinctions of this sort to popular phraseology! On the contrary, the Old Testament is as clear as to these distinctions as the New, long before philosophy had moulded the speech of Greece, and outside altogether the Greek that it had moulded.

All through Scripture, from the first chapter of Genesis on, the beast is credited with a "soul." "Everything wherein there was a living soul' is the designation (in Gen. 1:30, Heb.) of the mere animal as distinct from man. True, man also is made a living soul; but that is not his highest-his special character. God is the "Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9), not of souls; and as the son is in the image of his father, man is thus by a special work created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). Thus also it is the "spirit of man that is in him" that "knoweth the things of a man" (1 Cor. 2:11); and this spirit is therefore never ascribed to the beast. The writer of Ecclesiastes in his early "thoughts" raises a question about it, but which

he answers at the close (3:21; 12:7), and it is merely the doubt of a man in a fog, not divine truth, as is evident, nor given as that.

The spirit and soul are always viewed in Scripture with perfect consistency in this manner. Scripture is always self-consistent, and never loose in what it says. The faculties proper to man, the mental and moral judgment are ascribed to the spirit; the sensitive, instinctive, emotional nature is ascribed to the soul. Yet there is a knowledge that can be ascribed to the soul, as there is a joy of the spirit; and if "heart" be substituted for "soul," and "mind" for "spirit," we can understand this without realizing any confusion or inconsistency in the matter.

As to the death state, if spirit or soul be absent the body will be dead, and either may be mentioned in this way; yet here, too, Scripture will be found perfectly at one in all its statements. In the body, (and through its connection with it, doubtless, in the "natural" or "psychic" condition already spoken of,) man-though he has a spirit-is a "soul;" so that "soul" becomes, as in our common language also, the equivalent of self; while out of the body, though he has a soul, he is a "spirit."

This will explain all passages, except perhaps those in Revelation, where also that in chapter 20:4 is only a somewhat emphatic use of soul for self or person; while the "souls under the altar," as applied to martyrs, are but figured as persons whose lives had been offered up in sacrifice. The usage is not really different.

"Spirit and soul and body," then, make up the man; and here the spirit it is that is the distinctive peculiarity of man, as is evident. To be true Man the Lord would surely possess both these; and both are accordingly ascribed to

Him in Scripture. He can speak of His soul being troubled and sorrowful (Matt. 26:38; Mark 14:34; John 12:27); and it can be said of Him, that "His soul was not left in hell" (or hades), (Acts 2:31). On the other hand, in His youth He waxes strong in spirit (Luke 2:40); He perceives in His spirit (Mark 2:8); He rejoices and is troubled in spirit (Luke 10:21; John 13:21); He commends and gives up His spirit to His Father (Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

Thus the proof of His true humanity is complete. Here too He is in all things made like unto His brethren; and how much, in fact, depends upon this! That, we must seek to get before us later on; but first, we must turn to certain denials or explanations otherwise of what these texts seem to teach; old speculations having been revived of late, and calling for fresh examination. It will be of use to trace it first in its older form and then in its modern phases. The older form is known (in Church history only) as Apollinarianism; the later is all around us to-day in what is known as Kenoticism.

Apollinaris was a man in high esteem among the orthodox, and in opposition to Arianism a zealous Trinitarian. It was, in fact, in opposition to Arianism that his views seem to have been developed. "The Arian doctrine of the person of Christ," says Dr. Bruce,⁶ "was, that in the historical person called Christ appeared in human flesh the very exalted-in a sense,-divine-creature named in Scripture the Logos [or Word],-the Logos taking the place of a human soul, and being liable to human infirmity, and even to sin, inasmuch as, however exalted, he was still a creature, therefore finite, therefore fallible, capable of turning, in the abuse of freedom, from good to evil. Apollinaris accepted the

Arian method of constructing [conceiving?] the person, by the exclusion of a rational human soul, and used it as a means of obviating the Arian conclusion."

He did not deny a human soul in Christ in the scriptural sense of soul, but a rational human soul, which was the philosophic term for which Scripture uses the term "spirit." The spirit of Christ he maintained to be His Deity; and in this way he thought not merely to escape the Arian doctrine of moral frailty in the Lord, but to obtain other results of the greatest importance.

Of these the first was the avoidance of all possibility of supposing a dual personality in Christ, such as in fact some of his opponents fell into. Quoting Dr. Bruce again: In his view "Christ was true God, for He was the eternal Logos manifested in the flesh. He was also true man, for human nature consists of three component elements, body, animal soul, and spirit;" and all these Christ had "True, it might be objected that the third element in the person of Christ, the nous [mind] was not human but divine. But Apollinaris was ready with his reply. 'The mind in Christ,' he said in effect, 'is at once divine and human; the Logos is at once the express image of God and the prototype of humanity.' This appears to be what he meant when he asserted that the humanity of Christ was eternal,-a part of his system which was much misunderstood by his opponents, who supposed it to have reference to the body of Christ. There is no reason to believe that Apollinaris meant to teach that our Lord's flesh was eternal, and that He brought it with Him from heaven, and therefore was not really born of the Virgin Mary; though some of his adherents may have held such opinions. His idea was that Christ was the celestial man; celestial, because divine; man, not merely as God

incarnate, but because the divine spirit is at the same time essentially human."

"This," Bruce remarks, "was the speculative element in the Apollinarian theory misapprehended by contemporaries, better understood, and in some quarters more sympathized with, now."

And here is our interest in all this matter, that in the ferment of men's minds at the present time so much of the dead and buried past is being revived; oftentimes in fragments which it is useful to put in their place therefore again, that we may see their natural connection, and realize their significance.

But

Apollinaris would have urged, no doubt, that this last part of his view was not simply speculation. He might have appealed to John 3:13, "the Son of man which is in heaven," or better still to 1 Cor. 15:47, "the second Man is (ex ouranou) out of heaven.⁷"

Nevertheless, "made in all things like unto His brethren" could not be said, as is manifest, of Christ as he has pictured Him, except we admit a self-emptying so great as that this divine humanity shall be able to take the true human limitation, be tempted as we are, increase in wisdom as in stature, be the new Adam, Head of a new race of men: without this it is plain we have not the Christ of the Scriptures. He is so unlike us that we would not have courage to claim Him for ourselves. Nor can we think of Him as in the agony of the garden, or in the darkness of the forsaken sorrow upon the Cross. The whole mental and moral nature of man, Apollinaris rightly conceived to be in that spirit of man, which he denied the Lord to possess. Spirit, He had brought

(according to this theory) from heaven with Him; or rather this was the very One who came. Thus it became now indeed "the spirit of a Man"; but a human spirit it could not be called, except by an argument which leaps over an infinite difference as if it scarcely were one, while in the interests of the theory, (that is to provide against the mutability of the creature,) it is appraised at its full worth.

But there was a third advantage that Apollinaris conceived to arise from this divine humanity of Christ, that it made God Himself to stoop to suffering and death, as no other view did, and this he believed to be essentially necessary to give power to His redemptive work. But the view he took of this is in contention.

On the whole, there can be no right question that Apollinarianism, though it had long disappeared, and only for a short time indeed maintained itself, was none the less a step towards Kenoticism, which has of late been spreading in many quarters, and which was needed to round out the elder doctrine to any consistency. An American writer of this school even "founds his theory on the basis of the essential unity of the human and divine"; "the incarnation, according to him, being the human element (the Logos) eternally in God, becoming man by taking flesh, and occupying the place of a soul." (Bruce.)

Of

Kenoticism, in connection with our present theme, a very slight notice will suffice. Its main position is that the Son of God, in becoming man, contracted Himself really within human limitations, so as either actually to become the human spirit of Christ, or else to take place

along side of this in one human consciousness. Always the aim is, as with Apollinarianism, to escape the attribution to the Lord of dual personality, to make the Christ of the Gospels more simply intelligible, while conserving His actual Deity. Deity can, they say, without real self-impairment, lay aside what belongs to it except essential attributes; and omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence are not these, but only expressions of free relation to the world which He has made. "Incarnation is for the Son of God, necessarily self-limitation, self-emptying, not indeed of that which is essential in order to be God, but of the divine manner of existence and of the divine glory which He had from the beginning with the Father, and which He manifested or exercised in governing the world. Such is the view," says Thomasius as quoted by Bruce, "given by the apostle in the epistle to the Philippians, such the view demanded by the evangelic history; for on no other view is it possible to conceive how, for example, Christ could sleep in the storm on the sea of Galilee. What real sleep could there be for Him, who, as God, not only was awake, but, on the anti-Kenotic hypothesis, as Ruler of the world, brought on, as well as, stilled the storm?"

The writer quoted here does not go the extreme length of Gess and others, who reproduce the Apollinarian view of the Lord's humanity; but we need not cite more to show from what questionings Kenoticism has arisen, or the answer which essentially all forms of it supply. Who does not know these questions? and does not know also how we are baffled by them? Is this difficulty after all capable of satisfactory solution? or does it show us that we are face to face with the inscrutable, only affirming

to us the Lord's own declaration that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father"?

It must give us pause, at least, to realize how truly hypothetical all the answers are,-how little Scripture can be even pleaded in their behalf: and here surely is the very subject upon which we should fear to hazard a word without the safe-guard of Scripture. We may, however, look at what is advanced, if only with the conviction that the feebleness of all our thoughts is what will be demonstrated by it. Even this may have its good also in keeping us within the limits of trustworthy knowledge, that with the psalmist we may not exercise ourselves on things too high for us, and incur the sure penalty that follows presumption.

Kenosis is indeed a word taken from Scripture: it is the "self-emptying" of the second chapter of Philippians, the real force of the word which in our common version is poorly rendered, "He made Himself of no reputation" (heauton ekenosen). It thus professes to be based upon Scripture-indeed to be the only adequate interpretation, as we have seen, of the passage referred to: a wonderful passage indeed, with which we cannot do better than refresh our memories and our hearts. Wonderful it is that it is an exhortation for us to the imitation of Christ in it:-

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, did not esteem it a thing to be grasped at, the being equal to God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, becoming in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The alteration from "thought it not robbery" to "esteemed it not a thing to be grasped at" is in accordance with the alternative in the margin of the Revised Version and with what is preferred by many at the present day. The point evidently that the apostle insists on is, not that Christ could claim to be equal with God, but that He did not hold fast that claim: He emptied Himself-gave up the form of God for a servant's form. The point that the Kenotic theory invites us to consider is what is involved in this self-emptying.

The fact itself is manifest: He was here a Man, in a servant's form. He did not come in the form which was proper to Him as God, though He was God. That is surely plain. It does not seem necessary to go back of the simple truth with which every Christian is acquainted, to understand this emptying. There is no fresh revelation apparent in it: rather, it is to this general Christian knowledge that the apostle appeals.

We are entitled to seek the full worth of these expressions: that is surely true. He emptied Himself of the form of God to take a servant's form: there is the antithesis; but it only implies the actuality of His manhood. When in manhood He Himself speaks of "the Son of man who is in heaven" (John 3:13). Was He in heaven, then, in the servant's form? Nay, one could not say so. But then the servant's form which He had assumed did not limit Him to that; the kenosis was not absolute and universal, but relative to His appearance upon earth; it was only what was necessarily implied in His coming into the world as Man, and not to be carried back of this. It agrees perfectly with the passage in Philippians as an appeal founded upon the facts of

Christian knowledge, and not a new revelation for the first time communicated.

Again when the apostle assures us in Colossians (1:19,) that "it pleased all the fullness (of the Godhead-the whole Godhead) to dwell in Him," this is impossible to make consistent with the Kenotic view of self-contraction within the limits of mere manhood. We may be indeed very feeble in understanding what is meant by this, but it is not contraction at all but expansion of our conception of Christ as Man. It is not Kenoticism, nor consistent with it.

But, apart from Kenoticism, the Apollinarian conception of the Lord's humanity does not present a basis for a human life capable of faith, of temptation, of sympathy with ordinary human experience, of growth in wisdom such as is explicitly attributed to Him. The singleness of personality which is indeed very manifest in it-and which is its attraction to the perplexed intellect-is gained at too great a cost. We must assert against the Apollinarian His true Manhood, and against the Kenoticist His complete Godhead; even while we own that the connection between these is inscrutable, and must remain so: comforting ourselves with the assurance that that is after all what our Lord Himself has declared. We know not the Son in the mystery of His nature; but we do know Him in His union of Godhead and manhood the living Link between God and His creatures, which can never be undone, and will never give way whatever be the strain upon it. In Him before God, accepted in the Beloved, we are "bound in the bundle of life with the Lord our God" in a way no human thought could have dreamed in its highest imagining. But it is no

imagination, but the assurance that He Himself has given us: "Because I live ye shall live also" (John 14:19.)

6 "The Humiliation of Christ," pp. 42, 43.

7 So the editors read it now.

Christ - The Son of Man

The integrity of our Saviour's manhood is marked by one title which the Lord claimed for Himself with special emphasis, and which prophecy also had in a most distinct way applied to Him,—“the Son of man.” Here “man,” in the Hebrew texts, is “Adam,” man generically; and it really settles conclusively the question (if any entertain it) as to His being personally Man. A son of man is just a man in the broadest sense, one by descent and inheritance a man. In Ps. 49 a “the low” in our version are just literally “the sons of Adam”—the commonalty, having nothing to distinguish them from others,—and are so contrasted with the “sons of ish,” (“the high”) the men of mark in any way whatever. By the use of this term the Lord comes down, therefore, in the simplest manner, as far as the truth of His humanity is concerned, to the common level. He is not simply “man,” One whom you could call that, though differing far from the race of Adam: He is “Son of man;” deriving His humanity from humanity, with nothing to separate it in kind from humanity in general,—“made in all things like unto His brethren,” as the apostle declares. The Christ of Apollinaris, or of some of the modern Kenotics, would not be a “Son of man.” He would be a divine man, perhaps; but absolutely separated from humanity in the sons of men: “brethren” among these He could not have. The force of the term is seen in the use of it as applied to the prophet Ezekiel, and once in Daniel. Both lived when things were broken up in Israel; and Ezekiel as the priest is chosen of God to be the judge, according to the law of Leviticus in its spiritual application, of the leprous condition of the

people. He is taken to witness their wilful and inveterate apostasy from Jehovah. After which, as commanded in Leviticus, the demonstration being complete, the leper is put outside the camp. The glory of the Lord is seen, though lingeringly, as all unwilling, to depart from the city (chap. 11:22, 23.)

Now the priest is one "taken from among men," and thus qualified to be "ordained for men in things pertaining to God." (Heb. 5:1.) His humanity makes him to know men, and to have heart interest in them. And thus we see the meaning of the priest prophet being addressed, as he is so constantly, as "son of man." As we try men before juries of their peers, so man, as such, is here called to pronounce on men. As man and as a priest for men, he is one who will use compassion, and therefore his judgment will be more complete and final, impossible to be objected against. His judgment is appealed to here, therefore, as "son of man." (chapter 20:4; 22:2.)

But Ezekiel is only in this the mouth piece and representative of God Himself. The judgment is, of course, God's judgment. How striking is it, therefore, to find, when we lift up our eyes, with the prophet, to that awful throne above the firmament, to find there too (chap. 1:26) "the likeness of the appearance of a Man"! the first time in Scripture that we find even the "appearance" there.

