

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

THE LIFE AND
TIMES OF JESUS
THE MESSIAH
BOOK V



ALFRED EDERSHEIM

**The Life and Times of
Jesus the
Messiah—Book V**

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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The Cross and the Crown

by Alfred Edersheim

Chapter 1—The First Day in Passion-Week

Palm Sunday—The Royal Entry into Jerusalem

(St. [Matthew 21:1-11](#); St. [Mark 11:1-11](#); St. [Luke 19:29-44](#); St. [John 12:12-19](#).)

At length the time of the end had come. Jesus was about to make Entry into Jerusalem as King: King of the Jews, as Heir of David's royal line, with all of symbolic, typic, and prophetic import attaching to it. Yet not as Israel after the flesh expected its Messiah was the Son of David to make triumphal entrance, but as deeply and significantly expressive of His Mission and Work, and as of old the rapt seer had beheld afar off the outlined picture of the Messiah-King: not in the proud triumph of war-conquests, but in the meek rule of peace.

It is surely one of the strangest mistakes of modern criticism to regard this Entry of Christ into Jerusalem as implying that, fired by enthusiasm, He had for the moment expected that the people would receive Him as the Messiah. ¹ And it seems little, if at all better, when this Entry is described as an apparent concession to the fevered expectations of His disciples and the multitude... the grave, sad accommodation to thoughts other than His own to which the Teacher of new truths must often have recourse when He finds Himself misinterpreted by those who stand together on a lower level. ² Apologies are the weakness of Apologetics'—and any accommodation theory can have no place in the history of the Christ. On the contrary, we regard His Royal Entry into the Jerusalem of Prophecy and of the Crucifixion as an integral part of the history of Christ, which would not be complete, nor thoroughly consistent, without it. It behoved Him so to enter Jerusalem, because He was a King; and as King to enter it in such manner, because He was such a

¹So notably *Keim*. Of course, the theory proceeds on the *assumption* that the Discourses reported by St. Luke are spurious.

²Dean *Plumptre* on St. [Matthew 21:5](#).

King—and both the one and the other were in accordance with the prophecy of old.

It was a bright day in early spring of the year 29, when the festive procession set out from the home at Bethany. There can be no reasonable doubt as to the locality of that hamlet (the modern *El-'Azariye*, of Lazarus), perched on a broken rocky plateau on the other side of Olivet. More difficulty attaches to the identification of *Bethphage*, which is associated with it, the place not being mentioned in the Old Testament, though repeatedly in Jewish writings. But, even so, there is a curious contradiction, since Bethphage is sometimes spoken of as distinct from Jerusalem,³ while at others it is described as, for ecclesiastical purposes, part of the City itself.⁴ Perhaps the name Bethphage—house of figs'—was given alike to that district generally, and to a little village close to Jerusalem where the district began.⁵ And this may explain the peculiar reference, in the Synoptic Gospels, to Bethphage (St. Matthew), and again to Bethphage and Bethany.⁶ For, St. Matthew and St. Mark relate Christ's brief stay at Bethany and His anointing by Mary not in chronological order,⁷ but introduce it at a later period, as it were, in contrast to the betrayal of Judas.⁸ Accordingly, they pass from the Miracles at Jericho immediately to the Royal Entry into Jerusalem—from Jericho to Bethphage or, more exactly, to Bethphage and Bethany leaving for the present unnoticed what had occurred in the latter hamlet.

[4]

Although all the four Evangelists relate Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, they seem to do so from different standpoints. The Synoptists accompany Him from Bethany, while St. John, in accordance with the general scheme of his narrative, seems to follow from Jerusalem that multitude which, on tidings of His approach, hastened to meet Him. Even this circumstance, as also the paucity of events recorded on that day, proves that it could not have been

³Siphre, ed. *Friedm.* p. 55 *a*, last lines; *Sot.* 45 *a*; *Tos. Pes.* viii. 8.

⁴*Pes.* 63 *b*; 91 *a*; *Menach.* 78 *b*; *Babha Mets.* 90 *a*.

⁵See also *Caspari*, *Chron. Geogr. Einl.* p. 161. The question as to the proposed identification (by some) of Bethany with the *Beth Hini*, or *Beth Hanioth*, where the Sanhedrin (apparently of Sadducees) sat after leaving the Temple and which was destroyed three years before the City, must be left here undiscussed.

⁶St. Mark and St. Luke.

⁷St. Augustine has it, *recapitulando dixerunt*.

⁸St. [Matthew 26:6-13](#); St. [Mark 14:3-9](#).

[5] at early morning that Jesus left Bethany. Remembering, that it was the last morning of rest before the great contest, we may reverently think of much that may have passed in the Soul of Jesus and in the home of Bethany. And now He has left that peaceful resting-place. It was probably soon after His outset, that He sent the two disciples'—possibly Peter and John ⁹—into the village over against them—presumably Bethphage. There they would find by the side of the road an ass's colt tied, whereon never man had sat. We mark the significant symbolism of the latter, in connection with the general conditions of consecration to Jehovah ¹⁰—and note in it, as also in the Mission of the Apostles, that this was intended by Christ to be His Royal and Messianic Entry. This colt they were to loose and to bring to Him.

The disciples found all as He had said. When they reached Bethphage, they saw, by a doorway where two roads met, the colt tied by its mother. As they loosed it, the owners and certain of them that stood by ¹¹ asked their purpose, to which, as directed by the Master, they answered: The Lord [the Master, Christ] hath need of him when, as predicted, no further hindrance was offered. In explanation of this we need not resort to the theory of a miraculous influence, nor even suppose that the owners of the colt were themselves disciples. Their challenge to the two and the little more than permission which they gave, seem to forbid this idea. Nor is such explanation requisite. From the pilgrim-band which had accompanied Jesus from Galilee and Peraea, and preceded Him to Jerusalem, from the guests at the Sabbath-feast in Bethany, and from the people who had gone out to see both Jesus and Lazarus, the tidings of the proximity of Jesus and of His approaching arrival must have spread in the City. Perhaps that very morning some had come from Bethany, and told it in the Temple, among the festive bands—specially among his own Galileans, and generally in Jerusalem, that on that very day—in a few hours—Jesus might be expected to enter the City. Such, indeed, must have been the case, since, from St. John's account, a great multitude went forth to meet Him. The latter, we can have little doubt, must have mostly consisted, not of citizens of Jerusalem,

⁹Comp. St. [Luke 22:8](#).

¹⁰[Numbers 19:2](#); [Deuteronomy 21:3](#).

¹¹St. Mark; comp. also St. Matthew.

whose enmity to Christ was settled, but of those that had come to the Feast. ¹² With these went also a number of Pharisees their hearts filled with bitterest thoughts of jealousy and hatred. ¹³ And, as we shall presently see, it is of great importance to keep in mind this composition of the multitude.

If such were the circumstances, all is natural. We can understand, [6] how eager questioners would gather about the owners of the colt (St. Mark), there at the cross-roads at Bethphage, just outside Jerusalem; and how, so soon as from the bearing and the peculiar words of the disciples they understood their purpose, the owners of the ass and colt would grant its use for the solemn Entry into the City of the Teacher of Nazareth ¹⁴ Whom the multitude was so eagerly expecting; and, lastly, how, as from the gates of Jerusalem tidings spread of what had passed in Bethphage, the multitude would stream forth to meet Jesus.

Meantime Christ and those who followed Him from Bethany had slowly entered on ¹⁵ the well-known caravan-road from Jericho to Jerusalem. It is the most southern of three, which converge close to the City, perhaps at the very place where the colt had stood tied. The road soon loses sight of Bethany. It is now a rough, but still broad and well-defined mountain-track, winding over rock and loose stones; a steep declivity on the left; the sloping shoulder of Olivet above on the right; fig-trees below and above, here and there growing out of the rocky soil. ¹⁶ Somewhere here the disciples who brought the colt must have met Him. They were accompanied by many, and immediately followed by more. For, as already stated, Bethphage—we presume the village—formed almost part of Jerusalem, and during

¹²St. John 12:12.

¹³St. Luke 19:39; St. John 12:19.

¹⁴It is surely one of those instances in which the supposed authority of MSS. should not be implicitly followed, when in St. Mark 11:3, the R.V. adopts what we must regard as a very jejune gloss: and straightway He [viz. Christ] will send him back hither'—as if the disciples had obtained the colt by pledging the Master to its immediate restoration. The gloss is the more inapt as it does not occur in the parallel passages in St. Matthew and St. Luke.

¹⁵They may have awaited in Bethany the return of the two, but the succession followed in the text seems to me by far the most probable.

¹⁶The quotations are from the well-known and classical passage in Dean Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 189 &c.

Easter-week must have been crowded by pilgrims, who could not find accommodation within the City walls. And the announcement, that disciples of Jesus had just fetched the beast of burden on which Jesus was about to enter Jerusalem, must have quickly spread among the crowds which thronged the Temple and the City.

[7] As the two disciples, accompanied, or immediately followed by the multitude, brought the colt to Christ, two streams of people met⁷—the one coming from the City, the other from Bethany. The impression left on our minds is, that what followed was unexpected by those who accompanied Christ, that it took them by surprise. The disciples, who understood not,¹⁷ till the light of the Resurrection-glory had been poured on their minds, the significance of these things even after they had occurred, seem not even to have guessed, that it was of set purpose Jesus was about to make His Royal Entry into Jerusalem. Their enthusiasm seems only to have been kindled when they saw the procession from the town come to meet Jesus with palm-branches, cut down by the way, and greeting Him with Hosanna-shouts of welcome. Then they spread their garments on the colt, and set Jesus thereon—unwrapped their loose cloaks from their shoulders and stretched them along the rough path, to form a momentary carpet as He approached. Then also in their turn they cut down branches from the trees and gardens through which they passed, or plaited and twisted palm-branches, and strewed them as a rude matting in His way, while they joined in, and soon raised to a much higher pitch¹⁸ the Hosanna of welcoming praise. Nor need we wonder at their ignorance at first of the meaning of that, in which themselves were chief actors. We are too apt to judge them from our standpoint, eighteen centuries later, and after full apprehension of the significance of the event. These men walked in the procession almost as in a dream, or as dazzled by a brilliant light all around—as if impelled by a necessity, and carried from event to event, which came upon them in a succession of but partially understood surprises.

They had now ranged themselves: the multitude which had come from the City preceding, that which had come with Him from

¹⁷St. John 12:16.

¹⁸St. Luke 19:37, 38.

Bethany following the triumphant progress of Israel's King, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. Gradually the long procession swept up and over the ridge where first begins "the descent of the Mount of Olives" towards Jerusalem. At this point the first view is caught of the southeastern corner of the City. The Temple and the more northern portions are hid by the slope of Olivet on the right; what is seen is only Mount Zion, now for the most part a rough field. But at that time it rose, terrace upon terrace, from the Palace of the Maccabees and that of the High-Priest, a very city of palaces, till the eye rested in the summit on that castle, city, and palace, with its frowning towers and magnificent gardens, the royal abode of Herod, supposed to occupy the very site of the Palace of David. They had been greeting Him with Hosannas! But enthusiasm, especially in such a cause, is infectious. They were mostly stranger-pilgrims that had come from the City, chiefly because they had heard of the raising of Lazarus. ¹⁹ And now they must have questioned them which came from Bethany, who in turn related that of which themselves had been eyewitnesses. ²⁰ We can imagine it all—how the fire would leap from heart to heart. So He was the promised Son of David—and the Kingdom was at hand! It may have been just as the precise point of the road was reached, where the City of David first suddenly emerges into view, at the descent of the Mount of Olives that the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen. ²¹ As the burning words of joy and praise, the record of what they had seen, passed from mouth to mouth, and they caught their first sight of the City of David adorned as a bride to welcome her King, Davidic praise to David's Greater Son wakened the echoes of old Davidic Psalms in the morning-light of their fulfilment. Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.... Blessed the Kingdom that cometh, the Kingdom of our father David.... Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.... Hosanna... Hosanna in the highest...Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

¹⁹St. John 12:18.

²⁰ver. 17.

²¹St. Luke.

They were but broken utterances, partly based upon [Psalm 118](#), partly taken from it—the Hosanna²² or Save now and the Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord²³ forming part of the responses by the people with which this Psalm was chanted on certain of the most solemn festivals.²⁴

- [9] Most truly did they thus interpret and apply the Psalm, old and new Davidic praise mingling in their acclamations. At the same time it must be remembered that, according to Jewish tradition, Ps. 118. [vv. 25-28](#), was also chanted antiphonally by the people of Jerusalem, as they went to welcome the festive pilgrims on their arrival, the latter always responding in the second clause of each verse, till the last verse of the Psalm²⁵ was reached, which was sung by both parties in unison, [Psalm 103:17](#) being added by way of conclusion.²⁶ But as the shout rang through the long defile carrying evidence far and wide, that, so far from condemning and forsaking, more than the ordinary pilgrim-welcome had been given to Jesus—the Pharisees, who had mingled with the crowd, turned to one another with angry frowns: Behold [see intently], how ye prevail nothing! See—the world²⁷ is gone after Him! It is always so, that, in the disappointment of malice, men turn in impotent rage against each other with taunts and reproaches. Then, psychologically true in this also, they made a desperate appeal to the Master Himself, Whom they so bitterly hated, to check and rebuke the honest zeal of His disciples. He had been silent hitherto—alone unmoved, or only deeply moved inwardly—amidst this enthusiastic crowd. He could be silent no longer—but, with a touch of quick and righteous indignation, pointed to the rocks and stones, telling those leaders of Israel, that, if the people held

²²There can be no question that Hosanna represents *hōsanna* but probably in an abbreviated form of pronunciation *hōsanna* (comp. *Siegfried in Hilgenfeld's Zeitsch. f. wissenschaft. Theol.* for 1884, p. 385).

²³[Psalm 118:25, 26](#).

²⁴As will be remembered, it formed the last Psalm in what was called the *Hallel* ([Psalm 113-118](#)). For the mode in which, and the occasions on which it was chanted, see Temple, &c. pp. 191-193. The remarks of *Godet* on the subject (Comm. on St. [John 12.](#)) are not accurate.

²⁵ver. 29.

²⁶Midr. on [Psalm 118.](#), ed. Warsh., pp. 85 b, last 3 lines, and p. 86 a.

²⁷A common Jewish expression, *mlBabha Mez. 85 a*, line 3 from top, or *ml(y)lwk Ber. 58 a*, about the middle.

their peace, the very stones would cry out.^{28 29} It would have been so in that day of Christ's Entry into Jerusalem. And it has been so ever since. Silence has fallen these many centuries upon Israel; but the very stones of Jerusalem's ruin and desolateness have cried out that He, Whom in their silence they rejected, has come as King in the Name of the Lord.

Again the procession advanced. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the City is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments and the path mounts again, it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instance the whole City bursts into view. As now the dome of the Mosque El-Aksa rises like a Ghost from the earth before the traveller stands on the ledge, so then must have risen the Temple-tower; as now the vast enclosure of the Mussulman sanctuary, so then must have spread the Temple courts; as now the grey town on its broken hills, so then the magnificent City, with its background—long since vanished away—of gardens and suburbs on the western plateau behind. Immediately before was the Valley of the Kedron, here seen in its greatest depth as it joins the Valley of Hinnom, and thus giving full effect to the great peculiarity of Jerusalem, seen only on its eastern side—its situation as of a City rising out of a deep abyss. It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road—this rocky ledge—was the exact point where the multitude paused again, and “He, when He beheld the City, wept over it.” Not with still weeping (*edakrusen*), as at the grave of Lazarus, but with loud and deep lamentation (*eklausen*). The contrast was, indeed, terrible between the Jerusalem that rose before Him in all its beauty, glory, and security, and the Jerusalem which He saw in vision dimly rising on the sky, with the camp of the enemy around about it on every side, hugging it closer and closer in deadly embrace, and the very stockade which the Roman Legions raised around it;³⁰ then, another scene in the shifting panorama, and the city laid with the ground, and the gory bodies of her children among her ruins; and yet another scene: the silence and desolateness of death by the Hand of

²⁸St. Luke.

