An Exposition of the Gospel of Mark

William Kelly

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Preface

Edited, with additions, by E. E. Whitfield.

Elliot Stock, 1907 (See “Appendix” towards the end of this series for more notes on the book of Mark. The numbers throughout this series that are not super-scripted refer to the notes on the Appendix page.)

“The Son of man did not come to be ministered to, but to minister.”

Preface

Lectures on the Second Gospel, by the late Mr. W. Kelly, for fifty years editor of the Bible Treasury, passed through that magazine in the years 1865 and 1866, as “Remarks on the Gospel of Mark.” These are now reproduced under the title intended by him for their separate publication. He hoped to develop the lectures by the addition of critical apparatus and an examination of the common treatment of the “Synoptic problem.” As this was not to be carried out by himself, an endeavour has been made to supply in the present volume something in substitution.

For the English text of this Gospel, in the “Remarks” generally that of the Authorised Version, large use has been made of an anonymous “New Translation” referred to by Dr. F. Field in his “Otium Norvicense.” That version was a work of Mr. J. N. Darby, and as such serves better for a volume of Mr. Kelly’s writings than any other which might be offered in lieu of his own. The Greek text represented is, accordingly, that which underlies Mr. Darby’s translation. The portions peculiar to Mark are

here in heavy type. Any deviations from the Authorised Version of Old Testament passages quoted are drawn from the same translation (London: G. Morrish, 1890). Marginal references to parallel passages in the other Gospels have been added.

To the few critical notes which appeared originally, with some taken from other volumes of the magazine, the letters “B.T.” are attached; the rest are new. All these foot-notes embrace the latest available evidence, such as that of the Sinai palimpsest, discovered in 1892, of what is considered the oldest Syriac version known. “Edd.” (editors) stands for the critical text adopted in 1904 by the British and Foreign Bible Society for its centenary edition of the Greek New Testament, a translation of which, in Bagster’s “Workers’ New Testament” (1906), is at the command of ordinary English readers.

The Introduction is made up from later papers of Mr. Kelly in the Bible Treasury, especially extracts from those collected in his volume entitled “God’s Inspiration of the Scriptures,” which will indicate his attitude on the historical and the textual criticism of the Gospels, and that of Mark in particular. These have been developed in the notes arranged as an APPENDIX, where reference is made chiefly to the literature that has appeared within the last forty years. For such notes the editor alone is responsible. Indexes of passages and contents complete the book.

Readers will find “freedom of criticism” applied to the ideas of some of the real leaders in the business of literary and historical criticism of the Bible. To use words of Professor Julius Wellhausen himself, we should

have “eyes to see” and should “dare to use them.” Anyone familiar with the processes by which Biblical study is carried on by learned Germans knows what generals they are in the army of “hewers of wood and drawers of water”; how admirable in investigation of what lies on the surface; but how their very occupation with details mars their insight, for which ingenuity has to do duty. They have more to learn from Englishmen than we from them: in this country sound sense is seldom lacking. Constant submission by English-speaking people to German critical opinion is in every way a mistake.

May God in His mercy deliver many from the present widespread apostasy, that such may continue in His goodness! Those who would surrender Christ’s word cannot be far off from giving up Himself.

E.E.W. March, 1907.

Introduction

§1. Biographical

Mark (Marcus) was a common Roman praenomen. His Jewish name was John.1 He was converted through Peter (1 Peter 5:13; cf. Acts 12:12).2 At the very outset of his Christian course Barnabas (his relation) and Paul took him with them on their missionary travels (Acts 12:25, Acts 13:5). John Mark had that light idea of the responsibility of Christian service which is so common: he thought he could take up and put down God's work as he liked, and he left the two leaders to go on with the work by themselves, whilst he went off home again (Acts 13:13, Acts 15:36; cf. Acts 4:36). Then we lose sight of him for six or seven years, which, for all we know, may have been so much lost time; and after that he becomes the passive cause of an exceedingly unfortunate dispute. Paul and Barnabas arrange a further mission, and Barnabas "determines" to take his relation again with them, while Paul "thought not good" to take one who had already deserted his post. This gave rise to so sharp a contention that the two veterans separated.... Most of us, perhaps, would have thought it best to leave Mark alone after that; and it comes as quite a surprise that we find him finally charged with the high honour of writing one of the four Gospels. Not only, does Peter take him in hand with that affectionate care which we should expect from one of his nature, but Paul, who had such a disparaging judgment of him in former times, is able to recognise and acknowledge the value of Mark's subsequent service. He mentions him as being one of his five fellow-workers who were "a comfort" to him (Col.

4:11; cf. Philemon 24) in Rome about A.D. 64, and two years subsequently he tells Timothy to “take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry” (2 Tim. 4:11).1 This evangelist, as Luke — mentioned together in 2 Tim. 4:11 — was doubtless a prophet. It is the prophetic character of gift which especially is in exercise for writing Scripture (Rom. 16:26). This explains the true source of the authority in such holy writings. To attribute it to Peter 2 for the one and to Paul for the other betrays the worthless character of early tradition, such as it appears in the speculations of Eusebius of Caesarea.2

§2. Divine Design

The second Gospel 3 has for its design the setting forth of the service “of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” He who at first failed, but at length was pronounced “profitable for ministry,” was just as suitable in the power of the Holy Spirit for that task as Matthew, called from the receipt of customs to be an Apostle, was for the first Gospel. Christ Himself serves in the Gospel, and does mighty works accompanying it, as Mark describes.3 The precision which Mark furnishes, partly by his characteristic “straightway” that so often occurs, partly by a perhaps still more definite specifying of time — e.g., in Mark 4:35 — enables us to clear up some difficulties in the different order of the events4 related in the three Synoptic Gospels.3 From a careful comparison it results that, of the four inspired writers, two were led to abstain save in the rarest degree from chronological order; two from their respective designs subordinate that order where requisite to a grouping of events or discourses independently; and of the two, in each case one was an

Apostle, the other not. Matthew and Luke were from time to time not bound to simple historic sequence, whereas Mark and John as the rule adhere to it.4 None can be justly called “fragmentary,”5 for each has a specific design impressed on the work, and all that is inserted or omitted may be accounted for on this principle. Where an incident illustrates that which belongs to the scope of all four, they all introduce it, as, for instance, the miracle of the five loaves and the two little fishes. Where it falls in with the province of one only, there it is given, and nowhere else; as the Temple tax in Matt. 17, the deaf stammerer in Mark 7, the penitent woman in Luke 7, and the Samaritan woman in John 4, to mention but one of the many facts, signs, and discourses peculiar to each, and to John abundantly. In some cases three give the same subject-matter, in others but two.

But this is not all. Whilst there are notable phrases and words common to all,6 there are quite as notable differences7 in the mode of communication. Hence speculative minds are tempted to irreverent cutting of the knot they cannot untie;8 whilst unexercised souls fail to gather the profit intended of the Spirit through every shade of difference. For it is a perversion of the truth that the writers were inspired, but not the writings. If 2 Peter 1:21 warrants the former, still more explicit and distinctly applicable is the claim for the latter in 2 Tim. 3:16. In the verse preceding we have the “sacred” title of the Old Testament; but in verse 16 the Spirit of God pronounces for “every” thing that falls under the designation of “Scripture.” It is not a question of human infirmity, but of God’s power. Every Scripture is inspired by God (θεόπνευστος). Not only were the

men inspired, but so, according to the Apostle Paul, is the result. Ordinarily their writing, like their words, would have been liable to the imperfections of human speech and the limitations of human thought; but every Scripture, every writing that comes under this category, is God-breathed, and in no way “left” to the mere accidents of human faculties. To mix up with inspiration the manifold errors of copyists in the lapse of ages is illicit and illogical, not to say dishonest, for this is quite another question. All we contend for is the Divine character of indisputable Scripture.

Differences, then, there are; but instead of being the discrepancies which unbelief hastily and improperly calls them because of ignorance, they are the beautiful and instructive effect and evidence of God’s varied designs. Take Matt. 8 as an instance — “a solemn assembly of witnesses,” as one justly calls it. The leper came, in fact, long before what is called the Sermon on the Mount. “And, behold,” in verse 2 ties us down to no date. But as the Holy Spirit had already given a summary of the Lord’s deeds of gracious preaching and power in Matt. 4:23, 24, so He presents details of His teaching in chapters 5:6, 7, and of His miracles in chapter 8, and again in another way in chapter 9, where the date yields to deeper considerations, and selected proofs are grouped together designedly. In Mark 1:40-45, where no such purpose operates, we see its place historically. Luke confirms the fact that it was on “one of those days” when Christ was in Capernaum, and before the healing of the paralytic, which in Matthew is reserved for the first case in Matt. 9.

But, to look into details, the leper’s cure fitly attested the present power of Jehovah-Messiah which opens

Matt. 8. And as this proved His grace toward the Jew that came in his uncleanness and faith (however faltering), the Gentile centurion's great faith next follows, and here only is connected thus. In the Gospel of Luke it has a different place, in Mark it has none. The third fact in chapter 8, the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, so interesting to a Jew, and assuring that grace to the Gentile did not turn Messiah's heart from Israel, seems here inserted with that design, whereas historically it preceded both the previous miracles in date, as shown in Mark 1 and Luke 4. So, of course, did the healing of many demoniacs and sick on that evening after the Sabbath, in fulfilment of Isa. 53:4. It is not in the least difficult to believe that the Holy Spirit led Matthew to introduce at this point what Luke presents in quite a different connection (Luke 9:57), and with an addition too. The harmonists who imagine duplicates are no more faithful than the commentators who tax the inspired with discrepancies. The conversation, whenever it occurred, seems given in the first Gospel to show the great vessel of Divine power and grace — i.e., the Messiah consciously rejected, the Son of Man having nowhere to lay His head, yet claiming from a disciple to be followed, even if a father lay dead. We know, too, for certain that the storm which He rebuked and the deliverance of the demoniacs took place after the parables of Matt. 13 were heard and explained.

The septenary of chapter 9 is a similar collection of witnesses following that of chapter 8, which indicates not only His Divine power displayed in Israel, but the growing hatred and jealousy which it excited in the scribes, till it culminated in the Pharisees who sought to poison the multitude with their blasphemy: "By the

prince of the demons He casteth out demons." But no more evidence is needed that Matthew was led, where it was required, to state facts and words so as best to give dispensational order, as Luke was led in no less a degree to present moral order. Take the Lord's genealogy as a clear proof, not in Luke 1, but in Luke 3, after the statement of John put in prison, and of the wondrous scene of His baptism following, though, of course, it long preceded what is here recounted. Take, again, the temptation, where Luke puts the third act in the second place as the moral order; whereas the actual fact as represented by Matthew coincided with the dispensational, which it was his function to make known. This necessitated the remarkable omission which the true and ancient text testifies, as distinguished from the common error introduced by copyists, harmonists, and the like, whose false assimilations provoke the rather more evil doubts of their opponents.

How full of interest, as bearing on Divine purpose, to observe that in the Gospel of Mark there is no account of the Lord's reading of Isa. 61 and preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth, any more than Matthew or John gives it! For Luke 4 it was reserved, as Christ's grandly suited introduction to public witness, as we shall see more fully in its place. The introduction for Matthew's Gospel was the striking but wholly different application of Isa. 9, where the light shining in despised Galilee was promised. Nor was Mark given to state this, but only Matthew, whose also it was, above all, to point out the fulfilment of prophecy in the still more despised Messiah, as he only had mentioned the visit of the Magi, and the flight into Egypt, and the slaughter of the babes, all bearing in the same direction.

Again, Mark was not led to present the remarkable healing of the centurion's servant, which has so prominent a position in the first Gospel, and a still greater length in the third. The leper's cleansing Mark does give, followed by the healing of the paralytic, and very graphically in both cases; but there was no design by him to bring in the witness that Jehovah's power would call in Gentiles when Israel should be cast out, as in Matt. 8, any more than to show, as in Luke 7, the faith of the Gentile, not so seen in Israel, which recognised the power of God in Jesus to command sovereignly and in love, and this in a soul so humbled by grace as to discern His people in the degenerate Jews, loved and honoured for His name's sake.

So, further, in the first Gospel and the second we have no account whatever of the widow's son raised from the dead outside Nain. It had no connection with their scope in particular, and we may presume that it was therefore here omitted. But it had the utmost importance for illustrating Divine power in the highest form, united in our Lord Jesus with the fullest human sympathy, and so it is exactly in accord with the special aim of Luke's Gospel, where alone it is found.

On the same principle we may account for a vast deal of intermediate matter given in the central parts of the first and third Gospels, which does not appear in the Gospel of Mark.9 We are thus delivered from the theories which have occupied many learned men, to the hurt of themselves and of those who trust them. For they have sought on human grounds to explain the different phenomena of the Synoptic Gospels, some advocating a common document,10 others only a general apostolic tradition.11 Again, a supplemental intention has been

attributed to those that followed successively the first, for his own contribution to the sum as it gradually appeared and grew.12 Had they believed in the special design imprinted by the Holy Spirit on each and every one of them, erroneous speculation had been spared, to the honour of God's word and to the spiritual profit of His children. The differences which undoubtedly occur would then have been known to be in no case discrepancy, but springing from God's wisdom, not man's weakness, and adding incalculably to the witness of Christ, and consequently to the spiritual intelligence of him that accepts all from God in faith of His truth and love.5 Legitimate criticism may seek to gather the true text from reliable documents, in time differing more or less through human infirmity or fault. But it nightly supposes an original Divine deposit. No intelligent person would mix this question with God's inspiration; various readings belong to the distinct region of man's responsibility, as Scripture does to Divine grace. The problem of the true critic is to use all means, external and internal, to recover what was originally written (See §3). What is called "higher criticism" is essentially spurious, either denying God as the Author or impudently pretending to speak for Him, if they go not so far. Even Christians are in danger of heeding what these enemies of the written word assume, when it is said that it nowhere claims Divine authority. Nor is it only inferential evidence that is given throughout the Bible in general, as well as the conclusive proof of the reverence to all then written shown by our Lord, the Lord of all. It is dogmatic truth that God's inspiration is claimed for every Scripture — not merely for all given before the Apostle Paul wrote his last epistle, but for that part which remained to be written. For nothing less

is the force of 2 Tim. 3:16 Every scripture [is] inspired of God and profitable," etc. Had the existing body been meant the article would have been requisite, as in verse 14, which speaks only of the Old Testament. Its absence was no less correct for accrediting with the same source and character all that God might be pleased to vouchsafe till the canon was complete.

Indeed, the Apostle had at an earlier date made in substance the same claim in 1 Cor. 2. Where the Hebrew oracles stopped, the New Testament revealed all that is for God's glory and goodness to communicate (verses 9-12): "Which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those Spirit-taught, communicating spirituals by spirituals," or, if we supply the gap, "spiritual [things] by spiritual [words]." The words were as positively of the Holy Spirit as the thoughts.13 Such is the essential property of Scripture. Thus all was of the Spirit of God — the revelation, the communication, and also the reception. Rationalism denies God in them all, attributing them to man's spirit, which he may elevate in effect to that of God, being in darkness and walking in darkness, and knowing not whither he goes, because darkness blinded his eyes.

Translation, again, like interpretation, as well as editing the text from the varying witnesses, belongs to the responsible use of Scripture, and is quite distinct from the fact of its Divine inspiration. No doubt the conviction that God inspired every Scripture would act powerfully on the spirit of every believer who undertook works so serious, and is intended to make him feel his dependence on God in the use of all diligence and every means duly to attain the end in view. But inspiration means, as one of those employed in it says, that men

spoke from God, moved (or borne along) by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). Hence Scripture is not of man's wit or will, but of God, as no one more clearly than our Lord ever shows, and so of final and Divine authority. Hence, too, the danger and evil for anyone to give, whatever the cause of failure, his own mind and not God's in editing, translating, or interpreting. What God communicated is able to make one wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. "Is it not written?" if truly applied, is absolutely conclusive in His judgment who will judge living and dead. "And the Scripture cannot be broken."

How immense, too, is the privilege! In its later portion it is the revelation of God, not merely from God, but of Himself, and of God speaking to us in a Son — not the Firstborn merely, but the Only-begotten, the revelation of the Father and the Son by the Holy Spirit. Oh, the grace, too, of His Son deigning to become man, that we might have what is absolute made relative to us in the tender affections of very man, yet of One who was and is God as His Father. Hence the total change for us in looking at things, seen or unseen, according to God, where the greatest are brought down to our hearts, and the least we learn to be near to God's love; nothing too great for us, nothing too little for God, as said another departed from his labours to be with Christ. Christ alone, Christ fully, accounts for both, and Scripture is the true treasure-house as well as standard of it all, as the Spirit was sent forth from heaven to make it good in us in every way. No tradition could avail for such a stupendous task.

The Spirit of God in recording does not limit Himself to the bare words that Jesus spoke. This I hold to be a matter of no little importance in forming a sound

judgment of the Scriptures. The notion to which orthodox men sometimes shut themselves up, in zeal for plenary inspiration, is to my mind altogether mechanical; they think that inspiration necessarily and only gives the exact words that Christ uttered. There seems to me not the slightest necessity for this. Assuredly the Holy Spirit gives the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The differences are owing to no infirmity, but to His design, and what He has given us is incomparably better than a bare report by so many hands, all meaning to give the same words and facts.... Matthew and Luke alike give us the parable of the sower, but Matthew calls it the word of the kingdom, while Luke calls it the word of God. The Lord Jesus may have employed both in His discourse at this time.... The Spirit of God did not give us to have both in the same Gospel, but acts with Divine sovereignty. He does not lower the Evangelists into mere literal reporters..., The mere mechanical system can never explain inspiration. It finds itself entirely baffled by the fact that the same words are not given in all the Gospels. Take Matthew "Blessed are the poor" (verse 3), and Luke (verse 20) "Blessed are ye poor." This is at once an embarrassing difficulty for the mechanical scheme of inspiration; it is none at all for those who hold to the Holy Spirit's supremacy in employing different men as the vessels of His various objects.6

§3. Textual Criticism.

Although able critics have for a century sought to edit the Greek Testament on documentary evidence of Greek manuscripts, ancient versions, and early citations, none as yet have succeeded in commanding more than partial

confidence. Hence it has been a necessity for any careful and conscientious scholar who would really know the sources to compare several of these editions, and search into the grounds on which their differences depend, so as to have anything like a correct and enlarged view of the text, and to judge fairly of the claims of conflicting readings.... Mature spiritual judgment, with continual dependence on the Lord, is just as essential as a sound and thorough familiarity with the ancient witnesses of all kinds.7 Lachmann published a manual edition of the New Testament professedly based on Bentley's idea of exhibiting the text as read in the fourth century... at one fell swoop sentenced the mass of the surviving witnesses to an ignominious death, and presented us with a text formed on absolute principles of singular narrowness.... 14 The neglect of internal evidence is a fatal objection. But the grand fallacy involved is that a manuscript of the fourth or fifth century must give better readings than one of the seventh or eighth. Now this is in no way certain. There is a presumption in favour of the more ancient manuscript, because each successive transcription tends to introduce new errors in addition to those it repeats. On the other hand, a copy of the ninth century may have been made from one older than any now extant, and certainly some old documents are more corrupt than many of the more recent witnesses. Every ingenuous scholar must own, to say the least, that the oldest manuscripts have some bad readings, and that the modern manuscripts have some that are good. 15 Hence the distinction is not between the united evidence of the most ancient documents (Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers), and the common herd of those more recent; for rarely, if ever, is there such unanimous ancient testimony without considerable support from

witnesses of a later day. The truth is that almost always, where the old documents really agree, there is large confirmation elsewhere, and where the ancients differ, so do the moderns. It is quite unfounded, therefore, to treat it as a question pure and simple between old and new. Nor is it the important point of research what particular readings existed in the days of Jerome. For notoriously errors of various kinds had then crept into both Greek and Latin copies, and no antiquity can sanctify an error. The true question is: What, using every available means to form a judgment, was the primitive text? It is often forgotten that our oldest documents are but copies. Several centuries elapsed between the original issue of the New Testament Scriptures and any manuscripts now existing. All, therefore, are on the ground of copyists differing only in degree. It is not, then, a comparison between a single eye-witness and many hearsay reporters, unless we have the original autographs. And, in fact, we know that an historian's account, three centuries after alleged facts, may be, and often is, corrected, five hundred or a thousand years after, by recurrence to sources more trustworthy, or by a more patient, comprehensive, and skilful sifting of neglected evidence.

My own conviction is that in certain cases, especially in single words, the most ancient copy that exists may be corrected by another generally inferior, not only in age, but in almost every respect besides, and that internal evidence ought to be used, in dependence upon the Spirit of God,16 where the external authorities are conflicting.8 1 Bible Treasury, vol. xx., p. 28 ff.

2 "Exposition of 2 Timothy," pp. 138, 172.

3 Cf. “Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Gospels,” pp. 152, 156 ff.

4 “Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Gospels,” pp. 140-151.

5 On “Divine Design” traced chapter by chapter, see continuation of the above in B.T., vol. xiii., p. 124 ff., reproduced in “The Inspiration of the Scriptures,” pp. 320-329. As to “Divine Design” being discredited as an a priori theory, see “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 8 ff.

6 The last paragraph has been drawn from “Lectures on the Gospels,” pp. 287-289. See further note 13 in Appendix.

7 From a review of the Revised Version of the New Testament in B.T., vol. xiii., p. 287 (June, 1881).

8 From Preface to “The Revelation of John,” edited in Greek, with a new English version and a statement of the chief authorities and various readings (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860). For a commendation by Ewald of the views above expressed, see that distinguished scholar’s notice of what he describes as this “very useful English work in Jahrbücher (Göttingen, Dieterich, 1861), No. xi., p. 247ff.

Mark 1

Cf. “Introductory Lectures on the Gospels,” pp. 140-156.

Mark 1:1-18.

Cf. Matt. 3:1-11; Luke 3:1-17; John 1:19-30.

Mark gives us the ministry of the Lord. His account is brief; and there are few events which are not recorded by Matthew and Luke. Nevertheless, what a gap there would be in our view of the Saviour’s life and work here below if we hid not Mark! In none have we a more characteristic manner of presenting what is given us. In none have we such graphic, vivid life-touches of our Master: not only what He said and did, but how He looked and felt. Besides, there is the evident design of drawing our attention to His Gospel service, and all the incidents chosen, and the peculiar mode in which they are handled, will be found to bear upon this weighty and affecting theme: the Lord God as the servant, in lowly, faithful ministration of the Gospel here below.

The very opening illustrates this. “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ; 17 the Son of God9; as it is written in Isaiah the prophet10: “Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way. 11 The voice of one crying,” etc.” We at once enter on the great business the Holy Ghost had in hand. There is no blowing of trumpets to usher in the King in due style and title. This has its just place in Matthew, where the descent traced from Abraham and David, along the chosen royal line of Solomon too, so admirably agree with God’s object there. And the circumstances before and after His birth follow, all carrying out the same end

of presenting Jesus as the true and blessed Messiah of Israel. Luke and John, it could be readily shown, were endowed by the Spirit with equally striking and suited wisdom for maintaining the aim of their Gospels respectively; but space forbids for the present our delaying to speak of these things particularly.

It is well, however, in noting the beautiful immediateness of the picture here brought before our eyes, to observe that there is no precipitancy, no omission of what was a most important preface for the account of Jesus thus ministering — the previous appearance and services of John the Baptist. To this there seems to be an allusion in the opening words. It was more than prophecy, though in accordance, as verses 2 and 3 prove, with the prophets. “The law and the prophets,” we are told elsewhere, “were until John,” (Matt. 11:13) who took a great step in advance — “the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Such was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, after long silence had reigned as to God’s testimony in Jerusalem.

Further, is it not touching to see that, if we are about to follow the steps of God’s faithful and only perfect Servant, the change which the Holy Ghost, in sovereign wisdom, makes in His citation of Mal. 3:1 attests the Divine glory of Jesus? In the prophecy it is Jehovah sending His messenger who would prepare the way before Him. In the Evangelist it is still Jehovah sending His messenger, but it is now before “Thy face” — i.e. the face of Jesus Christ. The truth is, Jesus, humble Himself as He might, was Jehovah. Matthew elicits the same truth from His name. “Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for it is He who shall save His people from their sins.” Now, the Jews were the people of none but Jehovah. It is

the more remarkable in the opening of our Gospel; for Mark, unlike Matthew, rarely quotes the Scriptures.12 How perfectly it is in keeping with the Gospel, and its opening part also is evident. If the Lord of glory was coming or comes in the form of a servant and the likeness of men, it was most appropriate that prophecy should (not be broken, but) bend before Him, and that a new and still more blessed testimony should begin.

But where cries this voice of the herald, and where was he baptizing? “In the wilderness.” What, then, was the state of Jerusalem and the people of God? They must go outside to John if they would take their right place before God. What he presented was the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. The effect was great; I say not savingly, but extensive, and not without touching the conscience. “There went out to him all the district of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.” All this is here sketched by Mark, clearly, but rapidly and in brief, without stopping by the way to set before us, as was needful to the purpose of God in Matthew, the proud and false-hearted men who stood in the place of religious leaders of the day, objects of God’s certain and scrutinizing judgment.

But if John had his own special place, and if his abode, and garb, and food witnessed his separation from the evil state of Israel, it was his happier task to testify the superiority of Christ’s person, and of His ministry, as compared with his own. Nothing is here said of baptizing with fire, as in Matthew and Luke, to both of whose subject it was requisite. But Mark was inspired to speak only of that part of John’s testimony which is directly associated with the Lord’s Gospel work —

namely, baptizing with the Holy Ghost. It is not, of course, that under Christ repentance ceased, and can ever but be, in a world of sin, the necessary pathway of a soul that is born of God. Still, the turning of a soul to God, in a sense of sin and self-judgment, is different from the Divine power which sets evil aside on the basis of a redemption accomplished by the grace of God. This is the characteristic blessing of Christianity.

Mark 1:9-11.

Matt. 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:31-34.

Yet was Jesus, the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, Himself baptized by John in the Jordan, Himself receives the Holy Ghost! What a sight and truth! Infinitely above sin and sins (which He did not even know), yet was He baptized with water. He had no unrighteousness to confess, but thus it became Him to fulfil all righteousness. From Nazareth of Galilee came He, who was God over all, blessed for ever. There He dwelt, as Matthew tells us, so that the prophets' saying might be in this, as in all else, fulfilled. Could heaven behold unmoved such grace? Impossible: "And straightway going up from the water, He saw the heavens cleaving asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him." What meaning had that act of baptism in the mind of God! "And there came a voice out of the heavens saying, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee13 I have found My delight."14 Him," as St. John says, "hath God the Father sealed."15 It is not merely the fact, but "He saw," etc., which is here recorded. Though truly God, He was man; though a Son, He became a servant, and was now about to enter on His ministry. He receives the Spirit as well as the recognition of His Sonship. He had justified God's

sentence on, and call to, Israel — yea, He had in grace joined the souls who had bowed to it in the waters of Jordan; but this could not be without the answer of the Father for His heart's joy in the path He was about to tread. The one was the fulfilment of every kind of righteousness, and not legal only (this in grace, for there was no necessity of evil in His case), the other was His recognition thereon by the Father in the nearest personal relationship, over which His submission to baptism might have cast a cloud to carnal eyes.

Mark 1:12, 13.

Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13.

"And immediately the Spirit drives Him out into the wilderness; and He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to Him." What a picture of His position in a few words of God! Moses, the lawgiver, had been with God on the mount forty days; Elijah, the prophet, had been in the wilderness with God for the same, sustained without the need of man's food. But what was either miracle compared with the position of Jesus? For Him, the Son, to be with God was, and had been from all eternity, His natural place, so to speak; but now He was come down to the earth, a man among men, and in the wilderness, to which sin had reduced this fair creation, He is for forty days tempted (So Luke 4:2) of Satan. Man was not there, but the wild beasts were, as our Evangelist so forcibly adds; and there, too, the angels were ministering to Him. It was all His wondrous preparation for a service no less wondrous.20 We have seen thus far in Christ the great preparatives for the service of God, the first of them, at least and of course,

modified by His intrinsic and absolute sinlessness. And such I believe to be in measure true of everyone whom the Lord calls to follow in His own path. There is, first, the owning of our true place before God. And what real enjoyment of our spiritual relationship can there be till we bow before God in the truth of our condition? There may be a sort of joy arising from the thought of sins being forgiven; but forgiveness of sins, however sweet and important, is, after all, but an act — an immense, Divine act — of sovereign grace through the blood-shedding of the Saviour. It is not in itself the existence or the enjoyment of our new definite relationship of sons with the Father. This, along with the seal of the Spirit, is what is next given. We, too, led by the Spirit, have the happy witness that we are the children of God. But, following this, there must be the consciousness of what the power of Satan is, and of the wilderness too, before there can be the full ability to serve others in the power of God.

Mark 1:14-20.

Matt. 4:12-22; Luke 4:14, 15, Luke 5:1-11.

“But after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the glad tidings [of the kingdom16] of God.” This was the fitting moment for his public ministry. It was an hour little suited for nature, when Messiah’s forerunner was tasting the enmity of the world; but Jesus came not to escape the sorrows of love in a hating world, but to make known what God is, in spite of — yea, because of — such a world. Therefore He says: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God17 has drawn nigh. Repent and believe in the glad tidings.” There was no more delay for the testimony of grace. it

was no question of the law, but of repentance and believing in the Gospel. But though it was now the time for Divine action, grace will have sharers of its own joy. Accordingly, we have Simon and Andrew, James and John, called to become fishers of men. They had known and believed in Jesus before, but now they must follow and be with Him. Boats, nets, father — their earthly property, their ordinary occupation, their natural relationship — must yield to the call of Jesus. Not that all are called to go after Jesus thus; but assuredly it is the Holy Ghost who leads the soul that is born again to call Him Lord. Is this confession to be real or is it unmeaning? By His blood we are redeemed to God. We are not our own; we are bought with a price. He is our Lord, not only in great things, but in the smallest matters of everyday life. And sure I am that a crisis comes in the history of believing souls, when they must be put to the proof how far this is true in their experience. For Satan does seek to tempt us, out of the happy place of the servants of Christ, to make ourselves lords, as it were. Are we seeking our own interests, our own pleasure, our own ease? Are we struggling for our own will? Are we seeking to be something in the world, or, at any rate, something in the Church? What is this but to be lords instead of His servants? But to own Him as Lord, to do His will, this is our own proper business. For this we are saved. This is what He died for, and this is what we ought to live for — to own Jesus Lord. To live for ourselves in anything is to defraud Him of His rights, and it is to deny, so far, the great price He paid to make us His.

Mark 1:21 -28.

Luke 4:31-37.

“And they go into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath He entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes.”23 This is the first and essential point in the ministration of God’s word, that it should be spoken with authority. Flesh may imitate it. The world thinks that self-will is the only thing that can avail to effect any end. But however strong man’s will may seem in the things of men, the certainty of God’s will is the one thing by which the Holy Spirit clothes the word with authority in Divine things. This was pre-eminently the case with Christ, for He alone as man had the Lord always before Him. But even with us there should be the speaking with assurance of God’s mind and will (1 Peter 4), if we speak for God at all; otherwise it would be better to be silent. With the scribes it is not so. They may reason or they may dazzle, as argument or fancy preponderates. But for us it is better not to speak if we have not the certainty of that which God would have spoken at any given time. By speaking uncertainly we only communicate our own doubts or darkness to others. But if we have by grace the certainty of God’s truth, let it be spoken with authority. It is as servant that Christ does so here. He was Himself the perfection of humility; for it is in no way inconsistent with a lowly mind to speak with the fullest authority where we have no doubt about the mind of God.

But next we find “there was18 in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, [Let us

alone]19: what have we to do with thee, Jesus Nazarene? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God. And, Jesus rebuked Him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And When the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him."24 How strikingly these demoniacal possessions appeared in the presence of Jesus! One might almost think, as we read the Gospels, that all then existing and possible cases had been crowded around Him. But the truth is, there may have been as many before, but the presence of Divine light brought it all out then; the presence of Jesus, the Son of God, drove Satan to bay, and withdrew the mask which may previously have covered his victims. And in a degree this may be observed wherever the power of God's truth and holiness are at work. Does He raise a standard? There opposition will at once be felt, and the enemy will declare himself. The unclean spirit would gladly be left alone, but owns the power of the despised Jesus of Nazareth. The power of Satan could but feel the presence and supremacy of the despised of men, but Holy One of God. Jesus, however, rebukes him, and delivers the possessed, to the astonishment of all, who own the new doctrine by reason of the power which judged and expelled the enemy.20

Mark 1:29-34.

Matt. 8:14-16; Luke 4:38-41.

Nor is this all. The Divine word was felt, and demons were forced out. Sickness, too, flees before His touch; and this not only in the individual case of Simon's wife's mother,25 but in crowds of others, miserable and distressed in every form. As to this, indeed, we have but

to humble ourselves before God; for the Church was once the seat of this same wondrous energy of rebuking diseases and casting out devils. They were the powers of the age to come. But God has stripped the Church of her ornaments to our shame, and it becomes us to be humbled for it. Let us, however, turn to Jesus. Unwearied with His day of toil and service for others, at even it was still the same. He evermore carries on His work of love; for “when the sun had gone down, they brought to Him all that were suffering, and those that were possessed by demons, and the Whole city was gathered together at the door, and He healed many suffering from various diseases, and cast out many demons,26 and did not stiffer the demons to speak, because they knew Him.” He refused that mixed testimony. It must be Divine, in order to be accepted of Him.

Mark 1:35-39.

Luke 4:42-44.

But what is so blessed for us and so instructive, too, is the next lovely feature that we find in the Lord as the servant on earth. “In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a desert place, and there prayed.” Occupied though He had been, early and late, with the sorrows of others, yet here we find Him long forestalling the dawn, while it was yet the dark of night, in order to hold intercourse with His Father. And what were the communications between such a Father and such a Son? The Old Testament tells us The Lord Jehovah hath given Me the tongue of the instructed, that I should know how to succour by word him that is weary. He wakeneth morning by morning, He

wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the instructed." (Isa. 50:4) The New Testament tells us how He went a great while before day into a desert place, and there He prayed. And if He thus retired to be with God, Himself the Lord God, before He entered upon the work of the day, can we wonder that we fail so much in outward labour, who fail yet more in this inward intimacy with our Father? Be assured, the secret of holy strength and endurance in service is found there alone.

Mark 1:40-45.

Matt. 8:1-4; Luke 5:12-16.

Before we speak of the cleansing of the leper, let us consider a little the structure of our Gospel21 as compared with the others. A close inspection will soon satisfy the reader that Mark follows the order of the facts,22 as does John, with a very slight exception, so far as he gives us a historical account. Neither Luke nor Matthew adheres to the obvious successional order of events: the former, with a view to developing the moral bearings of the facts, recorded the real condition of man and the admirable resources of Divine grace; the latter, so as to manifest more vividly the change of dispensation consequent on the rejection of the Messiah. This I believe to have been the aim of the Holy Spirit in their Gospels respectively, without pretending to say how far the authors may have entered into the far-reaching purposes of God in their own inspired writings. In general, the character of the New Testament inspiration is intelligent communion with the mind of God, and not an instrumental medium only, as was the case ordinarily with the Jewish prophets (1 Peter 1). The great question, however, is as to God's intention; and He

looked to the permanent instruction and blessing of His Church through the written word.

Difference there is, frequent and grave, between the various presentations of the Lord in the Gospels, and this both in the order of the narratives and in the manner in which the separate circumstances and discourses are brought before us. To what are we to attribute these constantly varying shades? Is it to the mere infirmity of good men, who did as well as they could, but could not be expected absolutely to tally, as even the best and ablest will disagree in their thoughts, feelings, apprehensions, and judgments? Or, on the contrary, are we to attribute these seeming discrepancies, not to man's weakness, but to God's wisdom? And are we reverently to ponder their every divergence from one another, as no less fraught with truth than their evident unisons? Not that we would for a moment forget that in the books of Scripture we have the beautiful maintenance of the individual style and manner of the writers. But let us all and always remember that individuality sustained is a very distinct thing from error allowed, and that Divine inspiration neither admits error nor destroys individuality.

That there are numerous and striking differences in the Gospels is plain to all but the most careless reader; that these differences are divinely given, and not the flaws of oversight, is equally certain to the believer. To confess the inspiration of the Evangelists, and withal to attribute to the Gospels mistake of any kind, is to deceive oneself as well as sin against God. Inspiration is no more inspiration if it be compatible with error. To account for the shades of difference, to show how necessary, and reasonable, and divinely perfect they all are, is another

matter, and depends on our measure of spiritual understanding and power; but no Christian ought to hesitate for an instant as to resenting every impeachment of the word of God. Now, God has taken care that of the writers of the Gospels, two (Matthew and John) should be Apostles, and two (Mark and Luke) not, though all, of course, are alike inspired. Further, His wisdom has arranged that, of these two classes, one of each (Mark and John) should adhere to chronological order, and the others (Matthew and Luke) should adopt, to a certain extent, a grouping of facts necessarily different from the simple transcription of the facts as they occurred. It is remarkable that to our Evangelist, though not an Apostle, we are indebted for the clearest view of the historical line of our Saviour's ministry, followed by that which closed and crowned it, from the cross to the ascension. The proofs that Mark, in his brief, rapid, but most graphic sketch, preserves the series intact will appear from time to time as we pursue its course. The fact is stated here, the importance of which, if accepted as true, is manifest; for we thus have a standard of sequence whereby we can measure, as on an absolutely perfect scale, the displacements of Matthew and Luke. We have, then, to consider in detail the principle and objects which the Holy Ghost had in view when He led these Evangelists to gather together certain incidents, miracles, or discourses, taken out of their place, but according to an order quite as real as that of Mark, and, of course, still more proper for their own specific design.

The omission or insertion of particular points in one or more Gospels, not in the rest, is due to the same cause. For example, the first dawning of the true light on the

hearts of Andrew, John, Peter, etc., is given nowhere but in John 1. “He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out” (John 10:3). On the other hand, not John, but the other Evangelists, show us their official summons to follow Christ and become fishers of men; but of these Luke only (Luke 5) furnishes, and this out of its actual date, the details of the miraculous draught of fishes which the Lord caused to act with such searching power on the soul of Peter, as well as on his partners. Otherwise the succession of events in Luke coalesces with that of Mark, save that the former alone opens with the scene in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 9:16-27), which so livingly portrayed the intervention of Divine goodness, Jesus anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power; and, on His rejection by His own people, the overflowing of grace to the Gentiles. Matthew here (Matt. 4:23-25) has no details, but dwells on His preaching and miracles throughout all Galilee, and its widespread fame and effects; after which broad outline follows the Sermon on the Mount, transplanted from its place as to date, so as to give at the outset a fuller exposition of the principles of the kingdom. Mark has not the sermon; his task was not to unfold the character of the kingdom of heaven in contradistinction to the law (as the prophet like unto and greater than Moses does in Matthew), but to recount the works and Gospel ministry of the Lord. Its place, if it had been inserted there, would have been, I believe, in the middle of chapter 3. Thus, the comparison of the chronological line of things in Mark, as being, so to speak, a fixed scale, greatly facilitates our perception of the displacements in Matthew or Luke and our consideration of the Divine wisdom which, in either case, so ordered their accounts.

To return. “There comes a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saving to Him, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” What a picture of helpless misery this leper kneeling before Jesus! not, therefore, without hope, for he besought the Saviour in his deep distress. There was no cure for leprosy; if God cured, there were offerings for cleansing. “Am I God, to kill and make alive,” said the alarmed King of Israel, “that this man sends to me to cure a man of his leprosy?” (2 Kings 5:7) In truth, to be a leper was to be “as one still-born, half of whose flesh is consumed when he comes out of his mother’s womb.” (Num. 12:12) Yet was this leper importunate with Jesus, of whose power he had no doubt. “If Thou wilt, Thou canst cleanse me.” This was the only question in a heart broken down to feel his real condition, his urgent and extreme need. Was Jesus willing? And what an answer came to feeble faith! For God will be God evermore, and surpass even our truest thoughts of Himself. “But Jesus,23 moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and says to him, I will; be thou cleansed.” What new thing was this on earth? A man most surely, yet as surely infinitely more than man: a heart touched with exquisite feelings of pity; a hand stretched to touch a leper! Was this law? Had it been only law, and a mere man in question, there would have been, not the cleansing of the unclean, but the defilement of him who ventured into contact with that loathsome, forbidden object. But descend ever so low as He might in grace, Jesus was the Son of God, a Divine person, who alone of all men could sinlessly say, “I will; be thou cleansed.” No exertion of power could have so met the leper’s wants, his wants of soul as well as of body. The tenderness, the perfect, unselfish love that touched him — what should not this

be to our hearts? Assuredly, it revealed the heart of Jesus as no words alone could have done; and yet the words revealed One who was God on earth. It was Divine grace in man, in Jesus, the perfect servant of God, and the more blessedly serving man's necessities because thus perfectly serving God. Hence immediate cleansing followed, the very reverse of contamination contracted. "And as He spoke,24 immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed."

"And He sharply charged him, and straightway sent him away, and says to him, See thou say nothing to anyone," etc.27 It was of importance that the priest, at the sight of the leper cleansed, should be compelled to own and witness and, as it were, formally take cognizance of the proof that the hand of God was there at work, not now writing judgment on the proud profanity of man, but in the might, and withal deepest condescension, of grace working the cure of abject and otherwise hopeless wretchedness and suffering, the standing type of a sinner. Besides, grace respects and maintains law till death and resurrection bring in another and surpassing and abiding glory for those who have their portion in it by faith; neither does it seek its own credit, but that God in all things should be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

"But he went out and began to proclaim it much, and to spread the matter abroad, so that He could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places; and they came to Him from every quarter." Jesus sought not His own things; and just as in the previous scene (verse 37) human applause was but the occasion of His turning away from the éclat of miracles to other and more despised work, so here He avoids town for

neglected wilds, though ever open to the appeal of need, come whence it may.

We have seen the Lord formally introduced and entering on His public Gospel ministry, endowed with the power of the Spirit and tempted in vain, though to the uttermost, by the devil. We have seen Him, after calling chosen witnesses, expose and expel the unclean spirit which possessed a man. There was the power of God, no less than the authority of the Word. Extreme violent sickness fled and strength was ministered — strength to minister — at His hand; diseases and. demons alike yielded to this Minister of good in an evil day, who sought not their testimony, but the face of His Father, in secret, while men slept. But if preaching the Gospel and driving out devils was His main service, His compassionate heart and hand were open to every cry of need, as the leper proved who came in the abject confession of his misery, whose healing He subjects rigorously to the Levitical law of cleansing, and thus compels the priests themselves to behold, in this very subjection to the law, the evidence of the presence and power of One who was above it.

9 B. Weiss, with corr and most uncials (ABDL, etc.), besides versions, retains “the Son of God,” which Nestle, after Tischendorf, etc., omits with pm and cursives. See Westcott and Hort, Appendix, p. 23. As to what the lecturer understood by “Son of God” here, see his remarks on Mark 13:32.

10 “Isaiah the prophet.” The Sinai, Vatican, Cambridge of Beza, Parisian (L), and St. Gall uncials, with some twenty-five cursives, the most ancient versions and express early citations, preserve the true text. “In the

prophets," though given in the Alex. and most other manuscripts, is an evident correction made to ease the difficulty. Even on human ground it is absurd to suppose that the writer did not know that the first words quoted were from Mal. 3:1, and if inspiration be allowed, the only question is as to the principle of thus merging a secondary in a primary quotation. Cf. the somewhat different use of Jeremiah (from that of Isa. 40:3) in Matt. 27:9, 10. There is purpose in both, which cursory readers have not seen, and so they have been as quick to impute a slip as the later copyists were to eliminate it. But it is as irreverent as unwise and evil to obscure or deny the truth even in such points as these, because the modes of Scripture application differ from those of ordinary men, and we may not at a first glance be able to appreciate or clear up the profound wisdom of inspiration. Kuster's conjecture that the reading was originally "in the prophet" seems a mere effort to get rid of what he did not understand, which really, like such attempts generally, leaves the chief point where it was (B.T., vol. xiii., p. 300 ff.).

11 A

ΓΔ, etc., syrhcl arm. goth., Origen here add "before thee." Edd. omit, as BDL, etc.

12 As to quotations from the Old Testament, see "Lectures on Gospels," p. 162 ff. Cf. note 19 at end.

13 "In thee": so Edd. with BDL, etc., best cursives (33, 69), Old Latin, Syr., etc. "In whom" is the reading of A and later uncials with most cursives.

14 Because of "His association with all in Israel who felt and owned their condition in the sight of God... the Saviour identifying Himself with the godly-feeling

remnant" ("Lectures on the Gospels," p. 19 ff.). Cf. note 19.

15 John 6:27. Cf. note 30.

16 "Of the kingdom" disappears with good reason (BL, etc., 1, 33, 69, Syrsin Vulg.), though most uncials (AD, etc.) and cursives insert the words, the old versions being pretty evenly divided. It is an addition borrowed from Matthew, whose Gospel it suits perfectly (B.T., ubi supra).

17 Matthew uses "kingdom of God" in a few passages where "kingdom of heaven" could not be used (Matt. 6:33, Matt. 12:28, Matt. 21:43). Thus the kingdom of God was there when Christ the King was there; the kingdom of heaven began with Christ going to heaven. By-and-by, when Satan ceases to rule, it will be the kingdom of heaven (and of God too, of course), not in a mystery, but in manifestation. The kingdom of God has also a moral force which kingdom of heaven has not, and in this way is frequently used by St. Paul, and was peculiarly suitable to the Spirit's design in Luke (B. T., March, 18 5 8). See further note 21.

18 "And there was": so ACD and later uncials, Lat. Syrr. (including sin.), Arm. Go. AEth. Edd. with BL, 1, 33 insert "immediately" after "and."

19 "Let us alone (Ah!)." Edd. omit, as BD, Lat. Syrsin pesch, but the words are in A C L, etc., Syrhcl, etc.

20 On verses 23-28, cf. B.T., vol. xxiii., p. 148.

21 Cf. "Lectures on the Gospels," pp. 39-43; on "Matthew," pp. 9, 10, 190-196.

22 See note 4 to Introduction.

23 “Jesus”: so AC

ΓΔ, etc. Edd. (“Workers’ New Testament” not following Nestle) omit, as BD.

24 “As soon as He had spoken”: AC

ΓΔ, most cursives, Vulg. Syrhcl. Edd. omit, as BDL, a few cursives (including 69), Old Latin, Memph., etc.

Mark 2

Cf. “Lectures on Gospels,” pp. 156-161.

Mark 2:1-12.

Matt. 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26.

After an interval spent in desert places with such as flocked to Him by the fame which kept Him from any city, we find our Lord once more in Capernaum; and at once crowds besiege, not the house only, but the very door, to hear the word He was speaking. Alas, Capernaum! wert thou not exalted to heaven? Art thou not brought down to hell? The mighty works done in thee were less mighty than the Word which thus attracted thee, as of one that had a pleasant voice and could play well on an instrument; and yet all fell on heedless hearts and unploughed consciences; and they knew not, though they did know, and will yet, that a prophet, and more than a prophet, was among them. But if the mass listened only with their ears, there was faith which persevered in face of difficulties, and failed not to make its suit to Jesus. What could seem more desperate? The leper at least could come to Him, could beseech, could kneel down to Him: how could the paralytic pierce the throng which severed him from the Saviour? If he could not come himself, he could be brought. And so it was. They come bringing the paralytic on his couch, which was borne of four. “And when they could not come near to Him on account of the crowd, they uncovered the roof28 where he was; and when they had dug it up, they let down the couch on which the paralytic lay.” O Lord, how sweet, how refreshing to Thy heart this

confidence in Thee, this most eloquent, even if unuttered, appeal to Thy love and power! It was faith, not alone of the patient, but of his bearers; and faith, now as ever, gets not only what it asks, but far more and better. “When Jesus saw their faith, he says to the paralytic, Son, thy sins are forgiven [thee].”25 Yes! this was the root of the evil, deeper than either leprosy or paralysis — sin — which man accounts so small a matter, a mere moral scar on the surface! What was sin not to Him who on the cross was made sin? Who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself? Filled with love, and in view of the faith which has there sought Him out, He acts in the sovereignty of grace and pronounces the wondrous words, “Son, thy sins are forgiven [thee].” He who knew all men, and did not commit Himself to them; He who knew God and His handiwork, commits Himself to faith. It may be weak faith, but it is of God, and His eye was quick to see it, and to bless it according to all the love of His heart. “Son, thy sins are forgiven [thee].”

But Satan, too, had his congregation there. “Certain of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why does this man thus speak? He blasphemes. 26 Who can forgive sins but God only?” They were wise in their own conceits; they were judges of law and Gospel, and neither doers of the one nor believers of the other. They were worse. Rejectors of Christ and His mercy, their proud reason disdained the blessed truth of God; their proud self-righteousness spurned and hated that grace of which they never knew the need. The amplest evidence of holy power, the power of God, in opposition to Satan and in compassion to man, had been vouchsafed; but what of that to reasoning scribes, used to the world as it is, and jealous of their own religious

importance? One here below pronouncing the forgiveness of sins to a miserable sinner who had not even sought it! This was in their eves startling, blasphemous, an encroachment on God's prerogative. Not that they cared for God or loved man, but they hated Jesus for His grace; and if it were the truth, their occupation was gone. But no, it could not be; it was unheard of since the world began: "Why does this man thus speak? he blasphemes.29 Who can forgive sins but God only?" Ah! there was the secret; the glory of Jesus was unknown, His Divine dignity entirely left out of the account. The principle they urged was true, the application fatally false. How often this is the rock on which religious unbelievers split and perish!

And yet forthwith He gave them evidence of what and who He was; for He perceived in His spirit that they so reasoned in their hearts, taxed them with their hidden thoughts, and appealed to themselves whether it was easier by a word to convey forgiveness or a bodily cure. Which claim was readiest? Who but a Divine person, or the wielder of Divine power, could say either the one or the other? They were equally easy to God, alike impossible to man. "But that ye may know," says He [in evident reference to Ps. 103:3], "that the Son of man30 hath power [ἐξουσίαν, the right as well as the ability] on earth to forgive sins (He says to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up thy couch, and go to thine house. And immediately he arose, took up his couch, and went out before them all, so that all were amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it thus." The outward sign of power guaranteed the gift of grace and both betokened that He who spoke was the Son of man on earth.

It will be observed that, though the Lord does here appropriate to Himself the double character of mercy, which Israel are yet to attribute to Jehovah in Ps. 103, it is not as Christ or Messiah, properly speaking, but as "Son of man." So He was ever wont to speak. It is the title of His manhood, both in suffering rejection and in glory; as such He blesses faith here, as such He will judge unbelief by-and-by (John 5). Thus He vindicated on earth, by the powers of the world to come, that mercy which forgave the sinful soul before them. What a withering rebuke to cavilling scribes! What a triumphant testimony to the gospel of grace in the name of Jesus! And God does not now leave Himself without a witness, where His Spirit carries to the heart the power of that name, and a witness that fails not to tell on the consciences where there are eyes to see the holy strength and liberty of one previously degraded in sin, and shame, and folly. Sin withers the man, as well as covers him with guilt. He who pardons communicates life and power, to the glory of God; and this as Son of man, the name of mercy to the ruined that bow to Him.

Mark 2:13-17.

Matt, 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32.

The next scene, after the record of His teaching by the seaside, still more opens and manifests the outflowing of grace: the call of Levi, the publican (or Matthew, as he calls himself). What a step and change! From the tax-office to follow Jesus, soon to be an Apostle when the Twelve were ordained (chapter 3)! No trade, no name, was more scandalous in Israel. This was the very occasion for grace, as our Lord proves by His choice. Nor was this all, for as Jesus reclined at table in his

house, “many tax-gatherers and sinners lay at table with Jesus and His disciples; for they were many, and they followed Him.” In Pharisaic eyes31 He could not have gone lower in familiar love, unless He had turned outright to the Gentiles; for shepherds were not more an abomination to the Egyptians than tax-gatherers were to the scribes and Pharisees. Hence, when they saw Him eat with these reprobates, they say, not to Jesus, but to His disciples (for only pride and mischief were in their hearts), “How is it that He eateth and drinketh with tax-gatherers and sinners?” But this effort to undermine Him with His followers, and so to shake them, only draws out from the Lord His own strong, increasingly strong, expression of grace, as well as His exposure of His and their enemies’ self-destructive pride: “When Jesus heard it, he says to them, They that are strong have no need of the physician, but they that are ill. I have not come to call [the] righteous, but sinners.” On their own showing, what claim had they on all He had to bestow?

Mark 2:18-22.

Matt. 1:14-17; Luke 5:33-39.

Next, a similar spirit of dishonesty and ill-will, which entangles the disciples of John also, goes to Jesus about His disciples; for they and the Pharisees, who used to fast,32 came to Him asking why His disciples did not. But the Master stands up in their behalf, and shows that a wisdom above their own led them in their weakness. Where was the sense, the propriety, the reverence in lasting if the Bridegroom was there? John Baptist had announced better things; but Pharisaism despised Jesus, and had no heart for the joys of His presence. Let them

all learn, however, that days were coming when He should be taken away, and then should they fast in that day.

In truth, the whole scene intimated to those who had ears to hear the grave economical change that was at hand, and that Messiah's presence now was but transitional. His call of Levi and His eating and drinking with publicans were no dark signs that Israel as such were lost: the disciples' enjoyment of His brief stay before His taking away plainly signified the abrupt and impending catastrophe — seemingly His, but really theirs; and the verses that follow bear witness to the new character of God's ways therein, and to their incompatibility with Judaism. Neither its displayed form nor its inner power can blend with the old thing: the kingdom of God, being not in word but in power, must have a new and suited vehicle wherein to work. Legal forms only prove their weakness if there be the energy of the Holy Ghost. The worn-out Jewish garment and old skins disappear: new wine demands new skins.33 Christianity, in its principle and its practice, is a fresh and full development of Divine blessing. It was not a question of mending the old, but accepting the new.

Mark 2:23-28.

Matt. 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5.

The incident of the first Sabbath Day is here recorded, which, in point of fact, took place at this very time; for we must constantly bear in mind that Mark pursues the thread of history. Our Lord is intimating the break that was about to take place with Judaism, and the introduction of the new character and power of the kingdom of God. Now, this is a very serious truth always,

but it was peculiarly solemn to Israel. What more perplexes a godly person than the very thought of God changing His mind? What difficulty greater than the notion that God could, as it were, unsay or undo what He had previously laid down? And I think there ought to be great delicacy in dealing with souls where we find there is a godly jealousy as to this, even though it may be ignorant and not without prejudice. But, still, it was the evident fact that what God set up for a specific purpose in Israel never fully reflected His own mind. Eternal truth, breaking through the clouds of Judaism, shone out in the person of Christ, and is now verified in experience as well as faith by the Spirit's working in the children of God.

In a word, it was never the purpose of God to reveal Himself and bring out all His mind in connection with the Jews, but with the Church. Christianity, and not Judaism, is the expression of God's mind. Christ Himself, properly speaking, is the image of the invisible God, and Christianity is the practical present result. It is the application of the life, mind, and affections of Christ to the heart and walk of those who are brought to God; and this, founded on His work and correspondent to His place in heaven by the Spirit sent down. All through the Jewish system, as well as before it, there were souls waiting for Christ, and the only persons that ever honoured God in the Jewish system were those who, by faith, were above that system. Those alone walked blameless in the various ordinances of the law who looked for the Messiah. It was this expectation, given by the Spirit of God, which lifted them above the earthly thoughts, the grovelling desires, the selfishness of nature. It raised them above themselves, if one may so

say, as well as above their fellows, for there is always Divine power in Christ; and although it was far more fully displayed after Christ came, yet, as one may see before the sun rises there is such a thing as the dawn, and streaks that betoken the coming day, so those who looked by the faith of Christ beyond the mere passing shadows which met and satisfied the religiousness of nature — those only honoured God even in the outward ordinances of Israel. It is the same principle now as ever, but in a fuller way, because nothing is more certain than that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the saint of God, in the Christian. But how is it fulfilled? Never merely by endeavouring to keep the law. It never was fulfilled in that way, nor can be. In point of fact, as we know, the men that were thus jealous for the law were themselves the greatest and bitterest of the enemies of the Lord Jesus. You know it was fleshly pride as to the law which blinded them into the delusion that even our blessed Lord Himself did not sufficiently honour it. We easily gather that Paul was taxed with the same reproach; and Stephen, too, was stoned to death because of this fertile and fatal mistake. So that we may lay it down as a fixed point that the men who put the ordinances, or the outward regulations of God, in the place of God and Christ Himself are men that never keep it; even as Stephen told the Jews that they received the law by the disposition of angels, and had not kept it. These were the men whose voices were loudest about it to those who really honoured God in that law as well as in the faith of the Messiah.

Take every believer — I do not say on every occasion, for there is, sad to say, a danger of our own nature working, and that nature neither believes in Jesus nor keeps the

law, but is a law-breaking, Christ-denying thing: the flesh is enmity against God Himself, and nature working its own way always dishonours God — but take the believer, not when he is yielding to his own corrupt nature; take him where, in truth alone, so to speak, we can rightly think of a believer as such, in the exercise of his faith, in the manifestation of the new life which the grace of God has given him, and what is the character of this life? It cleaves to God, it delights in His word, it loves His will, it is attracted by whatever manifests Him. All proves that the believer loves God in heart and soul, loves Him better than himself — for he hates himself, and is ready to own, lust so far as faith is in operation, his own folly, his frequent and shameful failure, while he seeks to justify and cleave to God, and delights to make Him known. How comes this? It is that Divine principle of life, the energy of the Spirit of God, acting in the new man which enjoys each thing that flows from and displays God, and is the exercise of the new nature which we derive from God. Again, the believer, just in proportion as he has Christ before his soul, walks in the Spirit according to the will of God. If he has not Christ before him, it is as if he had no new nature. Life is there, but it is only Christ that maintains, and manifests, and brings it out, giving its full exercise and scope. The believer's heart goes out towards misery — yea, towards poor guilty sinners. Flesh despises and hates, or is indifferent; but the new nature, under the Spirit's power, goes out in compassion and desire for another's blessing. There, I say, is love again; and thus you have the two great moral principles, love to God and love to man. The believer, and the believer alone, walks in them. If he has Christ in his eye, he has them in his heart, and the Holy Ghost strengthens him to walk accordingly. It is

thus that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those that walk after the Spirit. The Spirit of God is careful to show it is fulfilled in them that walk after the Spirit, not in such as only stand for the law.