The tenderness that is implied in all this, though it cannot avert the present judgment, comes out, how fully, before the close of these prophecies, when, the people being at last cleansed by divine grace from all their iniquities, Ezekiel is taken to be a witness now of their

restoration and blessing. City and temple are seen built up anew, and the glory of God returns to its old place among them. Holiness and love are thus both at last satisfied, and the law of the leper is illustrated in both its parts, the judgment and the grace.

Daniel is only once addressed as “son of man,” (chap. 8:17) but the prophecy of the Son of man—or strictly, of “One like unto a Son of man” (7:13, 14)—to whom, coming in the clouds of heaven, is given a universal and everlasting dominion, is given us by him: a prophecy which is echoed and enlarged upon in the New Testament. In the eighth psalm, though more enigmatically expressed, we have by the mouth of David what anticipates and is the foundation of this. And here we have, strikingly expressed, the thought conveyed to us by this title; Christ being the full utterance and justification of God’s delight in man.

What is man, if you look at him under the light of the glory of the heavens? what is he, this creature of earth, enosh, “frail man” or the “son of man,” ordained to come into his inheritance by a way so characterized by weakness, and which so perfectly marks God’s estimate of him? Ah, you must take in Christ to find the answer. He too is Man,—yea, the Son of man: come down to manhood in this significant weakness which in Him united to Deity itself is the manifestation of the moral glory of God, so that it is set above the heavens, those created heavens whose glory had just now made man look so poor and contemptible! What are they now to Man in Jesus? to the Son of man?

Here then is He of whom a later psalm speaks as “the Son of man whom Thou hast made strong for

Thyself" (80:17); and His exaltation and kingdom are the necessary result. Gone down to the lower parts of the earth for the suffering of death, He is "ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." (Eph. 4:10.) In Him, as the angels at His birth declared, God has shown His "good pleasure in men." (Luke 2:14, Greek.) It is manhood as God made it at the beginning, which God has thus taken up in the Person of Christ, or the psalmist's challenge goes after all unanswered.

True, it may be, and it will be, in very different condition. As, for instance, the "spiritual body" of the resurrection is very different from the "natural," or "psychical body," as we have seen. Yet even here the identity of the body itself is assured us. That which is sown a natural is raised a spiritual body: identity as to the person is maintained under even such a change of condition as this implies; "we shall be changed," but it will still be "we." And it is man and the son of man that the psalmist sees, at first so poor and weak, and now so unutterably glorified in Christ our Lord. Otherwise, I say again, the psalmist's question remains unanswered, and must ever remain unanswered.

This being so, the Lord's constant use of this term becomes intelligible throughout. He uses it as the simplest and most intelligible one, which no one, so to speak, would deny, and yet which upon His lips conveys so much: Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (Matt. 16:12.) Son of man, just by its common application to men at large, He must be, of course; and yet in His application of it to Himself it becomes distinctive by its very universality: for who would dream of speaking of himself as "the Son of man," except as implying that He was more than this meant as to other

men? The Lord might address the prophet in this way, as reminding him of what he was, but no man, speaking among the sons of men, could distinguish himself by what was not distinctive. If it were distinctive of Him, then He was the Son of man in some sense that others were not; not less truly so, but more: and so He was—the One son of man upon whom the shadow of the fall had never been: Man, and of man, yet in more than all the promise of his first creation; God's Man indeed, justifying that creation itself, as all else had dishonored it; and thus having in Himself the promise for men of a new creation, by which they too at last should fulfill the purpose of the Creator; "Lord of the sabbath," as He who shall bring in, in such wise as to be violated no more, the rest of God.

But for this the Son of man must suffer, must be lifted up, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," giving His "flesh" thus "for the life of the world;" but "glorified" in this ability to work out in the extreme of human weakness the purposes of God. "God" thus "glorified in Him," He must "also glorify Him in Himself," yea, "straightway glorify Him."

In such scriptures the "Mediator, the

Man Christ Jesus," is set before us. They show us, if there could be question of it, how His perfect manhood had to do with the atonement wrought. And while on the one hand it is said that "we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son," and that "God sent forth His Son to redeem," yet, when we come to the details of this glorious work, the lifting up of the Son of man is that by which is indicated for us the bearing of curse by which "Christ redeemed us from curse," (Gal. 3:13) "for it is

written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Throughout, it is one blessed Person; but Scripture is perfect in the way these things are put. If it would win our hearts with the amazing gift that God has given for us,—if it would show the power that has laid hold upon us,—then it speaks of the work of the Son of God. If on the other hand we are to think of the actual suffering and sin bearing, then it sets before us Christ, or Jesus Christ, or the Son of man; and the last is more the Lord's own language, while the former is that of the apostles. The two may be put together where it says, "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son," but it is a false emphasis that would pass over the first part of this, to fasten itself upon the last. We have many times over, "the blood of Christ, of Jesus, of Christ Jesus, of the Son of man, of the Lord, of the Lamb;" once, "God's Son," is added to this.

It is one Person throughout, and all these wondrous names are His; but Scripture is in such delicate adjustment that it is easy to disturb the balance of it. As surely as we do, we find in result that we are losing the equipoise of truth itself. A false emphasis upon the truth is the beginning of error.

The "Son of man" speaks of what the

Son of God became in order to redeem us. It insists upon His manhood, true, full manhood, by which He became, for His believing people, the typical, representative Man before the eye of God. As this the "meal-offering of first-fruits" (Lev. 2:14-16) sets Him forth. But, really to avail for them, He must go beyond this type, and be the Sin bearer in their behalf. For this He becomes the Christ, the One Anointed to be Prince and Saviour. For this He

dies the death of the Cross, and becomes, as risen from the dead, the "last Adam." Head of a new race of men.

In this we are but touching things that we must take up later. What remains for us here is but the connection of this title "Son of man" with the prophecies of the future, which the Lord takes up from Daniel's vision of the world-empires, and applies to Himself. All judgment is given to Him because He is the Son of man (Jno. 5:27); and here we find in fact Ezekiel's vision perfected. With full knowledge of man, with abundant tenderness for man, Himself the Representative Man before God, it is He to whom it belongs to settle all things on the basis of a righteousness which He has glorified. "The likeness of the appearance of a Man" upon the throne comes into realization, and the vision of Daniel takes full place as the hope of Israel and of the earth. It is indeed connected with the appraisalment of responsibilities, and the solemnity of judgment to come: when the Son of man comes with the glory of His Father and with His holy angels, He shall reward every man according to his works; but this can adjust itself to the gospel and to a hope that shall not disappoint. The Son of man is the true Bridegroom of His people, and judgment itself only clears the way for the exhibition of all the fullness of a grace which the fact of His manhood sufficiently reveals.

Yes, hope, full, glorious hope is in this title of the Son of man. It cannot be separated from it. It is for David's house what the Branch out of the root of Jesse is, but wider in its promise and tenderer in its implications:—a Son of man in whom alone man's cut off years renew themselves, and now with divine strength. The hosts of heaven wait upon Him, zealous to do His pleasure; but our hearts go back to One amid the scanty group of His

disciples, giving them as the pattern for their imitation, and an inlet into the glory of heaven itself, the "Son of man, come not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

We surely see from all the relations in which we find this title of Son of man,—if even it be that under which the Lord takes the Kingdom or assumes the judgeship of the human race,—that it implies (apart from sin and all its consequences) humanity in its complete likeness to our own. It is because of this that He is indeed the suited judge of men. Defect of any kind would here be fatal. The Apollinarian Christ would be far removed from likeness to the sons of men. The substitution of the divine for a human spirit would be the deprivation of that which gives to manhood its distinctive character. The loss of personality would make impossible "the Man Christ Jesus;" and thus the "One Mediator," who is this same blessed "Man," would disappear for us (1 Tim. 2:5).

These ways in which the Lord is presented to us in Scripture show how near to dual personality we have to come in any simple apprehension of its statements. Their very boldness (when we realize who it is that is spoken of) exhibits a characteristic feature of inspiration, which does not concern itself with mere mental perplexities, in matters that are so evidently beyond us. We cannot fathom the Christ of God. We can realize how perfectly—divinely—on both sides He suits us; though we may be quite unable to put the two sides together. Dual personality would not suit us; but we want One who is both perfectly human and truly divine,—one who can sleep in the storm on the sea, and rise and still the storm. Such a Saviour we have got—how

good to know it!—if we can see nothing besides His heart of love that unites the two together.

Take, then, the Lord in His childhood life in Nazareth, and think of His waxing strong in spirit, growing in wisdom as in stature, in favor with God and man (Luke 2:40, 52). How perfectly is He man; how really within human limits; a marvellous Child, yet a Child, as He is plainly called. Who shall adjust the divine to the human here, omniscience to growing knowledge? Shall we attempt it? What would it be but to exercise ourselves in things too high for us, and prove but the pride of our hearts? Would heart or conscience find deeper rest or satisfaction in Him, if we were able to comprehend what for all these centuries has been inquired into and speculated upon, with no more knowledge achieved at the end than at the beginning?

But assuredly it is the Son of man I find here,—a Person in all the truth of humanity; and who shall deny me the happiness of drinking in the grace that has here stooped down to the condition of a child, so that a child may realize His sympathy and adore Him for His love? Thank God that none can deny me: it is as open to one as to another; and the love is as unfathomable in it as is the Person.

The Old Testament, in a passage well-known, but to which we naturally turn in such a connection as this, to admire afresh its sublimity and beauty, brings together in sharpest contrast such oppositions as these. It is the voice of the Lord to Israel that we hear in it, but we soon recognize it as familiar to us. It asks:—

“Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I

have sold you?" Nay, the Lord is not so poor:—"Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves; and for your transgressions is your mother put away."

And now comes out the controversy that He has with them: "Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?" Here is Jehovah Himself come as a Saviour to them, but there is no response; He is not recognized, or credited with power to redeem. And we know well when this was: when One came to His own, and His own received Him not; and though the power of God was in His hand, and He used it for them without stint, yet they would not believe in His gracious visitation.

Now He openly declares Himself:—

"Behold, at My rebuke I dry up the sea, and make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering."

But it was not in this guise He had come; and the voice becomes strangely altered. It drops into a softer key, and is now appealingly human:—

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner."

We need not for our purpose go further. The prophet does, and shows us Christ in His suffering and rejection plainly enough. Here, however, we have already the contrast we are seeking. It is the Almighty who is come

in servant's form: it is He who is strangely taking the place of obedience and acquiring the tongue of the learned for the ministry of grace to individual need, if the nation at large reject Him. For this He becomes Himself a learner, and is wakened morning by morning to "hear" as that. Yet it is the One who dries up the sea and makes the rivers a wilderness. Who shall put these things together? For satisfaction to the intellect, no one can. Yet even the intellect may be satisfied another way: namely, in the assured conviction of its inability to understand one's own being—to know how "spirit and soul and body" make up one man. Is it so wonderful, then, that there should be modes of the Infinite that baffle us altogether? or that "no man knoweth the Son but the Father?"

Let us turn reverently to another scene in which we find Him whose name is "Wonderful"—to the awful scene of Gethsemane. Here the "cup" which He took upon the cross is causing Him agony in the anticipation of it. Three times He prays that, if it were possible, it might pass from Him; and to this He adds the words so familiar to us, "not My will, but Thine be done."

The cup could not pass. He needs must drink it. But when we realize it as that which, expressed outwardly by the three hours of darkness, has its inner meaning in the agonizing cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" we can understand that it was the very necessity of His holy nature that He shrank from it and could not take it as of His own will, but only as the divine will for Him. Here, surely, we have a perfect and therefore a real, human will. He is as true man as any man can be; and personally man, as such a will must prove Him. We are again beyond the limit of

comprehension here, if we say, as we must say, "Yes, but He is none the less divine;" but we are not beyond the limit of enjoyment or of faith.

At the cross we find the cup itself—the awful abandonment; but who shall explain it? Or who shall tell us how He is, all through, the Man of faith, yea the pattern of faith? Shall we not rather drop all such questioning, and believe, where alone belief finds its opportunity,—where we see not?

How grandly the 102nd psalm faces the seeming contradiction; putting it in the strongest way in the mouth of the blessed Sufferer, crying out:—

"Because of Thine indignation, and Thy wrath: for Thou hast lifted me up and cast me away. My days are like a shadow that is lengthened; and I am withered like grass...He weakened my strength in the way: He shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days; Thy years are throughout all generations."

Thus the contrast between man and

God—between God and man fading away under divine wrath—is vividly realized. And now comes the answer of God to Him:—

"Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt continue: and they all shall grow old as a garment: as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end."

Here is

God, suffering as a man, and at the hand of God! the cross in its deepest mystery is told out: we see that it is recognized, faced, but not explained. Christ is Himself “the mystery of godliness God manifest in the flesh.” And here is all that we can say about it.

F W Grant

Christ - The Second Man

If the title of the Lord as Son of Man shows the continuity of humanity in Him with humanity as found in men in general,—body, soul, and spirit truly human,—there is all the more need for us to realize on the other side the uniqueness of this humanity in Him,—the wondrous new step that humanity has gained in the Person of the “Man, Christ Jesus.”

We may say, and rightly say, that if we know Him as the “Word made flesh,” we know Him necessarily as the Unique Man, peerless and apart from every other. That is true, indeed, but it is not all the truth. We could not in fact, if this were all the truth, speak of humanity having gained a step in Him. He would be simply alone in this: in this sense He could have no “brethren;” the deity raying through His manhood could not be partaken of, as is plain: in this respect He must be ever alone.

But Scripture does not leave us to such a conclusion. It joins together two titles that are His as man, and as a unique man, in such a way as to assure us of our gain in this very uniqueness;—of our manhood being by divine grace raised to a new plane in Him, so as to make Him in a peculiar sense “Firstborn among many brethren”(Rom. 8:29). These two titles are “the Second Man,” and the “Last Adam,”—the antitypical parallel, (and so necessarily contrast) with the “first man Adam” (1 Cor. 15:45, 47). As the first man was head of a race, and not to remain alone, but to be in fact a “First-born among many brethren,” so is it also with the “Second Man.” He is to be such, Head of a race, a race of men, but a new race; and it is said as to Him “the Last

Adam," because there is no other Adam to succeed Him, as with the first man. In Him God's thought as to man is completely fulfilled, and His heart completely satisfied.

But it is not of the Last Adam that we are now to think, but of the Second Man as such: "Second," as a new order of man, in contrast (as is here seen) with the First: "the first man is of earth earthy; the Second Man is of heaven." Corresponding to this, "the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." These differences will be found to be in relation to one another: "as is the earthy such are they also that are earthy, and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and, as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly."

It is the failure of the first man which has made way for the Second; but the Second it is who alone develops God's thought from the beginning, and justifies fully His delights in the sons of men. It is not with the failed first man merely that the Second is put in contrast, but with the first also, as here, apart from any failure. The earthy typifies the heavenly; but in every type the contrast is as plain as the resemblance.

Man is a microcosm, the world in little, in which is embodied all that went before him, which in him is raised also to its full natural perfection. He is the crown and epitome of it all. And nature rises up to him in successive steps of progress, each retaining what has gone before, while it transcends it. In the whole series God's principle of advance is made so plain, that, while we cannot predict, at any point at which we stop, just what may be (or whether anything may be) beyond it,

yet we are prepared to estimate it when it comes, and trace the unity of the divine handiwork, and see how the end has been before Him from the beginning, and how one blessed purpose runs through all. It may not be in vain for us, even with such a theme as we have now before us, to look back to the beginning, before man himself was upon the earth, and learn from nature itself what it may teach us of the supernatural, and how the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has ruled throughout the ages.