²⁹The expression: stones bearing witness when sin has been committed, is not uncommon in Jewish writings. See *Taan.* 11 *a*; *Chag.* 16 *a*.

³⁰*Jos.* War v. 6. 2; 12. 2.

God—not one stone left upon another! We know only too well how literally this vision has become reality; and yet, though uttered as prophecy by Christ, and its reason so clearly stated, Israel to this day knows not the things which belong unto its peace, and the upturned scattered stones of its dispersion are crying out in testimony against it. But to this day, also do the tears of Christ plead with the Church on Israel's behalf, and His words bear within them precious seed of promise.

[11] We turn once more to the scene just described. For, it was no common pageantry; and Christ's public Entry into Jerusalem seems so altogether different from—we had almost said, inconsistent with—His previous mode of appearance. Evidently, the time for the silence so long enjoined had passed, and that for public declaration had come. And such, indeed, this Entry was. From the moment of His sending forth the two disciples to His acceptance of the homage of the multitude, and His rebuke of the Pharisee's attempt to arrest it, all must be regarded as designed or approved by Him: not only a public assertion of His Messiahship, but a claim to its national acknowledgment. And yet, even so, it was not to be the Messiah of Israel's conception, but He of prophetic picture: just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass.³¹ It is foreign to our present purpose to discuss any general questions about this prophecy, or even to vindicate its application to the Messiah. But, when we brush aside all the trafficking and bargaining over words, that constitutes so much of modern criticism, which in its care over the lesson so often loses the spirit, there can, at least, be no question that this prophecy was intended to introduce, in contrast to earthly warfare and kingly triumph, another Kingdom, of which the just King would be the Prince of Peace, Who was meek and lowly in His Advent, Who would speak peace to the heathen, and Whose sway would yet extend to earth's utmost bounds. Thus much may be said, that if there ever was true picture of the Messiah-King and His Kingdom, it is this, and that, if ever Israel was to have a Messiah or the world a Saviour, He must be such as described in this Prophecy—not merely in the letter, but in the spirit of it. And as so often indicated, it was not the letter but the spirit of prophecy—and of all prophecy—

³¹[Zechariah 9:9](#).

which the ancient Synagogue, and that rightly, saw fulfilled in the Messiah and His Kingdom. Accordingly, with singular unanimity the Talmud and the ancient Rabbinic authorities have applied this prophecy to the Christ.³² Nor was it quoted by St. Matthew and St. John in the stiffness and deadness of the letter. On the contrary (as so often in Jewish writings, two prophets—[Isaiah 62:11](#), and [Zechariah 9:9](#)—are made to shed their blended light upon this Entry of Christ, as exhibiting the reality, of which the prophetic vision had been the reflex. Nor yet are the words of the Prophets given literally—as modern criticism would have them weighed out in the critical balances—either from the Hebrew text, or from the LXX. rendering; but their real meaning is given, and they are Targumed by the sacred writers, according to their wont. Yet who that sets the prophetic picture by the side of the reality—the description by the side of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem—can fail to recognise in the one the real fulfilment of the other? [12]

Another point seems to require comment. We have seen reasons to regard the bearing of the disciples as one of surprise, and that, all through these last scenes, they seem to have been hurried from event to event. But the enthusiasm of the people—their royal welcome of Christ—how is it to be explained, and how reconciled with the speedy and terrible reaction of His Betrayal and Crucifixion? Yet it is not so difficult to understand it; and, if we only keep clear of unconscious exaggeration, we shall gain in truth and reasonableness what we lose in dramatic effect. It has already been suggested, that the multitude which went to meet Jesus must have consisted chiefly of pilgrim-strangers. The overwhelming majority of the citizens of Jerusalem were bitterly and determinately hostile to Christ. But we know that, even so, the Pharisees dreaded to take the final steps against Christ during the presence of these pilgrims at the Feast, apprehending a movement in His favour.³³ It proved, indeed, otherwise; for these country-people were but ill-informed; they dared not resist the combined authority of their own Sanhedrin and of the Romans. Besides, the prejudices of the populace, and especially of an Eastern populace, are easily raised, and they readily sway

³²Ber. 56 *b*; Sanh. 98 *a*; Pirké de R. El. 31; Ber. R. 75; 98; 99; Deb. R. 4; Midr. on Cant. i. 4; Midr. on Cant. i. 4; Midr. on Eccles 1:9; Midr. Shemuel 14.

³³St. [Matthew 26:3-6](#); St. [Mark 14:2](#); St. [Luke 22:2](#).

from one extreme to the opposite. Lastly, the very suddenness and completeness of the blow, which the Jewish authorities delivered, would have stunned even those who had deeper knowledge, more cohesion, and greater independence than most of them who, on that Palm Sunday, had gone forth from the City.

Again, as regards their welcome of Christ, deeply significant as it was, we must not attach to it deeper meaning than it possessed. [13] Modern writers have mostly seen in it the demonstrations of the Feast of Tabernacles,³⁴ as if the homage of its services had been offered to Christ. It would, indeed, have been symbolic of much about Israel if they had thus confounded the Second with the First Advent of Christ, the Sacrifice of the Passover with the joy of the Feast of Ingathering. But, in reality, their conduct bears not that interpretation. It is true that these responses from [Psalm 118.](#), which formed part of what was known as the (Egyptian) Hallel,³⁵ were chanted by the people on the Feast of Tabernacles also, but the Hallel was equally sung with responses during the offering of the Passover, at the Paschal Supper, and on the Feasts of Pentecost and of the Dedication of the Temple. The waving of the palm-branches was the welcome of visitors or kings,³⁶ and not distinctive of the Feast of Tabernacles. At the latter, the worshippers carried, not simple palm-branches, but the *Lulabh*, which consisted of palm, myrtle, and willow branches intertwined. Lastly, the words of welcome from [Psalm 118.](#) were (as already stated) those with which on solemn occasions the people also greeted the arrival of festive pilgrims,³⁷

³⁴This after *Lightfoot. Wunsche* (Erlaut. d. Evang. p. 241) goes so far as to put this alternative, that either the Evangelists confounded the Passover with the Feast of the Tabernacles, or that they purposely transferred to the Passover a ceremony of the Feast of Tabernacles!

³⁵[Psalm 113-118.](#)

³⁶Such were, and even now are, common demonstrations in the East, to welcome a king, a conqueror, or a deliverer. For a large number of heathen and Jewish instances of the same time, comp. *Wetstein*, ad loc. (i. pp. 460, 461).

³⁷I am aware, that so great an authority as Professor *Delitzsch* calls this in question (*Zeitschr. für Luther. Theol.* for 1855, p. 653). But the testimony of the Midrash is against him. *Delitzsch* regards it as the shout of the Feast of Tabernacles. But how should that have been raised before the Feast of Passover? Again, it does not seem reasonable to suppose, that the multitude had with full consciousness proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, and intended to celebrate there and then the fulfilment of the typical meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles.

although, as being offered to Christ alone, and as accompanied by such demonstrations, they may have implied that they hailed Him as the promised King, and have converted His Entry into a triumph in which the people did homage. And, if proof were required of the more sober, and, may we not add, rational view here advocated, it would be found in this, that not till after His Resurrection did even His own disciples understand the significance of the whole scene which they had witnessed, and in which they had borne such a part. [14]

The anger and jealousy of the Pharisees understood it better, and watched for the opportunity of revenge. But, for the present, on that bright spring-day, the weak, excitable, fickle populace streamed before Him through the City-gates, through the narrow streets, up the Temple-mountain. Everywhere the tramp of their feet, and the shout of their acclamations brought men, women, and children into the streets and on the housetops. The City was moved, and from mouth to mouth the question passed among the eager crowd of curious onlookers: Who is He? And the multitude answered—not, this is Israel's Messiah-King, but: This is Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And so up into the Temple!

He alone was silent and sad among this excited multitude, the marks of the tears He had wept over Jerusalem still on His cheek. It is not so, that an earthly King enters His City in triumph; not so, that the Messiah of Israel's expectation would have gone into His Temple. He spake not, but only looked round about upon all things, as if to view the field on which He was to suffer and die. And now the shadows of evening were creeping up; and, weary and sad, He once more returned with the twelve disciples to the shelter and rest of Bethany.

Chapter 2—The Second Day in Passion-Week

The Barren Fig-Tree—The Cleansing of the Temple—The Hosanna of the Children

(St. [Matthew 21:12-22](#); St. [Mark 11:15-26](#); St. [Luke 19:45-48](#).)

How the King of Israel spent the night after the triumphal Entry into His City and Temple, we may venture reverently to infer. His royal banquet would be fellowship with the disciples. We know how often His nights had been spent in lonely prayer,¹ and surely it is not too bold to associate such thoughts with the first night in Passion week. Thus, also, we can most readily account for that exhaustion and faintness of hunger, which next morning made Him seek fruit on the fig-tree on His way to the City.

It was very early² on the morning of the second day in Passion week (Monday), when Jesus, with his disciples, left Bethany. In the fresh, crisp, spring air, after the exhaustion of that night, He hungered. By the roadside, as so often in the East, a solitary tree³ grew in the rocky soil. It must have stood on an eminence, where it caught the sunshine and warmth, for He saw it afar off⁴ and though spring had but lately wooed nature into life, it stood out, with its wide-spreading mantle of green, against the sky. It was not the season of figs but the tree, covered with leaves, attracted His attention. It might have been, that they hid some of the fruit which hung through the winter, or else the springing fruits of the new crop. For it is a well-known fact, that in Palestine the fruit appears before the leaves⁵ and that this fig-tree, whether from its exposure or soil, was precocious, is evident from the fact that it was in leaf, which

¹St. [Mark 1:35](#); St. [Luke 5:16](#); St. [Matthew 14:23](#); St. [Luke 6:12](#); [9:28](#).

²prwi, used of the last night-watch in St. [Mark 1:35](#).

³idwn sukhn miana *single* tree.

⁴St. [Mark](#).

⁵*Tristram*, Nat. Hist. of the Bible, p. 352.

is quite unusual at that season on the Mount of Olives,⁶ The old fruit would, of course, have been edible, and in regard to the unripe fruit we have the distinct evidence of the Mishnah,⁷ confirmed by the Talmud,⁸ that the unripe fruit was eaten, so soon as it began to assume a red colour—as it is expressed, in the field, with bread or, as we understand it, by those whom hunger overtook in the fields, whether working or travelling. But in the present case there was neither old nor new fruit, but leaves only. It was evidently a barren fig-tree, cumbering the ground, and to be hewn down. Our mind almost instinctively reverts to the Parable of the Barren Fig-tree, which He had so lately spoken.⁹ To Him, Who but yesterday had wept over the Jerusalem that knew not the day of its visitation, and over which the sharp axe of judgment was already lifted, this fig-tree, with its luxuriant mantle of leaves, must have recalled, with pictorial vividness, the scene of the previous day. Israel was that barren fig-tree; and the leaves only covered their nakedness, as erst they had that of our first parents after their Fall. And the judgment, symbolically spoken in the Parable, must be symbolically executed in this leafy fig-tree, barren when searched for fruit by the Master. It seems almost an inward necessity, not only symbolically but really also, that Christ's Word should have laid it low. We cannot conceive that any other should have eaten of it after the hungering Christ had in vain sought fruit thereon. We cannot conceive that anything should resist Christ, and not be swept away. We cannot conceive, that the reality of what He had taught should not, when occasion came, be visibly placed before the eyes of the disciples. Lastly, we seem to feel (with *Bengel*) that, as always, the manifestation of His true Humanity, in hunger, should be accompanied by that of His Divinity, in the power of His Word of judgment.¹⁰

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With St. Matthew, who, for the sake of continuity, relates this incident after the events of that day (the Monday) and immediately

⁶On the fig-tree generally, see the remarks on the Parable of the Barren Fig-tree, Book IV. ch 16.

⁷Shebh. iv. 7.

⁸Jer. Shebh. 35 *b*, last lines.

⁹St. Luke 13:6-9.

¹⁰Comp. St. John 11:35-44.

before those of the next, ¹¹ we anticipate what was only witnessed on the morrow. ¹² As St. Matthew has it: on Christ's Word the fig-tree immediately withered away. But according to the more detailed account of St. Mark, it was only next morning, when they again passed by, that they noticed the fig-tree had withered from its very roots. The spectacle attracted their attention, and vividly recalled the Words of Christ, to which, on the previous day, they had, perhaps, scarcely attached sufficient importance. And it was the suddenness and completeness of the judgment that had been denounced, which now struck Peter, rather than its symbolic meaning. It was rather the Miracle than its moral and spiritual import—the storm and earthquake rather than the still small Voice—which impressed the disciples. Besides, the words of Peter are at least capable of this interpretation, that the fig-tree had withered in consequence of, rather than by the Word of Christ. But He ever leads His own from mere wonderment at the Miraculous up to that which is higher. ¹³ His answer now combined all that they needed to learn. It pointed to the typical lesson of what had taken place: the need of realising, simple faith, the absence of which was the cause of Israel's leafy barrenness, and which, if present and active, could accomplish all, however impossible it might seem by outward means. ¹⁴ And yet it was only to have faith in God; such faith as becomes those who know God; a faith in God, which seeks not and has not its foundation in anything outward, but rests on Him alone. To one who shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass, it shall be to him. ¹⁵ And this general principle of the Kingdom, which to the devout and reverent believer needs neither explanation nor limitation, received its further application, specially to the Apostles in their coming need: Therefore I say unto you, whatsoever things, praying, ye ask for, believe that ye have received them [not,

¹¹St. Matthew 21:18, 22.

¹²St. Mark 11:20.

¹³Bengel.

¹⁴We remind the reader, that the expression rooting up mountains is in common Rabbinic use as a hyperbole for doing the impossible or the incredible. For the former, see Babha B. 3 b (yrw+ rq; for the latter (Myrh rqwBer. 64 a; Sanh. 24 a; Horay. 14 a.

¹⁵The other words are spurious.

in the counsel of God, ¹⁶ but actually, in answer to the prayer of faith], and it shall be to you.

These two things follow: faith gives absolute power in prayer, but it is also its moral condition. None other than this is faith; and none other than faith—absolute, simple, trustful—gives glory to God, or has the promise. This is, so to speak, the New Testament application of the first Table of the Law, summed up in the Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. But there is yet another moral condition of prayer closely connected with the first—a New Testament application of the second Table of the Law, summed up in the Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. If the first moral condition was God-ward, the second is man-ward; if the first bound us to faith, the second binds us to charity, while hope, the expectancy of answered prayer, is the link connecting the two. Prayer, unlimited in its possibilities, stands midway between heaven and earth; with one hand it reaches up to heaven, with the other down to earth; in it, faith prepares to receive, what charity is ready to dispense. He who so prays believes in God and loves man; such prayer is not selfish, self-seeking, self-conscious; least of all, is it compatible with mindfulness of wrongs, or an unforgiving spirit. This, then, is the second condition of prayer, and not only of such all-prevailing prayer, but even of personal acceptance in prayer. We can, therefore, have no doubt that St. Mark correctly reports in this connection this as the condition which the Lord attaches to acceptance, that we previously put away all uncharitableness. ¹⁷ ¹⁸ We remember, that the promise had a special application to the *Apostles* and *early disciples*; we also remember, how difficult to them was the thought of full forgiveness of offenders and persecutors; ¹⁹ and again, how great the temptation to avenge wrongs and to wield miraculous power in the vindication of their authority. ²⁰ In these circumstances Peter and his fellow-disciples, when assured of the unlimited power of the prayer of faith, required all the more to be both reminded and warned of this as its second

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¹⁶So Meyer.

¹⁷St. Mark 11:25.

¹⁸Ver. 26 is in all probability a spurious addition.

¹⁹St. Matthew 18:21, 22.