Take the Jew, to whom the law was given. Does he manifest real love? I do not say that some are not upright men, possessed of natural benevolence. The question now is of the manifestation of active love to God and man. If men have merely the law before them, what then? The Jew himself is the most striking example and proof that flesh is good for nothing; he is bent upon his own things in this world, coveting a place everywhere, loving money, and so on, of which we are all of us apt to be guilty by nature. Undoubtedly this is the case with the mere unconverted Israelite or the nominal Christian, in whom the Holy Ghost does not act. Unless Christ, either as an object of hope before He came or now since He has come as the object of faith, be before the heart, there is no reality, nor can be, because the flesh is a false and hating thing. Unless a man have a new nature distinct from and above his own, there never is true — that is, Divine — love. The one means of accomplishing the law is to have Christ before and above us, yet in that our portion by faith. Hence it was that Enoch and Noah, and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who never heard of the law, yet obeyed and pleased God. Were they not holy and godly men? Certainly they were. What made them so? The faith of the woman’s seed, the promised Son, the Messiah. Then, when the law was given, what was it that made Moses and Aaron saints of the Lord? The law? Never. It was Christ. It was having Him before their soul. Not that God’s law was not honoured, but what enabled them to

delight in the expression of God's mind — be it what it might — was their looking for and believing in God's blessed promise of the coming Deliverer, the Kinsman-Redeemer. And now He is come, that which has delivered us from wrath and judgment delivers us also, in proportion as it is the object of our souls, practically from self and the world, from corruption and violence of every kind. Let Christ be forgotten by a believer, what is the effect? He shows the pride, vanity, foolishness, malice, of the old man. It is not, of course, what is proper to him as a believer, but what belonged to him as a man before he believed. Self is allowed to come out and show its own hateful colours when Christ is not the one standard and object who fills the mind's eye and heart.

Now, our Lord, at this very time, brings out, in His pointed acts connected with the Sabbath Day, an illustration of what has been before us, and I take this opportunity of dwelling on it a little in a practical way and also doctrinally, seeking the instruction for our own souls that the Lord gives us in these incidents. It is. true that the first and primary object was to fill up what He had already shown. To put a new piece upon an old garment would only make the rent worse; so to pour new wine into old bottles would only risk the loss both of the wine and the bottles. The attempt to mix the new forms and spirit of the kingdom of God with the old ways of Judaism, would only end, not in mending Judaism, nor in preserving Christianity, but in the ruin of both. And this precisely has been the issue in the history of Christendom. The palpable failure of the outward Christian profession is the practical evidence of this truth. What Satan aimed at was to mingle together the

old Jewish ordinances with Christian truth, and the result is such painful confusion that the light of truth and the grace of God are utterly darkened — such a complete jumbling together that simple souls are perplexed, to their exceeding loss and damage. They cannot in such a state see the difference between grace and law, and what it is to be brought under the name of Christ. All these things are dim before them, and hence ensues uncertainty of soul and powerlessness practically in glorifying God.

Our Lord follows this up by the instruction of the Sabbath Day. “It came to pass that He went through the corn-fields on the Sabbath, and His disciples, as they went, began to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said to Him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath that which is not lawful?” Now, it is clear that there was no law of God against the case. The censure was a law of their own, and a notion of men which looks upon an outward fact and makes a system of it — man’s constant danger. It is quite true that God had ordained upon the Sabbath Day rest for man and beast, but there was no ground whatever from the law ‘ of God to forbid a hungry man, as he passed through a field, from plucking the ears of corn to satisfy his want — nay, it was thoroughly according to the beneficence of God to provide from His’ people’s plenty for such urgent need. There was remarkable care in Israel for the stranger, the bereaved, and the suffering. The poor in the land were not to be forgotten in the joy of harvest, and an express ordinance of God forbade their making clean riddance of the corners of the field. But how came it to pass that there should be famished Israelites thus passing through a cornfield? And if such want existed, was it God or His

enemy who turned the Sabbath Day into an iron vice for afflicting the sad at the will of heartless religionists? Thus it was that the Pharisees, in their pretended desire to honour God on the one side, showed, on the other, their complete ignorance of His heart and character, which breathed the fullness of mercy towards want and wretchedness; all was set aside by the miserable codicil that man added to the will of God. But there was One on earth who at once detected the forger's hand that presumed to meddle with the first testament. The Lord stands up for the guiltless. "Have ye never read what David did when he had need and hungered, he and they that were with him? how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar. — [the]27 high-priest,34 and ate the shewbread, which it is not lawful save for the priests to eat, and gave also to them that were with him?"

Our Lord here points to the rejection of the object of God's counsels — of David, for instance, in his day, who was the anointed king, even while he was the despised one and hunted for his life upon the mountains of Israel. He and his company typified Jesus, and Jesus was found now in circumstances morally similar to those of David, anointed, but not yet come to the crown. Thus it is that the Lord vindicates the disciples and maintains the principle that when God's witness is refused it is madness for the rejectors to pretend to be glorifying God. Were they then despising a greater than David? For such to talk about the Sabbath Day, in order to lay heavier burdens on the righteous, what was it in God's eyes? The Lord of glory was upon earth, and how came it that His disciples wanted even ears of corn to stay their hunger? What a tale this told! How was it that the disciples of Jesus were thus miserable? How out of

course must be the foundations for the Lord and His disciples to lack the most ordinary necessaries of life! Who were these praters of malicious words about the Sabbath Day that could forbid even this scanty pittance, while God's mercy would refuse to none, and least of all on that day? But that the Pharisees, rejecting the Lord Jesus, their own Messiah — that they should have the face to abuse the Sabbath against His disciples! David, when he was in destitution because of the wickedness of Saul, who held the throne in an evil way — David and his followers could eat the shewbread, which was only, had things been in order, for the priests. If thus the hallowed bread became common, what was the past to the present? In the presence of the evil that despises God's beloved and faithful witnesses in the earth, the outward ordinances of the Lord lose their application for the time being. The sanctity of ritual disappears before the rejection of the Lord and His people.

"And He says to them, The Sabbath was made on account of man, and not man on account of the Sabbath." The Sabbath was not intended to be a means of increasing the sufferings of poor man. If God sanctified it after the creation, and enacted it at the giving of the law, was it that God wanted to make His people miserable? On the contrary, not only in its higher character and beside the thought of His rest, of which it is a type, the Sabbath was made for man. Pharisees might turn the Sabbath into an engine for torturing man, but, in God's mind, the Sabbath came in most mercifully. There were the days of labour which God Himself had known something of in figure, for there was a time when He had wrought and made the earth; and God Himself was pleased to rest on the Sabbath, and to

sanctify it. Then sin came in, and God could no longer own it, and His word is silent. We read of the Sabbath no more until God takes up His people in delivering mercy, and gives them manna from heaven. Then the Sabbath Day becomes again a marked thing, and rest follows, the type of Jesus sent down from above. It disappears from the beginning of the first book of Scripture and reappears in the second. God makes rest once more. He was giving to man in grace when He brought Israel out of Egypt. Of this the Sabbath was the appropriate sign. But Israel, understanding not the grace of God, accepted the conditions of His law. They took their stand upon their own righteousness when God gave them the Ten Commandments, and the consequence was that man under law failed miserably, dishonouring God, setting up calves of gold, bringing discredit, shame, and scandal upon the name of God throughout the whole world. This is no more than we have each done. The Israelites made this fatal mistake when they surrounded Mount Sinai. Instead of reminding God of His promise to Israel, instead of confessing that they could not be trusted, and that it is only the mercy of God that enables anyone to do His will, they, on the contrary, undertook boldly to earn the promised blessings by their own obedience. But they broke down increasingly, till it came to the crisis of David’s rejection in Israel. God showed where His heart was, as He loves to do at such a time. Granted that the shewbread was only for the priests, yet for them to keep their consecrated bread and let the anointed king starve would be strange homage to God and the king. And now the Son of David, the Lord of David, was there, and more rejected, more despised, than David himself.

The Lord, after He has thus drawn out of Scripture the true lesson for the day, brings out the general beneficent object of God in the Sabbath for all days. “The Sabbath was made on account of man.” The Pharisees thought and spoke as if man was made for the Sabbath, to be put under it thus; but the Sabbath was made for man’s good and rest, raising his thoughts above the mere labour of his hands. But He brings in another principle: “The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath also.” He connects that with the Sabbath being made for man, but breaks out into a greater truth: the person of Christ is above all ordinances. His glory, even as the rejected man, eclipses all the twinkling rites instituted by the Lord Himself. I have no hesitation in saying that the Lord who gave the law at Sinai, and He who afterwards was born and lived a man upon the earth, was the same blessed Divine person. He who always acted throughout the Old Testament in government, who came down and suffered and died upon the cross in grace, He now maintains, not merely that He is Lord of the Sabbath in virtue of being Divine, but of being Son of man; and what is the importance of this? “Son of man” is the title of His rejection. “Son of man” is the name that He assumed when the Jews refused Him as the Messiah. You will find a remarkable proof of this in Matt. 16:13 and Luke 9:18 (the same fact recorded in the two different Evangelists). He forbids His disciples to say that He was “the Christ.” He leaves aside for a while the glory of His Messiahship: as such He had come and presented Himself to the Jews, but they would not have Him. Now He says, as it were, It is too late: I have given them ample proof — miracle, prophecy, My own ways and words. Everything shows that I am the Messiah, but they will not have Me. It is not that proof is wanting, but their

hearts are steeled against all evidences. They are the enemies of God, and proved to be such by refusing what God has fully vouchsafed. Now He takes another character altogether — “Son of man.” And what may well and deeply affect us is this — it is as Son of man that He suffers on the cross. “The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.” “The Christ” was a title in particular connection with Israel after the flesh. He was their Messiah. He belonged to no other nation. He was the promised King of the Jews. But the Jews would not have Him. Well, says the Lord, you cannot deny that I am Son of man. It is a lowly name, but, after all, the Son of man opens the way to His magnificent rights and glory over all mankind. The Son of man comes in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The Son of man takes the kingdom over all tribes, and nations, and tongues. What leads to it all? His rejection as Messiah. He suffers as Son of man first, because it is determined, according to God’s counsels and grace, to have companions with Him in the very same glory. It is through that very same fact that Christ has suffered as the Son of man, and has surely taken His glory because of it, that we shall be with Him — that all Christians will be without a spot or stain, or any such thing, all through the suffering Son of man. But if I have Him humbled, I have the glorious Son of man.

In the present case, however, the Lord does not go further than “The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” He accepts His rejection, but He pleads for His disciples before those who boasted and disputed about the Sabbath, while they were dishonouring the

Lord of the Sabbath. Could they deny what David had done, and God had scaled, sanctioned, and recorded for Israel's instruction? That is the first defence. The next is that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for it. The third plea, which is rather a consequence, is that He who was a blessed Man - the Son of man — is Lord of the Sabbath. It is the glory of His person as the rejected, suffering Man: as such, and not only as God, He is above the Sabbath Day - its Lord.35 25 "Thee": so Acorr, with later uncials and most cursives. Edd. omit, with BD, etc.

26 "Thus speak? he blasphemes": so Edd. with BDL, Amiatine of Vulg., Memph.; whilst ACG, etc., Syrpesch hcl Arm. Goth. AEth. have "Why does he thus speak blasphemies?"

27 "[The]": Edd. omit with BL

Γ, etc. It is inserted in C

Δ, etc., and in cursives 1, 33, 69. is neutral.

Mark 3

Mark 3:1-6.

Matt. 12:9-14; Luke 6:6-11.

Jesus is in the synagogue upon another Sabbath Day, and there was a man there which had a withered hand, and they watched Him whether He would heal him on the Sabbath Day, that they might accuse Him. How remarkable it is that Satan gets an instinctive sense of what the Lord was going to do. Satan outwits himself in his servants by expecting good from the Lord and the Lord's people. This is a remarkable thing. Again, if you find a child of God doing something wrong the world feels it at once. Even they have an instinctive feeling of what the child of God ought to do. They know that he has no business with the pleasures and vanities of the world. They are surprised to see a Christian there. Why is this? They have not a bit of conscience themselves. Those who have got a purged conscience or those who have got no conscience at all are far more likely to see what is right than those that carry a bad conscience. The man who had no conscience at all offers to follow the Lord wherever He goes. There was no struggle in it, no reality, no moral purpose. It was the mere vanity of the flesh, the same kind of presumption that said, "All that Jehovah has spoken will we do." (Ex. 19:8) The flesh always assumes its own competency, whereas faith feels that it is only God who can work anything good, and can ripen the fruits from trees of His own planting.

These men, I must repeat, who were assembled in the synagogue expected the Lord to do good. They were

looking for this; but they judged from their own thoughts what an awful thing it would be to heal on the Sabbath Day! Our Lord knew what they thought about it, but faith and love are very different things from human prudence. Mere prudence would have led a man not to have given them the smallest excuse, but grace does not mind giving people handles if they are disposed to take them. Grace is bent upon pleasing God, whether people like it or not, and Jesus therefore says to the man that had the withered hand, “Stand forth.” He gives it a publicity, and stamps the character of the transaction in the most manifest manner — makes it a sign of what grace is before them all. “He saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath or to do evil? to save life or to kill? But they were silent, and when he had looked round about on them with anger, being distressed at the hardening of their hearts, he says to the man, Stretch out thine hand, and he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.”28 But those that would not let our Lord do what was good were ready, even as He hinted Himself, to do what was evil on the Sabbath Day. They conspired to kill Him, the Lord; and to kill Him for what? Because He brought the goodness of God before their very eyes, and they hated God. They would not have allowed it to themselves for a moment that Jesus was even a good man, so blind and perverted is the judgment when the heart is not right! All the grace of Jesus only appeared to their eyes as the most abominable iniquity. We may well think what the heart of man is, and learn hence what our own natural thoughts and feelings are — not a whit better than theirs. The point of this second tale is not so much the passing away of mere ordinances in presence of the rejected Christ, or the supremacy of His person above the highest earthly claim; rather is it

the necessary superiority of grace as God's character and work in a world of sin and misery. How came this man with a withered hand in Israel? It was through sin somewhere, and the evident token of misery. Could God rest where there reigned either the one or the other? Was either the manifestation of God? And what were these proud Sabbatarians, these enemies of grace and of Jesus? Were they or was He the true witness of what God is? Not more surely were they false representatives of God's character than Jesus was the manifestation of God's power as well as of His love. Jesus showed both in that word, "Stretch out thine hand," and by its restoration proved that God, the Goodness of goodness, was there. And He was there, not maintaining the Pharisees in their thoughts about His law, but vindicating His own grace, for grace alone can bring blessing into a sin-stricken world. This may suffice for the general teaching of the second Sabbath Day, which I think is full of instruction, as giving us the witness that our Lord bore His patient, gracious ministry in deed as well as in word.

But a few words must now be said upon our relation to the Sabbath. When God sanctified and instituted that day, whether you take the time of creation or the giving of the law, it was emphatically the seventh day and no other. No man could have been thought to honour God had he kept the fourth or fifth, or any other but the last day of the week. Instead of this, to have kept the first day of the week would have been an act of rebellion against God. How comes the mighty change? Is it that the first day is simply substituted for the seventh day? Is this what Scripture teaches? Taking the Acts of the Apostles, we find there that the Apostles and others

used to go on the Sabbath Day into the synagogue of the Jews — used to teach the Jews on that day whenever there was an open door. On the first day they used to meet with Christians to take the Lord's Supper, or at any other services which might open. There was no such thing as dropping one day for another. Had it been a substitution they would not still have gone on the Sabbath Day with the Jew, and on the first day with the Christian. Yet they did both. At first such of the Christians as had been Jews went to the synagogue, and they were at liberty to take a part in reading Scripture. If this were done now generally the person would be considered an intruder, but in a Jewish synagogue it was allowed and welcomed. The Apostles, therefore, and others were perfectly justified in using this liberty for the truth; they were acting in the spirit of grace. Wherever we can go with a good conscience, and without joining in anything that is contrary to the Word of God, there one may and ought to go if it would be a service to the Lord. But where one is required to join in that or with those we know to be opposed to the will of God, how are we free to go? Are we at liberty in anything to make light of what we know to be disobedience? But in this case there was nothing of the kind, for at the synagogue they simply read the Word of God and gave leave that it should be expounded. Who could say that this was wrong? If we knew that the Scripture and nothing but the Scripture was read upon any day of the week in a so-called church or chapel, and there were perfect room left to help, should one not be delighted to go, if, indeed, there would not be a kind of obligation upon us? If it were a mere crowd of heathen reading the Scriptures, one might enter it and speak

with them. The door would be, I believe, open on the Lord's part, and grace would take advantage of it.

These facts are enough, then, to show that it is a great mistake to suppose that the Lord's Day is a mere substitution for the Sabbath. On the contrary, the Lord's Day has a far higher character than the ancient day of rest. Not that one would for a moment forget that the Sabbath Day was divinely appointed. It was founded upon two great truths of God. First, it involved and displayed and promised, as it were (in type at least), creation-rest; it witnessed rest after God had finished His work of creating. The second notable connection with the Sabbath Day was this — it was the day of law. On these two occasions of surpassing moment to man and Israel was the Sabbath brought out by God with peculiar solemnity. The Sabbath Day rests, therefore, upon Divine ground, but it is the ground of creation and law. Is either of the two the Christian place? In no wise. Are you a mere child of man, a creature now? Then you are assuredly sinful, and must be cast into hell. Are you on the ground of law? Then you are lost and condemned, for you are under the curse. But the Christian is on the footing neither of creation nor of law. On what is he, then? He belongs to the new creation and stands in grace — the clean, exact contrast of the foundations of the Sabbath Day. Hence it is that the first day of the week comes before us as a wholly new thing, the holy memorial of Divine blessing, proper to the Christian individually and to the Church of God. And on what basis does it rest? When Christ rose from the grave with a new life to give to every soul that believes in Him at once Israel is set aside. Risen from the dead, what more connection had He with Israel than with the Gentiles?

He was entirely above them both. We meet Him there, His work done, in resurrection-life. He is found after that meeting with disciples only, not with Jews and Gentiles, but in the midst of the assembly or that which is the type of it. But He first meets with individual saints, Mary Magdalene and others. We find Him in the assembly on the first day of the week. And the Lord's Day has this character to us now. It is first the day of Christ's resurrection, when not merely the work of redemption was done, but the work of new creation begun in mighty power. Thus the new day is founded, not upon creation, but upon redemption, and it is the expression of grace, not of law.

These are the Scriptural ways of putting the matter. Therefore is it to be maintained not that the Christian man has got no special day in which he meets his Saviour, for he has one incomparably more blessed than the Sabbath of man. It is not that he has not got as good a day as the Sabbath of Israel: he has an infinitely better one. He is not merely remembering a creation which is passed away, but he has entered on a new creation. Not that he is occupied with a paradise that is lost; he looks onward confidently to that which is gained. The paradise of God is opened to him. It is not that he is following and occupied with Adam that fell; he has before his soul the second man, the last Adam, that rose. These are our hopes. He is not, therefore, within the domain of the law that will curse him, but in the atmosphere of grace by which he is saved. This shows us why people, whether they understand the difference or not — all Christians — keep the first day and not the Sabbath. They may call it the Sabbath Day, but this is quite a mistake, and a grievous one. Those who view it as the Sabbath may be

most excellent persons, but the notion is seriously an error in doctrine and practice. It is an earthly Jewish principle, and it is a Christian's duty, if he know better, not to spare it, however he may feel for the prejudices of the godly.

I have heard of believers who could say, There is no harm in working upon the Lord's Day. Who put such a thought into their heads? Seeking gain upon the Lord's Day! Why, even the world shames those who do so. Christendom owns the Lord's Day. They may not enter into it intelligently. It is impossible for them to appreciate its roots and fruit. But a Christian behaving more selfishly or loosely than a worldly man — what a picture! How is the Lord's Day, then, to be kept? It is a remarkable fact that nowhere is it made into a commandment. This is not the character of Christianity. When the Lord (as in John) speaks about commandments, they are always of a spiritual nature, and not like an ordinance. Take even Baptism. People may call it an ordinance, but it is a misconception. So as to the Lord's Supper. When the Lord says, "Do this in remembrance of Me," how lowering to call this a commandment! Supposing you were at the dying bed of one who loved you better than anyone else in this world. If he said, Here is my Bible, take it and keep it in remembrance of me, would you call this a commandment? Would it be the reason for keeping the Bible that you had a peremptory injunction to keep it? Such a thought would show that there was no heart there, and very little head either. I can understand a person in authority, if a child lacked feeling and sense, laying down something as a positive charge, just because the child wanted heart to do the right thing,

unless it were made a matter of stringent obligation and penalty. But not so does the Lord speak to us. If you love the person who gives you the Bible to keep in remembrance of him it is not as a mere commandment, but his heart gives you this token of his love to you, and your love keeps it, of course, and keeps it best because it is love that does it.

There are places where commandments come in most beautifully. Where in the New Testament do you hear of commandments most? In the Gospels, where the Lord's Supper, Christian Baptism, or both, are shown out, commandments to the Christian are not, as such, mentioned. On the other hand, it is in the Gospel of John that we have the Spirit of God so full of the new commandments that the Lord lays upon us. These were the expressions of His mind. They brought in, not His love only, but His authority, which is blessed whenever it does come in, and the child of God loves and values both thoroughly. But if you bring in such thoughts into the Lord's Supper, what a complete misapprehension of the Lord's mind! It falsifies Baptism and the Lord's Supper to change them into things enjoined in the way of commandment. They are the most precious institutions of the Lord, the symbol and acknowledgment of the great standing facts of Christianity.

As to the Lord's Day, I must again recall the remarkable manner in which it is introduced in the New Testament. There is no positive word such as, "The first day of the week thou shalt keep." Wickedness thence infers that it is not to be kept. Some take advantage not to observe the day because the Lord does not make it a matter of positive command. Another class take advantage of it in another form, and assume that it is the business of the

Church to decide in such matters. One is human laxity, and the other the self-importance of man. The Lord's Day comes before us as those that are quickened with Christ, stamped with His own special presence. Christ was, and I believe is, with His disciples in a manner peculiar to that day. I do not say that the Lord did not visit His disciples upon other days. but He was specially and pre-eminently with them gathered together on that day. This is enough for me. If I own the Word of God as that which has supreme power over my soul, if I value every act of Christ as that from which I am to gather Divine instruction, how can this be lost upon me? But the Holy Ghost follows it up. That day which our Lord consecrated with His own presence in the midst of His gathered saints, the Holy Ghost impresses upon His people. It is not brought out in the form of law or injunction or threat; but the Church of God, whatever other days they might meet on, took especial care to meet on this day. There was also a sweet connection between the Lord's Supper and His day. The earliest disciples took that supper every day; they seemed as if they could hardly part when they got together, and they came together as often as they could, and everything gave place to this. Not that I think that the Pentecostal state of things was the most maturely blessed. There was singular power of simplicity in them, and very wonderful manifestation of Divine grace; but I have little doubt there were many souls that went on and grew and enjoyed the Lord more than they ever did on that day. It is an evil, unfounded notion, because the flesh constantly tends to draw the believer back from the first enjoyment of the Lord, to think that therefore it must be so. There is no necessity for declension at all. There is a kind of first fervour and freshness that is very apt to be

lost in the soul; but if there is real integrity of heart to the Lord, positive growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ will follow. And although there may be a certain kind of joy that is not so great at the end of ten or twenty years as it was on the first day of coming to the knowledge of the Saviour, yet I do not believe that it is therefore a more spiritual state or more glorifying to God. One is the blessedness of an infant, the other of a full-grown soul, more firmly, calmly, unselfishly, it may be, honouring God in its way, provided the soul, along with increase of knowledge, maintains its singleness of heart to the Lord. That is where we fail; but as far as the power of the Spirit of God goes, there is no reason why a soul should not be as happy after fifty years as at the first.

In the course of the New Testament I think you find this very thing — the Spirit of God taking up the first day, and showing that it was not merely a hasty feeling of the disciples, but a truly godly one. The Spirit of God directed it when the Apostles were there, and not only leads them on, but preserves the record of the fact for us. Therefore, in Acts 20:7, we have it recorded that so it was after the Jerusalem-state, when they went up to the Temple to worship, and used to break bread at home. For, let me say in passing, the margin [of the A.V.] is correct; it is in contrast with worshipping in the Temple. They used to pray in the Temple because they had been Jews, and they took their Christian feast at home. Now, it may have been always the same houses where persons went. There is no such idea as moving about from house to house, but it was at home — i.e., in a private house and not in the Temple. After this state of things was passed away, we hear of assembling to break

bread on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week. And, when we think of it, there is peculiar force and blessedness in the first day of the week being the Christian day. What is the idea of the Sabbath Day? I take the first six days to myself, to the world, to earthly things, and then at the end of it, when I may be tired of serving myself and other people, I finish up with the Lord, and give the last day to Him. But now how beautifully the Christian form of the truth comes in! It is the first day. I begin with the Saviour. I begin with His grace. I begin with Him that died for me and rose again. I am not a Jew, I am a Christian, and therefore let us not forget it is the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, for the one, but the first day, which is the Lord's Day, for the other — the day of Him who by His own blood, death, and resurrection has acquired a just title for my eternal and heavenly blessing. He had it in His own person: He was Jehovah the Lord of all, before ever He came into the world; but now He is Lord on another ground — that of redemption, because He has died and risen. There is at once the open door of my blessing — of your blessing — Divine blessing to every poor soul that is brought by grace to receive Him and bow to Him.

We will not dwell further upon this subject now. I have desired to convey with simplicity the general principle of these two Sabbath Days. Instead of pursuing the subjects of the chapter for the present, it seemed better to bring out the Divine character of the Sabbath Day, and the still more blessed and equally Divine character of the first day, the one being the day for the Jew, the other for the Christian. The Sabbath Day will reappear on the earth in the millennium. I mean that the seventh day of the week will be then kept by the Jews. The

prophecies are plain that the Sabbath of the Lord is yet to be observed. But by whom? By Israel and by the Gentiles too, for the Gentiles by-and-by will be subordinate to Israel, and both on earthly ground. God's intention is to exalt Israel to the first place on the earth. Meanwhile what becomes of Christians? They will be taken out of the earth altogether, they will be in heaven; all question of particular days will be completely at an end; we shall be in the day of eternity, we shall have entered upon the rest of God, the sabbatism that remains. In spirit we have done so even now, because we have received Christ and eternal life in Christ. But then we shall be manifestly in the eternal day, when there will be neither first day nor last day, but one infinity in the glorified state, blessedly serving our God and the Lamb. But upon the earth, when Israel will be restored and brought back to their own land, and converted by God's goodness there, will they observe the Lord's Day? No; they will keep the Sabbath. If you look at Ezekiel you will see the force of it exactly. You might be able from thence to form a map of Israel's condition in the land; it is given there so distinctly and positively that a person might with little trouble lay down the landmarks of each tribe of Israel.29 Thus clear is the Word of God as to the future disposition of each tribe within the borders of the Holy Land. They will have not only a glorious city and temple — the name of it "Jehovah is there"30 — but when that day of glory comes they will not be as we are, keeping the day of resurrection, but the Sabbath, which was a sign between the Lord and Israel. Looking at the Scriptures, you will find how often the Sabbath Day is said to be Jehovah's sign to them, and He will cause His people then to keep the Sabbath Day. They will do so in a far more blessed way than ever they did; they will rest

upon Christ, though they will not have the same heavenly assurance that the Christian has now. When Christ rose from the dead He had done with the world, and we, too, in Him have done with the world now in the spirit of our souls, and in the character of our relationship to God. “They are not of the world.” How far? “Even as I am not of the world.” (John 17:16) Christ is the measure and standard of how far we are not of the world, and not being of the world we have a day that bears the stamp of joy upon it. The day that Christ rose from the dead and was manifested as not of the world — that is the day for the Christian. But inasmuch as the world will be made a blessed world then, and the Lord will make it His own world, they will have a day suited for the world — the Sabbath Day. Nothing can be more plain or more important practically.

May our souls, each of us for himself, learn the truth, and, having learnt it, may we be witnesses of it in word and deed! May we stand forth by His grace as those who now have nothing to do in this world but the will of God, for the glory of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! That is the business of every soul that loves Jesus, and rests upon His blood, and is risen with Him.36

Mark 3:7-12.

Matt. 12:15-21; Luke 6:17-19.

Jesus was now made manifest in the holy grace and power of His ministry, the vanquisher of Satan, and withal subject to God, superior to ordinances even as Son of man and the asserter of God’s right to do good in an evil world. Much as man might like to profit for his own interests by His power and the mercy in which it was wielded, enmity to God in Him soon displayed itself.

The self-righteous and the profane take counsel how to destroy Him.

But, His hour not being yet come, Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea, retiring from the hypocritical malice of His enemies, but unwearied on the errand of love on which He was sent. “And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem,37 and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things He did, came to Him. And He spake to His disciples that a small ship should wait on Him because of the crowd, lest they should press upon Him. For He healed many; so that they beset Him, that they might touch Him, as many as had plagues.” After all, how little can man arrest the stream of blessing! Till God’s time arrives to yield to the cross the stream of testimony may be diverted, but it will flow to the eternal joy of the poor and needy who bow to Jesus. In the cross it overflowed. But the Lord, intent on the best blessings for man, provides against the overpressure of a crowd too engrossed in the relief of bodily weakness and suffering; while He refuses the testimony of the unclean spirits, compelled to bow and own His glory. It was not for such to make Him known. He received not testimony from man as such, much less from demons.38 What was the value of any recognition of His person unless it were of God’s own working by the Spirit?

Mark 3:13-19.

Matt. 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16.

Far, however, from hiding the light under a bushel our Master now enters on a new and momentous step in the

testimony of grace. “And He goes up into the mountain39 [for ministry has its source on high, and in nowise has its sanction from the multitude] and calls whom He Himself would31; and they went to Him, and He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power [to heal diseases and] to cast out demons.”32 It was an act not only new and strange to man’s eye, but in truth independent of Israel and man, and most significant in every point of view. The Lord separates Himself from men to God, and summons in sovereign choice whom He would.; and they came. And if He caused twelve to be with Him specially and to be sent by Him, it was, as in His own case, with marked prominence given to preaching, but with title and ability to heal diseases and expel demons, and even among the Apostles there was a peculiar place assigned from the first to Simon, surnamed by Him Peter,40 and to the sons of Zebedee, whom He surnamed Boanerges40a (verse 17), followed by the rest, though, one of them, Andrew, was certainly among the first who saw and followed Jesus, and was the means of bringing to Jesus his own brother Simon. But there are last who become first, and the Lord, who calls and orders all, alone is wise and worthy. What a testimony to the condition of men and things around! Men — the Jews — needed to be preached to; all was out of course. It was not a question of heathen only. It was in the midst of self-satisfied Israel that the lowly Son of God thus wrought.

Mark 3:20-30.

Matt. 12:22-32; Luke 11:14-23.

On their coming home, a crowd again assembled so that they could not even eat bread. But His kinsmen felt the reproach of the world, and went out at the singular tidings to lay hold on Him, as if He were out of His mind! They were ashamed of a relative, mad to their thinking, who virtually condemned all the world, especially in what He had just done. It was nature, always blind in Divine things.41 Not so merely — “the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, He has Beelzebub, and By the prince of the demons He casts out demons.” They were filled and guided of the enemy, and knew well it was no case of a madman, but of a real power which cast out demons. This their malice attributed to Satan in their effort to explain, weaken, and defame what they could not deny. The energy which dealt with Satan, in mercy to man, was owned; but if they owned it to be of God, their religious importance, their occupation, their gain, was gone. And the highest of occupations is proverbially the basest of trades; and trading in souls and truth or falsehood exposes men to Satan. And the fatal die was cast. And these proud teachers, setting up to be authorized of God to reject His Son, sunk into the merest slaves of Satan. How solemnly and with what unbroken calm the Lord deals with them! “And having called them to Him, He said to them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom have become divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house have become divided against itself, that house cannot subsist. And if Satan rise up against himself and be divided, he cannot subsist, but hath an end. But33 no one can enter into a strong man’s house and spoil his goods, unless he will first bind the strong man; and then he will plunder his house. Verily, I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven

unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin,34 because they said, He has an unclean spirit." It was not only self-contradictory and attributing good to the evil one, but blasphemous — yea, it was to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and judgment, eternal judgment, 42 is the sentence of His lips, "because they said, He has an unclean spirit."

Mark 3:31- 38.

Matt. 12:46-50; Luke 8:19-21.

The concluding scene is the grave and fitting sequel for therein the Lord, in the hearing of a crowd that surrounds Him, renounces, as it were, all natural ties, were they the nearest ones of His mother and His brethren,35 substituting His disciples, whosoever should do the will of God, in the place of that relationship to Him from which apostate Israel was falling.43 28 Ccorr L Γ, Syrrsin hcl add "sound as the other." Edd. omit, with ABCpmD, 33, Amiatine and the rest of Syrr.

29 See map, "Palestine of Prophecy," in Bagster's "The Paragraph Bible," in separate issue (Ezek. 48).

30 Yahveh-shammah: last verse of Ezekiel.

31 As to this being the place where the Sermon on the Mount would come in, see "Lectures on Matthew," p. 194, and cf. "Introductory Lectures," pp. 161-168.

32 To heal diseases and so ACcorrD, etc., nearly all cursives, Latt. Syrr. Arm. Goth. Edd. omit, with BCpmL, etc., Memph.

33 “But”: so recent Edd., with BL

Δ, etc., 1, 33, 69, Memph. it is omitted by T.R. with AD Γ, etc., Amiat. Syrr. Goth.

34 ”Sin” (

ἁμαρτήματος), so Edd., with BL

Δ, 33, almost all Latt. Syrsin, Memph. Goth. A few cursives have it in the form ἁμαρτίας. “judgment” is the reading of ACcorr and the later uncials, and almost all cursives Syrpesch hcl AEth. See, further, note 42.

35 After “brethren” AD, etc., Syrhcl (mg) Goth. add “and thy sisters,” but the omission is sustained by BCL Δ, etc., 1, 33, 69, Syrrpesch Arm. Memph. AEth. The “Workers’ New Testament” has the words without the brackets used by Nestle (after Treg. W. H.). B. Weiss supposes that the omission was due to similarity of ending (ὁμοιοτέλευτον). — As to the attitude of the Lord’s kinsfolk (verse 21), cf. “Introductory Lectures,” p. 164 ff.

Mark 4

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 168-173.

Mark 4:1-20.

Matt. 13:1-23; Luke 8:4-15.

The Lord Jesus had been announced as the Messiah by His forerunner, had manifested Himself fully as such, so that all were responsible, from the chief authorities down to the people at large. The last chapter showed what the result would be — the crowning testimony of the Spirit rejected as well as the Son of man in person, the unpardonable sin of that rebellious and apostate race, and the formation of new relationships, characterized by the doings of God’s will, in lieu of the natural ties which were now solemnly and publicly disowned of the Lord.

This opens the way for a parabolic description of the Saviour’s ministry, its course and results, His attitude meanwhile and at the close, as well as the circumstances of His disciples while engaged under Him. Mark does not present a full view of the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven, which has its appropriate place in Matthew. Nevertheless, both he and Luke give us in a very complete manner, each suited to the special aim of the respective Gospels, the Parable of the Sower.

“And He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His doctrine, Hearken: Behold, the sower went forth to sow, and it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the wayside,44 and the birds36 came and

devoured it up. And some fell on rocky ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth; but when the sun arose it was scorched; and because it had no root it withered away. And some fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred. And He said, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

This was His work now, scattering abroad the seed of the Word. There was nothing in man acceptable to God. It was a question of something new and Divine, the fruit of the operation of grace. A new life there must be if fruit unto God be looked for. There was nothing like it before: not even John's preaching went out thus far and wide, and still less the law and the prophets.

But, then, there are divers lessons to be learnt, for the action is always responsible, even where it is not efficacious. The seed was good: there was no defect there; but man, as such, is good for nothing, and the effect, where there is not the saving work of the Spirit, comes to nothing sooner or later. Much, therefore, was, in this point of view, lost.

The first class, where all fails as to result, consists of the wayside hearers. "When they heard," says the Lord in explanation, "Satan cometh immediately and taketh away the word that was sown in them."37 This answers to the birds coming and devouring the seed that fell by the roadside. This is the direct, destructive power of the enemy which hinders the entrance of the Word. It does not penetrate below the surface, never goes farther than

talk, speculation, or admiration of the preacher. The moral state of death is evidently untouched, and Satan has it all his own way.

Next, we have the case of the seed that fell on stony ground, where it had but little earth, and the effect was full of instantaneous promise. “Immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.” Here we have the flesh or nature doing its best, but proving its utter weakness. They are the persons “who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, but are for a time; then, tribulation or persecution arising for the word’s sake, immediately they are offended.” Here the work went no deeper than the affections, without reaching the conscience and convicting it before God. To take the joy of Christianity where there has been no judgment of the life and state as in God’s sight is really to slight and ignore Him altogether, making much of self. Haste in reception of the blessing is anything but the indication of a Divine Work. Hence the all-importance of repentance, which has been too much lost sight of through a desire to guard the freeness of grace and deliver the Gospel from legal clogs. But this remedy is, at least, as dangerous as the disease which it was intended to cure. We must not weaken the solemn dealing of the Holy Ghost with the conscience. It is good, wholesome, and essential that the soul should weigh its condition in God’s light and pronounce His judgment on itself, though, doubtless, repentance is of faith, and not a preparation for faith. Still, there may be no kind of peace and all but despair as yet. The heart may be ploughed up deeply and with

scarcely more than a hope of mercy, which keeps it from utterly sinking; and the Lord in due time brings home the word, “Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven.... Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.” Then, indeed, there is, at once and lastingly, peace and joy in believing.

Where there is not the sounding of the heart thus morally, as in God’s sight, the same haste which receives easily gives up without difficulty in presence of fiery trial. Well, in truth, it is for the soul, thus captivated by an imaginative joy through a mere feeling of the beauty, the truth, and the attractiveness of God’s most unselfish love in the abstract, which may be mistaken for its own deep enjoyment of His grace to a sin-convicted soul — well it is if it discover the fatal error, and, after being turned aside, if it return, or, rather, turn in reality, to God in divinely wrought sense of its sin and guilt, to find in Christ Jesus the only answer to its wants.

The third case is where some seed fell among thorns but, being choked by the growing thorns, it yielded no fruit. Such are they who hear the word; but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful (verses 18, 19), a serious and not infrequent thing. May we beware! There are various forms in which the evil works, but it is worldly lust and real selfishness, in distrust of God and indifference to His interests, so that the heart gets either overwhelmed with anxiety or active in the pursuit of present things. The very semblance of devotedness is lost, and the soul goes back, it may be with intense avidity, to the world it had seemed to leave. There are none without the need of God’s guard against them all. But ye that are poor, watch against encroaching cares; ye rich, be not enticed

by the deceitfulness of riches; both of you, see that ye judge “the lusts of other things!”

On the other hand, there is seed that falls on good ground, and yields fruit, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred: even there the result is chequered, for that which is fatal to the unbeliever may injure grievously the fruitfulness of the faithful. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (verse 9). It is a grave matter for every soul — grave for him that hears; and what is it for him who has no ear to hear?

“And when He was alone, they that were about Him with the Twelve asked of Him the parables.38 And He said unto them, Unto you it is given [to know]39 the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables: that beholding they may behold, and not see; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest it may be they should be converted, and they should be forgiven.40 And He said to them, Know ye not this parable and how then will ye be acquainted with all parables He explains the mind of God, not to the Twelve only, but to those who were about Him. They were those within: all else were “without,” to whom all things happen in parables, a rebelling people without even a reprover now. But those within have the privilege of knowing the mystery of the kingdom: grace thus wrought distinguishing those separated to Christ from the guilty nation, given up increasingly to judicial darkness, though it reproved them for their want of understanding. 45 Nor was this parable hard to discern, but elementary and fundamental, a sort of introduction to those which were to follow. Nevertheless, the gracious Lord, if He rebukes, proceeds to expound it, as we have seen in verses 14-20.

Mark 4:21-25.

Luke 8:16-18.

But, beside saving the soul, the engrafted word issues in testimony; and this is the next and characteristic statement of the Lord in our Gospel. “And He said unto them, Is a lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed, and not to be set on the lamp-stand? For there is nothing hidden which shall not be manifested; neither does any secret thing take place but that it should come to light. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.” The word is not “seed” only to produce fruit, but a lamp to shine in the witness of God’s grace and truth in this dark world, even as Christ, lowly as He was, and servant of all, was its perfect expression personally. Was it, then, come to be put under a bushel or a couch, and not, rather, on its own appropriate stand? It could not be: for, in truth, “There is nothing hidden which shall not be manifested; neither does any secret thing take place but that it should come to light. If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Thus we have the responsibility to shine in the world, holding forth the word of life; and this with the settled certainty that all must come out, whether of good or evil, closing with the solemn appeal to individual conscience once more.

Again, “He said to them, Take heed what ye hear with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you and unto you [that hear]41 shall more be added. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.” It is still responsibility in the service and testimony of the Lord. We must take heed, then, what we hear: for what we receive, we are bound to communicate. Want of value for

the treasure of God, want of confidence in His grace, reaps its own bitter harvest. “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you shall more be added.” Such is the special connection here. Those only possess who give out in grace, and such shall receive yet more abundantly; while they who have not in reality, shall lose even the show they have.46

Mark 4:26-29.

The next parable, which is peculiar to our Gospel, is singularly characteristic of it. It is the work of the kingdom. “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep, and rise up night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow up, he knoweth not how. [For]42 the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself; first the blade, then an ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is produced, immediately he putteth in the sickle, for the harvest is come.” The absence and apparent disregard of the Lord are supposed, not His manifestation and active interference. Harvest being come, He reaps, instead of sending His angels, as in Matthew.47

Mark 4:30-34.

Matt. 13:31-35; Luke 13:18, 19.

This is followed by the mustard seed, which shows its growth from a small beginning into a great development, and a system of protection on the earth even for the emissaries of the god of this world. “And with many such parables He spoke not to them,48 as they were able to hear. But without a parable He spoke not unto them; and in private He expounded all things to His disciples.”43

Mark 4:35-41.

Matt. 8:18, 23-27; Luke 8:22-25.

The final scene of the chapter sets forth the trials to which His people are exposed in their work, with Him in their midst. Their foolish, selfish unbelief is as plain as His calm supremacy over that which He only could control, and His just rebuke of their timidity, blind to the glory of His person.

36 “The birds” (simply): so ABCL, 1, 33, 69, Amiat. Syrr. Memph. “Of the sky” is added by DCM and some cursives.

37 “In them”: so ACL

Δ, Syrhcl(mg), Edd. read “into them,” with B, 1, 69, etc. “In their hearts” appears in D, the later uncials, 33, Amiat. Syrsin pesch hcl(t).

38 “Parables”: so Edd., with BCL

Δ, Amiat. Memph. The reading of AE

ΠΣ Syrpesch Goth. AEth. is “parable.”

39 [“To know”]: so Ccorr D

Δ, etc., Old Latin Syrpesch hier have the word, but Edd. omit, as ABCpm KL Π Syrsin.

40 “They should be forgiven”: so Edd., with BCL, etc. “Their sins,” etc., is found in AD, etc., Syrsin pesch, Old Latin, Memph.

41 [“That hear”], as A and later copies, 1, 33, 69, Syr. Arm. Edd. omit, with BCDL Δ, Old Latin, Memph.

42 [“For”]: so later uncials, Old Latin, Amiat. Goth. Edd. omit, with ABCL.

43 “His”: so AD and later uncials, almost all cursives (1, 33, 69); whilst Edd. adopt “his own,” with BCL Δ and Origen.

Mark 5

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 173-181.

Mark 5:1-20.

Matt. 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39.

We have still an unfolding of the service of Jesus. In this chapter it is not simply the ministration of the word, with its various hindrances and measures of success as far as God is pleased to work both in quickening power and fruitfulness, and this to the end. Neither is it a picture of the tempest-tossed condition of the disciples, Jesus with them, meanwhile, in their dangers, but apparently heedless till appealed to, yet all through the security of His people.

Now we have another thing, the ministry of Jesus in presence of Satan’s power, and the utter confessed weakness and misery of nature. An instructive lesson, indeed, for not only do we see the all-conquering might of Him who was crucified in weakness, but the extent of the deliverance shown forth in him who was both set free from the thraldom of Satan and who afterwards became the active witness to others of the Lord’s greatness and power to others. It is not merely sin here, or the lusts of the flesh and the world. We know how continually God does save from human violence and corruption and their consequences. In Legion, however, we have, rather, the direct agency of Satan paramount, if not there. As to this, men ordinarily are incredulous; or, if they admit it ever thus acted, they would limit it to the time of Christ on earth. That there may have been a greater rising up of the enemy’s power in opposition to

the Son of God when here below is a very different statement, and I believe it; but it is a most erroneous conclusion that his power was then so shattered as a matter of fact that cases of demoniacal possession were never afterward to appear. The New Testament refutes the illusion. After Christ died and rose (and this must have gone in the direction of destroying the energy of Satan further than anything else), He charged His servants to preach the Gospel with this sign accompanying them: “In My name they shall cast out demons.” (Mark 16:17) And so, in the Acts of the Apostles, we find the word confirmed thereby. Sick folks were brought, and persons vexed with unclean spirits; “and they were healed every one” (Acts 5:16). This was after the descent of the Holy Ghost, too; so that this mighty event, following redemption, had not of itself extinguished cases of possession. Nor was this confined to Peter or the other Apostles; but similar power accompanied Philip, the evangelist, at Samaria. “For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed by them; and many that were paralyzed and lame were healed.” I need not dwell on such strong cases as the divining damsel of Philippi, nor that at Ephesus (Acts 19), which the seven sons of Sceva proved to be too real to their cost: they are well known.

The truth is, the great victory of Christ is for faith and the Church’s deliverance and joy, though no doubt it was attested largely to the world in miraculous signs, as it will be applied by-and-by in a power which will bind Satan first, and filially crush him for ever. But in the meantime the Church is the scene where Christ’s victory and power are made good by the Holy Ghost. The world, so far from being made better, is proved to be farther

than ever from God, as Satan is proved to be its prince and god in the cross of Christ, but for this very reason the object for the time of the fullest testimony of God's grace in the name of the Crucified. The Gospel which is sent so abundantly to gather out of the world — mark, not to bless it, but to gather out — treats the world as already condemned, and only awaiting unsparing judgment when Jesus is revealed from heaven. Hence separation from the world49 is the paramount duty of, and only right course for, the Christian. The guilt of the blood of Jesus lies upon it, and the only escape for any soul is by faith in that blood, which, if it bring nigh to God, puts the believer in principle outside and above the world — such is the ground, and seeking, and walk of faith. Hence also, the possible amelioration of the world and of man, as such, is a practical denial of the Gospel, and a deep, though in many cases an unwitting, dishonour to the Lord Jesus. No ignorance justifies the allowance of such thoughts, and the more knowledge of Divine truth there is, the more guilty they are. The grace of God supposes the total ruin of the objects of grace, and the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven will execute Divine vengeance on those who feel not their sin and ruin, and who despise His grace. Mark, then, describes in detail and most graphically the torment of this man with an unclean spirit. "And when he was gone out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man50 with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains: because he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been torn asunder by him, and the fetters were shattered: and no one could subdue him. And always, night and day, he was in the tombs, and in the mountains,44 crying, and

cutting himself with stones.” The solitude of death, the rejection of human restraint and influence, the restlessness and the cruelty of that which possessed him, were most conspicuous, but not less so his recognition of a superior power and glory in Jesus. “When he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped Him, and crying with a loud voice, says,45 What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, torment me not. For he was saying to him, Come out of the man, unclean spirit.”

It is remarkable, by the way, how the man is identified with the unclean spirit, just as now in grace the Holy Spirit blends most intimately with the believer. The man cries, “Torment me not,” though it was a question of dealing with the spirit. So he answers, “My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought Him much that He would not send them46 away out of the country.”

On the other hand, it was of importance to give the distinctest evidence that the dwelling of demons in a man is as certain and real as it is of the utmost gravity. Hence the Lord hears their petition that they should be sent into the great herd of swine51 which was feeding at hand “And immediately47 Jesus48 gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea [about two thousand],49 and were choked in the sea.” In some instances the possessed had a serious disease also. In Legion’s case we hear of none; but even if there had been, it would be absurd to suppose the transfer of disease to all the swine and such an effect as their immediate frantic rush to destruction. But the expulsion of all the demons from the man and their

possession of the herd was an opportunity to show their love of destroying when a mightier hand no longer controlled their spiteful malice.

But, alas! what is man in presence of Jesus, or the merciful power which thus rescued the victim of the devil's torture? "They went out50 to see what it was that had taken place. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed by demons and had had the legion sitting [and]51 clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." Yes, afraid before Him who breaks the captivity of the devil; more afraid of Jesus and His grace than of the devil and his works! Nay, more than this. "They that had seen it, told them how it had happened to him that was possessed by demons, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts." Alas! alas! the swine and the demons were to them pleasanter neighbours than the Son of God. They had never sought to be free from either; they did seek to be rid of Jesus. Such is man; such the world was and is.

It is sweet to see the reverse of this in the heart of him who was emancipated. Not only was he at ease before the Saviour, "sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind," but all his affections were towards Him, and where Jesus went his desire was to follow. "And when Jesus was come52 into the ship, he that had been possessed by demons prayed Him that he might be with Him. "And He53 suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thine own people, and tell them how great things the Lord52 hath done for thee, and hath had mercy on thee." The spiritual feeling that knit his soul to Jesus was of God, and would be gratified and satisfied in due time. But the grace of the Lord thought of others in this

miserable scene of the enemy's wiles, to whom He would bless the testimony of him that had known so painfully the power of Satan. His "own people," therefore, rather than strangers, were to hear the message. "Tell them," said the Saviour, "how great things the Lord hath done for thee." "And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him; and all wondered." And so may we, not only at the great things done, but at the simple faith displayed. "The Lord" for him was "Jesus."

Mark 5:21-43.

Matt. 9:18-26; Luke 8:40-56.

We have, next, the Lord going at the call of one of the rulers of the synagogue to heal his sick daughter, lying at the point of death.54 On the way and in the throng His garment is touched by a woman which had an issue of blood twelve years. Here, too, man was unavailing. Instead of finding relief from those most skilled, "she had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and had found no advantage from it, but had rather grown worse." What a picture of human woe, and how common! "For she said, If I shall touch but His clothes I shall be healed"; and she was right, as faith always is. "Immediately her fountain of blood was dried up: and she knew in her body that she was cured from the scourge." But even conscious assurance is not enough for the grace of God. She had stolen, as it were, the blessing; she must have it a free and full gift from the Lord, face to face. "And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself the power had gone out of Him, turned round in the crowd, and said, Who touched my clothes? And His disciples said unto Him,

Thou seest the multitude pressing on Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me? And He looked round about to see her who had done this. But the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had taken place in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth." Blessed Lord, it is good somehow, anyhow, if it be Thy hand that does it, to be brought to tell Thee all the truth! For of a truth it is but to have the cup filled of Thee to overflowing. "And He said to her, Daughter, thy faith hath healed thee: go in peace, and be whole of thy scourge." Was the blessing less now that the gain of the believer was countersigned of the Lord. Was not the deed of power enhanced by the gracious words that scaled it hers with His own signet?

Such is now the blessing that faith seizes while the Lord is on the road to heal the sick daughter of Judah. And if evil news53 met the ruler's ear, while Jesus was crowning His mercy to her who touched Him, how swift is His goodness to shield a feeble heart from despair! "Be not afraid: only believe."54 It was not troubling the Master, but His proper work. With chosen witnesses, pillars of the circumcision, He goes, turns out the vain weepers who scorned His words of comfort, and in presence of the parents and His companions wakes the damsel from the sleep of death, to their great amazement. So at the end of the age He will raise up Israel.

44 "In the tombs and in the mountains": so Edd., with ABCHL, etc., 1, 33, 69, and versions. DE, etc., have "in the mountains and in the tombs."

45 "Says": so Edd., with ABCKL, etc., 1, 33, Cod. Amiat. "Said" is the reading of DE, etc., 69, Memph.

46 “Them”: as D, etc. Edd. read “him,” with L, etc., Syrpesch AEth.

47 [“Immediately”]: as A

ΠΣ, etc., 33, 69, Amiat. Edd. omit, as BCL

Δ, I, Memph.

48 “Jesus”: so A

ΠΣ, etc., 33, 69, Amiat. Edd. omit, as BCEL

Δ, I, Memph.

49 “They were” (before “about, etc.”) as ACcorr

Π, etc., 33, 69, Syrhcl Goth. Edd. omit, with BCpmDL

Δ, I, Amiat.

50 “Went out”: as pmCD and later uncials, Syrsin pesch Arm, AEth. “Went” (Edd.) is the reading of corr ABKLMU Πcorr, etc., 1, 33, Syrhcl Memph. Goth.

51 [“And”]: so AC

Π, etc., Syrsin hcl Arm. Goth. Edd. omit, with BDL

ΔΣ, 1, 33, 69, Amiat. Memph.

52 “He went”: so Edd., with ABCD KLM

ΔΠΣ, 1, 33, Old Latin. “He had gone” appears in later uncials and most cursives.

53 “And He”: so Edd., with ABC, etc., 1, 33, Syrpesch hcl Memph. Goth. And (but) Jesus as DE, etc., 69, with most cursives, Old Lat., AEth. Arm.

54 Here is found one of the few exceptional dislocations, if not the only one, in Mark, for it would appear from Matt. 9:18 that while the Lord was speaking of the wine

and the bottles (Mark 2:22), the ruler Jairus came about his daughter (“Introductory Lectures,” p. 160 note).

Mark 6

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 181-188.

Mark 6:1-6.

Matt. 13:53-58; cf. Luke 4:16-30.

There are three divisions I would make in the portion before us, in order to examine it more conveniently: First, the unbelieving rejection of Christ in “His own country55”; secondly, the mission of the Twelve; thirdly, the power — yet, alas! fatal weakness, withal — of an unpurged conscience, as illustrated in King Herod’s behaviour to John the Baptist.

First, the unwearied Servant comes into His own country, followed by His disciples. “And when the Sabbath was come, He began to teach in the synagogue; and many hearing Him, were astonished, saying, Whence has this man these things? and what is the wisdom that is given to Him,56 and such works of power are done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter,57 the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in Him.”

But what a lesson! The power of His teaching was owned, and the mighty works done by His hands; but even the despised Nazarenes stumbled at the lowly Lord — the lowly Servant — of all. The meanest of mankind is not free from the same spirit of the world which blinds the highest. In truth, the god of this world blinds all that are lost. The fact may come out more conspicuously in the princes of this world, where resources cannot help

them to discern and proclaim the Lord of glory; but the universality of the moral blindness is shown in such conduct as that of the men of Nazareth to the Lord Jesus. That the true heir to the throne of David, to speak of His regal glory, should be a “carpenter” was and is too much for flesh and blood. And yet, when it is believed, the grace of His humiliation is as striking as the need for it was urgent and absolute, if God was to be glorified and man delivered according to His mind. It is clear, also, that the grace of all He became and endured is only rightly seen by those who see in Him the Son — He is the true God and eternal life.

Here, however, even as prophet He is rejected; and Jesus bows to it is the common lot of those who labour for God in a world which knows them too well to pay them honour, and yet knows them not, as it knew Him not. “A prophet,” said He, “is not despised, save in his own country, and among his kinsmen, and in his own house.” And as thus He speaks, so He acts, or rather does not act. For “He could there do no work of power, save that He laid His hands upon a few infirm persons, and healed them.” How admirable the perfection of His service! It seems to me that nothing displays it more than such ways as these: “He could there do no work of power.” Yes, He, the Creator of all, the Sustainer of all, could do nothing mighty there. He was the ever-dependent and obedient man who had come to do, not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made”; (John 1:3) yet He could there do no mighty work. Blessed Lord! greater art Thou to me in Thy weakness thus than in Thy strength, whereby all things consist. And yet there was the

gracious exercise of healing as far as was morally consistent with the people and the place in God's eyes. For "He laid His hands upon a few infirm persons, and healed them." "And He marvelled," adds the Spirit of God, "because of their unbelief."58 This did not, however, hinder His testimony in the neighbourhood; for He "went round about the villages teaching."

Mark 6:7-13.

Matt. 10:1-15; Luke 9:1-6.

Secondly, He called the Twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits, and commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only, etc. I do not think the importance of the Lord's sending out His servants, whether the Twelve or others, is adequately estimated by most. It was not yet, it could not be till His death and resurrection, that their mission could have its full character of world-wide grace. Still, it is a most precious principle, this sending out of His messengers with a message of grace, as it was a new thing in the earth. And what a tale it told of the real, though hidden, glory of Him who sent them! For who could thus commission and qualify with power over unclean spirits, save one who was consciously Divine? And what injunctions for His ambassadors! "No wallet, no bread, no money in their belt '59 but shod with sandals, to put not on two coats." Truly, His kingdom and His service were not of this world, else would the Lord have provided otherwise. Yet they went forth with the fullest sense of authority. "And He said to them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart thence." How wise and careful of the dignity of His

messengers, as well as watchful lest the message should be compromised by the self-seeking of those charged with it! “And whatsoever place55 shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony to them.”56 That He was the Son of God, the Saviour, did not lessen, but aggravate, the criminality of those who despised Him in their persons. The substance of this preaching was that men should repent. There is no Divine work in the sinner without repentance. There may be a sort of belief of no value without it; indeed, nothing is more common in Christendom. But it is not so where the Holy Spirit is at work, who ploughs up the conscience as well as brings home to the heart the good seed that may be sown. External signs accompanied them; for they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

Mark 6:14-29.