Scripture testifies to a gradual development of creation up to man; whether we see in it the immense periods which science claims for such development, or just six literal days, or whether, perhaps, we may be permitted to believe that both views have a measure of truth in them, and one need not exclude the other. Any way, a development there is,—from inorganic to organic, through the plant and animal up to man. So plain is this that Moses has been claimed as an evolutionist on this account. Progress he certainly believes in; and if we look at it with sufficient care, a very orderly progress we shall find it; and its four divisions of nature can better justify themselves than the three which people commonly believe in, by which man is sunk into the animal merely, and that which distinguishes him as man is ignored and set aside.

“Divisions” we may call them, because

Scripture clearly distinguishes them as lifeless; living; the animal with life and soul; man with life, soul and spirit. Each of these takes up into itself what has gone before it, and adds its own distinctive element of being, which in the case of the animal and man are distinctly

asserted to be anew “creation.” It will repay us to look more distinctly at them.

The lifeless or inorganic lies at the bottom of the whole, and need not detain us. In the crystal it seems to prophesy the organization which it never attains: for there is a bound here which cannot be passed. No life except from life is the well ascertained conclusion of science itself.

The plant takes up the lifeless into itself, and by some process peculiar to the living thing transforms it into the living. Out of this it builds up its tissues, a multitude of small cells combining in the most marvelous way to construct a most complicated structure; each filling its place and taking its part, with a division of labor and unity of interest such as have never been excelled anywhere else. Here is an instinct before instinct, a wisdom below consciousness, and which cannot belong to these particles of living matter, or in some ways the higher life that follows it must be a degeneration from it. The life that has come in is something one cannot define—cannot separate by any chemical or other test from the matter which it permeates and controls in so marvelous a way. The invisible and intangible assumes here at the start a kind of royal state, yet in service: not separating itself from what is lower than itself, but lifting it up and transforming it. And this is the progress Scripture shows us to be constantly in nature. It is not evolution: the lower does not lift itself to higher condition; the higher element is not developed from the lower, but stoops to it and raises it. Thus already the principle begins to be revealed, which will carry us on to quite other scenes before its full power is declared.

From the vegetable we pass on to the animal—to the living soul. [8] This is defined, in Gen. 1:30, as “every thing wherein there is a living soul.” That this “soul” is not the same as life is shown by the very term “living” which is connected with it. But the connection shows also that a principle of life is in it: a life which is now on a higher plane than before. As in the plant life and matter are found inseparably, so in the animal it is with soul and life. The “soul” (*nephesh*, *psuche*) is indeed the life of the animal,—is the word used for it, though it means much more than this, and although there is a distinct word for life also (*chai*, *zoe*). But the soul is the seat of the emotions, instincts, and appetites of the body—the whole sensitive nature; and while in the animal the functions of nutrition and reproduction are styled by physiologists “vegetative functions,” the distinctly animal ones are those of sensation and voluntary motion. The “living soul that moveth” indicates both these.

We see, therefore, how by the connection of the soul with it, life is lifted in the animal to a higher plane; while soul is not just this higher life itself, but a new element of being, as expressly indicated by the term “created,”—“God created every living soul.”

In man, once more we have a distinct addition, that of spirit; and by this it is, clearly, that he is created in the image of God. For God is Spirit, and the Father of spirits (Heb. 12:9). The son is therefore in the Father’s image; and in the human spirit, the mental and moral faculties are added to the instinctive and emotional ones. But then by this union the gain of the soul over that of the animal merely is easily to be seen. The law we have traced thus far manifests itself again; the soul in its turn

acquires an inseparable union with spirit, by which it shares in the light of self-consciousness in which the spirit moves, and becomes partaker also in its immortality. The beast perishes, but not the soul of man, which they that kill the body cannot touch. [9]

Thus the spiritual law manifests itself at each step of progress in creation up to man. It is by the abasement of the higher to the lower that all progress is accomplished; and here redemption is not dimly shadowed in creation. Christ comes in at the next step; and in the Second Man the abasement of the Higher to the lower finds its complete exemplification in the inseparable union of the divine and human. The Eternal Life is linked with humanity, and the Second Man becomes the First-born among many brethren, the Last Adam-Head of a new race of men.

Contrast there must be, therefore, between humanity as found in the first man and in Christ the Second; and this, apart from question of the fall. The first man was, from the beginning, "of the earth, earthy; the Second Man is of heaven." He is born as we are newborn, by the direct interposition of the Spirit of God. Not like Adam, simply "made upright," He is at His birth "that holy Thing," who "shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). His nature as Man is the "divine nature"; and there is not with Him, as there is in us, though born of God, any contradiction to it. In other respects He does not at first show His dignity: for sin has come in, and there is a work to be done by Him in view of it, which can only be done in humiliation. He comes therefore, not in sinful flesh, (that were wholly impossible and abhorrent to Him), but "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3). His circumstances are those of other men,—intensified when

He comes forth to take up His special work. His spotless righteousness interposes no external guard against surrounding evil in a world to which sin has given the character it has. He is specifically in it the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Infliction from God, of course, there could not be, but only the testimony of fullest delight on His part in His Holy One; until He entered that one awful shadow which at the end of His course here fell upon Him as He came at last to the dread place, our place, in which alone He could lay hold upon us, and bring us out with Himself into the light of God.

We must look on, then, to resurrection to see the Second Man in full character as that, and to see fully what humanity has gained in Him. But this will be better considered when we contemplate Him as last Adam, the Head of the new race of men. For moral perfection, as already said, He could not wait for that, but was (as even the demons confessed Him) "the Holy One of God," perfectly according to His mind, all through. There was no possible mutability of nature in Him; and we must not pervert the idea of His full moral freedom to the admission of such a thought. Perfectly free He was, of course, in glorious holiness: it was the devil's thought that He was free to sin,—free as implying in Him a sort of balance of possibilities, and as if this were even necessary to His perfect trial and the reality of a final victory over evil: for without struggle, they would say, there can be no victory.

But struggle with Himself there was not, and victory over Himself would have been already defeat: He would be no more the Christ of Scripture, "tempted in all things as we are, apart from sin" (Heb. 4:15). The "yet

without sin" of our common version, and still remaining in the revised, has done terrible work in lowering Christ in the imaginations of men. There is no justification of the "yet" possible. The Greek has nothing of it. It came in through the mere supposition that "without sin" spoke of final result, instead of an exception to the kind of temptation. Sin was no possible temptation to Him: there was absolutely no power of seduction in it. That did not touch the question of His freedom, but characterized it. The more unassailable by sin we are, the freer we are, not the less free. We are not perfected by loss of liberty. To walk with God is to walk in the consciousness of the reality of things, undeceived and unpervverted.

If I say of any one, "He cannot do a dishonest act," do I think of him on that account, as less a free man? If there is no moral certainty about his actions, do I credit him, therefore, with a firmer will and more perfect self-control? No one can say or think so.

Nor did He who came into the world as man's

Deliverer divest Himself of His necessary perfection, that He might be on more equal terms with the adversary. Had it been a necessity to do so, it is hard to see how it could have been accomplished. For how could moral perfection consent to its own debasement? or how could its enfeeblement be other than debasement? For even a divine Being there are impossibilities, which proceed from perfection, and which therefore are perfection. The impossibility of sinning was a necessary glory of the Christ of God.

But men object to this on the other side that it involves an impossibility of sympathy with those encompassed

with infirmity such as belongs to fallen creatures. No doubt it does with everything that implies sin, or that depravity of nature which cannot be separated from it. But sympathy with this is (as has often been pointed out) as far as possible from what a Christian needs or could find true comfort in. He finds in Christ a perfect atonement for it, and, if he knows deliverance, a power in divine grace which has broken for him the dominion of sin. Walking in the Spirit, he does not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Moreover, the evil in him is that which God in His wonderful wisdom uses to turn him from self-occupation to Christ, and to hide from him all pride and self-complacency. But the evil itself he does not sympathize with, but condemns, while in all else he finds truest sympathy. But this is not the place in which to enlarge upon all this: it ought to be enough to quote here the apostle's words that "such a high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from, sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). But the examination of this belongs also rightly to another place.

The "Second Man"

is, necessarily and emphatically "of heaven," heavenly. True, His manhood has in it promise for the earth also, gives indeed for the inhabitants of earth the sweetest possible assurance; but this too gains, and not loses, by such heavenly character. This is inseparable, of course, from His being the Son of God in humanity; but it attaches to the Second Man as such, as the text from Corinthians clearly intimates: for, in contrast with the first man being "of the earth earthy," the "Second Man is of heaven."

If we look on to the full “image of the heavenly” (1 Cor. 15:49), which we are yet to bear, the glorious body which is to be our own, though the resurrection of what has been sown in the dust, or the present mortal one changed to immortality, is yet spoken of as “our house which is of heaven” (2 Cor. 5:2). “Mortality” will then, says the apostle, be swallowed up of “life” (ver. 4). There will be then the quickening of our mortal bodies, now “dead because of sin” (Rom. 8:10, 11), which will make them, as yet they are not, to be partakers of “redemption” (ver. 33). Thus the new life power it is which, pervading and moulding them, will make them heavenly, the “image of the heavenly” being reached in them also.

But even now, and while yet we wait for this, by virtue of the work which has begun in us, we are already “heavenly” (1 Cor. 15:48). For the quickening of the Spirit we already have; the heavenly life is begun, though amid hindrances and in obscurity, in that which is the highest part of our humanity.

When we turn to consider the Lord as among us “in the days of His flesh,” we find in Him also not as yet the full heavenly character. As to His body, though in no wise (as with us) under the power of death, and with none of the penalty of sin upon it, He is yet “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom.

8:3),—according to the pattern of the humanity that has failed in Adam, though without failure or any consequences of it, save as in grace He might stoop to these.

Every way He is without blemish, but more: this body of flesh and blood which He has assumed—as the vessel of

earth in which the bird of heaven may die for the cleansing of our leprosy (Lev. 14:5)—is itself, all true as it is, of course, a “veil” of the higher humanity which has come in with Him, and which is not innocent and earthy, as in the first man, but holy and heavenly. In Him is manifested to us “that Eternal Life, which was with the Father” (1 Jno. 1:2), and is now, without fleck of shade or moment of intermission, “the light of men” (Jno. 1:4).

This Life is “in Him,”

as it could not be in any other: “for as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (John 5:26). He is thus the Source and Spring of it for us as the “last Adam;” and possessing it as Man, is characterized absolutely by that “divine nature” which it implies as divine life. This touches in no way the full reality of manhood in Him—spirit and soul and body: for little as we know of the mystery of “life,” we do know that it sets aside none of these, but gives them their full value and reality.

As the “First-born among many brethren,” this life manifests itself in Him as a life of faith, in constant dependence upon God, nay, living (as we would not have dared to think of Him, had He not Himself taught us so to apply the scripture) “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). To this indeed, as we know, was His constant appeal, treading in this respect in a path in which He calls us to follow Him as “Leader” in “and Completer of faith” in His own Person (Heb. 12:2, Gk.); while this perfection He did not plead as title to escape the trials and sorrows of a pilgrim path, but on the contrary tasted the cup of affliction fully, even to death, yea, the death of the cross. But this

was His grace and our need only: for Himself He was no debtor to death at all. No one took His life from Him, but He laid it down of Himself, having power both to lay it down and to take it again.

Upon this it does not need to insist here. The word of God speaks with absolute decision about it all: did one enlarge, how much would have to be written! We are here, however, but attempting an outline of truth, to fill in which materials are everywhere to be found, while the full reality is unspeakable. Heaven and earth meet here together, and all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in the Man Christ Jesus. How marvelous to be told in this very connection, that “in Him we are filled up” (Col. 2:9, 10)!

8. A term which the Revised Version, following the older one, disguises as “living creature,” “life,”—to the great detriment of the sense.

9. The subject is too large to enter into further here. It may be found more fully considered in “Creation in Genesis and Geology,” pp. 25-35; “Spiritual Law in the Natural World,” chaps. 7 and 8; “Facts and Theories as to a Future State,” chaps. 4-7.

Christ - The Last Adam

It is the first epistle to the Corinthians alone, and in the same passage, which gives us the two important terms, so closely related as they are to one another, of "The Second Man" and "Last Adam" (15:45, 47). The one looks backward; the other forward. The "Second Man" implies that before Him we have only the first man, repeated and multiplied, in his descendents; now a new type has appeared; and that this, which is the full and final thought of man, may become the true heir of the inheritance, the "Second Man" is the "Last Adam." He is the "last" not "second," because plainly there is no other to succeed Him. "The Last Adam" (in opposition to "the first man Adam," (who "became a living soul") becomes "a Spirit giving life."

The apostle does not say that the Second Man became a Spirit giving life, for an obvious reason. The Second Man, as such, brings before us the new humanity, in the likeness of which every one of the new race will be ultimately found; but the Last Adam is the Head of the new race, and to be a "Spirit giving life" is peculiar to Himself. Man as man, and not merely the first man, has the mysterious power imparted to him of propagating his kind; but the new humanity is of too high a nature to permit this to the men of it. Only the Last Adam can communicate the new "life" which is its characteristic; and He, inasmuch as He is, what they are not, above man altogether. We cannot think of the Last Adam aright without explicitly taking into account His Deity,—that He is the "Word made flesh."

Noticeable it is in this way that we who are Christ's, and to whom Christ is life, are yet never spoken of as the children of Christ. Of the first Adam we are naturally children; of the last Adam, and as implied by that very relationship, we should be children also, in a higher and so a fuller way: yet we are never taught to call Christ "Father." For this there must be reason, and therefore that in it as to which we may rightly and reverently inquire why it is.

In the Old Testament, and not the New, we come nearest to the thought of children of Christ. In the fifty-third of Isaiah, the abundant seed field of New Testament truth, we find first of all Messiah come and cut off, without posterity "Who shall declare His generation?" asks the prophet: "for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken" (ver. 8). Thus there seems utter failure of blessing: cut off Himself, He has none who spring from Him,—who perpetuate His name and character.

So it naturally would appear; but the question has other answer before the prophecy ends; and in that very death in which for the sins of others He has been cut off, there is at last found the secret of a blessing such as seemed to be gone without remedy: "When Thou shalt make His soul a sacrifice for sin, He shall see a seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand" (ver. 10). This "seed" and prolonging of His days are the double answer to the question which His death had raised.

Christ really then has a seed; the Last Adam as a quickening Spirit points to nothing else: but this only makes it more certain that there is a reason for the

avoidance of such expressions as we naturally look for. We are taught by Christ Himself to speak of His Father as our Father (John 20:17), though this, of course, is not inconsistent with His relation to us as Last Adam. Of the first Adam it could be said also, as has been before remarked, that he was a "First-born among many brethren," without prejudice to his relationship to these as father.

In the Gospel of John it is that the Lord is seen as the Eternal Life, the Son, to whom "the Father hath given to have life in Himself," just as the Father hath life in Himself (ch. 5:26). The words show that it is as Man He is speaking, and that thus in manhood He becomes a Source of life: "as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (ver. 21). Thus it is in John's Gospel also that we find Him, after His resurrection, in character as Last Adam, (so much the more as in contrast with the first,) "He breathed on. them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (20:22). John's is the Gospel of His Deity, and yet this remarkable characteristic action is reserved for it.

So, too, in his epistle John links them: "This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).