²⁰St. Luke 9:52-56.

moral condition: the need of hearty forgiveness, if they had aught against any.

[19] From this digression we return to the events of that second day in Passion week (the Monday), which began with the symbolic judgment on the leafy, barren fig-tree. The same symbolism of judgment was to be immediately set forth still more clearly, and that in the Temple itself. On the previous afternoon, when Christ had come to it, the services were probably over, and the Sanctuary comparatively empty of worshippers and of those who there carried on their traffic. When treating of the first cleansing of the Temple, at the beginning of Christ's Ministry, sufficient has been said to explain the character and mode of that nefarious traffic, the profits of which went to the leaders of the priesthood, as also how popular indignation was roused alike against this trade and the traders. We need not here recall the words of Christ; Jewish authorities sufficiently describe, in even stronger terms, this transformation of the House of Prayer into a den of robbers. ²¹ If, when beginning to do the business of His Father, and for the first time publicly presenting Himself with Messianic claim, it was fitting He should take such authority, and first cleanse the Temple of the nefarious intruders who, under the guise of being God's chief priests, made His House one of traffic, much more was this appropriate now, at the close of His Work, when, as King, He had entered His City, and publicly claimed authority. At the first it had been for teaching and warning, now it was in symbolic judgment; what and as He then began, that and so He now finished. Accordingly, as we compare the words, and even some of the acts, of the first cleansing with those accompanying and explaining the second, we find the latter, we shall not say, much more severe, but bearing a different character—that of final judicial sentence. ²²

²¹ See the full account in Book III. ch 5.

²² The grounds on which this second has to be distinguished from the first cleansing of the Temple, which is recorded only by St. John (2:13-23) have been explained on a previous occasion. They are stated in most commentaries, though perhaps not always satisfactorily. But intelligent readers can have no difficulty in gathering them for themselves. The difficulty lies not in the two purifications, nor yet in the silence of the Synoptists as to the first, since the early Jerusalem Ministry lay not within the scope of their narratives, but in the silence of the Fourth Gospel in regard to the second purification. But here we would remark that, less than any of the others, is the Fourth Gospel a *history* or successive narration; but, if we may so say, historical dogmatics—the *Logos* in the historical

Nor did the Temple-authorities now, as on the former occasion, [20] seek to raise the populace against Him, or challenge His authority by demanding the warrant of a sign. The contest had reached quite another stage. They heard what He said in their condemnation, and with bitter hatred in their hearts sought for some means to destroy Him. But fear of the people restrained their violence. For, marvellous indeed was the power which He wielded. With rapt attention the people hung entranced on his lips,²³ astonished at those new and blessed truths which dropped from them. All was so other than it had been! By His authority the Temple was cleansed of the unholy, thievish traffic which a corrupt priesthood carried on, and so, for the time, restored to the solemn Service of God; and that purified House now became the scene of Christ's teaching, when He spake those words of blessed truth and of comfort concerning the Father—thus truly realising the prophetic promise of a House of Prayer for all the nations.²⁴ And as those traffickers were driven from the Temple, and He spake, there flocked in from porches and Temple-Mount the poor sufferers—the blind and the lame—to get healing to body and soul. It was truly spring-time in that Temple, and the boys that gathered about their fathers and looked in turn from their faces of rapt wonderment and enthusiasm to the Godlike Face of the Christ, and then on those healed sufferers, took up the echoes of the welcome at His entrance into Jerusalem—in their simplicity understanding and applying them better—as they burst into Hosanna to the Son of David.

It rang through the courts and porches of the Temple, this Children's Hosanna. They heard it, whom the wonders He had spoken and done, so far from leading to repentance and faith, had only filled with indignation. Once more in their impotent anger they sought, as the Pharisees had done on the day of His Entry, by a hypocritical appeal to His reverence for God, not only to mislead, and so to use

manifestation of His Person and Work. If so, the first included the second purification of the Temple. Again, to have introduced it, or the cursing of the fig-tree, would have been to break up the course, and mar the symmetry of the narrative (St. [John 12.](#)), which presents in successive and deepening shading the attestation of the Christ: at the Supper of Bethany, on His Entry into Jerusalem, before the Greeks in the Temple, by the Voice from Heaven before His gainsayers, and to his disciples.

²³St. Luke.

²⁴St. Mark.

His very love of the truth against the truth, but to betray Him into silencing those Children's Voices. But the undimmed mirror of His soul only reflected the light. ²⁵

- [21] These Children's Voices were Angels Echoes, echoes of the far-off praises of heaven, which children's souls had caught and children's lips welled forth. Not from the great, the wise, nor the learned, but out of the mouth of babes and sucklings has He perfected praise. ²⁶ And this, also, is the Music of the Gospel.

²⁵We may here note, once for all, that the manner of answering used by Christ, that of answering a question by putting another in which the answer appeared with irresistible force. was very common among the Jews (rbd Kwtm rbd by#m). Another mode was by an allegory—whether of word or action.

²⁶So in the LXX., rightly giving the sense; in the original strength. It is perhaps one of the grandest of the grand contrasts in the Psalms: God opposing and appeasing His enemies, not by a display of power, as they understand it, but by the mouth of young boys [such is the proper rendering] and sucklings. The Eternal of Hosts has these for His armour-bearers, and needs none other. The ancient Synagogue, somewhat realistically, yet with a basis of higher truth, declared (in the Haggadah), that at the Red Sea little children, even the babes in the womb, had joined in Israel's song of triumph, so fulfilling this saying of the Psalmist.

Chapter 3—The Third Day in Passion-Week

[22]

The Events of that Day—The Question of Christ's Authority—The Question of Tribute to Caesar—The Widow's Farthing—The Greeks who sought to see Jesus Summary and Retrospect of the Public Ministry of Christ

(St. [Matthew 21:23-27](#); St. [Mark 11:27-33](#); St. [Luke 20:1-8](#); St. [Matthew 22:15-22](#); St. [Mark 12:13-17](#); St. [Luke 20:20-26](#); St. [Matthew 22:41-46](#); St. [Luke 21:1-4](#); St. [John 12:20-50](#).)

The record of this third day is so crowded, the actors introduced on the scene are so many, the occurrences so varied, and the transitions so rapid, that it is even more than usually difficult to arrange all in chronological order. Nor need we wonder at this, when we remember that this was, so to speak, Christ's last working-day—the last, of His public Mission to Israel, so far as its active part was concerned; the last day in the Temple; the last, of teaching and warning to Pharisees and Sadducees; the last, of his call to national repentance.

That what follows must be included in one day, appears from the circumstance that its beginning is expressly mentioned by St. Mark ¹ in connection with the notice of the withering of the fig-tree, while its close is not only indicated in the last words of Christ's Discourses, as reported by the Synoptists, ² but the beginning of another day is afterwards equally clearly marked. ³

Considering the multiplicity of occurrences, it will be better to group them together, rather than follow the exact order of their succession. Accordingly, this chapter will be devoted to the *events* of the third day in Passion Week.

¹St. [Mark 11:20](#).

²St. [Matthew 25:46](#); St. [Mark 13:37](#); St. [Luke 21:36-38](#).

³St. [Matthew 26:1](#); St. [Mark 14:1](#); St. [Luke 22:1](#).

1. As usually, the day commenced ⁴ with teaching in the Temple. ⁵ We gather this from the expression: as He was walking ⁶ viz., in one of the Porches, where, as we know considerable freedom of meeting, conversing, or even teaching, was allowed. It will be remembered, that on the previous day the authorities had been afraid to interfere with Him. In silence they had witnessed, with impotent rage, the expulsion of their traffic-mongers; in silence they had listened to His teaching, and seen His miracles. Not till the Hosanna of the little boys—perhaps those children of the Levites who acted as choristers in the Temple ⁷—wakened them from the stupor of their fears, had they ventured on a feeble remonstrance, in the forlorn hope that He might be induced to conciliate them. But with the night and morning other counsels had come. Besides, the circumstances were somewhat different. It was early morning, the hearers were new, and the wondrous influence of His Words had not yet bent them to His Will. From the formal manner in which the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders are introduced, ⁸ and from the circumstance that they so met Christ immediately on His entry into the Temple, we can scarcely doubt that a meeting, although informal, ⁹ of the authorities had been held to concert measures against the growing danger. Yet, even so, cowardice as well as cunning marked their procedure. They dared not directly oppose Him, but endeavoured, by attacking Him on the one point where he seemed to lay Himself open to it, to arrogate to themselves the appearance of strict legality, and so to turn popular feeling against Him.

For, there was no principle more firmly established by universal consent than that *authoritative* teaching ¹⁰ required previous authorisation. Indeed, this logically followed from the principle of

⁴St. Matthew.

⁵St. Luke.

⁶St. Mark.

⁷For these Levite chorister-boys, comp. The Temple and its Services p. 143.

⁸St. Mark.

⁹There is no evidence of a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin, nor, indeed, was there any case which, according to Jewish Law, could have been laid before them. Still less can we admit (with Dean *Plumptre*), that the Chief Priests, Scribes, and Elders represented the then constituent elements of the Sanhedrin.'

¹⁰Otherwise the greatest liberty of utterance was accorded to all who were qualified to teach.

Rabbinism. All teaching must be authoritative, since it was traditional—approved by authority, and handed down from teacher to disciple. The highest honour of a scholar was, that he was like a well-plastered cistern, from which not a drop had leaked of what had been poured into it. The ultimate appeal in cases of discussion was always to some great authority, whether an individual Teacher or a Decree by the Sanhedrin. In this manner had the great Hillel first vindicated his claim to be the Teacher of his time and to decide the disputes then pending. And, to decide differently from authority, was either the mark of ignorant assumption or the outcome of daring rebellion, in either case to be visited with the ban. And this was at least one aspect of the controversy as between the chief authorities and Jesus. No one would have thought of interfering with a mere Haggadist—a popular expositor, preacher, or teller of legends. But authoritatively to teach, required other warrant. In fact there was regular ordination (*Semikhah*) to the office of Rabbi, Elder, and Judge, for the three functions were combined in one. According to the Mishnah, the disciples sat before the Sanhedrin in three rows, the members of the Sanhedrin being recruited successively from the front-rank of the Scholars. ¹¹

At first the practice is said to have been for every Rabbi to accredit his own disciples. But afterwards this right was transferred to the Sanhedrin, with the proviso that this body might not ordain without the consent of its Chief, though the latter might do so without consent of the Sanhedrin. ¹² But this privilege was afterwards withdrawn on account of abuses. Although we have not any description of the earliest mode of ordination, the very name—*Semikhah*—implies the imposition of hands. Again, in the oldest record, reaching up, no doubt, to the time of Christ, the presence of at least three ordained persons was required for ordination. ¹³ At a later period, the presence of an ordained Rabbi, with the assessorship of two others, even if unordained, was deemed sufficient. ¹⁴ In the course of time certain formalities were added. The person to be ordained had to deliver a Discourse; hymns and poems were recited; the title Rabbi was

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¹¹Sanh. iv. 4.

¹²Jer. Sanh. 19 *a*; lines 29 &c. from bottom.

¹³Sanh. i. 3.

¹⁴Sanh. 7 *b*.

formally bestowed on the candidate, and authority given him to teach and to act as Judge [to bind and loose, to declare guilty or free]. Nay, there seem to have been even different orders, according to the authority bestowed on the person ordained. The formula in bestowing *full* orders was: Let him teach; let him teach; let him judge; let him decide on questions of first-born; ¹⁵ let him decide; let him judge! At one time it was held that ordination could only take place in the Holy Land. Those who went abroad took with them their letters of orders. ¹⁶

[25] At whatever periods some of these practices may have been introduced, it is at least certain that, at the time of our Lord, no one would have ventured authoritatively to teach without proper Rabbinic authorisation. The question, therefore, with which the Jewish authorities met Christ, while teaching, was one which had a very real meaning, and appealed to the habits and feelings of the people who listened to Jesus. Otherwise, also, it was cunningly framed. For, it did not merely challenge Him for teaching, but also asked for His authority in what He *did*, referring not only to His Work generally, but, perhaps, especially to what had happened on the previous day. They were not there to oppose Him; but, when a man did as He had done in the Temple, it was their duty to verify his credentials. Finally, the alternative question reported by St. Mark: or'—if Thou hast not proper Rabbinic commission—who gave Thee this authority to do these things? seems clearly to point to their contention, that the power which Jesus wielded was delegated to Him by none other than Beelzebul.

The point in our Lord's reply seems to have been strangely overlooked by commentators. ¹⁷ As His words are generally understood, they would have amounted only to silencing His questioners—and that, in a manner which would, under ordinary circumstances, be scarcely regarded as either fair or ingenuous. It would have been

¹⁵These involved points of special difficulty in cannon-law.

¹⁶Comp. *Hamburger*, Real-Encycl. ii. pp. 883-886. But he adds little to the learned labours of *Selden*, De Synedriis, ed. Frcf. pp. 681-713. How the notion can have arisen that in early times a key was handed at ordination (Dean *Plumptre* and many others), it is difficult to say—unless it be from a misunderstanding of St. [Luke 11:52](#), or from a strange mistake of *Lightfoot's* meaning ad loc.

¹⁷St. [Matthew 21:23-27](#); St. [Mark 11:27-33](#); St. [Luke 20:1-8](#).

simply to turn the question against themselves, and so in turn to raise popular prejudice. But the Lord's words meant quite other. He *did* answer their question, though He also exposed the cunning and cowardice which prompted it. To the challenge for His authority, and the dark hint about Satanic agency, He replied by an appeal to the Baptist. He had borne full witness to the Mission of Christ from the Father, and all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. Were they satisfied? What was their view of the Baptism in preparation for the Coming of Christ? No? They would not, or could not answer! If they said the Baptist was a prophet, this implied not only the authorisation of the Mission of Jesus, but the call to believe on Him. On the other hand, they were afraid publicly to disown John! And so their cunning and cowardice stood out self-condemned, when they pleaded ignorance—a plea so grossly and manifestly dishonest, that Christ, having given what all must have felt to be a complete answer, could refuse further discussion with them on this point. [26]

2. Foiled in their endeavor to involve Him with the ecclesiastical, they next attempted the much more dangerous device of bringing Him into collision with the civil authorities. Remembering the ever watchful jealousy of Rome, the reckless tyranny of Pilate, and the low artifices of Herod, who was at that time in Jerusalem,¹⁸ we instinctively feel, how even the slightest compromise on the part of Jesus in regard to the authority of Caesar would have been absolutely fatal. If it could have been proved, on undeniable testimony, that Jesus had declared Himself on the side of, or even encouraged, the so-called Nationalist party, He would quickly perished, like Judas of Galilee.¹⁹ The Jewish leaders would thus have readily accomplished their object, and its unpopularity have recoiled only on the hated Roman power. How great the danger was which threatened Jesus, may be gathered from this, that, despite His clear answer, the charge that He prevented the nation, forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, was actually among those brought against Him before Pilate.²⁰

¹⁸St. Luke 13:7.

¹⁹Acts 5:37; Jos. Ant. xviii. 1. 1; 20:5. 2.

²⁰St. Luke 23:2.

The plot, for such it was,²¹ was most cunningly concocted. The object was to spy out His inmost thoughts,²² and, if possible, entangle Him in His talk.²³ For this purpose it was not the old Pharisees, whom He knew and would have distrusted, who came, but some of their disciples—apparently fresh, earnest, zealous, conscientious men. With them had combined certain of the Herodians’—of course, not a sect nor religious school, but a political party at the time. We know comparatively little of the deeper political movements in Judaea, only so much as it has suited Josephus to record. But we cannot be greatly mistaken in regarding the Herodians as a party which honestly accepted the House of Herod as occupants of the Jewish throne. Differing from the extreme section of the Pharisees, who hated Herod, and from the Nationalists it might have been a middle or moderate Jewish party—semi-Roman and semi-Nationalist. We know that it was the ambition of Herod Antipas again to unite under his sway of the whole of Palestine; but we know not what intrigues may have been carried on for that purpose, alike with the Pharisees and the Romans. Nor is it the first time in this history, that we find the Pharisees and the Herodians combined.²⁴ Herod may, indeed, have been unwilling to incur the unpopularity of personally proceeding against the Great Prophet of Nazareth, especially as he must have had so keen a remembrance of what the murder of John had cost him. Perhaps he would fain, if he could, have made use of Him, and played Him off as the popular Messiah against the popular leaders. But, as matters had gone, he must have been anxious to rid himself of what might be a formidable rival, while, at the same time, his party would be glad to join with the Pharisees in what would secure their gratitude and allegiance. Such, or similar, may have been the motives which brought about this strange alliance of Pharisees and Herodians.