Matt. 14:1-12; Luke 9:7-9.

The third point to be noticed now is the solemn history of conscience in King60 Herod, who, on hearing the fame of Jesus, imputed the miracles to John the Baptist, as risen from the dead. There was the usual variety of opinion and uncertainty among men, but Herod’s bad conscience made him positive that it was John, whom he had beheaded. What a torment even here it is, unless in the yet more desperate case of those who are religiously seared! The Holy Spirit then turns aside to give the account of the circumstances, and to explain why Herod was thus uneasy and perplexed. The wicked Herodias, whom the tetrarch had guiltily married, though she was his brother’s wife, had sought her revenge in vain. For,

spite of his censure, John stood high in Herod's esteem as a just and holy man; and Herod, having heard Him, did much,57 and listened gladly. But there the fair show ended. Satan found the way to shut him up to a course from which there was no escape, save by repentance and the acknowledgment of his sins. It grew out of a royal revel where Herodias' daughter58 danced to the content of Herod and his guests, and drew from the king the rash promise, with an oath, to give her what she asked, to the half of his kingdom. Now was the opportunity of the vindictive adulteress, who instructed her daughter to demand at once the head of John the Baptist upon a dish. And the king (whose fear for John had no higher source than nature), while very sorry, yields for the sake of his character before his guests, immediately sends one of the guard to despatch the prisoner,62 and presents his head to the damsel, as she also does to her mother. What an evident net of Satan's laying for the feet of one who was not without feeling! and how powerless is conscience where God's servant is in one scale and the poor plighted honour of man in the other! How simple it all is in God's presence! The devil's promises are better broken than kept.

The latter part of the chapter, as well as the former, is singularly full of instruction for the service of the Lord. First of all we had the Lord's own portion. Not only was He refused in His title of King or the Messiah, but despised as God's servant. They heard His doctrine and were astonished at His wisdom no less than His power, but there was one thing that outweighed all in their minds — "Is not this the carpenter?" And so He was. It appears, hence, that our Lord really thus wrought. He was not only the son of a carpenter, but a carpenter

Himself. The Creator of heaven and earth spent a considerable part of His sojourn in this world in this lowly labour day by day.

Our Lord accordingly, shut up from doing great deeds, turns to an unobtrusive work. Although debarred by their unbelief from rendering a conspicuous testimony to His glory, He did lay His hands upon “a few infirm persons, and healed them.” There was no such thing in our Lord as mortified feeling; He turns calmly from the scorn that hindered His mighty works there to occupy Himself with cases few and inconsiderable. Can we overlook even in this Christ’s perfection as the servant?

The next thing we saw was the sending out of the Twelve. There was the combination of two elements in them hard to reconcile. They were to be placed in circumstances that would leave them open to the contempt of everyone. They were to have no money in their belt, not even two coats, not shoes but sandals; they were to be without wallet or provision for the way. What could seem to be more helpless or more dependent than their condition? Yet none the less they, being sent forth as the messengers of the King, were invested with His own power. One remarkable proof of it was the power given them over unclean spirits. “He began to send them forth by two and two [there was association in their service], and gave them power over unclean spirits.” And so sent out, not only did they preach that men should repent, but they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. The paramount thing in the mind of the Lord was the dealing with the power of Satan. There is much unbelief among men as to this. The world has grown old in material inventions, and as times pass over the earth

men get so accustomed to the power given to man over external nature that they are apt by these very circumstances to forget and deny the unseen power and wiles of Satan. It was therefore of great importance that the disciples, who were called and sent by God's authority, in going forth through the land of Israel, should be clothed with the Divine power, as far as it was communicable, for Christ's sake.

But there is another thing, too, which is of great importance for the service of the Lord. As they called men to repent, so there is an astonishing answer in the conscience. The word reaches the heart even where it is least likely, as in the case of Herod, who is the instance the Spirit of God gives us here. Where men do not repent, still there is conscience, and the word does not fail to probe it. They may not heed the warning, they may turn from it, they may try to forget it, and may succeed for a time in stifling all right feeling, but the barb is there, and although, as in a strong man, the effect of a wound may not be palpable for a time, still, when the day of weakness comes, then the old wound reappears, and what youthful vigour enabled him to slight may give increasing trouble till the whole scene is closed. We have in Herod the history of a soul that had his conscience reached by the word of God, but nothing more. We know well that there is such a thing as resisting the Holy Ghost on the part of unconverted men; it is the commonest thing possible where God's word is known, though it is not only resisting the word, but the Spirit, of God. Therefore it was that Stephen said, when addressing the Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 7:51) The Holy Ghost so far uses the word as to touch the

conscience, and whosoever refuses this resists both the word and Spirit of God. In Herod's case it was only John's testimony, but it was a mighty one, as far as the conviction of sin was concerned. John the Baptist did not pretend to bring in redemption; his main object was to point to One who was coming. But there was a mighty work produced through him in leading men to the sense that they could not do without the Lord. Thus he brought before men that all was ruined in the sight of God, and that, so far from things being prosperous or happy, the axe was lying at the root of the tree, judgment was at the door. And so it was, only that, first of all, the judgment that man deserved fell, by grace, upon Christ. That was the unlooked-for form in which Divine judgment took place then in the cross. It was a most real dealing of God, but it was a judgment for the time stayed from falling upon the guilty, which fell upon the guiltless Son of God, and thereby redemption is accomplished. The whole work of Christ for the Church of God has come in during the time of man's — Israel's — being left by the Lord to himself. It is the time of God's long-suffering, the world being permitted to follow its own way in the rejection of the Gospel as much as in the crucifixion of Christ. This is what the world is doing now, and soon to consummate, when judgment will come. Thus, conscience is shown in a man that felt what was right, and heard the word gladly for a time. But there was no repentance, no submission of his soul to the conviction that for a moment passed before his mind of what was true, just, and of God. The consequence was that circumstances were so managed by the enemy and permitted of God that Herod should evince the worthlessness of natural conscience even as regards the very person whom he had owned as a prophet. But at

any rate all was lost now, and a guilty hour at a banquet, where the desire to gratify one as bad or worse than himself, ensnared his weakness and involved his word. There is the end of natural conscience. Herod orders what he would not have conceived it possible for him to do. But we little know the power of that unclean and subtle adversary the devil. It is just the counterpart of what the Lord was doing in grace by His disciples — He gave them power over the unclean spirit. Men repent, and the power of Satan must be broken in order to this. Here, on the contrary, was a man who knew he was in an evil case; but the power of Satan was never really broken. There was no going to God in the sense that he could not deliver himself. The result was that Herod went on till in this evil hour the terrible deed was done; all was over, and he, no doubt, given over to despair or indifference. Had there been the sense of the grace which is in Christ, there was grace enough to have blotted out that or any sin; but the heart that refuses to bow in conscience to God never acknowledges the grace there is in Christ.

Mark 6:30-44.

Matt. 14:13-21; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13.

Having thus again a little sketched the truth in this part of the chapter as regards the principles of God for guiding in service, we may pass on. The Apostles gathered themselves unto Jesus, and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. Now, there was great simplicity in this, and a most wholesome thing it is for anyone engaged in the Lord’s work to go to Jesus with what has been done and taught. It is well to examine, and perhaps rehearse; but to whom

can we do it with safety but to Jesus? There is such a thing as going out in service, but there should be the returning and telling Jesus all that we have had to do or say. There may be occasions where it is well and comely to cheer others with the wonderful works of God; but there is no time where it is not well and wholesome to go to the Lord about it. In His presence there is no danger of being puffed up, and thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. There we learn how little we are, and the defectiveness even of that which we most desire for the edification of one another. Our Lord thoroughly shows His interest and sympathy in this, and says to them: “Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.” Well for us if we needed thus to rest more — that is to say, if our labours were so abundant, our self-denying efforts for the blessing of others were so continual, that we could be sure that this was the Lord’s word for us, “Come ye into a desert place, and rest awhile”! I am afraid that sometimes we rather need to be stirred up to feel what a claim souls have upon us, what we owe, not merely to the saints of God to seek their blessing, but to every creature, for we are debtors to all. Having such a Christ as we have, we ought to feel that we have riches enough for everything — riches of grace in Him, not merely for the saints of God, but for the poorest of sinners. The Twelve had so discharged their mission that our Lord could tell them thus to turn aside and rest awhile. There was more than rest for the body: with Him what repose for the soul! It is a good thing at times to be thus alone, and yet not alone — alone from man that we may be with the only One who can give us fresh strength

and, at the same time, adequate lowliness for the better discharge of our service, whatever it may be.

They depart, then, into a desert place by ship privately. Now, it is the Lord's way of goodness that I think so well worthy of note in this place. We do not make enough of the Lord; we are not quite simple in our thoughts of His interest with us in all the details of circumstances day by day; we do not always think of Him as a real, living, tender friend occupied with us and intent upon our good, and even deigning to care for our bodies as well as our souls. Here is the proof of it as to the Twelve.

"And many saw them departing, and recognised them,59 and ran together there on foot out of all cities, and outwent them. And [Jesus] when He came out, saw a great crowd, and was moved with compassion for them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. And He began to teach them many things." This is exceedingly sweet, because His object in retiring was to have given His disciples leisure, they had not time so much as even to eat, and the haste of the multitude was really an intrusion, and yet the Lord at once turns to the crowd in love. Here, again, there is no such thing as the slightest expression of disturbed feeling. There was no coldness shown to the intruders. On the contrary, He enters upon this fresh service with the same alacrity that He had turned aside with His disciples in order to give them a little rest by the way. More than that, He looks with compassion upon the multitude, "because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. And He began to teach them many things." He at least knew no leisure; at any rate, where did He ever take advantage of it, although there was infinitely more to try and weary Him as a man than ever fell upon any other? At once He

turns to teach these needy men that which they little knew they needed.

“And when it was already late in the day,63 His disciples came unto Him and said, This is a desert place, and it is already late in the day. Send them away that they may go into the country and into the villages round about, and buy themselves bread, for they have nothing to eat.”60 Oh, do we not see the reflection of ourselves here? “Send them away.” Was that all the disciples could think or say? Had they not profited more by the past experience of their Master? Had they not profited by the grace the Lord had been for so long a time displaying towards poor, shepherdless Israel? “Send them away.” Send them away from Jesus! Without refreshment from Jesus! This was what even disciples could propose to the Lord Himself. Is not this what we learn of our own hearts? Do we not continually discover our little ability to count upon grace and to turn its boundless resources to meet present difficulties? When we have seen the Lord’s ways we may admire them, but faith is especially shown in knowing how to avail ourselves of what is in Christ for the want that is actually before us. Here the lack was in others; but what a lack in themselves when the unbelief of disciples thus vents itself to the Lord! “Send them away that they may go and buy bread. But He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat.” It is always so that He acts — “give.” He loves a bountiful giver; He was so Himself, and He was now about to open the hearts of the disciples to feel aright. It was not only what was needed in an authoritative mission throughout the land of Israel when the kingdom was going to be set up, but now it was a heart for the poor, despised, and wretched in Israel. The Lord would

give the disciples His own sympathies. He would make them know what they themselves lacked — teach them to feel what there is in Christ even for the men who had no feeling for His wants, no consideration for the Lord in the retirement that He had sought. But this does not change the grace that is in Christ. Whatever may be the fault of another, we have to look well to it that it brings out from us the patient wisdom of grace. It is the hardest thing we have to learn. Here the disciples break down; but it was in the presence of One who only turned it to the account of leading them to a perception of His own grace. This is the great point of the whole chapter; it is the fitting of others for the service on His own approaching and entire rejection.

Here we have not only adequate power, but adequate affection. Power over the unclean spirit we have seen, moral power through the word, even over a natural man's conscience, had been proved; but now we have the perception of the Lord's feelings, His compassion for a multitude, even though unbelieving. There are many who truly believe in the love the Lord has for the Church, but they do not at all understand the deep pity He has toward poor man as such. Now, this the Lord was showing here. It is not a question merely of believers, but we have persons who, it is plain, were merely seeking to get what they could from Jesus, following Him on their own account — not for life eternal, not because of their sins, nor was it for the miracles even that they had seen, but for what He could give them for this life. The Lord did not refuse even this, but the disciples knew nothing of this grace. They had authority conferred on them they had proved communicated power along with this they had come and told the Lord

what they had done and taught. But where was their affection answering to the Lord's? That they had it not is betrayed by their words to Him. The Lord had now to communicate His own thoughts and feelings to them, and He does it after this sort: "He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat." They do not need to go: they do not need to buy. What Jesus tells them is to give — "Give ye them to eat." "And they say unto Him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" This is another working of unbelief in them. Not that they had the least thought of going and buying; but they wanted to put their insuperable difficulty before their Master. But what do we need such a one as Christ for if not for that which we cannot even touch? The greater the difficulty, the more suited is the occasion for the Lord to display Himself. He is Lord of all; and if He is, what can a difficulty be but only an appeal to His power, and which shows it was ever beyond measure. "Give ye them to eat."

"He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? Go [and] see. And when they knew, they say, Five and two fishes." This is a feature that I think it well to notice, because it is important practically. The Lord loves, however truly working in His own power, to make use of that which we might despise in human wisdom. Moses may plead his impotence, but the Lord will make use of that man of slow speech. If He employ Aaron too, He will put the sentence of death upon everything that flesh leans upon. So now our Lord draws upon the resources that were already in the hands of the disciples. Not that such things as they had could have availed without Him; but that He is ever with us, in one way or another, ever

ready to work and bless, according to His almighty power and goodness.

When they brought word that there were five loaves and two fishes, doubtless it was with the conviction that no answer could be less satisfactory. How wise they were in thinking it a vain thing that such a multitude could be fed by anything that they possessed! But it is the way of God to make use of the weak and little as truly as to abase that which is self-confident of its greatness. And as the Lord was about to act upon this very principle with the Twelve, He was now teaching them the same as to the feeding of the multitude then around them. It was the exerting His own creative power on that which was utterly contemptible — at least, in human eyes. The five loaves and two fishes seemed to be absurd for such a multitude. But what was it not in the hands of Jesus?

But He does another thing. He commands that they should sit down by companies upon the green grass, and they sat down in ranks by hundreds and fifties.64 The Lord is not unmindful of outward order and decorum in His arrangements. He was about to work a stupendous miracle, and He arranges the people carefully, bringing before their eyes the conviction of what there was in Him for the need of man. He was really there, the promised One, that was to feed His poor with bread (Ps. 132:15). Where were they that they had never thought of Him, that they did not count upon such love as this for a still greater want than the bread that perishes for the body? But it was the Lord acting from His own goodness, and in no respect even according to the mind of a disciple. The multitude was unprepared for the work, but the disciples were just as blind. They no more expected what was coming than the multitude. Our

being believers is no proof at all we shall have faith for any particular exigency before us. Present dependence upon God is necessary to give us a just thought of the Lord's ways; otherwise we may be as foolish as if we had no faith at all, and we shall be sure to be so if we do not measure the difficulties by Jesus. Bring Him in and the difficulty is at an end.

But, further, the Lord employs the disciples between Himself and the multitude. How continually we find the Lord returning good for their evil, putting honour upon the poor disciples who so little appreciated His feelings of love and compassion! He does not distribute the bread directly, as if He made no account of His servants. He meant to show His disciples that the love of Christ delights to work in human channels. The same unbelief, which on one side sees nothing in Jesus, on the other is apt to overlook and deny the use Jesus makes of suited instruments to dispense His blessings in this world. But as it was Jesus alone who was the source of it all, the disciples were to be the. channels, both learning and teaching what grace could do to them, and through them. The disciples, accordingly, take the bread from the hands of Jesus, and thus it is that the supply is provided for the vast multitude. It was the Lord's way then, and it is His way now. The wonders of His grace are not, as it were, all reserved for His own exclusive hand: for although He alone is the constant, active spring of grace, yet at the same time He works by whom He will, and He puts often the most honour upon the least comely member; for as we know it is in Nature the most vital and essential member that is the most guarded and the least apparent, so it is in His body the Church: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. 1:31) He

Himself was among them as “he that serveth.” It is in no way the Lord showing the worth of this one or that one, but displaying His own grace and power according to His own sovereign will. But the disciples must learn that, if they were rebuked and their unbelief made most apparent, the Lord’s grace was not altered towards them — nay, His grace could employ them immediately afterwards to be the distributors to the famishing multitude of the bread of His providing. What grace toward them!

The whole scene is most instructive, and particularly so as giving us to see the manner of His own service and the failure of others. “When He had taken the five loaves and two fishes, He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and kept giving them to His disciples to set before them. And the two fishes He divided among all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve hand-baskets full of the fragments and of the fishes. And they that ate of the loaves were five thousand men.”61 The very fragments far exceeded the provision they had at first, but even the fragments were not to be forgotten or despised. What simplicity of care, even where He ensured that there should be the testimony before their eyes of the miraculous character of the whole transaction!

Mark 6:45-52

Matt. 14:22, 23; John 6:15-21.

The next scene has also its lesson for us. “Immediately He constrained His disciples to go on board ship, and to go on before to the other side, to Bethsaida,65 while He sends away the crowd. And when He had dismissed them, He departed into the mountain to pray.” It was

one of the great signs of the Messiah that He would satisfy His poor with bread, as you may remember in Ps. 132. The Lord ought to have been thus recognised, but He was not. Accordingly He sent them away. The people, instead of being gathered to the Lord as to their King, have been for a season at least put aside. He has dismissed the multitude because of their unbelief; He has departed from Israel for a time, and gone on high to take the place of intercession. And while the Lord is there the disciples are exposed to all the storms and fluctuations of this lower scene. "And when evening was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and He alone on the land. And He saw them toiling in rowing, for the wind was contrary to them." It is a little picture of what was to be accomplished by-and-by. The Lord is gone on high now; He is not with the multitude, neither is He in bodily presence with the disciples. He has left the Jews for the time; He is also away from the disciples. They have their work to do, but apparently they make no progress. But in the midst of the contrariety of all things around them He comes again. "About the fourth watch of the night He cometh unto them, walking upon the sea; and would have passed by them. But when they saw Him walking upon the sea they supposed it had been an apparition, and they cried out. For all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He talked with them, and says to them, Be of good courage; it is I; be not afraid. And He went up to them into the ship, and the wind ceased."65a

Mark 6:53-56.

Matt. 14:34-36.

Then we find that, having come to shore with the disciples, the Lord accomplished all that was spoken. “When they had come out of the ship they recognised Him immediately, and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about on couches those that were ill, where they heard He was. And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the market-places, and besought Him that they might touch, if it were but the border of His garment; and as many as touched Him were healed.” It is a little picture of what will be the consequence of the Lord’s return to the earth. When the Lord and His disciples rejoin the shore that He has left, when He comes back again, whatever there is of human woe, wretchedness, weakness, sickness, in this world, all will flee before the presence and touch of the Son of God. He will then and thus manifest His goodness. Accordingly, what we have here is the consummation and triumph of all ministry in His own ministry. The disciples are shown in their weakness meanwhile, but encouraged by the prospect of His return in power and glory, when all shall be made good that the Lord has ever promised, and that He has led His people to expect in this world. It is a good thing for our souls to realize that while our Lord is away we are not to be discouraged by difficulties — not cast down if the wind is contrary and ourselves toiling in vain, yet not in vain. It is He who has sent us across that troubled sea; it is He who meanwhile intercedes for us, and as surely will He come to us; and when He does return, all that is lacking He will supply, all that hinders will be removed, and then will the universe duly, fully exult in its Lord, our Lord and Master, when He shall be exalted from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

This is what the final circumstances of the chapter typify. It may cheer us in any little service that is before us now. It is instruction for the service of the Lord, beginning with His own rejection in shame and ending with His glorious return, when all sickness and misery disappear before His presence.

55 “Whatsoever place”: Edd., with BL, 69, etc. “Whosoever” has the support of AD, later uncials, almost all cursives, Old Lat. Syrsin pesch.

56 The latter part of this verse [in T.R.] seems an accommodation from Matt. 11 and Luke 10, with changes. Yet the ancient testimony is ample (B.T.). The authorities supporting the words “Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom or Gomorrha in [the] day of judgment than for that city” are AE ΠΣ, etc., 1, 69, most Syrr. Memph. Edd. follow BCDL Δ, Syrsin Old Lat. and Jerome’s Vulgate.

57 “Did many things”: so ACD, etc., all cursives, Old Lat. Syrsin hcl, etc. (see note 61 at end). Edd. follow ABL, Memph. for “was perplexed.”

58 “The daughter of the same Herodias”: so Nestle, etc., with AC, later uncials, most cursives, all vv. (including Syrsin). Hort “His daughter Herodias,” which is the reading of BDL Δ.

59 Recognised them”: so Edd., after AKL, etc., many cursives, including 33, Syr. Memph. AEth. EFG, etc., 69, have “him”; whilst BD and Amiat. have neither “him” nor “them.” This is an illustration of W. H.’s “conflate” readings (Introduction, p. 95 ff.).

60 Edd.: “buy themselves something” (, fragments) “to eat,” with B(D)L Δ Syrsin Memph. Text (the “received”) is that of AE, etc., and other Syrr.

61, 1 and some other copies with Arm. have “about 5,000 men.”

Mark 7

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 188-190. See also note 66.

Mark 7:1-23.

Matt. 15:1-20.

In this chapter the scene is totally changed. It is no longer the accomplishment of promise, nor merely the retiring before the oppressive cruelty of him that was then in the place of outward authority. We have here the Lord morally dealing with, and judging, the religious chiefs of Jerusalem who, in their confidence and pride, undertook to blame His disciples and Himself with them. It was themselves, however, who had made the word of God of none effect through their tradition. Thus we are on ground of peculiar importance at this present time, and indeed at all times in Christendom. For there has never been a time in which this danger has not existed ever since the word of God was given, partially or completely, to the Church. Traditions began to multiply apace when the Apostles passed away. As the word of God, more particularly the New Testament, is not in the form of mere command, there was peculiar openness in Christendom to the influence of tradition. In the Jewish system all was ordered by rule. It was the natural and obvious fashion of the Jewish economy that God regulated all their intercourse, gave positive injunctions as to the whole policy, left scarcely anything open to His people, but prescribed their private and public obligations, whether individual, family, or social — their religious duties as well as their political. In fact,

everything was made a matter of plain commandment, and yet even in that system, so inveterate is the heart of man in departing from the living God, that even there we find the leaders of the Jews taking away the people from these expressed commandments of God by putting them under the authority of their own tradition. How comes it that there is this continual tendency in the heart of man, and specially of those that take the place of guides of God's people, no matter when or where you look at it, to supplant His word by their tradition? It is because tradition gives importance to man, leaves room for superiority to self. The consequence is that not merely the religious chiefs are thus fond of gratifying their self-importance by imposing rules of their own, but the people love to have it so. This painful fact is brought out in all the word of God. Thus, throughout the Old Testament, not only were the priests ever rebellious, but the people also: man never was subject to God, but has continually departed from God, in whatever way He might be trying him. This, then, came to an issue between the Lord and the Jewish religionists.

"And the Pharisees and certain of the scribes who came from Jerusalem are gathered together unto Him." They had the highest authority as far as the earth was concerned; they came from the holy city of ancient religion, clothed with the credit of Divine law and authority. "And seeing some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashed, hands." Now, there was clearly nothing moral in this — nothing that could touch the soul or that affected a man's relationship with God; but it was contrary to their traditions, and therefore they found fault. It is easy to conceive that this tradition may have had a pious origin.

There may have been in the minds of these leaders an idea of keeping up before the people the importance of personal purity; for washing the hands would be a very natural sign that God looks for and insists on holiness in the works of His people. At any rate, such was the custom expected from every professor, whether from that idea or any other of presenting to the minds of the Israelites their duty in the things of God. They may have pleaded indirectly. No doubt it was drawn from the word of God, because there were certain washings which men always practised. Thus, the priests were to wash the sacrifices presented to God, as they had been themselves washed at the time of their consecration, and had always to wash hands and feet before entering the tabernacle. It seemed a reasonable and meet inference that this rite, at once simple and expressive, ought to be observed by every man among the holy people in his ordinary dealings day by day. Who, in fact, could have the necessity of personal purity kept too much before his eyes? But there was precisely where man was in fault. The great principle of the word is that, God being infinitely wise and holy, where He does not lay down any positive injunction of His own, woe to him who infringes liberty. Man, on the contrary, takes advantage of the opening, and, where God has not laid down a law, he makes one of his own. But God has given no warrant thus to legislate; and half the disputes and schisms that have occurred in Christendom are due to this cause. The haste of man to solve a difficulty has recourse to such measures, and the desire of man to enforce his own will where God, instead of laying down anything positive, has left things as a test for the heart, and therefore has purposely abstained from a command. It cannot be surprising that what is thus introduced is

almost always evil; but supposing the thing imposed might seem ever so desirable, the principle is always faulty.

I desire to press the immense importance of giving no authority to any rule except the word now written. To hear men of God, to be helped by servants of God, to value an exposition of the truth, is all well, but is a very different thing from an authoritative canon or creed which men impose as binding upon conscience. It is never right to accept thus what comes from man. God alone and His word bind the conscience. His servants may teach, but if they teach aright, it is the truth of God. They bring the word of God to bear upon the conscience, and therefore nobody that understands the place of God's servant would wish to create a divided allegiance by imposing his own thoughts and words. His proper function as a servant is rather to maintain the undisguised supremacy of God's word, so that the conscience may be put under a positive and increased sense of obligation. Whenever the work is well done, and blessed by God's grace, further question is at an end. This is the true aim of such ministry as Scripture recognises. The truth is sufficiently brought out that men's consciences should be called into action. The Spirit of God gives Divine force to it, so that souls are left without excuse. Even in the preaching of the Gospel every unconverted man is under the responsibility of receiving the testimony of God; but still more in Divine things, after we have received the truth and have discovered the inestimable place and value of the word of God. It is of all importance that our souls should hold fast and firm, that whatever the helps imparted through man, whatever the light of God that shines through the

vessels He employs, still it is God's light, God's truth; nothing else than God's word ought to be acknowledged as authoritative.

Assuredly the business of a Christian, of a servant of God, now is not to stand between man and God, which was the position of a priest in Judaism, but to put away the obstacles which act as veils, that man may face the truth, and, indeed, God Himself, without being permitted to escape; so that the light that comes from God may shine full upon the conscience and the heart of man. This does not suit man left to himself; it displeases the world, which prefers a distant reserve; and these Pharisees and scribes, though they came from Jerusalem, were really of the world. Hence they reasoned in Divine things, as men do now, from principles that are true enough in worldly things: the word was not mixed with faith in their hearts. No doubt, in the outward world, God has left man to himself in great measure, save that He keeps a certain providential check upon him. Government of the earth is committed to human hands, and man comes under the responsibility of exercising or observing that government here below. But still he is left to judge according to the means God has given. There may be certain landmarks God has laid down; for instance, the sacredness of human life, which God asserted before He called out Abraham, and which is a principle as obligatory now as ever it was. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This was what God instituted at the time of the Flood; but with such-like slight exceptions, man is left free to arrange, according to the circumstances, the various punishments and rewards in this world. But in Divine

things the main point is God dealing, by His word and Spirit, with conscience, as immediately subject to Himself. And hence it is that everything which intercepts the direct application of the Scripture from God Himself to His children is the most positive injury. It is man stepping into the place of God. This at once furnishes a sure test for deciding what is of God and what is not. If you speak to me of helps for understanding the word of God, these exist and are given of God. Such is the object of ministry, which is the service that God has instituted for the purpose of giving effect to His word. But none the less is His word the means of dealing with sinners and of building up His children. True, it is the service of God in His word, not a rival or co-ordinate authority.

On the other hand, tradition is essentially different. It proceeds, not from God, but from man. We find the attempt to introduce it even in the New Testament, and while the Apostle Paul was in the midst of his labours. The Church at Corinth shows, perhaps, the first attempt of the enemy to insinuate human tradition. They had allowed women to preach in the public assembly, which the Apostle denounces. There was a good deal to be argued for it. People might have reasoned — if women had gifts, why should these not be used? If gifts were possessed suited to bring out the truth of God, why not turn these to the utmost account in the Christian assembly? The word of God positively interdicts this. It allows that a woman might prophesy; as, for instance, the four daughters of Philip, the evangelist, no doubt did prophesy. The question is, where and how? In the first place, they were not to prophesy to men, because that would be an inversion of God’s order. A woman is not suffered to teach or govern. Consequently, while they

were allowed to bring out whatever light they had, even of the highest character, yet it was to be done in subjection to the word of the Lord. A man, as the Apostle shows, is the glory of God, whereas the woman is put under subjection. Man has the official place of superiority to the woman. It could, therefore, never be supposed that God would give a gift to a woman in such sort as to set aside, in so important a manner, the difference established from the beginning, and sanctioned and insisted upon in the New Testament. In the next place, within the public assembly woman's speaking in any form, even asking a question, is forbidden. They are to ask their husbands at home. It was this very thing that drew out the Apostle's condemnation of tradition. The Corinthians seem to have allowed and contended for liberty to be given to these gifted women to speak in the assembly. But the Apostle takes them to task, and urges that if any of them were spiritual or prophets they would be subject to the word of the Lord. On the other hand, if any of them were ignorant, let them be so. What a blow to the would-be-wise speculators to hear their theories treated as mere and wilful ignorance! "If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." (1 Cor. 14:38) These high-flown men were really ignorant of the mind of God.

This, it is evident, is exceedingly important, because it puts us in the presence of the great truth which the Church of God has forgotten and trampled under foot in all ages. The word is not to come out from ourselves. We want the word that comes from God to the Church, and not what the Church, so-called, pretends to utter. The Church never teaches nor rules. That which comes from man or from the Church has no authority whatever; on

the contrary, the Church is called to be in the place of subjection to Christ: she is not in the place of the Lord, but of the lady. Jesus is Lord; He alone commands the Church, which is put by God in the place of the woman, as subject to the Lord. This at once becomes a very weighty difference in practice. For we can all remember the day when we thought that human rules in the things of God were right and necessary. It seemed to us as if the ecclesiastical state could not be held together without human regulations. We judged that the present state differs so from what existed of old that it is impossible to apply the word of God in its integrity to the Church now, and therefore new rules must be introduced to suit our days. In admitting such a principle, you do two things — you dishonour the word of God, for the word of God is not a dead letter, like man's: the word of God is a living word now as then. Every Christian believes this for the salvation of his soul, but not for his walk and conduct every day, and, more particularly, not for the worship and government of the Church. Is it not, on the very face of it, a mischievous principle to allow the word of God to be a living authority in one thing and to treat it virtually as obsolete and dead in another? Is it not venturing near the fatal slide of infidelity? I do not say that the persons who speak and act thus are infidel; but it is an infidel principle to consign to the grave any part of God's word, to maintain that all that part which dwells so largely upon the union and worship of Christians, the ways in which they are to walk together in the confession of their Lord, and in common subjection to the word and Spirit of God — that all this is out of date, and no longer obligatory on the saints. But you do another dishonour by such a course, for you not only dethrone the word of

God from its supremacy in the conscience, but you exalt the commandments of man: you slight the true authority and recognise a mere usurper. It is evident I must have something that governs me If I am not simply subject to the word of God, I am sure to bow to the word of man. Some may prefer their own thoughts if they think their own wisdom is superior to their neighbour's. But the general form taken is not so much an individual showing self-sufficiency, but rather the union of a number who encourage one another to join in this race of independence, which involves disobedience to the word of God. We are living at a time when Satan does all to lower Scripture, and when God has brought out its value and pressed its practical moment more home upon the conscience than in former days. There was a time when not one of us had ever been exercised upon this subject. It was taken for granted that a human supplement of rules is necessary. But any rule invented by man for the government of Christians is a tradition, and of the worst kind, because it is thus made a thing of positive authority for faith and practice.

The Pharisees in our chapter brought out this conventional washing of hands, and pressed it upon the disciples. The Spirit's comment is that "the Pharisees and all the Jews, unless they wash their hands diligently, 62 eat not, holding the tradition of the ancients. And when they come from the market-place, unless they are washed, they do not eat. And many other things there are which they have received to hold, the washing of cups and vessels, brazen utensils, and couches." Every spiritual man must feel the quick, cutting condemnation of the whole principle, root and branch, which breathes through the language of the Spirit of God. However

subdued the tone may be, the whole thing is treated as utterly weak and childish. The washing of persons is classed with the washing of cups and vessels. Many like things they do. What a religion! “Then the Pharisees and scribes ask Him, Why do Thy disciples walk not according to the tradition of the ancients, but eat the bread with defiled63 hands?” It is remarkable how the Lord answers them. It is not by discussing the source of the tradition or showing its futility. He deals at once with its broad character and its moral effect on the obedience that is due to God. This is, doubtless, a most admirable pattern for every Christian man. The Lord lays bare the moral fruit of these traditions, and thus the simple escape the snare of the enemy. “He answered and said unto them, Well did Esaias prophesy concerning you, hypocrites,68 as it is written, This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Isa. 29:13)

And this is His method of proof. He takes one of these noted traditions and shows that, plausible as it might seem, it was but the cunning slight of deceivers, led by one more cunning than themselves, and destructive of the true fear of God. It drew men into disobedience, and made excuse for sin, or, rather, denied it. Thus their zeal for tradition blinded them to what ordinary conscience must have felt, “for, leaving the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men.” He does not call it a wicked tradition; it was “of men,” and is not to be held. “And He said to them, Well do ye set aside the commandment of God, that ye may observe your own tradition.” There is the process: give up what is of God, and then you will fall into the hands of man. There is

great importance in the principle. It is not a comparison of things as to whether this is better than that. The evil is laying aside the commandment of God, and preferring man's tradition to it. The only thing that has claim upon the Christian heart is what comes from God. Whatever God wills, whatever is His revealed mind on any given subject, demands the believer's reception and obedience. "For, leaving the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of vessels and cups: and many other such like things ye do."

What is the harm of all this? It may not be wise, but is merely innocent, a person might argue. But the Lord does not judge so lightly of nullifying God's commandments by the deference that men show to the will and word of man. "For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and he who speaks ill of father or mother, let him surely die." There we have the plain revelation of God's mind. To honour parents is right and of God, to make light of them unfits man to live in God's estimate. How did tradition dissolve so plain a duty? "Ye say, If a man say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is, gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and ye suffer him no more to do anything for his father or his mother, making void the word of God69 through your traditions which ye have delivered: and many such like things ye do." just consider what an issue this was. A man sees his father and mother in want; he has received in earthly goods that which would relieve them, but the tradition-mongers have invented a plan to benefit religion so called at the cost of filial duty. If one said "Corban" the duty was totally changed, and that which would have been due to the parent must now be devoted to the priest. No matter what the need of

father and mother, that word “Corban”. estopped all action of heart or conscience. The leaders had devised the scheme to secure property for religious purposes, and to quiet persons from all trouble of conscience about the word of God.

But the judge and Lord of all meets this at once. Who had given them authority to say, It is Corban? Where had God warranted such a practice? and who were they that dared to substitute their thoughts for the word of God? It was God who called on man to honour his parents, and who denounced all slight done to them. Yet here were men violating, under cloak of religion, both these commandments of God! This tradition of saying “Corban” the Lord treats not only as a wrong done to the parents, but as a rebellious act against the express commandment of God.

For my part I never heard of a tradition introduced into any religious body, or imposed upon any individuals, that was not contrary to the word of God. Such are the rules made by man in the things of God. Indeed, all religious societies have a system, which they do not even profess to have derived from the word of God. There are those now in Christendom that cast themselves upon the word of God alone, but such one would not lower to the level of a religious society. I say, then, that wherever you find men who join together in these voluntary societies, large or small, they introduce a system of their own for the purpose of distinguishing themselves from others, and regulations that they consider necessary for the establishment or extension of the society. They invent and impose human rules, which not only differ from the Scripture, but contradict it. God’s word is a living reality, and a complete standard of truth and practice.

Everything that man adds as a supplement is a deformity; it is that which, as it does not flow from God, is inconsistent with the light. Man is incompetent to regulate what belongs to God.

Thus persons say it is impossible to go on unless you have rules about ministry; it would not do to have everybody rising up and attempting to minister. It is freely admitted that if there were not the looking to the Holy Ghost there would be confusion, and that even where there is faith in Him there is always the need of self-judgment why one does this or seeks that, but God is equal to all the difficulty. If we submit to the word of God nothing can be more distinct or positive than that there is no such thing as a universal right to minister on one hand, and no such thing as a process or any human means of conferring a title to minister upon a man. Not the Church, but Christ; not the subject woman, but the risen man and Lord, can call to the work of teaching the saints or of preaching the Gospel. It surprises many to hear that there is no such thing as a human institution to warrant the preaching of the Gospel. A single text would destroy my statement if it were not true, but no Scripture can be brought forward. The general practice of Christendom has no Divine ground whatever for its justification. Hence they are obliged to take their stand upon tradition, which contradicts the plain word of God. For if any Christians have the power to preach, which comes only from the Lord, they are not only at liberty, but bound to preach. It is a question of positive responsibility to Him before whose judgment we must all be made manifest. The Lord, if He lights a candle, does not intend it to be put under a bushel, but to be set on a candlestick. It is at man’s peril if he attempt to

hinder the going forth of the energy of God's Spirit. Whoever has the power of the Spirit to preach should go forth and use it; woe to him if he does not.

Take another case. There is no such thing in the New Testament as a person set apart by any human mode simply to teach the Church. Whereas, when we look around, we see one and the same principle running through a vast variety of forms, from the Pope down to the ranting preacher. All have got their self-devised methods, by which none can be a minister in the denomination unless he go through their own human process. But such a routine is wholly unsound and contradicts the word of God, and every Christian person is bound to give effect to this by renouncing in every way what is contrary to the word of God. Do you think and say that this is too hard? Then it is you who are too bold, not I. For am I not asserting what I can prove? You have your Bibles, and can search for yourselves. But it may be said, Was there no such thing as ordaining? Certainly there was, when Apostles or apostolic men constituted elders, etc. But our Lord still sends, as He used to send, men out to preach the Gospel. But I contend that a human rite, before they permit souls to preach to the world or teach the Church, is a tradition of men and contrary to Scripture. You will find in Scripture that there were persons appointed by the Apostles to take care of tables, persons chosen by the Apostles or their envoys to a certain work of supervision. Some were called elders and others deacons, but neither the one nor the other was necessarily a preacher or teacher. It is nothing but a blunder to confound elders and deacons with ministers of the word as such. Those who were evangelists, or pastors and teachers, exercised their

gifts, not because they were made elders or deacons, which they might not be, but because they had a capacity from God to preach, teach, or rule. To confound these gifts with eldership is a great mistake. When once the difference is seen it clears the way, and brings one either outside the traditional paths of Christendom, or, if disobedient, within the range of our Lord's rebuke.

May we all bear in mind how deeply we need to watch against the spirit of tradition! Wherever we impose with absolute authority a thing that does not proceed from God Himself, it is a tradition. It is all very well to take counsel of one another, and it is not a happy feature to oppose others needlessly; but it is of all consequence that we should strengthen each other in this, that nothing but the word of God is entitled or ought to govern the conscience. It will be found that when we let go this principle, and allow a rule to come in and become binding, so that what is not done according to that rule is regarded as a sin, we are gone from the authority of the word of God to that of tradition, perhaps without knowing it ourselves.

The Lord here shows convincingly where these Pharisees and scribes were. They had never considered that their principle of Corban made void the word of God. But let us, too, bear in mind that after we have had any Divine truth pressed upon us we are never the same as before. We may have been simply and honestly ignorant then, but we are thenceforth under the increased yoke of God's known mind, which we either receive in faith or reject, and harden ourselves by rejecting in unbelief. Therefore, let us look to the Lord, that we may cherish a good conscience. This supposes that we have nothing before us which we cleave to or

allow inconsistent with God's will. Let us desire and value nothing but what is according to His word, lest peradventure any of us be left where Christ leaves these Pharisees, under the terrible censure that they made void the word of God through their tradition. If but one example was taken up it was a sufficient sample of the things they were doing continually.

Now we turn to another subject — the condition of man. We are first shown that religion without Christ is but hypocrisy, and that man's interference in Divine things ends in setting God's word aside to keep his own tradition. The next thing we see is what man really is, religious or not. "When He had called again the crowd, He said to them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand." The Lord here brings to light the broad principle which of itself would account for His sentence on all tradition. Does it come from man? It is enough. How is it that which springs from such a source is bad and untrustworthy? It concerns every soul, for it is no question of controversial strife. Protestant and Papist, beware of slighting the admonition of the judge of quick and dead. "There is nothing from outside a man, entering into him, can defile him; but the things which go out from him, those it is which defile the man."70 This, if we apply the principle in all its extent, involves the character of tradition; for tradition comes out from man — not a word to man with the authority of God, but a human word that beggarly pride would fain invest with purple and gold to cover its nakedness. This may show the connection, for undoubtedly the Lord here judges the moral issues of the heart and all the ways of man. "If any one have ears to hear, let him hear." The disciples could not understand Him. What a lesson for us! Christ's

servants could not understand Him. The very Apostles were slow to believe that man was utterly corrupt. Is there anyone here that doubts the thorough evil, not merely to be found among men, but of man? Does anyone think that human nature can be trusted? Listen to the Saviour — the Saviour of the lost. “If any one have ears to hear, let him hear.”

“When He entered indoors from the crowd His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. And He says unto them, Are ye also thus unintelligent? Do ye not perceive that all that is outside entering into the man cannot defile him, because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging64 all meats? And He said, That which goeth forth out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, deceit lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness all these wicked things go forth from within, and defile the man.”71 There is nothing in the heart of man that so hinders his intelligence as the influence of religious tradition. Not only this, but tradition darkens a disciple wherever it works, and one effect and invariable accompaniment of it is specially insubjection to the humbling truth that there is no good thing in man. I do not deny that God can bring everything that is good into the heart. For He gives His Son, and in Him eternal life; He washes the believer in the precious blood of Christ, and gives the Holy Ghost to dwell in him. Neither do I speak of what is the fruit of Divine grace working in man; but I maintain that what comes out of man as such is invariably bad. As to this the disciples were dull of understanding, yet

there was not one obscure word in what Christ uttered. Why is it that Divine truth seems and is so difficult to apprehend? Our obstacle chiefly lies, not in the head, but in the heart and conscience. It is not the bright or the powerful intellect that understands the word of God best; it is the man whose purpose of heart is to serve the Lord. Wherever there is a simple-hearted desire to do His will, “he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.” “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” It is not, If thine eye be keen or far-seeing, but “If thine eye be single.” (John 7:17; Matt. 6:22) What a comfort to a poor soul that is consciously weak, ignorant, foolish, it may be! Such a one, nevertheless, may have a single eye, and consequently see farther, spiritually, than the brightest of men, whose heart is not unreservedly toward the Lord. What in this case hindered singleness of eye? Why were the disciples so undiscerning? Because they did not like to receive such a tremendous sentence on man. They had been accustomed to make conventional differences.

The Pharisees and scribes, the great men of Jerusalem, were still of a certain value in their eyes, just as you find the vulgar crowd gaping after the sounding titles of the religious world. How little are the mass of God’s children emancipated from the delusion that there is something in these names that guarantees or presupposes real intelligence! Never was it so, and never less than now. Can you point out a time since Christendom began when there was such a complete giving up of the mind of God in the places of highest pretension? There have been seasons when the world was more hostile and the form of hatred more formidable as far as persecution goes, but never was

there an hour when Christendom — ay, Protestant Christendom — had so many swamps of indifference to God's authority, with here and there a standard of rebellion against the truth of Christ. This may seem strong, no doubt, but I have made the assertion according to God's word, and, as far as that may go, with a closer study of Christendom in its various phases than many persons. I am not afraid, then, to reassert my conviction that there never has been a display of man's evil heart of unbelief in the shape of indifference on one side, and, on the other, of enmity against the truth, equal to the present aspect of the age. Even when Christendom mumbled over their devotions, saturated with religious fable, and thoroughly subject to a crafty and ignorant priesthood, the word of God was less known and less slighted than now. The dungeon wall of superstition is partially fallen, the light of God's testimony has been seen enough to provoke the malice of men. People are energetic enough in these days, but their energy is against the Gospel. It is not so with all, thank God! but the peculiar feature of the present age is that the active aggression is against Scripture, an organized rebellion proceeding from professors in the high seats of human learning. Not only daring individuals here and there attack Scripture, but the nominal teachers and heads of the clergy combine to do it with comparative impunity, as if they were determined to concentrate the whole weight of their personal and official influence. This has a voice for us; if we have understanding of the times, let us take care that we stand firmly, conscientiously, and uncompromisingly, though humbly, on the foundation of Divine truth, caring for nothing else. We shall be counted harsh: this is always the portion of faithfulness. But the name of the

Lord is our tower of strength for the last days, as from the beginning. So Paul warns Timothy in his last Epistle, as he looked at the perils of these days (which are still more emphatically true now than they were then); and what is the resource for them? Not tradition, but the written word of God. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,” etc. (2 Tim. 3:16) It is not teachers, nor godly men raised up, however precious both may be — nothing but Scripture can be a permanent standard of truth.

As to things that defile, they come out of the man. This is true in all things, and all acts of evil. They invariably spring from within, from the corrupt will of man. Thus, for instance, it is plain that if the law execute the capital sentence on a criminal, it is not murder, but, contrariwise, the vindication of God’s authority in the earth. It is not a question of evil feeling against the culprit, and there is nothing defiling in it. But if you were so much as to injure a man in deed, word, or thought, there you have what defiles. The moment there is that which is a part of your self-will, without God, which comes out of you, and you yielding to it, there is the taint of defilement. “Murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things go forth from within and defile the man.” In a word, we have the doctrine most plainly laid down here that man — i.e., man in his present state — is only the source of that which is evil. I require another absolutely perfect One, who is outside me, to be my life, and such a One I have in Christ. If I am a Christian at all Christ is my life, and the business for me thenceforth is to live on and according to that good which I have found in Christ.

Therefore, the happy man is he who is always thinking of and delighting himself in Christ. The man, on the contrary, who is striving to find some good in himself is under the error of the disciples before they learnt to bow to the word of the Lord. His light was too bright, too searching, too severe, too unsparing, for the will of the disciples. They did not accept the truth with simplicity, and therefore they found it a hard saying.

Mark 7:24-30.

Matt. 15:21-28.

We have seen that which cometh out of man, and how defiling it all is. We are now to learn what comes from God, and how full of mercy and goodness this is, delivering those oppressed by the devil. But there was, I am persuaded, a significant previous act in our Lord's going from the scene where He had rebuked the traditions of earthly religion, and the universal sink of corruption in the heart and its issues, which they but conceal.72 The only real remedy is the deliverance of sovereign grace in Christ, who arose from thence and "went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon [those world-renowned monuments of God's sure judgment], and entered into an house, and would have no man know it; and He could not be hid. But immediately a certain woman, whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet." What claim had she? Not the smallest. "The woman was a Greek73 [or Gentile], a Syrophoenician by race." She was from the fertile stock of Israel's enemies, the corrupt and idolatrous despisers of the true God. But if Jesus desired an opportunity to show the grace of God above all question of right, desert, or any conceivable plea, save

that of utter misery cast on Divine mercy in Him, never was there a more needy suitor. “And she besought Him that He would cast the demon out of her daughter.”

Yet if the faith of the woman was to triumph, none the less was it tried. And I consider that it is morally instructive to observe that the richest grace on the part of Christ does not make the trial of faith less, but more. The soul that is little exercised never cats the kernel of the blessing, never proves the depths that are in God and His grace.

Mark, precise as his Gospel usually is in details, does not give us the particulars of her first appeal to the Saviour as “Son of David,” the propriety of which in Matthew is evident. Neither does our Gospel bring out His unwonted silence, and the disciples’ entreaty, and the firm statement of His mission as minister of the circumcision, for which also we must turn to Matthew.

Nevertheless, even here our Lord does maintain the principle of “the Jew first,” as the simplicity of faith (what is so genuinely intelligent?) in her urges “and also the Gentile.” But there is more. Grace speaks out the whole truth, and strengthens its object to bear it, confess it, and delight in it. So here the Lord adds in verse 27: “It is not right to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.”74 “And she answered and says to him, Yea, Lord: for even the dogs under the table eat of the children’s crumbs.” She is taught of the Lord to take her true place; but she cleaves with undoubting assurance to the certainty that He will not deny His. She was no better than a dog; but is not God full of bounty and goodness even to the dogs? “And He said unto her, Because of this saying, go thy way: the demon is gone

out of thy daughter." It was the blessed and holy ministry of grace to desperate need.

Mark 7:31-37.

Matt. 15:29-31.

The scene that follows illustrates still farther the Saviour's grace, only it is in the ordinary domain of His labours. "And again, departing from the borders of Tyre and Sidon, He came65 to the Sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring to Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in speech; and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him." What a picture of the impotence to which sin has reduced man — inability to hear the Lord's voice, incapacity to tell Him his need! Such are those whom the Saviour heals among the despised Galileans or anywhere else. "And He took him aside from the crowd, and put His fingers to his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue; and, looking up to heaven, He groaned, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And immediately his ears were opened, and the band of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. And He charged them that they should tell no man; but the more He charged them, so much the more abundantly they published it; and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: He makes both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." It is still the service of love, the heart and the hand of the only perfect Servant. "He has done all things well" was their astonished testimony. May we ever and for all confide in Him! His right hand has not forgotten; His heart is unchanged; He Himself is the "same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." (Heb. 13:8) May we treasure up the look to heaven, the sigh over

the earth, the gracious, interested handling of the sufferer, the word of delivering power, the manner and the measure of the cure! Truly “He has done all things well.”

62 “Diligently” (or “frequently,” “with vigour,” or “with nicety”). The mass of authority [ABD, etc., followed by Edd.] sustains πυγμῃ (D:

πυκμῃ). Lit. “with the fist,” or “up to the elbow.” Tischendorf adopted πυκνά from the Sinaitic copy, confirmed, perhaps, by the Latin (verse 9) and some other versions. St. Gall [as the Syrsin] has neither (B.T.). See, further, note 67.

63 “Defiled”: so Edd., after pmBD, 1, 33, Memph. Arm. “Unwashed” is found in corr AL, etc., Syr. Goth.

64 “Purging” (

καθαρίζων). A serious italic supplement by the Revisers appears in verse 19, “This He said.” Here is the preliminary question of καθαριζων and καθαριζον, the former undoubtedly carrying much the most weight externally (AB, etc., 1, 69, and some other cursives [followed by Edd.]; καθαριζον, KM and most cursives), if one did not bear in mind how carelessly the best MSS. interchange ω and o, which almost nullifies their suffrages on the point. The strange version of the Revised Version, “Making all meats clean,” seems due to Origen (Comm. in Matt. 15:10). — K. usually is regarded, if in the neut., as in apposition with the sentence; if in the masculine, as appended in an independent construction, with the gender conformed to τὸν ἀφεδρῶνα, the departure from formal grammar giving the more force to the participle (cf. Moulton’s “Winer,” p. 778, and Blass, § 70, 10, on the

anacoluthon). Indeed, καθαρίζει and καικαθαρίζει are found in some copies, all indicative of the difficulty presented by the construction (B.T.).

65 “Of Tyre and Sidon he came to”: so A with later uncials, almost all cursives (including 1, 69), Syrsin pesch hcl. Revised Version with Edd. have “of Tyre. He came through Sidon,” after BDL Δ, 33, etc., Old Latin, the Syriac of Jerusalem, Memph. AEth. See, further, note 75.

Mark 8

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 190-194.

Mark 8:1-9.

Matt. 15:32-39.

In the second miracle of the feeding of the multitude we have, of course, a repeated testimony to Christ as the Messiah, the Shepherd of Israel, viewed in the beneficence of His power. It was, indeed, no more than what is predicted of Him “I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread.” This was a very significant token to Israel.

In the case of other rulers there is a natural necessity in general that their people should contribute to their sustenance and grandeur; but the Messiah would be the source of nourishment to His subjects. This privilege appertained to and was revealed of Him alone. There never has been, never can be, any other ruler with such a sign attached to his person and with such a character belonging to his rule as this gracious source of supplies to His people. Elsewhere it was the fruit of rapine, robbing the distant to lavish on those at home. The Messiah will act out of His own almighty power and love to Israel. This is the plain meaning of Ps. 132:15. The force of Scripture has been greatly weakened through the bad habit of spiritualizing it; in point of fact, it is losing the interpretation of Scripture when we limit it to such applications. Undoubtedly, one is entitled to take the spirit of such a word as this, and one may see from it how Christ cares for those who believe in Him and that

He now displays more than ever this characteristic goodness in His loving provision for their need.

But to the great mass of God's children at present on the earth what idea does the promise of Ps. 132 present? and what meaning except a passing exercise of compassionate power do they find in these miracles? It is evident that the Spirit of God attached great importance to the fact, for the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels is the feeding of the multitude — at least, the earlier case where the Lord fed the five thousand. This, then, remains true, that in these miracles the Lord was giving the twofold witness of His being the Messiah, competent and willing to carry out all that was most characteristic of Himself, and what no other prince or king could possibly effect, because even for his own State ordinarily dependent upon revenue derived from his lieges. But the Lord Jesus has this singular source and supply of grace in Him, and His kingdom will be marked by it, so that instead of His burdening Israel or draining the world of its wealth to sustain Him, the Lord Jesus Christ will even retain the place of the blessed and only Potentate even when the earth owns Him as King. It will be a day when all burdens shall be taken away and the earth yield her increase. No doubt man's heart will be opened and "a multitude of camels shall cover Zion, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall publish the praises of Jehovah. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall serve thee; they shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will beautify the house of My magnificence. Who are these that come flying as a cloud, and as doves to

their dovecotes? For the isles shall await Me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of Jehovah thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, for He hath glorified thee.... The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the cypress-tree, pine-tree, and box-tree, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious.... For bronze I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood bronze, and for stones iron; and I will make thine officers peace, and thy rulers righteousness." (Isa. 60:6-17) But the great distinguishing feature of the earthly kingdom of the Messiah as compared with all others will be this affluence of goodness when the Divine power undertakes all for man in the great day when the Lord's victory over Satan is made good here below. The millennium will not be man brought into the eternal state, but as yet with a body liable to death. There will still be the possibility of evil in the world but the peculiar feature will be that, while the evil is not rooted out and sin is still in the nature of man, and the power of death may be used in particular cases as a judgment on flagrant sin, yet will the power of good by Christ, the great King, prevail over evil: not the struggle of evil with good, but the supremacy of blessing flowing from Jehovah-Messiah throughout the whole earth. If there were a single spot of the earth apart, a solitary nook of nature unvisited by the stream of blessing in "that day," it would be, so far, the triumph of evil over good. We know from Rev. 20 that, after the millennium, the nations will rebel. No beneficence on the part of the Lord, no feeding His poor with bread, will change the heart of fallen man — nay, nor will His displayed glory deter him from mad opposition. The sad proof will be

patent that all who are not born of God in the millennium will furnish fresh fuel for Satan to kindle the last rebellion against the Lord; but fire will come down out of heaven and dispose of them judicially, caught in the very act. How overwhelming the evidence of man's good-for-nothingness when glory dawns on the earth, just as much as the present evil age is proving man's good-for-nothingness in despising or abusing grace! The Lord showed that there was no deficiency in power, even while He was here, for the purpose of displaying the power of His kingdom. He that could feed five thousand could have as easily fed five millions. He was pleased to use the commonest material on the spot; it was the Lord of all taking what was there, and so it will be in the millennium, the Lord making all things new — not absolutely, but in a measure, and the figure of the complete work which will close all.

The Christians who only think of heaven blot out the testimony of a vast range of Scripture, whereby the future scene is not merely rendered vague, but gravely falsified, and in the weightiest and most momentous traits, too. For the age to come will be for the most part unprecedented. The habit of thus making everything bend to the present moment is most injurious to our faith, because it dishonours Scripture. It springs from and feeds the spirit of infidelity perhaps as much as any other bias.

The next point I would desire to notice is the special teaching of the two miracles. Why are two facts given us so nearly of the same kind? Is there anything to be gleaned from the circumstances that on one occasion the Lord feeds five thousand, and twelve hand-baskets of fragments were taken up; and on the other, four

thousand were fed, and seven hampers were taken up? There are those who are quick to say that such an inquiry is to be too curious, that it is indulging fancy if we attempt to gather a precise meaning; but I hope that few of my readers have such low thoughts of the word of God as to suppose that, besides the mere facts, we have not a display of Christ in moral principle or in a dispensational point of view in what is recorded of Him. We do need to weigh and prize the simplest incidents related, only do not confine Scripture to your horizon or mine. Let us value every fact, but do not let us despise any lesson God may convey thereby. Let us leave room for all He meant to be enjoyed. Little as we may any of us know, we know enough to stand for the truth that all Scripture is not only given by inspiration of God, but profitable; and it is the business of the Christian to beware of indulging in his favourite points or doctrines, and to seek spiritual understanding of all the word and revealed mind of God.