"As the Father...quickeneth, so the Son quickeneth." "The Spirit" also "is life" (Rom. 8:10). It is a divine inspiration, of which the breathing into the first Adam (Gen. 2:7) was but a significant type. Even by that, man became the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:28), and thus by creation (not position) in His "image" (Gen. 1:27), as the son is in the father's image (Gen. 5:3). Man received thus (what the beast has not) a spirit; and God is the

“Father of spirits” (Heb. 12:9). But this is only what is natural, and what has been debased by the fall; we need, therefore, a new begetting of God, a new communication of life: “that which is born of the flesh is flesh”—not merely human nature, but human nature degraded, as it were, to its lowest point, “flesh”: as if the spirit had left it, “dead,” therefore, while living.

So, with a sad harmony, Scripture everywhere asserts: man must be born again.

The breath of a new life enters into him, and he lives. This is no mere moral renewal. If “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,”—flesh has produced flesh; there has been a real communication of nature, as shown in the being brought forth. So also “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” partakes of the nature of that from which it is derived. Divine parentage is shown in participation in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), and we are become true children of God, with His likeness. “Passed from death unto life” (John 5:24), the life we have received is eternal life: which means, not that it will always last, for so will the wicked always live—if you call it “life”—but that it has always been also, not in us, but in God. This is the life that deserves to be called eternal; and this is the life in which we have begun to live. In us it has its beginning, its growth, its practical expression: this imperfect at the best, and varying from that in the infant to the young man and the father, it is nevertheless eternal life all through, whether it be as yet undiscernible by man or making a possessor of it a shining light amid the darkness of the world.

Much of what I am here saying is in contention by many; and there are perhaps few things of equal importance

that are held more variously than what new birth is, and its connection with or disconnection from eternal life. It would carry us too far to discuss these variations: it is enough, perhaps, to say that, on the one hand, the signs of it given in John's first epistle show plainly that righteousness, love to God and to the brethren, and faith in Christ, characterize all who are born (or begotten) of God; and on the other, that he writes to all that "believe on the name of the Son of God" that they may know that they have eternal life. I may be told indeed by some that these things are quite different; that faith in the Son is more and later than faith in Christ; but the gospel of John assures us that he that believeth not on the Son is one still under condemnation and the wrath of God. It is not the saint but the sinner who passes from death unto life; and that change, momentous as it is, cannot be a long process.

Thus, then, the "quickenings Spirit" acts in every one born of God. As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, just so the Son quickens; and none the less it is of the Spirit we are born again. It is a divine work, and Father, Son and Spirit all partake in it. Thus it is manifest that we are by this birth children of God; and while the Son as Mediator is He in whom life is for us, and the Spirit is the positive Agent in communicating it, the Father it is whose blessed will the Son and Spirit alike work, and "of whom every family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:15, Gk.). "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him" (1 Cor. 8:6).

Thus, although we have been very recently told that there is no new communication of a new nature in new

birth, yet the Lord Himself has taught us, on the contrary, that “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,”—that it partakes of the nature of Him who has brought it forth. And He says, “that which is born,” (not “he who is born,”) because the new life communicated does not as yet (as we have already seen) pervade the whole man. The body is still, in this respect, “dead, because of sin” (Rom. 8:10), even “if Christ be in you;” and the “flesh” also thus (it must still be asserted) “because of sin,” remains, even in the man delivered from its dominion, a cause for constant watchfulness and self-judgment. [10] But the youngest babe born of God has nevertheless the nature of its Parent: even though here there be as much difference between the new born babe and the man, as there is in the physical prototype. Abundant room for development must be admitted, while the development itself proves but the essential sameness of the nature in these wide extremes.

The Second Man, then, is also the Last Adam; but in the latter term much more is implied than in the former, and that the result of that union of the divine and human which faith can joyfully accept while it acknowledges the inscrutability of it. “No one knoweth the Son, but the Father.” No human mind can think out the divine-human Person who is here before us; but to seek to have the value of scripture statements is another matter, and is the part of faith. It would be wronging the love which has enriched us with them, not to seek to appropriate our riches.

The connection of truth in this chapter in Corinthians which furnishes us with our present text is noteworthy. The apostle is writing to us of the resurrection, and has been contrasting the natural body as sown in the grave

with the body of the saint in resurrection. "It is sown a natural body," he says; "it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."

The connection here is very much obscured by the translation: what connection could one suppose between "a living soul" and "a natural body"? None at least that one could argue, from the language used; and in fact, as elsewhere said, we have in English no clear way of making apparent the connection. If we were at liberty to use the word "soulual," (which is not in the dictionary,) we should be able to do this: we should then read, "There is a soulual body," ... "the first man Adam was made a living soul;" as, on the other hand, "There is a spiritual body," and "the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."

The first Adam had a soulual body, a body characterized by the soul its tenant: for he was himself a living soul. It is remarkable, while quite intelligible, that, though a man's spirit is his highest part, and it is by this is a good boy "knows the things of man" (1 Cor. 2:11), and is in relation to God, yet while here in the body he is never called a "spirit," but only what the beast is, a "soul." On the other hand, as soon as he has left the body, he rises to the measure of his distinctly human part, and is now a "spirit." Common usage recognizes the same difference. In some sense the connection of soul and body is a shrouding of his higher nature. The same word psychical or soulual, is translated in our common version "sensual" (Jas. 3:15; Jude 19), though this, of course, is a use of it which is not due to man's condition as created

but to the sin which has entered in. It is similar to the use of "flesh" for a condition in which fallen man, as if the spirit had departed from him, is characterized as "dead." Yet the psychical or "soulual" body, as in contrast with a "spiritual" one, is easily understood as that which hems in and disguises necessarily man's spiritual nature. In the babe this is sunk entirely at first in its fleshly wrappings. By degrees it emerges, with slow and painful labor freeing itself from the bonds of the material, the humbling discipline which God has ordained for it, but still "seeing as through a glass, in a riddle" (1 Cor. 13:12). In the future only is to be its "face to face" knowledge.

This is what it means, as I take it,—or at least it is part of what it means,—for man to be a "living soul." It implies a life of sense, which may be yet, and should be, even on that account, a life of faith; of struggle which may be defeat or victory. Out of which we do not pass until the body is left behind, or fashioned by the last Adam into a "spiritual body," fit instrument for and no clog upon the enfranchised spirit. Only with this redemption of the body will the "sons of God" be fully manifested (Rom. 8:19. 23)

As

"Last Adam," the Lord is revealed as in connection with that "new creation" which God is perfecting for Himself out of the ruins of the old. Such a thought as this is not unrepresented in nature. The present world is thus built up out of the ruins of a previous one, which in all features of highest worth it surpasses; according to that law of progress which we have seen written on its grades of life development, and to which its life-history

also, on the whole, conforms. But the new creation connected with the Last Adam arises out of a deeper collapse than any that preceded it,—thank God, to assume now a permanence which shall suffer no collapse again. With the first Adam, its head, the old creation fell. With the last Adam, the new creation abides in indefectible blessing.

While the title of “last Adam” is found only in the passage we have been considering, the epistle to the Romans (5:14) fully declares Him to be the Antitype of the first. His relation to the new creation is what Adam’s was to the old. The results are in contrastive parallel: “as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22). But here, because the new creation is brought out of the old, it is not enough to say, “shall live,” but “shall be made alive.” [11] He who is to be the new Adam of a new creation brought out of the old must for this accomplish redemption.

Thus it is as risen from the dead that the Lord breathes upon His disciples, and the antithesis to “in Adam” is “in Christ;” this being the official title with which His priestly sacrificial work connects itself. Eternal life for us is “in Christ:” that is, in the Last Adam, with His sacrificial work accomplished, and gone up as our Representative Head to God.

The first man was also in a very real way the representative of his race; not, however, by any formal covenant for his posterity, of which Scripture has no trace; but by his being the divinely constituted head of it. His representative character was grounded in what men call “natural law,” and which is nothing but divine law. This is asserted in the plainest possible way in

Scripture. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" expresses the law. "What is man that he should be clean? or he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous?" "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And the Lord affirms the principle in the most emphatic way: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." What men now call the principle of "heredity" is thus affirmed by Him, and it is the whole scriptural account of the matter.

Sin came in through Adam. The nature of man was corrupted; by the disobedience of one the many were made sinners; and death introducing to judgment was the stamp of God upon the fallen condition. So, as the apostle says, "in Adam all die." "In Adam" thus speaks of representation, as the apostle argues as to Levi and Abraham (Heb. 7:9, 10): "And, as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham; for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him." Similarly we were in the loins of Adam when he fell and sentence of death was passed upon him. Thank God, we have heard the voice of Another,—Head and Representative too of His race, which says, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

The last Adam is the head of a new race. And so, "if any man be in Christ"—set over against "in Adam" in the verse already looked at—"he is a new creature" (or "it is new creation" 2 Cor. 5:17). To be "in Christ" is to belong to the new creation and the new Head. The last Adam becomes Head of the race after His work of obedience is accomplished; and that wondrous "obedience unto death" becomes the heritage of the new race. The connection of the Head and race is necessarily by life and nature. A corrupt nature was transmitted from the

fallen head. A divine life and nature, free from and incapable of taint, is ours in the new Head, Christ Jesus. Death and judgment lay hold upon the fallen creature: righteousness belongs to the possessor of eternal life.

The life and the place go together, and are never disjoined. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). Eternal life or the wrath of God: these are the alternatives. Solemn and wonderful alternatives they are!

10. As the "thorn in the flesh," needed by a man who had been in the third heaven, and needed on that very account, will surely prove for any who have an ear to hear.

11. That the apostle is here speaking only of those "in Christ," and not, as generally believed, of all mankind, will be evident on due consideration. For the resurrection of the wicked is not an effect of Christ's redemption, but a "resurrection of judgment" simply (John 5:29); and throughout the chapter it is only of the resurrection of the saints—of those of whom Christ is first-fruits (ver. 20)—that he is speaking. The "all" on both sides (whether "in Adam," primarily, or "in Christ," eventually) are only the redeemed. It is from error as to this that some forms of restorationism have originated.

Christ - The Anointed Priest

The Lord seen as "Last Adam"

necessarily introduces us, therefore, to His atoning work. For the race of which He is thus Head, although a new creation, is a race of men,—of those involved in the fall of the first head, and who have added to this their own individual and innumerable iniquities. Here, therefore, what He is as Christ—as Messiah, the "Anointed"—comes into view: for this "anointing" has regard to His official work, and (apart from Jacob's anointing of the pillar at Bethel) the first notice that we have of it in Scripture is in connection with the priests (Ex. 28:41; 29:7); while the high priest is distinctively, even as among these, the "priest that is anointed" or Messiah-priest.

After the failure of the priesthood, it is the king who is specifically the "anointed of Jehovah;" and the union of priest and king in our Lord, as in the type of Melchizedek, we shall have attentively to consider in a little while. For Christ also, priesthood necessarily preceded kingship, the history runs parallel with the doctrine. Of the prophet who (as in Elisha's case) was sometimes anointed, but, from the nature of his call, less frequently, we need not at present speak. Christ unites, as we know, these three offices in His own Person, but the first and fundamental one is that of priesthood.

The priest, ideally, was one who presented himself to God in behalf of others: of those who could not, therefore, of themselves draw near, as he. For his office, there were two requisites: first, personal fitness to draw near himself. This was figured under the Law by that

simple white linen garment in which alone the sanctuary could be entered; while, where ever there had been sin, (and therefore for the high-priest also, as long as he was but the "figure of the true") the blood of sacrifice was needed for atonement.

Among mere men the true Priest could not be found. The "called of God" is He to whom, though Man, God could say, "Thou art My Son: to-day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. 5:5). In Him, as "First-born among many brethren," a new humanity begins for God, open to all men to come into, but by the lowly gate of a new birth. For these as Head and Representative He stands and offers sacrifice; for these, and not for the world, He intercedes; but this of course shuts out none from blessing. Faith could at any time bring nigh the stranger and join him to the people of God. Of God's will none were ever shut out, as even the dispensation of law bore witness, and Ruth and Rahab are signal examples. Now, under the gospel, to faith all the privileges of God's house are open. The veil is rent, and God is in the light, where the blood of Christ His Son cleanses those who enter from every stain of sin.

But we are now looking at the Priest

Himself, whose call to the Priesthood is founded upon His nature as Son of God, as the apostle distinctly tells us. He "glorified not Himself to be made high-priest, but He who said unto Him, Thou art My Son: to-day have I begotten Thee." Here the owning Him Son of God,—the First-born and not the Only-begotten, or it would not be said, "to-day,"—implies, according to the argument, that God recognizes Him as High-priest also; and so the apostle adduces the passage from the hundred and tenth

psalm as similar in import: "Just as also in another place, he saith, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

It is denied, however, by some that this is the argument. "The two citations," says Moll, "do not express the same idea; nor is the former adduced to prove that Christ is a High-priest; but simply to call to mind the relation previously unfolded, that namely, which the God who has bestowed this priestly dignity on Christ, sustains as Father to this Anointed One."

In fact, the apostle's words at first sight may seem indefinite. That "He glorified Him, who said to Him," does not necessarily mean "glorified Him in saying to Him." But the apostle does, nevertheless, use the same form of speech in the seventh chapter with reference to the second quotation, which here he does to the first: "But He with an oath, by Him that said unto Him: The Lord swear and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever." Here, of course, no doubt could arise, nor could be supposed to do so: and this makes a difference. But it would show, at least, least, that the form of speech is not against the implication.

Further, that relationship of Christ as Son to God, previously unfolded, has been already shown to be in connection with His priesthood in the second chapter: for it has been told us there that the "many sons" whom God is bringing to glory "are all of one" with Him: "so that He is not ashamed to call them 'brethren.'" And because these "children that God has given Him" are "partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise took part in the same, that through death He might annul him that had the power of death, and deliver them." Thus "it

behoved Him to be made in all things like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in thing pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”

Here is surely a long and connected argument to show the relation which Christ’s being the Son of God bears to His Priesthood. For atonement, and for sympathy too (as to which the last verse of the second chapter speaks) Christ as High-priest must be made like unto His brethren. His brethren are the many sons of God He is bringing to glory; He therefore must be Son of God in human nature. To own Him this is thus by implication to own Him as the Mediator-Priest on their account.

That as Son of God He is King also, and that the quotation from the second psalm is in connection with this, does not conflict at all with such a view. The second quotation, which directly affirms His Priesthood, expressly connects the two things together. He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, a priest upon the throne (Zech. 6:13); a King with priestly tenderness and succor for the sinful and needy,—a Priest with royal and more than royal authority. How sweet and fitting is the union in Him of these two things! that as the Minister of priestly grace all power should be committed to Him! But here, plainly, priesthood must come first, and lay the foundation. It must begin in humiliation and sorrow, as the apostle represents. The Son of God must learn what obedience is in a strange path of suffering. The Perfect One must be officially perfected as the Author of eternal salvation to all those that obey Him. He cries unto “Him that is able to save Him out of death,” not “from” it, and is “heard for His piety” (Heb. 5:7-9). Come up out of death, He is “saluted of God as high-priest after the

order of Melchizedek" (ver. 10),—hailed as Victor with the crown.

This course begins on earth and ends in heaven. On earth He made propitiation (2:17), offering up Himself (7:27) in the body prepared Him (10:5), one offering for sins, by which He has perfected in perpetuity those that are sanctified (10:14). Then, as risen from the dead, in the power of that blood whose acceptance had been thus openly declared, He entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (9:24). But we must look more closely at the stages of accomplishment of a course for us so necessary and so fruitful.