Feigning themselves just men, they now came to Jesus with honeyed words, intended to disarm His suspicions, but, by an appeal to His fearlessness and singleness of moral purpose, to induce Him to commit Himself without reserve. Was it lawful for them to give

²¹St. [Matthew 22:15-22](#); St. [Mark 12:13-17](#); St. [Luke 20:19-26](#).

²²St. [Luke](#).

²³St. [Matthew](#).

²⁴Comp. for example, St. [Mark 3:6](#).

tribute unto Caesar, or not? were they to pay the capitation-tax²⁵ of one drachm, or to refuse it? We know how later Judaism would have answered such a question. It lays down the principle, that the right of coinage implies the authority of levying taxes, and indeed constitutes such evidence of *de facto* government as to make it duty absolutely to submit to it.²⁶ So much was this felt, that the Maccabees, and, in the last Jewish war, Bar Kokhabh, the false Messiah, issued a coinage dating from the liberation of Jerusalem. We cannot therefore doubt, that this principle about coinage, taxation, and government was generally accepted in Judaea. On the other hand, there was a strong party in the land; with which, not only politically but religiously, many of the noblest spirits would sympathise, which maintained, that to pay the tribute-money to Caesar was virtually to own his royal authority, and so to disown that of Jehovah, Who alone was Israel's King. They would argue, that all the miseries of the land and people were due to this national unfaithfulness. Indeed, this was the fundamental principle of the Nationalist movement. History has recorded many similar movements, in which strong political feelings have been strangely blended with religious fanaticism, and which have numbered in their ranks, together with unscrupulous partisans, not a few who were sincere patriots or earnest religionists. It has been suggested in a former part of this book, that the Nationalist movement may have had an important preparatory bearing on some of the earlier followers of Jesus, perhaps at the beginning of their inquiries, just as, in the West, Alexandrian philosophy moved to many a preparation for Christianity.²⁷

At any rate, the scruple expressed by these men would, if genuine, have called forth sympathy.²⁸ But what was the alternative here presented to Christ? To have said *No*, would have been to command rebellion; to have said simply *Yes*, would have been to give a painful

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²⁵ *Jos.* Jew. War ii. 16. 4.

²⁶ Babha K. 113 *a* and the instance of Abigail pleading with David that Saul's coinage was still in circulation. *Jer. Sanh.* 20 *b*.

²⁷ For fuller particulars on this point see Book II. ch 10.

²⁸ Some might have even religious scruples about handling a coin of Caesar. Such an instance is mentioned in *Ab. Zar.* 6 *b*, where a Rabbi is advised to throw it into the water, and pretend it had accidentally dropped from his hand. but probably that instance refers to the avoidance of all possibility of being regarded as sharing in idol-festivities.

shock to keep feeling, and, in a sense, in the eyes of the people, the lie to His own claim of being Israel's Messiah-King!

But the Lord escaped from this temptation'—because, being true, it was no real temptation to Him.²⁹ Their knavery and hypocrisy He immediately perceived and exposed, in this also responding to their appeal of being true. Once more and emphatically must we disclaim the idea that Christ's was rather an evasion of the question than a reply. It was a very real rather, when pointing to the image and inscription on the coin,³⁰

[29] for which He had called, He said, What *is* Caesar's render to Caesar, and what is God's to God.³¹ It did far more than rebuke their hypocrisy and presumption; it answered not only that question of theirs to all earnest men of that time, as it would present itself to their minds, but it settles to all time and for all circumstances the principle underlying it. Christ's Kingdom is not of this world; a true Theocracy is not inconsistent with submission to the secular power in things that are really its own; politics and religion neither include, nor yet exclude, each other; they are, side by side, in different domains. The State is Divinely sanctioned, and religion is Divinely sanctioned—and both are equally the ordinance of God. On this principle did Apostolic authority regulate the relations between Church and State, even when the latter was heathen. The question about the limits of either province has been hotly discussed by sectarians on either side, who have claimed the saying of Christ in support of one or the opposite extreme which they have advocated. And yet, to the simple searcher after duty, it seems not so difficult to see the distinction, if only we succeed in purging ourselves of logical refinements and strained references.

²⁹However pictorial, the sketch of this given by *Keim* (*Jesu von Nazara* iii. 1, pp. 131 &c.) is—as too often—somewhat exaggerated.

³⁰By a strange concurrence the coin, which on Christ's demand was handed to Him, bore the image of the Emperor. It must, therefore, have been either a foreign one (Roman), or else one of the Tetrarch Philip, who exceptionally had the image of *Tiberius* on his coins (comp. *Schürer*, N.T. *Zeitgesch.* p. 231). Neither Herod nor Herod Antipas had any image on their coins, but only the usual devices of the Maccabean period. And the coins, which the Roman emperors had struck specially for Palestine, bore till the time of Vespasian, in accommodation to Jewish prejudices, no image of any kind.

³¹St. [Mark 12:17](#).

It was an answer not only most truthful, but of marvellous beauty and depth. It elevated the controversy into quite another sphere, where there was no conflict between what was due to God and to man—indeed, no conflict at all, but Divine harmony and peace. Nor did it speak harshly of the Nationalist aspirations, nor yet plead the cause of Rome. It said not whether the rule of Rome was right or should be permanent—but only what all must have felt to be Divine. And so they, who had come to entangle Him, went away not convinced nor converted, but marvelling exceedingly.³²

3. Passing for the present from the cavils of the Sadducees and the gainsaying of the Scribes, we come unexpectedly on one of those sweet pictures—a historical miniature, as it is presented to us—which affords real relief to the eye amidst the glare all around.³³ From the bitter malice of His enemies and the predicted judgment upon them, we turn to the silent worship of her who gave her all, and to the words with which Jesus owned it, all unknown to her. It comes to us the more welcome, that it exhibits in deed what Christ had said to those hypocrites who had discussed it, whether the tribute given to Caesar was not robbing God of what was His. Truly here was one, who, in the simplicity of her humble worship, gave to the Lord what was His!

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Weary with the contention, the Master had left those to whom He had spoken in the Porches, and, while the crowd wrangled about His Words or His Person, had ascended the flight of steps which led from the Terrace into the Temple-building. From these steps—whether those leading up to the Beautiful Gate or one of the side gates—He could gain full view into The Court of the Women into which they opened. On these steps, or within the gate (for in no other place was it lawful), He sat Him down, watching the multitude. The time of Sacrifice was past, and those who still lingered had remained for private devotion, for private sacrifices, or to pay their vows and offerings. Although the topography of the Temple, especially of this part of it, is not without its difficulties, we know that under the colonnades, which surrounded the Court of the Women but still left in the middle room for more than 15,000 worshippers, provision was made

³²exequamazon, according to the better reading in St. Mark.

³³St. Mark 13:41-44; St. Luke 21:1-4.

for receiving religious and charitable shaped boxes (*Shopharoth*); somewhere here also we must locate two chambers: ³⁴ that of the silent for gifts to be distributed in secret to the children of the pious poor, and that where votive vessels were deposited. Perhaps there was here also a special chamber for offerings. ³⁵ These trumpets bore each inscriptions, marking the objects of contribution—whether to make up for past neglect, to pay for certain sacrifices, to provide incense, wood, or for other gifts.

[31] As they passed to this or that treasury-box, it must have been a study of deep interest, especially on that day, to watch the givers. Some might come with appearance of self-righteousness, some even with ostentation, some as cheerfully performing a happy duty. Many that were rich cast in much'—yes, very much, for such was the tendency that (as already stated) a law had to be enacted, forbidding the gift of the Temple of more than a certain proportion of one's possessions. And the amount of such contributions may be inferred by recalling the circumstances, that, at the time of Pompey and Crassus, the Temple-Treasury, after having lavishly defrayed every possible expenditure, contained in money nearly half a million, and precious vessels to the value of nearly two millions sterling. ³⁶

And as Jesus so sat on these steps, looking out on the ever-shifting panorama, His gaze was riveted by a solitary figure. The simple words of St. Mark sketch a story of singular pathos. It was one pauper widow. We can see her coming alone, as if ashamed to mingle with the crowd of rich givers; ashamed to have her offering seen; ashamed, perhaps, to bring it; a widow in the garb of a desolate mourner; her condition, appearance, and bearing that of a pauper. He observed her closely and read her truly. She held in her hand only the smallest coins, two Perutahs and it should be known that it was not lawful to contribute a less amount. ³⁷ Together these two Perutahs made a *quadrans*, which was the ninety-sixth part of a *denar*, itself of the value of about sevenpence. But it was all her living perhaps all that she had been able to save out of her scanty housekeeping; more probably, all that she had to live upon for that

³⁴Sheqal. vi. 5; 5:6.

³⁵Midd. i. 1.

³⁶Jos. Ant. xvi. 4. 4; 7. 1.

³⁷Babha B. 10 b.

day and till she wrought for more. And of this she now made humble offering unto God. He spake not to her words of encouragement, for she walked by faith; He offered not promise of return, for her reward was in heaven. She knew not that any had seen it—for the knowledge of eyes turned on her, even His, would have flushed with shame the pure cheek of her love; and any word, conscious notice, or promise would have married and turned aside the rising incense of her sacrifice. ³⁸

But to all time has it remained in the Church, like the perfume of Mary's alabaster that filled the house, this deed of self-denying sacrifice. More, far more, than the great gifts of their superfluity which the rich cast in, was, and is to all time, the gift of absolute self-surrender and sacrifice, tremblingly offered by the solitary mourner. And though He spake not to her, yet the sunshine of his words must have fallen into the dark desolateness of her heart; and, though perhaps she knew not why, it must have been a happy day, a day of rich feast in the heart, that when she gave up her whole living unto God. And so, perhaps, is every sacrifice for God all the more blessed, when we know not of its blessedness.

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Would that to all time its lesson had been cherished, not theoretically, but practically, by the Church! How much richer would have been her treasury: twice blessed in gift and givers. But so is not legend written. If it had been a story invented for a purpose or adorned with the tinsel of embellishment, the Saviour and the widow would not have so parted—to meet and to speak not on earth, but in heaven. She would have worshipped, and He spoken or done some great thing. Their silence was a tryst for heaven.

³⁸Jewish tradition, though it ever had painfully thrusts forward the *reward*, has some beautiful legends, allegories, and sayings about the gifts of the poor. One quotation must here suffice (Bemidb. R. 14). It is to the effect, that, if on who is poor, doeth charity, god says of him: This one is preventing Me. he has kept My commandments before they have come to him. I must recompense him. In Vayyikra R. 3, we read of a woman, whose offering of a handful of flour the priest despised, when God admonished him in a dream to value the gifts as highly as if she had offered herself. Yet another quotation from the Mishnah. The tractate Menachoth closes with these words: Alike as regards burnt-offerings of beasts and those of fowls (those of the poor) and the meat-offering, we find the expression "for a sweet savour," to teach us, that to offer much or to offer little is the same, provided only that a person direct mind and heart towards God.'

4. One other event of solemn joyous import remains to be recorded on that day. ³⁹ But so closely is it connected with what the Lord afterwards spoke, that the two cannot be separated. It is narrated only by St. John, who, as before explained, ⁴⁰ tells it as one of a series of progressive manifestations of the Christ: first in His Entry into the City, and then in the Temple—successively, to the Greeks, by the Voice from Heaven, and before the people.

[33] Precious as each part and verse here is, when taken by itself, there is some difficulty in combining them, and in showing their connection, and its meaning. But here we ought not to forget, that we have, in the Gospel-narrative, only the briefest account—as it were, headings, summaries, outlines, rather than a report. Nor do we know the surrounding circumstances. The words which Christ spoke after the request of the Greeks to be admitted to His Presence may bear some special reference also to the state of the disciples, and their unreadiness to enter into and share His predicted sufferings. And this may again be connected with Christ's prediction and Discourse about the last things. ⁴¹ For the position of the narrative in St. John's Gospel seems to imply that it was the last event of the day—nay, the conclusion of Christ's public Ministry. If this be so, words and admonitions, otherwise somewhat mysterious in their connection, would acquire a new meaning.

It was then, as we suppose, the evening of a long weary day of teaching. As the sun had been hastening towards its setting in red, He had spoken of that other sun-setting, with the sky all aglow in judgement, and of the darkness that was to follow—but also of the better Light would arise in it. And in those Temple-porches they had been hearing Him—seeing Him in His wonder-working yesterday, hearing Him in His wonder-speaking that day—those men of other tongues. They were Proselytes Greeks by birth, who had groped their way to the porch of Judaism, just as the first streaks of light were falling within upon his altar. They must have been stirred in their inmost being; felt, that it was just for such as they, and to them that He spoke; that this was what in the Old Testament they had guessed, anticipated, dimly hoped for, if they had not seen it—its

³⁹St. [John 12:20-50](#).

⁴⁰See ch 6.

⁴¹St. [Matthew 24](#).

grand faith, its grander hope, its grandest reality. Not one by one, and almost by stealth, were they thenceforth to come to the gate; but the portals were to be flung wide open, and as the golden light streamed out upon the way, He stood there, that bright Divine Personality, Who was not only the Son of David, but the Son of Man, to bid them the Father's welcome of good pleasure to the Kingdom.

And so, as the lengthening shadows gathered around the Temple-court and porches, they would fain have seen Him, not afar off, but near: spoken to Him. They had become Proselytes of Righteousness; they would become disciples of the Lord our Righteousness; as Proselytes they had come to Jerusalem to worship and they would learn to praise. Yet, in the simple self-unconscious modesty of their religious childhood, they dared not go to Jesus directly, but came with their request to Philip of Bethsaida.⁴² We know not why to him: whether from family connections, or that his education, or previous circumstances, connected Philip with these Greeks or whether anything in his position in the Apostolic circle, or something that had just occurred, influenced their choice. And he also—such was the ignorance of the Apostles of the inmost meaning of their Master—dared not go directly to Jesus, but went to his own townsman, who had been his early friend and fellow-disciple, and now stood so close to the Person of the Master—Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Together the two came to Jesus, Andrew apparently foremost. The answer of Jesus implies what, at any rate, we would have expected, that the request of these Gentile converts was granted, though this is not expressly stated, and it is extremely difficult to determine whether, and what portion of what He spake was addressed to the Greeks, and what to the disciples. Perhaps we should regard the opening words as bearing reference to the request of the Greeks, and hence as primarily addressed to the disciples,⁴³ but also as serving as introduction of the words that follow, which were spoken

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⁴²We mark here also the utter absence of all legendary embellishments as evidence of truth. So far from yielding to what, even in a book like the present, is a temptation, the narrative of the Evangelist is peculiarly meagre and void of details. We may note that only proselytes of righteousness who had submitted of circumcision, would be allowed fellowship in the regular worship.

⁴³St. [John 12:23](#).

primarily the Greeks,⁴⁴ but secondarily also to the disciples, and which bear on that terrible, very near, mystery of His Death, and their Baptism into it.