We may inquire, then, besides the confirmation of the Messiah's place in earthly glory and His care for His people, what we have to learn from these miracles. Upon the earlier occasion the Lord gives us the feeding of the multitude first of all, and then His dismissing them and leaving the disciples, as far as His bodily presence is concerned, sending them, under a contrary wind, across a troubled sea, where they tack all night and make little or no progress, while He is upon a mountain in prayer to God. Is not this an evident picture of what has taken place since the Lord dismissed Israel, as it were, for a time, and left the disciples, as far as His bodily presence is concerned? He is above interceding. He has taken a new position altogether; and here are

the disciples, during His absence on high, exposed to conflicting elements here below. What could more justly portray the actual dispensation — Israel dismissed after His testimony to them, the disciples as now left by our Lord in this stormy world, and Himself ever living to intercede for them? Moreover, when all seems to be vain, the Lord appears unexpectedly, goes on board along with them, and "immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." What could indicate, as a type, more clearly that, as the effect of the unbelief of Israel, He would leave this world to go on high, and take the place, not of king over the earth to supply His people's necessities (for they, indeed, were not ready for Him), but of priestly advocate in heaven, till He descends and rejoins His tempest-tossed disciples, and brings in healing power and blessing everywhere? (cf. Mark 6:34-56). Along with this we see, in the earlier miracle, "twelve baskets." This, I think, refers to the way in which man becomes prominent. He is made to be the means of carrying out the mind of the Lord. So it will be by-and-by.

But here in the story before us (chapter 8) of feeding the multitude, where we have the four thousand men fed and the seven baskets left, there is a notable difference. It has nothing to do with any figure of the Lord's ways dispensationally. We see here the Lord taking care of a certain remnant of His people out of His own pure grace. It is not the testimony to the order of events from His rejection by Israel till His return in power and glory. He is the Messiah, of course; but it is the beneficent goodness of His heart that He is showing, spite of His rejection. The Lord will take up a remnant by-and-by in the last days, when the mass are apostates, and He will

care for them and supply their need. Meanwhile, He turns to us of the Gentiles in His grace; and what lack we? But whether taken as an earthly or a heavenly remnant, the scene illustrates the fact and certainty of the Lord's tender care of His people now that He has been rejected. There is no leaving them here; He is with His disciples all through.

"In those days, the crowd being again great,66 and having nothing to eat, He called the disciples to Him." Now it is not, as in the last, that the disciples come to Him, anxious about the multitude. It was His own doing out of His own loving thought. He said unto them, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have stayed with Me already three days, and have nothing to eat; and if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint on the way, for67 some of them are come from far." One gathers hence that the object of the scene is not to furnish a type of the ways of the Lord when He presented Himself to Israel and Israel would not have Him. Here it is simply His provision for the remnant of His people, for the poor that go after Him. They might have little perception of His glory, yet He cares for them. It is entirely a question of Christ's goodness in this case, watching over them and providing for them, more than enough, though nothing would be lost. It was their wretchedness that appealed to His heart; and the Lord took the whole thing in hand Himself, though He privileged the disciples to be channels of His bounty.

Accordingly, even when the disciples ask Him, "Whence will one be able to satisfy these with bread here in a desert place?" He inquires, "How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven." The "seven" at the beginning and the end of this case refers, it would seem, not to the

question of man's instrumentality (for which "twelve" is the regular symbol in Scripture), but simply to the fulness of provision, scanty in man's eyes, but complete in His eye of grace and power, as well as of that beyond the mere meeting of their present need. It is the Lord's perfect care and compassion for His people. Not only did He satisfy them, but there is completeness stamped upon the whole transaction, to the praise of His goodness and power. "They ate and were satisfied, and they took up of the fragments that remained seven hampers. And they that had eaten68 were about four thousand, and He sent them away76.

Mark 8:10-13.

Matt. 15:39-16:4.

"And immediately He went on board ship with His disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha."77 This is another point of distinction I wished to notice. On the former occasion He left His disciples and went alone; at this time He accompanies them. It has no reference to what is going on with the present dispensation, nor to His ascension in order to the exercise of priestly functions in heaven. What we here behold is the Lord's perfect care for His people, and then His presence with the disciples, watching over them and guarding them in the midst of the difficulties of a perverse generation, superstitious or sceptical, but equally unbelieving before God. For the Pharisees came forth and began to argue with Him, "seeking from Him a sign from heaven." This is most painful, for the fact of asking for the signs shows that they had no serious thought about, and no heart for, the remarkable miracles that had been wrought by the Lord. Yet they

must have produced a deep and wide impression; for it was impossible that first five thousand men, beside women and children, and then four thousand, could be thus fed without the thing being noised abroad throughout the country. The question of the Pharisees, I presume, grew out of the speculation set afloat by the Lord's having wrought these miracles. At any rate, they wanted a sign from One who had provided the greatest in quantity and quality before their eyes. Could they have given a more awful proof of man's unbelief? A sign! Why, what had all the Lord's ministry been? A sign from heaven! Why, the Lord was Himself the Bread of God which cometh down from heaven; and He had been showing what He was in the-fullness of His love to His people upon. the earth. It is the capricious, rebellious heart of man, discontented with all that God gives. If God gives the fullest earthly sign, according to His word, for an earthly people, they want a sign from heaven.

The Lord treats this demand with unwonted sharpness. He says, and "groaned in His spirit" as He says, "Why doth this generation seek a sign? Verily, I say unto you, a sign shall in no wise be given to this generation. And He left them, and, going again on board ship,69 departed to the other side." The Lord's refusal is very striking to my own mind. We know that their demand was not from felt sense of need, nor from desire to have that need supplied; the Lord never refused such an appeal. It was not because they were miserable sinners, not because they drew too largely upon Him They were only changing the form of their unbelief, persistently and ingeniously perverse in refusing all that God's wisdom presented. There was such a multitude and variety of signs as had never before been seen: there was the very

substance of every sign in His own person; but there was neither eye to see, nor ear to hear, nor heart to receive, what God gives in Christ. He, therefore, abruptly turns from them, enters a ship, and departs to the other side. The truth is, the time for signs was nearly over. There had been abundance given; but it was never the way of God to multiply signs beyond the occasion for which they are introduced; because, although they may rouse persons at the beginning of a testimony from God, if continued afterwards, they would frustrate the moral object He has in view, if they would not lose their very character of signs. A miracle would cease to be a miracle if continually going on.

Mark 8:14-21.

Matt. 16:5-12.

But deeper than any such question was this fact the truth of God had been presented in every possible form, with all possible outward vouchers and tokens and seals, to awaken, arrest, and attract the chosen people. There was no lack of signs; it was faith they wanted. Accordingly, the Lord, when He goes to the other side, charges the disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. The omission of the Sadducees is to be noticed in this place. Sadduceeism, no doubt, is a withering evil, but it is not the most dangerous. The leaven of the Pharisees, if not that of Herod also, may have a worse character and be a greater hindrance in the confession of Christ. For what is the leaven of the Pharisees? It is the cleaving to outward religious forms of any kind, which practically hide the Lord and His Christ. It is the effect of traditional influence, and may be orthodox in much; but

it is religion — self — that is worshipped, rather than the true and living God known in His Son. The next is the leaven of Herod — that is, worldliness, the desire of what will give present reputation or keep up conformity to this world. These are two of the great perils Christians have to watch against. The disciples did not understand the Lord. They thought it was a question of loaves! “They reasoned with one another [saying],70 [It is] because we have no bread.”“‘ Sometimes we wonder at such stupidity in the disciples, but if we reflect on our own history, can we not discern our own dulness in understanding the Word of God, our own slowness in following and walking in His will?

Alas! it is too true a picture of our own hitches and difficulties. It all arises from a want of perception of the truth, and grace, and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this, again, is because we walk in such feeble self-judgment. It is our own undiscerned will that makes His mind in Scripture dark to us. If our eye were but single, if we walked in a spirit of lowly dependence, to do nothing but follow the Lord, we should find nine-tenths of our difficulties at an end. But we have an old as well as a new nature, which we do well to judge unsparingly. Through the mercy of God we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; but the old man seeks to intrude and get the upper hand, and so hinders the believer from following Christ simply and fully. This was at work among the disciples. They thought the Pharisees a respectable sort of people, and they were not prepared for their Master’s sweeping condemnation. There is no deliverance from any of these obstacles and snares but in Christ; and there is no possibility of practically walking in the power of Christ unless the flesh is judged. Our Lord rebukes

the disciples very decidedly: “Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your heart [yet]71 hardened?” It was really so. Our Lord all through treats it as an affair of the heart, and not as an intellectual mistake. It is important that we should accustom ourselves to judge things from their moral roots. If we pursue a wrong course, let us beware of excusing ourselves; if we do, we never get either profit by the way or victory in the end. We must discover that which caused the mistake. What was its source? What exposed us to it? Christ was not our only motive. I believe we never do a wrong thing where Christ is the one object before us. It is not that the flesh is not in us, but it is the Holy Ghost, and not the flesh, that has power in us where Christ is the single actuating spring of the heart. What is self-indulgence or the world’s esteem to a man who is filled with Christ? This is what the Apostle so earnestly sought for the Ephesian saints — “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” (Eph. 3:17.) It was not that they might merely have Christ as their Saviour, nor only even that they might obey Christ as their Lord, but that they might have Him dwelling in their hearts by faith. It is the soul occupied with Christ to the exclusion of other objects — Christ abiding as the treasure of the heart; and what power to discern and to act according to Christ where this is so! And what is the effect of an unjudged will? Children of light though we be,. light now in the Lord, yet the light is only in Him for us, and we see it not, if we think, or speak, or act far from the Lord practically. Thus it is we neither remember His ways nor understand Himself79.

Mark 8:22-26.

The cure of the blind man of Bethsaida is not only a striking, but a sweetly instructive, lesson. Our Blessed Lord shows, if I may so say, all possible interest in the case, both before the miracle was wrought and in the mode of cure. “He took the blind man by the hand, and led him forth out of the village80; and when He had spit on his eyes, and put His hands upon him, He asked him if he beheld72 anything.” He acts as one would who was deeply concerned, heartily entering into every detail. It is the only instance recorded in Mark of a gradual character; indeed, as far as I know, it is the great standing witness of distinct stages in curing blindness. We have in John 9 an illustrious miracle where sight was given, and not all at once, to the man blind from his birth. But there is a marked peculiarity in the case before us. The fact is that there are two things needful where a Person has not seen at all. One is the faculty of seeing, the other is the power of applying that faculty. Supposing a blind man had visual capacity conveyed to him, it does not follow that he could see thereon. He would not be able to measure distances or to judge with accuracy of the various objects before his eyes. In order to estimate aright any such object, the habit of seeing, comparing, etc., is indispensable. Not only is this true of other creatures, but of man also. We all acquire this gradually; but, growing up as it does from our infancy, it is apt to be overlooked. So true and important, however, is the practice of seeing that if a person who had never seen suddenly received his sight he would not be able at first to discern whether a thing were round or square by barely looking at it; and this though he might have been accustomed to judge of the very same things by the

touch. It is a fact of much interest which seems to me to be intimated in the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida. Though the same conclusion was the deduction of human science scarce two hundred years ago,73 here you have it quietly assumed in the word of God these eighteen centuries.

First of all, the Lord took the man by the hand and led him out of the village; next, He applied to His eyes that which came from His own mouth, and put His hands upon him. For here He is all through the true servant. It is not enough that the task is done, but the manner of doing it must be that which should glorify God and win the heart of him who is healed. What consideration, what condescension, what taking of trouble, so to speak! A word had been enough. But the Servant-Son of God enters into the case fully, and asks the patient (though He only, He perfectly well, knew all about it) “if he beheld anything” (verse 23). Even in John 9, where the eyes were anointed with a plaster of clay, and the blind man then went and washed in the pool of Siloam, the full cure followed immediately. In the case before us there was a special reason for dividing, not the miraculous remedy so much as the effect. The Lord was showing an exercise of Divine power, which at first sight seems to be not so striking as those more commonly healed by a word or a touch. The man looked up and said he beheld men, for he saw persons walking about, like trees. There is no little difference between a man and a tree, but he could not yet distinguish them (especially if, as I presume, born blind).74 All was vague before him. He might, and no doubt did, in his blind estate readily discern between a tree and a man by a touch. But he had not yet learnt to apply his new-born vision, and the

miracle purposely halved the cure. His mind could hardly confound the men who moved with trees, but his faculty of vision only showed that the two things were somewhat alike: they were as trees walking. It was all as yet confusion to him. There was naturally no aptitude in using with clearness the faculty he had just acquired.

“After that He put His hands again upon his eyes, and he looked steadfastly75; and he was restored, and saw all things clearly.” “He hath done all things well.” As that is a saying peculiar to Mark, so it is everywhere a truth illustrated in it; and it is the great point we have brought out here. It was not only that He did what He did with unfailing energy, but the manner In which He wrought was no less admirable. “He hath done all things well.” Mark 7:37) And never was this more conspicuously shown than in the second application of the Lord’s hands to the half-opened eyes, by which the blind man of Bethsaida was made to see all men clearly. “And He sent him to his house, saying, Neither go into the village, nor tell it to any in the village.”

Mark 8:27-29.

Matt. 16:13-16; Luke 9:18-20.

Next (verse 27 et seq.) we have the good confession, not of the Lord before Pontius Pilate, but of Peter before the Lord, against an unbelieving generation. The Lord puts the question to His disciples: “Who do men say that I am? And they answered Him, saying,76 John the Baptist; and others, Elias; but others, One of the prophets.” All was uncertainty, and that is all that man ever, and in spite of busy and laborious efforts, arrives at. The painful, toilsome searching of the creature into things too high for it only ends in perplexity and bitter

disappointment. It leaves a man totally short of, and utterly in the dark about, that which, after all, is the only thing of prime importance. Some say one thing, some another; but who of all the sons of men does or can say the right thing?

And He asked them,77 But ye, who say ye that I am? And Peter answers and says to Him, Thou art the Christ81ff..” Now, we have not here, as in Matthew, the Lord pronouncing, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona.” How comes that? Neither have we here, as there, the Lord’s remarkable address to Peter: “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My church.” Why is all this difference? Because Peter is represented as simply saying here, “Thou art the Christ.” Where it is added that he confessed the Lord to be “the Son of the living God,” there the special notice was also given that he was blessed, “For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.” A confession so singularly rich drew out the Saviour’s recognition of His Father’s grace to Simon Barjona. Thereon the Lord also exercises His rights, and gives him the new name of “Peter,” and adds, “Upon this rock I will build My Church.” He was the Son of the living God. If He had been only the Christ, the Messiah of Israel, it would not have been a sufficient basis for the Church. His Messianic dignity (in which He is also spoken of as Son of God, Ps. 2) might have been a sufficient rock for Israel, as it was their faith and hope; but “the Son of the living God” was a revelation of His glory that went far beyond it. The moment you have the Lord known and confessed in this His highest glory, He for the first time begins to announce His building of His Church. That new edifice, which takes the place of

Christ-rejecting Israel, is founded upon Him who is not only the Christ, but the Son of the living God. Accordingly, death and resurrection follow as that which not only determined Him to be the Son of God with power, but gives the Christian and the Church their proper character (2 Cor. 5:15-19; Eph. 1, 2) It is upon this rock the Church is builded. What could show more clearly that the Church is an absolutely new thing? The attempt to make out this sense of the Church in the Old Testament times proves that the true nature of God's present temple is unknown. The important thing is to see the points of distinction and contrast. Those who confound Jewish duties, and experience, and hopes with the revelation of our Lord when the people rejected Him with the fully developed display of Him in the New Testament, and the consequently new responsibilities and joys of the Christian, blot out, not all truth, but every feature that is essentially characteristic of the "one new man" (Eph. 2), and take away what is specially incumbent on the Christian and the Church of God. This, if true, demonstrates the importance for our souls of taking heed to Scripture. There are those who are so steeped in human tradition and so unversed in the dispensational ways of God that to tell them the Church was part of the mystery hidden from ages and only revealed since Pentecost would be to their minds a revival of the monstrous and wicked error of the Manichees. But the word of God is none the less positive and perfectly plain about it. And Christian men would do well to search the Scriptures, and spare their reproaches, lest haply they be found to fight against God.

Such, then, was the wide scope, answering to Peter's high confession, in Matthew. The Spirit of God in Mark merely records a. part of that confession, and as He designedly leaves out the most peculiar portion of it ("the Son of the living God"), so we have only, and with equal design, our Lord's answer in part. His being the Son of the living God, though owned, we have seen, was not, and could not be, set forth freely and fully until our Lord, by dying and rising again, put the seal, as it were, to this grand truth; and hence the Apostle Paul was the great witness of it. The first testimony that he renders in the synagogue after his conversion is, according to Acts 9:20, that Christ "is [not only made Lord, but] the Son of God." Accordingly, also, he brings out the calling, and nature, and hopes of the Church of God in a way beyond all the others.

Mark 8:31 — Mark 9:1.

Matt. 16:21-28; Luke 9:22-27.

But I would call your attention to the fact that, though here Peter only says, "Thou art the Christ," our Lord charges them that they should tell no man this thing. This He does in all the three Synoptic Gospels. It is a point of instruction much to be heeded. For, first, He had asked them, "Who say ye that I am?" Then, after He had heard the confession of His person from Peter, He binds them to tell none about it. How comes this? It was too late. Full proofs had been vouchsafed. The time was past for presenting Him longer as the Jewish Messiah83. It had been fully told the people; and who did they say He was? But now another thing is not before Him alone, but also set before the disciples — His friends. He is going away; He falls, therefore, back upon another glory that

belongs to Him. Rejected as “David’s Son,” He is owned by faith as “the Son of the living God”; but He is also “the Son of man.” He was about to be humbled even unto death, and this could only be in His human nature; even He shall once more return to earth, as the Son of man, in His glory (cf. verse 31 with verse 38) “He charged them that they should tell no man about Him. And He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and of the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise. again.” Thus He drops the title of “Christ,” and insists upon His place as Son of man as the suffering One first, and this from the heads of Israel. He should be killed, and after three days rise again. “And He spoke the saying openly.” He forbids them to make known His being the Messiah: that testimony was closed now. There was no good in talking about it; the Jews had refused Him, and would definitely, as the Messiah. He had given them every possible form and degree of testimony, and the effect was that they rejected Him, more especially their religious leaders, more and more bitterly and unbelievingly. The consequence would be His death, as He shows His disciples openly. As Son of man He was going to suffer, and as Son of man to be raised the third day, the real condition of His glory by-and-by. Accordingly, we shall find at the end of the chapter the coming again of the Son of man in glory, with His holy angels, when despisers and all unbelievers shall be made the objects of His shame: just recompense of being ashamed of Him and His words before He thus comes.

But there is another thing of vast moment to notice before we close. We have not only a proof of what man

is, in the Jews, the most favoured of men; in the elders, and priests, and scribes, who only become the most active in the scorn and refusal of the Son of man; but His disciples relish not His shame. “And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him. But He, turning round, and seeing His disciples, rebuked Peter, saying,78 Get away behind Me, Satan, for thy mind is not on the things that are of God, but on the things that are of men.” What a solemn lesson, that the Lord should find it needful, at such a time, when, as Matthew shows, He pronounces Simon blessed, and puts special honour on him, to rebuke him thus sternly! How worthless is the fleshly mind even in the chief of the twelve Apostles! In rebuking Peter, because of his carnal dislike of the cross of Christ, He could say, “Get away behind me, Satan,” because it was flesh’s unbelief, selfishness, and presumption, and not the less because veiled under a pious form. He never said to a saint, Get thee hence, as He said to the devil when he arrogated the worship due to God (cf. Matt. 4:10).79 What was it that so roused our Lord? The very snare to which we are all so exposed — the desire of saving self, the preference of an easy path to the cross. Is it not true that we naturally like to escape trial, shame, and rejection; that we shrink from the suffering which doing God’s will, if in such a world as this, must ever entail; that we prefer to have a quiet, respectable path in the earth — in short, the best of both worlds? How easily one may be ensnared into this! Peter could not understand why the Messiah should go through all this path of sorrow. Had we been there we might have said or thought yet worse. Peter’s remonstrance was not without strong human affection. He heartily loved the Saviour, too. But, unknown to himself, there was the unjudged spirit of the world. He

could not bear that their Master should be so dishonoured and so suffer. There was some unbelief of human iniquity. Could the elders, chief priests, and scribes be so wicked, after all? Moreover, there was a want of understanding that there was no other way to deliver man — that this was the only means of glorifying God about man's sin (John 13:31) Suffer the Lord must unto death, and this under God's hand as well as man's. There could be no salvation without it. And God forbid that we should glory save in the cross, whereby the world is crucified to us and we to the world. Let all know this, the people, the crowd, as well as the disciples: so said Jesus. "Whosoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me84. For whosoever shall desire to save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's85, shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? For what should80 a man give in exchange for his soul? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man also be ashamed when He shall come in the glory of His Father with the holy angels86.ff."

The verse which opens chapter 9 clearly belongs to the discourse at the end of chapter 8. Our Lord's promise was fulfilled on "the holy mount." Some of those who stood as He spoke were permitted to see "the kingdom of God come in power88." The reference to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem is arbitrary and incongruous. The special form of the promise is worthy of note. In Matthew it is "the Son of man coming in His kingdom"; in Luke it is simply "the kingdom of God." In the former the personal title of the Lord, as the rejected

but glorious man, and so coming in His kingdom, is made prominent; in the latter it is the moral character, as usual, of that display which the chosen witnesses were privileged to behold — the kingdom of God, not of man. Mark, on the other hand, was led to speak of the kingdom of God coming in power. The same substantial truth appears in all; each presents it so as to suit the Divine design of the Gospels respectively. In our Gospel the Blessed Lord is ever the administrator in power of God's kingdom, and even here, in giving expression to this promised sample of the kingdom, hides His glory as much as possible, though in truth He could not be hid.

66 "Again great": so Edd., following BDCLMN

Δ, etc., 1, 33, 69, Old Lat., Syrsin Arm. Goth. AEth. Memph. "Very great" has the support of AEFHK, later uncials, and most cursives, Syr. (exc. sin.).

67 "For": as A, etc., Amiat., Syrpesch hcl. "And": so Edd., with ABL Δ, 1, 33, Memph. Syrsin.

68 ["They that had eaten"]: as ACN and later uncials, 1, 69 Latt. Syr. Arm. Goth. Edd. omit, with BL, 33, Memph.

69 ["The ship"]: as AE, etc., 33 Syrsin pesch hcl Arm. Memph. Goth. Edd. omit, with BCL Δ and best copies of Vulgate.

70 ["Saying"]: as ACLN and later copies, nearly all cursives, Syr. Arm. Memph. Goth. AEth. Edd. omit, after BD.

71 ["Yet"]: as AX, etc., 69, Amiat. Syr. Edd. omit, with BCDL, etc., 1, 33, Memph.

72 "If he beheld" (lit. beholds): as ADcorrLN, etc., nearly all cursives (1, 69), Amiat. Syr. Goth. Arm. Memph. Edd. "Dost thou behold?" with BCDpm Δ, Memph.

73 “I shall here insert a problem of that very ingenious and studious promoter of real knowledge, the learned and worthy Mr. Molineaux, which he was pleased to send me in a letter some months since; it is this: Suppose a man born blind, and now an adult, and taught by his touch to distinguish between a cube and a sphere of the same metal, and nighly of the same bigness, so as to tell, when he felt the one and the other, which is the cube, which the sphere. Suppose, then, the cube and sphere placed on a table and the blind man be made to see: query, ‘Whether by his sight, before he touched them, he could now distinguish and tell which is the globe, which the cube?’ to which the acute and judicious proposer answers: ‘Not.’ For though he has the experience of how a globe, how a cube, affects his touch, yet he has not yet obtained the experience, that what affects his touch so or so, must affect his sight so or so; or that a protuberant angle in the cube, that pressed his hand unequally, shall appear to his eye as it does in the cube. I agree with this gentleman... in his answer to this his problem; I am of opinion that the blind man at first sight would not be able with certainty to say which was the globe, which the cube, whilst he only saw them; though he could unerringly name them by his touch, and certainly distinguish them by the difference of their figures felt. This I have set down, and leave with my reader, as an occasion for him to consider how much he may be beholden to experience, improvement, and acquired notions, where he thinks he had not the least use of or help from them: and the rather because this observing gentleman further adds, that having, upon the occasion of my book, proposed this to divers very ingenious men, he hardly ever met with one that at first gave the answer to it which he thinks true, till by

hearing his reasons they were convinced." ("Locke's Works," vol. i., p. 124, ed. 10.)

74 I do not think the comparison of men, indistinctly seen, with trees at all disproves his being born blind, as some infer.

75 "He looked steadfastly": as Edd., after BCcorrD and a few cursives. "Made him look up": so AN and later uncials, Syrsin.

76 "Answered": as AD, etc., all cursives, Lat. Syrhcl Arm. Goth. "Spoke": so Edd., following BC, etc., Syrpesch Memph. AEth. "Him, saying": these words T.R. omits, as AN, etc., I, Syr.

77 "Asked them": so Edd., with BCpmDL

Δ. "Saith to them": as ACcorrN, etc., 1, 33, 69, Amiat. Goth. Arm. AEth.

78 "Saying": as ADX

ΓΠ, etc., 1, 33, 69, Old Lat., Syrhcl Goth. Arm. "And says": Edd., with BCL Δ, Memph.

79 In Luke 4:8, "Get thee behind Me, for," is a mere interpolation (B.T.).

80 "Should": so Edd., with BL, Memph. "Shall" is in ACD, all cursives, and Lat.

Mark 9

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 195-214.

Mark 9:2-13.

Matt. 17:1-13; Luke 9:28-36.

Let us remark that those selfsame witnesses He takes and leads up “on a high mountain apart by themselves,” whom afterwards (Mark 14) He takes with Him to Gethsemane. What a change from the glories of the one scene to the exceeding sorrow unto death of the other! Yet was the connection close, and the, end of the Lord full of tenderness to His own: even as the mention of His rejection and death leads the way to the transfiguration in the three early Gospels. What is there, indeed, so real as His sufferings and His glories? How blessed to know and rest on them both in the midst of the vain show of men!

Again, let it be observed that Mark says less of the personal change and more as to His raiment than either Matthew or Luke. “And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became shining, exceeding white [as snow]81, such as fuller on earth could not white them.” He is ever the Servant-Son: as profound in His lowliness as He accepts with dignity what comes from above — dignity which manifests its source by a splendour which stains the pride of earthly glory. In Matthew there is no contrast with fuller on earth, but it is added most characteristically that “His face shone as the sun, and His raiment became white as the light” — a most suited image of supreme glory for the great King. In Luke how wonderfully adapted is the description!

“And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance became different, and His raiment was white [and] effulgent.” None but he mentions the Lord thus bowing down before His Father at this very moment; even as he directs us to that which was more personal than any other in the mighty change that thereon ensued.

“And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answering, says to Jesus, Rabbi89, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; for Thee one, and for Moses one, and for Elias one. For he knew not what to say; for they were filled with fear. And there came a cloud overshadowing them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son90: hear Him.82 And suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one any longer, save Jesus only with themselves.” Having already treated of the scene in Matthew,83 I will not dwell on the astonishing circumstance further than to remark that the Lord discloses in this type of God’s kingdom what popular theologians so dislike — earthly things mingled, though in no wise confounded, with heavenly things (John 3). There are the glorified, in the persons of Moses and Elias; there are the men in their still unchanged natural bodies, Peter, James, and John; there is the central figure of the Lord, the Head of all things above and below. So it will be when the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is not any more a testimony of word from those who were eyewitnesses of His majesty, but made good and displayed in the day of the Lord.

It is mere irreverence to deride what will be by-and-by, or what was then beheld anticipatively, as “a mongrel state of things,” “an abhorred mixture of things totally

inconsistent with each other." If transient glimpses of glory, if passing visits of glorious beings have been vouchsafed from the beginning down to our Saviour's days, is it that man can read in these no more than a tale that is told? Is there to them no confirmation from the holy mount of the prophetic word which declares that Jehovah's feet shall stand on Mount Olivet, not to dissolve all things as yet, but to be King over all the earth in that day when He shall come, and all His saints with Him? (cf. Zech. 14). "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith Jehovah I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jizreel. And I will sow her unto me in the land; and I will have mercy upon Lo-ruhamah; and I will say to Lo-Ammi, Thou art my people; and they shall say, My God" (Hosea 2). "Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, for administration of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth; in Him" (Eph. 1:9). It is in vain to pervert this to the eternal state; it is as distinct from that final condition as from the present ways of God. For as the gathering of the Church is essentially eclectic, and in no sense a gathering of all things in heaven and earth into one, so eternity is after all dispensation (οἰκονομία), administration, or stewardship, is over. The millennial reign, the kingdom of Christ, is the sole answer to this, even as to the other Scriptures. "Let Thy kingdom come, let Thy will be done, as in heaven, so upon the earth" (Matt. 6:10).

To resume: In reporting to us the voice that spake from the cloud (verse 7), Mark, like Luke, was led of the Spirit to omit the middle clause which Matthew gives us, the expression of the Father's complacency in the Son. But this really imparts special emphasis to Christ's title as Son, and the Father's will that they should hear Him - not now Moses and Elias, whom Peter's unintelligent haste had put on a level with Him. The Divine utterance, too, is scaled by the sudden disappearance of those who represented the law and the prophets, Jesus only being left with the disciples.

"And as they came down from the mountain, He charged them that they should tell no man what they had seen, till the Son of man should be risen from among the dead. And they kept that saying, questioning among themselves what rising from among91 the dead was." If they knew the Scriptures and God's power of resurrection, as the Sadducees did not, certainly the rising from among the dead was as new to them as it is little understood yet by many disciples.

Hence the difficulties of learned men perplexed them. "And they asked Him, saying, Why do the scribes say that Elias must first have come? And He answering, told them, Elias indeed, having come first, restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of Man, that He. must suffer much, and be set at nought. But I say unto you, that Elias also is come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they would, as it is written of him." Our Lord does not dispute the truth pressed by the scribes; but as He points out His own approaching shame and suffering before He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels, so He shows a similar application of Elias's case in the person of John the Baptist, while

the strict coming of Elias or Elijah awaits its fulfilment in the latter day92. To faith the forerunner is already come, as well as the Lord Himself. Unbelief must feel both by-and-by.

Mark 9:14-29.

Matt. 17:14-20; Luke 9:37-42.

The foot of the mountain presented a far different scene from the transfiguration glimpse of the kingdom, the disciples encircled by a vast multitude, the scribes questioning with them, and the power of Satan in man unremoved. Christ comes down, and all the people in amazement salute Him. Christ challenges the scribes; but what will He answer him who appealed in vain to the disciples for his son with the dumb spirit, his tormentor? "He answering him saith, O unbelieving generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? Bring him unto Me." Blessed Lord Jesus! perfect are Thy ways. No love, no tenderness, no long-suffering like Thine; yet didst Thou feel the faithlessness which knew not how by dependence on God and denial of self to draw on that energy which casts out Satan from his strongholds. Yet even in Thy presence, when deliverance, is nigh, how dost Thou try the faith and patience of those who learn all in Thee! "And they brought him unto Him: and when He saw him, immediately the spirit tore him, and he fell on the ground, and rolled foaming." Not even yet came the rebuke of power. "And He asked his father, How long a time is it that it has been like this with him? And he said, From childhood, and often it has cast him both into the fire, and into waters, to destroy him; but if Thou couldst84 do anything, be moved with pity on us, and

help us. Jesus said to him, If thou couldst [is] believe,85 all things are possible to him that believeth. And immediately the father of the child cried out and said [with tears],86 I believe: help mine unbelief92a." It was certainly but a feeble confession; yet was it true, and the heart was to Him only. "When Jesus saw that the crowd was running up together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And [the spirit] cried out and rent [him]87 much, and came out, and he became as one dead; insomuch that the most said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And He said to them, This kind can go out by nothing but by prayer and fasting."88 It is an admirable picture of the ways of gracious power in the deliverance of man, Israel especially, from the well-nigh fatal possession of the enemy, with a serious intimation to the disciples wherein lay the secret of their weakness.

Mark 9:30-32.

Matt. 17:22, 23; Luke 9:43-45 John 7:18-31; John 10:32-34.

Alas! it is not lack of power we have to own, but scanty entrance into His mind. The fleshly mind can think and talk of glory here below, but the cross breaks in neither understood nor welcome. "And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and He would not that any man should know it. For He taught His disciples, and said to them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men 93 and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise again after three days.89 But they

did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask Him."

Mark 9:33-37.

Matt. 17:24-18:5; Luke 9:46-48.

The truth is that other thoughts preoccupied them, which hindered the inshining of God's grace displayed in the cross, as well as the terrible evidence it gave to the alienation of man from God. The carnal mind which would so end in man was actively at work in themselves; and He knew it, and laid it bare before their eyes. "And He came to Capernaum, and being in the house, He asked them, Of what were ye reasoning90 by the way? And they remained silent; for by the way they had been reasoning with one another who [was] greatest." And how gracious and faithful the lesson! "And He sat down and called the Twelve, and says to them, If anyone desire to be first, he shall be last of all, and minister of all. And He took a little child, and set him in the midst of them; and when He had taken it in His arms, He said to them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me; and whoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him who sent Me94."

Mark 9:38-42.

Luke 9:49, 50; Matt, 18:6.

Nor is it only the disciples as a whole who need reproof and correction from the Master. As Peter on the mount of glory, at the beginning, so. ere the chapter closes, John betrays the spirit of egoism which shrouds the proper glory of Christ in the very effort of nature to exalt Him. "And John answered Him, saying, Teacher, we saw one casting out demons in Thy name who does not

follow;91 and we forbad92 him, because he% does not follow us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no one who shall do a miracle in My name, and be able soon [after] to speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is for us95."

It is not as in Matt. 12, where Christ is rejected by the power of unbelief under Satan's instigation, which is blind to the testimony of the Spirit of God that it hates and blasphemes. There compromise is impossible, halfheartedness perilous and fatal. "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth" (Matt. 12:30). Men it is a question between Christ and the darkening, blaspheming power of the devil, the only safety is in being with Christ, the only service is gathering with Him. But where no such question is raised, but, on the contrary, some one, little known and little knowing, it may be, is true to the Lord's name97ff. as far as he knows it, let us rejoice to own him, and the Lord's evident honour put on him, though "he does not follow us." He is no enemy, but a friend of that name which he owns as best he knows. "He that is not against us," says the Lord in such a case, "is for us96." So to honour that name in the least thing shall not be forgotten, as also the slighting it, so as to stumble the least believer,93 is ruinous to him who is guilty.

Mark 9:43-50.

Matt. 18:8, 9.

This leads the Lord into a warning of searching solemnity. "And if thy hand ensnare thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into99 life maimed, than having the two hands to go away into hell94 into the fire unquenchable [where their worm dieth not, and the fire

is not quenched].95 And if thy foot ensnare thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life lame, than having the two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire unquenchable [where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched].96 And if thine eye ensnare thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire: where their worm100 dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The burden, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," falls on the conscience-stricken like the bell that tolls the felon to his doom. Would that it might kindle our hearts who believe into an unwonted earnestness on behalf of perishing souls! (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10, 11).

But there is direct profit for the disciples also. For if "every one shall be salted with fire101," it is also true that "every sacrifice shall be salted with salt";97 the former statement, in my opinion, being as large toward man as such as the latter emphatically and exclusively regards the saints set apart to God. "Salt is good," concludes our Lord, "but if the salt have become saltless, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another101a." How precious and practical the exhortation! The first requisite is this holy preservative energy in our souls, and then for one with another a spirit of peace. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace," adds the Apostle James, (James 3:18).

81 ["Snow"]: as AD and some later uncials, with 33, 69, Amiat. Syrsin pesch Memph. Goth. Edd. omit, after BCL Δ, etc.

82 As to the omission of “hear Him” in 2 Peter 1:17, see the “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 376 f.

83 Ibid., p. 365 ff.

84 So Edd., with BD, etc., I. “Canst” is in AC, etc., 33, 69.

85 The oldest and best authorities [B, etc., Memph. Arm. AEth., followed by Edd.] omit “to believe,” though it has large uncial support [ADN and later uncials, most cursives, Old Lat., Chrys.]. Perhaps the difficulty may have led to the omission. The question of power turns on faith (B.T.). After “believe” Ccorr, 1, 33, 69 and most other cursives, Syr.sin, Chrys., add “Lord,” which Edd. omit, after ABCpmD, etc.

86 The evidence [BL

Δ, etc., Syrsin Memph. Arm. AEth., followed by Edd.] is strong against “with tears” (B.T.). The words are inserted in DN and later uncials, most cursives, Old Lat., Syr.pesch hcl Goth.

87 “Him”: so pmACcorr EN, etc., 1, 33, 69, Amiat. Syrr. Memph. Edd. omit, after corrBCpmDL Δ.

88 The evidence is weak [Bpm] against “and fasting” (B.T.). The T.R. has the support of ACDLN, etc., most cursives, Old Lat., Syr. (including Sinai palimpsest), and Memph. Lachmann retained the words.

89 “After three days”: so Edd., after BCpmDL

Δ, Syrhcl mg, Memph. — ACcorrEN, etc., 1, 69, Syrsin pesch. have “on the third day.”

90 “Reasoning”: ANX

ΓΔ, etc., 1, 13, 69, Syr. Arm. Goth. AEth. here add “among yourselves” (with one another), which Edd. omit, after BCDL, Amiat. Memph.

91 “Who does not follow”: so Nestle, with A(D)N, most cursives, Syrhcl Goth. Arm. Swete and others omit, as BCL Δ, Syrsin pesch, Memph. “Because he” omitted by DX, 1, 69, Lat. Arm. On the conflation here see W. H., “Introduction,” p. 150 ff.

92 The T.R. is

ἐκωλύσαμεν (“forbad”), supported by ACNX

ΤΠ, etc. Edd. adopt

ἀκωλύομεν (“were forbidding”), with BD

ΓΔ.

93 In verse 42 the words “in Me” are supported by ABCcorr ELNX ΓΠΣΦΨ, Syrsin pesch hcl, Arm. Goth., but Edd. omit them on the slender basis of Δ, which, presumably, would not have availed for their admission under reversed conditions. It will be observed that the last-found treasure in the convent at Sinai upholds the “received text.”

94 The words “into hell” are attested by most and the best copies and versions, but are not in the Sinai palimpsest.

95 The clause bracketed in verses 44, 46 is in ADN, 69, Old Latin, Syrpesch hcl Goth. AEth., but Edd. omit, following BCL Δ, etc., and Syrsin.

96 Ibid.

97 Some witnesses [BL

Δ, I, and several other cursives, with Syrsin] followed by the Revisers leave out the latter half of verse 49. [It is supported by ACNS and most later uncials, and by cursives, with Syrpesch, and other versions.] The substance of the truth abides, no doubt, but the solemnity of the warning appears to be enfeebled in the curtailed form; and the distinction between the wicked and righteous as tested by God’s judgment, moral in grace, or final in verse 49 (B.T.).

Mark 10

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 214-227.

Mark 10:1-12.

Matt. 19:1-9.

Our Lord now starts on His last journey, leaving Galilee for the borders of Judea and the other side98 of the Jordan.102 When crowds resort to Him, He, as He was wont, again taught. And full of moral value and Divine light His teaching is. May our souls weigh it well! We are apt to be one-sided. If we seize the special manifestation of God’s grace, we are apt to over look, neglect, or enfeeble the great and unchanging principles of good and evil; if we keep hold of that which abides from first to last, the danger is that we leave not adequate room for His sovereign action at particular times. In Christ, the truth, this was never so. All the ways of God had their place: no one thing was sacrificed to another, yet this, too, without a levelling sameness, for even in God, while all is perfect and all harmonious, each attribute has not equal place, but there is that which is pre-eminent. Jesus, the Son and Servant of God, maintains on every side the truth of God in the face of sin and confusion.

First, He vindicates, according to the unstained light and tender goodness of God, the marriage relation. It is the most momentous step of human life, and the pillar of the social fabric. How thankful should we be to have the Lord of glory pronouncing on it in His passage through this world! The need was great. For even in the Holy Land, and among those who stood high for their sanctity,

with the law of God before their eyes and its precepts, rightly or wrongly interpreted, continually on their tongues, how low and loose was the theory! how basely selfish the practice! He was here on His errand of love with its eternal issues, yet would He stop in His course, and cause the light of heaven to shine even across the path of dark, designing men, recalling them to hear how God made man to live, as well as removing the veil which hindered disciples from seeing how He who was God would die.

“And Pharisees99 came to Him, and asked Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away [his] wife? tempting Him. But He answered and said to them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorce, and to put away. And Jesus answered and said to them, In view of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this commandment. But from [the] beginning of [the] creation God100 made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be united to his wife;101 and the two shall be one flesh: so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (verses 2-9). It is only the facts recorded by historians or the researches of men of learning into the Rabbinical remains which betray the excessive levity of the Jews as to marriage.103 The true obligations of the tie were unknown, and a wife’s place had no more stability than a servant’s — if so much, indeed. He asks what Moses commanded: they answer what Moses allowed; whereas our Lord shows how evidently it was in respect of their hard-heartedness he so wrote. In truth, the law made nothing perfect. Not the Gospel only, but the beginning of creation, bore its witness to the true

thought of God, who made them male and female. How admirably the Lord applies, not only the fact of Gen. 1, but the words of Gen. 2:24! All other obligations of nature, even the filial, must give place, as their own Pentateuch proved in principle as well as history; and the new relationship from the first was abstractedly indissoluble. They were no longer two, but one flesh, even if not kindred in spirit. This was not merely Adam's language, but God's deed; and if He united, let not man put asunder. Such was the Lord's bright and beautiful unfolding of the law to those who took advantage of what was permitted for a season. Grace and truth ever adorn what the legal spirit perverts to self-righteousness on the one hand or self-indulgence on the other.

To the disciples (in the house, as only Mark here tells us) the Lord gives the stringent reply that, "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if a woman put away her husband and marry another, she committeth adultery."104 Here is the dark converse of sin in this relationship: no licence of man can consecrate the annulling that tie while in the flesh.

Mark 10:13-16.

Matt. 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17.

The next incident is equally full of moral loveliness and Divine grace — full of instruction too, as here we have, not Pharisees, but disciples in painful collision with the mind of the Master. "And they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them. But the disciples rebuked those that brought [them]. But when Jesus saw [it], he was indignant, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me; forbid them not, for of

such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive105 the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." Our Evangelist specially marks the deep displeasure of the Lord. And no wonder! Indeed, it was part of His perfectness. For it was not only that they betrayed their own Rabbi-like self-importance, which makes much of ceremony, much also of knowledge, and overlooks the power of grace and the manifestation of Divine affections; but, besides, they took His place, falsified Him and the God of all grace that sent Him, and the essential character of that kingdom which He was about to establish. Suffer not little children, babes, to come to Him! Hinder them! Why, not only of such is the kingdom of God, but whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a babe shall not enter therein. Such is the Lord's solemn sentence. To be nothing for Jesus to receive is just the condition of entrance. May we too have faith to put our babes with ourselves before Him, and count on His sure blessing!

Mark 10:17-22.

Matt. 9:16-22: Luke 18:18-23.

The Lord had vindicated marriage according to its beginning from God against the Pharisees. He had blessed babes in spite of rebuking, but now rebuked disciples. We have Him next eagerly sought out by the rich young ruler. "And as He went forth into the way, one ran up and kneeled to him, and asked Him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit life eternal?"106 There was no lack of moral integrity here, no failure in reverence to One who was instinctively felt

to be superior, no indolence that avoided trouble; but earnestness was there, honest respect for that righteous man, and a sincere desire to learn a new lesson and take a fresh step in well-doing. It was nature doing its best, yet fundamentally at fault; for his question assumed that man was good and could do good — man as he is. His very salutation of honour to Jesus proved that His person was unknown, and therefore the truth unknown both as to God and man. Had the young ruler believed Him to be the Son of the living God, he would not have accosted Him with “Good Teacher” — a style suitable enough to a respected and honoured teacher, but both needless and improper in addressing One who was equal with God and was God. But the evil of man he had never realised — the total, hopeless sin and ruin of the heart in God’s sight. Hence the need of such a One as Jesus was unfelt — of One who, God and man, came down to the depths of sin in Divine love, and is raised up to the throne of God in Divine righteousness; who suffered all on earth from God on behalf of guilty man, that He might have man redeemed, reconciled, justified, glorified, by and with Himself in heaven, and in both, as in all things, God glorified through Jesus Christ.

Our Blessed Lord therefore refuses the honour which ignored the only just foundation for it, jealous for the truth as well as for God’s glory, as, indeed, it is the only real love to man. If not God, Christ was not good; if good, He is God.107 “And Jesus said to him, Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one [that is], God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said to Him, Teacher, all these

have I observed from my youth. And Jesus beholding him loved him." It is striking to observe these two things following — the comparative severity of our Lord's answer, and the express assertion that He looked upon him and loved him. The one showed how He dealt with amiable nature, intruding into what it knows not; the other, how no curtness of rebuke for spiritual blindness, no consciousness that the young man was faithless and would depart sorrowful at His word, hindered the Saviour's love for that which was sweet and attractive in human nature. Our Lord gave its full value to his honouring of the commandments, which He does not contradict; but He meets him on the ground he had chosen, not of a broken-hearted, convicted sinner asking what he must do to be saved, but of a blameless man who was conscious of nothing wrong in his life, but who felt desires after a more excellent way from One so pre-eminently excellent in his eyes as Jesus, who accordingly "said to him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me, [taking up the cross]."102 Jesus had done infinitely more; for, "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." But this ruler knew not the grace of our Lord, though he could not but see His ineffable moral beauty; he knew not His grace, for His glory was unknown to him. Little did he think even when he kneeled to Jesus that there stood before him One who, "subsisting in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be on equality with God, but emptied Himself and took upon Him the form of a bondman, and was made in the likeness of men; and having been found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It was

not, then, that He who repudiated all good save in One, save God, shrank from that test which He represented to the good-seeking ruler; yet the one thing the young and ardent Jew lacked was, oh! how incomparably short of the path of Jesus both in life and death. Still, it was far too great a demand on the loveliest sample of humanity which, as far as we read, crossed the path of the Lord; and it made plain in his sad, departing footsteps to others, if it did not discover to his own conscience, the covetousness of his heart, the value he set upon his possessions the trust he had in riches, the little heart he had for treasure in heaven, care for himself rather than for others, even for the poor, of whom the Lord ever thought much, and, above all, that so taking up the cross and following Christ was harder measure than he was prepared for. What is man? Wherein is he to be accounted of? Well may we worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. “There is none good but One [that is], God.” How true, and how blessed for us that so it is! “Verily every man, [even] the high placed is altogether vanity” (Ps. 39:5). Jesus had but disclosed the shadow, and not the very image, of Divine goodness in Himself; yet did the beauty of the amiable devotee consume away like a moth. “But he, sad at the word, went away grieved: for he had large possessions.”108 Surely every man is vanity.

Mark 10:23-27.

Matt. 9:23-26; Luke 18:24-27.

The great Prophet, the perfect Minister of grace and truth, turns the incident to the good of His own. “And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto His disciples,

With what difficulty shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Even the disciples understood not, but were astonished at His words. They, too, knew not there is no good thing in man, or in the advantages of the world, for the kingdom of God. "And Jesus answers again, and says to them, Children, how difficult it is for those who trust in riches103 to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And they were exceedingly astonished, saying to one another, And who can be saved? But Jesus looking on them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God." Thus Jesus softens in no respect the rigour of the truth. The very blessings, as men speak, of the flesh and of the world turn out hindrances in Divine things. With men, then, salvation is impossible. It is a question here, too, of God; but, blessed be His name, all things are possible with Him.

Mark 10:28-31.

Matt. 9:27-30; Luke 18:28-30.

What hearts are ours that even the solemn circumstance of the ruler, and the still more solemn sentence of the Lord which fell upon the amazed ears of the disciples, drew forth a self-complacent inquiry from him who seemed to be somewhat — yea, a pillar among those nearest to Jesus! "Peter began to say to Him, Lo, it is we who have left all, and have followed Thee. Jesus answered104 and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man who hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother [or wife],105 or children, or lands, for My sake, and the Gospel's,109 that shall not receive a

hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the coming age life eternal.110 But many first shall be last; and the last first." It is much to be noted that the Lord speaks but of abandoning nature for His own sake (and the Gospel's, as is added most appropriately in this Gospel only), even as Peter speaks of their leaving all and following Him. To leave for the reward would be worthless, and, moreover, never stands. Christ is the only efficacious attraction, the motive that governs a renewed heart. There is pasture for the sheep, there is the flock also; but the sheep follow Christ, for they know His voice. Rewards will follow by-and-by, but saints follow not the rewards, but the Lord. As our Evangelist speaks of the Gospel's sake, so he shows that the faithful sufferer receives a hundredfold now in this time for what he has left, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. "But," says the Lord (and if it was a significant word to Peter, is it not for us all?), "many first shall be last, and the last first." Righteous judgment will in the long-run reverse many a thought founded on that which meets the eye. It is the end of the race that tells, not the start, though God is unrighteous to no person and to no act. It is well, therefore, here, as before, to trust in God and His grace. "There is none good but One [that is], God."

Mark 10:32-34.

Matt. 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-34; John 11:16-55.

They were now on the road to Jerusalem, where the disciples well knew enmity to their Master was most deadly. Hence, when Jesus went before them, "they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid." They

were not more astonished at His calm facing the danger than they shrank from their own exposure to it. They were still attached to earthly life, though they would have liked to have spent it under Messiah's reign, sitting every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, with none to make them afraid. But to follow the path which led through persecution to death was far as yet from being a privilege and honour in their eyes. Even Christ they knew after the flesh: the glory of His death and resurrection was wholly unfelt as yet. Hence the Lord Jesus "took again the Twelve, and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered up to the chief priests, and to the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him up to the nations, and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him; and after three days106 He shall rise again." Thus the fullest testimony was given, not indiscriminately, but to chosen witnesses, though complete for the purposes of God among men. Matthew alone singles out, as was suitable, that form of death, the cross, which stumbled the natural mind of the Jew, while Luke, as his manner is, draws attention to the accomplishment of the Scriptures, not in specific detail like Matthew, but as a whole, adding to it the non-intelligence of the disciples.

Mark 10:35-45.

Matt. 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-28.

Then come the sons of Zebedee, James, and John" (with their mother, as we know from Matthew), "saying [to him],107 Teacher, we would that Thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we may ask Thee.108 And He said to them,

What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto Him, Grant us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand and one on Thy left hand, in thy glory." How often the carnal mind betrays itself in the faithful, even in the domain of faith! How weak as yet were those destined to be pillars! How the Master shines in presence even of the most blessed among His servants! They knew not what they asked. This was no question for the suffering Son of man on His way to the cross; but, rather, Could they drink of what it was His to drink? could they be baptized with the baptism that was before Him? Alas! ambition even in the things of the kingdom is soon followed by confidence in self: "We are able." What an answer! Need we wonder that these two also forsook Jesus and fled in the hour of the cross? Nevertheless, the Lord seals their answer with His promise of His own bitter portion, inward and outward; but lets them know that those high places around Himself in glory were not His to give, but for those for whom it is prepared. He refuses to depart from that morally highest place in such a world as this — God's servant among men. But if the two sons of Zebedee thus betrayed their ignorance of Christ's moral glory, how did the rest carry themselves? Not with sorrow of heart for their brethren. "When the ten heard it, they began to be indignant about James, and John." How often our fleshly resentment at the pride of another makes manifest the pride which dwells in our own hearts, and breaks out in an indignation as unseemly as the evil which provokes it! "But Jesus called them unto Him, and saith unto them, Ye know that those who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is109 not so among you: but whosoever would be great among you, shall be your

minister: and whosoever would be first of you, shall be bondman of all. For also the Son of man did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

This is love which serves, not flesh which seeks to be served. It is the animating motive and spirit, and not a question of position, ecclesiastic or ministerial; for I doubt not he who was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles was the one who was most of all imbued with the mind which was in Christ Jesus, and this not only in his own soul, but also in his service. Paul was bondsman of all. "His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (2 Cor. 11:23-29). It was for the Son of man alone not only to minister, but to give His life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:46-52.

Matt. 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43.

A new division of our Gospel here opens. It is the Lord's final presentation of Himself to the nation as Messiah. His ministerial work was closed. Here He is viewed as Son of David.

"And they came to Jericho." That city which first opposed itself to the entrance of Israel into the land of promise, but fell by the mighty power of God, when His people submitted themselves to, His word by Joshua; that city which brought the predicted curse on him and his sons who reared it again; that city whose waters were healed, and from whose land barrenness was taken away in grace by the prophet, is the scene of a remarkable display of beneficent power, in answer to the faith that owned the promised Seed and King.

"And as He went out of Jericho, with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the wayside begging." I do not doubt that it is the same incident which is recorded in Matt. 20 and in Luke 18. But the differences are so great as to have occasioned doubts of this in some.111 The truth is that each is perfect. Matthew gives the double cure — true to his habit (see Matt. 8) and the exigency of Jewish witness. Luke so states it that the careless might infer that the cure took place as the Lord went into (instead of as He came out of) Jericho. His moral order required the juxtaposition of the tale of Zacchaeus and the parable of the nobleman, as illustrating the scope of the two advents, and hence displaced of necessity the story of the blind man. But Luke takes care to say, not "as he was come nigh unto Jericho" (as the English Bible and

others), but “as He was nigh to Jericho,” ἐν τῳ ἐγγίζειν αὐτὸν εἰς

Ἰεριχώ, without saying whether it was His coming or His going.”‘ He was in that neighbourhood. Some manuscripts give “the son of Timeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, sat,” etc. The Sinai copy has “blind and a beggar.”110 As usual, our Evangelist relates the facts and even names with characteristic precision. “And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazaraean,111 he began to cry out, and say, Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me.” No expression of unbelief on the part of others could stifle his own cry of faith. It was, no doubt, in keeping with his wants to call on Him to whom Isaiah of old testified, “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened” (Isa. 35:5). Others knew this Scripture as well as Bartimaeus, but he claimed the blessing from the despised Nazarene. They said they saw, and therefore their sin remained. As for him, he was confessedly miserable, poor, and blind; naked, too, he was content to be, if he might the more readily cast himself on the Lord. The multitude, not feeling their own need, had no sympathy with one who felt his, and sought to drown his importunity. But it was God who had laid it on the heart of the blind beggar — God who, in his appeal to the rejected Messiah, rebuked the incredulity of His people, as miserable and poor and blind as he — yea, more so, incomparably more, because they felt it not, and owned not their King. For them He was but Jesus of Nazareth. “And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried out the more a great deal, Son of David, have mercy on me.

The application of this title is the more strikingly in place and season here, because it is the first occurrence

and, one may say, the only instance in Mark, common as it is from the first to the corresponding chapter of Matthew. The nearest approach is in the Lord's reference to Ps. 110 in chapter 12. This, as well as Mark 11:9, 10, may show how truly guided of God Bartimaeus was - the type, doubtless, of the remnant of the latter day, whose eyes will be opened of the Messiah before He is in publicly recognised relationship with Jerusalem.

But let us turn to the foreshadowing of the "mercy that endureth for ever." No rebuke came from Jesus. On the contrary, He stood still and said, "Call him.112 "And they call the blind man, saying to him, Be of good comfort, rise, He calls for thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus." Mark, not Matthew, mentions the cloak cast off in the alacrity113 that hastened at the invitation of Jesus, yet Matthew, not Mark, was an eyewitness.

"And Jesus answered and said to him, What wilt thou that I should do for thee? The blind man said to Him, Rabboni [My Master], that I may recover sight. And Jesus answered and said to him, Go, thy faith hath healed thee. And immediately he recovered sight, and was following Jesus in the way." Luke alone adds the expressed moral effect on the part both of the blind man and of all the people that saw the miracle: he glorified God, as they gave Him praise. But this is thoroughly the province of Luke, as must have been observed, in fact, by every reader of ordinary attention.

98 "And the other side of (beyond)": so Edd., with ABC, Memph. D, etc., 1, 13, 69, with Amiat., omit "and"; whilst AE, etc., and 33 have "by the other side," which is T.R.

99 C, etc., 1, 33, have “the” before “Pharisees,”

which Edd. omit, with ABLΓ, etc., 69, Memph.

100 “God”: so AD, etc., 1, 69, Jerome’s Vulg. Syr. Arm. Goth. AEth. Edd. adopt “He,” with BCL Δ, Memph.

101 “And shall be united to his wife”: so (AC)D, etc., nearly all cursives, Lat. Syrpesch hcl Memph. AEth. Edd. omit, with B, etc., Syrsin Goth.

102 The words bracketed are found in A(G)N, etc., 1, 13, 69, and Syrsin pesch AEth., Iren. Edd. omit, after BCD Δ and Old Latin.

103 ”For those who trust in riches”: so ACDN, later uncials, all cursives, most Old Latin, Syr. (including sin.), Arm. Edd. omit, as B Δ.

104 “Answered (answering)”: so A, etc., Syrsin pesch, Arm, Goth. Edd. omit, with BD, Memph.

105 [“Or wife”]: as AC and later uncials, 69, most Syrr. Goth. AEth., but omitted by Edd., after BD Δ, I, Syrsin Memph.

106 “After three days”: so Edd., following BCDL

Δ, Syrhcl mg, Memph. “The third day” is the reading of AN, etc., all cursives, Jerome’s Vulg., Syr sin pesch hcl (t) Arm. AEth., Origen.

107 [“To him”]: so Edd., as BCL

Δ, Memph. The words are not found in AE, etc., 1, 69, and Amiatine.

108 So Edd., with ABC, etc., 1, 69, Memph.; whilst

Γ and others omit.

109 “Is”: so Edd., after BCpmD, etc., Old Latin. The T.R. “shall be” is in ACcorrN, later uncials, most cursives, Arm. Memph. Goth.

110 BDL

Δ and, as stated above; the T.R. follows A, etc.

111 ”Nazaraean”: so AC, etc. Edd. adopt “Nazarene,” after BL Δ, I, with most Old Latin and Amiatine. See note 112.

112 This is, I doubt not, the true reading (BCL

Δ, a few cursives, Memph.; followed by Edd.), which bears the graphic stamp of Mark’s style. The vulgar text (D, etc., most cursives, Syrpesch AEth, etc.) is here, as elsewhere, due to that love of assimilating the Gospels which in the copyists answers to the love of harmonies among divines, both to the no small marring of the Divine perfection of the Gospels. Compare Luke 18:40, where “He commanded,” etc., is right (B.T.).