It is by His baptism at the hands of John, that the Lord, coming forth out of His thirty years of private life in which He had fulfilled His own personal responsibility as Man before God, devotes Himself to that work on behalf of others for which He had come. He is "baptized unto death," of which Jordan is the well-known figure; and this implies for Him both sacrifice and priesthood. As the Lamb of sacrifice John therefore proclaims Him, while as Priest He is anointed with the Spirit; the Father's voice proclaiming Him that which, as we have seen, marks Him as the true Priest—His beloved Son. Here then begins His ministry, which is characterized by all that grace which priesthood implies, and by those works of power which are the broad seal of His commission as the Anointed of God.

As Son of God

He is now also the Prophet, God Himself now, as never hitherto, speaking among men, and as Man, which makes the intimacy of this grace complete. But His feet have to take for this the way of Calvary. Every word is in

this sense an evangel; every act of power is as it were an anticipation of resurrection from the dead. The glorious Voice has to be hushed in silence, the Mighty One to be crucified through weakness, the Priest of men to offer up Himself, the Son of God to suffer as Son of man, the Seed of the woman to set a bruised heel upon the Serpent's head. It is a conflict of good with evil, in which all vantage of power is to be on the side of evil, the victory gained by suffering, in the awful place in which the fire of God also searched out all the inward parts, and no deliverance could be but on the ground of absolute perfection—a whole burnt-offering, sweet savor every whit. He was "heard for His piety." No grace could be in His case, but simple righteousness, which at last drew Him out and justified Him in resurrection from the dead.

Thus the pure white linen robe was seen to be upon Him before He entered the Sanctuary; but more,— the blood was provided: the penalty upon man was met, death and the forsaking of God,—the governmental penalty, and that which was and is the necessity of His nature,—of purer eyes than to behold iniquity and who cannot look at sin. Thus the hindrance—not to going (for He could always go) but to bringing into the sanctuary is removed: and this, of course, means His going in officially, as Priest for others. And thus it is that it is the blood of the sin-offering, (and only of that when in its fullest character,) not of any other, that opens the way into the sanctuary of God. For, sin being removed, God is free to draw near to men, free to admit men to draw near to Him: divine love is unhindered.

Thus propitiation was effected on earth, and resurrection had declared the justification of all who

should believe on Him, before He ascended up to take His place for us before God. "He entered in once, into the holy place, having found eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12). In contrast with remission for a year, and annual entrances of the Jewish priests, only for the moment, He has entered in once for all, never needing to repeat a sacrifice which abides in its value before God continually.

It is as entering in thus that He is "saluted of God a high-priest after the order of Melchizedek;" and here several things have to be noted, which combine to make up the picture presented to us in the type.

But let us first take notice that the two words in Heb. 5: in our common version alike translated "called," are by no means the same. The second word (ver. 10) is in the revised "named," but would better be rendered "addressed" or "saluted." It does not convey the thought of calling to an office, and it was not after His work had been accomplished, that the Lord's priesthood began. Most certainly He was High-priest when He offered up Himself (Heb. 7:27), and the passage here says nothing to the contrary. But it is in resurrection that His priesthood assumes the character in which Melchizedek represents Him,—a royal priesthood, and with no shadow of death upon it.

A royal priesthood is certainly the Melchizedek order; it is doubly emphasized: in his name, "King of righteousness"; and then as "King of Salem," that is, "King of peace." This is what the apostle first of all dwells upon. It has been by some lost sight of, because the Lord's human Kingdom is not yet come; but we are in "the Kingdom of God's dear Son" (Col. 1:13), and the

epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes His place as Son over the house of God (chap. 3:6). Thus He is surely a Royal Priest: with power in His hands exercised in priestly tenderness; righteousness and peace the characteristics of His rule.

Then Is a good boy

“abideth a priest continually”; and as Melchizedek is presented to us in the history, without predecessor or successor, without beginning of days or end of life, in this he is “made (typically) like the Son of God” (Heb. 7:3). Levi, as the apostle reminds us, gave tithes in Abraham to this greater priest; and the Levitical priesthood are thus prefigured as to their relation to the antitypical Melchizedek.

Strikingly, in the history also, Melchizedek offers no sacrifice, but “brings forth bread and wine” for the refreshment of the man of faith. This the apostle neither comments upon nor notices; but he goes on to picture Christ as the Minister of the true tabernacle, the heavenly sanctuary where, of course, no sacrifices are offered. The bread and wine cannot fail to speak to our hearts of the memorial of that once offered sacrifice, which has left us now no sacrifices save that of praise and thanksgiving. Thus every way Melchizedek represents Christ in His relation to us now. That there is an application to millennial days, and His relation to Israel, is surely true; yet the whole connection in the book of Genesis presses rather upon us the Christian one. [12] Indeed the men of Aaron’s order, while they show us typically the work which opens the Sanctuary, have nothing to say of the Sanctuary open. Melchizedek may therefore fill a gap here, without in any wise

displacing the Aaronic priesthood in whatever it can show us.

It is just here however that a mistake has been made in another direction which needs to be pointed out. It is that which would ascribe to the apostle a doctrine of the Lord not having been a Priest on earth, not even when offering up Himself upon the Cross; in direct contradiction of the whole typical system.

His words are very different from this: "For if He were on earth, He would not even be a priest, seeing that there are priests who offer gifts according to the law, who serve for representation and shadow of heavenly things." He does not say that the Lord was not a Priest on earth; but having set Him before us as Minister of the true (antitypical) Tabernacle, he says, if He were on earth there would be no room for Him in the earthly one: for there the sons of Aaron fill everything according to the law. Surely nothing could be much more simple than such a statement.

But the work which

He did upon earth had nothing to do with the Aaronic service, and answered to the work outside the sanctuary. Now He has finished this, it is the heavenly Sanctuary into which He has entered, and to which He belongs. "By one offering He has perfected in perpetuity those who are sanctified." And in consequence, "such a High-priest becometh us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."

All sin put perfectly away from every saint of God, our Priest in heaven is for saints, not sinners, for weakness, not for sin. His sacrifice is for sinners; His sympathy and

intercession are for saints, amid the opposition and seductions of an evil world, in which He has Melchizedek-like refreshment for the tired warrior, and memorials of unutterable value for him who is exposed to the offers of the king of Sodom: food of the mighty which makes men that, and in the strength of which they may go, like Elijah to Horeb, many days.

But our Priest keeps open the Sanctuary also, that we may have access to God, and refuge in His presence from the world through which we pass. With a veil rent, and a great Priest over the house of God, we are encouraged to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.

12. "See Genesis in the light of the New Testament," or The Numerical Bible, Vol. 1.

F W Grant

Christ - The Advocate

The High Priest that becomes us is, then, as the apostle has declared, One “separate from sinners,” those sanctified by His blood being “perfected in perpetuity” by it, so as being “once purged,” they might have “no more conscience of sins.” But this, as we know well, does not mean, “no more consciousness of sins,” (that is, of committing them,)

but that we have consciousness of the efficacy of that work abiding ever before God for us. There is never a moment’s intermission as to this.

But then, what about the sins which are committed after conversion? Is there simply no notice taken of them? That, we are sure, is impossible: both Scripture and our own experience would refute the unholy thought. That the people of God have often to suffer greatly because of their sins is known to all; and Scripture is full of examples of this, and asserts it doctrinally in the clearest way. Thus, “if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work,” says the apostle Peter, “pass the time of your sojourning here with fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as with silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Pet. 1:17-19). And again he says: “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely”—or rather, “with difficulty”—“be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (ch. 4:17, 18.)

Thus there is even a special judgment going on of the people of God at the present time; a judgment so necessary that on account of it, the righteous are said to be with difficulty saved: not, of course, because of any uncertainty about it, but simply because so much has to be done in this way to maintain the holiness of God. And the apostle Paul also speaks in even stronger language to the Corinthians: "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:31, 32).

This is indeed strong language as to those for whom the work of Christ avails in so full and absolute a manner as we have just seen it does. This work, then, does not set aside the need of such judgment. Nay, rather it secures it. Let us notice well that it is the Father's judgment: "if ye call on the Father who without respect of persons judgeth." In the final judgment of wrath it is not the Father who judges: as to that the "Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father" (John 5:22, 23). The Father's judgment is "of every son whom He receiveth;" so that "if ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Heb. 12:6, 7).

How blessed it is to know, and at the same time how solemn to realize, that the sin of a child of God is against his Father, and that it is the love of relationship that is called into exercise about it,—love which acts towards us "for our profit, that we might be made partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:10). It is impossible that He should treat it lightly; and it will be impossible in the

end for any one of His own to treat it lightly either. Grace abides toward us; and because grace abides, sin cannot be permitted to have sway over the objects of it.

But because this whole matter of a believer's sin is between the Father and His child, we are not to imagine that Christ has not to do with it. His priestly work has indeed been so fully done that in this character He has nothing more to do: He sits down, because His work is accomplished. But as Son over the house of God, priesthood is not His whole work. The children of God are put into His hand, who is the First-born among brethren; and in every thing that concerns them He has His necessary place and part. So then it is here: "if any one sin, we have an Advocate"—a Paraclete—"with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:1, 2).

The last is the ground and justification of the grace expressed in the former. Suited Advocate is He in deed who has been Himself this propitiation for us; and here "Jesus Christ the righteous" is very fully manifest,—love and righteousness alike displayed in Him. Here is the very character of the Advocate or Paraclete—the One "called to our side," "to our assistance," as both words mean; and this is in natural relation with the fact that we are given to Him. We being in His charge, He stands forth in our behalf, pledged and proved on both sides, God's and ours, and who has made both one. On earth, the Spirit of God is our Paraclete, and makes intercession for us, though perhaps, as far as we are concerned, in a groan that we cannot utter. In heaven, Christ our Paraclete is, as it were, similarly our voice uttering itself, but infinitely better than any utterance of our own could be. How well are we provided! Here are

two Witnesses in our behalf, each perfect absolutely, and having perfectly the ear of Him with whom they plead. How certainly effectual must be such intercession as this!

How good also it is to know that it is “if any one sin,” not, if any one repent, “we have an Advocate.” In Peter’s case, which is surely intended as a typical one, it is before the sin that Christ intercedes for him, and how tender is the intercession, “I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” Having need to learn himself, and to have the spirit of self-confidence broken in him, he cannot be spared the needful experience. Satan is permitted to sift him, but the Lord’s gracious eye, as Peter at the critical moment was given to see it, was watching the result with unwearied care, and guiding all to the predicted issue. The knowledge of ourselves—the needful exercise as to good and evil—He cannot ask that we shall be spared; but the end is sure, and we are invited to realize the strength and tenderness upon which we may lean at all times without a shadow of fear.

The maintenance of communion is that which our

Advocate continually is occupied with. For this the knowledge of ourselves is a necessity. Whether this shall be acquired as Simon Peter acquired it, it depends upon ourselves to say. I suppose we have all of us had to learn a good deal by such painful experiences; but there is surely a better way. Peter, we may remember, had resisted, if but for a moment, that washing of his feet, for him and for us all so needful; and it is still the independency which under whatever fair appearance resists His way with us, that condemns us to such a painful discipline. The Lord is still and ever our one

necessity. Wisdom is with Him and we must find it in Him; if it be in the way of the Cross, we need not wonder, though He Himself has borne all the burden there.

The

Cross is indeed the fulness of all wisdom for us. It is the judgment of man; it is the manifestation and glory of God. If we accept it as the setting aside for us of self and all that self can glory in, we shall find that it has set aside at the same time all that would hinder safe and steady progress. Christ is then ours with all His fulness, to draw from for every need that can possibly arise. Take it as the apostle puts it, that “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him we are complete”—filled up. Here is the one daily provision to carry with us, but for it the judgment of the Cross must be accepted in its entirety. Then in this Cross Christ is entirely for us,—all that God is as manifested here in Him.

This lesson is the lesson for all of us. The Advocate is with the Father, that our very failure may make for the learning of it, though it be in shame and bitter tears of repentance that we have to learn it. His advocacy is not to spare us what is needful for this, but that His end in us may be fully attained, and God glorified. Tenderest love there is in it, assuredly, and divine comfort,—tenderness, but no laxity; and no way of blessing for us except in complete surrender into His hands. We cannot but remember that they are hands that were pierced for us, and that for Him there was no way but that of the Cross.

F W Grant

Christ - The King

There is a title given to the Lord in Isaiah (chap. 9:6) which, while it has been taken to establish error on the one hand, seems on the other hardly to have been realized in its fulness of meaning by those most orthodox. It is that of "Everlasting Father," which is given in the margin of the Revised Version as (more literally) "Father of eternity." It is given to Him as One upon whose shoulder is the government in Israel, but of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; and the titles given Him show His capacity for this rule. He is no ordinary king, but the "Wonderful"—"a phenomenon," says Delitzsch, "lying altogether beyond human conception or natural occurrence." Then He is the "Counselor," whose purposes in their deep unfathomable wisdom need and admit no help from others; who find, on the other hand, in Him their wisdom. For, thirdly, He is El-gibbor, "the Mighty God," [13] infinite in resources, almighty in execution of His will; and then Abiad, the "Father of eternity," and "Prince of peace," which is the enduring effect.

But what, then, does this mean, "Father of eternity"? It is an inconceivability, says a recent commentator; for "eternity has no author." But the eternal state—eternity in that sense—has an Author; and it is just the glory of Christ, and coming here most perfectly in place among His other glories, that He is the Author of it. It is here that His "counsel" comes into full manifestation; it is here that the might of His Deity is seen in execution of His counsel; it is of this, finally, that peace is the

necessary and abiding result. He it is who brings in that which endures forever, because in it divine love can rest in full satisfaction, eternity being only the seal of that perfection in which it can rest.

Thus Christ is the Father of eternity. The incorruptible seed of it was Himself, the corn of wheat dying that it might not abide alone. But it is when power is in His hand openly and His kingdom is established that it will be seen fully how “the times of restitution” have been waiting for Him, and what this implies for One with whom restitution is not bringing back that which has passed away, but the bringing in of that which cannot pass away.

The prayer that our Lord taught His disciples was not, as it has been often misconceived, “Father, may Christ’s kingdom come.” It was “Father, Thy kingdom come.” And we need to recognize the difference in order to realize what Christ’s own kingdom means. There has been put forth recently a view of this which will illustrate what I mean. It has been maintained that as it needs the double type of David and Solomon to give Christ’s kingdom in its double character as that in which, first of all, enemies are subdued, and then peace prevails, so the millennial reign in which, to the last, enemies are being subdued, could only answer to the first part of this, the David-reign, and the Solomon-reign of peace would come after the millennium and be of long continuance. The millennium, it was argued, was neither in duration nor character a sufficient reign for Christ: it could only be the introduction to this, and the kingdom of peace itself must stretch far beyond it.

Now it is not my purpose to enter into the discussion of this, which it would seem a brief examination of Revelation would be enough to set aside; while the apostle's words in 1 Cor. 15: completely contradict it. For the time "when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father" is "when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet....And when all things shall be subdued under Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

Thus the very idea of the Lord's reign as Man is this sub dual of enemies and bringing things back to God. When this is accomplished, all is accomplished. He has no ends of His own beside. As He taught His disciples to pray for the coming of the Father's kingdom, so when he takes the throne, it is to bring it in. Every thing being settled according to God, He hastens to lay down the sceptre which as Man He has taken up, "that God may be all in all." He would not delay a moment the perfect blessing for which He has toiled, nor allow any other principle than that for which the "body prepared" was taken, "Lo, I am come, to do Thy will, O God."