[35] As we see these Greeks approaching, the beginning of Christ's History seems re-enacted at its close. Not now in the stable of Bethlehem, but in the Temple, are the wise men the representatives of the Gentile world, offering their homage to the Messiah. But the life which had then begun was now all behind Him—and yet, in a sense, before Him. The hour of decision was about to strike. Not merely as the Messiah of Israel, but in His worldwide bearing as the Son of Man was He about to be glorified by receiving the homage of the Gentile world, of which the symbol and the firstfruits were now before Him. But only in one way could He thus be glorified: by dying for the salvation of the world, and so opening the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. On a thousand hills was the glorious harvest to tremble in the golden sunlight; but the corn of wheat falling into the ground, must, as it falls, die, burst its envelope, and so spring into a very manifoldedness of life. Otherwise would it have remained alone. This is the great paradox of the Kingdom of God—a paradox which has its symbol and analogon in nature, and which has also almost become the law of progress in history: that life which has not sprung of death abideth alone, and is really death, and that death is life. A paradox this, which has its ultimate reason in this, that sin has entered into the world.

And as to the Master, the Prince of Life, so to the disciples, as bearing forth the life. If, in this world of sin, He must fall as the seed-corn into the ground and die, that many may spring of Him, so must they also hate their life, that they may keep it unto life eternal. Thus serving, they must follow Him, that where He is they may also be, for the Father will honour them that honour the Son.

It is now sufficiently clear to us, that our Lord spake primarily to these Greeks, and secondarily to His disciples, of the meaning of His impending Death, of the necessity of faithfulness to Him in it, and of the blessing attaching thereto. Yet was not unconscious of the awful realities which this involved.⁴⁵ He was true, Man, and

⁴⁴v. 24-26.

⁴⁵v. 27, 28 a.

His Human Soul was troubled in view of it: ⁴⁶ True Man, therefore He felt it; True Man, therefore He spake it, and so also sympathised with them in their coming struggle. Truly Man, but also truly more than Man—and hence both the expressed desire, and at the same time the victory over that desire: What shall I say? ⁴⁷ “Father, save Me from this hour? ⁴⁸

But for this cause came I unto this hour!” And the seeming discord [36] is resolved, as both the Human and the Divine in the Son—faith and sight—join in glorious accord; Father, glorify Thy Name!

Such appeal and prayer, made in such circumstances, could not have remained unacknowledged, if He was the Messiah, Son of God. As at His Baptism, so at this Baptism of self-humiliation and absolute submission to suffering, came the Voice from Heaven, audible to all, but its words intelligible only to Him: I both glorified *it*, and will again glorify *it*! ⁴⁹ Words these, which carried the Divine seal of confirmation to all Christ’s past work, and assured it for that which was to come. The words of confirmation could only be for Himself; the Voice was for all. What mattered it, that some spoke of it as thunder on a spring evening, while others, with more reason, thought of Angel-Voices? To him it bore the assurance, which had all along been the ground of His claims, as it was the comfort in His Sufferings, that, as God had in the past glorified Himself in the Son, so would it be in the future in the perfecting of the work given Him to do. And this He now spake, as, looking on those Greeks as the emblem and firstfruits of the work finished in His Passion, He saw of the travail of His Soul, and was satisfied. Of both He spake in the prophetic present. To His view judgement had already come to this world, as it lay in the power of the Evil One, since the Prince of it was cast out from his present rule. And, in place of it, the Crucified Christ, lifted up out of the earth’—in the twofold sense—was, as the result of His Work, drawing, with sovereign, conquering power, all unto Him, and up with Him.

⁴⁶Concurrebat horror mortis et ardor obedientiae.—*Bengel*.

⁴⁷Quid dicam? non, quid eligam?—*Bengel*.

⁴⁸Professor *Westcott* has declared himself in favour of regarding this clause, not as a question, but as a prayer, But this seems to me incompatible alike with the preceding and the succeeding clause.

⁴⁹St. [John 7:28](#) b-33.

The Jews who heard it, so far understood Him, that His words referred to His removal from earth, or His Death, since this was a common Jewish mode of expression (qls Mlw (h Nm). ^{50 51}

[37] But they failed to understand His special reference to the manner of it. And yet, in view of the peculiarly shameful death to the cross, it was most important that He should ever point to it also. But, even in what they understood, they had a difficulty. They understood Him to imply that He would be taken from earth; and yet they had always been taught from the Scriptures ⁵² that the Messiah was, when fully manifested, to abide for ever, or, as the Rabbis put it, that His Reign was to be followed by the Resurrection. Or did He refer to any other One by the expression, Son of Man? Into the controversial part of the question the Lord did not enter; nor would it have been fitting to have so in that hour. But to their inquiry He fully replied, and that with such earnest, loving admonition as became His last address in the Temple. Yes; it was so! But a little while would the Light be among them. ⁵³ Let them hasten to avail themselves of it, ⁵⁴ lest darkness overtake them—and he that walked in darkness knew not wither he went. Oh, that His love could have arrested them! While they still had the Light would that they might learn to believe in the Light, that so they might become the children of Light!

They were His last words of appeal to them, ere He withdrew to spend His Sabbath of soul before the Great Contest. ⁵⁵ And the writer of the Fourth Gospel gathers up, by way of epilogue, the great contrast between Israel and Christ. ⁵⁶ Although He had shown so many miracles, they believe not on Him—and this their wilful unbelief was the fulfillment of Esaias prophecy of old concerning

⁵⁰v. 34-36 a.

⁵¹This is another evidence of the Aramaic education of the writer of the Fourth Gospel. Yet another is the peculiar Judaic use of the word *hhour*, in [ver. 27](#) b-33. But the idea of Prince of this world has no analogon in the r# Mlw(h (or Metatron) of Rabbinism, to whom, strangely, the designation r(n (in [Zechariah 2:4](#) A.V., Babha B. 75 b, and in [Psalm 37:25](#), Yebam. 16 b, about middle) is applied. And this is, on the other hand, quite as characteristic of the Gospel which, under Jewish forms, bears a totally contrary spirit.

⁵²It is another mark of Jewish authorship, this use of the word Law to denote the whole Scriptures.

⁵³Lux ipsa manet; sed non semper *in vobis*.

⁵⁴Ambulandum, non disceptandum. Fides non est deszes, sed agilis in luce.

⁵⁵St. [John 12:36](#) b.

⁵⁶St. [John 7:37-43](#).

the Messiah. ⁵⁷ On the other hand, their wilful unbelief was also the judgement of God in accordance with prophecy. ⁵⁸ Those who have followed the course of this history must have learned this above all, that the rejection of Christ by the Jews was not an isolated act, but the outcome and direct result of their whole previous religious development. In face of the clearest evidence, they did not believe, because they could not believe. The long course of their resistance to the prophetic message, and their perversion of it, was itself a hardening of their hearts, although at the same time a God-decreed sentence on their resistance. ⁵⁹ Because they would not believe—through this their mental obscuration, which came upon them in Divine judgement, although in the natural course of their self-chosen religious development—therefore, despite all evidence, they did not believe, when He came and did such miracles before them. And all this in accordance with prophecy, when Isaiah saw in far-off vision the bright glory ⁶⁰ of Messiah, and spoke of Him. Thus far Israel as a nation. And though, even among their chief rulers there were many who believed on him, yet dared they not make confession from fear that the Pharisees would put them out of the Synagogues, with all the terrible consequences which this implied. For such surrender of all were they not prepared, whose intellect might be convinced, but whose heart was not converted—who loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

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Such was Israel. On the other hand, what was the summary of the Christ's activity? His testimony now rose so loud, as to be within hearing of all (Jesus cried). ⁶¹ From first to last that testimony had pointed from Himself up to the Father. Its substance was the reality and the realisation of that which the Old Testament had pointed from Himself up to the Father. Its substance was the reality and the realisation of that which the Old Testament had infolded and

⁵⁷Isaiah 53:1.

⁵⁸Isaiah 6.

⁵⁹Hence the effect which is [Isaiah 6](#). is ascribed to the prophet, is here assigned to God. We say 'decreed'—but not decreed beforehand, and irrespective of their conduct. The passage is neither quoted from the Hebrew nor from the LXX., but Targumed.

⁶⁰The paraphrase of this passage in the Targum Jonathan (for which see Appendix II.) is, indeed, most interesting; but the *Yeqara* or outstanding splendour of Jehovah, is not that to which the Evangelist here refers.

⁶¹St. [John 12:44](#).

gradually unfolded to Israel, and through Israel to the world: the Fatherhood of God. To believe on him was really not faith in him, but faith in him that sent Him. A step higher: To behold Christ was to behold Him that had sent Him. ⁶² To combine these two: [39] Christ had come a light into the world, God had sent Him as the Sun of Righteousness, that by believing on him as the God-sent, men might attain moral vision—no longer abide in darkness but in the bright spiritual light that and risen. But as for the others, there were those who heard and did not keep ⁶³ His words; and, again, who rejected, Him, and did not receive His words. Neither in one nor the other case was the controversy as between His sayings and men. As regarded the one class, He had come into the world with the Word of salvation, not with the sword of judgement. As regarded His open enemies, He left the issue till the evidence of His word should appear in the terrible judgement of the last Day.

Once more, and more emphatic than ever, was the final appeal to His Mission by the Father. ⁶⁴ From first to last it had not been His own work: what He should say, and what He should speak, the Father Himself had given Him commandment. Nay, this commandment, and what He spoke in it, was not mere teaching, nor Law: it was Life everlasting. And so it is, and ever shall be, eternal thanks to the love of Him Who sent, and the grace of Him Who came: that the things which He spake, He spake as the Father said unto Him.

These two things, then, are the final summary by the Apostle of the History of the Christ in His public activity. On the one hand, he shows us how Israel, hardened in the self-chosen course of its religious development, could not, and, despite the clearest evidence, did not, believe. And, on the other hand, he sets before us the Christ absolutely surrendering Himself to do the Will and Work of the Father; witnessed by the Father; revealing the Father; coming as the Light of the world to chase away its moral darkness; speaking to all men, bringing to them salvation, not judgment, and leaving the vindication of His Word to its manifestation in the Last Day; and finally, as the Christ, Whose every message is commanded of God,

⁶²v. 45-48.

⁶³So according to the better reading.

⁶⁴v. 49, 50.

and Whose every commandment is life everlasting—and therefore and so speaking it, as the Father said unto Him.

These two things: concerning the history of Israel and their necessary unbelief, and concerning the Christ as God-sent, God-witnessed, God-revealing, bringing light and life as the Father's gift and command—the Christ as absolutely surrendering Himself to this Mission and embodying it—are the sum of the Gospel-narratives. They explain their meaning, and set forth their object and lessons.

Chapter 4—The Third Day in Passion-Week

The Last Controversies and Discourses—The Sadducees and the Resurrection The Scribe and the Great Commandment—Question to the Pharisees about David’s Son and Lord—Final Warning to the People: The Eight Woes Farewell

(St. [Matthew 22:23-33](#); St. [Mark 12:18-27](#); St. [Luke 20:27-39](#); St. [Matthew 12:34-40](#); St. [Mark 12:28-34](#); St. [Matthew 22:41-46](#); St. [Mark 12:35-40](#); St. [Luke 20:40-47](#); St. [Matthew 23](#).)

The last day in the Temple was not to pass without other temptations than that of the Priests when they questioned His authority, or of the Pharisees when they cunningly sought to entangle Him in His speech. Indeed, Christ had on this occasion taken a different position; He had claimed supreme authority, and thus challenged the leaders of Israel. For this reason, and because at the last we expect assaults from all His enemies, we are prepared for the controversies of that day.

We remember that, during the whole previous history, Christ had only on one occasion come into public conflict with the Sadducees, when, characteristically, they had asked of Him a sign from heaven. ¹ Their Rationalism would lead them to treat the whole movement as beneath serious notice, the outcome of ignorant fanaticism. Nevertheless, when Jesus assumed such a position in the Temple, and was evidently to such extent swaying the people, it behoved them, if only to guard their position, no longer to stand by. Possibly, the discomfiture and powerlessness of the Pharisees may also have had their influence. At any rate, the impression left is, that those of them who now went to Christ were delegates, and that the question which they put had been well planned. ²

¹St. [Matthew 16:1](#).

²There seems some reference to this question put to Christ in what we regard as covert references to Christianity in that mysterious passage in the Talmud (Yoma 66 b)

Their object was certainly not serious argument, but to use the much more dangerous weapon of ridicule. Persecution the populace might have resented; for open opposition all would have been prepared; but to come with icy politeness and philosophic calm, and by a well-turned question to reduce the renowned Galilean Teacher to silence, and show the absurdity of His teaching, would have been to inflict on His cause the most damaging blow. To this day such appeals to rough and ready common-sense are the main stock-in-trade of that coarse infidelity, which, ignoring alike the demands of higher thinking and the facts of history, appeals—so often, alas! effectually—to the untrained intellect of the multitude, and—shall we not say it?—to the coarse and lower in us all. Besides, had the Sadducees succeeded, they would at the same time have gained a signal triumph for their tenets, and defeated, together with the Galilean Teacher, their own Pharisaic opponents. The subject of attack was to be the Resurrection³—the same which is still the favourite topic for the appeals of the coarser forms of infidelity to the common sense of the masses. Making allowance for difference of circumstances, we might almost imagine we were listening to one of our modern orators of materialism. And in those days the defence of belief in the Resurrection laboured under twofold difficulty. It was as yet a matter of hope, not of faith: something to look forward to, not to look back upon. The isolated events recorded in the Old Testament, and the miracles of Christ—granting that they were admitted—were rather instances of resuscitation than of Resurrection. The grand fact of history, than which none is better attested—the Resurrection of Christ—had not yet taken place, and was not even clearly in view of any one. Besides, the utterances of the Old Testament on the subject of the hereafter were, as became alike that stage of revelation and the understanding of those to whom it was addressed, far from clear. In the light of the New Testament it stands out in the sharpest proportions, although as an Alpine height afar off; but then that Light had not yet risen upon it.

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previously referred to (see pp. 193, 194). Comp. the interesting dissertation of Töttermann on R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanos (pp. 16-18).

³In regard to the denial of the Resurrection by the Sadducees, and to their views generally, we refer to the sketch of the three sects in Book III. ch 2.

[42] Besides, the Sadducees would allow no appeal to the highly poetic language of the Prophets, to whom, at any rate, they attached less authority, but demanded proof from that clear and precise letter of the Law, every tittle and iota of which the Pharisees exploited for their doctrinal inferences, and from which alone they derived them. Here, also, it was the Nemesis of Pharisaism, that the postulates of their system laid it open to attack. In vain would the Pharisees appeal to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, or the Psalms.⁴ To such an argument as from the words, this people will rise up⁵ the Sadducees would rightly reply, that the context forbade the application to the Resurrection; to the quotation of [Isaiah 26:19](#), they would answer that that promise must be understood spiritually, like the vision of the dry bones in Ezekiel; while such a reference as to this, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak⁶ would scarcely require serious refutation.⁷ Of similar character would be the argument from the use of a special word, such as return in [Genesis 3:19](#),⁸ or that from the twofold mention of the word cut off in the original of [Numbers 15:31](#), as implying punishment in the present and in the future dispensation.⁹ Scarcely more convincing would be the appeal to such passages as [Deuteronomy 32:39](#): I kill and make alive¹⁰ or the statement that, whenever a promise occurs in the form which in Hebrew represents the future tense,¹¹ it indicates a reference to the Resurrection. Perhaps more satisfactory, although not convincing to a Sadducee, whose special contention it was to insist on proof from the Law,¹² might be an appeal to such passages as [Daniel 12:2, 13, 13](#) or to the restoration of life by certain of the prophets, with the

⁴*Hamburger* (Real Encykl. vol. i. p. 125) has given the Rabbinic argumentation, and *Wünsche* (ad St. [Matthew 22:23](#)) has reproduced it—unfortunately, with the not unnatural exaggerations of *Hamburger*.

⁵[Deuteronomy 31:16](#).

⁶Cant. vii. 9.

⁷See Sanh. 90 *b*, about the middle.

⁸Ber. R. 20.

⁹Sanh. 90 *b* lines 9 &c. from bottom.

¹⁰Sanh. 91 *b*.