113 “Started [sprang] up”: so Edd., after BDL, etc., Memph. Goth.; whilst “rose up” is supported by AC, etc., most cursives, Syr. (including sin.), and other versions. The word ἀναπηδᾳν is used only here in the New Testament.

Mark 11

Mark 11:1-11.

Matt. 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-16.

The Saviour now proceeds on His last journey to Jerusalem, His final presentation of Himself, as far as testimony went, is the Messiah. His prophetic task had been accomplished and refused; the great work of atonement lay yet before Him. Between the two comes His royal progress, we may call it, to the city of the Great King. Nevertheless, as He was the predicted Prophet like unto Moses, and yet never man spake like this man; as He was the antitype of all the sacrifices, and yet they were but the shadow, not the very image, of the coming good, so there was a character wholly diverse from the manner of kings in the King of kings and Lord of lords, as He came to His own possession here below, His raising and settling the question whether His own people would receive Him.

“And when they drew near to Jerusalem, to113 Bethphage, and Bethany, at113 the Mount of Olives, He sends two of His disciples, and says to them, Go into the village that is over against you; and immediately on entering into it ye will find a colt tied, upon which none of men hath ever sat: loose and bring it. And if anyone say to you, Why do ye this? say, The Lord hath need of it; and immediately. he sends it here.”114 It is pre-eminently a scene under the governing hand of God. He would and did control the feelings of such as witnessed the colt taken, even as He afterwards directed the deeds and acclamations of the multitude by the way. “The

preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Indeed, this is so much the case that I suspect "the Lord" is here, as in Mark 5:19, left purposely vague. The Lord had need of the ass's colt, whether they referred the title to Jehovah or to the king who thus came in His name. If their faith really recognised the Messiah in Jehovah it was most true, and so much the better for those who did; but I am not sure that it could be asserted as the intention of the Spirit to imply that so much was meant in either of these cases. It is only in the two closing verses of this Gospel that we can certainly gather that He is designated "the Lord." The suitableness of this reserve till the statement of His final triumph by our Evangelist, who devotes himself to His service here below, is strikingly beautiful, and equally so in its absence before and in its presence then.

"And they went away and found a Colt114 tied to the door without at the crossway; and they loose it. And some of those standing there said to them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said to them even as Jesus said: and they suffered them. And they bring the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on it;"', and He sat upon it. And many, strewed their garments on the way, and others beds of twigs, having cut them from the fields. 115 And those that went before and those that followed cried out, Hosanna! blessed [be] He that cometh in the name of [the] Lord. Blessed [be] the coming kingdom of our father David.116 Hosanna in the highest."

It was a singularly bright testimony to the ways of God, and this not alone in the ever-adorable One who thus deigned to offer Himself to the acceptance of His people, but in the suited cries of the multitude, little as they realised the truth of their own words or the gravity of

the situation for their nation and city from that day to this. God, I repeat, was moving in the midst. He would have a testimony, true but despised, to the King, humble Himself as He might. Matthew points out the fulfilment of the prophetic oracle in the strange sight of that day. Luke adds “peace in heaven and glory in the highest” in the praise to God which filled the mouths and hearts of the disciples, as well as the blessed Saviour’s lament and tears over Jerusalem. It fell more within the domain of Mark to say that He “entered into Jerusalem117 into the temple; and having looked round on all things, the hour being already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.”

Matthew, as often, does not distinguish the stages of the transaction. From his account you could not gather that the Lord merely looked round on all the first day of His visit, and that not till the following day did He cast out those who desecrated the Temple with their buying and selling, as he alone describes the approach to Him there of the blind and lame (Matt. 21:14) to be healed. I am aware that some have. tried to solve the difficulty by the assumption that Matthew gives us a purging of the Temple on the first day, Mark on the second. But this appears to me definitely set aside by the precision of our Evangelist’s language about this second day, who tells us (verse 15) that then, not on the first day, He began to cast out those who sold and bought in the Temple.

John, on the other hand, entirely omits this cleansing of the Temple, but records (John 2) what no one else has done, an early act of similar character before our Lord entered on His public or Galilean ministry. But this is exquisitely in keeping with the whole scope of his Gospel, which starts, as it were, with the point to which

the other Evangelists gradually conduct us — the utter rejection of the Lord by His people, who abhorred Him, as He could not but loathe them.

Mark 11:12-14.

There is a similar merging of a twofold account in one view, if we compare Matthew's description of the cursed fig-tree with Mark's. "And on the morrow, when they came out from Bethany, He was hungry; and seeing a fig-tree from afar having leaves, He came, if perhaps He might find something on it; and having come up to it, he found nothing but leaves; for it was not the time of figs. And, answering, He said to it, Let none eat fruit of thee any more for ever. And His disciples heard." Had it been fig season the fruit might have been already gathered, but as it was not, fruit ought to have been found there, unless the tree were barren. Thus it was the emblem of the Jew, fruitless to God, however abounding in the semblance of life before men. Leaves the tree had, but no fruit. Hence the doom was pronounced — not more surely verified in the fig-tree then than ever since in the empty profession of the Jews.116

Mark 11:15-18.

Matt. 21:12-19; Luke 19:41-48.

After hearing the doom of the barren fig-tree, they come to Jerusalem, and enter the Temple, whence the Lord began to cast out those who sold and bought therein, overthrowing the tables of the money-changers and the seats of the dove-sellers, and suffering none to carry a vessel through the Temple.117 This He followed up by teaching openly what is written in Isa. 56:7, Jer. 7:11- God's purpose in the Temple, and meanwhile man's

selfish misuse of it. “Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers.” The prophetic reproof was not powerless, but it fell into a soil fruitful only in thorns and briers, worthless, and nigh to that curse, if not under it, which had just lit upon the type of their estate. “And the chief priests and the scribes heard [it], and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the crowd were astonished at His doctrine.” Truly their end was to be burned: God was not in their thoughts, but man; and self, not conscience, governed them. But what a picture! The righteous, elect Servant, the Son of God, hated to death — not of the crowd, who, if thoughtless and fickle, at least hung on unwonted words of holy vindication of God, of goodness toward man, of stern rebuke for the proud perverters of sacred things. Alas! it was these, the chiefs of religion, the theologians of that day, who quailed before the light of God, and sought only to extinguish it, that they might still preserve their influence among the men they loved not, but despised. And is the world or its religion better now?

Mark 11:19-26.

Matt. 21:20-22.

What could detain Jesus in such a scene, the more revolting because it was in title and responsibility “the holy, city”? Nothing but the errand of holy love on which He came. Hence, at the approach of night, His work for that day done, He retires once more, without the city. Who but the enemy could have insinuated the blasphemous thought that it was because that city was too hallowed ground for Him to rest on as yet?

As they passed next morning, the sight of the fig-tree dried up from the roots118 recalled the curse of yesterday to Peter. The Master's answer was, "Have faith in God" — a more pointed form of speech"" than that in the Gospel of Matthew, and of the gravest moment for the servants of God in presence of the guilt and ruin of that which seems fairest, or, at least, is most esteemed among men. As the fig-tree symbolized the people in their religious pretensions, now manifestly vain, and so judged of Him whose right it was and is, "this mountain" appears to denote rather their "place and nation," which in their unbelief they strove hard to keep under Roman patronage. ("We have no king but Caesar.") Strong as it stood in Jewish eyes, before the faith of the disciples it was doomed, and soon about to be violently rooted up and lost in the sea of Gentiles.118 Such is the declared efficacy of faith; but another requisite is (which faith indeed would effect) the spirit of gracious forgiveness toward any who might have wronged or otherwise offended us. In Matthew this has its place in the Sermon on the Mount, and especially in the prayer,120 as the retributive converse appears in the parable of the merciless servant. In Luke the principle comes out in another shape.

Mark 11:27-33.

Matt. 21:23-27; Luke 20:1-8.

The next visit to Jerusalem confronts the Lord, as He walks about in the Temple, with the chief priests and the scribes and the elders, who demand by what authority He was doing these things, and who gave it Him. Jesus pledges Himself to speak as to His authority, if they answer His question as to John's baptism — was it of

heaven or men? It was an appeal to conscience; but conscience they had none, save a bad one, which at once shrank into reserve, fearful to commit itself, not afraid to trifle with God and man. For they reasoned with themselves that, allowing John's baptism to be of heaven, they must receive his testimony to Jesus; asserting it to be of men, they must forfeit the people's favour, John being universally held to be in very deed a prophet. They preferred, therefore, to shelter themselves under a seemingly prudent ignorance. Who were they, then, to question the authority of Jesus? If they could only say "We know not," their incompetency was confessed. Those who could not solve, the question of the servant were surely not qualified to judge of the Master. In truth, their incapacity was, if possible, less than their hypocritical wickedness: the will was at fault yet more than the understanding. The Lord might well be excused answering such a question to such men. What a position for those who examined His authority to find themselves in! Left under the shadow and shame of their own avowed ignorance in the presence of the gravest religious problem then before them, they are obliged to bow to Him who closes the inquiry with unspeakable dignity, and with the most befitting wisdom — "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Lord, Thou knewest all things; Thou knewest that these men hated Thee!

114 If Lachmann meant by his punctuation or non-punctuation of the two last clauses (for he reads Ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ χρείαν ἔχει καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτὸν ἀποστέλλει ὧδε) that it is the Lord who was also straightway to send the colt, it seems strange that he did not adopt the

addition of πάλιν, which occurs in the Sinai, Cambridge (Beza's), Vatican and Paris (L) Manuscripts, and more than tell cursives (B.T.). The text followed above is the critical. See, further, note 114. "Sends": so Edd., after ABCD, etc., Goth. "Will send" is in GU ΠΦΨ, I, and some versions. "Again" is without the support of vv.

115 It appears to me that the best readings here are as I have given above [so Edd. below]. The common text is owing to the usual habit of assimilating the Gospel to the corresponding passages in Matthew and Luke. The frequency of the present tense in Mark is a feature of his style which gives vividness to what he depicts. The chief departure from the common text is in the last clause, where we have the shorter phrase, κόψαντες ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν in the Sinai, Vatican, Rescript of Ephrem S. and L. of Paris, Graeco-Lat. of St. Gall (Δ), besides versions (B.T.). The Sinaitic Syriac goes so far as to omit the words "others... fields." "Strewed them on the way" is supported by AD, etc., Old Latin, Syrpesch hcl Goth. Arm.

116 "The coming kingdom," etc.: so Edd., after BCL, I, etc. whilst A, etc., have "in the name of the Lord."

117 "And" (T.R.) before "into" is in AD, etc., Syrsin hcl Goth., but is omitted in the "neutral text" followed by Edd.

118 The Received Text is far from correct. The Sinai and other manuscripts [D, 33corr, with 69, etc., Syrsin Arm.] give "If ye have faith in God, verily," etc. But apart from this, the close of verse 23, I think, should be, "but believe that what he speaks comes to pass, he shall have it" [as B, etc.]. "For" at the beginning of the verse appears in ACL and later uncials, most cursives,

syrpesch hcl Memph. Goth.]. So in verse 24 [BCL Memph.], “For this reason I say unto you, All things, whatsoever ye shall pray and beg, believe that ye have received, and ye shall have them” (B.T.).

Mark 12

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 227-229.

Mark 12:1-12.

Matt. 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-19.

He parable with which this chapter opens sets forth in a few plain words, and in highly pregnant touches, the moral history of Israel as under the dealings of God. In what follows we have the various classes of Israel successively exposing themselves, while they were attempting to perplex the Lord. They thought to judge Him; the result was, they were themselves judged. But in the parable with which the chapter begins the Lord sets forth God’s dealings with the nation as a whole. “A man planted a vineyard and made a fence round it.” There was everything done on God’s part both to give them what was of Himself and separate them from the rest of sinful men. They were duly warned against contamination by heathen corruptions. He “dug a wine-vat.” There was every stilted preparation for the full results of their work, and there was also full protection, for He “built a tower.” Thus the owner let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.” This set forth their responsibility. The Jewish system in the past is man under probation. “At the season He sent to the husbandmen a bondman, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.” It is the moral trial of man exemplified in Israel’s conduct. Man is bound to make returns to God, according to the position in which God has set him. Israel had every possible advantage given them by God. They had priests,

religious ordinances, fast-days, feast-days, every help of an outward kind, and even miraculous testimony from time to time. There was nothing wanting that man could have, short of Christ Himself; and even of Him they had the promise, and were after a sort, we know, waiting for Him as their King. They had promises held out to them, and a covenant made with them. In short, there was nothing they had not that could be of any avail had it been possible to have got any good thing out of man. But can any good thing come out of the heart? Is not man a sinner? Is he not utterly defiled and unclean? Can you get a clean thing out of an unclean? It is impossible by any means used to act upon man. You may bring a clean thing among unclean, but if a creature merely it becomes defiled. If it be the Creator, He can deliver, but not even so by merely coming down into the midst of men. It requires more than this — His death. Death is the only door of life and redemption for the lost.

The Lord, then, gives the history of what they did render to God. The servant being sent, “they caught him and beat him, and sent him away empty.” There was no fruit to God — nothing but evil. There was insult to Himself and injury to His servants. “And again He sent to them another bondman; and [at] him they threw stones, and119 struck [him] on the head, and sent [him] away (not only empty, but) with insult.”120 One sin leads to a greater sin where it is not judged. “And again]121 He sent another; and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some.” They are rapidly sliding down the descent to destruction. There remained only one possible motive to act upon the heart of man. “Having122 yet [therefore]123 one beloved son,124 he sent him also125 last to them, saying, They will

reverence my son." Would not One be acceptable who was Infinitely greater in dignity and absolutely without a fault? For even prophets had faults; though there was great power of God in and by them, they were encompassed with infirmities like other men. But the Son was perfection: what if He were to come? Surely they must feel that the Son of God had an incomparably higher claim upon their affections and their reverence. And so it would have been had not man been utterly lost. And what was the moral lesson as to man brought out in the cross. Man was then proved to be utterly corrupt. God allowed it to be shown to the uttermost practically by the people of Israel. Nothing proved it so completely as the mission of the Son of God. The trial then closed in His rejection; but His rejection was their rejection before God. Man, no matter how tried or how greatly privileged, ends in proving his total opposition to God, his hopeless ruin in His sight. "But those husbandmen said to one another, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours." It was an opportunity for the will of man not to be lost. Satan led them on to wish to have the world to themselves. This is what man most values — to shut God out of His own world, and it was consummated by no act so much as by their killing the Lord Jesus — by His cross. It was man's rejection of God in the person of His Son. Henceforth he was shown to be evidently not only weak and sinful, but God's enemy. Even when He was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, man not only preferred, but was determined to have the world without God. In fact, this manifests that the world lies in the wicked one; and Satan, who was really the prince of the world before, became, on the casting out of Him who was God, the god of the world then. Man must have some god over him; if

he rejects the true God in the person of Christ, Satan becomes his god not really alone, but in this case manifestly. “And they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.” This closes the probationary measures.122 “What, therefore,126 shall the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others.” Nothing is said here of their rendering Him the fruits in their seasons, as we have in Matthew. It is the breaking of the old links with Israel (indeed, with man), and the giving the place of privilege to others. But more than that: the destruction of the old husbandmen follows. This has already taken place in part in the downfall of the Jewish people and of Jerusalem. Nor is this all. “Have ye not read this Scripture: The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the corner-stone: this is of the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes?”127 The Spirit does not here introduce the further fact related in Matthew. Not only is the stone to be exalted, the rejected prophet to become the exalted Lord (that is quite in keeping with Mark’s object), but in Matthew the other positions of the stone are developed more. First of all, He is a stone of stumbling on the earth; and next the stone, after His exaltation, falls upon its enemies at the close and grinds them to powder. This is connected with the prophecies and their accomplishment for both the Jews and the world. The Jews did trip upon Him in His humiliation when He was upon the earth; but when they finally take the place of adversaries, not only in unbelief, but in deadly opposition, forming, indeed, the chosen party of His great enemy, the Antichrist — upon them He will fall destructively at the end of the age. In Mark, however, it is simply that the rejected stone is exalted. This at once was felt by the hearers.121 “They sought to

lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them. And they left Him and went away."

Mark 12:13 -17.

Matt. 22:15-22; Luke 20:20-26.

Now comes the trial of the different classes into which the Jews were divided. "They send unto Him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians to catch Him in His 2 words." Ominous alliance! for ordinarily the Pharisees and Herodians were bitterly hostile to each other. The Pharisees were the great sticklers for religious forms, the Herodians were more the courtier party, the men who cultivated every means of advancing their interests in the world, as the others did for securing a religious reputation. But where Christ is concerned, the most opposed can unite against Him or His truth. "And they come, and say to Him, Teacher, we know that Thou art true, and carest for no one; for Thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth." They stooped to flattery and falsehood to effect their malicious end. What they said was, no doubt, true in itself, but it was utterly false as the expression of their feelings and judgment about Him. "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not? Should we give, or should we not give?" They wished to involve the Lord in a Yea or Nay that would compromise Him either with the Jews or with the Romans. If He said Yes, then He was giving up the hopes of Israel, apparently; He was but sealing them up in their bondage to the Romans. How could He be a true-hearted Jew, or, still more, the Messiah, their expected deliverer, if He left them as much as ever slaves of the Roman power? If He said No, then He

would make Himself obnoxious to that jealous Government, and give them a handle against Him as a setter-up of seditious claims for the throne of Palestine. But the Lord replies with consummate and Divine wisdom; and "knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye Me? Bring me a penny that I may see [it]. And they brought [it]. And He says to them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." This answer was complete and absolutely perfect, for in truth there was no conscience in them. Had they felt aright they would have been ashamed of the fact that the money current in their land was Roman money. It was their sin: and man, while he rejects Christ, refuses to look at his own sin. The Lord Jesus leaves them where their sin had brought them, makes them feel that it was their own fault and sin that had put them under the Romans' authority. He simply says, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." If you are here by your own fault, subject to Caesar for your sins, own the truth of your state and its cause, and pay what is due to Caesar; but forget not that God never ceases to be God, and see that you render to Him the things that are His. They were neither honest subjects of Caesar, nor were they, still less, faithful to God. Had they been true to Him they would have received the Lord Jesus. But there was neither conscience nor faith.

Mark 12:18-27.

Matt. 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-38.

"Then come unto Him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked Him, saying, Teacher, Moses wrote unto us, If anyone's brother die, and leave

a wife behind, and leave no children, that his brother shall take his wife, and raise up seed to his brother. There were seven brethren; and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed; and the third likewise. And the seven [took her, and]128 left no seed; last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection,129 when they shall rise again, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her as wife."

Here, again, it was merely a difficulty. The Sadducees were the infidel party, and all the apparent strength of infidelity lies in putting difficulties, in raising up imaginary cases which do not apply, in reasoning from the things of men to the things of God. The whole basis is false assumption. The Lord says to them, "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God." They betrayed, as usual, their ignorance of the Scriptures, spite of much pretentiousness, else they would not have put such a case. As for difficulties, what are they to the power of God, supposing there were difficulties to man? But what is beyond the power and conception of man is very possible to God; all things are possible even to him that believeth. But the truth is that it was total ignorance to suppose that in the resurrection state such a contingency could arise. The question, besides, took for granted the resurrection, which was exactly what they denied. Scepticism is habitually crooked — not less false than superstition. Whose would this woman be who had the seven husbands successively? The answer is, she would belong to none then. There is no such thing as a resumption of earthly ties in the resurrection. People do not rise from the dead as husbands and wives, parents

and children, masters or servants. Next, the Lord meets the question, not on the ground of their difficulty or mistake, but on its own merits according to the word of God. “When they rise from among [the] dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how, in the [section of the] bush, how God spoke unto him, saying, I [am] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

This portion He takes, not because it is the clearest Scripture in the Old Testament, but because it is in the books of Moses, which these Sadducees chiefly valued. God never gave the land of Israel in actual possession to Abraham or Isaac or Jacob when % they were alive in their natural bodies; yet He did promise them the land, not merely to their children, but to themselves. Therefore they must rise in order to have that land so promised to them. God gave them the land in promise, but they never possessed it; they must therefore possess it another day. And as this possession cannot be in their dead state, they must live again in order actually to have the promised land. The resurrection, therefore, is proved from God’s declaring Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob It is impossible that the promise He made them should not be fulfilled.

Mark 12:28-34.

Matt. 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28, Luke 20:39, 40.

Then come the Scribes. One of them, “having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, Which is the first

commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, Israel; The LORD our God is one LORD; and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thine understanding, and with all thy strength.123 This is the first commandment.130 And a second like it [is] this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." The scribe was obliged to acknowledge the Lord's wisdom.

He comprises the pith of the law of God in these two extracts — the love of God, which is unlimited; the love of one's neighbour, not with all the soul and strength, but "as thyself." The first is loving God more than oneself, to the exclusion of every other object as a competitor; the second is loving one's neighbour as oneself. In effect, he that loves God and his neighbour has fulfilled the law, as the Apostle says. Grace goes farther than that — even to the total renunciation of self. The grace of God, which assimilates the Christian spirit, according to the power of his faith, to the revelation which he has made of Christ, leads a person even to death for his brother's sake. "We ought to lay our lives down for the brethren'' (1 John 3:16), still more for God and the truth. "And the scribe said unto Him, Right, Teacher, Thou hast said the truth; for He131 is one, and there is none other; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the intelligence, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love neighbour as oneself, is more than the burnt-offerings and sacrifices."

He owns in his conscience that thus to love God and one's neighbour is far better than all upon which the Jews put such stress and value — the outward forms and ceremonies of the law. But there he ended: he saw not

Christ; grace, therefore, was unknown to this man. So that all the Lord could say to him was, “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.” Still, he was outside, for grace alone brings into the kingdom of God through the knowledge of Christ. And whether a person is near or far off from the kingdom of God, it is equally destruction if he does not enter it. This scribe owned what was in the law, but he did not know what was in Christ. The grace of God that brings salvation he knew nothing of. Duty to God and to his neighbour he owned. He set to his seal that the law was good and just (and so it is); not that God is true as revealed in Christ. After this no man durst ask Him anything more. They were answered and silenced in everything.

Mark 12:35-37.

Matt. 22:41-46; Luke 20:41-44.

The Lord now puts His question. It was a brief one, and totally different from the points raised by men. Man’s questions were founded either upon present things, or upon improbabilities to his mind, or upon the casuistry of rival duties. Christ’s question is founded directly on the Scriptures, and, more than that, on the mystery of His own person, that only link of souls with God. Christ’s question had nothing of curiosity in it, nor was it merely one for conscience, but for searching into God’s ways and implicit submission to the revelation of Himself. “How say the scribes that the Christ is Son of David?” It was true the Lord did not deny that the scribes saw the truth, but He raised a question which, if answered truly, holding fast the Scriptures, would have led them to the truth about His own Person. In a word, it was this: How is Christ David’s Lord as well as David’s Son? The

scribes saw truly enough that He was David's Son, but David, writing by the Holy Ghost, said that He was his Lord.124 How are these two things to be put together — the lower truth with which the scribes were occupied, and the higher one on which the Holy Ghost specially insists? How was Christ David's Son and David's Lord? The link and foundation of it was this, that while He was man, and as man David's Son, He was much more. In order to be David's Lord, He must be a Divine Person; but more than that, He is exalted into that place. The Lordship of Christ rests, not alone on His being, a Divine Person, but because He was rejected as Son of David. God has exalted Him to be both Lord and Christ. This opens the whole question of Israel's treatment of Christ, as well as of Jehovah's attitude toward Him. In Ps. 110 we read: "Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." Here it is not God sending His well-beloved Son down to the vineyard of Israel, but, when He was cast out, raising Him to His own right hand in heaven. Thus it involves their owning that Israel must have rejected their Messiah, and that when rejected God sets Him at His own right hand in heaven. This, evidently, is the key to the present position of Israel, and leaves room for the calling of the Church; in a word, it is the mystery of the person of Christ and the counsels of God that follows upon His rejection.

Mark 12:38-40.

Matt. 23; Luke 20:45-47.

But He does more than this. "He said to them in His doctrine, Beware of the scribes, who like to walk about in long robes, love salutations in the market-places, and

first seats in the synagogues, and first places at suppers. It is not only that the doctrine of the scribes is utterly Imperfect, but even in their ways there was much that was morally low and bad. They loved the honour of men, religious honour peculiarly, and therefore the chief seats in the synagogues, besides the uppermost rooms at feasts. Everything that would contribute to their ease and honour in this world was eagerly sought. More than this, they devour widows' houses — that is, they take advantage even of the sorrows of people that would expose them to be more entirely under their influence. Along with this there was great religious ostentation, for a pretence making long prayers. "These shall receive severer judgment."

Mark 12:41-44.

Luke 21:1-4.

But now the Lord singles out those with whom He had sympathy on the earth. "Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, and saw the crowd casting money into the treasury; and many rich cast in much. And a poor widow came, and cast in two mites, which make a farthing; and He called to [Him] His disciples, and said to them, Verily I say unto you, This poor widow hath cast more in than all who have cast into the treasury." The reason He gives: "for all have cast in of their abundance, but she of her want hath cast in all that she had, the whole of her living." God does not go by the amount given; He judges not by what is contributed, but by what is kept behind for self. In this case it was nothing — all was given. Those who gave of their abundance reserved the greater part for themselves; but the test of liberality is not what is given, but what is left. The much that is kept for self-

enjoyment is the proof of how little is given. But when there is nothing left, but all is cast into the treasury of God, there is the true working of Divine love and faith. There is what God values, because it is the expression not only of generous giving, but of entire confidence in Himself. This poor woman was a widow, and it might have seemed that she of all others was entitled to keep what little she had; but no — little as it was, all is for God. The dealing with such a small sum might have been a trouble to those who would have to count it, but it was noticed of God, valued by Him, and recorded for us, that we may confide in God, and may give whatever is according to His mind.

119 “Threw stones, and”: as AC, etc., Syrpesch hcl Goth. AEth. Edd. omit, after BD, etc., 1, 33, Old Latin, Memph.

120 “With insult”: so AC, etc., Syrpesch hcl Arm. Goth. AEth. B[D], etc., 1, 33, Old Latin, etc., have “and insulted [him],” as Edd.

121 “Again”: so AN, etc., Syr, pesch hcl Arm. Goth. Edd. omit, with BCD, etc., 33, Memph.

122 “Having”: so ACDpm, etc., 69, Jerome’s Vulg., Memph. Edd. adopt “he had,” after BCcorr L, etc., 33, Syr.

123 “Therefore”: so ACD, etc., Syrhcl. Edd. follow BL, etc., 33, 69, Memph., in omitting the word.

124 “One beloved son “: so Edd., after MBCD, etc., Amiat. Memph. A, etc., 1, 33, 69, have “one son, his beloved.”

125 “Also”: so ACD, etc., Syrhcl Goth. Edd. omit, after BL Δ, etc.

126 “Therefore”: as ACD, all cursives, Syrpesch hcl Arm. Swete, as Edd., omits, following BL, Memph, 127 Ps. 118:22 f.

128 [“Took her and”]: so AD (virtually), most later uncials, almost all cursives, Syr, Jerome’s Vulg., and other versions. Edd. omit, with BCL, etc., 33.

129 ACcorr, etc., 1, Amiat. Syrsin pesch hcl. Arm. AEth. add “therefore” after “resurrection.” Edd. omit, after BCpm, etc.

130 “This is the first commandment”: so AD, etc., all cursives, Syrsin pesch hcl, most Lat., Arm. Goth. Edd. omit, as B, Memph.

131 “He”: so ABKLM and later uncials, 1, 33, Amiat. “God” is in (D)EF(G)H, 69, Syrsin hcl (corr) Arm., etc.

Mark 13

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” p. 229 f., and see note 126.

Mark 13:1-13.

Matt. 24:1-14; Luke 21:5-19.

In the succinct account which Mark gives us of the prophetic discourse of our Lord on the Mount of Olives, 126 and of the questions that led to it, we have the favoured hearers specified more particularly than elsewhere: Peter, James, John, and Andrew. Mark is characterized by this minuteness of detail, although his is much the shortest of the Gospels.

The Lord, in answer to their question to tell them when these things should be (that is, the overthrow of the great buildings of the Temple),127 and what the sign should be when all these things should be fulfilled, warns them to beware lest any man should deceive them. This admonition is common to all three Evangelists who give the discourse. But here we shall find that the Lord’s warnings and instructions are very evidently in view of their service. This has been all through the character of Mark. Christ Himself is the perfect Servant of God, the Prophet here below preaching the Gospel and doing works according to its spirit. So, accordingly, even in His prophecy, He is the Servant still giving them that which would be of such high importance, not only for their souls, but in their work. It is not only prediction of coming judgments, but forewarning and admonishing them in their testimony. They were to beware of deceivers. Next, they were not to be troubled by external appearances, such as wars

and rumours of wars, etc.; but in presence of either one or the other they were to know that the end should not be yet.

In addressing the Church, there is great stress laid on an attitude entirely reversed: to it the end is at hand. The language is quite different from this, and it is the more remarkable because the Christian knows that these troublous times of the end are to fall upon the Jewish people, not upon the Church. They are retributive because of the rejection of the true Christ by the Jews; whereas the Church has received the true Christ, and therefore does not come under these judgments. Hence the Christian is always impressed in the word of God with the assurance that the end of all things is at hand. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12). The point for the disciples at the Mount of Olives (inasmuch as they were representing, not Christians, but the Remnant of Jewish disciples in the last days) is that, although these distresses and troubles that precede the catastrophe of this age would come, the end is not yet. The Lord was providing doubly for them. He was giving instruction that would be true even then and up to the fall of Jerusalem; and He was making that instruction to suit the latter days also, when Jerusalem should be besieged a second time, and fall in a great part at least, the scourge being sent of God, the great Assyrian power, who will come down upon Jerusalem, because of the abomination that maketh desolate.

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be earthquakes in different places, and there shall be famines and troubles;132 these are the beginning of throes."128 The end, therefore, was not yet. But now He turns aside to

introduce an instruction that is not given in the other Gospels in this connection. Even where there is anything similar, it is found at an anterior time and for a mission on which they had been sent out, and from which they had returned. Not that I for a moment doubt that the Lord did give it here also. The fact simply is that Matthew and Luke were led of God to convey similar language to us elsewhere, whereas Mark was inspired to give it here; the Lord no doubt gave this instruction on both occasions at least. “Take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to sanhedrims, and to synagogues: ye shall be beaten, and shall be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. And the Gospel must first be preached to all the nations.129 But when they shall lead you away to deliver you up, be not careful beforehand as to what ye shall speak [nor prepare your discourse],133 but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak: for ye are not the speakers, but the Holy Spirit.130 But brother shall deliver up brother to death, and father child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all on account of My name; but he that hath endured unto the end, he shall be saved.” This is clearly a guidance for their service in the midst of these prophetic events. It is evident also that it suits Mark in a way that is peculiar to himself.

Mark 13:14-23.

Matt. 24:15-28; Luke 21:20-24.

Then we come upon the final scene. “But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, standing where it134 ought not [he that reads, let him consider131], then let

those in Judea flee to the mountains" (verse 14). It is plain that this is the general truth that is found elsewhere. "And let him that is on the housetop not come down into the house, neither enter therein, to take away anything out of his house. and let him that is in the field not turn back to take his garment. But woe to those who are with child, and to those who give suck in those days! And pray that it135 may not be in the winter-time. For in those days shall be distress, such as there has not been the like since the beginning of creation which God created unto now, and never shall be. And unless [the] LORD had shortened those days, no flesh should have been saved, but on account of the elect whom He hath chosen, He hath shortened the days."132 Then we find an outburst of warning, not merely as before, but even more determined. "And then if any one shall say to you, Lo, here [is] the Christ; or lo, there; believe [it] not: for false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and give signs and wonders." It is evident that there is a final appearance, a fresh cloud of these deceivers In the latter days, as there was at the earliest application of this prophecy; and this to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But they were warned, "Take ye heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand."

Mark 13:24-32.

Matt. 24:29-36; Luke 21:25-33.

Then comes the power of God interfering to cut short the wickedness of man as well as the tribulation. "But in those days, after that tribulation,133 the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light." Figures may be used, but it is clear that it is God who interposes in power; for man cannot accomplish all that is meant,

neither can Satan. God alone can change or deal with the sources of power. “And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken.” The sense is plain, although in figurative language, showing a total revolution and overthrow of governmental powers. “And then shall they see the Son of man coming134 in clouds with great power and glory; and then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from end of earth to end of heaven.” It is still the Jewish people, or rather the remnant of the nation, the elect of Israel. Accordingly, the parable of the fig-tree is appended. “But learn the parable from the fig-tree. When its branch already becomes tender, and putteth forth the leaves, ye know that the summer is near.” The fig-tree is the acknowledged symbol of the people of God. “Thus also, when ye shall see these things happen, know that it is near at the doors. Verily I say unto you that this generation136 shall in no wise pass away till all these things take place. The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall in no wise pass away.”

But the Lord also tells us in language peculiar to this Gospel, “of that day or of that hour knoweth no one, neither the angels who are in heaven, nor the Son136, but the Father.” He had thoroughly taken the place of Son upon earth. I do not think that it refers to Him, viewed in His highest character, as one with the Father, but as Son and Prophet upon earth. The title of Son applies to Christ in more ways than one. It is true of Him in the Deity, true of Him as born into the world, and true of Him also in the resurrection. It is the second of these that we find here, as in the very first verse of this Gospel we find it said, “Jesus Christ the Son of God.” I do not

doubt that refers to His being Son of God here below, begotten in time, not the only-begotten of the Father, as we find so often in John. Looking at it in this way, there is little difficulty In understanding that He should speak as not knowing that hour, because He is speaking in His capacity of minister in the place that He took here below, the prophet that was serving God upon earth. So He did not know that hour. We read of Him in Luke as growing in knowledge as well as in stature. “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). He was always perfect — perfect as a child, perfect as a young man, perfect as a servant; but, nevertheless, all these were quite distinct from what pertained to Him as the Son, one with the Father in Godhead. So here, without derogating from His own intrinsic glory, He could say that “nor the Son, but the Father” knew of that hour.

Mark 13:33-37.

Cf. Matt. 24:42, Matt. 25:13; Luke 21:36-41.

“Take heed, watch and pray”137 is the application. And then He gives a parabolic instruction in the next two verses admirably adapted to this Gospel. “[It is] as a man gone out of the country who left his house and gave authority to his bondmen” (verse 34). Again, it does not say that He gives authority, to every man, but “to each his work.” This entirely harmonizes with Mark. Christ Himself was the great Servant. But now His service was past; He was going away, and taking the place of Lord on high. So He gives authority to His servants, and to every man his work, to each and all their due place. Remark, it is here not so much gifts as work.”

“Watch, therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh: even, or midnight, or cock-crowing, or in morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. But what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” This is decidedly a suited word for a servant watching in the absence of One who was gone, who left His house, but who was coming back again. Thus, from first to last, Mark is true to the great tone and character and object of his Gospel. It is to show the perfect Servant even in His prophetic testimony, and to maintain those in a spirit of service who are waiting and watching for Him here below. The disciples in their then state represented, not Christians, but the Remnant in the latter day, who will be substantially in the same position.

132 “And troubles”: as A, etc., all cursives, Syr. Edd. omit, as BDL, Amiat. Memph.

133 [“Nor prepare your discourse”]: as A and later uncials, most cursives, Syrpesch hcl. Edd. omit, as BL Ψ, 1, 33, 69, Syrsin.

134 There is an interesting dubious reading, “standing where he ought not”: ἑστηκότα, BL (followed by Edd.), instead of ἑστός (Steph.), ἑστώς (Elz., Griesbach, Scholz), ἑστηκός (Lachmann and Green), στηκόν (seven cursives, including 1, 69). If the masculine be well founded, it points to the Antichrist, the lawless one of 2 Thess. 2:4 (B.T.) Cf. Swete in loc., and see note 131a on the verse.

135 “It”: so Edd., after pmBDL, 69, Jerome’s Vulg. “Your flight” has the support of corr A, etc., 1, Syrpesch hcl Memph. Goth. AEth.

136 See “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 496 ff., and note 135.

137 ”And pray so ACL, etc., almost all cursives, the Syrr. (sin. omitting “take heed”). Edd. omit, with BD.

Mark 14

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” p. 230

Mark 14:1-11.

Matt. 26:1-16; Luke 22:1-6; John 12:1-8.

We have here a supper at Bethany and a supper at Jerusalem: one of them simply a supper in the house of those whom Jesus loved; the other a new thing instituted at the Paschal feast,137 which it was to set aside, while for the Church it was to be the standing memorial of the Lord Jesus that should follow.

But these two suppers have a very weighty place, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ being not only the great central truth of the latter, but also, in the former, what the Spirit of God brought before the spiritual instincts of Mary. She felt it, though not from any positive communication to her, but from that love to the Saviour which the Spirit made sensitive of the danger hanging over Him In a way she could not express. The Lord, who knew her love and all that was at hand, interpreted her act as done with a view to His burying. On both occasions the disciples enter most feebly into the good and the evil, but God Himself made manifest His own hand and mind as that which governed all. This is the more striking because on the occasion of the supper at Bethany, or rather connected with it, the chief priests and scribes, though they sought how they might take Jesus “by craft and kill Him,” had fully determined that it should not be “in the feast, lest there be a tumult of the people.” God, however, had already from of old decided that it was to be that day and no other — on the

foundation feast of all the feasts, on the Passover, which was, in fact, the type of the death of Christ. Thus we have God and man at issue; but I need not say, God carries out His own will, though He does it through the wicked instrumentality of the very men who had resolved it was not so to be. Indeed, it is always thus. God does not govern only His own children, even the destruction of wicked men is not the carrying out of their own will, but of God's will. Therefore it is written, "who were of old ordained to this condemnation" (Jude 4). Again, they were appointed to stumble at the word, being disobedient. It is not that God makes any man to be wicked. But when man, fallen into sin, goes on in his own self-will, loving darkness rather than light, and enslaved to Satan, God nevertheless proves that He always holds the reins, and keeps the tipper hand, and even in the path their lust or passion chooses to take fails not to accomplish His own will. It is like a man who, under intoxication, thinks to carry out some purpose of his, seeks, for instance, to steer to some place on the right hand, but really tumbles into a ditch on the left. So man, after all, cannot but do what God ha., determined beforehand. His will is powerless save to evince ' Ins sin. God's will always governs, though men prove, themselves inexcusably wicked in the way it is brought about. just so here. Man resolved to kill Jesus, but made up his mind that it should not be on the feast-day. God had arranged long before they were born that on the feast-day, their deed was to take place. And so it did.138 As we have seen, also, the supper at Bethany gave occasion to the first conception of the treachery of Judas. Satan put it into his heart. It was a scene of love, but such a scene draws quickly out the hatred of those that have no love. Mary's139 worshipping affection for

the person of the Lord, and her sense of His danger, led her on till the house of Bethany was filled with the sweet odour of the ointment she poured forth. But Judas roused the carnal mind of the other disciples; he had no communion with her; Jesus was not precious in his eyes. He, therefore, was carping where Jesus was the adored object of Mary. It was so much taken from his own ill-gotten gains. He only pleaded the cause of the poor, and stirred up the other disciples about it, so that “there were some indignant in themselves, and saying, Why was this waste of the ointment made?” But love, while it would lavish all, never wastes anything; self does, idle folly does, but love never.

The Lord pleaded her cause. “Let her alone; why do ye trouble her? She hath wrought a good work as to Me.” There is no work so good as that done to Jesus. Works done for Jesus’ sake are good, but what was done to Himself was far better. She had done not the least of what grace had wrought up to that day. “She hath done what she could: she has beforehand anointed My body for the burial.140 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever these138 glad tidings may be preached throughout the whole world, what this woman hath done shall be also spoken of for a memorial of her.” Most fitly though of grace is this woman’s good deed bound up with the name of Jesus, wherever He is preached here below. We have not her name here; we learn it was Mary the sister of Lazarus,139 and this from John, who appropriately lets us know, because He tells us of Jesus calling His own sheep by name. (John 10:3, John 11:2) Here the point was not so much who had done it, but that it was done — the ministry, so to speak, of a woman at such a time who loved the Lord Jesus, in view of His burial.

Further, we gather from this how one corrupt person can defile even those who have true hearts for Christ. The disciples were quickly caught by Judas's fair pretences on behalf of the poor, and allowed his insinuation to lead themselves into murmurings which reflected on Christ as much as they slighted the devotedness of Mary.

In contrast with the love of Mary, Judas goes forth "to the chief priests, to deliver Him up to them."141

Mark 14:12-16.

Matt. 26:17-19; Luke 22:7-13.

But now comes the supper of the Paschal feast 142 at Jerusalem, where the Lord acts as Master of that institution and Creator of a greater one. As on His entrance into Jerusalem they had demanded in the name of the Lord the ass's colt, saying that the Lord had need of him, so here "He sends two of His disciples, and says to them, Go into the city, and a man shall meet you carrying a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he enters, say to the master of the house, The Teacher says, Where is My guest-chamber, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples? And he will show you a large upper room143 furnished ready: there make ready for us." It was One who, though He was going to die, still went there with royal, Divine rights; He had not forfeited His place as Messiah, though going to suffer as Son of man on the cross. He therefore takes possession is the Master, and the goodman of the house at once, acquiesces in His claim. All was before His eyes. There was no lack of power to act upon the conscience and affections of men. He could have turned all others as He bowed this man's heart. But how then

should the Scriptures have been accomplished, and sin blotted out, and God glorified? It was necessary, therefore, that He should go to the cross, not as any victim of necessity, but as One whose will was only to do the will of His Father, accepting all His humiliation from Him.

Mark 14:17-21.

Matt. 26:20-25 Luke 22:21, 22; John 13:21-26.

“And when it was evening144 He comes with the Twelve. And as they lay at table and were eating,145 Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you that eateth with Me shall deliver Me up.146 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, Is it I? [and another said, Is it I?].”139 There was conscious integrity in the disciples, weak as they might be, and fleshly as we know from Luke they were, even in this very scene. But the Lord answers, “One of the Twelve, he who dippeth with Me in the dish. The Son of man goeth indeed as it is written concerning Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is delivered up.” It was man’s sin, Satan’s guile, God’s counsel, and Christ’s love. But none of these things altered the wickedness of Judas: “Good [were it] for that man147 if he had not been born.” He was ordained, we may say, for this condemnation: he was not made wicked by God, but his wickedness was made to take this shape in order to fulfil the counsels of God. One of that company which was chosen to be with Jesus here below was to prove this awful truth — that the nearer a man is externally to blessing, if he does not receive it into his heart, the more distant he is morally from it. There was but one Judas in Israel, and he was nearest to Jesus; there was but one who united all the

privileges of such companionship with Jesus to all the guilt of betraying Him.

Mark 14:22-25.

Matt. 26:26-29; Luke 22:14-20.

Then He institutes the supper — His own supper. It was not the Paschal feast,148 and we learn from Luke that He would not touch the Paschal cup. He would drink no more of the fruit of the vine until He drank it new with them in the kingdom of God. He refused that which was the sign of communion in things here below. His Father, God, was before Him, and suffering His will rather than doing it. But meanwhile, before that kingdom come, founded on His suffering unto death, there is the remembrance of a totally different thing — not of a kingdom, power, and glory, but of crucifixion In weakness: His body, ("This is My body"), and His blood, "the blood of the [new]140 covenant, shed for many." It was not for the Jew only, but shed for many.149 Nothing can be simpler than the terms in which He institutes the supper, as given in Mark. It was, I do not doubt, intended both to refer to the Passover as accomplished now, and also to bring in the power of the new covenant for the soul before it comes in for the people of Israel.

Mark 14:26-31.

Matt. 26:30-35; Luke 22:31-34.

The Lord now warns the disciples, not only of what was about to befall Him, but how it would affect them. "All ye shall be offended;141 for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad150" (Zech. 13:7). The cross has its side of shame and pain and danger for us, as well as of salvation

through Him who bore our sins there. But here it is the way in which it would prove, not deliver, them of which the Saviour speaks. Does that mighty work of suffering for our sins, does the Atonement, “scatter” the sheep? Is it not, on the contrary, the only righteous foundation on which they are gathered? In virtue of Christ’s death for our sins, the sheep, instead of being dispersed, are gathered together into one, even other sheep beyond those which Christ had in the Jewish fold, so that there might be one flock and one Shepherd (John 10, 11). But the smiting of the Shepherd expresses His utter humiliation as Messiah, cut off and having nothing. “I will smite,” etc., refers to God’s giving the Lord up to feel the reality of His rejection and death. No doubt atonement was therein wrought out. “Smiting” is a more general term; and though Christ takes it from God, it was literally His enemies who did the deed, and so became objects of Divine vengeance, as in Psalm 69. Smiting was the loss, so to speak; atonement was the gain of all. Now, that which was properly expiation or atonement was not the pure, however precious, act of Christ’s death. Of course, death was necessary for this as for other objects in the counsels of God; but it is what Jesus went through from and with God when made sin — it is what He suffered for our sins, not only in body, but in soul, under Divine wrath, that the atonement depends on. Many besides Jesus have been crucified, but atonement was in no way wrought there. Many have suffered horrors of torment for the truth’s sake in life and up to death, but they would have been the first to abhor the falsehood that their sufferings atoned for themselves any more than for others. Many saints have known what it was to be “smitten” and wounded of God, as the same Psalm testifies. In fact, this was more or less

the place of God's servants, the prophets, and of righteous men from time to time in Israel, who accepted their affliction and persecution, whatever it was, from God, and not man. This place the Lord Himself tested to the full, for in all things He must have the pre-eminence. He only wrought atonement, but He knew every sorrow which it was possible for man perfect, the Son of God, to take. The smiting of Him who was the Shepherd, chief not only of the sheep, but of the very prophets whom the Lord had raised up for Israel, refers to that utter cutting off which befell Him on the cross; but the sense of this not only He felt anticipatively, but it was that which was called forth before the cross. There was far more than atonement there. He realised in His soul all the condition in which God's people were, and His own total rejection, through man's sin and folly and Satan's maliciousness. The effect, then, of all this humiliation of the Saviour, even before it was complete on the cross, was the scattering of the disciples: "the sheep shall be scattered abroad." They stumbled and fled the night before the blow actually fell on their Master. They did not understand the thing, any more than some do now the Scriptures which speak of it, though the ground of the difficulty be wholly different. They could not make out why the Messiah should be thus treated, and how God should allow it. For it is plain that Christ took all from God (not man), and imputed all to Him. Faith never considers that afflictions spring out of the dust, but owns our Father's hand in everything, however in itself shameful and cruel if one looks at the secondary agents.

"But after I am risen, I will go before151 you into Galilee." The Lord assumes in resurrection His place of lowly service with the disciples. Peter, however,

confident in his own strength and love to Christ, assures the Lord that, although all should be stumbled, not so with him.

Alas! in Divine things there is no more certain forerunner of a fall than self-reliance. And our Lord tells him: “Verily I say unto thee, that thou this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt thrice deny me.” So careful and minute is the record of the Lord’s warning given in Mark — much more so than anywhere else. “But he spoke [the more]142 vehemently, If I should have to die with Thee, I will in no wise deny Thee.” However, it was not Peter alone who pledged his faithfulness thus vainly, for it is added, “and likewise also said they all.” They knew not their weakness; they knew not what it was to have the power of death pressing upon them. They had not faced the sense of total rejection by the world. Whatever there is of nature yet alive in our hearts is brought out by this. Man as such winces and refuses the trial. It is ever so till by the power of the Holy Ghost we realise our total separation from the world by and in the death of Christ. But to be dead with Him was not yet the known portion of the disciples consequently, not one of them was able to stand. Afterwards it was their privilege, but they had not gone that way heretofore. Jesus must go first. The sheep might follow after His cross in the spirit. But Jesus must needs be the first. In due time, strengthened of His grace through His death, they too might glorify God by their death — death really for the sake of Christ.

Mark 14:32-42.

Matt. 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46.

The Lord, having all the closing scene before His soul, gives Himself to prayer. Now, the effect of prayer is, in the face of deep trial, to make the trial more acutely felt. The presence of God does not make us feel less the wickedness of man, and certainly it does not make us feel less the failures, dangers, and ruin of His people. There could be no question of the smallest shortcoming, no grief on any such score as this in the case of the Lord Jesus; but He realised the more the condition in which those were who belonged to God. Did He not feel the treachery of Judas, the denials of Peter, the flight of all? Even with the apostates in Israel there was no hard indifference: how much more for the saints, the disciples, so shrinking at such a time? He realised the awful crisis that awaited the people of God; He felt, too, what it was for Him, the Messiah, to be utterly refused by the people to their own hurt and destruction — what it was not only for Him who was life to go through death, and such a death as could be known adequately only by Him! When the One that loved Him best hid His face from Him; when He was the object of Divine judgment; when all that was in God of indignation and horror against evil concentrated itself against Christ! Then, again, what feelings of pity for the people who were forsaking their own mercies and the light of God for thick darkness and sorrow, through which they must pass retributively for that which they were about to perpetrate against Himself! All this — yea, infinitely more — was before the Lord, felt and weighed by Him as One whose grace associated Him with the condition of God’s people, not substitutionally alone, but in association of heart and in all affliction with them. In atonement He is absolutely alone. He asks no one to pray then, looks then for no comfort from them, nor does

an angel come to strengthen Him then. He says “My God” then because it was what God felt against sin that He was enduring. He might and did say “Father” too, because He did not cease to be the Son, any more than He ceased to be the blessed and perfect and obedient man. Thus He said “Father” both before and after that upon the cross. But He cried, “My God, My God,” alone that time, as far as New Testament Scripture speaks of His addressing Him, because then for the first time all that God was in hatred of evil burst upon Him without the slightest mitigation or consideration of weakness. Nothing blunted its force. He was competent to bear, and He alone bore, the whole unbroken and unsparing judgment of God, and that without looking for the sympathy of the creature, whether of man or angel.

It was a question between God and Him alone when, on the cross made sin, and retrieving the glory of God that had been compromised by all the world, He alone endured all in His own person. This is the difference between the cross and Gethsemane. At Gethsemane our Lord was, as it is written, “amazed and deeply depressed.” He had taken with Him three chosen witnesses, and He “says to them, My soul is full of grief152 even unto death; tarry here and watch.” So even these chosen ones He leaves behind; “He went forward a little and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.” It would not have been perfection if He had not thus felt it. It was impossible that He who was life could desire such a death from His Father — from God in wrath against Him. It would have been hardness, not love; but although He felt it perfectly according to God His Father, yet He entirely submits His human will to the

Father's. "Abba, Father," He says, "all things are possible unto Thee. Take away this cup from Me; but not what I will, but what Thou [wilt]." He had a real soul, what is dogmatically called a reasonable soul, not a mere principle of vitality. He could not have said this, had it been true, as some have asserted, that the Divine nature in our Lord took the place of a soul.152 He would not have been perfect man had He not taken a soul as well as a body. Therefore could He say: "Not what I will, but what Thou [wilt]."

There was the most entire subjection to the Father, even in the bitterest possible trial that could be conceived. This cup was the cup of wrath on account of sin; not to say "let this cup pass from Me" would have shown insensibility to its character. But our Lord was perfect in everything. He therefore said: "Take away this cup from Me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou [wilt]." He comes, and finds the disciples sleeping instead of watching. It grieved Him, and it was right that it should. He warned them, however, for their own sake: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." They did enter into it, and they fell, Peter especially, to whom, indeed, it was that our Lord uttered it. He called them all to watch and pray, but Peter was the one to whom He said: "Sleepest thou? hast thou not been able to watch one hour He had particularly warned Peter before. He adds The spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh weak; and again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words, and when He returned, He found them asleep again (for their eyes were heavy), and they knew not what to answer Him. And He comes the third time, and says to them, Sleep on now and take your rest; it is enough. The hour is come; behold, the Son of man is

delivered up into the hand of sinners." He was as one given up to be cut off from the last Passover. From that the hour was come. "Arise, let us go; behold, he that delivereth Me up is at hand." It was not atonement only, but the Shepherd was about to be smitten, and the sheep felt it, and shrank away before the actual blow fell.

Mark 14:43-52.

Matt. 26:47-56; Luke 22:47-53.

"And immediately, while He was yet speaking, Judas comes up, one of the Twelve, and with him a great143 multitude, with swords and sticks, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders." The traitor had given the sign of a kiss, and told them to apprehend Him whom he kissed. And he went straight up to Jesus, and says, Rabbi, Rabbi,144 and covered Him with kisses; and they laid their hands on Him and took Him." Peter, ready enough to fight, though not to pray, draws his sword and smites the high-priest's servant, and cuts off his ear. The healing is not mentioned in this Gospel, for here the Lord is simply the suffering Son of man, the rejected Prophet of Israel, the smitten Shepherd. What proves His unabated power is not the point here, but His bowing to all shame; and the key is, "the Scripture must be fulfilled." He had never been one to call for such treatment from their hands — coming out against Him as against a thief, but the Scripture must be fulfilled.

"And all forsook Him and fled." Power would have kept them, but to yield to suffering began to take effect upon them. "The sheep were scattered." "And a certain young man followed Him, with a linen cloth cast about his naked body: and [the young men]145 seize him; but he

left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."153 Vigour fails: so does shame. The first assault was enough to drive him away. Man is powerless to face death. The only reason why believers are able to face it — nay, even to welcome it and rejoice in it — is because of Christ Himself and His death. He has taken out the sting but it was not yet done. Consequently the disciples forsook Him and fled, young man and all. In Christ alone, who suffered for us, we stand.

Mark 14:53-65.

Matt. 26:47-68; Luke 22:47-55, 63-71 John 18:2-24.

"And they led Jesus away to the high-priest. And with him are assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes." There we find afresh trial. Peter follows — afar off, it is true — into the palace of the high-priest, and seats himself with the servants. "And the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrim sought for witness against Jesus to cause Him to be put to death; and found none." They found the will, but not the power; readiness to testify, but even in that they could not succeed. Man fails in everything, except in malice against Jesus. Even with all the suborned testimony on the part of the witnesses, and all the readiness to condemn on the part of the judges, everything failed. The testimony did not agree. As required by law, there must be two or three witnesses agreed; but these agreed not.154 The consequence was that Jesus was rejected, not for the false testimony of man, but on the true testimony of God. It was for His own testimony that they condemned Him. He came witnessing to the truth, and He witnessed to it unto death. The high-priest, astonished, perplexed, and failing to condemn Him on

the witness of others, demands, “Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” We are told elsewhere that he puts the oath to Him, or adjures Him, but here it is simply the question without the oath Mark names. The Lord answers, “I am.” He witnesses a good confession, not only before Pontius Pilate, but before the high-priest. “And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” He could not, would not, deny the truth about Himself. He might refrain from noticing the false charges of others, but He would not, when challenged, shut up in His own breast the truth of His personal glory. He was the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed. But He was the Son of man also, and was going to take His place above, as well as to come with the clouds of heaven, according to the sure oracles of God. “Then the high-priest, having rent his clothes, says, What need have we any more of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy.”155 To him the truth was no better, so completely scaled in darkness was the head of religion among the Jews. “What think ye? And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on Him, and to cover up His face, and to buffet Him, and to say to Him, Prophesy: and the officers received146 Him with the palms of their hands.”

Mark 14:66-72.

Matt. 26:69-75; Luke 22:56-62; John 18:17, 25-27.

The Shepherd thus must be smitten every way. “I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.” And so we find that Peter, having ventured thus far into the palace of the high-priest, yet more feels the effect immediately. “As Peter was beneath in the palace-court,

one of the maids of the high-priest comes: and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked upon him and said, And thou wast with the Nazarene Jesus. But he denied, saying, I know not, nor understand what thou sayest." Still, he could not remain in presence of his own falsehood; he goes out into the porch: "and a cock crew."147 This was the Lord's warning to him. A maid156 sees him again. It must be so. There was nothing apparently to cause terror, but so utterly powerless was even this most devoted of the disciples — at least, most ardent in his love, and most energetic in his demonstrations — so powerless was he to face even the nearness of death, that it suffices for a servant-maid's word to bring out his denial of the Lord! "And again, after a little, those that stood by said to Peter, Surely thou art one of them; for thou also art a Galilean."148 But the more they pressed the truth upon him, the more he retreated, and, in his abject fear, began to curse and to swear.

Such was Peter, and such was the process through which he was soon to come out the chief of the Apostles. He had to be broken down to learn the good-for-nothingness of flesh. How entirely thenceforth it must be Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost! "I know157 not this Man of whom ye speak." Yet "this Man" was his Saviour, and he knew it — too well — too ill. "Thou art the Christ," he had said before. What a contrast now! "Who say ye that I am?" Jesus had said to him long before, and his answer was "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." We believe, and are sure." Now he says, "I know not this Man." Jesus to him now was a mere man, unknown of Peter. Yet flesh and blood had not revealed the truth about Christ to him, but the Father

which was in heaven. Peter, therefore, was near enough, when the rest were scattered, to add a sharper blow to the many which fell upon Jesus. One of the little number of disciples was a traitor; another, and he the chief of the Apostles, a denier of his Lord.

“And the second time149 a cock crew. And Peter remembered the word that Jesus said to him, Before [the] cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice.158 And when he thought thereon he wept.” I do not say that his repentance was complete; you will find that the Lord touched him to the quick some time after. Nevertheless, there was genuine feeling of his sin, shame, and anguish of spirit, though he had not yet been probed to the bottom. He wept as he thought thereon. It is always the word of the Lord that produces real repentance, whether in a saint or a sinner. It is not human feeling, nor shame, nor the fear of being found out — the word wrought within that Jesus spake. It is the washing of water by the word. The word of the Lord does two things: it convicts and it heals; it cleanses as well as detects our evil after a Divine sort. Had Peter believed Christ’s word as to his own entire weakness, he would have been kept. But he believed it not. “Though all,” he said, “shall be offended, yet will not I.” He was ready to die with Him, whereas in truth the mere surface of the scene of Christ’s death frightened him so that the more urgently the truth of his relation to Jesus was brought before him, the more he swore that he knew Him not. Such is flesh even in the saint of God — good for nothing everywhere!