This will prepare us for the better consideration of our Lord's Kingship, so little understood, as it seems, by many who yet accept it as a fact, and look on to see Him take possession of His throne and share it with His people. Rule is for Him service still, and power taken is power to serve with. If in grace He has linked us with Himself in this, it is important to know the character of what is before us. Service we see, then, to be the suited preparation for a rule which will still be service, for love is the spirit of service, and cannot be separated from it.

In those anticipations of Christ with which the history of the chosen people furnishes us, the King came after both priest and prophet. Sacrifice being that upon which for sinners all must be founded, the priest was the first link between God and the people, [14] until the failure of Eli and his family causes a change. The ark goes into captivity for awhile, and when it returns is still in retirement. The prophet Samuel is raised up as an extraordinary instrument for awhile, and even offers sacrifice; but this only shows that there is no proper restoration. The people clamor for a king.

The need of a king had been long realized. God anticipates it even in Moses' day. Throughout the times of the Judges, though priests were there, and sometimes prophets, the judge had to be raised up as a temporary expedient for the lack of a king. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every one did that which was right in his own eyes."

Saul too, though, a king, is, but a temporary expedient, yielded to the will of the people. With David only does the true king appear; and then for awhile Israel becomes a united and prosperous nation. But this also does not last: it is only the shadow yet, and not the substance; and to this the slow years are passing on.

His hands who have laid the foundation of the house, his hands must finish it (Zech. 4:9). The priest must be upon the throne (6:13). Priest, prophet, king, each separately too weak, must unite in one for the accomplishment of the divine purpose. Love must meet the demands of righteousness, and take the veil from the face of God, before power can be put forth in a way worthy of God who is Love and righteousness. At the Cross,

righteousness and power are both against the blessed Sufferer. After resurrection, and in the gospel, the King is hidden in God, that He may have a people conformed to His own likeness. Then at last, power must return to righteousness; what cannot be conformed must be destroyed: they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and them that work iniquity.

Yet even so, and though now there is power manifest, it is not as we might imagine—as most have imagined. There is not a general day of judgment and swift rooting out of evil to the uttermost, but a Kingdom of patient, however determinate rule, which persists for a thousand years. For a thousand years the lesson is given of the hopelessness of evil and the inherent curse that abides in it. The veil that has been over the nations is removed, and men are face to face with eternity and with God. The hands that bear rule were stretched out on the Cross for men, and there is no longer for any the possibility of denial or of ignorance of it. Satan is bound also for a thousand years; and, save in the heart of man, there is indeed “no adversary or evil occurrent.” Death seems also, except for open rebellion, to have disappeared. Thus Paradise might seem to have come again for men; and no more with innocent ignorance of evil, but with the accumulated lessons of multiplied generations. If sin were but ignorance—were but deceivableness—were but circumstantial—now its dead hand must be dropped off of man and nature. “For the heavens rejoice and the earth is glad; the sea roars and the fulness thereof; the field is joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for He is come,—for He is come to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with

righteousness, and the peoples with His truth" (Ps. 96:11-13).

Such is the picture of the future for man with which the Old Testament closes; and had we only this we should most certainly believe that this would be the final condition, or passing at least peacefully and surely into that "heaven and earth in which dwelleth righteousness" of which Peter, borrowing from Isaiah, speaks. Who could imagine any further disaster to a world which had already endured so many? or think that this new Eden was destined to pass away like the one of old? and that any of those so blessed, so warned, so instructed, to whom faith might seem to have passed already into knowledge, could listen once more to the voice of the tempter, and fall from within view of an opened heaven into a hell as real and manifest?

Yet it is the New Testament that assures us that this will be. "When the thousand years shall be ended, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to deceive the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up upon the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city; and fire came down from heaven and devoured them."

Thus comes to an end the last trial of man—perhaps of the creature—that shall ever be permitted. We may wonder, no doubt, why this is; but we may be sure, beforehand, that infinite wisdom, holiness, and love are in it, if God is in it. The Saviour of sinners is the King over all the earth, at the time when this last judgment of

the living takes place; and He is “the same, yesterday, today, and forever.” It is a permitted trial and exposure of those who through the long blessing of that wondrous time have hardened their hearts against all the goodness that appealed to them in it. It is the convincing proof that the condition of man is not the fruit of ignorance or of circumstances, but of sin, for which he is fully, and as judged by his own conscience, accountable. “Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life,” is the Lord’s own judgment of the men of His day. And here the end of confidence in the creature is reached absolutely. In God alone is help or hope.

After this last judgment of the living, the heavens and earth as now existing pass away, the judgment of the wicked dead at the “great white throne” takes place, and a new heaven and earth begin which are eternal. But events even such as these are not our present theme, but Christ Himself, though in such various relationship as all this implies; and we must now turn back to consider more particularly in this way our Lord’s Kingship.

There is no doubt or difficulty with any Christian as to Christ’s being King. It is a theological common-place that He is so. But as to what Isaiah, long before His coming, proclaimed of Him in the passage we were first of all looking at, “upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish it”—echoed and confirmed as this is by so much elsewhere—many Christians have still very great difficulty. It seems to them as if the title put upon His cross in the three languages of the world could only be given Him by enemies or detractors, and to take it seriously as His

would only be (however unintentionally) to dishonor Him thereby.

Low and carnal thoughts there have been also as to a millennial reign, from the time of the early "Chiliasts," who imported into it the Jewish conceptions of Messiah's Kingdom with a large measure of their grotesque materiality. In very recent days, as in the present, there are those who would see in a renewed earth "the fairest nook of heaven," and bring down all the heavenly promises to earth-fulfilments. It seems almost needless to say, however, that Scripture keeps earth and heaven always distinct: and that as the earthly promises have their home in the Old Testament, so have the heavenly ones theirs in the New. But Christ is the centre and heart of both, and by reason of our interest in Him, we too, though Christians, have connection with Israel and the earth. To His own apostles the Lord promised that they should "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28): and that is "when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory." When in heaven also John sees the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" take the book of the future, he records that in the praise of the redeemed that follows they say "We shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). And "to him that overcometh," the Lord Himself says, "will I grant to sit with Me upon My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father upon His throne" (3:21).

This involves no taking up the earthly conditions again, whether for Him or ourselves. We have seen what this millennial kingdom means for Him, that the earth is put into His hands, in order to bring it back out of its long alienation, and subdue it to God. The "rod of iron," which is the symbol of its rule, (though a Shepherd's

rod) dashes the rebellious in pieces like a potter's vessel (Ps. 2:9). This is again one of His promises to the overcomer to give him such power as this (Rev. 2:26, 27); but the character of it shows that it has to do only with a limited and peculiar time, and not with what is eternal. He is in this acting as the "Father of eternity," to give things their eternal order.

Israel will be then under the new covenant, which secures for them abiding blessing. None shall have need to say to another, Know the Lord; for they shall all know Him, and in His character as Saviour also: "for," He says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Yet we shall make a great mistake if We think of this as if it implied a spiritual level such as in Christianity. In its way, it will doubtless be more perfect, but earthly and not heavenly, with no hostile world to meet, no cross to bear, no strangership in it. These are all the necessary result of their very blessing. Harder it is to think of the old ritual in measure restored, the temple and its services, and with the glory as of old, but now extending itself over the whole city of God—"a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night" (Isa. 4:5). Ezekiel sees it entering and filling the new temple (Ezek. 43:2-5), and hears of a "prince" who offers his sin-offering as of old, and has his inheritance and his sons (45:22; 46:16). Notice, that he is not the "King;" and how all this, and the presence of the glory as of old, puts quite away the thought, if we ever had it, of any dwelling of Christ upon earth in this day of which Ezekiel prophesies.

He will reign,—and

“on the throne of David”; so Scripture positively says: but this does not mean that heaven has become but another name for earth, still less for the land of Israel; it does not mean that the infinite glories of the Christ of God are to shrink into those merely of a mightier David or a wiser and more resplendent Solomon. The Old Testament conception of Messiah must be enlarged by the New Testament; not the New Testament one contracted to the measure of the Old. Only in this way, indeed, shall we find the Old Testament itself attain its complete meaning, when transfigured by a light not its own.

We have to remember also that the millennium is not eternity, nor the final rest of God. It is not the seventh day, the Sabbath of creation, but the sixth, the man and woman set over the earth to “subdue” and “hold it in subjection.” The idea of a millennial sabbath is a foolish one upon the face of it; for God’s sabbath can never be broken up again, could never be measured by a thousand years! No doubt, people have felt the incongruity, who have proposed to enlarge it, according to the “year day” principle, to 360,000 years. That looks longer and more fitting, but only from a human standpoint; God’s rest can only be eternal; and the close limitation to a thousand years has its lesson for us in this very way. It tells us that in taking the millennium as sabbath-rest, we are taking the temporal for the eternal, and the misconception, so fundamental as it is, must cling to all our thoughts of it.

Thus it is that we naturally expect as to it a spiritual development that, as to the earth, (and the millennium applies only to earth,) we shall not find in it, and not finding which, we shall be tempted to overlook or deny

the plainest facts as to it, or to “spiritualize” what is too low to suit our notions of what ought to be. Yet how can we imagine for a moment an eternity for a “rod of iron,” or (as this implies) the subduing of enemies? how can we spiritualize such things as these?

No, the millennial earth is not yet ready for it to be said, “The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell”—or “tabernacle”—“among them.” That will be true as to the new earth, but we must not misplace it; and to misplace it, how much will be involved in this!

The millennium is a grand preparation time. Even as to the heavenly saints, their joys and glories cannot be measured from this side of things. As to Israel and the nations, however blessed under the manifest rule of Christ they may and must be, it is for them only a preparation for eternity,—such a preparation as the centuries up to it, have been for the heavenly saints. And then, let us remember, it is a preparation still for earth, though for the new earth; and that means much—how much, we have none of us perhaps realized.

Over the millennial earth a heavenly King will rule, with a heavenly company of redeemed men by grace His associates and ministers; “upon the throne of David,” but not in the palace of Solomon; and though with manifest and absolute power, yet with self-imposed restraints, both as to the manifestation and the exercise of this, such as the probationary and educational character of things implies, and a careful reading of the Old Testament will (I believe) make plain to one who reads it in view of this.

How blessed to turn to such a picture of that

Kingdom as the 72 psalm, for instance, exhibits! How different from any thing that hitherto has been seen on earth! But the New Testament alone it is which, if it does not say so much about the Kingdom, yet puts before us the King with the "crown with which," we may say, in a true and blessed sense, "His mother has crowned Him" (Song 3:11). For He is the Son of Man, and born of woman, and this is a glory won from His humiliation. From a deeper humiliation He has won another crown more glorious, and a crown with which His people crown Him with delight, "Emmanuel," God with us, even "Jesus, who hath saved His people from their sins."

13 Compare chap. 10:21; Deut. 10:17; Jer. 32:18.

14 Moses, no doubt, preceded Aaron; and in Moses, prophet, priest, and king were in some sense united. But this was almost necessarily the character of him whom God first used to separate the people to Himself. Having consecrated Aaron according to the divine command, he in this respect retires behind Aaron.

Christ - Head and Heir of All Things

That title which Isaiah gives to the “Child born”—the “Father of eternity”—leads us on to consider His relation to that eternal state of which He is Author. Here we shall find, indeed, in some sort an opposite line of thought to “that which we have just had before us” and yet in fullest accord with it. For if, in what we have looked at, Christ has been seen seeking and working for the Father’s glory, until He can give up to Him the Kingdom, which He has taken to bring all things into agreement with His blessed will, it is surely in perfect accord with this to find that Christ is Himself the Centre of all the thoughts and purposes—the counsels of the Father. As in communion with the Son we have had the Father before us, so now in communion with the Father have we the Son. Our joy it is and wondrous privilege to be brought into communion both “with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

The Son is as the Word the Revealer of God, and, as the Word made flesh, the Revelation also. Creation, as brought into being by the Word, proclaims in broken and reflected rays the glory of its Creator. This is that house of God of which the tabernacle in Israel was a figure, and which the Son is “over” (Heb. 3:1-6). Even in this from the beginning He has been already serving, and to what service does it not pledge Him in result! For, as over it, and the Revealer, He must maintain the glory of that revelation, amid all the frailty incident to the creature, and it would not be the creature, if it were not frail, nor could other than frailty and dependence suit it.

Moreover, the higher the structure is carried,—the more complex and wondrous it becomes, the frailer it is; the more it climbs God ward, the greater the depth to which it may fall; the more richly the ship is laden, the greater is the treasure which is exposed to wreck.

The service undertaken here by the Son is a service of love. Revelation is for the creature, not for God. The glory revealed in it is not to increase the wealth of the Revealer, but of him to whom it is revealed. God is not making gain out of His creatures, nor are they increasing His wealth at their own cost. "If thou hast sinned, what doest thou against Him? and if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto Him? if thou be righteous, what givest thou Him? or what receiveth He at thy hand?" Nay, love alone can count its riches in assuming such burdens. And God is love; and His glory is in the outflow of His goodness; and of this Christ is the only complete expression. What simpler then than that Christ—not simply the Son of His love, but the Son become Man—is the end for which all creation exists? Divine love, as it is exhibited, confirmed, glorified in Him, is the only possible key to the mystery of our being.

Sin has come in, and we think naturally very different thoughts from these. "I knew Thee, that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed," is said in all human languages, in accents of assured conviction. Even the Cross, the most wonderful manifestation of divine love that could be made has been darkened and profaned by such blasphemous accusations. But the answer has been given by the lips of the patient Sufferer Himself, whose lifting up avails and shall avail, to draw men unto Him,

and so to God. Yea, "He died for all, that they which live should no more live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again."

He has vindicated then afresh His hereditary title as "Son over the house of God;" and having finally consecrated it as a temple of praise for ever, He will abide the Head of it. For this is the, "mystery of God's will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, for the administration of the fulness of times, to head up all things in Christ; both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him, in whom we also have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1:9-11, Gk.).

We must not confound this with millennial Kingship, or with anything which is to pass away. The "fulness of times" is not simply the last of probationary ages, but that to which they all pointed and led the way. Headship is not the same as rule over, after the manner of a king, but implies a closer, natural, and, so to speak, organic relationship. The head is the representative and interpreter of that to which he is head, and which would be defective in a terrible way without it. Such is Christ's Headship over creation; and Ephesians here completes the doctrine of the two epistles which precede and connect with it as positional epistles—Romans and Galatians. The three are an ascending series, reaching in Ephesians their highest point and thus the widest view. For in Romans and Galatians His Headship is confined to man, and thus He is the second Adam of a new creation. That by itself would shut out angels; but they are not to be shut out, and the Lord's title here would necessarily include these also.

In the third chapter we find accordingly that “every family”—so it should be translated—“in heaven and earth is named”—or gets its title—“from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” That is, the relationship of God to Christ as Man affects His relationship with all His intelligent creatures. It could not surely fail to be so. Christ’s own place in relation to men must in some way avail for more than men; and the heading up of creation in Christ must bind it to God in a manner unspeakably different from its original relationship as creation merely. The character of man so commonly remarked on as a microcosm,—his nature thus putting him in relation to every part of the universe of God—becomes in this way a matter of highest and tenderest interest, as we realize this to be the nature assumed by the Son of God.