¹¹It is well known that the Hebrew has no *future* tense in the strict sense.

¹²Sanh, 90 *b* lines 10 and 9 from bottom.

¹³Sanh. 92 *a*.

superadded canon, that God had in part prefiguratively wrought by His prophets whatever He would fully restore in the future.

If Pharisaic argumentation had failed to convince the Sadducees on Biblical grounds, it would be difficult to imagine that, even in the then state of scientific knowledge, any enquiring person could have really believed that there was a small bone in the spine which was indestructible, and from which the new man would spring;¹⁴ or that there existed even now a species of mice, or else of snails, which gradually and visibly developed out of the earth.¹⁵ Many clever sayings of the Pharisees are, indeed, here recorded in their controversies, as on most subjects, and by which a Jewish opponent might have been silenced. But here, especially, must it have been felt that a reply was not always an answer, and that the silencing of an opponent was not identical with proof of one's own assertion. And the additions with which the Pharisees had encumbered the doctrine of the Resurrection would not only surround it with fresh difficulties, but deprive the simple fact of its grand majesty. Thus, it was a point in discussion, whether a person would rise in his clothes, which one Rabbi tried to establish by a reference to the grain of wheat, which was buried naked but rose clothed.¹⁶ Indeed, some Rabbis held, that a man would rise in exactly the same clothes in which he had been buried, while others denied this.¹⁷ On the other hand, it was beautifully argued that body and soul must be finally judged together, so that, in their contention to which of them the sins of man had been due, justice might be meted out to each—or rather to the two in their combination, as in their combination they had sinned.¹⁸ Again, it was inferred from the apparition of Samuel¹⁹ that the risen would look exactly as in life—have even the same bodily defects, such as lameness, blindness, or deafness. It is argued, that they were only afterwards to be healed, lest enemies might say that God had not healed them when they were alive, but that He did so when they were dead, and that they were perhaps not the same

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¹⁴Hence called the *os sacrum* (see again in the sequel).

¹⁵Sanh. 90 *b*.

¹⁶Sanh. 90 *b*.

¹⁷Jer. Keth. 35 *a*.

¹⁸This was illustrated by a very apt Parable, see Sanh. 91 *a* and *b*.

¹⁹1 Samuel 28:14.

persons.²⁰ In some respects even more strange was the contention that, in order to secure that all the pious of Israel should rise on the sacred soil of Palestine,²¹ there were cavities underground in which the body would roll till it reached the Holy Land, there to rise to newness of life.²²

[44] But all the more, that it was so keenly controverted by heathens, Sadducees, and heretics, as appears from many reports in the Talmud, and that it was so encumbered with realistic legends, should we admire the tenacity with which the Pharisees clung to this doctrine. The hope of the Resurrection-world appears in almost every religious utterance of Israel. It is the spring-bud on the tree, strip by the long winter of disappointment and persecution. This hope pours its morning carol into the prayer which every Jew is bound to say on awakening;²³ it sheds its warm breath over the oldest of the daily prayers which date from before the time of our Lord;²⁴ in the formula from age to age world without end it forms, so to speak, the rearguard to every prayer, defending it from Sadducean assault;²⁵ it is one of the few dogmas denial of which involves, according to the Mishnah, the loss of eternal life, the Talmud explaining, almost in the words of Christ—that in the retribution of God this is only measure according to measure;²⁶ nay, it is venerable even in its exaggeration, that only our ignorance fails to perceive it in every section of the Bible, and to hear it in every commandment of the Law.

But in the view of Christ the Resurrection would necessarily occupy a place different from all this. It was the innermost shrine in the Sanctuary of His Mission, towards which He steadily tended; it was also, at the same time, the living corner-stone of that Church which he had builded, and its spire, which, as with uplifted finger, ever pointed all men heavenwards. But of such thoughts connected with His Resurrection Jesus could not have spoken to the Sadducees;

²⁰Ber. R. 95, beginning.

²¹Isaiah 42:5.

²²Ber. R. 96 towards the close.

²³Ber. 60 *b*.

²⁴It forms the second of the eighteen Eulogies.

²⁵It is expressly stated in Ber. ix. 5, that the formula was introduced for that purpose.

²⁶Sanh. 90 *a* line 4 from bottom.

they would have been unintelligible at that time even to His own disciples. He met the cavil of the Sadducees majestically, seriously, and solemnly, with words most lofty and spiritual, yet such as they could understand, and which, if they had received them, would have led them onwards and upwards far beyond the standpoint of the Pharisees. A lesson this to us in our controversies.

The story under which the Sadducees conveyed their sneer was also intended covertly to strike at their Pharisaic opponents. The ancient ordinance of marrying a brother's childless widow^{27 28} had more and more fallen into discredit, as its original motive ceased to have influence. A large array of limitations narrowed the number of those on whom this obligation now devolved. Then the Mishnah laid it down that, in ancient times, when the ordinance of such marriage was obeyed in the spirit of the Law, its obligation took precedence of the permission of dispensation, but that afterwards this relationship became reversed.²⁹ Later authorities went further. Some declared every such union, if for beauty, wealth, or any other than religious motives, as incestuous,³⁰ while one Rabbi absolutely prohibited it, although opinions continued divided on the subject. But what here most interests us is, that what are called in the Talmud the Samaritans but, as we judge, the Sadducees, held the opinion that the command to marry a brother's widow only applied to a betrothed wife, not to one that had actually been wedded.³¹ This gives point to the controversial question, as addressed to Jesus.

[45]

A case such as they told, of a woman who had successively been married to seven brothers, might, according to Jewish Law, have really happened.³² Their sneering question now was, whose

²⁷Deuteronomy 25:5 &c.

²⁸The Talmud has it that the woman must have no child at all—not merely no son.

²⁹Bekhor. i. 7.

³⁰Yebam. 39 *b*.

³¹Jer. Yebam. i. 6. This seems also to have been the view of the School of Shammai.

³²Jer. Yebam. 6 *b*, relates what I regard as a legendary story of a man who was thus induced to wed the twelve widows of his twelve brothers, each widow promising to pay for the expenses of one month, and the directing Rabbi for those of the 13th (intercalatory) month. But to his horror, after three years the women returned, laden with thirty-six children, to claim the fulfilment of the Rabbi's promise!

On the other hand it was, however, also laid down that, if a woman had lost two husbands, she should not marry a third—according to others, if she had married three, not a fourth,

[46] wife she was to be in the Resurrection. This, of course, on the assumption of the grossly materialistic views of the Pharisees. In this the Sadducean cavil was, in a sense, anticipating certain objections of modern materialism. It proceeded on the assumption that the relations of time would apply to eternity, and the conditions of the things seen hold true in regard to those that are unseen. But perchance it is otherwise; and the future may reveal what in the present we do not see. The reasoning as such may be faultless; but, perchance, something in the future may have to be inserted in the *major* or the *minor*, which will make the conclusion quite other! All such cavils we would meet with the twofold appeal of Christ to the Word ³³ and to the Power of God—how God has manifested, and how He will manifest Himself—the one flowing from the other.

In His argument against the Sadducees Christ first appealed to the *power* of God. ³⁴ What God would work was quite other than they imagined: not a mere re-awakening, but a transformation. The world to come was not to be a reproduction of that which had passed away—else why should it have passed away—but a regeneration and renovation; and the body with which we were to be clothed would be like that which Angels bear. What, therefore, in our present relations is of the earth, and of our present body of sin and corruption, will cease; what is eternal in them will continue. But the power of God will transform all—the present terrestrial into the future heavenly, the body of humiliation into one of exaltation. This will be the perfecting of all things by that Almighty Power by which He shall subdue all things to Himself in the Day of His Power, when death shall be swallowed up in victory. And herein also consists the dignity of man, in virtue of the Redemption introduced, and, so to speak, begun at his Fall, that man is capable of such renovation and perfection—and herein, also, is the power of God that He hath quickened us together with Christ, so that here already the Church

as there might be some fate (Izm) connected with her (Yeb. 64 *b*). On the question of the Levirate, from the modern Jewish standpoint, see an interesting article by *Gutmann* in *Geiger's Wiss. Zeitschr. f. Jüd. Theol.* vol. iv. (1839), pp. 61-87.

³³The reproach Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures occurs in almost the same form in the discussions on the Resurrection between the Pharisees and the Sadducees which are recorded in the Talmud.

³⁴St. [Matthew 22:29, 30](#), and parallels.

receives in Baptism into Christ the germ of the Resurrection, which is afterwards to be nourished and fed by faith, through the believer's participation in the Sacrament of fellowship with His body and Blood. ³⁵

Nor ought questions here to rise, like dark clouds, such as of the perpetuity of those relations which on earth are not only so precious to us, but so holy. Assuredly, they will endure, as all that is of God and good; only what in them is earthly will cease, or rather be transformed with the body. Nay, and we shall also recognise each other, not only by the fellowship of the soul; but as, even now, the mind impresses its stamp on the features, so then, when all shall be quite true, shall the soul, so to speak, body itself forth, fully impress itself on the outward appearance, and for the first time shall we then fully recognise those whom we shall now fully know—with all of earth that was in them left behind, and all of God and good fully developed and ripened into perfectness of beauty.

[47]

But it was not enough to brush aside the flimsy cavil, which had only meaning on the supposition of grossly materialistic views of the Resurrection. Our Lord would not merely reply, He would answer the Sadducees; and more grand or noble evidence of the Resurrection has never been offered than that which He gave. Of course as speaking to the Sadducees, He remained on the ground of the Pentateuch; and yet it was not only to the Law but to the whole Bible that He appealed, nay, to that which underlay Revelation itself: the relation between God and man. Not this nor that isolated passage only proved the Resurrection: He Who, not only historically but in the fullest sense, calls Himself the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, cannot leave them dead. Revelation implies, not merely a fact of the past—as is the notion which traditionalism attaches to it—a dead letter; it means a living relationship. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto Him.

The Sadducees were silenced, the multitude was astonished, and even from some of the Scribes the admission was involuntarily

³⁵Through the Resurrection of Christ resurrection has become the gift of universal humanity. But, beyond this general gift to humanity, we believe that we receive in Baptism, as becoming connected with Christ, the inner germ of the glorious Resurrection-body. Its nourishment (or otherwise) depends on our personal relationship to Christ by faith, and is carried on through the Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

[48] wrung: Teacher, Thou hast beautifully said. One point, however, still claims our attention. It is curious that, as regards both these arguments of Christ, Rabbinism offers statements closely similar. Thus, it is recorded as one of the frequent sayings of a later Rabbi, that in the world to come there would be neither eating nor drinking, fruitfulness nor increase, business nor envy, hatred nor strife, but that the just would sit with crowns on their heads, and feast on the splendor of the Shekhinah.³⁶ This reads like a Rabbinic adaptation of the saying of Christ. As regards the other point, the Talmud reports a discussion on the Resurrection between Sadducees or perhaps Jewish heretics (Jewish-Christian heretics), in which Rabbi Gamaliel II. at last silences his opponents by an appeal to the promise³⁷ that ye may prolong your days in the land which the Lord sware unto your father to give unto them’—unto *them* emphasises the Rabbi, not unto you.³⁸ Although this almost entirely misses the spiritual meaning conveyed in the reasoning of Christ, it is impossible to mistake its Christian origin. Gamaliel II. lived after Christ, but at a period when there was lively intercourse between Jews and Jewish Christians; while, lastly, we have abundant evidence that the Rabbi was acquainted with the sayings of Christ, and took part in the controversy with the Church.³⁹ On the other hand, Christians in his day—unless heretical sects—neither denied that Resurrection, nor would they have so argued with the Jewish Patriarch; while the Sadducees no longer existed as a party engaging in active controversy. But we can easily perceive, that intercourse would be more likely between Jews and such heretical Jewish Christians as might maintain that the Resurrection was past, and only spiritual. The point is deeply interesting. It opens such further questions as these: In the constant intercourse between Jewish Christians and Jews, what did the latter learn? And may there not be much in the Talmud which is only

³⁶Ber. 17 *a*, towards the end.

³⁷Deuteronomy 11:9.

³⁸The similar reference to Exodus 6:4 by a later Rabbi seems but an adaptation of the argument of Gamaliel II. (See both in Sanh. 90 *b*.)

³⁹We also recall that Gamaliel II. was the brother-in-law of that Eliezer b. Hyrcanos, who was rightly suspected of leanings towards Christianity (see pp. 193, 194). This might open up a most interesting field of inquiry.

an appropriation and adaptation of what had been derived from the New Testament?

2. The answer of our Lord was not without its further results. As we conceive it, among those who listened to the brief but decisive passage between Jesus and the Sadducees were some Scribes'—*Sopherim*, or, as they are also designated, lawyers teachers of the Law experts, expounders, practitioners of the Jewish Law. One of them, perhaps he who exclaimed: Beautifully said, Teacher! hastened to the knot of Pharisees, whom it requires no stretch of the imagination to picture gathered in the Temple on that day, and watching, with restless, ever foiled malice, the Saviour's every movement. As the Scribe came up to them, he would relate how Jesus had literally gagged and muzzled ⁴⁰ the Sadducees—just as, according to the will of God, we are by well-doing to gag the want or knowledge of senseless men. There can be little doubt that the report would give rise to mingled feelings, in which that prevailing would be, that, although Jesus might thus have discomfited the Sadducees, He would be unable to cope with other questions, if only properly propounded by Pharisaic learning. And so we can understand how one of the number, perhaps the same Scribe, would volunteer to undertake the office; ⁴¹ and how his question was, as St. Matthew reports, in a sense really intended to tempt Jesus. [49]

We dismiss here the well-known Rabbinic distinctions of heavy and light commandments, because Rabbinism declared the light to be as binding as the heavy ⁴² those of the Scribes more heavy (or binding) than those of Scripture, ⁴³ and that one commandment was not to be considered to carry greater reward, and to be therefore more carefully observed, than another. ⁴⁴ That such thoughts were not in the mind of the questioner, but rather the grand general problem—however himself might have answered it—appears even from the form of his inquiry: Which [*qualis*] is the great—the first ⁴⁵ —

⁴⁰efimwse (St. [Matthew 22:34](#)). The word occurs also in St. [Matthew 22:12](#): St. [Mark 1:25](#); [4:39](#); St. [Luke 4:35](#) [1 Corinthians 9:9](#); [1 Timothy 5:18](#); [1 Peter 2:16](#).

⁴¹Comp. the two accounts in St. [Matthew 22:34-40](#) and in St. [Mark 12:28-34](#).

⁴²Ab. ii. 1; 4:2.

⁴³Sanh. xi. 3.

⁴⁴Deb. R. 6.

⁴⁵St. [Mark 12:28](#).

[50] commandment in the Law? So challenged, the Lord could have no hesitation in replying. Not to silence him, but to speak the absolute truth, He quoted the well-remembered words which every Jew was bound to repeat in his devotions, and which were ever to be on his lips, living or dying, as the inmost expression of his faith: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And then continuing, He repeated the command concerning love to God which is the outcome of that profession. But to have stopped here would have been to propound a theoretic abstraction without concrete reality, a mere Pharisaic worship of the letter. As God is love—His Nature so manifesting itself—so is love to God also love⁴⁶ to man. And so this second is like the first and great commandment. It was a full answer to the Scribe when He said: There is none other commandment greater than these.

But it was more than an answer, even deepest teaching, when, as St. Matthew reports, He added: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.⁴⁷ It little matters for our present purpose how the Jews at the time understood and interpreted these two commandments.⁴⁸ They would know what it meant that the Law and the Prophets hung on them, for it was a Jewish expression (Nywlt). He taught them, not that any one commandment was greater or smaller, heavier or lighter, than another—might be set aside or neglected, but that all sprang from these two as their root and principle, and stood in living connection with them. It was teaching similar to that concerning the Resurrection; that, as concerning the promises, so concerning the commandments, all Revelation was one connected whole; not disjointed ordinances of which the letter was to be weighed, but a life springing from love to God and love to man. So noble was the answer, that for the moment the generous enthusiasm of the Scribe, who had previously been favorably impressed by Christ's answer to the Sadducees, was kindled. For the moment, at

⁴⁶Meyer rightly remarks on the use of *agaphseiV* here, implying moral high estimation and corresponding conduct, and not *filein*, which refers to love as an *affection*. The latter could not have been commanded, although such *filia* of the world is forbidden (St. James 4:4) while the *filein* of one's own *yuch* (St. John 12:25) and the *mh filein ton kurio* (1 Corinthians 16:22) are stigmatised.