138 “These”: so AC and later uncials, 1, Cod. Amiat. Edd. omit, as BDL, 69.

139 [“And another said, Is it I?”]: so AD, etc., 1, 69, Orig. Edd. omit, after BCL., etc., Amiat. Syrsin pesch hcl (t).

140 [“New”]: so Lachmann, with A, etc., 1, 69, Amiat. Syr. Edd. omit, after BCDL, Memph.

141 After “offended” A, etc., 1, 69, Syrpesch hcl sin add “because of Me”; the same authorities, with the exception of Syrsin, having also “this night.” Edd. omit all these words, following BCcorr D, etc.

142 [“The more”]: as A, etc., 1, 69. Edd. omit, as BCDL, Old Latin, Memph. Syrhcl.

143 “Great”: so ACDL, etc., Syrsin pesch. Edd. omit, with BL, 69, and some vv.

144 The best copies omit the second “Rabbi.”

145 [“The young men”]: so ACcorr, etc., 1, (69), Syrhcl, and other vv; but Edd. omit, after BCpmDL Δ, Amiat. and Memph.

146 The best manuscripts (ABC, etc., with Syrhcl, Memph., followed by Edd.) substitute ἔλαβον, “received,” for ἔβαλλον (ἔβαλον), “did strike” (B.T.). “Did strike” is in EHM, etc., Lat. Syrpesch.

147 “And the [a] cock crew so ACD, etc., and later uncials, nearly all cursives, Syr pesch hcl, and other vv. Edd. omit, with BL.

148 After “Galilean” A, etc., most cursives, Syrpesch hcl, add “and thy speech agreeth.” Edd. omit, with BCDL, some cursives, and Amiat.

149 “And the second time”: so AC, later uncials, almost all cursives Syrsin hcl, etc. Edd. insert “immediately” after “and,” with BLC, Syrpesch, and Old Latin.

Mark 15

(Isa. 53:3)

Mark 15:1-5.

Matt. 27:1-14; Luke 23:1-4; John 18:28.

Next follows the consultation in the morning, after the Lord had been already condemned to "be guilty of death." The result is that the chief priests, the elders, the scribes, the whole council, and, indeed, the whole people consenting, agreed to deliver Jesus to Pilate, the representative of the civil power. Jesus must be condemned by man in every capacity — the religious and civil — the Jews, under the name of religion, having the chief guilt, and being the instigators of the civil authorities, morally compelling them to yield contrary to conscience, as we find in the mock trial before Pilate. Thus we see He was "despised and rejected of men." It was not only by one, but by every class of men. We shall find that as the priests, so the people, and as the governor, so the governed, down to the basest of them, all joined in vilifying the Son of God.

"And Pilate asked Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews? And He answering said to him, Thou sayest [it]." It was His good confession. (1 Tim. 6:11.) It was the truth; and He came to bear witness of the truth, which is particularly mentioned in the Gospel of John, where we have not merely what Christ was according to prophecy, nor even what He was as the Servant and great Prophet, doing the will of God and ministering to the need of man, but what He was in His own personal glory. Christ alone is the truth in the fullest sense, save that the Holy

Ghost is also called “truth” (1 John 5:6), as being the inward power in him that believes for laying hold of the revelation of God and realising it. But God as such is never called the truth. Jesus is the truth. The truth is the expression of what God is and what man is. He who is the truth objectively must be both God and man to make known the truth about them. Neither is the Father ever said to be the truth, but Christ, the Son, the Word. He is not only God, but the special One who makes known God; and, being man, he could make known man — yea, being both, He could make known everything. Thus, we never know what life is fully save in Christ, and we never know what death is save in Christ. Again, who ever knows the meaning of judgment aright save in Christ? Who can estimate what the wrath of God is save in Christ? Who can tell what communion with God is save in Christ? It is Christ who shows us what the world is; it is Christ who shows us what heaven is, and by contrast what hell must be. He is the Deliverer from perdition, and He it is who casts away from His own presence into it. Thus He brings out everything as it is, even that which is most opposed to Himself — Satan’s power and character, even up to its last form, Antichrist. He is the measure of what Jews and Gentiles are in every respect. - This is what some ancient philosophers used to think of man. They said, though falsely, that man is the measure of all things. It is exactly true of Christ, the God-man. He is the measure of all things, though most immeasurably above them, as being supremely God, even as the Father and the Holy Ghost also.

Here, however, before Pilate, our Lord simply owns the truth of what He was according to Jewish expectation. “Art Thou the king of the Jews? And He answering said

unto him, Thou sayest [it].” This was all; He had no more to say here. The chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing. He was not there to defend Himself, but to confess who and what He was. “And Pilate asked Him again, saying, Answerest Thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against Thee.150 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.” His silence produced a far graver effect than anything that could be uttered. There is a time to be silent as there is to speak;159 and silence now was the more convincing to the conscience. He was manifestly superior, morally, to His judge. He was manifesting them all, whatever they might say or judge of Him. But in truth they judged nothing but what was utterly false, and they condemned Him for the truth. Whether it was before the high-priest or before Pontius Pilate, it was the truth He confessed, and for the truth He was condemned by man. All their lies availed nothing. Hence it was not on the ground of what they brought forth, but of what He said, that Jesus was condemned. Only in John’s Gospel the Lord states the terrible fact that it was not Pilate himself, but what he was put up to by the Jews. We learn, further, in John that what frightened Pilate specially was that the Jews told him that they had a law, and that by this law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God. His Sonship is affirmed, and Pilate feared it was true. His wife, too, had a dream which added to his alarm, so that God took care there should be a double testimony — the great moral testimony of Christ Himself, and also a sign and token, which suited the Gospel of Matthew, an outward mark given to Pilate’s wife in a dream. Our Gospel is much more succinct, and keeps to the order of facts without detail.

Mark 15:6-15.

Matt. 27:15-26; Luke 23:16-25; John 18:29-40.

The iniquity of the Jews, however, appears everywhere. “But at that feast he used to release to them one prisoner, whomsoever they begged. And there was one named Barabbas, who lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. And the multitude, crying aloud,151 began to beg him [to do] as he had ever done unto them.” So it was the multitude that wished to mark still more their complete subjection to the wicked priests by preferring Barabbas and sealing the death of Jesus. He might still have been delivered, but the infatuated multitude would not hear of it. “But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release to you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered Him up through envy. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd that he should rather release Barabbas to them,” or, as John’s Gospel puts it, “Not this man, but Barabbas. Now, Barabbas was a robber.” He was a robber and a murderer — yet such was man’s preference to Jesus. “And Pilate answered and said again to them, What will ye, then, that I shall do to Him whom160 ye call [the]152 King of the Jews? And they cried out again, “Crucify Him.” Pilate, cruel and hardened as he was, still remonstrates: “What evil, then, has He done? And they cried out exceedingly, Crucify Him.” They could find no evil, they only imagined it out of the murderous evil of their own hearts. Pilate, utterly without the fear of God, but “desirous of contenting the crowd, released Barabbas to them, and delivered up Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified.” So true it was that, even in this last scene, Jesus delivers others at His own cost

and in every sense. He had just before delivered the disciples from being taken; He is now the means of delivering Barabbas himself, wicked as he was. He never saved Himself; He could have done it, of course, but it was the very perfection of the moral glory of Christ to deliver, bless, save, and in all at the expense of Himself.

Mark 15:16-21.

Matt. 27:27-31; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:1-16.

But, further, every indignity upon the way was heaped upon Him. “The soldiers led Him away into the court [called] Praetorium, and they call together the whole band. And they clothed Him with purple, and bind round on Him a crown of thorns which they had plaited. And they began to salute Him, Hall, King of the Jews!” There was no contempt too gross for Him. “They struck His head with a reed, and spat on Him, and, bending the knee, worshipped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put His own garments on Him, and lead Him out to crucify Him.” And now, in the spirit of the wickedness of the whole scene, “they compel one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming from the field, the father of Alexander and Rufus (cf. Rom. 16),161 to carry His cross.” It would appear that these two sons were afterwards well-known converts brought into the Church; hence the interest of the fact mentioned.161 God’s goodness, I suppose, used this very circumstance, wicked as it was on man’s part. He would not allow that even His Son’s indignity should not turn to the blessing of man. Simon, the father of these two, then, was compelled to bear His cross by those who held the truth, if at all, in unrighteousness.

Mark 15:22-32.

Matt. 27:31-44; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:17-27.

“And they bring Him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, Place of a skull. And they offered Him [to drink]153 wine medicated with myrrh: but He did not take it.” The object of giving this was to deaden anguish, the excessive lingering pain of the cross, but He refused. “And having crucified Him, they part His garments, casting lots upon them, what each should take.” This, we know from elsewhere, was the distinct accomplishment of Divine prediction, as it was the human sign of one given up to capital punishment. “It was the third hour, 162 and they crucified Him. And the superscription of what He was accused of was written over, The King of the Jews.” The terms are exceedingly brief in Mark’s Gospel. He only mentions the charge or accusation, not (as I conceive) all the formula. The other Gospels give different forms, and it is possible they were written in various languages — one in one language and one in another. If this be the case, Mark only gives the substance. Matthew would naturally give the Hebrew form, Luke the Greek (his Gospel being for Gentiles, as Matthew’s was for Jews), while John would give the Latin, the form of that empire under which he himself suffered later on. As that kingdom smote the servant, he records what it had done to the Master, and this in the language of the empire. There is a slight difference in each, which may thus arise from the different languages in which the accusation was written.154 At any rate, we know that we have the full Divine truth in the compared matter; and of all ways of accounting for their shades of distinction, none more unworthy of God, nor less reasonable for man, than the notion that they are to be

imputed to ignorance or negligence. Each wrote, but under the power of the Spirit; and the result of all is the perfect truth of God.

Mark, like Matthew, mentions the robbers (indeed, all do) as a testimony to the complete humiliation of God's Servant and Son on the cross. Men would not even give Him that place singularly. He was indeed alone in the grace and moral glory of the cross, but to increase the shame of it these two robbers were crucified with Him, one on His right hand, and the other on His left.155 Such was its outward appearance; but next, also, His words were turned against Him, not merely on His trial, but in His dying moments. "And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Aha, Thou that destroyest the Temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself, and come down from the cross." How little did they know that His very words were now on the point of being completely accomplished!

But the chief priests carried it out farther, as usual. Mocking, they "said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; Himself He cannot save." A great truth, though not in the sense in which they meant it. Both its parts, rightly applied, are most true; of course, not that He could not, but that He did not, save Himself - yea, could not, if grace were to triumph in redemption. "He saved others; Himself He cannot save."156 It is the history of Christ upon earth; it is the history, above all, of His cross, where the whole truth of Christ comes out more fully, though under the absolute infliction of Divine wrath for our sins, as well as the greatest strain of outward circumstances, but all borne in perfection. The holiness of Christ that at all cost would put away sin to the glory of God, the love of Christ that at all cost to

Himself would bring eternal deliverance to others, the grace of God, was fully seen in Him: the righteous judgment, the truth, and the majesty of God. There was nothing that did not stand vindicated on the cross as nowhere else. It was the resurrection, however, that displayed all, publishing what God felt. He was raised from the dead, as it is said, by the glory of the Father. What was done upon the cross was for others; but what was towards Himself, as well as towards others, appeared in the resurrection and setting of Jesus at God's right hand. But in the mouth of unbelief, the very same expressions bear a totally different character from what they have in the lips of faith. So it is that a worldly man may show that appearance of calm in the presence of death which faith really gives him whose eye is on Jesus: in this one it is peace, in that no better than insensibility. But with ordinary believers, who do not understand the fulness of grace, there are mental anxieties beyond what the unbeliever knows, because the latter does not feel what sin is, and what becomes the glory of God. When a soul believes and yet is not established in grace, it is in trial and trepidation of spirit as to the result, and it ought to be so till the heart is at rest through Christ Jesus.

How little these chief priests knew the secret of grace! He saved others, said they, and they could not but know it. Himself He would not — did not — save. Nay, in the sense of love and Divine counsel, Himself He could not save. He laid down His life for us — no otherwise could we be saved; and, more than this, obedient to the Father at all cost, determined to carry out His will, even our sanctification. In that sense only He could not save Himself. There was no necessity of death in the nature

of the Lord Jesus Christ. All other men had the necessity of death through Adam; Christ had not, though He, the last Adam, Christ, sprang from him through His mother; He did not in Himself underlie the consequences of the first Adam at all, though He in grace bore all the consequences on the cross, but not as one under them: He only bore them for others by God's will and in His own sovereign love. Therefore, very expressly, as to His death, He says I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again" (John. 10:18). He alone of all men could say so since the world began. Adam in paradise could not speak thus; Christ alone had the title according to the rights of His person. His becoming man did not compromise His Divine glory. His being God did not enfeeble His suffering as man. There was no lowering of deity, but, in result, a very real exalting of humanity. Nevertheless, the Scriptures must be fulfilled: the Anointed One must die; God's glory must be vindicated; death must be encountered by dying, and its power broken, not by victory, but by righteousness. For this is the wonderful fruit of the death of Christ: the power of death is exhausted by righteousness, He having taken upon Himself the curse, the judgment of sin, so that God might be glorified even herein. Hence the fullness of blessing and peace to the believer. This gives the Atonement its wonderful place in all the truth of God. Nothing can be substituted for it. He in atonement is the substitute for all others, and everything else as claiming to do with offering for sin is vanished away.

But as to these chief priests, they mockingly cried: "Let the Christ the King of Israel come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Yea, so complete

was the spirit of unbelief that they who were crucified, even in the midst of their dying agonies, had time to turn round and add to His sufferings. Mark does not mention the conversion of one of these robbers. Luke does, and we know that afterwards the one who was converted, instead of asking Him to come down from the cross, owned Him to be the King before the kingdom comes, believing thus without seeing. The poor soul, therefore, shone through the grace of God, the more because of his own previous darkness; and the darkness of the chief priests who mocked formed the sombre background which made this robber so conspicuous. In the very circumstances, over which the chief priests gloried as the defeat of Jesus, the thief gloried as deliverance for his own soul. But this falls to the province of Luke, who shows us the mercy of God that visits a sinner in his lowest estate — the Son of man coming to seek and to save that which was lost. This runs through Luke more than through any other Gospel. Consequently, also, he shows us the blessedness of the soul in its separate state. This dying thief, when his soul left the cross, would be at once with Jesus in paradise.

Mark, however, mentions the indignity heaped upon Jesus by the robbers, along with their companions, the chief priests, and others.

Mark 15:33-41.

Matt. 27:45-56; Luke 23:44-49; John 19:28-37.

“And when [the] sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until [the] ninth hour.” lit was more than human: God caused a witness of that hour that stood out from all before and after. There was darkness; the very world felt it. As the Lord told the

Jews, the stones would cry out unless there were a voice from babes and sucklings. As John the Baptist told them, of these stones God could raise up children to Abraham. So here the insensibility of men, the revilings and scoffings from chief priests down to thieves, against the Son of God, were answered on God's part by the veiling of all nature in presence of the death of Him who created all; there was darkness over the whole land. Above, below, what a scene!

"And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice [saying],157 Eloi, Eloi,164 lama sabachthani? which is being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Ps. 22:1) It was no exhaustion of nature. Jesus did not die because He could not live, as all others do. He had still the full energy of life. He died not only in atonement, but to take His life again. How else could He have proved the superiority of His life to death, if He had not died? Still less could He have delivered us. "We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rom. 5:10).

But more than that. His living again, His raising Himself from the grave, His taking life again, proved that He had conquered death, to which He had so entirely submitted for God's glory. He was put to death. By wicked hands He was crucified and slain; yet it was also entirely voluntary. In every other person death is involuntary. So absolutely is Jesus above mere nature, whether in birth or in death, or all through. Besides, the cry was most peculiar, such as had never been heard from a blessed, holy Man as He was. That which drew it forth was God's forsaking Him there. It was not a mere manifestation of love, though there never was a time when the Father saw more to love in His Son than at that moment; yea,

never did He see before then such moral beauty, even in Him. But if He was bearing sin, He must really endure its judgment. The consequence was to be forsaken of God. God must abandon Him who had taken sin upon Him. And He did take our sins, and endured that forsaking which is the inevitable consequence of sin imputed. He who knew no sin knew the cost to the uttermost when made sin for us.

"And some of those that stood by, when they heard [it], said, Behold, he calls for Elias." This seems to be mere scoffing again. There is no reason to suppose they did not know that He said, "My God, My God," not Elias.164 "And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and fixed it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, Let alone, let us see whether Elias comes to take Him down. And Jesus, having uttered a loud cry, expired."165 Now that death was consummated, the only righteous ground of life and redemption, the "veil of the Temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom." The Jewish system was doomed, and sentence executed upon its characteristic and central feature. The veil was that which separated the holy place from the holy of holies; there was no single point in the Jewish system more emphatic than the veil. For what the veil indicated as a figure was God present, but man standing outside; God dealing with the people, but the people unable to draw near to God, having Him with them in the world, but nevertheless not brought to Himself, not able to look upon His glory, kept at a distance from Him under the law. (Cf. Heb. 9:8, Heb. 10:19, 20.) The rending of the veil, on the contrary, at once pronounced that all was over with Judaism. As the darkness supernatural was one testimony before His death, so this at His death

declared the power of Christ's blood. It was not only God come down to man, but man now, by the blood of Christ, entitled to draw near to God — yea, all who know the value of that blood into the holiest of all. But as far as the Jewish economy was concerned, here was the abolition of it come in principle. The tearing down this chief sign and token was the virtual profaning of the sanctuary, so that now anyone could look into the holiest. It was no longer the high-priest alone venturing within once a year, and that not without blood; but now, because of His blood which they had spilt, little knowing its infinite value, the veil was rent from top to bottom. This was in the first month of the year. The feast in which the high-priest entered was in the seventh month. Thus the destruction of the veil was the more marked now. The truth is that the real application of the day of atonement and the following feast of tabernacles will be when God begins to take up the Jewish people. We are said to have Christ as our Passover; but the day of atonement, viewed as a prophetic type, awaits Israel by-and-by.

Nor was this all. There was a testimony, not only in nature as opposed to the scorn of men and the revilings of the crucified ones that were with Him — not only was there this darkness of nature and rending of the veil for Judaism, but a Gentile was brought forward compelled of God to acknowledge the wonder that was there and then being enacted. "Truly this Man was Son of God." In all likelihood he was a heathen, and did not mean more than to own that Christ was not a mere man, that He was somehow or other what the Chaldean monarch heard and spoke of in Dan. 2, 4. Now, the centurion went farther than they of Babylon. He felt that, though

His dwelling was in flesh, yet He was a Divine being, and not the Son of man merely. I do not think that when Nebuchadnezzar says that he saw one like the Son of God, he meant the full truth that we know; for the doctrine of the eternal Sonship was not then revealed, and it could not be supposed that Nebuchadnezzar entered into it, for he was an idolater at that very time. But it was a testimony of his full confidence that it was a supernatural being of some kind," the Son of God." At the same time, the Spirit of God could well give the centurion's or the king's words a shape beyond what either knew. "Truly this Man was Son of God."

Mark 15:42-47.

Matt. 27:57-61; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42.

The disciples were not there. They, alas! forsook Him and fled; at any rate, they are not mentioned. They were so out of their true place that God could say nothing about them. Yet one who up to this time had shrunk back from the due confession of Jesus was now brought forward. "And when it was already evening, as it was [the] preparation, that is, [the day] before a sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, who himself was awaiting the kingdom of God, came, and took courage,166 and went in to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus." The very circumstances that might have been supposed naturally to have filled him with fear of and shrinking from the consequences were, on the contrary, used of God to bring out a boldness that never had visited Joseph's heart before. He identified himself with Jesus. He had not the precious place of following Him while He was alive, but the death of Jesus brought him to a point, commanded his affections, and made

him, therefore, to enter courageously and demand the body of his Master. Pilate, astonished, asks if Jesus was already dead. Naturally, crucifixion is a slow death; people linger sometimes even for days when a person is in ordinary health. But in the case of Jesus it was but for a few hours. There was nothing farther to do. It was not, therefore, a question of mere lingering. Besides, it was the accomplishment of prophecy that not a bone should be broken, which John tells us, who is always occupied with the person of the Lord. It was according to the Scriptures that He should be pierced, but not a bone should be broken; and this most remarkable circumstance John witnessed, and tells us of. Mark does not notice it. Pilate "wondered if He were already dead; and calling to [him] the centurion, he asked him if He had been long dead." It was the rapid death of Jesus, accompanied by the loud voice, that filled the centurion with amazement. This showed that It was not the death of a mere man. He had power to lay down His life. So when he was certified by the centurion Pilate gives leave.

And Joseph "bought fine linen [and] took Him down, and swathed Him in the fine linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was cut out of a rock, and rolled a stone to the door of the sepulchre." And two of the Marys beheld where He was laid. Here at least, then, we have genuine affection. If there was not the intelligence of faith, there was the love that lingered over the Lord they adored with true feeling — the fruit of faith which thus honoured Jesus even in His death.

150 "Witness against thee": so A, etc., 33, 69 Syr. Arm., etc. Edd.: "accuse thee of," as BCD, 1, Ital. Memph. AEth.

151 “Crying aloud”: so corrACN, later uncials, Syr. Arm. Edd. adopt “coming up,” with pmBD, Amiat. Memph. Goth.

152 “Whom ye call [the]”: so Edd., after AB (without “whom”) C Δ, 1, 33, 69. AD, 1, 69, Ital. Vulg., omit “whom ye call,” whilst some of the later uncials do not show “the.”

153 [“To drink”] is in ACcorrD, etc., all cursives, Jerome’s Vulg., Syr. Goth AEth, but is omitted by Edd., with BCpmL Δ Memph.

154 See “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 551; also note 163.

155 B.T.: As the best uncials (Alexandrian, Vatican, Sinai, Rescript of Paris, Beza’s Cambridge, and one now in Munich), with more than forty cursive manuscripts Syrsin), etc., omit verse 28, I do not think any cautious mind can urge its genuineness here. it was probably borrowed from the citation of Isa. 53:12 in Luke 22:37 (Revv. as Edd. have rejected the verse which is found in the later uncials, 69, Syrpesch hcl hier Arm. Goth. AEth., and was retained by Lachmann). Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” p. 162.

156 See B.T., vol. xxi., p. 307.

157 [“Saying”]: so AC, etc., 1, 33, 69, Syrpesch hcl Arm. Goth. Edd. omit, after BDL, Syrsin Memph.

Mark 16

Cf. “Introductory Lectures,” pp. 231-240.

Mark 16:1-8.

Matt. 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:1-10.

The resurrection not only witnesses the power of death overcome and the perfect condition of man before God, suitable to heaven, but, as regards things here below, it is for him that believes the true solvent of all difficulties. Jesus never was vindicated thoroughly till the resurrection. There was, of course, a rich and mighty testimony before; but it was one which might be gainsaid even by those who saw the miracles — not rightly, but through the power of Satan. Even the practical infidel, the sensual man, could say that his brethren would believe if one came to them from the dead. But we shall find that the unbelief of men is beyond even resurrection, unless there be the grace of God giving it effect.167 In this chapter we have the women coming to the grave of Jesus with love, but no intelligence of resurrection, and, consequently, in grievous perplexity. They had “bought aromatic spices “167a that they might come and anoint Him. The Lord had told the disciples distinctly that He was about to rise from the dead. So small was the faith even of these saints of God that, on the very day He had prepared them to expect His rising, they were occupied with that which was only suitable to a dead Christ, not the risen and living One. “Very early, on the first [day] of the week, they came to the sepulchre when the sun had risen. And they said to one another, Who shall roll us

away the stone out of the door of the sepulchre?" But it was done already. "When they looked, they see that the stone has been rolled [away],158 for it was very great." Such is the virtue of resurrection, such the power which accompanies it. The hindrance was beyond their capacity to remove; the stone that blocked up the grave was very great. But this made no difference to God; and it was now rolled away. "And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right, clothed in a white robe; and they were amazed. But he says to them, Be not amazed. Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified One; He is risen; He is not here; behold the place where they had put Him." Thus their terror vanishes: such is the use the angels make of the resurrection of Christ. Fear is natural to man in a ruined world where sin reigns. Adam had no reason for fear till the fall; what just ground has a believer now for fear, since Christ, who died for him, is risen? He has ample grounds to judge self and its ways, but none to doubt the triumphant results of Christ's work. The whole substance of a believer's blessing consists of and depends on Christ, and in proportion as you mix up self in any way with Him, it is unbelief. If I allow the sense God gives me of my own badness to hinder my peace in Him, it is almost as wrong as the vain dream of my own goodness. It is all a mistake to think Christ can ever mix with the first Adam. It must be either Christ or self, both can never bean object of trust. When we have found Christ, there are certain effects produced by Him through the Holy Ghost; but they are effects, not a cause. Unbelief makes things done by us a cause, but this is invariably false.

Now the resurrection proclaims the victory. Although these women were there in presence of angels, they were really in presence of a greater than angels, whom they saw not — of Jesus risen from the dead. Even the saints are called to blessing greater than angels. Why should they be affrighted? The saints are brought into nearness to God that angels never did or can possess. The saints will reign with Christ — angels never do. Thus Satan has been totally defeated in all his thoughts and plans. If his pride was wounded at the Divine purpose of raising man above the angels, God, nevertheless, has raised man (already in Christ, soon in His body the Church), not only above angels, but so high as to unite him who believes now with Christ, the Head of all principalities and powers. Even the world will shortly see the saints glorified with Christ and sharing the same glory with Him. “The glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them” (John 17:22). The millennium will be the display of all this, which makes the idea of such an era brought in by the Gospel so monstrously false as well as defective. It makes the glory of the bride to consist in what she is and does in the absence of the Bridegroom, instead of holding out God’s glory displayed in Christ, and the Church glorified and reigning with Him. If it was, therefore, a sight painful and unsuitable that these women, heirs of such glory, should be affrighted in presence of an angel, let us bear in mind that, though converted then, they had not yet received the spirit of adoption; and what power can there be without that? There may be the instincts of a new life but no peace nor spiritual energy. “Ye seek Jesus the Nazarene.” He knew that their heart was right.

It is beautiful to see that, as in Mark where we have the fall of Peter more fully than elsewhere, so we have the Lord's special consideration of Peter. "Go, tell His disciples and Peter He goes before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said to you. And they went out,159 and fled from the sepulchre; and they trembled and were amazed; and they said nothing to anyone; for they were afraid." They little knew the power of resurrection yet: they knew the fact, but not the power.

Mark 16:9-11.

Luke 8:2; John 20:11-18.

But now we have the scene looked at from another point of view — that is, of service: all is ruled by this great truth.160 "Now when He had risen early on the first [day] of the week, He appeared first to Mary of Magdala, out of whom He had cast seven demons." It is not only the angelic message and the proofs of His being risen; but now it is Himself seen as risen first by Mary Magdalene. There is a remarkable putting of circumstances together here. Mary Magdalene had been mentioned before; but here only it is added to her name, "Out of whom he had cast seven demons." These two things are mentioned together. The Son of God comes, as we know, to destroy the works of the devil: He was manifested for that purpose. The defeat of Satan's power, even before this, in the case of Mary Magdalene, was yet more confirmed by this, that the risen conqueror of Satan appeared first to her. The great fact is all that is given us here. In John's Gospel there is the beautiful unfolding of the way in which He takes her out of Judaism. "Touch Me not," Me says to her," for I have not yet ascended to My Father." Thus, henceforth the

disciples were going to know Him — no more after the flesh. “But go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.” Do not be looking at Me now as a visible Messiah, destined King over all the earth. I am going to take another place in heaven, and to put you in My relationship on earth, as sons of My Father and your Father, as redeemed to My God and your God. He declares His name unto His brethren; and on that, as the basis and form of relationship, He next gathers them together and praises in the midst of His brethren. He comes there and fills them with joy. “Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.” For Christ is not only the Object, but the Leader of praise. He communicates both the material and the strain of praise to the disciples. Christian worship is in truth His worship transferred to us, and so carried on as we worship His and our Father and God in spirit and in truth. But this theme belongs rather to John.161 Here it is simply said, “She went and brought word to those that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, did not believe.” It is very remarkable the simplicity with which the Evangelists relate the proofs of the incredulity of the disciples: there is no attempt to gloss it over. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, all tell it out plainly. They knew not the Scriptures, says John, that He must rise from the dead. They saw the fact, but did not take in its connection with the repealed counsels of God. It was believed on in the intelligence of evidence before their eyes, not yet entered into in faith, as it was soon about to be.

Mark 16:12-15.

Luke 24:12-35.

“After these things He was manifested in another form to two of them, as they walked, going into the country. And they went and brought word to the rest; neither did they believe them.” This is the journey to Emmaus, which is given fully and characteristically in Luke.

Mark 16:14-18.

Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-29.

“Afterwards He was manifested to the eleven as they lay at table, and reproached them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him risen.” In their case it is evident that hardness of heart is laid to their door, as the root of their rejecting the testimony concerning Jesus. Yet it is to them that the Lord shortly after (the Evangelist omitting other matters which might distract) says, “Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to all the creation.” What a wonderful process for fitting those men to preach to others! It must be by being made nothing of in their own eyes. Repentance always goes with faith and humiliation; the finding out what we are, specially towards God and His word, is God’s way of making us useful to others. The sense of our own past unbelief is used of God when He sends us out to call others to believe; we can understand their unbelief and feel for them in it, having been so unbelieving ourselves. This is not man’s way in what he calls ministry, but it is God’s. “Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to all the creation.” After what you have proved of yourselves, be confident in God — not in man, but in the

God who was so patient with you, and sent you testimony after testimony, till you were compelled to come in. That same God deigns to use you in His work on behalf of others, and as you have proved how persistent God has been in His goodness to you in your unbelief, so do you go on patiently in His service. “Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to all the creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be condemned.” It is not enough for you and for Christ’s glory that you believe: “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Baptism has this importance — not, of course, saving the man before God, for the essential point as to this is believing that which is unseen of men, but baptism is an open sign and witness of this before men. Thus a man stands to what he believes, and confesses it publicly. He does not say, My heart believes in Christ, but there is no need that I should say anything about it. Baptism is the initiatory testimony that one believes in Christ. It is founded upon His death and resurrection. “So many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ, were baptized unto His death. Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:3 f.). Not according to the first Adam, who mistrusted God and sinned, and became a dead man; but as Christ was obedient unto death, and has brought us life everlasting righteously through His own death. Baptism acknowledges this, and is as good as saying, I renounce all I am, and every hope from man; I know the first Adam, and myself as a child of his, to be dead: all my hope is in the last Adam. When a man is really brought to this, he is a true believer, and baptism outwardly sets

forth the truth of Christ. Thus baptism has a decided value as a testimony before God and men. No wonder, therefore, it is said by Peter that “Baptism [while he carefully eschews any ex opere operato efficacy in the same sentence] also doth now save us” 1 Peter 3:21). If a man refused to be baptized through shrinking from the shame of it, he could not be owned as a Christian at all. Paul, in writing to the Gentiles, shows that the great thing is what has taken place in Christ. Peter insists upon baptism, though he expressly guards them from thinking too much about the outward act; but the grand point is the demand of a good conscience towards God by Christ’s resurrection.

Hence it is said here, “He that believeth not shall be condemned.” Unbelief was the fatal evil above all to be dreaded. Whether a man was baptized or not, if he did not believe, he must be condemned. There could be no promise of salvation, spite of baptism, if he did not believe. This makes baptism simply consequent on believing; but when we hear of condemnation, it is on the ground of not believing. Alas! millions will be condemned who have been baptized, yet so much the worse because they do not believe.

“And these signs shall follow those that have believed,. in My name they shall cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they should drink any deadly thing it shall not injure them; they shall lay hands on the infirm, and they shall be well.” There is not a word here as to time. It is not all who believe, but “those that have believed”; and, further, it is not said of those that believe even to the end of the age. Nothing of the kind is intimated. When, on the contrary, the Lord in Matthew commands them to

disciple all nations, baptizing and teaching them, He vouchsafes the assurance of His presence with them to the end of the age. The Lord abides with the disciples till the age is completed — all implied in “Lo, I am with you all the days.” But it is not so with these signs of Mark. Our Lord’s word was fully accomplished to the letter in the particular epoch when these signs were given; but there was no bond of perpetuity. In this way the contrast with Matthew is striking, and the mouth of the objector or deceiver is stopped.

“In My name they shall cast out demons.” He begins with power over Satan. They were to go forth in the power of His resurrection. Although He was going away, so far from thereby losing power, they would rather gain in this respect. “Greater works than these shall he do, because I go to My Father” (John 14:12).The notion of the Jews was that all the great works were to be done when Messiah was on the earth. Not so. In His name, during His absence, His servants should cast out demons, etc. “They shall speak with new162 tongues.” What a wonderful testimony of God’s grace towards all men! They were to speak now of His wonderful works (Acts 2) in the tongues wherewith God had confounded men at the tower of Babel. This was fulfilled, first on the day of Pentecost to the Jews, then to the Gentiles in due time. “They shall take up serpents” — the outward symbol of the power of Satan in this world — that which man instinctively hates since the fall, unless he be so besotted as to worship it. “And if they should drink any deadly thing, it shall not injure them.” The power of nature, of things inanimate as well as animate, could not avail against them; but, contrariwise, “they shall lay hands on the infirm, and they shall be well.” The

beneficial power of good in His name overcomes evil and banishes it.

Mark 16:19-20.

Luke 24:50-53.

"The Lord, therefore, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God." The work was done: He sat down. With His great earthly work over, He was the great Servant who could say, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." So He sat down at the right hand of God, the place of power. "And they went forth and preached everywhere." Is the Lord, then, inactive? Nay, "the Lord working with [them]." So true is it from the first verse of Mark to the last, Jesus is the One that doeth all things well, working for men in His life, or, rather, working for sinners; suffering for sins in death; even now working with His servants when He is gone up to heaven. He is the servant of God throughout our Gospel. Even seated at God's right hand, He is the Servant, but "the Lord, working with them and confirming the word by the signs following. [Amen."]163 Mark 16:9-20. — Lachmann, usually presumptuous, did not dare even to bracket a concluding scene worthy of, and inseparable from, the Gospel to which it belongs.... Is the omission of B [as to see below] and some copies of the Armenian and Arabic vv., with a single Latin manuscript, is the silence of the Eusebian and Ammonian sections, with the marks in L, etc., to overthrow the vast mass of positive testimony? It seems probable that much of this, if not all, may be accounted for by the difficulty found in harmonizing the passage with others (B.T., vol. i., December, 1857). Possibly it may have been added later by the same hand;

for certainly the last verse indicates a date considerably later than that which is usually assigned to the publication of this Gospel. Language can be easily imitated in so short a fragment, whereas writers would freely describe new facts with new expressions, while underneath the surface lie, in my opinion, the most indelible traces of connection with the character and aim stamped on this Evangelist by the Holy Spirit. Would this organic link have been kept up had Apostolic men, during Apostolic times, added the general compendium of the events of the resurrection with which the present Gospel concludes? (B.T., vol. vii., p. 256, April, 1869). I admit that there are certain differences between this portion and the previous part of chapter 16. But, in my judgment, the Spirit purposely put them in a different light. Here it is a question of forming the servants according to that rising from the dead for which He had prepared them. Had the Gospel terminated without. this, we must have had a real gap.... This wonderful Gospel of His ministry would have left off with as impotent a conclusion as we could possibly imagine..... For they were afraid: what conclusion less worthy of the servant Son of God? What must have been the impression left if the doubts of some learned men [see note 168] had the slightest substance in them? Can anyone who knows the character of the Lord and of His ministry conceive for an instant that we should be left with nothing but a message baulked through the alarm of women? [cited in Scrivener, “Plain Introduction,” vol. ii., p. 343]. The very freedom of the style, the use of words not elsewhere used, or so used by Mark, and the difficulties of some of the circumstances narrated, tell, to my mind, in favour of its genuineness; for a forger would have adhered to the letter, if he could not so

easily catch the spirit of Mark.... I am not aware that in all the second Gospel there is a section more characteristic of this Evangelist that the very one that man's temerity has not feared to seize upon, endeavouring to root it from the soil where God planted it. These words are not of man. Every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. This shall never be rooted up, but abides for ever, let human learning, great or small, say what it will ("Introductory Lectures on the Gospels," p. 233 ff.). The Revisers put, most undeservedly, a certain stigma on chapter 16:9-20, because B omit these verses, L, with a break, adding a miserable compendium (see Nestle's Greek Text "[British and Foreign Bible Society], and Bagster's Workers' New Testament," p. 108), and many cursives giving them with more or less doubt. No good version of antiquity omits. But a few Fathers, on harmonistic grounds, talk of the accurate copies ending with ejfobou'nto gavr. The positive external proofs and the internal prove not only that it is inspired Scripture, but from none other than Mark himself (B.T., vol. xiii., p. 302).

158 "Rolled away": so AC, with later uncials, all cursives, Syr(sin), hcl, but Edd. "rolled back," after BL.

159 "Quickly" (T.R.) after "went out" is feebly supported, and is rejected by Edd., after ABCD and most of the later uncials and the cursives, Old Latin, etc.

160 As to verses 9-20 see special note at end of chapter.

161 John 20:17. See "Exposition" of that Gospel, p. 418 ff.

162 "New": so Edd., after ACcorrD, etc., Syrpesch. it is omitted in CpmL Δ, etc.

163 “Amen” has the support of Cpm, etc., and some vv., but is rejected by Edd., following ACcorr, 1, 33, Syrr. Arm.

Appendix

Notes by E. E. Whitfield.

Notes on the Introduction

§ 1.

Mark, although he may have been (as Birks thought, p. 235) a Roman Christian on his father's side, was doubtless maternally a Hebrew (Palestinian) Christian (Acts 12:12). Cf. the Aramaic surname of his cousin Joseph (Acts 4:36). Hence the Greek used by him would have, as we find, an Aramaic tinge about it. Very noticeable is the frequency with which he gives Aramaic words. At Mark 6:15, Mark 8:14, Mark 10:22, Mark 14:8, Mark 15:12, Wellhausen impeaches him of imperfect acquaintance with Greek (as to which see note 78 in particular). Mark's peculiarities, however, are all explicable from the κοινὴ διάλεκτος, used from the time of Polybius to long after the beginning of the Christian era. As to this "Hellenistic" Greek, see Carr, Notes on Luke, pp. 9-14. The second Evangelist does but combine an Aramaic element with strictly colloquial Greek, with which the Roman Christians would be familiar, as this was the language very long used in that community at Rome (Swete, Introduction).

Many have based their belief that this Gospel was composed for the special benefit of Christians at Rome on the presence of numerous Latin expressions in it, but these were current coin throughout the Empire. The reference to Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21) is suggestive, because of mention of a Rufus in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 16:13). But there is something to

be said for Birks' view (p. 227 ff.; cf. Bernard, p. 43) that Mark's Gospel had Palestinian Roman readers in view from the fact that no geographical explanation is offered, such as Italians would require, where some (as Wellhausen, Wernle) find vagueness in his statements, so as to attribute to the Evangelist himself imperfect knowledge of the country. As to this, however, see Greswell (p. 98 f.).

2 The treatment of incidents in which Peter is prominent strikes all readers: that which would be honourable to the Apostle is passed over, whilst anything discreditable to him is emphasized. If this be not seen, some support might attach to the Tübingen "tendency theory." Peter's connection with this Gospel acquired, however, a legendary character, more and more as the actual circumstances receded. Papias (A.D. 125) and Irenaeus (A.D. 180) having represented the Gospel as finished after the death of Peter, Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200) spoke of it as written in his lifetime; Eusebius as with the Apostle's sanction; whilst Jerome (A.D. 420) makes out that Peter dictated it (Pfleiderer, i. 398f.).

As to the extent of the circulation of Mark's Gospel in the early Church, see Burkitt, p. 260 f. The earliest Greek commentary upon it which is extant was that of Victor and others of Antioch (about A.D. 400); the earliest Latin that of our venerable Bede. See, further, note 168.

§2.

3 Since the middle of the second century of our era (with the exception of a statement by Clement of Alexandria, that the two Gospels with genealogies were the first written), the Gospel of Mark has taken the

second place, intermediate between those of Matthew and Luke, of the Gospels called “Synoptic” by Griesbach (1790). So in typical authorities such as Muratori’s fragment in the West, Athanasius’s list of books in the East, neither Mark nor Luke is placed first in a single document. The traditional idea, followed by Origen (third century), has been that Matthew’s was the Gospel first of all written, then Mark’s; and this belief was accepted by post-Reformation writers of repute, such as Grotius and Bengel. In the nineteenth century Greswell (i., p. 16) adhered to the old view, and it underlies Bernard’s esteemed Bampton Lectures on “Progress of Doctrine,” where (p. 143 f.) Matthew’s close link with the Old Testament and his treatment of the Gospel preached first to “the circumcision” (Rom. 15:8), have been emphasized. Archbishop Thomson, in his introduction to the first volume of the “Speaker’s Commentary” (p. xxxvii. 1.), did not depart from it. Roman Catholic opinion, represented by Hug (1808) and Schanz, maintains the precedence, of Mark over Luke. That W. Kelly’s conviction was the same as that of these various writers appears in his “Lectures on Matthew” (p. 376. f.).

From the time of Herder (1780), however, the notion arose that Mark’s, the shortest and simplest of the three, was the earliest of the Gospels written. Lachmann (1835) gave formal expression to this belief (see Burkitt, p. 37). For a time, in the hands of the dominant Tübingen school (Baur, Hilgenfeld, etc.), Matthew’s priority held its ground, and as late as the year 1885 H. J. Holtzmann could describe this as a “burning question.” It is still an open one, although the suffrages of most experts, including Westcott in England (p. 190),

are for Mark (see below under “Synoptic Problem”). Some of these, nevertheless, allow that passages such as Matt. 5:17, Matt. 10:6, Matt. 15:24, tell against their opinion. Certain modern writers have held that Mark was last of the three, whilst some Germans in the middle of the last century have assigned to Luke priority over both Matthew and Mark. Such was already Beza’s opinion at the time of the Reformation: he could not believe that Matthew and Mark wrote before Luke, because of the third Evangelist’s apparent criticism, in his Preface, of all predecessors. But it has not been generally supposed that Luke included Matthew and Mark in what he there says. Matthew, at any rate, was an “eye-witness,” an “attendant on the Word” (Greswell, p. 75), whilst Mark’s Gospel is in close relation to the Apostle Peter’s ministry (note 2).

Dean Robinson adopts Professor Harnack’s earliest date for Mark, which is A.D. 65; Professor B. Weiss’s date is A.D. 67. The corresponding date for Matthew is A.D. 70 (the Epistle of Barnabas, quoting Matthew’s Gospel, refers to the destruction of Jerusalem as quite recent); and for Luke, A.D. 80. Zahn’s dates are, for Mark, A.D. 67; for Luke, A.D. 75; for Matthew, A.D. 85.

The chief result of assigning the earliest date of all to Mark has been that the critics’ view of the development of Christian doctrine has been shaped by their interpretation of this Gospel in particular, which is regarded as exhibiting the teaching of the “historical” in distinction from the “Pauline” Christ. Mr. F. W. Newman, in his last book, “Hebrew Jesus,” remarked (p. 57): “No one can reasonably doubt that the whole essence of the faith and religion of Jesus of Nazareth finds its expression in the Lord’s Prayer.” Strange to say, the

prayer is not contained in the Gospel of Mark! For reply to the same writer's remarks in "Phases of Faith," p. 173, on the Synoptists in relation to the Deity of Christ, see J. N. Darby, "Irrationalism of Infidelity," p. 287.

4 There has always been difference of judgment as to which of the Gospels, if any, exhibits the exact sequence of events in the Lord's ministry. Ancient opinion favoured Luke's order; modern is for that of Mark. Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (A.D. 125), according to a passage quoted by Eusebius ("Ecclesiastical History," iii. 39), stated on the information of "John the Elder," a disciple of the Lord, that Mark's record of what He said and did was "not in order." The historian describes Papias as "a man of petty mind," which opinion Réville (i. 291) puts down to the ecclesiastical courtier's dislike of millenarian opinions represented by this Papias; nevertheless, the old Bishop seems to have been wrong in this. Greswell (i., p. 5) and Birks held Mark's order to be the most regular, Greswell going on to say, rightly, that it is confirmed by that in the fourth Gospel. On the other hand, Farrar's much-read "Life of Christ" is based on Luke's order (see edition of 1903, p. 143); and Wright ("New Testament Problems," p. 176 f.), Salmond (art. "Mark" in "Hastings' Dictionary," p. 255), Wellhausen ("Introduction to the Gospels," p. 51), J. Weiss (p. 19), with Wernle ("Sources," pp. 58, 60), are adverse to the now prevalent view, which W. Kelly always maintained. It rests on a firm basis: where Matthew and Luke differ from Mark's order, they differ also from each other; Mark and Matthew constantly differ from Luke, Mark and Luke from Matthew, but we do not find that Matthew and Luke together differ from Mark, save most exceptionally (see Abbott, "Encyclopaedia Biblica," or

Bennett, “Primer,” and especially Burkitt, p. 36 ff.). It would be found that the first part of Mark coincides with Matthew, but the second with Luke.

5 The “fragmentary” view was advocated by the celebrated Schleiermacher (1817), whose Essay on Luke was translated into English by Bishop Thirlwall (1832). But Mark’s Gospel (6:14) will show us that the Evangelists, selecting their materials (cf. John 20:30), did not go to work with mere fragments which came to their hand haphazard. Their omissions were due to an entirely different cause from that alleged by writers who measure their knowledge of words and deeds by the limits of their respective records.

A crucial instance is that of the raising of Lazarus. Professor Burkitt writes as to this: “Where are we to put the scene into the historical framework preserved by St. Mark? Can any answer be given except there is no room?” (p. 222). Already had Professor Sanday, in his “Fourth Gospel” (p. 166), written: “The vague, shifting outlines of the Synoptists allow ample room for all the insertions made in them with so much precision by St. John” (cf. John 4:2, 3). Professor Tischendorf, in his “Synopsis Evangelica,” placed the incident between the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth chapters of Mark, and that without awakening sense of dislocation on the part of most students, including Greenleaf, the standard American writer on Evidence, who assigns the same position to it in his “Harmony.” But Burkitt goes on to say that the event could not have been unknown “to a well-informed personage like Mark, nor could he have had any reason for suppressing a narrative at once so public and so edifying.... Is it possible,” he asks, “that anyone who reads the story of Mark can interpolate into

it the tale of Lazarus and the notable sensation?... Must not the answer be that Mark is silent about the raising of Lazarus because he did not know of it?" (p. 222 f.). Hear now W. Kelly: "Why should the resurrection of Lazarus be omitted in the first three Gospels? Man, if these accounts had been his work, would not have omitted it; he would deem the insertion of it in each Gospel necessary for a full and truthful account.... The omission of so stupendous a miracle in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, points out clearly that it is the Spirit of God who wrought sovereignly, and writes by each with a special purpose.... This miracle of raising Lazarus does not show us Jesus as the Messiah, or the SERVANT, or the Son of man, but as the Son of God, who gives life and raises the dead, a grand point of doctrine in John 5, and there found alone in the Gospels" ("Lectures on Matthew," p. 437 f.). The difference between the "sayings" of Jesus and "public events" in His life (Burkitt) is of no significance whatever from this point of view. So it is with the whole texture of the Gospels, from Matt. 1 to John 22. Various incidents are recorded by those who did not actually witness them, whilst one or other who did is silent about them. Cf. another quotation in note 7 from an earlier part of Professor Burkitt's book.

6 We here reach one of the two determining elements of the so-called "Synoptic Problem," which has engaged men's minds since the time of Le Clerc (1716), more particularly since the thirties of the last century. It is the conjunction of agreements and differences which makes the problem, from the merely literary point of view, so "complex and difficult," as Professor Sanday has described it in his Bampton Lectures (p. 281). Professor

H. J. Holtzmann remarks that, while the idea of inspiration (see note 13) governed scholars' minds, it was the differences which exercised them; that now they canvass the agreements, which the older writers ascribed to the autor primarius. W. Kelly, however, would explain the differences in the same way.

Archbishop Thomson refers agreements to a common source. That there was any such written one is purely hypothetical. Luke's ἄνωθεν (Luke 1:4) does not tell us, as Newman's "Phases of Faith" (p. 127) might lead unwary readers to suppose, that the third Evangelist used such (cf. "Irrationalism of Infidelity," reissue, p. 162 f.). If there be any truth at all in a story, we look for substantial agreement in the witnesses.

7 For a historical student, as for a lawyer, it is differences which demand the more consideration. When we have to estimate the value of any statements, as Chrysostom long ago said, the very differences may remove all suspicion of collusion on the part of the witnesses. Now, if "each of the three Gospels represents a different view of our Lord's life and teaching" (Burkitt, p. 131), the solution of differences should usually not be far to seek, even if it seem not at first entirely adequate; and this because we do as yet but "know in part."

A solution of some difficulty of this kind often proposed is that the diversity arises from difference in translation from the Aramaic speech of Christ or of those reporting Him (so Eichhorn: see Schmiedel, col. 1850). There is, says Salmon, the tendency of different translators of a common document to vary in both words and constructions (p. 105 f.). The reference there is to Mark 12:38, compared with Luke 20:46. At verse 40 of Mark

(as verse 47 of Luke) we have “prayers,” but in Matt. 23:5 “phylacteries”: the word “tephillin” means both.

The following simple cases may be taken in further illustration:

1. Reporting the Parable of the Sower, Mark 4:15 has “Satan,” Matt. 13:29 the “wicked one,” Luke 8:12 “the devil.”

2. In the account of the Transfiguration, Mark 9:5 has “Rabbi,” Matt. 17:4 “Lord,” Luke 9:33 “Master” (as to which last, see Burkitt, p. 113 f.). It is easy to see that for these a mere difference of translation may arise.

3. The superscription on the cross, written in three languages. Mark’s narrative (Mark 15:26), probably read in particular by Roman Christians, would follow the Latin form, the most concise.

4. The parallels to Mark 12:15 in Matt. 22:18 and Luke 20:23 used by Westcott are very interesting, because they exhibit a difference of both verbs and nouns throughout.

But the difference may be one of enlargement or contraction, as in the report of Peter’s great” confession. Mark 8:29 has simply “the Christ,” but Luke 9:20, “the Christ of God,” whilst Matt. 16:16 gives “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Here is a case in which Mr. Kelly’s difference of “Divine design,” of which the respective writers were instruments, alone will help us. Reference may be made to his “Lectures on the Gospels,” and to those specially on Matthew, in a separate volume.

8 Cf. H. J. Holtzmann, “Introduction,” p. 233 “The Gordian knot, which dogmatics failed to cut, it is for criticism to untie.”

9 The characteristic portions of Matthew referred to are Matt. 5 - 7; of Luke: Luke 6:20 - 8:3, and Luke 9:51 - 18:14.

10 The natural solution — from the literary standpoint — is doubtless that the Synoptists either copy one from another, or make use of a common source (Burkitt, p. 34; cf. Westcott, pp. 184-186).

As common source, Lessing (1785) supposed (it is all a question of hypothesis, note 6) an Aramaic Gospel of the Nazarenes; and so Eichhorn (1794), whose work was translated into English by Bishop Marsh. Eichhorn held that no Synoptist had used either of the two others. Greswell makes the natural remark (p. 36) that “a primary common source might account for verbal agreements, but not for supplemental arrangement of facts”; and, the more helpful observation (p. 39 f.), that “if you believe in the inspiration of the Gospels, the supposed existence of sources from which the Evangelists derived their materials is not more precarious than unnecessary” (cf. note 13 below). Such is precisely the standpoint of these Lectures.

As far as Mark’s Gospel is concerned, the idea of any document being behind it scholars now gradually give up (Burkitt, p. 63 f.). An exception is made with regard to Mark 13:14, where the words “Let him that readeth understand,” Sanday (followed by Burkitt) may be right in saying, “could not have been suggested by oral tradition.”

The hypothesis that now holds the field is that our canonical Mark is the common source of Matthew and Luke, so far as regards the matter which these Gospels have in common. In his “Manual Commentary” on the Gospels, H. J. Holtzmann already, seventeen years ago, wrote of it as proven (p. 3). This professorial writer is possessed by the idea that “Christianity is a book religion”; so that for him it does not so far, rise above the level of Islam. Not so, happily, his fellow-critic Bernhard Weiss, for whom it is “a life.”

The connection between the Gospels of Mark and Luke is referred by Dean Luckock (i. 7) to the intercourse between these Evangelists, to be gathered from Col. 4:10-14, Philem. 4. Cf. the affinity of Luke’s Gospel to the writings of Paul.

One stage in the conduct of this investigation was marked by, a discussion of the supposed existence of an “original Mark” (Urmarcus, called by French writers Protomarc). English readers are referred for this to Burkitt, p. 40 ff. H. J. Holtzmann and Pfleiderer (i. 401) have been dominated by the idea of such a document having existed in Aramaic. Jülicher (p. 232) and Burkitt, amongst others, think that there was no such document behind the canonical Mark, the last-named German professor referring to the peculiarity of Mark’s vocabulary and style, quite unlike a translation.

There remains, however, the question whether any other document, no longer existing, once furnished materials for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Another statement of Papias, also reproduced by Eusebius, appears in all the modern literature upon this topic. According to Papias (as well as Irenaeus and Origen), Matthew wrote

λόγια (Oracles: cf. Rom. 3:2, Heb. 5:12) in the "Hebrew dialect," by which is understood Aramaic. Each. Papias says, made what he could of this record of "sayings." Its existence is not questioned by W. Kelly, or those like-minded (cf. "Irrationalism of Infidelity," pp. 102 note, 294). This is the document called "Q" by Wellhausen. Bishop Lightfoot ("Essays on Supernatural Religion," p. 173 f.) and Zahn (as Burkitt; p. 13 5, giving parallels with Mark at p. 147 f.) have thought that it recorded both acts and words of the Lord. Most are of opinion that, while Matthew's Gospel in its Greek form, and Luke may have drawn from this collection, Mark did not; but Ewald, B. Weiss, and Schanz extend its use to the second Gospel also. Of course, the existence of such a collection in Aramaic would carry with it the possibility of a corresponding Greek document. Words of the Lord not in our canonical Gospels seem to have been in circulation. In Acts 20:35 "remember" indicates that Paul was not speaking by revelation. "There can be no doubt," wrote Neander," that Paul made use of written memoirs of the life of Christ" (p. 7). Some of the Apostle's own writings have not been in like manner rescued from oblivion (1 Cor. 5:9; Col. 4:16).

11 Bishop Westcott ("Introduction to the Gospels," p. 164 ff.), Archbishop Thomson, Deans Plumptre and Farrar, with other scholars of the characteristically "English school," and the Swiss Professor F. Godet (on Luke), make it mainly a question of oral tradition, which Westcott conceives lasted to the time of Papias. Zahn shows from the history of the Canon that the Gospels were generally current in the Church from about A.D. 130. In 1 Cor. 15:5-7, Paul appeals to no written record, but to living witnesses. The tendency in Germany has

been to attach ever less importance to oral tradition, which Schmiedel characterises as a “refuge for the destitute” (col. 1845). The Lord’s words were brought to the remembrance of the Twelve (John 14:26). They were to proclaim His sayings from the housetops (Matt. 10:27; cf. Acts 10:37, 1 Cor. 15:3, 1 Tim. 6:3). Abbott supposes that the Synoptic Gospels were independent expansions of notes taken from “the Apostles’ teaching” (Acts 2:42). Wright dwells much on catechetical instruction (Luke 1:4 in Greek); but see H. J. Holtzmann’s strictures in his “Introduction,” and also the remarks in “Irrationalism of Infidelity,” p. 291, on insufficiency of human repetition.

12 On the “supplemental” view, see Westcott, p. 183f. The history of the whole problem, of which this is the last phase discriminated by W. Kelly in the text, would be found lucidly given in H. J. Holtzmann’s “Introduction.” The Fathers and traditional theology held that Matthew’s Gospel was intended to prove the Lord’s Messianic claims; that Mark made use of Matthew, according to Augustine, whom Erasmus followed, as an epitomizer; but Koppe, in 1782, rightly denied that such was the case. The Roman Catholic scholar Hug held that Mark gave a chronological arrangement to the materials that he found in Matthew’s record; and that Luke, besides using his predecessors’ work, as assumed by Augustine in his “De consensu Evangelistarum,” i. 2, 4, where “co-operation” is spoken of (said by Schanz, p. 25 ff., to have continued to be the prevalent idea), availed himself of further sources. From the extracts used by Greswell (p. 55 f.) it would seem that Luke was actually acquainted with Matthew’s Gospel as well as Mark’s. In the third

Evangelist's account of the institution of the Lord's Supper some find combination of Matthew and Mark's records with Paul's (1 Cor. 11:23-25).

Biblical writers do seem to have made use of each other's work: (1) in the Old Testament, for example, Jeremiah of Deuteronomy, Micah of Isaiah, or vice versa; (2) in the New Testament, where the First Epistle of Peter is cognate with the Roman and Ephesian Epistles of Paul, Second Peter with Jude. Paul is supposed by W. Kelly, in his exposition of 1 Tim. (5:18), to have used Luke's Gospel (Luke 10:7). Zahn connects Mark 10:9 with 1 Cor. 7:10. As to this use by one writer of another, see "Irrationalism of Infidelity," p. 165.

13 The INSPIRATION of the Bible is a topic which, unhappily, at the present day awakens dissension amongst Christians. The older view is represented by such writers as Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln. Archdeacon Lee of Dublin, and Dean Burgon; that now prevalent, by the British and American Higher Critics and their adherents of the "modern" pulpit.