That He is the Son has here also its significance, as we see, and how the original and divine relationships shine through the acquired ones. Wonderfully accordant it all is, with all its surpassing blessedness. How “all things were created for” Christ, as well as “by” Him, we can clearly see (Col. 1:16); as well as how, not merely by His power, but in the link of such relationships, “by Him all things consist” (ver. 17).

Thus the Son is the “Heir of all things (Heb. 1:2); and sonship and heirship go together, not merely among the dying sons of men who, under death because of sin, leave their possessions to others; but sonship and heirship go together in things that are eternal, and where again that which is divine shines through and interprets the creaturely and temporal. The thoughts of God reflect Himself and spring out of His affections—out of the depth of His nature. Would only that there were

more ability to receive and trace out what His word, the key of all, has opened so for us! Let us remind ourselves that it is in this very connection that we are assured that, “according to the riches of His grace, He has abounded towards us in all wisdom and thoughtfulness [15] having made known to us the mystery of His will.”

Yes,

God has thought of us, indeed, as those whom He has called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ, and is training to be His co-heirs in His inheritance. Shall we not respond to His care and seek to grow more into “the mind of Christ”?

How tenderly are our thoughts drawn towards these glories of His by the reminder of our own personal interest in them. As here, where the mystery of His will to head up all things in Christ being spoken of, we are straightway reminded, “in whom also we have obtained an inheritance.” At the close of this chapter again, “He has made Him to be Head over all things to the Church which is His body.” In Colossians we find, in the verses most characteristic of the whole epistle (chap. 2:9, 10): “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are complete”—filled up—“in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power.” Such things as these, which assuredly we should most shrink from putting together, the word of God unites as if to challenge our attention by such connection, as if to make it impossible to possess ourselves of what is our own, without exploring the glories of Christ so linked with it.

15 I cannot find a better word to express here the idea of $\varphi\rho\nu\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$, which the Common Version translates, most

unsuitably surely, prudence. Others give 'intelligence' but being on God's part toward us, this also seems hardly adequate.

Christ - The Head of the Body

We read nothing of any “Body of Christ” (in the sense in which we are now considering it), until Christ is a man in heaven. Figure, as of course it is, the appropriateness of the figure depends upon this, that it is a relationship to Christ as Man of which it speaks. Being a figure, we are to examine its force as such, as Scripture develops it, expecting to find in it the instruction which all figures have: for, as in Israel’s history, the “things that happened to them” (not merely can be used in a typical sense, but) “happened to them for types” (1 Cor. 10:11), so we may be sure also that in nature everywhere, according to the design of God, the clothing of the natural is but the veil of the spiritual; nor shall we “materialize too much” by allowing the glory of the light to shine through its earthly tabernacle.

This at once reminds us that the Lord compares

His body with the temple of God, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up: He spake of the temple of His body” (John 2:19 and 21). And this is directly in the line of John’s testimony, that “The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us; and we beheld His glory,—glory as of an Only-begotten with the Father, full of grace and truth” (chap. 1:14). Here it is said, “was made flesh,” not because He assumed nothing but a human body, but because in taking flesh, He came within the sphere of human observation and knowledge,—here the direct revelation of His glory began: He was in the world and the light of it.

The body prepared Him was as the instrument of His Spirit by which His words and works made known the

unique obedience which proclaimed Him the Second Man; while over all, through all, shone, in strange yet blessed harmony with this, the higher glory. Thus the body of Christ was the tabernacle or temple of God on earth.

Now the apostle, speaking of the responsibility of Christians, as flowing from their relationship to Christ, uses the same figure and connection of thought. The Church, as baptized by the Spirit of God, is one body, and that the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13, 27). Christians are also the temple of God for the same reason, the Spirit of God dwells in them (chap. 3:16). These thoughts are here no further connected, but in another place in the same epistle (chap. 6:15-20) he does connect them further, and applies them to the individual Christian and to his body as indwelt by the Holy Ghost. "Your bodies," he says, "are members of Christ...Do ye not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; wherefore glorify God in your body."

Here in the Christian, as in Christ, the body is the temple of God, He being glorified in it by the devotion to Him of those members in which humanity even in its highest faculties is manifested. The practical life glorifies Him, not only in the character exhibited in it, but this as the fruit of divine grace acting in virtue of Christ's blessed work, and by the Spirit of God.

It is not, of course, of the Church that the apostle is speaking, but of the individual; and therefore it is that he says that "your bodies are the members of Christ"—he could not go further. Yet the basis is the same, the

being “joined to the Lord” by the Spirit; and the individual is thus in the same way the temple of God as the whole Church is. Thus far, at least, the individual represents the whole, the “living stone” represents or shows the nature of the whole building.

As the “body prepared” Him was that in which the Word was manifested, and the Life, thus seen, became “the Light of men,” so now in the night of His personal absence, He has a Body in which (though not in that original brightness) the same Light shines. Thus the Body of Christ is always spoken of as here, in the place of manifestation. The Church is “the epistle of Christ, read and known of all men, written with the Spirit of the living God upon fleshy tables of the heart,”—written with the rays of that glory hidden from the world, but to faith unveiled: “for God who caused the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give out the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 3-4:6). Thus “we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16): in the body of Christ, as energized by His Spirit, and controlled by the unseen Head in heaven, the life of Christ continually renews itself on earth. For the body speaks of living activities, of an organic unity in which communion is wrought out in the ministry of every member to the whole: for no member of a body liveth. to itself, and the love of Christ to His own is reproduced in the mutual service which is love’s outflow, and for which He who knows best our interests has provided by the variety and inequality of the gifts He has given, that we may be bound the more together by our mutual dependence.

Such is the Church which is Christ’s body, in the thought of it which Scripture gives. The hindrances to realization

of this, Scripture dwells upon also fully, and we are made to feel them painfully and continually. But these do not come within our purpose to consider now; as, indeed, it is not even the Church itself which is the object before us, but Christ in His relation to it. This, while it is in Him unspeakable condescension and grace, is even thus His glory forever, and shall fill the hearts of all the hosts of heaven with His praise. Yea, “unto God” shall “be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all the generations of the age of ages” (Eph. 3:21, Gk.).

In Corinthians the Church is contemplated in its order, fellowship, and service. It is the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), and therefore Christ is its Head, but the Head is not explicitly brought before us, save incidentally, “nor again the Head to the feet, I have no need of you.” I apprehend no difficulty in applying this to Christ. The Church is, in that divine purpose which is the glory of divine grace, His “fulness:” the Head must have a body; and it is because of this wonderful relationship, that it is said, where speaking of the unity of the body notwithstanding its many members, “so also is the Christ.” Some are beginning to apply even this to the Church exclusively—“the anointed Body.” And they tell us even that, its being the complement of Christ is not the idea of Scripture, and that, if here we take in Christ, the eye and ear which the apostle instances as parts of the body would belong to the Head; but even in Ephesians and Colossians the “Body is looked at as complete in itself, though deriving” from Christ. Nay, even “the force of ‘He gave Him to be Head over all things to the assembly which is His body,’ is said to be only “that He might in all things have the pre-eminence—be chief.” “All these things,” it is finally urged, “are

only human figures;" "we have been materializing too much."

Now it is granted, at once, that the "body of Christ," as applied to the Church, is a figure, and therefore also the Lord's headship. They are figures of realities, to convey which all words are feeble. To materialize them would be profanity; but to take them as language the most suited that could be found to make us know what may be known and what God would have us know,—to take them at their fullest worth, therefore, instead of diminishing that worth, and so casting slight upon the communication of the Spirit who gave them,—this is what surely becomes us. The apostle himself assures us that we do "see by means of a mirror, in an enigma" (1 Cor. 13:12, Gk.). Must we not, therefore, scan the more closely, look the more needfully into, all the words of the enigma?

Now, it is certain, the apostle uses these terms, "head" and "body," very distinctly and determinately, in reference to the relationship between Christ and the Church. They are words not once merely, or casually used. We can see, indeed, that the figure fails before the full reality: for the body has to grow up to the stature of the Head (Eph. 4:15), and from the Head all the body maketh increase to the upbuilding of itself (16). Yea, Christ nourisheth and cherisheth the Church: for we are members of His body (5:29, 30). And in Colossians we have a similar statement (2:19).

Thus the Body does surely "derive from the Head;" but that does not show that Headship of the body does not (so we are told) express authority. Certainly it is the very thing which in relation to the body the head would

express; and this is, I think, why the apostle can speak of the eye and ear as in the body rather than the head. For eye and ear are not the governing part: the hearing ear goes with the spirit of obedience; it is the very part anointed with the blood in the Old Testament to express this. While the Church sees also, and is governed intelligently. But the head presides—governs. The crown is put on the head. To say, “not even the head¹⁶ to the feet” is to say as much as can be said.

Again,

“wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord: for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church” (Eph. 5:23). Will it be said that here there is no question of authority?

Mere authority, it is true, does not give the proper thought of headship, which springs out of relationship, with common interests, and generally implies a representative character. Head and body, while of course they may be contrasted with one another as such, are yet in union so intimate that any completeness of one without the other could only be the completeness of a corpse. Scripture certainly does not contemplate it as to the Church in Corinthians, as we have seen. It is negatived three times over by “the Head to the feet,” so also is the Christ,” and “ye are the body of Christ.”

We might leave the passages in Ephesians and

Colossians to speak for themselves; only it is good to realize how God in them would lift us up as much as possible to the height of His glorious thoughts. Thus in Ephesians (1:22, 23), “He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in

all." There are the words, but how are we to interpret them? That Christ should be Head over all things,—that is not difficult to understand if He be what He is, the Creator of all things, the One for whom all was created, the One by whom all things subsist, and, yet again, the One who has been pleased to link Himself eternally with this creation of His by the manhood which He has assumed. But the apostle says, "Head over all things to the Church:" why and how "to the Church"? That cannot mean to limit what is absolute. It cannot mean (what would be a small thing to say in such connections as we have here) that to the Church God has made Him preeminent in all things,—even if that were the meaning of "Head over all." No, but this headship over all shows the fulness of His resources for that to which He is Head in such sort 17 that it is His Body. The Head over all is Head to a people so by the Spirit united to Him, that they are one with Him as a body is with its head; thus His fulness, as the head must have a body in order that there should be a complete man. Yet, most marvelous to say, He who is in relation to this Body as His fulness, is Himself divine and filling all in all!

We can trace these thoughts in Colossians also, though with characteristic difference of presentation: "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power...the Head, from which all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:9, 10, 19).

It has been said by some one that we never read of the body of Christ in heaven: and true that is, surely, of the whole present time. The Church is not yet in heaven,

and is never spoken of as part here, part there. The condition of the dead is not the question, though every saint absent from the body is present with the Lord. But against the Church the gates of Hades cannot prevail; and it remains upon earth until caught up to meet the Lord in the air, completed then by the recovery of all the many that in the meanwhile have been removed by death.

Till then the Body will not have reached the full stature of its blessed Head, so as to be perfectly fitted to Him, a work which is now being carried on by the continual energy of the Spirit of God, working by the gifts of His grace to accomplish this result. When this is accomplished, we cannot for a moment suppose that what has been carefully wrought out will come to an end, and serve no eternal purpose. We might as well think that our own bodies, perfected by the change of the living or by resurrection from the dead, will then have fulfilled their purpose and be laid aside forever. Into the future of each we are indeed given to see little; but this should no more in one case than the other, hinder our belief in that future. We feel also that we can evidently infer from the service of the body here, a good deal as to its future purpose. What the body is to us now, that (only perfected) will it be to us forever. May we not as rightly infer that what the Body of Christ is to Him now, that (only perfected, for perfected we know it is to be) it will be to Him forever? And we have seen the actual link in meaning between our bodies and His: the scripture figures given us of God for our instruction may be counted on to instruct and not deceive us.

The body is the servant of the mind, and in all its parts speaks of special adaptation to its various needs. As we

think of it often, and prove it in the diseased and maimed conditions which are the result of sin, we may deem it little beside a hindrance to the activity of the soul—a clog upon it. Yet the simple fact that we are destined to an eternity in the body should make us dismiss such hasty inferences. The body is, as we are at present constituted, a necessity even to the work of the mind itself in many ways; and the mind trains it, disciplines it, as well as uses it according to its will.

In how much may one apply this to the Body of Christ, while of course fully remembering how entirely it is of grace, not of necessity, that He is found in such relationship as this implies with men His creatures. Here, indeed, how often seeming an obstruction to His will, the light of life how little shining out of us so as to be His commendatory “epistle” in the world, the Body how little, as to display, the temple of His glory yet! Still, the very discipline of His hand upon us, the experience of a grace which abides with us and does not give us up, the learning however slowly and imperfectly, something of His path, His cup, His baptism, all this assures us, of what His word reveals—a purpose to have us with Himself and for Himself, a drilled, disciplined, at last perfected “Body,” through which His Spirit will work out purposes of His love, of which as yet we can know little, but which will reveal a special, divinely given oneness with Himself, in which He will be glorified, His heart satisfied, as He sees in it the fruit of the travail of His soul. And to God shall be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, through all the generations of the age of ages. Amen.

16 If the body is “complete in itself,” and Christ is not here the head, what is this “head of the church,” (if it mean any thing) which is not Christ?

17 τις εστι το σωμα αντου~.

Christ - The Bridegroom

The Church as the Body of Christ speaks, then, as we have seen, of service in subjection and fellowship with the Head. In the Bride we find it in a new aspect, in which, while association with Christ is just as prominent, there is rather the thought of rest than of activity; or it is the heart that is awake and in activity, Christ is seen as the Beloved of the heart, and in known and enjoyed relationship, its entire satisfaction and delight.

The

“Body” is not the equivalent of the “Bride,” and we miss much if we accept the one as substitute for the other. The incompatibility of the Church filling both these places has been, however, lately pressed, and that the members of Christ’s Body are not the Bride, but part of the Bridegroom Himself. But surely, if these are both figures, there is no incompatibility here, and it is only by joining different aspects of truth in an incongruous manner—“part of the Bridegroom”—that they are made to appear so. Scripture does not so connect them, and to put things in this way is only an unconscious self-entanglement of thought.

It has been also represented that the Church was a “mystery hid in God” during Old Testament times, and that this is inconsistent with there being any types of it in the Old Testament, such as Rebekah, for instance, has been taken to be: for types teach, and were meant to teach doctrines, and the mystery is not said to be hidden in Scripture, but in God. But this is to overlook the plain statement of the apostle, where after a direct quotation

of Gen. 2:24, ("the two shall be one flesh") following an application of the preceding history of Adam and his wife, he says: "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5:32). Now here the mystery of the Church as the Bride of Christ is found at the very beginning of the Old Testament.

Types by themselves teach nothing: they need the removing of the veil that is over them before they can be anything more than just history, ordinance, or what is upon the face of them. If Scripture were full of them, they would still be hid in God until it pleased Him to give the key to unlock their meaning. The distinction sought to be made is therefore quite unfounded.

It is true, that, as to the Body of Christ, the Old Testament, as far as we are aware, has no hint of it; while with regard to the Bride there are types from the very beginning. But not only so, the figure of marriage is used again and again with reference to the relation between Jehovah and Israel, as a people brought into intimate and unique attachment to Himself; and this both in the history of the past, and in the prophecy of the future. This was, therefore, no mystery hid in God,—no secret to be brought out at an after time,—and cannot refer to the Church which is Christ's Body. Thus in Jeremiah (31:31-34) God speaks of the covenant made with their fathers, when He took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, as of a marriage contract: "which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband to them, saith the Lord." And in Hosea (chap. 2) God judges them for their wanderings from Him as adultery, while He prophesies the return of the nation to her "first husband" as the result of His dealings with her in the time to come: "I will visit upon

her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgot Me, saith the Lord. Therefore, behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor as a door of hope; and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

Then comes the renewal, but in a more intimate way, of the old relationship. "And it shall be at that day that thou shalt call Me Ishi, and shalt no more call Baali: for I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall be no more remembered by their name."