⁴⁷St. Matthew 22:4.

⁴⁸The Jewish view of these commands has been previously explained.

least, traditionalism lost its sway; and, as Christ pointed to it, he saw the exceeding moral beauty of the Law. He was not far from the Kingdom of God.⁴⁹ Whether or not he ever actually entered it, is written on the yet unread page of its history.

3. The Scribe had originally come to put his question with mixed motives, partially inclined towards Him from His answer to the Sadducees, and yet intending to subject Him to the Rabbinic test. The effect now wrought in him, and the silence which from that moment fell on all His would-be questioners, induced Christ to follow up the impression that had been made. Without addressing any one in particular, He set before them all, what perhaps was the most familiar subject in their theology, that of the descent of Messiah. Whose Son was He? And when they replied: The Son of David⁵⁰ He referred them to the opening words of [Psalm 110.](#), in which David called the Messiah Lord. The argument proceeded, of course, on the two-fold supposition that the Psalm was Davidic and that it was Messianic. Neither of these statements would have been questioned by the ancient Synagogue. But we could not rest satisfied with the explanation that this sufficed for the purpose of Christ's argument, if the foundation on which it rested could be seriously called in question. Such, however, is not the case. To apply [Psalm 110.](#), verse by verse and consistently, to any one of the Maccabees, were to undertake a critical task which only a series of unnatural explanations of the language could render possible. Strange, also, that such an interpretation of what at the time of Christ would have been a comparatively young composition, should have been wholly unknown alike to Sadducee and Pharisee. For our own part, we are content to rest the Messianic interpretation on the obvious and natural meaning of the words taken in connection with the general teaching of the Old Testament about the Messiah, on the undoubted interpretation of the ancient Jewish Synagogue,⁵¹ on the authority of Christ, and on the testimony of History.

Compared with this, the other question as to the authorship of the Psalm is of secondary importance. The character of infinite, nay,

⁴⁹St. [Mark 12:33, 34.](#)

⁵⁰This also shows that the later dogma of Messiah the Son of Joseph had not yet been invented.

⁵¹Comp. Appendix IX.

Divine, superiority to any earthly Ruler, and of course to David, which the Psalm sets forth in regard to the Messiah, would sufficiently support the argument of Christ. But, besides, what does it matter, whether the Psalm was composed by David, or only put into the mouth of David (David's or Davidic), which, on the supposition of Messianic application, is the only rational alternative?

[52] But we should greatly err if we thought that, in calling the attention of His hearers to this apparent contradiction about the Christ, the Lord only intended to show the utter incompetence of the Pharisees to teach the higher truths of the Old Testament. Such, indeed, was the case—and they felt it in His Presence.⁵² But far beyond this, as in the proof which He gave for the Resurrection, and in the view which He presented of the great commandment, the Lord would point to the grand harmonious unity of Revelation. Viewed separately, the two statements, that Messiah was David's Son, and that David owned Him Lord, would seem incompatible. But in their combination in the Person of the Christ, how harmonious and how full of teaching—to Israel of old, and to all men—concerning the nature of Christ's Kingdom and of His Work!

It was but one step from this demonstration of the incompetence of Israel's teachers for the position they claimed to a solemn warning on this subject. And this appropriately constitutes Christ's Farewell to the Temple, to its authorities, and to Israel. As might have been expected, we have the report of it in St. Matthew's Gospel.⁵³ Much of this had been said before, but in quite other connection, and therefore with different application. We notice this, when comparing this Discourse with the Sermon on the Mount, and, still more, with what Christ had said when at the meal in the house of the Pharisee in Peraea.⁵⁴ But here St. Matthew presents a regular series of charges against the representatives of Judaism, formulated in logical manner, taking up successively one point after the other, and closing with the expression of deepest compassion and longing for that Jerusalem, whose children He would fain have gathered under His sheltering wings from the storm of Divine judgment.

⁵²St. [Matthew 22:46](#).

⁵³St. [Matthew 23](#).

⁵⁴St. [Luke 11:37-54](#).

To begin with—Christ would have them understand, that, in warning them of the incompetence of Israel’s teachers for the position which they occupied, He neither wished for Himself nor His disciples the place of authority which they claimed, nor yet sought to incite the people to resistance thereto. On the contrary, so long as they held the place of authority they were to be regarded—in the language of the Mishnah ⁵⁵—as if instituted by Moses himself, as sitting in Moses seat, and were to be obeyed, so far as merely outward observances were concerned. We regard this direction, not as of merely temporary application, but as involving as important principle. But we also recall that the ordinances to which Christ made reference were those of the Jewish canon-law, and did not involve anything which could really affect the conscience—except that of the ancient, or of our modern Pharisees. But while they thus obeyed their outward directions, they were equally to eschew the spirit which characterised their observances. ⁵⁶ In this respect of twofold charge is laid against them: of want of spiritual earnestness and love, ⁵⁷ and of more externalism, vanity, and self-seeking. ⁵⁸ And here Christ interrupted His Discourse to warn His disciples against the first beginnings of what had led to such fearful consequences, and to point them to the better way. ⁵⁹

[53]

This constitutes the first part of Christ’s charge. Before proceeding to those which follow, we may give a few illustrative explanations. Of the opening accusation about the binding (truly in bondage: desmeuw) of heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laying them on men’s shoulders, proof can scarcely be required. As frequently shown, Rabbinism placed the ordinances of tradition above those of the Law, ⁶⁰ and this by a necessity of the system, since they were professedly the authoritative exposition and the supplement of the written Law. ⁶¹ And although it was a general rule, that no ordinance should be enjoined heavier than the congregation could

⁵⁵Rosh haSh. ii. 9.

⁵⁶Even the literal charge of teaching and not doing is brought in Jewish writings (see, for example, Ber. R. 34).

⁵⁷St. Matthew 23:3, 4.

⁵⁸v. 5-7.

⁵⁹v. 8-12.

⁶⁰See especially Jer. Ber. i. 7, p. 3 b.

⁶¹Ab. iii. 11.

bear,⁶² yet (as previously stated) it was admitted, that whereas the words of the Law contained what lightened and what made heavy the words of the Scribes contained only what made heavy.⁶³ Again, it was another principle, that were an aggravation or increase of the burden had once been introduced, it must continue to be observed.⁶⁴ Thus the burdens became intolerable. And the blame rested equally on both the great Rabbinic Schools. For, although the School of Hillel was supposed in general to make the yoke lighter, and that of Shammai heavier, yet not only did they agree on many points,⁶⁵ but the School of Hillel was not unfrequently even more strict than that of his rival.⁶⁶ In truth, their differences seem too often only prompted by a spirit of opposition, so that the serious business of religion became in their hands one of rival authority and mere wrangling.⁶⁷

It is not so easy to understand the second part of Christ's accusation. There were, indeed, many hypocrites among them, who might, in the language of the Talmud, alleviate for themselves and make heavy for others.⁶⁸ Yet the charge of not moving them with the finger could scarcely apply to the Pharisees as a party—not even in this sense, that Rabbinic ingenuity mostly found some means of evading what was unpleasant. But, as previously explained,⁶⁹ we would understand the word rendered move as meaning to set in motion or move away in the sense that they did not alleviate where they might have done so, or else with reference to their admitted principle, that their ordinances always made heavier, never lighter—always imposed grievous burdens, but never, not even with the finger, moved them away.

⁶²B. Kama 79 *b*.

⁶³Jer. Sanh. 30 *a*. at bottom

⁶⁴Nidd. 66 *a*.

⁶⁵So notably in the well-known eighteen points *rbd h'y Ab. Sar. 36 a*.

⁶⁶Twenty-four such are mentioned. Jer. Bets. 60 *b*.

⁶⁷Many, very many of them are so utterly trivial and absurd, that only the hairsplitting ingenuity of theologians can account for them: others so profane that it is difficult to understand how any religion could co-exist with them. Conceive, for example, two schools in controversy whether it was lawful to kill a louse on the Sabbath. (*Schabb. 12 a; 107 b*.)

⁶⁸Sot. 21 *b*.

⁶⁹vol. i. p. 101.

With this charge of unreality and want of love, those of externalism, vanity, and self-seeking are closely connected. Here we can only make selection from the abundant evidence in our support of it. By a merely external interpretation of [Exodus 13:9, 16](#), and [Deuteronomy 6:8; 11:18](#), practice of wearing Phylacteries or, as they were called, *Tephillin*, prayer-fillets was introduced.⁷⁰ These, as will be remembered, were square capsules, covered with leather, containing on small scrolls of parchment, these four sections of the law: [Exodus 13:1-10; 11-16](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21](#). The Phylacteries were fastened by long leather straps to the forehead, and round the left arm, near the heart. Most superstitious reverence was attached to them, and in later times they were even used as amulets. Nevertheless, the Talmud itself gives confirmation that the practice of constantly wearing phylacteries—or, it might be, making them broad, and enlarging the borders of the garments, we intended *for to be seen of men*. Thus we are told of a certain man who had done so, in order to cover his dishonest practices in appropriating what had been entrusted to his keeping.⁷¹ Nay, the Rabbis had in so many words to lay it down as a principle, than the Phylacteries were not to be worn for show.⁷²

[55]

Detailed proof is scarcely required of the charge of vanity and self-seeking in claiming marked outward honours, such as the uppermost places at feasts and in the Synagogue, respectful salutations in the market, the ostentatious repetition of the title Rabbi or Abba Father or Master^{73 74} or the distinction of being acknowledged as greatest. The very earnestness with which the Talmud sometimes warns against such motives for study or for piety sufficiently establishes it. But, indeed, Rabbinic writings lay down elaborate directions, what place is to be assigned to the Rabbis, according to their rank, and to their disciples,⁷⁵ and how in the College the most learned, but at least the most aged, among the Rabbis, are to occupy

⁷⁰On the Tephillin, comp. Sketches of Jewish Social Life pp. 219-244.

⁷¹Jer. Ber. 4 c, lines 7 and 8 from top.

⁷²Menach 37 b.

⁷³Makk. 24 a.

⁷⁴These titles are put in the mouth of King Jehoshaphat when saluting the Rabbis.

⁷⁵Horay, 13 b.

the upper seats. ⁷⁶ So weighty was the duty of respectful salutation by the title Rabbi, that to neglect it would involve the heaviest punishment. ⁷⁷ Two great Rabbis are described as literally complaining, that they must have lost the very appearance of learning, since in the market-place they only had been greeted with May your peace be great without the addition My masters. ⁷⁸

[56] A few further illustrations of the claims which Rabbinism preferred may throw light on the words of Christ. It reads like a wretched imitation from the New Testament, when the heathen Governor of Caesarea is represented as rising up before Rabbis because he beheld the faces as it were of Angels; or like an adaptation of the well-known story about Constantine the Great when the Governor of Antioch is described as vindicating a similar mark of respect to the Rabbis by this, that he had seen their faces and by them conquered in battle. ⁷⁹ From another Rabbi rays of light are said to have visibly proceeded. ⁸⁰ According to some, they were Epicuræans, who had no part in the world to come, who referred slightly to these Rabbis. ⁸¹ To supply a learned man with the means of gaining money in trade, would procure a high place in heaven. ⁸² It was said that, according to [Proverbs 8:15](#), the sages were to be saluted as kings; ⁸³ nay, in some respects, they were higher—for, as between a sage and a king, it would be duty to give the former priority in redemption from captivity, since every Israelite was fit to be a king, but the loss of a Rabbi could not easily be made up. ⁸⁴ But even this is not all. The curse of a Rabbi, even if uncaused, would surely come to pass. ⁸⁵ It would be too painful to repeat some of the miracles pretended to have been done by them or for them, occasionally in protection of a lie; or to record their disputes which among them

⁷⁶Babha B. 120 *a*.

⁷⁷Ber. 27 *b*.

⁷⁸Jer. Ber. 9 *a*, about the middle. Comp. *Levy*. Neuheber. Wörterb, ii. 10 *a*.

⁷⁹Jer. Ber. 9 *a*, about the middle.

⁸⁰u. s.

⁸¹Jer. Sanh x. 1.

⁸²Pes. 53 *b*.

⁸³Gitt. 62 *a*.

⁸⁴Horay. 13 *a*.

⁸⁵Sanh. 90 *b* line 3 from top.

was greatest or how they established their respective claims.⁸⁶ Nay, their self-assertion extended beyond this life, and a Rabbi went so far as to order that he should be buried in white garments, to show that he was worthy of appearing before his Maker.⁸⁷ But perhaps the climax of blasphemous self-assertion is reached in the story, that, in a discussion in heaven between God and the heavenly Academy on a Halakhic question about purity, a certain Rabbi—deemed that most learned on the subject—was summoned to decide the point! As his soul passed from the body he exclaimed: Pure, pure which the Voice from Heaven applied to the state of the Rabbi's soul; and immediately afterwards a letter had fallen from heaven to inform the sages of the purpose of which the Rabbi had been summoned to the heavenly assembly, and afterwards another enjoining a week's universal mourning for him on pain of excommunication.⁸⁸

Such daring profanities must have crushed out all spiritual religion, and reduced it to a mere intellectual display, in which the Rabbi was always chief—here and hereafter. Repulsive as such legends are, they will at least help us to understand what otherwise might seem harsh in our Lord's denunciations of Rabbinism. In view of all this, we need not discuss the Rabbinic warnings against pride and self-seeking when connected with study, nor their admonitions to humility.⁸⁹ For, the question here is, what Rabbinism regarded as pride, and what as humility, in its teachers? Nor is it maintained that all were equally guilty in this matter; and what passed around may well have led more earnest to energetic admonitions to humility and unselfishness, but no ingenuity can explain away the facts as above stated, and, when such views prevailed, it would have been almost superhuman wholly to avoid what our Lord denounced as characteristic of Pharisaism. And in this sense, not with Pharisaic painful literalism, but as opposed to Rabbinic bearing, are we to understand the Lord's warning to His own not to claim among brethren to be Rabbi or Abba or guide.⁹⁰ The Law of the Kingdom, as repeatedly

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⁸⁶See for example Bahba Mets 85 *b* and 86 *a*.

⁸⁷Ber. R. 96. towards close

⁸⁸Babha Mets 86 *a*.

⁸⁹See the quotations to that effect in *Schöttgen*, *Wetstein*, and *Wünsche* ad loc.

⁹⁰Hac clausula (ver. 11) ostendit, senon sophistic litigasse de *vocibus*, serem points spectasse (*Calvin*).

taught,⁹¹ was the opposite. As regarded aims, they were to seek the greatness of service; and as regarded that acknowledgment which would come from God, it would be the exaltation of humiliation.

It was not a break in the Discourse,⁹² rather an intensification of it, when Christ now turned to make final denunciation of Pharisaism in its sin and hypocrisy.⁹³ Corresponding to the eight Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount with which His public Ministry began, He now closed it with eight denunciations of woe.⁹⁴ These are the fourthpouring of His holy wrath, the last and fullest testimony against those whose guilt would involve Jerusalem in common sin and common judgement. Step by step, with logical sequence and intensified pathos of energy, is each charge advanced, and with it the Woe of Divine wrath announced.

[58] The first Woe against Pharisaism was on their shutting the Kingdom of God against men by their opposition to the Christ. All knew how exclusive were their pretensions in confining piety to the possession of knowledge, and that they declared it impossible for an ignorant person to be pious. Had they taught men the Scriptures, and shown them the right way, they would have been true to their office; but woe to them who, in their positions as leaders, had themselves stood back with their backs to the door of the Kingdom, and prevented the entrance of others.