The slur which imputation of "Bibliolatry" carries with it no more attaches to those cherishing the same conviction as that of W. Kelly than to all Christians worthy of the name who venerate the Bible as an altogether unique sacred Book. The superstitious respect in which a volume of the Bible is held by the Russians is something quite different from the allegiance of such as the lecturer, for whom there is no exchange of the thraldom of "historical Christianity," as it is called, for bondage to the letter of Scripture, so often alleged against the English Reformers. Those who

emphasize the guidance of the Spirit are not prone to make that mistake.

Gardner is right in saying, “All compromises are unavailing; we must have either verbal inspiration or scientific criticism, with its results, whatever they may be” (“Exploratio Evangelica,” p. 469). It will be seen that the present book unreservedly accepts this issue.

A bogey has been made of plenary (verbal) inspiration by reason of ill-advised statements of extremists (see Ladd, vol. ii., pp. 182, 206 f., 218). To contend for the inerrancy of Hebrew vowel-points and accents (ii. 177), which tyros in that language at the present day know were invented only after the Canon of Scripture was closed, and to set up other like indefensible positions, have brought discredit on the phrase, from which there is difficulty in emancipating it. The “mechanical” view, so called, that God “took possession of every faculty, suspending and superseding it” (Thomson, “Introduction,” p. lv.), is negatived by 1 Cor. 7:40, 2 Cor. 11:17. As the Archbishop rightly says, “the sacred writers were not machines.... If his mind was logical, he reasoned as Paul did; if emotional, he wrote as John wrote.” That theory carried with it the idea of dictation, which was a mistake: it is, to begin with, inconsistent with reminiscence (John 14:26). As to style: “If God has expressly formed the instrument, He can use it for the purpose for which He has formed it. That is style” (“Irrationalism of Infidelity,” p. 147). Of course, the Holy Spirit has no special language of His own: He did but use the particular writer’s language, which none the less bears the impress of the Spirit. One may take 1 Cor. 15:2 in R.V.: “in what words I preached it unto you.” A spiritualist will tell you that a “medium” gives him the

spirit's words. Why not, then, God His own in the Bible? To say, as do advocates of the "illumination" theory (as to which see Farrar, "The Bible," etc., p. 111), that inspiration extends only to doctrine, not at all to the language of Scripture, traverses 1 Cor. 2:13. The word λαλεῖν used there is not applied by Biblical writers exclusively to oral speech (see Rom. 7:1, Heb. 4:8, 2 Peter 3:16, comparing Acts 28:25). Reference may here be made to the note below on Mark 14:9, in respect of which Wellhausen has tripped. Few will question the supernatural value of the Lord's own words on earth, and the claim they make upon His disciples. As a Synoptic passage we may take Mark 8:38, and compare 1 Tim. 4:6, 1 Tim. 6:3, where probably the Apostle speaks of his own utterances or communications as "words of our Lord Jesus Christ." That there is a difference between "the word" and "words" appears from John 8:43 (cf. Davidson, art. "Prophecy" in "Hastings' Dictionary" and note 69). That inspiration attaches to the ῥῆμα as used in Acts 28:25, where "one" such extends to verse 28, is beyond dispute. Dr. Clifford (p. 88) objects to the American sceptic Ingersoll's remark: "It will not do to say that it (the Bible) is not verbally inspired. If the words are not inspired, what is?" The infidel was perfectly right. It is not those who defend "plenary" inspiration that need any commiseration, but certainly those that deny it. Instead of such concessions conciliating infidelity, they do but encourage it, as the present writer found when concerned with intelligent workmen at Chatham, whose hostility to conventional religion has not been removed, but rather strengthened, by certain summer courses of cathedral sermons in the neighbourhood.

Ancient opinion as to inspiration may be seen in Westcott (“Introduction” Appendix B). Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Origen certainly went further than moderns; Basil, Chrysostom and Jerome allow for individuality.

After Luther had already expressed his opinion against the idea (Dorner, “History of Protestant Theology,” i., 254), a decree of the Council of Trent declared for dictation, somewhat to the embarrassment of the recent Papal Commission. As to the present Catholic position, see Schanz, “A Christian Apology,” ch. xiii. Calvin was of much the same mind as the German reformer (Dorner, i., p. 390). Calov and Quenstedt, of the Wittenberg school, in the following century held the most extreme view of “mechanical” inspiration (ii. 128, 131, 136). With them agreed the divines who drew up the Helvetic Confession (1675).

As far as writers like W. Kelly are to be classified, it will be with those whose sympathies go with the “dynamic” view, of “the immediate and indefeasible guidance of the Holy Spirit”; but the miserable idea of mistakes on the part of the Biblical writers is for such entirely excluded. Schaff’s moderate statement is to be commended: “We cannot say that the thoughts only are Divine, while the words are altogether human. Both thoughts and words, contents and form, are Divine and human as well.” It is the same, he says, as with the Person of Christ.

Leading British theologians, for the most part, now are influenced by the views of Coleridge, which underlie the “general” view (see Farrar, p. 112) represented by Dean Alford, and fostered in the academic teaching of the Old English Universities, as well as Nonconformist

theological colleges. It recognises “the action of the Holy Spirit on the heart of the writers, not distinct from the analogous influence on all Christian men.” But this is to confound positive inspiration with a strain of high fervour. Nobody could wisely deny a Divine “afflatus” to Christian hymns which impress the spiritual nature of people of different nations in somewhat the same way as Scripture does: such is the hymn by Bernard of Clairvaux, put into English verse by Josiah Conder, which begins, “Thou art the everlasting Word.” Hymns and spiritual songs of that high quality go into every hymn-book. Some writers, from the names used by the Apostle appearing in the titles of the LXX, have supposed that the “hymns and spiritual songs” Paul mentions in his Ephesian and Colossian letters were the Old Testament Psalter alone. But with this view W. Kelly could not agree (see his “Reply to Rees”).

The school of opinion on inspiration last discriminated in Farrar’s book attaches “no attribute of infallibility to Bible phrases and references.” As this position is very much the one taken by Martineau and Emerson, it is manifest that with it “Higher Criticism” acquires wide scope, and few safeguards remain. “Calling it inspiration,” wrote W. Kelly, “only adds to the delusion” (“Exposition of John,” p. 412). Doubtless the Spirit is, as A. B. Bruce said, “the only true guardian of orthodoxy” (“Kingdom of God,” p. 336); but, at the same time, you have leading Higher Critics claiming that the movement engineered by themselves is a “breathing of the Spirit.” It rather behoves the “spiritual” to acknowledge than to criticize Scripture (1 Cor. 14:3; cf. John 7:17, and Ps. 112:4).

Professor Sanday (“Oracles of God,” p. 36) says There is a grave question whether its history is altogether infallible,” although Dr. Clifford writes: “Historians were seers, and went down below the surface of things.” Réville (i. 257) alleges misreporting and misrepresentation of the Lord’s sayings by the Evangelists; and so Dr. Horton in “Revelation and the Bible” (p. 233f.): “Historical criticism may challenge the accuracy of the Evangelists.” He himself has assailed that of John (“The Teaching of Jesus”). How any responsible writers can, in the face of Luke 1:4, state that the Biblical writers do not claim accuracy is an enigma. Thus Wright ventures to say that “the Scriptures themselves protest against the traditional view of the Gospels that they are absolutely true,” and his Scripture reference is none other than 1 Cor. 13:9 f., which does but speak of what is true as far as it goes — i.e., covers nothing in any way false; it concerns what as yet remains unrevealed. Moreover, such use of Paul’s words is surely perilous in the light of Mark 13:32. In the same strain as Dr. A. Wright, Dean Robinson speaks of “an inspiration which does not carry with it the entire accuracy of every detail of historical narrative” (“Thoughts on Inspiration,” p. 10).

The unity of the Scripture is manifestly impaired by the very prevalent error that the historical element is purely human. What is one to think of the use made by some of James 3:2 as evidence of a disclaimer by Biblical writers of infallibility? How, in the name of such British common sense as exists outside of a modern minister’s study, can one conceive that the readers of that epistle (in accordance with a favourite canon of interpretation) understood the Apostle’s Words in that fashion? For

them, as for Luther, his letter would only have been one of “straw.”

Associated, strangely enough, with misrepresentation by the Evangelists of the Lord’s teaching is the alluring cry of “back to Christ” (the new, Ritschlian, theology). Wellhausen tells you that such a thing is impossible; that the “historical Christ” (cf. note 3 at end) is so much overlaid by “historical Christianity” as to be “played out.” Amidst all this wreck, let writer and reader hold fast 1 John 4:6. What can we know of Christ save as instructed by His commissioned first followers?

Much depends on the use which we make of the Bible for the particular view we take of inspiration. If the word be our daily food, that view will be high; if it is only “studied,” a very low view will satisfy. As far as there is any fault, it must be in ourselves. Principal Fairbairn has well said, “Unless God he heard in the soul, He will not be found in the word” (“Christ in Modern Thought,” p. 499).

A profound student of Holy Scripture has written: “We are only sure of the truth when we retain the very language of God which contains it” (Darby, “Synopsis of the Books of the Bible,” on 2 Tim. 1:13). It was from sharing this conviction that men like Tregelles and Burgon, widely divided in their views of textual criticism, went to work in the same spirit, the former wearing himself out with lifelong devotion to an attempt to arrive at an approximately pure text of the New Testament. Such pains taken by anyone with lower views of inspiration than his it is difficult to appreciate.

As to “the word of God” being “contained in Scripture,” see note on 7:13. Reference may further be made to Sir

R. Anderson's trenchant remarks on the whole subject of the present note in his "Bible and Modern Criticism," pp. 83. 177-184.

§3.

14 J. J. Griesbach, Professor at Jena, described by Mr. Kelly in the preface to his edition of the "Greek Text of the Revelation" as "perhaps the most distinguished of modern critics for judicial ability," divided the authorities into Alexandrian (as "B"), Western (as "D"), and Constantinopolitan or Byzantine (as "A"). In his second edition (1796-1806) Griesbach gave preference to the Alexandrian recension.

J. M. A. Scholz, Roman Catholic Professor at Bonn, followed in 1830-1836 with an edition professedly based on Byzantine readings.

Karl Lachmann, mentioned in the text, published his larger edition in 1842-1850, and wherever possible regarded only Alexandrian copies older than the fifth century. He rigidly excluded internal evidence. Although he sought to carry out the idea of Bentley in exhibiting a text current in the fourth century, he neglected to give effect to the English scholar's acknowledgment of the value of the later for correction of slips in the ancient manuscripts. These are respectively called "cursives," or "minuscules," and "uncials."

15 As to the Syrian text, "which underlies the so-called Textus Receptus, Westcott and Hort, in their "Introduction," § 185, p. 133, admit that it "must be the result of a recension in the proper sense of the word, a work of criticism performed by editors, not merely by scribes."

“The triumph,” writes Sir R. Anderson, “of the Westcott-Hort school of textual criticism in the revision of the New Testament was due to either ignorance or neglect of the science of evidence. The mutilation of the Gospels, by making the text agree with certain of the oldest manuscripts, was but an example of the tendency of laymen to disparage indirect evidence when direct evidence is available. No lawyer would accept the authority of those manuscripts against the united voice of the versions and the Fathers” (“Pseudo-Criticism,” p. 5). For this, compare Wills on “Circumstantial Evidence,” p. 260 (secondary evidence admissible when an original document has been lost), and also the American standard work on “Evidence” of Professor Greenleaf, vol. i., part ii., chapter iv., §§ 84, 509.

16 It is really the application of one’s mind to the internal evidence which carries with it the most severe test. How often your merely textual critic may be like the person who, up to a certain point, could only see men as trees walking (Mark 10), because some eye-salve is wanting for spiritual insight! (Rev. 3:18). Even if it were another hand, as Tregelles and others have supposed, who added the twelve last verses of our Gospel, that man, Aristion or any other, was governed by more sense of spiritual propriety than those now who try to account for the addition by merely historical or literary considerations. - On the text of Mark, see Blass, “Philology of the Gospels,” chapter xi.

Notes On Mark 1.

17 Mark 1:1 — “Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Some, as Meyer and Wellhausen, treat this as a title, corresponding to that in the beginning of Matthew,

which view H. J. Holtzmann discredits because of the "according as." "Gospel" here is not used in the literary sense of "book," a meaning which it did not bear until well into the second century, when Justin Martyr, writing about the year 150, speaks of the Gospels as "Memoirs" (ἀπομνημονεύματα). Some writers — the Germans, misled by Luther's version (kept up in the joint critical translation of 1899) — take Mark's words to mean "Gospel concerning Jesus Christ." Zahn, however, sees that the real force is "beginning of the Gospel" as ministered, good news brought, by Him. Cf. Acts 1:1, Heb. 2:3, Rev. 19:10 ("testimony of Jesus Christ"). It is a portraiture of His service, a model for His workmen (cf. 1 Peter 2:20 ff. with 8:35, 10:29 here). Zahn well says that for doctrine about Him the Biblical manner of expression would show περί, as in Acts 28:31, Rom. 1:3. See also Hosea 1:2, referring likewise to W. Kelly's "Exposition of the Epistles of Timothy," p. 4.

18 Mark 1: 2. — With regard to the quotation, Klostermann points out that "prepare the way" in Malachi is, in fact, characteristic of the latter part of Isaiah, and that the absence of "and" is significant — that Mark meant a single prediction (p. 176). Large use of "and" (parataxis) is certainly peculiar to this Gospel, for which, besides the opening chapter (passim), see in particular Mark 3:13-16 and Mark 10:32.

Lee (p. 339), after Hengstenberg ("Christology of the Old Testament," iii., p. 608), supposes that Malachi used Isaiah — that is, not to have given an independent prediction (cf. note 12 above).

"Thy [for My] way." J. Weiss (p. 197f.) remarks that "the Christology of Mark is related to that of John more

closely than is generally supposed." As to this, reference may be made to Mark 2:10:41, 44, (see note there), Mark 3:15, Mark 6:7, and to note 3 above. The "priority" of Mark lends no assistance to the theories of writers like Martineau about growth of "mythological attributes of the person of Jesus" ("The Seat of Authority in Religion," ii. 360).

18a In

ἐβάπτισα we have a good instance of the flexibility of the later aorist, scarcely differing here from the present. It is not a mere Hebraism.

19 Mark 1:11. — "I have found my delight." That is, in the self-humiliation of JESUS, seen in His submission to the baptism; not excluding the Lord's earlier life on earth (Gould), nor reference to His preincarnate condition (Swete). Wellhausen strangely renders εὐδόκησα by "I have chosen." If that he intended to conform to Isa. 42:1, Theodotion's version of which Swete mentions as "probable" reference, the connection (Matt. 12:17 ff.) of the prophet's words is missed — Christ's rejection by the nation, and God's then taking up the Gentiles. We have here the objective attestation of the sonship (Sanday) for the Lord's own enjoyment. So in Luke 3:22, whereas in Matt. 3:17 (cf. John 1:33) the Spirit records the voice as to the Baptist. See, further, note on Mark 8:38.

20 Mark 1:13, 14. — Between these two verses a position may very well be found for the early Judean ministry of the Lord recorded by the fourth Evangelist. Greswell supposes that it lasted six months at least (p. 19). Cf. John 3:24, John 4:13, and Acts 10:37, with Mark 3:7, 8. In Luke 4:44 there is a striking variant reading —

“the synagogues of Judea” — which finds place in the text of the “Workers’ New Testament” and in the margin of the R.V.

21 Mark 1:15. — Intelligent habitual readers in general of the Gospels suppose that they understand such familiar phrases as “kingdom of heaven,” “kingdom of God,” without being aware of the extent to which the meaning or bearing of these expressions is canvassed by professional expositors of Scripture. Some scholars (as Schürer, 2, p. 453; Stalker, “Christology,” p. 138; and O. Holtzmann, p. 160 ff.) can find no difference between them. Such commonly rely on the acknowledged fact that “heaven,” in Jewish usage, may stand sometimes for “God” (H. J. Holtzmann, “New Testament Theology,” p. 50), as in Matt. 5:34 (cf. Matt. 23:22), Mark 11:30, Luke 15:18, John 3:27. So Bishop Robertson, Bampton Lectures, p. 62f. (cf. Dalman on “Phraseology, of the Mishna,” p. 179). But “used as a name of God, we always have the singular (οὐρανός), and never the plural” (Cremer, “Lexicon of New Testament Greek,” edited by Urwick, p. 662 f.). It is so in the passages just quoted from each of the Gospels. Writers who so blend the two expressions have no adequate explanation to offer of Matthew’s phrase “kingdom of God” in Matt. 12:28, Matt. 19:24, Matt. 21:31. See also Fairbairn, “Studies in the Life of Christ,” p. 104.

As to the connection between “kingdom” and “Church,” A. B. Bruce says: “The two categories do not entirely coincide. The kingdom is the larger category. It embraces all who by the key of a true knowledge of the historical Christ are admitted within its pale” (“The Kingdom of God,” p. 266). Cf. Principal Fairbairn: “The kingdom created the Church, not the Church the

kingdom. The parables that explain and illustrate the one are inapplicable to the other.... The Church and the kingdom may be more properly contrasted than compared" (op. cit., p. 108), and "the Church began to exist after the Ascension" (p. 110). Dr. Hort wrote helpfully on this subject. "Since Augustine's time," he says, "the kingdom has been simply identified with the Christian Ecclesia. This is a deduction from some of our Lord's sayings taken by themselves, but it cannot, I think, hold its ground when the whole range of His teaching about it is examined. We may speak of the Ecclesia as the visible representation of the kingdom of God, or as the primary instrument of its sway.... But we are not justified in identifying the one with the other, so as to be able to apply directly to the Ecclesia whatever is said in the Gospels about the kingdom of heaven or of God" ("The Christian Ecclesia," p. 19). Cf. Dorner, "The Future State," American translation, p. 73 ff. Wellhausen has not advanced beyond Augustine's idea. See his "Introduction," p. 106. The passage has been paraphrased by Burkitt (p. 192 ff.). He, too, treats the kingdom as equivalent to the Church, and misapprehends the distinctive character of the first Gospel. In the volume on Matthew's Gospel (p. 113f.) W. Kelly has: "There is not in all Scripture a single passage where the kingdom of heaven is confounded with the Church, or vice versa."

The phrase "kingdom of heaven," derived from the Old Testament (Dan. 4:26), meant primarily the visible sovereignty of God established in power and glory (cf. Mark 9:1). The rejection of Christ has postponed that, and has imparted to the kingdom the form of "mystery" (Matt. 13) which it now takes. The present is

the time of the King's "patience" (Rev. 1:9). In Matt. 28:18 we find "all power is given unto Me in heaven." Here is the inauguration of the "kingdom of heaven" which, as "kingdom of God," had already affected the earth (Luke 17:21).

22 Mark 1: 21. — Capernaum (cf. Matt. 9:1, "His own city"). Trench quotes Chrysostom ("Homily on Matthew"): "Bethlehem bare Him, Nazareth nurtured Him, Capernaum had Him continuously as inhabitant."

23 Mark 1: 22. — For the scribes, see art. s. tit. in the American "Jewish Encyclopaedia," vol. xi. A stupendous fact of the Lord's life on earth is that He had no education commonly so called, although Josephus ("Contra Apion," ii. 25) tells us that "Moses gave commandment to instruct children in the elements of knowledge (γράμματα)." Graetz ("History of the Jews," ii. 148) quotes from the Talmud that "a fatherless child was not brought to be taught" in any synagogue school. Indeed, "there is no evidence," writes Fairbairn, "that in the time of Jesus any schools existed in Nazareth. The wonder both at Nazareth (Mark 6:2) and Jerusalem (John 7:15) how He knew His letters proves that He had not been educated in any school" ("Studies in the Life of Christ," p 52; cf. his "City of God," p. 226). The Lord spoke the Aramaic dialect of a Galilean peasant, but Fairbairn goes probably too far in saying that He did not know Greek ("Manchester Lectures on the Miracles of Christ," p. 17). If so, how did He communicate with the Greek woman of Mark 7:26? Sepphoris, a Greek city, was within five miles of Nazareth, and Greek was spoken throughout that region. Even so, His would be only colloquial Greek, like that which we meet with in the Gospel of Mark. See, further, note 56.

H. J. Holtzmann (“New Testament Theology,” p. 129 f.) speaks of the importance of students of the Gospels being acquainted with the vernacular of JESUS. Cf. Burkitt, p. 5 f., where reference is made to Wellhausen’s application of such knowledge to the interpretation of the Gospel records, the Cambridge Professor stating that things imperfectly understood by students knowing only Hellenistic Greek are “immediately clear” to those so further equipped. As far as the German Professor’s “Commentary on Mark” is concerned, we are not struck with the result as profitable. His treatment of “Son of man” is based on a view of the Aramaic background which Dalman, the leading expert in this branch, rejects (see note on Mark 2:10). Is it helpful to anyone to be told by Wellhausen (on Mark 1:4) that the Aramaic equivalent of a Greek passive is an active intransitive (reflexive), illustrated in baptism by “the one baptized” of the classical language being equivalent to “the one dipping (himself)” in the vernacular of Christ? Leaving eccentricities or tricks of language alone, we may recall a solemn question of the Lord at Jerusalem, and His own answer (John 8:43): “Why do ye not know My speech (λαλίαν)? Because ye cannot hear My word (λόγον).”

As to the scribes (Sir A. F. Hort, “Divinity Professors”), reference may be made to Edersheim, “Life of Jesus the Messiah,” if not to Schürer, “History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ,” § 25. As to Christian “theology,” see note 35.

24 Mark 1: 24. — This incident is vividly exhibited in Delitzsch, “A Day in Capernaum,” p. 99.

25 Mark 1: 29. — Klostermann makes use of this verse in illustration of the process of Peter's supposed connection with the second Gospel. The Apostle's "we" and "me" (my) Mark is considered to have simply converted into "they" and "Simon." Klostermann treats 3:16 similarly.

26 Mark 1: 34. — For the difference between "devil" and "demon," see Trench, "On the Miracles," p. 166f.

27 Mark 1: 43, 44. — Harnack ("What is Christianity?") uses this passage in support of his idea that the Lord "did not assign that critical importance to His miraculous deeds which even the Evangelist Mark attributed to them." On the miraculous, see note 58.

"Say nothing to anyone": lest the priests, hearing of it by anticipation, should discredit the hand of JESUS in it (J. Wesley).

Notes On Mark 2.

28 Mark 2: 4. — For description of such a house, see A. M. Thomson, "The Land and the Book," ii., p. 433 f.

29 Mark 2: 7. - Blasphemy is one of the New Testament Greek words which acquired an extension of meaning among the Jews beyond that which they had in the classics. There it meant simply "speaking against" a person, a "blasphemy" thus being the opposite of a "euphemism" (Trench, "Miracles," p. 219). Cf. its use in Mark 14:64, and for the thought cf. Phil. 2:6. Bengel has a good note in his "Gnomon" at Matt. 9:3. Another such word is αἰώνιος, used in Mark 3:29, where the "Workers' New Testament" renders "age-abiding." Such words illustrate Ps. 12:6: "The words of Jehovah are

pure words, silver tried in the furnace of earth, purified seven times."

30 Mark 2: 10. — Here we meet, for the first time in Mark, with the title Son of man, used characteristically by the Lord of Himself. The lecturer sets forth at the end of this chapter (verse 27 f., cf. the note there) what is undoubtedly its true significance. But the phrase exercises "divines" still, as of old the "scribes" (John 12:34). H. J. Holtzmann says that the meaning intended is "one of the most intricate questions in New Testament theology" ("Introduction," i., p. 246); and the art. s. tit. in Hastings (vol. iv.) certainly shows the perplexity prominent contemporary writers feel in dealing with it (p. 586). How could anyone really be satisfied with such enlightenment as this article affords? It is, however, like exposés of "modern thought," which Mrs. Humphry Ward deems instruments of a "liberal education." A summary of the points at issue may be useful:

1. Whether "Son of man" does or does not bear a Messianic meaning. Bousset (chapter 10) avers that the majority of scholars regard it as a true Messianic title. Harnack, on the affirmative side, agrees not only with H. J. Holtzmann, but with B. Weiss, whom Stalker (Lect. ii.) and Stevens follow. They are influenced by such passages as Mark 14:61 f., John 3:13, and 1 Cor. 15:45, 47 — some, accordingly, seeing a reference in it to Christ's heavenly origin (so also Dalman). The negative side is taken by Westcott ("Commentary on John's Gospel") and Wendt ("The Teaching of Jesus"). Neander limited himself to saying, "It is certain that this name was not amongst the more usual or best-known names of Messiah" (p. 98).

2. As to the meaning which “Son of man” bears in the Old Testament. The passages discussed are Job 25:6, Ps. 8:5 and Ps. 80:17, Ezek. 2:1, etc., Dan. 7:13. Job 25:6 and Ps. 8, as well as the passages of Ezekiel, are supposed to describe inferiority. A. B. Bruce on Matt. 9:6 would connect the parallel passage here with those of the Ezekiel type (“humiliation”). Dan. 7:13, it is generally agreed, stands for superiority. However this may be, H. J. Holtzmann, Dalman, Schmiedel, etc., trace the New Testament use of the title to Daniel; not so Westcott, etc.

3. The relation of the Evangelists’ “Son of man” to that in the apocryphal book of Enoch (“Similitudes,” chapters xxxvii. — lxxi.) is discussed. This book was for long known only in Ethiopic, but for the last twenty years the first thirty chapters of it have been available in Greek. Deane, in his “Epigrapha,” has dealt with so much as concerns the present topic (pp. 49-95; see in particular pp. 62, 89 f.). Amongst others, Réville (i. 192 note) is of opinion that the picture of the “Son of man” in this book “differs entirely from that common to the four Gospels.” Stanton and Drummond agree in considering the book post-Christian.

4. With regard to the meaning being (a) “mankind,” or (b) simply a “human being.” Grotius took it in the first sense; later writers, as Neander (p. 99), Westcott, Stanton (“Jewish and Christian Messiah,” part ii., chapter ii.), and Farrar, understand by it the “Ideal of Humanity,” and practically a new title, although Ps. 8:4 and Ps. 80:17 might seem, from the parallelism in each, to countenance that sense already in the Old Testament. H. J. Holtzmann (“Introduction,” p. 39 f.; “New Testament Theology,” i., p. 255), Pfleiderer (i. 341,

referring to Matt. 9:8), Wright, Wellhausen ("Jewish and Hebrew History," p. 346), hold that the use of Bar Enosh in Aramaic determines "human being" as the sense, on the ground that B-E is the only equivalent in that language for "man." This view naturally suits such as Martineau ("Seat of Authority in Religion," p. 335 f.). Holtzmann's view, however, Dalman, the leading expert, describes as "a grievous error," "a mare's nest," because in Biblical Aramaic Enosh alone, not B-E, stands for "man," and with him Schmiedel and some others agree.

Theology — call it "systematic" or "scientific" — is certainly not at its best in such uninspiring treatment of this title, after which it is refreshing to find Fairbairn writing that "Son of man" is "no man's son"; that He "has no fellow"; that Christ is "the Son of man"; and, further, "As Son of God, Christ interprets God to man; as Son of man, He interprets man to God" ("Christ in Modern Theology," p. 364).

Following up the lecturer's remarks, which introduce the reader to a very different atmosphere from that of conventional scholarship, we may develop these by reference to the "Synopsis of the Books of the Bible," by Mr. J. N. Darby. The second psalm, he explains, in the light of Acts 4:25 ff., as exhibiting to us the Son of God, rejected in His character of Messiah; the eighth as setting Him forth "the Son of man," with a higher glory (cf. John 1:49 ff., John 12:23, 34). In Mark 9 (see also notes on that chapter) Peter, having confessed Jesus as Messiah, the Lord thereupon drops that title for the time being, to introduce His sufferings as Son of man. In Ezekiel the title "suited the testimony of a God who spoke outside of His people." "It is Christ's own title, looked at as rejected and outside of Israel. He would

not, thus rejected, allow His disciples to announce Him as the Christ, for the Son of man was to suffer" (ii., p. 370 f.). "He could not be rejected as Christ without His having a more glorious place destined to Him" (ibid., p. 78). On Dan. 7 the same writer remarks: "It is not now the Messiah, owned as King in Zion, but ONE in the form of the Son of man, a title of far greater and more wide significance. It is the change from Ps. 2 to Ps. 8 brought about by the rejection of the Messiah" (p. 437).

In his "Lectures on Matthew" W. Kelly has remarked, with reference to the use of this title in Acts 7:52-56, that when the Lord "was refused as Messiah, Stephen, finding that the testimony was rejected, is led of God to testify of Jesus as the exalted Son of man at God's right hand" (p. 352).

Attempts are made to divorce the Synoptic from the Johannine treatment of the Lord's ministry in general; but a comparison of Mark 14:64 with John 10:36 would show what a link this title forms between the three first and the fourth Gospels. Cf. Schanz, "A Christian Apology," ii., p. 521. Thus in John 6:27 we are told that in His baptism (Mark 1:10 f. and parr.) the Lord was "sealed" as Son of man. Moreover, not only in John's, but in all the other narratives the distinction between the titles "Christ" and "Son of man" is maintained. This is especially noticeable in Luke 9:26 (cf. Matt. 10:23), but we meet with it also in Mark 9:21 f. See also Mark 12:34, and compare Westcott's note on p. 34 of his "Commentary on John."

In all four Gospels the sufferings of the Son of man as well as His exaltation, are spoken of; His being future Judge (John 5:22) is but one form of the latter.

Outside the Gospels, besides Acts 7:52 ff., already mentioned, reference may be made to 1 Cor. 15, Eph. 1, and Heb. 2, and, of course, to Rev. 1:13 and Rev. 14:14. On Matt. 9:6, Bengel connects “on earth” with “Son of man” (as here). Cf. John 3:13. Neander also accepts the idea of the connection with heaven in the title itself. The Lord, he says, indicated thereby “His elevation above all other men, the Son of God in the Son of man” (p. 100).

See, further, notes on verses 27, 28, and 14:64; also note on 8:27 ff. as to the claim of JESUS to be Christ, which, as so much else at the present day, has been wantonly questioned.

31 Mark 2: 16. — As to the Pharisees, see Edersheim’s “Life of Jesus the Messiah,” if not Réville i., chapter x., or the American “Jewish Encyclopedia,” vol. ix.

32 Mark 2: 18. — The Pharisees’ idea was that pious people should not, even if they could, be emphatically happy! The remonstrances came both from them (Luke 5:33) and from John’s disciples (Matt. 9:14).

33 Mark 2: 22. — As to the different Greek words for “new,” see Trench, “Synonyms,” lx. The νέος (time) applies to the wine, the καινός (quality) to the skins. A. B. Bruce remarks (on Matt. 9:17): “That which is new in time does not necessarily deteriorate with age; it may even improve. That which is new in quality always deteriorates with age.”

34 Mark 2: 26. — A difficulty is raised here from the fact that Abiathar was not the official high-priest at the time of this incident (see 1 Sam. 21:1; cf. 1 Sam. 22:11). The confusion of names already arose in the Old Testament text of both Hebrew and Greek; cf. 1 Sam. 22:20 with 2 Sam. 8:17 (1 Chron. 18:16). But “the” before “high-

priest" is absent from the Greek of Mark — "Abiathar, a high-priest." Abiathar was doubtless acting for his father at the time, and he was, as Plumptre says (ad loc.) "of David's party, the chief agent in allowing him to take the shewbread." Moreover, the preposition ἐπί may here be taken as "in the presence of" (cf. Greek of 1 Tim. 6:13).

35 Mark 2:27, 28. — The questions raised in respect of the designation "Son of man" have been already discussed in note 30 (on verse 10), in anticipation of the lecturer's remarks at this place. Grotius would apply the rules of formal logic to the "man" of the first of these two verses, followed by the "Son of man" of the other (cf. note 29 above); and so H. J. Holtzmann (ad loc.). Bousset likewise finds it "obvious" that Son of man here means "man in general" (p. 185). But much that is "obvious" to any not going beyond the surface of a passage is illusion. The application of logic, which we have to correct in life by our experience, has been baneful in "theology": see as to this Professor Julius Kaftan's standard book on "The Truth of the Christian Religion" (1894), or his recent pamphlet "Jesus and Paulus," especially at pp. 33, 36. All know how forcibly this consideration applies to Calvin's system of doctrine. It is curious that learned men should be anxious to foist conventional logic into the interpretation of such a homely narrative as Mark's is throughout. The reader may look for like treatment by "advanced" writers at Mark 10:18, Mark 12:37, where see notes.

It may be desirable here to note the characteristics of theology, or reasoned development of Biblical doctrine, which it has been since the time of Origen. One whose writings are not sufficiently known shall speak. "When a man's mind apprehends the truth, and he seeks to give

it a form, he does it according to the capacity of man, which is not its source; the truth as he expresses it, even were it pure, is separated in him from its source and its totality; but, besides this, the shape that a man gives it always bears the stamp of the man's weakness. He has only apprehended it partially, and he only produces a part of it. Accordingly, it is no longer the truth. Moreover, when he separates it from the whole circle of truth in which God has placed it, he must necessarily clothe it in a new form, in a garment which proceeds from man: at once error mixes with it. Thus it is no longer a vital part of the whole: it is partial, and thereby not the truth; and it is, in fact, mixed with error. That is theology" (J. N. Darby, Synopsis," vol. v., on 2 Timothy).

Notes On Mark 3.

36 Mark 3:1-6. — Neander observes as to the incident recorded in these verses that "it is obvious that the accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were written independently of each other" (p. 275 note).

27 Mark 3:7, 8. — Farrar rightly finds here an implication of Judean ministry (cf. note 20), the Lord having been "well-known [already] to people at and near Jerusalem." See also verse 22 of this chapter.

38 Mark 3:12. — We find Chrysostom long ago saying "The Lord would not have the wicked, whether demons or men, bear testimony to His truth" (cited by Isaac Williams, i. 410).

39 Mark 3:13. — "The mountain." Wernle ("Sources of the Life of Jesus," p. 58) here indulges in miserable criticism of the use of the definite article; as if Mark, from vague acquaintance with the land, thought that

there was only one mountain in the district. The definite article in the colloquial style is used to mark mountainous country, highlands. It is the same in more or less classical Hebrew, as at Gen. 12:8, Gen. 14:10, Deut. 1:24 (“ins Gebirge” in German, Kautzsch’s “Textbibel,” 1899, for which French has a like fitting expression, “à la montagne”). So at Mark 6:46, Matt. 5:1, etc.

It is at this point that “the Sermon on the Mount” fits in with Mark’s narrative. See, further, last verse of the chapter and note 43.

40 Mark 3:16. — Klostermann draws from this verse another of his illustrations of how he supposes Peter’s communications to Mark took shape in this Gospel (cf. note 25 above).

40a As to “Boanerges,” see art. by Prof. Rendel Harris, in Expositor, Feb., 1907.

41 Mark 3:21. — Farrar writes The Gospels faithfully record what sceptics are pleased to consider so damaging an admission (“Life Of Christ,” p. 75). Wernle and others imagine that Matthew’s and Luke’s omissions were sometimes dictated by the feeling that Mark had divulged incidents derogatory to the Lord’s reputation — so little do such writers grasp the singleness of purpose with which plain-speaking, because plain-thinking men, as the sacred writers, were animated. Such an experience of Christ as is here recorded does but reveal the hindrances to devotedness in God’s service for which those of one’s own flesh and blood in every age are accountable: for the disciple it must be as it was for the Master, as we are told by each of the Evangelists,

who, it is alleged, suppressed such incidents in their narratives (Matt. 10:24, Luke 6:40).

42 Mark 3:29. — As to the Biblical usage of such words as αἰώνιος (everlasting), see note 29 above. Etymology is a slender basis to go upon; the usus loquendi all important. Outside the Gospels (as Matt. 25:46) we have the word contrasted with πρόσκαιρος in 2 Cor. 4:18. Call it there "timeless," "cyclic," or what you will, it is but to reach some equivalent expression for that which is beyond the limits of human intelligence; this ever needs conditions of time as of space, because apprehension is not the same as comprehension. God himself is αἰωνιος (Rom. 15:26). If in 2 Thess. 1:9 destruction is not really "everlasting," then salvation in Heb. 5:9 will not be either; if fire in Jude 7 be not "eternal," so also glory in 2 Tim. 2:7. To come to our Gospel; if guilt αἰωνίου ἁμαρτήματος do not mean endless woe, the "life eternal" of Mark 10:30 cannot stand for endless bliss. Bishop Moorhouse, in a sermon on "The Teaching of Christ," has actually ventured to insist on the "life" of Matt. 25:46 not being "eternal"; and logic is, confessedly, on his side. Were it not well to leave that severely alone? (cf. note 35). Dean Farrar, in his "Eternal Hope," here takes refuge in the critical reading ("sin"); but Dr. Beet rightly treats this as equivalent to the "punishment" of Matt. 25:46. The word κόλασις used there, Trench ("Parables") insists, does not in Biblical Greek bear its classical meaning of that which is corrective, remedial. The reader is referred to Sir R. Anderson's powerful treatment of the whole question in his "Human Destiny."

43 Mark 3:35. — Adeney (p. 46) notes the obvious implication that the Lord did not, "could not, regard

other people in the same light" as the responsive hearers spoken of in this passage. For the "will of God," see the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7).

Notes On Mark 4.

44 Mark 4: 3-8. — For the local scenery which enters into the Parable of the Sower, reference may be made to Thomson, "The Land and the Book," i., 115, as also to Stanley's description in his "Sinai and Palestine."

45 Mark 4: 10-12. — Compare Matt. 13:10-17, where the Divine motive behind the Lord's words is made quite clear. The "remnant" is discriminated from the nation at large, whose wilful repudiation of Him as the Messiah, as represented by its leaders, brings upon the mass ("the many" of Dan. 9:27, Mark's "those without," Luke's "the others") that judicial sentence of blindness which Isaiah (Isa. 6) proclaimed, but modern critics, such as Schmiedel (col. 1866) and Bousset (p. 42), are slow to apprehend. A diatribe of one of these is against the "preposterous dogmatic pedantry of a later age." Jülicher pronounces the words reported by Mark as "impossible in the mouth of Jesus." Compare with such infatuated views Neander's remarks: "There is here expressed "a moral necessity that those destitute of the right will (on which all depends, and without which the Divine drawing is in vain) could understand nothing of the things of the Lord which they saw and heard. So long as they remained as they were, the whole life of Christ, according to the same general law, remained to them an inexplicable parable" (p. 107 f.). Cf. the judicious remarks of Burkitt (p. 88) on the subject. Menzies refers to Rom. 11:8, comparing Mark 3:5. Salmond cites Matthew Henry: "A shell that keeps good

fruit for the diligent, but keeps it from the slothful." — J. Wesley: (a) would not, (b) could not.

In verse 12 Mark for "that" has

ἵνα, for which Matthew has

ὅτι. Bengel, nevertheless, would take

ἵνα also as consecutive ("so that"), referring to Gen. 22:14 in the LXX (cf. Luckock, ad loc., the "more merciful rendering"), according to which the people must be supposed to make their own heart fat. See also Sadler's note on Matthew's parallel. Gould thinks that "it is only ironically that God commands the prophet to harden the people by his pungent preaching." Plumptre had already written: "The acceptance of a foreseen result was in Hebrew forms of thought expressed as the working out of an intention" (cf. John 3:19). At the passage in Matthew he refers to John 12:40 and Acts 28:26. With this view agrees what Schanz says on the subject.

46 Mark 4: 25. — Cf. Matt. 13:12, Luke 8:18. Neander writes "Whosoever in reality has made to himself a living possession of the truths which he has heard, to him shall more be ever given. But he that has received it only as something dead and outward, shall lose even that which he seems to have, but really has not."

47 Mark 4: 26-29. — The same distinguished theologian last quoted writes on this passage: "Christ intended to impress upon the disciples that their duty was to preach the word (not to make it fruitful).... If they only preach the word and do nothing further to it, it will by its own efficacy produce in men a new creation which they must behold with amazement (verse 27). No words could have

more effectually... rebuked the tendency to ascribe too much to human agencies, and too little to the substantive power of the word itself" (p. 346 f. Cf. Trench, "Parables," p. 290).

48 Mark 4:33. — Cf. Mark 6:34, and see, of course, Matt. 13, etc., for such parables. Reference may be made here to the "Lectures on Matthew," p. 279 f.

Notes On Mark 5.

49 Deliverance from the world, writes Professor Kaftan, is the keynote of Paul's doctrine of Redemption ("Jesus and Paulus," pp. 50-54), a thought that seems being echoed in these days within the State Church of Prussia.

Amelioration of the world, whether of its moral state or of the material interests of mankind, which goes under the name of "Humanitarianism," and is, according to Cotter Morison and his school, to provide "the religion of the future," is a poor copy of what Christianity left to itself would effect. It is not, of course, to be denied that φιλανθρωπία was known to the pre-Christian moralists; it belongs to the vocabulary of Xenophon and Plato (cf. Acts 28:2). But, to his credit, Professor Percy Gardner in his book (p. 187) has questioned whether humanitarians from mere "love for man" accomplish what Christ did for man from love of God. See Titus 3:4, and cf. Acts 10:38, besides, for the Old Testament, Micah 6:8.

50 Mark 5: 2. — Out of a comparison of this passage and that in Luke, both speaking of a single demoniac, with the parallel account of Matthew, who tells us of two men so relieved by the Lord, one of the stock difficulties is raised which are trotted out generation after generation. Readers do not always notice that the dual is a

peculiarity of Matthew's Gospel: so with his blind men of Jericho and his colt and foal at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It arises from the Jewish standpoint of his Gospel, and may in some, at least, of the instances be explained by the corresponding need of what, according to the Old Testament, was accounted adequate testimony. Greenleaf, independently of this consideration, cites Le Clerc's maxim: "Qui plura narrat, pauciora complectitur; qui pauciora memorat, plura non negat." The American writer's book is interesting as having been dedicated to his brethren of the legal profession; his points are those which appeal to such as are expert in evidence. The work was written from the believing point of view. Cf. note on Mark 10:46.

51 Mark 5: 11. — Gadara (Edd. at v. 1 read Gerasenes instead of Gadarenes) was capital of the region in which it was situated, which may account for Mark's adoption of this name (see Thomson, "Land and Book," i. 367, ii. 338). It was a Grecian city (Josephus "Antiquities," xvii. 2, 4), which explains the presence of swine, not to be looked for amidst a Jewish population. The late Professor Huxley, in his magazine controversy with Mr. Gladstone, did his utmost to weaken the statement of Josephus 52 Mark 5: 19. — "The Lord." Luke 8:39 has ὁ Θέος. Cf. the "Introductory Lectures," p. 196. The only place where κύριος represents JESUS in the unquestioned part of Mark is 11:3, and then in Christ's own mouth, where see note, and compare that on Mark 16:19f. Some readers may be glad to be reminded here of John Newton's fine hymn (No. 92 in the Olney collection), which begins "Legion was my name by nature," and probably sprang from his special personal experience.

53 Mark 5: 23. — Cf. Luke 8:42, 49; also Matt. 9:18, where Jairus speaks of his daughter as already dead. See Trench, “Miracles,” pp. 192 f. “Jairus was perplexed whether to speak of her as departed or not.” The narrative is, as he says, “drawn from the life.”

54 Mark 5: 36. — Cf. Luke 8:50. “Only believe” carries faith in Himself, whose power (Mark 9:23) is ever involved in any question concerning it, and yet is but one element of it (cf. note on 8:4). But His Person as such is not so much in the forefront in Mark’s as it is in Luke’s Gospel. In Mark 9:42 the words εἰς ἐμέ are rejected by the editors, although well attested — by ABCcorr and later uncials, with 1, 69, Jerome’s Vulgate, Syrr., as against Cpm, D and Δ. See, further, note on verses 5 and 6 of the next chapter, and cf. Sir R. Anderson’s reply to Harnack’s “What is Christianity?” in “Christianized Rationalism” (Twentieth-Century Papers, 1903).

Notes On Mark 6.

55 Mark 6: 1. — “His own country.” See note 22; also Réville i. 390.

56 Mark 6: 2. — Some remarks have already been made in note 23 upon the “education” (speaking κατὰ ἄνθρωπον) of our blessed Lord. It is quite needless to consider whether He in youth ever entered the portals of such an academy as in the Talmud is called a yesheybah ()$ for the accuracy of the Jews in the taunt recorded in the passage of John cited in the earlier note may remain unquestioned. His “new doctrine” (Mark 1:27) was His prophetic word, as to which cf. Amos 7:14 f. It was creative, not created (Schlottmann, § 144; cf. John 7:46). Wernle, in “Beginnings of Christianity,” vol.

i., p. 36, describing the Lord as “Layman,” says that He “redeemed His listeners from the theologians” (p. 99). May we not add that such redemption is to be had in our day from the critics likewise? As Sir R. Anderson has said in a recent book, we do not propose to exchange thraldom to the one set of men for bondage to the other. Wernle’s book has been translated by one cleric and edited by another. “All laymen,” we are told by him, “accept the most obvious contradictions, and do not strive after any inner harmony” (p. 379), Surely those who live in the proverbial glass house might withhold their stones. “Laymen” are not so idiotic (see Greek of 1 Cor. 14:23). Wernle’s countryman Weizsäcker (“Textbibel”) has rendered ἰδιῶται by Uneingeweihte, “uninitiated” (shall we say in “mysteries”?). Cf. 2:14 there. The writer of that Epistle co-ordinates them with ἄπιστοι, Ungläubige, “unbelievers.” Lawyers, describing critics as “laymen,” will tell these that they are miserable judges of evidence, in statements that seem to conflict.

57 Mark 6: 3. — “The carpenter.” As to the humiliation of this pursuit, see “Ecclesiasticus,” xxxviii. 24-34, and cf. Delitzsch, “Jewish Artisan Life in the Time of Christ” (1902).

In Matt. 13:55 we have the “carpenter’s Son.” That is one of the variations from Mark’s record found in the first and third Evangelists which some critics idly imagine represent a later tendency to tone down Mark’s language, so as to divest the record of the Master of what was considered derogatory to it; whilst others represent Mark as “secondary,” because he does not speak of Christ as son of Joseph (Schmiedel, col. 1846). True, such is what “literary analysis” can accomplish.

How very appropriate to the second Gospel is the disclosure that the servant Son of God thus wrought with His own hands, sanctifying all human service, and doubtless maintaining a widowed mother!

It is on record that when the Emperor Julian ("the Apostate") was engaged in his last campaign, a Christian soldier was asked by a scornful officer, What was the Carpenter doing just then? The answer received was, "Making a coffin." The Emperor fell in that very battle (Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History," v. 8).

"The son of Mary" (cf. Luke 4:22, "the son of Joseph"). It is common for critics to allege against the virgin-birth of the Lord being historical the fact that Mark is silent about it. In this strain writes Menzies. Mary herself "knows nothing of His having been born in any extraordinary way." If, however, our second Gospel were the earliest, what could be more reasonable than to conclude that during the lifetime of the Lord's mother the circumstances of His birth Divine wisdom and propriety of human feeling combined to withhold? The perfection of the Bible does, of course, lie in its matchless fusion of Divine and human, a truism constantly urged by critics, but feebly apprehended in any helpful, fruitful way by themselves. The Tübingen scholar Baur, who adhered to Matthew's priority, used this verse in support of his idea that Mark did know of the virgin-birth! See, further, note in Farrar, "Life of Christ," p. 63.

As to there being no genealogy in Mark W. Kelly has written: "Who would ask the pedigree of a servant?" ("Exposition of John," p. 8), 58 Mark 6: 5, 6. — Faith in the Person of Christ attaches in the second

Gospel to His function as Prophet; in Luke's to, that of Priest; in Matthew to His being the King. With Mark's narrative cf. Peter's words in Acts 3:22.

A comparison of this place with Matt. 13:58 affords some critics another illustration of their fad that Matthew, or the "editor" of his Gospel, revised Mark's too naive statements!

A distinction may be made between the "supernatural" and the "miraculous" in respect of the efficacy of ordinary prayer (Drummond, p. 13 f.). Some answers to prayer, however, may fall under the miraculous.

On the general subject of miracles, see notes 27, 54 above.

Schmiedel's discrimination of certain passages of Mark which for him constitute the "foundation pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus" (cols. 1881-1883 of his article in "Biblical Encyclopaedia"), Fairbairn well characterises as an illusion that mistakes critical ingenuity for historical science ("Philosophy of the Christian Religion," p. 304).

With reference to the passage under consideration, Bousset (p. 56; E.T., p. 49) makes the Lord's being unable all a matter cognizable by human psychology. For the believer it suffices to know the method of the "psychology" which is Divine. Men may have pressure put on them to come within the range of spiritual blessing (Matt. 20:17-19), but faith is a gracious gift, in no way the result of compulsion. In the first Gospel (Matt. 11:12) force is exerted by men themselves, who seek God with all their heart (Deut. 4:29). According to Matt. 22:11, 12, a man already in the presence of the Host is found not to have accepted that vesture which,

according to the custom of ancient princes, was offered by them to their guests (cf. Phil. 3:12).

One may be sure that Richard Hooker did not foresee the use which would be made in our day of his position in the “Ecclesiastical Polity” that God is Himself governed by His own laws.

59 Mark 6:8. — “No money in their belt.” Dr. R. F. Horton, according to his “Revelation and the Bible” (p. 367), has allowed himself to be strangely misinformed as to the practice of Christians whom he describes as “the most emphatic in maintaining the Divine infallibility of the Bible.” He alleges that they “reject the inference of St. Paul in favour of paid ministry.” He would be right if by “paid” he merely meant stipulated remuneration, which is unknown in the community amongst whom W. Kelly laboured. It contains most of the few who really act upon the precepts of Scripture bearing on hired ministry (1 Cor. 9:9, etc.). Material support of ministry exercised in faith is a Divine obligation which they ever recognise.

60 Mark 6:14. — “The King.” Herod’s title was “Tetrarch,” strictly not “King.” Dr. A. B. Bruce, on Matt. 14:9, says that “it was natural for Mark,” writing for Romans, “to use this title, as it was applied freely in Rome to all Eastern rulers” (Cf. Réville, i. 236; and Farrar, “Life of Christ,” p. 305, where it is described as a “courtesy title”).

60a Mark 6:15. - With the Greek of this verse, cf. end of Judges 16:11, in LXX, “a man like any other ordinary man.” Wellhausen’s “scarcely Greek” (ad loc.) is poor criticism (cf. notes 1, 78).

61 Mark 6: 20. — Field (“Notes on the Translation of the New Testament,” p. 29 f.) inclined to the reading ἐποίει,

“did” (many things). “Herod,” he remarks, did all but the vital thing — “dismissing his wife.”

62 Mark 6: 21. — Wellhausen (ad loc.) relies on the statement of Josephus that the Baptist was executed at Machaerus, on the other side of the Jordan. Even so, there was nothing to prevent the Tetrarch’s summoning his Galilean courtiers thence. We meet with scribes and Pharisees “from Jerusalem” among Christ’s audience in Galilee or Perea; so in the first verse of the next chapter (cf. Luke 13:31-34). According to the critic’s view, such ministry must have been exercised in the very neighbourhood of the metropolis. From exaggeration in idea of “local colouring,” Wellhausen would place the scene of verse 27 here in Galilee (“into the sea”), and not Judea (cf. Burkitt, p. 61).

63 Mark 6: 35. — “Late in the day” i.e., between three and six p.m., which time already the French still describe as soir, the first of the Jewish two evenings. In verse 47 we have the second evening (six o’clock to dusk).

64 Mark 6: 40. — The description here is explained by Luke 9:14. The people were arranged as one hundred in front and fifty deep.

65 Mark 6: 45. — Wellhausen here avails himself of an old difficulty created by comparison of John 6:17 with Mark’s statement. In Mark we find πρός, “Bethsaida”; in John εἰς, “Capernaum.” Indeed, εἰς τὸ πέραν, which is sufficiently accredited by the textual evidence (its omission in the Sinaitic Syrian version is insignificant), exhibits the difference of prepositions involved. They occur together again in 11:1, where εἰς stands for the direction taken;

πρός for the point arrived at or actually reached (cf. the quotation in Luke 4:26). There is no inconsistency, nor "conversion of B. into C.," as Wellhausen puts it. Trench ("Miracles," p. 296) says: "This Bethsaida (cf. John 1:44) lay on the west side of the lake, in the same direction as Capernaum, and near to it." Wellhausen himself has "not far from Capernaum."

65a Mark 6: 52. —

ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄρτοις should not be rendered by concerning the loaves, as R.V., or about, etc., as in the "Workers' New Testament," but by through, etc., as Wellhausen. The loaves supplied the ground of the disciple's misapprehension (cf. ἐπι τῳ ὀνόματι μου in Mark 9:37, Mark 13:6).

Notes On Mark 7.

66 Mark 7: 1-23. — Wernle here asks: "Why does this controversy about clean and unclean, detached from all other controversies, appear amidst stories about meals?" It is a signal instance of Mark's method, not that of Matthew or Luke, with whom the arrangement is dispensational and moral respectively, of narrating incidents as they actually happened. How could it have anything to do with a device on the Evangelist's part to connect it, for dramatic effect, as this critic suggests (p. 66), with the interview between Jesus and the heathen woman?

67 Mark 7: 3. — The usage explaining the word

πυγμῃ may be found in Edersheim, "The Temple, its Ministry," etc., p. 239.

68 Mark 7: 6. — "Hypocrites." The strong language of the Lord which enters into the narratives of both Mark

and Matthew in other connections matches whatever can be alleged by Burkitt (p. 227 f.) and others of a more exasperating tone in any of the Johannine discourses.

69 Mark 7: 13. — “The word of God.” From the time of the Reformation much has been written as to the connection of this phrase with Scripture, some holding that the two terms are now co-extensive, whilst others maintain the ancient distinction between “the word” as oral and as written. Happily, in this country “the judicious Hooker” wrote, now three hundred years ago, that “we have no word of God but the Scripture.” He opposed the Puritans’ idea that mere reading of Scripture cannot be effectual (“Ecclesiastical Polity,” v. 21, 1, 2).

This standard Anglican writer has expressed himself as follows on the subject of interpretation: “I hold it for a most infallible rule in exposition of sacred Scripture that when a literal construction will stand, the farthest from the letter is commonly the worst” (cf. notes 88, 134). There is, of course, a logical connection between inspiration (note 13) and interpretation.

It is no doubt correct that, as A. B. Davidson has said for the Old Testament (Hastings, vol. iv., p. 127), “the word” stands for the spiritual meaning of the “words” (see John 8:43, and cf. John 17:8, 14). It is, however, an exaggeration on the part of Farrar (“The Bible,” etc., p. 134 f.; cf. Beet, “Manual of Theology,” p. 65) to represent that “nowhere in the New Testament is the Old Testament called the word of God” — that this phrase is used of Christ alone. That “the word of God” is used in the New Testament chiefly of the contemporary oral word, as in Mark 2:2 (Cf. 2 Tim. 4:2) and Heb. 13:7,

is unquestionable. But even if such a passage as Heb. 4:12 could be shown not to refer to Scripture, it seems certain that Mark 7:13 distinguishes “the word of God” from aught oral. Cf. “it is written in your law” this last word, we know, applies in the New Testament, not only to the Pentateuch, but to the Psalms (John 10:34). As for the New Testament, when Timothy was enjoined to “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2), this precept was given in close connection with what the Apostle says of the Scriptures (end of chapter 3 — i.e., in the same context), so that the material of the written word can scarcely be excluded from the preaching. Professor Theodor Zahn, in a sermon on James 1:16 ff., has said: “When we talk of the word of God, we first think of the Bible, the word of God reduced to writing for His community (Church). But James is not speaking of the Bible.... It is possible to honour the Bible, and not to hear thus the voice of God. “

Moreover, God does of course speak to His creatures otherwise than by Scripture. We have, however, to be guided by intimations on the subject (as in the case of the raising up of Cyrus), not by the influence of great names, as Luther (Dorner, “History of Protestant Theology,” p. 244). Note here the extravagance of Zwingli: “He who is born of the Spirit requires a book no longer” (Dorner, i. 290 f.; cf. Barclay’s “Apology for the Quakers”). It is through the word that any are so born, so that it is the vital principle (which needs sustaining), if we listen to Apostles (1 Peter 1:23); and those not of God are characterised by ears closed to the inspired writers (1 John 4:6).

A further momentous question is the interrelation of the Bible and the Church. And, first, does the Church’s

“sanction” impart to the Scriptures their authority? The Church has not formed the Bible, but it was through Christ’s word which we have in the Bible that the Church was “gathered”..... “If the Bible,” writes Fairbairn, “is made to depend on the Church, is it not evident that it is not the Bible conceived as a revelation? What the canonizing process produced was not a revelation, but a book.” And again: “Hebrews was precisely as much inspired, and possessed exactly as much authority, before as after its incorporation in the Canon,” whilst “the continuance of the Spirit is the source of the authority of the word of the living God” (“Christ in Modern Thought,” p. 505 ff.). Dorner had already written that the Bible is itself a revelation, “not merely the record of a revelation previously given” (“History of Protestant Theology,” ii. 128).

Bishop Gore has written that, for his school, “it becomes more and more difficult to believe in the Bible without believing in the Church” (“Lux Mundi,” p. 248; cf. his sermon in 1900 at Westminster Abbey for the British and Foreign Bible Society), which means, doubtless, as Fairbairn puts it, that “as the supremacy of the Bible is weakened, the position of the Church is strengthened.” If men thus tell us that our faith must be rooted in the Church’s testimony, we need only reply by inquiring, How are we to know that “the Church” is to be trusted? Any rejoinder that the Church rests on the authority of the Bible would he manifest reasoning in a circle.