The change of title here is significant. "Ishi" and "Baali" both are used for "husband"; but the latter is strictly "lord, master," and implies simply the wife's subjection; whereas "Ishi," "my man," as with similar words in other languages, goes back to creation and the fundamental fitting of man and woman to each other, so that there should be real fellowship or kinship in the relation. The connection with the substitution of the one title for the other as to the true God and the dropping of the very names of the "Baals," the false gods, out of Israel's mouth, is therefore easy to be understood. They had only known God hitherto in the far off place of "master," not in the reality of His glorious nature, not in the affectionate intimacy which He sought. Thus there Was nothing to hinder their being drawn away to "other lords" which had usurped His place. But now, in the future which He here contemplates, all would be changed, so as to make stable the relationship: "And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth

thee unto Me in righteousness and in judgment, and in loving kindness and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness”—or “steadfastness”—“and thou shalt know the Lord.”

Here, then, is the end of all wanderings: and now “Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah,”—“My delight is in her,”—“and thy land Beulah” (married): “for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married” (Isa. 62:4).

Here it is plain that to Israel,

God’s earthly people, it is that these promises belong. It should be as plain, surely, that the “Bride of the Lamb,” united to Him in heaven before He comes forth to the judgment of the earth (Rev. 19), is not Israel, and that the “new,” the “heavenly Jerusalem,” “Jerusalem which is above,” (Rev. 21; Gal. 4:26) cannot be the Old Testament city, even in the fullest glory of her glorious time to come. Thus there are certainly two “Brides” contemplated in Scripture, a heavenly and an earthly one; and the objections made against this are really of no force whatever. For instance, where it is said: “The Bride in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea is Israel, or at any rate the elect of Israel; those who were partakers of the heavenly calling in Israel.” Surely nothing could well be more contrary to Scripture than this. Was it with partakers of the heavenly calling that God made a covenant when He took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt? Was it the elect in Israel who broke that covenant, though Jehovah was a husband to them? Was it these to whom He gave a writing of divorcement, and put them away? Is it a heavenly land,

that is no more to be called Desolate, but Beulah (married)? Is it to an elect heavenly people that it is said, "Turn, O backsliding children: for I am married unto you; and I will take you, one of a city, and two of a family, and will bring you to Zion"? If these questions cannot be answered in the affirmative, then assuredly, whatever the New Testament Bride may be, the Old Testament one is not the same.

The writer allows even that "all the promises to Israel as a nation were earthly," and such are the promises here: they are national; although it is true that only those can enjoy them who undergo that spiritual change which our Lord emphasizes as needed by any who enter the Kingdom of God. As Isaiah says (4:3, 4): "And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning."

In the forty-fifth psalm the divine-human King, Messiah, is seen as the Bridegroom of Israel, and as to its being an earthly scene that is set before us in it there can be surely no question made. It was to such a Bridegroom that the Baptist testified (John 3:29); and the parable of the virgins doubtless speaks of the same. In the whole prophecy (Matt. 24, 25) Israel is prominent, the Church coming in only in that part of it which assumes that parabolic form in which the "mysteries of the Kingdom," "things kept secret from the foundation of the world," had been before declared. And the virgins going forth to meet the Bridegroom, have been inconsistently taken by

many to be the same as the Bride. To set this right in no wise affects the doctrine, if it does not rather make it clearer. At least the conformity with the Old Testament is plain, and with the position that Matthew holds as the connecting link between the Old Testament and the New.

In the passage in Ephesians before referred to there is much more than an illustrated appeal to wives and husbands in view of Christ's relationship to the Church. That relationship is stated in a very definite way in antitypical parallelism to that of the first Adam and the woman divinely given to him. Adam, we are distinctly told in Romans (chap. 5:14) "is the figure of Him that was to come." Christ is called in Corinthians (1 Cor. 15:45) "the last Adam." But notice the contrast also, which here as always, in one way or other, obtains between type and antitype: "the first Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." The same parallel, yet contrast, is seen in this passage in Ephesians: "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." It was God who presented Eve to Adam: it is Christ who as the fruit of His own self-sacrifice presents the Church to Himself.

It is certain that here Christ is looked at as in a higher,—and so in some sense a contrasted—way, repeating the story of the second of Genesis. But that is not all: the apostle goes on to say: "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but

nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. For we are members of His body; [we are] 18 of His flesh and of His bones." Here two things are brought together which, in different ways show the ground of the Lord's care. We are members of His body: nearer to Him than that can nothing be. But this is by the baptism of the Spirit, and implies a prior, anticipative, originative work that shall prepare for it. The baptism of the Spirit effects union; but with whom then can He unite Himself? Now comes the answer: "we are of His flesh and of His bones."

But this carries us back at once to the Old Testament type again, and we hear Adam, after the whole of nature besides has failed to furnish a helpmeet for him, and when God to provide one has brought forth the woman out of his side,—we hear Adam saying, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." Her origin is from him, though not in the way of nature, but of divine power. And now again has been produced by a mightier act of divine power, a people who have received their spiritual origin from the last Adam, out of His death-sleep, who is not only a living Spirit, but a "Spirit giving life." The earthly history has found its complete fulness of meaning.

And thereupon follows the saying, whether it was Adam's or not, which the apostle quotes and applies in the end of his exhortation: "for this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The argument and justification for those apparently foreign unions, is founded upon that original fitting of the woman to the man which was made by God Himself the basis of origin

of the whole family relationship. Thus it retains its place as prior to and beyond all other.

But the apostle's application is that with which we have here to do. He says of it: "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

The mystery here then is spiritual, while God has manifested His interest in it by writing it out in natural hieroglyphics, impossible to be interpreted until He be pleased to give the key. "All these things happened unto them for types, and are written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages are come."

It is not of the Bride that we are now desiring to speak, but of the Bridegroom; but the one so implies the other that we are compelled to the course we have been pursuing. The recurrence of the type so frequently in the Old Testament, even from the beginning of the history, is full proof of how dear to Him is the thought of the relationship. Assuredly we shall not give these up from any preconceived idea that they ought not to be there. They are there, and speak so plainly for themselves, pictures though they may be only, that no unprejudiced mind can avoid seeing them.

Take

Rebekah: and if Isaac be a type of Christ, and, in the twenty-second of Genesis, received back "in figure" from the dead (Heb. 11:19), how is it that we find next Sarah, the mother (Rom. 9:5) passes away, and then Rebekah takes her place in Sarah's tent as bride of the risen heir. Of the kindred already, she is called by a special messenger (as the Church by the Holy Spirit) to cross the desert in his company to meet her yet unseen Lord.

Take Asenath; and Joseph too is betrayed by his brethren, brought down to the prison house and brought up out of it to be the Saviour of Egypt (the world); and then he must have a Gentile bride, while his brethren are strangers to him.

Take

Zipporah (the “bird”—the heavenly bride); and again Moses is away from and rejected by his brethren when he finds her by the well—a Gentile too—and marries her.

Are such things, so fit in themselves, so fitting to their place in the history, mere casual happenings, which we may use, if we will, for illustration, but must not seriously press as having any design from God? Surely if design may be recognized anywhere without a label, we may recognize it here.

Now it is not contradictory to all this, and cannot be, to find that Old Testament saints looked for a city which has foundations; or even to believe, as I have long done, that this city and the New Jerusalem, the Bride of the Lamb in Revelation, are the same thing. Once let us realize that the “city,” however identified in some sense with its inhabitants, is yet in fact the habitation and not the inhabitants, and the difficulty begins to clear. The Bride City may contain more than the Bride, as even the writer whose views I am referring to allows. The throne of God and of the Lamb are in it; and the twelfth of Hebrews distinctly shows us “the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,” apart from both “the church of the First-born ones,” and “the spirits of just men made perfect.”¹⁹ “God has prepared for them a city” does not in this case imply necessarily what it is quoted for; and we may adapt the writer’s own words otherwise than he

would allow. "This holy Jerusalem may contain"—the saints of the Old Testament; "but it is not necessary on this account that we should identify them."

Turning from all this now, how blessed to think of this Bridegroom character of the Lord Jesus! It should be plain that it expresses His personal joy of love, in a way that the "Head of the Body" cannot, because it expresses a very different thing. A whole book of the Old Testament has been given to the expression of this relation of the Lord Jesus,—no doubt, in the first place to Israel; but capable of application all through to the higher and heavenly. Perhaps we have not a New Testament book of this character, for the same reason that we have not a New Testament psalm book. It would rather belittle than truly represent it; if it were not, at least, to be a book too large for human handling. Christian psalmody finds in all else that has been written its material of praise. Its "song of songs" must also transcend utterance. And perhaps must be learned otherwise than any book of this kind could avail for.

Thus it is, after all, that one can say so little of what the Lord's Bridegroom character means. We see that all the nearest, sweetest human relationships are taken up to image forth these more wondrous spiritual ones. And Bridegroom and Bride, always remaining in the first freshness of the sabbatic morning of their beginning, speak of a mutual abiding for one another, which is the revelation of a sufficing love, such as we are surely learning by the way as we go to meet Him, but which in the first moment of His presence will manifest itself as it had not been before.

In the moment of her presentation to Isaac, Rebekah took a veil and covered herself. We can but do so in the anticipation of that time.

18 The repetition of the “we are,” or some equivalent of it, is necessitated by the insertion here of the preposition ?κ (“out of”) ωηιχη σεπαρατες της φηρστ στατεμεντ φρομ της λαττερ ονε.

19 In the tract to which I have been referring the names of the twelve tribes on the gates of the city and those of the twelve apostles on the foundations are taken alike to show the Israelitish character of the city itself, and the “portion” of the twelve as judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28) shows these to be “separated off from the Church,” the body of Christ. He even declares that “the Lamb is the special title of the Lord Jesus in relation to Israel, and the elect of Israel”

No wonder that it should be also discovered that “the Gospels are the conclusion of the Old Testament history, and not the commencement of Church teaching; except, of course,”—and how important the exception!—“so far as Christ crucified is the foundation of all blessing.”

The Throne of God and of The Lamb

The Lamb is the well-known title of Christ in the Apocalypse, the book of the future. It expresses the patience of His humiliation, even to the death of the cross; but it characterizes Him still in glory. Even when the apostle is told of the Lion of the tribe of Judah having prevailed to open the book, the vision assures him that it is a "Lamb as it had been slain."

The connection between the humiliation and glory is familiar to us. Because of that wondrous humiliation "God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly, earthly, and infernal beings, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

This is His personal exaltation, and as Man.

He has descended and is now ascended up, far above all heavens, and sits upon the Father's throne, waiting there until His foes are made His footstool. All things are to be put under His feet, though as yet we do not see this.

The Kingdom of the Son of Man, His millennial reign, is that in which this is accomplished. He has then a throne which He can share with others, as the Father's throne He cannot (Rev. 3:21); and the saints reign with Him a thousand years.

But while the Father thus glorifies His Son, for the Son His personal exaltation is not the object. He takes the

Kingdom to bring all things into eternal order, and thus bring in the rest of God. Having done this, the Kingdom in this form is given up; its object is achieved; “and when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28).

We can in this way understand both why the Kingdom lasts for comparatively so short a period, and yet why it occupies so large a place in the field of prophecy. In the Old Testament, save in Isaiah’s promise of a new heavens and earth, we never get beyond it. And even in the New, while that promise is expanded for us in the sweet picture with which we are all familiar (Rev. 21:1-8), yet that which follows of the New Jerusalem goes back immediately, as to the time of view, to the millennium again. Only in this way could the leaves of the tree of life be for the healing of the nations (22:2).

Beyond the thousand years the city itself abides, for it is eternal; and here is for us the fullest view that the book of Revelation affords with regard to the eternal state. Yet it is both brief and enigmatic; and the eyes that have been upon it for many generations have ever yearned to see more clearly what is portrayed in it.

But upon this we do not mean to dwell at present. We are following, as we may, the Christ of God through all that changes into the changeless blessedness. What can we know of it? Little, perhaps, indeed; but we may at least distinguish some things that need to be, and where Scripture seems clear enough to save us from any presumptuous speculation in the matter.

For many—and some even of those who are theoretically clearer—the millennium has been practically too much identified with the eternal condition. It has given too much its character to eternity; while, on the other hand, I think it will be found that sometimes that which is eternal has been thought of as millennial.

The millennium, with that which immediately follows and connects with it, is a period of formation,—of labor, not of rest. First, things are set in order morally and spiritually; then physically also. It applies also to the earth solely; not (in the higher sense of the word) to heaven. The “new heavens” are firmamental, the heavens of the second creative day.

Now, as to the reign, when it is said of the saints that they reign with Christ a thousand years, we might naturally think that they would cease to reign, then, after this. Yet we find it said of those in the heavenly city, “they shall reign for ever and ever,” (or “the ages of ages”) the strongest expression used for eternity. And this may remind us that before the thrones are seen set up as to the earth (chap. 20:4), and before even the Lamb has taken the book in heaven (chap. 5:7), we have seen thrones around the throne of God (chap. 4:4) and those occupying them who afterwards sing the song of redemption, and are therefore redeemed men (5:9). Is there not here implied plainly a reign which, as it begins before the millennial reign, will not be limited by it?

As to the Lord Jesus, “all authority” is already His “in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18), and yet He has not taken His throne as Son of Man. He is on the Father’s throne, which is not divided nor circumscribed by that “Kingdom of His dear Son,” into which already He has

“translated” us (Col. 1:13). Thus we cannot limit Christ’s reign by the Kingdom of the Son of Man. And when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, “that God may be all in all,” will that “Kingdom of the Father” more exclude His sovereignty? If all authority be His now, has it shut out the Father? Will the Kingdom of the Father any more shut out the Son?

If we need a more direct answer to such a question, we shall find it in what is said of the heavenly city, that “the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.” It is but one throne: two there could not be; and it is characterized in this way, as the “throne of God and of the Lamb.” That which speaks of the lowest depths of humiliation gone into is joined with the incommunicable Name of glory: it is added to that to which no addition would seem possible. God accepts this addition; yet not as if it were the acceptance of anything extraneous to Himself: nay, in it He is become manifest in a glory before which the hosts of heaven prostrate themselves in adoring wonder. In the Lamb God has found the expression of Himself He has been ever seeking,—the means of pouring out unhindered the fulness which shall make His creatures full: and thus from the throne of God and of the Lamb issues the stream of the water of life.

That it is the “throne of God,”

declares at once that here we have before us what is eternal: not dispensational, not temporary. “That God may be all in all,” the Lamb has brought Him down to the lower parts of the earth, and taken humanity up to the height of heaven. The Lamb is henceforth the “Lamp” of divine light; as “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple” of the city, the unveiled

Presence in which worship shall be alike free and necessary. The mystery of the Person of Christ is the assurance that in no way whatever can God and the Lamb be separated ever.

But what an overwhelming thought it is, humanity united thus to Godhead, the Crucified upon the throne of God! And we, whom He has taken up from the depths in which He found us, to declare in us the fulness of divine self-sacrificing love,—we are following on to see Him where He is, with eyes at last able to behold His glory; changed ourselves into His likeness!

F W Grant