For the views of such as Dr. James Martineau on Scripture as authority, reference might be made to his “Seat of Authority,” book ii., chapter ii. The Deism which passed from this country to Germany, to beget there the Rationalism of the eighteenth century (see Cheyne,

“Founders of Criticism”), returned hither in the nineteenth in the form of “Higher Criticism,” now running its course; with such a movement Unitarians naturally are in sympathy. They claim as virtual adherents the German leaders of this unholy cause, who, as their comrades in Great Britain, remain in outward conformity to officially orthodox Churches.

The “critics” at present in vogue find no proper place in their vocabulary for Paul’s “in part” (1 Cor. 13:9). With such limitations as they themselves seek to impose, there can be no true progress, no fully scientific because no sufficient accuracy (cf. Sir Wm. Ramsay in the Expositor, December, 1906). Many of them, like souls of old, will not “enter in,” nor allow others to do so who lean upon them.

For Roman Catholic treatment of Tradition, see Schanz, “A Christian Apology,” ii., ch. xi.

70 Mark 7: 15. - The Lord here sets aside Mark 11:43; so the critics wax bold with such an example! It is as with a Swiss hunter who scales an Alpine crag, his child looking on. Let the latter try the same experiment, and what will be the result? There is as little reasonableness in the one process as the other.

71 Mark 7: 18-23. — Use is made of this passage in Sanday’s “Lectures on Inspiration,” p. 410.

72 Mark 7:24-30. Wernle (“Sources,” p. 60) speaks of fellow-investigators having “split their heads” over the cause of the Lord’s going into the region of Tyre and returning to the Sea of Galilee by, way of Sidon (see critical note for verse 31), but spares himself by the “simple” suggestion that the Evangelist, with the record of this interview before him, found it convenient to

locate the Lord on heathen ground, and did so accordingly! Such is the “critical” intelligence which goes towards the making of a modern professor!

73 Mark 7:26. — As to the respective use made of Hebrew, of Aramaic, and of Greek at that period, see Schürer, § 22 f.

74 Mark 7: 27. — Some, as Pfleiderer, contrast the mainly Jewish outlook of Christ’s ministry with Paul’s “cosmopolitan” view. This can only be rightly understood by reference to Matthew’s Gospel, and such helps as the “Lectures” of W. Kelly upon it. Professor Julius Kaftan is one of the few German writers on the subject whose bearings are satisfactory. The Apostle, as he says in a recent pamphlet, did but follow his Master’s policy, for him, too, it was ever to the Jew first. Moreover, Kaftan points out how, according to the first, especially Jewish, Gospel, one finds the Lord incurring opposition from the hints He threw out of coming Gentile blessing; and Pfleiderer’s extreme form of this antithesis completely breaks down when we reach the light of the third Gospel. It is true that the Lord’s own “mission” was to Israel alone (Matt. 15:24).

75 Mark 7: 31. — See critical note. W. M. Thomson (“The Land and the Book,” iii. 481) explains as follows: “He went northward, then eastward, and probably crossed the Jordan at Dan, and came through the region east of that river until He reached the shores of the Lake of Tiberias.” Cf. Burkitt, p. 92, and the route map there. The Cambridge professor resists the temptation to follow Wellhausen’s conjectural emendation of Sidon into Bethsaida from supposing that Mark had Saidan before him, which he took for Sidon.

Notes On Mark 8.

76 Mark 8:1-9. - Cf, parallel in Matthew. Having had in chapter 6 the record of the feeding of five thousand men, we here meet with the description of another like work of power in behalf of four thousand persons. This time it is not JESUS in the character of Messiah among Israelites as such. The significance of numbers in Scripture is allowed more or less by even German writers (as Ewald); it is illustrated here by the difference between seven baskets as compared with twelve in the previous case, appropriate in a Jewish connection. Chapter 6 sets before us that which was dispensational; in chapter 8 we find the Lord acting as "Creator and Preserver of all mankind." This was seen of old by Hilary amongst others (see Trench).

Modern critics, who never rest on their oars in the quest of novelties, find a "doublet" here. Menzies, amongst British writers, treats the two accounts as only different versions of the same incident. As in most other questions of criticism, our scholars, for the most part, are content to echo the Germans. Wernle ("Sources," p. 66) offers the hypothesis that Mark "was told something of the kind twice over," and will have it that "the similarity of the two accounts is disguised by the interposition of other stories." B. Weiss, adhering to the distinction between them — which it requires only "eyes to see" (see below, note 79) — supposes that there were divergencies in the "Petrine tradition." What a balanced English writer of the first rank says on the subject may be seen by consulting Sanday ("Outlines," p. 123).

77 Mark 8: 10. - Dalmanutha: mentioned here alone in the Gospels. Its site being unknown, the place is marked

conjecturally in Perthes' Gotha map between Capernaum and Magdala.

78 Mark 8:14-16. — Wellhausen, in loc., makes the odd confession: "I do not know whether εἰ μὴ ἕνα ἄρτον οὐκ is Greek." It is perfectly good Greek, although of the Hellenistic type. This Semitic scholar is not as much at home in the New Testament Greek as in the Old Testament Hebrew.

79 Mark 8: 19 f. — The baskets in the earlier miracle were κόφινοι (hand-baskets); in the second, σπυρίδες (hampers). This closely accurate distinction has been often remarked, as by E. J. Holtzmann ("Manual Commentary," p. 191). Some have supposed that it militates against the theory of essentially oral tradition (Burkitt, p. 35).

80 Mark 8: 23. — Why "out of the village"? Trench answers, that the man might be more receptive of deep and lasting impressions ("Miracles," p. 376). For Bethsaida being the place, Greenleaf compares Matt. 11:21.

81 Mark 8: 27-30. — Cf., of course, parallels in Matt. 16 and Luke 9. This passage has been somewhat anticipated in note 30.

82 Mark 8: 29. — The literature now most in vogue ignores the impressions which must have been left on those disciples who had come to Christ in the first instance through John, by his testimony to Messiah (John 1:34-51). Difference of judgment as to the historical value of the fourth Gospel becomes vital. How is one to understand their alacrity in Mark 1:16-20, which implies belief in some human testimony, but for John's narrative? That belief has now ripened into

conviction, issuing in confession, which is Divine (Schlottmann, p. 111).

Martineau (most original of the English school) held that the Lord never Himself claimed to be Messiah; that it was “a position made for Him and palmed upon Him by His followers” (“Seat of Authority,” p. 331 f.). Réville calls this “proving too much” (ii. 185). Harnack has sense enough to abstain from this negation (“What is Christianity?” p. 133); for the Berlin professor the entry into Jerusalem is decisive.

83 Mark 8: 30. — Another novelty, for which the author, however, has not succeeded in gaining much acceptance, is that of Wrede (“The Messiah Secret,” p. 114), that the Lord kept secret His Messianic claim as long as He was upon earth; that it began to be realised only after His resurrection (Acts 2:30). As to this, any able to use it might consult the book of J. Weiss (p. 45).

The sceptical fads do not stop there. H. J. Holtzmann (on Mark 2:18) finds another “I” besides “the proper I,” because the Lord uses the third person. So Wellhausen (Introduction, p. 97). It is easy to understand the changed form of speech in the light of the transition from “the Christ” to the “Son of man,” especially as Sufferer (Mark 9:31, Mark 10:33), explained in these Lectures. Cf. those on Matthew, pp. 352, 443.

84 Mark 8:34. — Adeney well notes on

εἴ τις θέλει, κ.τ.λ., that the renunciation Christ looks for is not merely that of a besetting sin, but of self.

85 Mark 8: 35. — “For My sake and the Gospel’s” (Cf. Mark 10: 29). It is only in this Gospel we find the words italicised. They illustrate Mark’s point of view, in which

service is dominant. Not entering into this, Carpenter (p. 186) and Wellhausen can only suggest the influence of Pauline ideas on the form ultimately taken by Marks Gospel. The temptation to assimilate the other accounts seems not to have asserted itself in respect of these words. — As to alleged absence of claims of the SON from the Synoptic Gospels, see Mason, Cambridge Essays, p. 443.

86 Mark 8: 38. — Farrar shows from this that "Son of man" was not a synonym of "Messiah" ("Life of Christ," p. 333). But he seems not to have apprehended its full significance.

87 Ibid. — None of Christ's disciples are to be ashamed of His words — e.g., in Mark 9:48, Mark 13:32. All are exhorted by one of His Apostles to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3), without regard to such restraint as suggested by Bishop Moorhouse's "self-appointed champions of the faith" ("The Teaching of Christ"). Those so criticized may take courage from 1 Cor. 16:15: ἔταξαν ἑαυτούς ("consecrated themselves"). Some of the official leaders act a very unworthy part at the present day.

As to exaltation of the Son of man, cf. 13:26, 14:62.

Notes On Mark 9.

88 Mark 9:1. — "Come in power." The Greek form (

ἐληλυθῦιαν) expresses "come in its completeness" as the end of a gradual process (Plumptre).

Trench ("Studies in the Gospels," pp. 185ff.) rightly rejects the idea that Pentecost was the fulfilment of these words. But he falls short of the truth when he sees the fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. J. Scott

Russell's views). Even so, partial fulfilment, as he puts it, is "a rehearsal of the final." Pentecost in Acts 2 was that. As to the same writer's connection of Matt. 24:34 with the complete fulfilment, see notes below on Mark 13:30. Here, as there, we have illustration of an Apostolic principle as to ἰδία ἐπίλυσις (2 Peter 1:20).

That the first Christians looked for the return of the Lord in their lifetime, as Bishop Robertson says in his Bampton Lectures, one may suppose to have been the case previously, to the fall of Jerusalem. That event, being unattended by His παρουσία, must have widened their understanding of His words.

Dr. Horton, on the same page of his "Revelation and the Bible" where already an error of his has been pointed out (note 59), goes wrong with Alford over Paul's words in 1 Thess. 4:15. Neither the elastic use of the Greek present participles there nor the English idiom of the common translation requires our understanding the Apostle to say that he would be one of those alive at the time of the παρουσία. The form of words, it is certain, may be equivalent to "those of us who," etc. So Theodoret, Chrysostom, Bengel, Dean Vaughan, and others (cf. Greek at Heb. 10:39). Moreover, the Apostle employs the Old Testament formula: he was speaking ἐν κυρίῳ - i.e., oracularly. It was of God, for the benefit of believers throughout the dispensation, that he expressed thus vaguely the "blessed hope" of that event. See, further, note 134.

89 Mark 9: 5. — Dalman traces all three designations of Rabbi (Mark), Lord (Matthew), and Master (Luke), to the Aramaic equivalent preserved by Mark (cf. note 7).

90 Mark 9: 7. — “Beloved Son.” Cf. Mark 1:11 and 2 Peter 1:17; so in Matt. 17:5, but in Luke 9:35 the critical reading is “chosen,” which is very much the equivalent of ἀγαπητός in Semitic languages; whilst in Hellenistic Greek it was a synonym of μονογενής - only-begotten. In Luke’s account (Luke 3:22) of the baptism of JESUS he uses ἀγαπητός, there unchallenged.

91 Mark 9: 10. — With the Pharisees’ idea of resurrection of the dead the disciples were familiar, but resurrection from among the dead, or first resurrection, of which the Lord was Himself to be the “first-fruits” (1 Cor. 15:20), was an enigma. The Authorised Version did not bring out the force in this connection of the preposition ἐκ.

92 Mark 9:13. — According to Matthew’s parallel, the Lord here made use of Mal. 4:5, as well as of Mal. 3:1 in Matt. 2:10 (cf. Mark 1:2); whilst the Baptist, according to John 1:23, quoted Isa. 40:3, to which alone he appeals. Isaiah set forth the witness of the forerunner.

92a Mark 9: 24. — For other than personal faith inducing grace, cf. Luke 5:20.

93 Mark 9:31. — The

ἄνθρωποι into whose hands the Lord was to be betrayed were Gentiles. It is impossible to get a satisfactory explanation of the title “Son of man” in a passage like this from the collocation of Son of man and men as treated from the point of view now popular. The Lord was rejected (1) as Christ by the Jews; (2) as Son of man by the Gentiles as well. Under such circumstances, the modern conception of Him as ideal is feeble in the extreme (see notes 30, 35).

94 Mark 9:37. — The language here resembles that of John's Gospel (Sir A. F. Hort).

95 Mark 9:38-42. — There is no such break in the connection between verses 37 and 42 as Carpenter supposes (pp. 187, 202). Cf. verses 34 and 38, which describe the same spirit, if from different points of view.

96 Mark 9:40. — Here we have forbearance commended, in contrast with a sectarian party spirit; whilst Matt. 12:30 speaks of latitudinarianism as affecting Christ personally. (Renan supposed the passages to be contradictory.) The first Evangelist supplies the principle applicable to ourselves, Mark that applicable to others. Cf. Epistles 1 and 2 of John. Neutrality here means aid; indifference, in Matthew's Gospel, hostility to Christ.

97 Mark 9:41. — We have here JESUS speaking of Himself as "the Christ." Cf. note 82.

98 Mark 9:42. — "In Me." See critical note. The same words in Matt. 18:6 are unquestioned. Cf. note 54, and also Ewald, "Theology of the Old and the New Testament," p. 275 f. It is noticeable that in recording this utterance of the Lord each of the three Synoptists uses a distinct expression for "it were better," etc.: Mark, καλὸν... μᾶλλον; Matt. 18:6, συμφέρει; Luke 17:2, λυσιτελεῖ.

99 Mark 9:43 ff. — " Enter into." See Dalman, p. 95, on this terminology.

100 Mark 9:48. — "Worm." See Isa. 66: 24. It is, of course, metaphorical (Beet, "The Last Things," p. 180 f.). As to recognition by the Pharisees of endless

punishment, see Schürer, § 26, or Josephus, Bell. Jud. ii. 8, 14.

101 Mark 9:49. — Cf. Keble's lines:

"Salted with fire they seem to show

How spirit lost in endless woe

May undecaying live.... "

Mason remarks: "When our Lord says their worm... the thought is rather that of unintermittency than that of interminableness" (" The Faith of the Gospel," p. 418 f.).

101a Cf. Col. 4:6. On germs in Mark of Pauline teaching, see B. Weiss, "Theology of the New Testament," § 63 f., etc., and Cf; note 122.

Notes On Mark 10.

102 Mark 10:1. — As to the route taken, see Burkitt, p. 96, note.

103 Mark 10:2. — Bennett on the Mishna (p. 72 1.) refers to the Talmudical treatise Gittin (4:8, 8:5, 8), for loose views of the Rabbins on the subject of divorce, akin to those prevalent in some American States.

104 Mark 10:11, 12. — Wellhausen, following D and Syrsin, would read "put away by," as the common reading would violate the Jewish, but be in keeping with Greek and Roman law, conceived to be familiar to Mark's first readers (cf. Wernle, p. 47; Bousset, p. 39). But Burkitt (p. 100 f.) is surely right in seeing a reference to the wanton ways of Salome (Josephus "Antiquities," xv. 7, 10) and Herodias. Greenleaf, too, supposes a natural allusion to an existing legal custom.

Cf. 1 Cor. 7:13 for the effect of adoption of Christianity on marital relations.

105 Mark 10:15. - “Receive the kingdom.” See Dalman, p. 91; and note above On 9:47. Cf. Matt. 10:30, and next note, besides that on verse 30.

106 Mark 10:17. “Inherit life eternal.” Inherit stands for “take possession of,” as in Matt. 25:34 (Dalman). So in Luke 18:18. In the Synoptic Gospels it is regarded as in reserve; so in Paul’s Epistles. Luke 18:22 tells us that the young man was to have treasure in heaven. Cf. Col. 3:3.

Some have supposed that there is a difference between “life” and “life eternal,” but this is a mistake. See Matt. 19:16, 17, and Dalman, who shows that in the early and in part contemporary Jewish literature “life” without qualification stands for “life eternal.” Outside the Bible (Ps. 133:3 and Dan. 12:2) we meet with the expression in the apocryphal Psalm of Solomon (3:16), 2 Maccabees (vii. 9), and the Book of Enoch (xxxvii. 4), as also in the Aramaic paraphrases (“Targums”) used in the synagogues, as at Lev. 18:5, Deut. 33:6. See, further, note 110.

107 Mark 10: 18. — Much use has been made of this verse by those interested in obtaining evidence for the notion that, in respect of the Deity of the Saviour, as of much else, there are layers of narrative, in the earliest of which there is no recognition of aught beyond simple humanity. Christ here seems to be taking the position predicted of Him in Ps. 16:2. The emphasis is not on “Me,” but on “good” (Swete). Nothing further need be added to the words of the lecturer here, although reference may be made to his “Lectures on Matthew” (p.

415 f.) for remarks on “goodness” in the parallel passage there; also to “Introductory Lectures,” p. 358 f. One may readily see in either passage an intended appeal to the man’s sanctified reason. It was a question to be answered by himself. For the use made by Bishop Chase, after Germans (cf. Wernle, p. 42; Bousset, p. 202, E.T.), of the Matthew passage, as if it betrayed the moulding influence of the editor’s hand, see Burkitt, p. 17 f., and cf. notes 57, 59 above.

108 Mark 10: 22. — Wellhausen criticizes Mark’s

ἦν γαρ ἔχων, κ.τ.λ., as “scarcely Greek.” It is, of course, for εἶχε, κ.τ.λ., (“he was in possession of many estates”). This use of εἰμί with the participle is very frequent in the best Greek writers (see Blass, §62), and is often noticeable in the sections of Luke’s Gospel peculiar to that Evangelist. See, again, note 1.

109 Mark 10:29. — Cf. Mark 8:35.

110 Mark 10:30. — “In the coming age life eternal.” For the Jew all blessing is connected with this earth, and expressly in connection with Messiah’s reign. The Synoptic Gospels do not go beyond the Old Testament use of the phrase “life eternal” (note 106). In general, says Dalman, “the life of the world to come took the place of eternal life” (cf. Nicene Creed). It is nowhere, however, regarded as lapsing when the eternal state sets in, as some in recent years have supposed. The fourth Gospel regards the title to it as indefeasible (Mark 10:28 f.).

111 Mark 10:46-52. — Matthew speaks of two blind men relieved by JESUS as He went out of Jericho; Mark of one only, healed as He was going out from the town; Luke also of one only, healed as the Lord was near to the

place (so Kelly — cf. “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 440 — after Grotius). Greswell supposed that one was healed as Jesus entered the town (Luke); the other as He left it (Mark). See his “Dissertations,” vol. ii., p. 569. Greenleaf says that the Lord may be regarded as “occasionally going out of Jericho, in which city He had made some abode” (cf. 6:1-8, 22:10, 40, with 11:19), and that it was as He thus was returning into the town (Luke 18:35) that the miracle as described by Luke was wrought. He again refers to Le Clerc’s maxim, quoted above at v. 2. Gloag thinks that the miracle was performed on the two simultaneously.

112 Mark 10:47. — As to the form “Nazarean,” see “Exposition of John,” p. 375, note.

Notes On Mark 11.

113 Mark 11:1. — On the use of the prepositions here, see note 65.

114 Mark 11:3. — Field (“Notes,” p. 34) supports the view taken by the lecturer that τις, not κύριος, is nominative to ἀποστέλλει - i.e., the man is to send them back, not Jesus Christ’s ὁ κύριος is manifestly used of Himself. In verse 9 the anarthrous name is for Jehovah. Cf. note 52.

115 Mark 11:7. — This is another case in which Matthew has two for the other Evangelists’ one. Réville (ii. 267) refers to the parallelism in Zech. 9:9. which he supposes Matthew was “misled.” Yet that Evangelist is all the time supposed to be describing what he himself witnessed (see note 50). Origen (speaking of it as the received interpretation), Athanasius, and Augustine understand the foal to stand for the Jew, the colt for the

Gentile, use being made also of Mark's "two roads" (verse 4). Cf. Ambrose, that one disciple was sent as if to the circumcision, the other to the uncircumcision (Isaac Williams, ii., p. 340 ff.).

116 Mark 11:12-14 (and Mark 11:20-24). — Wellhausen in loc. indulges in another of his characteristic sneers. He may never have so much as heard of the standard English work on the miracles by Trench, from which the following is an extract: The fig-tree "was punished not for being without fruit, but for proclaiming by the voice of those leaves that it had fruit; not for being barren, but for being false; and this was the guilt of Israel, so much deeper than the guilt of the nations." Trench aptly refers to Gen. 3:7, Hosea 14:8, Rom. 2:3, 17-27, Rom. 10:3, 4, 21, Rom. 11:7-10. There should be no excuse whatever afforded to writers such as Professor Carpenter for saying of this incident that it is "a stumbling-block to apologists for the Gospel narratives" (p. 32). He, amongst others, might with advantage consult Mr. Kelly's "Lectures on Matthew," p. 443; "Introductory Lectures," p. 88f.; or Mr. Darby's "Irrationalism of Infidelity," p. 181 of reissue.

Surely Principal Fairbairn goes too far in saying that here was something in nature which surprised Christ as indicative of His limited knowledge ("Christ in Modern Thought," p. 353 note). The surprise is of the same category as that which He experienced in connection with unbelief in Israel.

117 Mark 11:15-18. — Cf. John 2:14 ff. Farrar says rightly that it is "impossible to believe that the narratives refer to the same event." Miss Bramston (perhaps echoing Wright or others) says that "it is

improbable that He did it twice," but why is not stated ("Sunrise of Revelation").

118 Mark 11: 20. — Schmiedel treats this as contradicting Matt. 21:19. But in Mark it is only said that the Lord "saw," etc. Anyhow, it is a case of merging by Matthew of two days' events into one, as explained by the lecturer.

119 Mark 11: 22. — "Have faith in [of] God," or Divine faith. See note 54, and cf. the Pauline phrase "righteousness of God."

120 Mark 11:25. — Note here some of the vocabulary of the forms of prayer recorded in Matt. 6 and Luke 11, which is regarded by all as unquestionably spoken by the "historical Jesus," and for F. W. Newman constituted the one basis of His doctrine (note 3). Yet Mark does not include it in his narrative. It is clear that he knew of the prayer, whether he was acquainted with the raising of Lazarus or not (note 5).

Notes On Mark 12.

121 Mark 12: 1-11. — This is the passage taken by Dr. Abbott in comparison with Matt. 21:33-44, Luke 20:9-18, to illustrate the theory of the composition of the Gospels put forth by him in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" (see note 11). All the words in the Greek of Mark, save four, he shows, are common to Matthew's and Luke's parallels. The difficulty any mere "compiler" would have had is set forth without any exaggeration.

122 Mark 12: 8. — It is common, with regard to the question of probation, either (1) to uphold the idea that Christians are under the law, or (2) to deny man's complete moral ruin before God, in either alternative

impairing Pauline doctrine (Gal. 5:18, Rom. 6:14, Rom. 7:18, Rom. 8:8). The alleged antithesis between the Synoptic reaching of the Lord on this subject and that of the Apostle is one of the novelties of "modern thought" with which the present generation is harassed. Anyone may understand that the full truth as to human depravity must have become clearer after the Crucifixion; yet the germs of Paul's doctrine, like that of John (John 3), are to be found in Mark 10:15, the truth of which Matthew's στράφητε (Matt. 18:3) does but emphasize.

123 Mark 12: 28-34. — The words quoted by the Lord in verse 29 f. are those of the Shema, which it was the duty of males to repeat morning and evening. On the use made by Christ of the Hebrew, Farrar ("Life of Christ," p. 69) writes: "Jesus was acquainted with it, for some of His Scriptural quotations directly refer to the Hebrew original."

124: Mark 12: 35-37. — We are here told that David himself, and that by inspiration (for the Greek, cf. Rev. 1:10), said that which modern critics deny to him as his words. The old Jewish idea of the authorship of Ps. 110 was that, in David's old age, when he could no longer go out to battle, a Court poet composed it in order to console him. But the Evangelist here tells us that the Lord cited the Psalm definitely as David's own. Not content with the denial of such authorship, some writers go on to represent that Christ here disavowed His being Himself "Son of David" Réville i., p. 47 note, 303 f., 381; Bousset, p. 182). Compare what Professor Sanday says on this subject (article "Son of God," p. 573 in Hastings); Neander (p. 402) "to oppose a one-sided adherence to the one at the expense of the other"; and, for the

relation of sonship of God to the Lord's Messianic claims, the article in Hastings just referred to, p. 576.

125 Mark 12: 40. — As to the result of comparing Mark's record with that of Matthew (23:5), see note 7.

Notes On Mark 13.

126 This chapter sets before us Mark's form of the Apocalypse on Mount Olivet, which brings under consideration the general question of prophecy as such. In this Gospel we have the Lord presented as "Prophet," in which character it may be expected that He would engage in prediction. At the present day this supernatural element is but feebly confessed. Scholars in general incline to content themselves with searching for some historical background to each prediction, to which the application of the particular prophecy is then limited. Consequently, a persistent effort is regularly made to establish the fulfilment already of each prediction, so that the margin of unfulfilled prophecy becomes in men's hands rapidly narrower. That which cannot be so explained is deemed "ideal." The writers who favour this treatment of Scripture have themselves to assume the role of prophets. Thus Professor Driver in his popular Looks on Isaiah and Jeremiah, where we are told that there are predictions which never will be fulfilled. But it is impossible for such writers to establish that conditions which seem to have passed away can never reappear. If we are to attach such importance to individual background, let us not forget the principle long ago stated by a master in this department, that history tends to repeat itself (Thucydides) — a useful consideration when studying the pregnant utterances of our Lord recorded in this chapter. Too many now have

the “ideal” on the brain; they need themselves to be more practical.

All Scriptural prophecy looks on to the time when “the kingdom of God and the authority of Christ is come” (Rev. 11:15 -12:10). For the interpretation of each several prophecy an Apostolic principle serves us: the scope of “no prophecy of Scripture is had from its own (particular) interpretation” (2 Peter 1:20). Cf. “Irrationalism of Infidelity,” p. 251 of reissue; also the “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 377 f., to which frequent reference has been made in these notes.

Because of the difficulty modern professors have in distinguishing in the prophecy before us the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus from analogous events to take place in connection with Christ’s second coming, it is useless for expositors of Scripture to allege confusion in the Evangelists’ minds or misreporting on their part of what the Lord said on this occasion. One need say nothing here upon such palpable irreverence. The fault lies with moderns in their “critical” presuppositions, as well as in superficial study of the Old Testament and depreciation of the Jew. The gravity of the sins of that people and consequent national judgment are to be overcome by the future blessing assured to them in their Scriptures. Men shrink from believing that aught of the kind must be attended by preliminary judgments, but this remains as true as ever it was. The “germinant” nature of prophecy, which Bacon wrote of three hundred years ago, is true today, and will remain so (Cf. “Irrationalism of Infidelity,” p. 255 f., 270).

Some particular points will be dealt with in the order in which they arise in the chapter, but the reader is expected first carefully to weigh the lecturer's own remarks.

127 Mark 13: 2. — From the vicious standpoint of critics explained in the last preceding note Wernle would date the publication of this Gospel after the year 70 (see note 3), because of the destruction of the Temple being placed in the forefront of the discourse — that is, anything like veritable prediction is denied to our Lord as to mere men like Isaiah; simply human foresight at its best (that in His case likewise faulty!) is allowed.

128 Mark 13: 8. — For "throes" here, cf. Hosea 13:13.

129 Mark 13: 10. — "The Gospel." As to supposed reflex influence of the theological language of the early Church on the Synoptic vocabulary, see Sanday, "Son of God," in Hastings, p. 573.

120 Mark 13: 11. — In this early Synoptic Gospel we meet already with the promise of the Spirit in the Johannine sense (cf. note 94).

131 Mark 13: 14. — The words of this verse (cf. Matthew's parallel) are supposed to suggest that at the time of the siege of the city a sort of "fly-sheet" containing the Apocalypse in a separate form was in circulation for the guidance of Christians (note 10, cf. Carpenter, p. 197; Burkitt, p. 63 f.).

"He that reads" (see 1 Tim. 4:13, Rev, 1:3, and Col. 4:11). The Greek word implies (cf. "that hear" in Rev.) "reading aloud" that is, ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ. Cf. Rev. 2:7, etc., for the importance of such use of Scripture in ministry, worship, etc. The very "reader" may be preacher in the

sense of Rom. 10:14, compared with the passages in Revelation. There is blessing to be had by the “hearer” of such.

“Standing where he ought not.” Throughout medieval times “Antichrist” was regarded as Mohammedanism; since the Reformation the Papacy has enjoyed that unhappy distinction in the eyes of Protestant controversialists. To the view in general of the Reformers Dr. C. H. H. Wright adheres in the first of his two volumes on Daniel recently published. According to Dr. Wright, the Jesuits started, as a set-off against the Protestant view, the idea now shared by all premillenarian writers, who have abandoned the Lutheran “Antichrist.” Be this as it may, the belief that the “man of sin” (2 Thess. 2:3, 4) stands either for the political head of the Roman Empire when it is revived (Rev. 13:1), or for his confederate (ibid., ver. 11) prince of a revived Jewish State, called the false prophet in Rev. 16:13 (see Kelly, “The Revelation Expounded,” third edition, pp. 159-162), agrees, as far as the first alternative is concerned, with the conviction of the primitive Christians, which seems to have passed away definitely only after Constantine’s acceptance of Christianity as the religion of the Empire. The “Holy Roman Empire” established by Charlemagne passed away in 1806, and the “temporal power” of the Pope in 1870; but students of prophecy look for a confederacy between the magnates symbolized in Rev. 13 as “beasts.” Those who advocate “reunion” of Christendom on the basis of “the primacy of Peter” seem as feebly to apprehend the bearings of the last book of the Bible as supporters of “Zionism” would do. The “Revelation of John” must be studied in close connection with the

prophecy on Olivet. Besides Mr. Kelly's writings on the subject, readers would do well to acquaint themselves with the late R. Govett's "The Apocalypse Expounded by Scripture," and Sir R. Anderson's "The Coming Prince."

132 Mark 13: 19, 20. — In keeping with the theory of the strictly contemporary character of the account (note 127), Carpenter (ubi supra) here finds "retrospect" in the one verse of what has been "anticipated" in the other. But the Lord's words in verse 20 are to be understood of what had already been predetermined when He spoke. In verse 19 the reference is to the time of "Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7). The miseries of the Jews during the siege doubtless exemplified what is here set before us, just as the phenomena of Pentecost did Joel's prediction, which in like manner awaits complete fulfilment.

133 Mark 13:24. — This Gospel has not Matthew's word "immediately." On this Carpenter (p. 198) bases a supposition that Mark here, or his editor, is post eventum ("secondary" to Matthew). Such literary analysis may be ingenious, but Mark's reason for its omission seems hidden from writers who can but indulge in barren conjectures.

134 Mark 13: 26. — Cf. 8:38, and note ad loc. Here we have what Paul in one of his very earliest letters (2 Thess. 2:8), speaks of as the ἐπιφάνεια of the Lord, "the appearing of His coming (

παρουσία)." The "coming" in its initial stage he has described in his first letter to the same Christians (4:15). It may be useful at this point to state the ideas of some critics on the subject. We shall take H. J. Holtzmann as a now long-accredited spokesman. In his somewhat

famous “Synoptic Gospels,” published just before these lectures appeared in the Bible Treasury, this scholar discriminated three aspects of the Second Advent — of His return as dealt with by the Lord when on earth; (a) for judgment (Luke 17:24), (b) a historical coming (Mark 9:1), (c,) a spiritual coming (Matt. 18:20, to which we may add John 14:18, John 16:7). All this, it is believed, is very much in accordance with the facts which the Gospel records supply. To the view thus gained we have to add Paul’s revelation (1 Thess. 4), which speaks of that not to be confounded with any of Holtzmann’s comings. The Apostle’s first statement many Christians, misled by the majority of commentaries — e.g., Alford on 2 Thess. 2:1 — wrongly merge in his supplementary declaration, made to correct the Thessalonians’ understanding of his first (see 2 Thess. 2:2, R.V.). Cf. note 88 above.

135 Mark 13: 30. — “This generation... all these things....” From taking “generation” in the temporal sense of the word, Strauss and De Wette represented the Lord as fallible. Others, as Meyer, A. Wright, Swete, preserve their “orthodoxy,” while still explaining the word of a period of some thirty to thirty-three years. The difficulty of determining when such a generation should begin — the Lord’s contemporaries belonged to different generations relative to their age - is altogether ignored. These writers, to begin with, have to assume that such a generation as they think of commenced with His ministry, without anything in the Gospels to appeal to for support. Origen and Chrysostom of old, followed by Wordsworth and Alford (as equivalent to γένος) of recent English commentators, with Dorner and Stier amongst Germans, take “generations,” as it must be

taken, in its moral meaning. Not only is it so used in the Old Testament (as in Deut. 32:5, Ps. 24:6 and Ps. 73:14, Jer. 8:3), but in the Gospels themselves (Mark 9:19, Matt. 17:17, Luke 16:8), as elsewhere Acts 2:40, etc.; cf. Gal. 1:4). Is not "that day" in verse 32 suggestive of "something at a distance"? (Beet, "Manual of Theology," p. 446 f.).

Verse 10 must be borne in mind in connection with the words "all these things." The convenient makeshift of critics has been mentioned in note 129.

135a Mark 13:31. — "My words." It is not merely a question in this Gospel of His words (Wellhausen), but of His deeds likewise (see note on last verse of Mark 16).

136 Mark 13:32. — "Nor the Son." Cf. Matt. 24:36 in the critical text, followed in the "Workers' New Testament." These words have been supposed by writers of Unitarian tendency to impair the Lord's omniscience, in which they are followed by several in high ecclesiastical position in the English Establishment. The κένωσις (emptying) of the Lord spoken of in Phil. 2:7 has a bearing on the words.

"it is of course difficult," writes Dean Strong, "to understand how two kinds of consciousness can have been present at one time in one Person" ("Manual of Theology," p. 119). Again, Bishop Gore: "He willed to observe the limits of the science of His age, and He puts Himself in the same relation to its historical knowledge" ("Lux Mundi," p. 205). This idea had already been countenanced by a living prelate. "When He quoted passages from the Old Testament, He might have no more knowledge of their age and actual authors than that which was current in His own time" (Bishop

Moorhouse, “Teaching of Christ,” p. 47). See, however, more healthy remarks than these in Schaff, “Christ and Christianity,” pp. 107-119.

The American writer Gould speaks of the passages having given rise to much ‘‘theological tinkering.” He does not himself, certainly, afford any help on the Subject.

Augustine (quoted by Wordsworth in loc.) refers to the elastic force of the word “know,” undeniable as regards both Hebrew and Greek. Here the word is οἶδεν (not γινώσκει). Its use may be seen in “I know you not,” “the Lord knoweth them that are His..... I knew Him not” (said by John Baptist of Christ, evidently not deriving any ordinary previous acquaintance with JESUS (John 1:31, 33, Matt. 3:14, and Luke 1:36). Cf. Peter’s “I know not this Man” (Mark 14:71).

Some have repudiated explanations offered on the ground that these virtually supported a Docetic view — that is, that our Lord “feigned a condition which did not actually exist for the benefit of His disciples.” The Docetists, such as Cerinthus, held that the flesh of Christ was not real (see Strong, p. 99, and cf. Fairbairn, “Christ in Modern Thought,” p. 353). Réville (ii. 313), condemning words of a sermon by Bossuet, questions the authenticity of the words, which he supposes were due to Arian influence on the manuscripts of the Gospels. Worst of all, Schmiedel (article on “Gospels” in “Encyclopaedia Biblica,” col. 1881) boldly says, “In the person of Jesus we have to do with a completely human being,” and that “the Divine is to be sought in Him only in the form in which it is capable of being found in a man.” He seems to seek to blunt the edge of these soul-

corrupting words by adding what is true — that the historical value of the Gospels goes with the presence of such passages in them.

The devout Bengel's explanation, which most commends itself of all put forth on the "orthodox" side, is that the Lord had no command from the Father to declare that day. For the "authority" of His words, see Mark 1:2, John 12:48-50, John 14:24, and cf. Acts 1:7 (Greek), Rev. 1:1 ff., and see remarks of Professor Sanday (article "Son of God" in Hastings), also Dorner, "Person of Christ," i. 54. As to correlative use of the "Father and the Son," reference may be made to Mark 9:37, Mark 14:30, comparing Matt. 11:27, Matt. 28:19, Luke 10:22, all of which bear on Harnack's proposition that "the Gospel as Jesus proclaimed it has to do with the Father only, and not with the Son" ("What is Christianity?" p. 147).

With this question is connected that of silence (see Mark 15:5).

A few words of the late J. N. Darby may be welcome as a conclusion to this note. "In the historical presentation of Christianity the Son is always presented as down here in servant and manhood estate all through John, though in heaven and one with the Father.... In Matt. 3 the whole Trinity is revealed, and, we may say, for the first time fully.... Hence, No! not the Son, has no difficulty" ("Notes and Comments," vol. ii., from p. 416).

136a Mark 13: 35. — Observe the division of the night, and see on 15:25.

Notes On Mark 14.

137 As to the difficulties felt, and much discussed, in connection with the Synoptic accounts of the last

Passover as compared with the fourth Gospel, see note on verse 12.

138 Mark 14: 2. — The lecturer's remarks on the frustration by God of the rulers' desire that our Lord should not suffer at the time of the feast (ἐν τῃ ἑορτῃ) call for earnest consideration in respect of their bearing on the points that come before us at verse 12. It is no question (as Wellhausen puts it on the present verse) of Mark's following the "old" chronology in agreement with John's statement, rather than with the "usual Synoptic chronology." Such "layers" of narrative in the Gospels are veritable cobwebs, not rendered more respectable by the names of distinguished professors associated with them.

139 Mark 14:3. — "A woman." Pfleiderer (i. 385, note) suggests that the woman was Mark's own mother, whom he identifies with Luke's Mary and also John's Mary, the anointer of His feet. Even critics can do that which Wellhausen satirizes in his note on verses 51, 52 (cf. note 153 here).

140 Mark 14: 8 f. - Allowing the Aramaism, it is only necessary to remark that τὸν καιρόν is understood as object of the verb προέλαβε, "seized in good time her opportunity of embalming with myrrh," etc. Whatever Wellhausen may think, it is accurate, idiomatic Greek.

As to "Gospel," see note 17. Here it is, of course, the Gospel of "service," as elsewhere in Mark, not doctrine about Christ (Carpenter, p. 204, and Wellhausen, ad loc.), save as His service and that of the woman to Him are reproduced in the devotion of His followers.

Chrysostom already (about 400 A.D.) in Homily on Matt. 8, spoke of "those who inhabit the British Isles

publishing abroad an act done in Judea privately in a house by a woman" (I. Williams, ii. 19).

J. Weiss (p. 5) uses this verse to show how far distant for Mark was the παρουσία (see note 88).

141 Mark 14: 10 f. — Cf, John 18:2. Wellhausen here finds no "historical connection," because the betrayer's motive is not alleged by the Evangelist. It is, however, stated indirectly. Does such a feeble remark arrogate to itself the name of "criticism "?

142 Mark 14: 12 f. — Cf. verse 1 f. "The first day of unleavened bread, when they used to sacrifice the Passover" (cf. Matt. 26:17, "on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread"; Luke 22:7, "the day of unleavened bread"; John 13:1, "before the feast of the Passover"). This introduces a long-debated question — whether the Passover partaken of by our Lord on the verge of His crucifixion was, as the Synoptists represent, the ordinary Paschal meal, or one in anticipation of it, as John's Gospel some have thought requires us to believe. It will be desirable first to seek to determine the meaning of the expressions used by the Synoptists before considering any specially found in the fourth Gospel.

1. "The first day of unleavened bread." The patristic Greeks took Matthew and Mark's πρώτῃ as equivalent to προτέρᾳ (we might say προτεραίᾳ), "the day before" (the ἄζυμα, "unleavened bread") — a view that was unwittingly confirmed by the Jewish medieval commentator Rashi on Ex. 12:15, who says that "first day" there means "the day before" (Schanz), the 15th of Nisan being technically the first of these days. As for Luke's "the day," we may compare Gen. 2:4, noting the

words of the third Evangelist, “called the Passover,” which are exactly, those used by Josephus in his “Antiquities.” If “days of unleavened bread” were called “Passover,” we have to do with a whole season.

2. The “feast of the Passover” (John). Lev. 23:5 f. requires our distinguishing in the original institution the initial “Passover” from the “feast” annexed to it — the “feast of unleavened bread.” Each term has to be understood not only in its own proper narrower meaning, but also according to its conventional elastic meaning. The learned Dr. John Lightfoot (seventeenth century) has shown in his “Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae” (Gandell’s edition, vol. ii., p. 467f.) on the present passage of Mark that, according to Jewish phraseology, considered with reference to Deut. 16:2 (cf. Num. 28:17), oxen (“herds”), or the sacrifices offered after the lamb eaten, were called the “Passover,” as well as the lamb itself; and in his notes on John 18:28 (vol. iii., p. 420f.) he shows, from expressions used by the Rabbins, that it is the chagigah, or festive offering, brought on the fifteenth day (not fourteenth) of Nisan to which John’s word “Passover” refers. “Feast” speaks of the whole season, but specifically of that prescribed in Lev. 23:6 (cf. Edersheim, “Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah,” chapter ix., p. 489).

The American “Jewish Encyclopaedia” (article “Passover,” by Emil Hirsch) shows that what was strictly the “Passover” and the “Feast of Unleavened Bread” came naturally to be looked upon as one season, and therefore to have the same designation.

3. All four Evangelists fix the day of the Crucifixion as a Friday, with which agrees the tradition recorded in the

Talmud. Wellhausen at Mark 15:42 renders παρασκεύη as “Friday,” in accordance with old Syriac, and also modern Greek. This leads us to inquire what the “preparation” was for. Westcott and others have replied, for the Passover in the narrow sense of the word, but Purves (“Hastings’ Dictionary,” under “Preparation”) holds that it was for the Sabbath and so “preparation of the Passover” would stand for “the preparation in Passover week.” Whilst the technical word “preparation” seems to have been in standing use for a weekly function (with Mark 15:42 cf. Josephus, “Antiquities,” xvi. 6, 2, referred to in Grimm’s “Lexicon,” s.v.), some preparation would be needed for various festivals, and the preliminaries for the Passover in that year would blend with those for the Paschal Sabbath, called “high day” in John 19:31.

The “Jewish Encyclopaedia” discredits Chwolson’s idea that the present calendar for Passover, which excludes Friday as a day for its observance, was in existence then, stating that it is not generally accepted.

To sum up: The Lord and His disciples may be confidently regarded as having taken the initial meal substantially at the same time as the rest of the Jews, within the limits of what Wellhausen (on “Luke”) calls the same “official day,” referring to Luke 22:34 there (cf. Mark 14:30, yet more explicit). The language of John 18:28 is, in the light of Jewish usages, in no way incompatible with that of Mark 14:12; and John 19:14 does but fix the day and hour of what is spoken of in the latter passage, whilst John 19:31 speaks of preparation simply with manifest reference to the Sabbath alone. The “mistake” that critics have attributed to the

Synoptists is a “mare’s nest.” Most are singularly wanting in what Huxley called “scientific imagination.”

Grotius, Hengstenberg, Alford, Wordsworth, Westcott, Ellicott, Farrar, Edersheim, W. Kelly (“Exposition of John,” p. 392, note), Drummond and Sanday have in turn discussed the question. Grotius supposes that no lamb was used by the Lord (so Luckock, Carr, etc.). Even if it were so, the case would be in line with that of the Jews outside the land. Hengstenberg (on John) follows Lightfoot; Alford settles nothing; Wordsworth is content to follow Chrysostom, who supposes that the Jews broke the law by deferring their observance of the supper until after midnight of the 14th of Nisan. Sir R. Anderson’s treatment of the subject in his “Bible and Modern Criticism” (chapter 8) is excellent ‘

Wright (“Synopsis,” p. xxxi.) hesitates not to speak of John as “correcting Mark”; Gardner, of its being “impossible to reconcile the two in accordance with the canons of history” (p. 152 f.). But the language and ways of the period have to be thoroughly investigated before a “reconciliation” can be deemed needful. If it be “quite uncertain,” as Professor Gardner says, “which date for the Crucifixion is the true one,” does not such “uncertainty,” affect only the minds of those who imagine reconciliation is required? Again, there is no excuse for an arch-offender, Schmiedel, saying that the Synoptists (he speaks of Luke) confound the preparation and the Passover itself. It is only those in confusion over the παρασκεύη who could say so; the two could certainly be coincident, and did in that year fall unquestionably on the same day.

See further at verse 18 here, and as to Mark's "third hour," considered in relation to John's "sixth," refer to note on 15:25 below.

The two disciples, Luke tells us (Luke 22:8), were Peter and John.

143 Mark 14:14. — "The Teacher." The person addressed may have been himself a disciple. Conjecture has been employed as to his identity. For "upper room," cf. Acts 1:13; here it is ἀνάγαιον, there ὑπερῳον.

144 Mark 14:17. — See note 63.

145 Mark 14:18. — The Jews had adopted the Roman custom of reclining at meals.

146 Mark 14:19 f. — The allusion to the betrayer becomes intelligible on reference to John 13.

147 Mark 14:21. — Note the recurrence of the word

ἄνθρωπος, and cf. note on 9:31. See also Beet, "The Last Things," p. 190.

148 Mark 14:23. — The benediction was a custom at all Jewish meals (cf. Acts 27:35).

149 Mark 14:24. — The order here is significant. The disciples partake of the cup before the Lord speaks of its symbolism. We have in this a corrective of the Catholic idea of the elements, regarded independently of the spiritual condition of the recipient.

The word

διαθήκη has probably the meaning of "covenant" everywhere in Biblical Greek, Heb. 9:16 f. not excepted. See Hatch, "Essays in Biblical Greek," p. 48: "must be invariably taken in the sense of covenant in the New

Testament. The word testamentum in early Latin versions meant ‘covenant.’“

150 Mark 14:27. — This may be treated as a paraphrase, the words of Christ agreeing with neither the Masoretic Hebrew text nor the LXX in either of the MSS. B or A (Swete). Wellhausen’s suggestion that they come from Theodotion’s translation is needless. See Matt. 8:14 for a clear instance of paraphrase; also Heb. 10:5, and cf. Gloag, p. 30.

151 Mark 14: 28. — The word

προάγειν (“go before”) of the shepherd is used likewise in John 10:4; also of false leaders in 2 John 9.

151a Mark 14: 30. — “This day, even in this night.” See note 142 as to Jewish “official” day.

152 Mark 14: 34-39. — Cf. Luke 22:43, Heb. 5:7. “My soul is full of grief.” This is one of the Gospel passages bearing on our Lord’s full humanity, which was early questioned. Thus Apollinaris held that in the Lord the place of a human soul or spirit was taken by the word (λόγος). See Pullan, “Early Christian Doctrine,” p. 101; or Dorner, “History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ,” vol. ii., p. 35 f.

Wellhausen (ad loc.) truly remarks: “Death itself is not what is terrible, but that which precedes and leads up to it.”

153 Mark 14: 51 f. — Some venture to regard the record of this incident as trivial. It is of the same order as Paul’s request to Timothy in his second Epistle (2 Tim. 4:13). The “Irish clergyman” of Mr. F. W. Newman’s “Phases of Faith” was restrained from parting with his library by Paul’s words there, illustrative of a determination that

no part of Scripture should be a dead letter for the author of “The Irrationalism of Infidelity.” Nothing would seem to be too commonplace for the Holy Spirit’s use.

W. Kelly, in Bible Treasury, vol. xx., p. 28, speaks of his impression that Mark himself is the person intended. So already Townson and Greswell had thought, as Olshausen and Lange, followed by Godet and Réville (ii. 378). Ewald suggested Paul; Plumptre, Lazarus.

154 Mark 14: 61f. — As to the Lord’s reticence when first interrogated, see Stalker, p. 151, and Sir R. Anderson’s book on “The Silence of God.” Observe the association here of the three titles, Christ, Son of God, Son of man. Martineau (p. 133), as Wendt, allows the Messianic sense of Son of God in this place alone (cf. Luke 22:67-70).

155 Mark 14: 64. — The felt blasphemy is very noticeable in connection with the title “Son of man” (cf. note 30). On the aorist ἠκούσατε, see note 18a.

156 Mark 14:69. — “The maid.” A man is spoken of in Luke 22:58. The two versions are combined in John 18:25 — “they said” (cf. note 158).

157 Mark 14: 71. — “I know,” etc. (

οἶδα). See note 136.

158 Mark 14: 72. — “Wept,” or “kept weeping” (

ἔκλαιεν, imperfect). The passages of the Gospels which afford a complete view of Peter’s failure may, be referred to in the following order: John 18:17, Matt. 26:69 (Mark 14:66, Luke 22:56), Mark 14:68 f., Matt. 26:71, John 18:25, Luke 22:58, 59, John 18:26, Matt. 26:73 (Mark 14:70-72).

Notes On Mark 15.

159 Mark 15:5. — See note 154.

160 Mark 15: 12. — “That I do to Him,” etc. (

ποιήσω ὅν). On this Wellhausen ventures to say: “In the Greek the accusative after ποιήσω is incorrect.” Such infatuation in a professed scholar is unaccountable. The Greek language was plastic everywhere and at all times. “To do good to a man” is in colloquial Greek εὖ δρᾶν τινα, or ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖν τινα, to treat well;

κακὸν ποιεῖν πράσσειν, to do ill to, to treat amiss. “What shall I do to [him]?” “How shall I treat [him]?” There is no solecism, no awkwardness in the Evangelist’s language here. See Blass, § 34, p. 91, at foot.

161 Mark 15: 21. — See note 1.

162 Mark 15: 25. — Cf. John 19:14, and note 142. Mark’s “third hour” is by “critics” set against John’s “sixth hour.” Such do not see that, while the second Evangelist is speaking of the Crucifixion, the fourth refers to the outcry before Pilate (Kelly, “Exposition of John,” p. 392 f.). It is usual for “reconcilers” to suppose that the Synoptists’ statements are based on the strictly Jewish day, those of John on the Roman way of reckoning the civil day. The Jews took the hours from sunrise (our six a.m.), the Romans from midnight, with whom the sixth hour, accordingly, was the same as ours. Then three hours would elapse before the crucifixion (nine a.m.), and these would be taken up by the events recorded in the three first Gospels: the sentence of death, the journey to Golgotha, and the preparations there for the crucifixion. See, however, papers of Sir W. M. Ramsay in the Expositor, referred to by Professor

Sanday in “Outlines of the Life of Christ,” p. 147. As to Wieseler’s idea, see Farrer, “Life of Christ,” p. 112 note, where reference is given to Justinian’s “Digest” (xli., Titus 3:6, 7). — The present writer believes that it means the third hour after the last watch of the night (Mark 13:35).

163 Mark 15: 26. — Cf. Kelly, “Lectures on Matthew,” p. 551, and note 7 above (third illustration).

164 Mark 15: 34 f. - Eloi. This is the Aramaic form, Eli in Matt. 27:46 the Hebrew, which Wellhausen supposes was that actually used by the Lord, as having a ring more like Elias. As he says, the Jews could not have misunderstood Eloi, their vernacular.

165 Mark 15: 37. — Nowhere in the Gospels is the word “died” used as the result of our Lord’s crucifixion. Here ἐξέπνευσεν, “expired,” as in Luke, Matthew’s word being ἀφῆκετ.π., “dismissed His spirit,” whilst John’s is παρέδκνετ.π., “gave up,” etc. As to these, see “Exposition of John,” p. 398. — The date seems to have been 7 April, A.D. 30.

166 Mark 15: 43. — “Took courage,” etc.,

τολμήσας. Such is Dr. Field’s rendering, based on that of the “New Translation,” by J. N. Darby, to which the learned editor of the “Hexapla” refers in his “Notes on the Translation of the New Testament” at this passage.

Notes On Mark 16.

167 Mark 16: 1-8. — The accounts of the Resurrection given by the four Evangelists have always been closely scrutinised in the service of unbelief, so that the most has been made of apparent discrepancies. The late Professor Rawson Birks, in his “Horae Evangelicae,” vol.

iii., chapter iii., p. 449 f., entered into an “examination of charges of inconsistency of Mark’s account with that of one or other of the rest of the Evangelists,” to which any reader may be referred, as also to the later work of Christlieb, “Modern Doubts,” p. 468 f.

It is desirable closely to compare the four accounts, and to make sure of the right meaning of the exact expression used by each Evangelist. Something like the following scheme may aid any reader of a book like O. Holtzmann’s “Life of Jesus,” in which the different accounts are represented as inconsistent with one another.

Mary Magdalene (accompanied by “the other Mary”) visited the sepulchre whilst it was yet dark (Matt. 28:1, John 20:1). The word ἐπιφώσκειν used by Matthew refers, not to morning, but to evening twilight — “as it began to grow dusk” — i.e., on the Sabbath evening which preceded the morning of the resurrection. See its like use in Luke 23:54, where Wellhausen remarks that in the Syriac liturgies the expression bears the same sense.

Mary Magdalene goes to tell Peter and John, who come and go again (John 20:3-10, Luke 24:12 — omit “then” of A.V.), but Mary Magdalene on her return remains, and sees JESUS (Mark 16:9, John 20:11 f.). The other Mary, it seems, in whose company she revisited the sepulchre, carried information to Salome (Mark 16:1).

Then other women (Luke 24:10) come, who see the angels and flee, saying, whilst on their flight, nothing to anyone until they meet JESUS, whose words rally them, so that they deliver their message to the eleven as to

Galilee (Mark 16:5-8, Matt. 28:5-10, Luke 24:9). Cp. Bp. Chase, Camb. Essays, p. 393.

Mary Magdalene delivers the message confided to her by JESUS to the disciples in general as to the Father (John 20:17, 18, Mark 16:9-11).

Luke 24:13-35 (cf. Mark 16:12, 13) tells us of the interview between JESUS and the two journeying to Emmaus, and verses 36-49 (Mark 16:14 f.) of His appearance to the eleven, which was on two consecutive Sundays (John 20:19-29). Within the next five weeks the disciples must have gone to Galilee, and returned to Judea for the Ascension scene recorded by Luke.

And so, if Mark's "Salome" is set against Luke's "Johanna," the common-sense explanation is that Luke must have included Salome among "the others" he speaks of in the same verse (Luke 24:10).

Again, in verse 5 here, "a young man." Against this "critical" writers use Luke's "two men" (Luke 24:4). The women were trembling. Only one of the angels, presumably, was spokesman; to him their attention was attracted.

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ἠγόρασαν, bought (not, as A.V., on the Friday evening). See Blass, p. 202.

Mark 16: 7. — "He goes before you into Galilee" (so Matt. 28:7). But for O. Holtzmann (as for Wernle, p. 16) there is a difficulty in the fact that Luke, who tells us about appearances in Judea, says nothing about Galilee in this connection. Throughout the Gospels of Matthew and Mark Galilee is prominent. The Divine design of the

Gospels here, as always, comes to our aid (see the "Lectures on Matthew," p. 562 f.).

168 Mark 16: 9-20. — The textual criticism of the closing verses of Mark has been fully discussed by Tregelles, Scrivener, Burgon, Westcott and Hort, Sadler, Salmon, and others. A recent statement will be found in Swete's Introduction to his edition of Mark.

They appear in AC and fifteen other uncials, all cursives, and versions except Syrsin. D has as far as v. 15, whilst Syrcm shows vv. 17-20. Hippolytus quotes verse 19, Irenaeus verse 20. Their place in the Gospel has been recognised by Wetstein and Bengel among the older scholars: by Scheiermacher, De Wette, Bleek, Strauss, Hilgenfeld, Olshausen, Ebrard, Ellicott, Salmon, Wace, etc., among the more recent — in particular by Scrivener and Burgon. Scrivener deals with the external evidence in his "Introduction," pp. 337-344, fourth edition; Burgon with the internal in his, chapter 9. Salmon writes: "We have no evidence that any writer anterior to Eusebius remarked that there was anything abrupt in the conclusion of St. Mark's Gospel, or that it gave no testimony to our Lord's resurrection" (p. 146). He, too, discusses the internal evidence, holding that it favours reception of the verses; Morison, the same emphatically, calling the question as to these verses a "romance of criticism, which must, as time goes on, yield to sober truth" (lxxiii).

The following scholars, amongst others, have been more or less adverse to the belief that Mark was the writer: Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, B. Weiss and Zahn.

Tregelles, while questioning that Mark was the writer, treats the verses as authentic and a part of canonical Scripture. He compares them with the last chapter of Deuteronomy (“Printed Text of the New Testament,” p. 246 f.).

By those English scholars who do not defend Mark’s authorship they are supposed to have been written by Aristion, spoken of by Papias as “a disciple of the Lord.”

Dr. Hort’s views will be found in “Introduction to Greek New Testament,” Appendix, pp. 28-51.

Wright suggests that Mark’s Gospel was not copied in his lifetime, and would therefore be little used, thus “narrowly escaping extinction” (Synopsis XIV., cf. Burkitt, p. 260 f.).

Professor Sanday writes: “The most probable view, I think,” regarding these verses, “is that they were written to make good a loss through the frayed end of a roll” (Bampton Lectures, p. 380).

Zahn’s opinion, that the book remained uncompleted, he rests on the critical canon that, where two mutually exclusive texts, the origin of each of which may be a shorter, well-attested text, compete with this, the shorter must be regarded as the original recension (“Introduction to the New Testament,” vol. ii., p. 227).

Pfleiderer (i. 395) compares these verses with verses 58-60 of the “Gospel of Peter,” which has a like abrupt ending. See also Dean Robinson’s lecture on that apocryphal work (p. 29).

So much for the views of those not defending the verses. Since the appearance of the Revised Version, it has been discovered that they are included in Tatian’s

“Diatessaron,” of the early part of the second century. This later phase of the question may have led to some modification of the case against them.

W. Kelly to the end of his life shared Burgon’s conviction as to the inordinate respect in which the most ancient copies have in general been held, whilst feeling, perhaps yet more strongly than the late Dean of Chichester, that the text was really tampered with here, as was always the lecturer’s belief with regard to another dozen verses in the fourth Gospel (John 7:53-8:11).