The second Woe was on their covetousness and hypocrisy. They made long prayers,⁹⁵ but how often did it only cover the vilest selfishness, even to the devouring of widow's houses. We can scarcely expect the Talmud here to furnish us with illustrative instances, and yet at least one such is recorded;⁹⁶ and we recall how often broad phylacteries covered fraudulent minds.

The third Woe was on their proselytism, which issued only in making their converts twofold more the children of hell than themselves. Against this charge, rightly understood, Judaism has in vain

⁹¹St. [Mark 9:35](#); St. [Luke 14:11](#); [18:14](#).

⁹²*Keim* argues at length, but very inconclusively, that this is a different Discourse, addressed to a different audience and at a different time.

⁹³St. [Matthew 23:13-33](#).

⁹⁴Although St. [Matthew 23:14](#) is in all probability spurious, this woe occurs in St. [Mark 12:40](#), and in St. [Luke 20:47](#).

⁹⁵*Ber.* 32 *b*; *Yoma* 29 *a*.

⁹⁶*Sot.* 21 *b*; comp. *Jer. Sot.* 19 *a*.

sought to defend itself. It is, indeed, true that, in its pride and exclusiveness, Judaism seemed to denounce proselytism, laid down strict rules to test the sincerity of converts, and spoke of them in general contempt⁹⁷ as a plague of leprosy.⁹⁸ Yet the bitter complaint of classical writers,⁹⁹¹⁰⁰ the statements of Josephus,¹⁰¹ the frequent allusions in the New Testament and even the admissions of the Rabbis, prove their zeal for making proselytes—which, indeed, but for its moral sequences, would neither have deserted nor drawn down the denunciation of a woe. Thus the Midrash, commenting on the words:¹⁰² the souls that they had gotten in Haran refers it to the converts which Abraham had made, adding that every proselyte was to be regarded as if a soul had been created.¹⁰³¹⁰⁴

To this we may add the pride with which Judaism looked back upon [59] the 150,000 Gibeonite converts said to have been made when David avenged the sin of Saul;¹⁰⁵ the satisfaction with which it looked forward to the times of Messiah as those of spontaneous conversion to the Synagogue;¹⁰⁶ and not the unfrequent instances in which a spirit favorable to proselytism is exhibited in Jewish writings,¹⁰⁷ as, also, such a saying as this, that when Israel is obedient to the will of God, He brings in as converts to Judaism all the just of the nations, such as Jethro, Rahab, Ruth, &c.¹⁰⁸ But after all, may the Lord not have referred, not to conversion to Judaism in general, but to proselytism to the sect of the Pharisees, which was undoubtedly sought to the compassing of sea and land?

⁹⁷Horay, 13 *a*.

⁹⁸Yeb. 47 *a. b*; Nidd. 13 *b*.

⁹⁹*Tacit.* Hist. v. 5; *Seneca in August.* De Civit. Dei vi. 11(2).

¹⁰⁰For passages in proof see *Wetsein* ad loc.

¹⁰¹Ant. xviii. 3. 5; 20:2, 4; Jewish War ii. 17. 10 &c.; 20, 2; Life 23.

¹⁰²Genesis 12:5.

¹⁰³Ber. R. 39, ed. Warsh. p. 72 *a*, and Vayy. R. 1.

¹⁰⁴Anyone who would see how Jewish ingenuity can, for the purpose of misrepresenting the words of Christ, put a meaning even on Jewish documents which they can never bear, is advised to read the remarks of the learned *Jellinek* on St. [Matthew 23:15](#), in the *Beth ha-Midr.* vol. v. pp. xlvi. xlvii., and his rendering of the quotation from Ber. R. 28.

¹⁰⁵2 Samuel 21:1 &c.; Yebam, 79 *a*.

¹⁰⁶Ab. Zar. 24 *a*.

¹⁰⁷The learned *Danzius* has collected all that can be said on that subject in *Meuschen*, Nov. Test. ex Talm. illustr., pp. 649-666. But in my opinion he exaggerates his case.

¹⁰⁸Midr. on [Ecclesiastes 5:11](#).

The fourth Woe is denounced on the moral blindness of these guides rather than on their hypocrisy. From the nature of things it is not easy to understand the precise allusion of Christ. It is true that the Talmud makes the strangest distinction between an oath or adjuration, such as by heaven or by earth which is not supposed to be binding; and that by any of the letters of which Divine Being, when the oath is supposed to be binding. ¹⁰⁹ But it seems more likely that our Lord refers to oaths or adjurations in connection with vows, where the casuistry was of the most complicated kind. In general, the Lord here condemns the arbitrariness of all such Jewish distinctions, which, by attaching excessive value to the letter of an oath or vow, really tended to diminish its sanctity. All such distinctions argued folly and more blindness.

[60] The fifth Woe referred to one of the best-known and strangest Jewish ordinances, which extended the mosaic law of tithing, in most burdensome minuteness, even to the smallest products of the soil that were esculent and could be preserved, ¹¹⁰ such as anise. Of these, according to some, not only the seeds, but, in certain cases, even the leaves and stalks, had to be tithed. ¹¹¹ And this, together with grievous omission of the weightier matters of the Law: judgement, mercy, and faith. Truly, this was to strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel! We remember that this conscientiousness in tithing constituted one of the characteristics of the Pharisees; but we could scarcely be prepared for such an instance of it, as when the Talmud gravely assures us that the ass of a certain Rabbi had been so well trained as to refuse corn of which the tithes had not been taken! ¹¹² And experience, not only in the past but in the present, has only too plainly shown, that a religious zeal which expends itself on trifles has no room nor strength left for the weightier matters of the Law.

From tithing to *purification* the transition was natural. ¹¹³ It constituted the second grand characteristic of Pharisaic piety. We

¹⁰⁹Shebh. iv. 13 and 35 *b*, 36 *a*.

¹¹⁰Maaser, i. 1.

¹¹¹Maaser. iv. 5.

¹¹²Jer. Dem. 21*d*.

¹¹³*Keim*, with keen insight, characterises the Woes which contrasts their proselytising with their resistance to the progress of the Kingdom; then, the third and fourth which

have seen with what punctiliousness questions of outward purity of vessels were discussed. But woe to the hypocrisy which, caring for the outside, heeded not whether that which filled the cup and platter had been procured by extortion or was used for excess. And, alas for the blindness which perceived not, that internal purity was the real condition of that which was outward!

Woe similarly to another species of hypocrisy, of which, indeed, the preceding were but the outcome: that of outward appearance of righteousness, while heart and mind were full of iniquity—just as those annually-whited sepulchres of theirs seemed so fair outwardly, but within were full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Woe, lastly, to that hypocrisy which built and decorated sepulchres of prophets and righteous men, and by so doing sought to shelter itself from share in the guilt of those who had killed them. It was not spiritual repentance, but national pride, which actuated them in this, the same spirit of self-sufficiency, pride, and impenitence which had led their fathers to commit the murders. And were they not about to imbrue their hands in the blood of Him to Whom all the prophets had pointed? Fast were they in the Divine judgement filling up the measure of their fathers.

And thicker and heavier than ever before fell the hailstorm of His denunciations, as He foretold the certain doom which awaited their national impenitence. ¹¹⁴ Prophets, wise men, and scribes would be sent them of Him; and only murder, sufferings, and persecutions would await them—not reception of their message and warnings. And so would they become heirs of all the blood of martyred saints, from that of him whom Scripture records as the first one murdered, down to that last martyr of Jewish unbelief of whom tradition spoke in such terms—Zechariah, ¹¹⁵

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denounce their false teaching, the fifth, and sixth their false attempts at purity, while the last sets forth their relations to those forerunners of Christ, whose graves they built.

¹¹⁴v. 34-36.

¹¹⁵We need scarcely remind the reader that this Zechariah was the son of Jehoiada. The difference in the text of St. Matthew may either be due to family circumstances, unknown to us, which might admit of his designation as the son of Barachias (the reading is undoubtedly correct), or an error may have crept into the text—how, we know not, and it is of little moment. There can be no question that the reference is to this Zecharias. It seems scarcely necessary to refer to the strange notion that the notice in St. [Matt 23:35](#) has been derived from the account of the murder of *Zacharias, the son of Baruch*, in the

[62] stoned by the king's command in the Court of the Temple, ¹¹⁶ whose blood, as legend had it, did not dry up those two centuries and a half, but still bubbled on the pavement, when Nebuzar-adan entered the Temple, and at last avenged it. ¹¹⁷

And yet it would not have been Jesus, if, while denouncing certain judgement on them who, by continuance and completion of the crimes of their fathers, through the same unbelief, had served themselves heirs to all their guilt, He had not also added to it the passionate lament of a love which, even when spurned, lingered with regretful longing over the lost. ¹¹⁸ They all knew the common illustration of the hen gathering her young brood for shelter, ¹¹⁹ and they knew also what of Divine protection, blessing, and rest it implied, when they spoke of being gathered under the wings of the Shekhinah. Fain and often would Jesus have given to Israel, His people, that shelter, rest, protection, and blessing—but they would not. Looking around on those Temple-buildings—that House, it shall be left to them desolate! And he quitted its courts with these words, that they of Israel should not see Him again till, the night of their unbelief past, they would welcome His return with a better

Temple during the last siege (*Jos. War. iv. 5. 4*). To this there are the following four objections: (1) *Baruch* (as in *Jos.*) and *Barachias* (as in *St. Matt.*) are quite different names, in Greek as in Hebrew—K:w@rb@af, blessed Barouc, and hyafk:reb@e Jehovah will bless BaraciaV. Comp. for ex. LXX., [Nehemiah 3:20](#) with iii. 30. (2) Because the place of their slaughter was different, that of the one between the porch and the altar that of the other in the midst (en mes—) of the Temple'—either the court of the women, or that of the Israelites. (3) Because the murder of the Zacharias referred to by *St. Matt.* stood out as the crowning national crime, and as such is repeatedly referred to in Jewish legend (see references in margin), and dwelt upon with many miraculous embellishments (4) Because the clumsiest forger would scarcely have put into the mouth of Jesus an event connected with the last siege of Jerusalem and derived from Josephus. In general, we take this opportunity strongly to assert that only unacquaintance with the whole subject could lead anyone to look to Josephus for the source of any part of the evangelic narrative. To these remarks we have to add that precisely the same error (if such it be) as in our text of *St. Matthew* occurs in the Targum on [Lamentations 2:20](#), where this Zechariah is designated the son (= grandson) of Iddo comp. [Ezra 5:1](#), and [Zechariah 1:1, 7](#). For the correct reading (son of Jehoiada) in the Gospel of the Hebrews comp. *Nicholson*, p. 59.

¹¹⁶[2 Chronicles 24:20-22](#).

¹¹⁷*Sanh.* 96 b; *Gitt.* 57 b; also in the *Midr.* on [Ecclesiastes 3:16](#) and [10:4](#). and on [Lamentations 2:2](#), and [4:14](#).

¹¹⁸v. 37-39.

¹¹⁹*Vayyik. R.* 25.

Hosanna than that which greeted His Royal Entry three days before. And this was the Farewell and the parting of Israel's Messiah from Israel and its temple. Yet a Farewell which promised a coming again; and a parting which implied a welcome in the future from a believing people to a gracious, pardoning King!

[63] **Chapter 5—The End Day in Passion-Week, the Last Series of Parables:**

To the Pharisees and to the People—On the Way to Jerusalem: The Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard—In The Temple: The Parable of the No and Yes of the Two Sons—The Parable of the Evil Husbandmen Evilily Destroyed—The Parable of the Marriage of the King’s Son and the Wedding Garment

(St. [Matthew 19:30, 20:16](#); St. [Matthew 21:28-32](#); St. [Mark 12:1-12](#); St. [Luke 20:9-19](#); St. [Matthew 22:1-14](#).)

Although it may not be possible to mark their exact succession, it will be convenient here to group together the last series of Parables. Most, if not all of them, were spoken on that third day in Passion week: the first four to a more general audience; the last three (to be treated in another chapter) to the disciples, when, on the evening of that third day, on the Mount of Olives, ¹ He told them of the Last Things. They are the Parables of Judgment, and in one form or another treat of the End.

1. *The Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard.* ² As treating of the End this Parable evidently belongs to the last series, although it may have been spoken previously to Passion-Week, perhaps on that Mission-journey in Peraea, in connection with which it is recorded by St. Matthew. At any rate, it stands in internal relation with what passed on that occasion, and must therefore be studied with reference to it.

We remember, that on the occasion of the rich young ruler’s failure to enter the Kingdom, to which he was so near, Christ had uttered an earnest warning on the danger of riches. ³ In the low spiritual stage which the Apostles had as yet attained, it was, perhaps

¹St. [Matthew 24:1](#). St. [Luke 21:37](#).

²St. [Matthew 19:30-20:16](#).

³St. [Matthew 19:23, 24](#).

only natural that Peter should, as spokesman of the rest, have, in a kind of spiritual covetousness, clutched at the promised reward, and that in a tone of self-righteousness he should have reminded Christ of the yet part of what He, the Lord, had always to bear, and bore so patiently and lovingly, from their ignorance and failure to understand Him and His work. And this want of true sympathy, this constant contending with the moral dulness even of those nearest to Him, must have been part of His great humiliation and sorrow, one element in the terrible solitariness of His Life, which made Him feel that, in the truest sense, the Son of Man had not where to lay His Head. And yet we also mark the wondrous Divine generosity which, even in moments of such sore disappointment, would not let Him take for nought what should have been freely offered in the gladsome service of grateful love. Only there was here deep danger to the disciples: danger of lapsing into feelings kindred to those with which the Pharisees viewed the pardoned Publicans, or the elder son in the Parable his younger brother; danger of misunderstanding the right relations, and with it the very character of the Kingdom, and of work in and for it. It is to this that the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard refers.

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The principle which Christ lays down is, that, while nothing done for Him shall lose its reward, yet, from one reason or another, no forecast can be made, no inferences of self-righteousness may be drawn. It does not by any means follow, that most work done, at least, to our seeing and judging, shall entail a greater reward. On the contrary, many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first. Not *all*, not yet always and necessarily, but many. And in such cases no wrong has been done; there exists no claim, even in view of the promises of due acknowledgement of work. Spiritual pride and self-assertion can only be the outcome either of misunderstanding God's relation to us, or else of a wrong state of mind towards others;⁴ —that is, it betokens mental or moral unfitness.

Of this the Parable of the Labourers is an *illustration*. It teaches nothing beyond this.⁵ But, while illustrating how it may come that some who were first are last and how utterly mistaken or wrong is

⁴St. [Matthew 20:15](#).

⁵Instead of discussing the explanations of others, I prefer simply to expound that which I have to propose. The difficulties of the usual interpretations are so great that a

the thought that they must necessarily receive more than others, who, seemingly, have done more—how, in short, work for Christ is not a ponderable quantity, so much for so much, nor yet we the judges of when and why a worker has come—it also conveys much that is new, and, in many respects, most comforting.

[65] We mark, first, the bearing of the householder, who went out immediately, at earliest morn (*ama prwi*), to hire labourers into his vineyard. That he did not send his steward, but went himself, ⁶ and with the dawn of morning, shows both that there was much work to do, and the householder's anxiety to have it done. That householder is God, and the vineyard His Kingdom; the labourers, whom with earliest morning He seeks in the marketplace of busy life, are His Servants. With these he agreed for a *denarius* a day, which was the ordinary wages for a day's labour, ⁷ and so sent them into the vineyard; in other words, He told them He would pay the reward promised to labourers. So passed the early hours of the morning. About the third hour (the Jewish working day being reckoned from sunrise to sunset), that is, probably as it was drawing towards a close, he went out again, and, as he saw others standing idle in the market-place, he said to them, Go ye also into the vineyard. There was more than enough to do in that vineyard; enough and more to employ them. And when he came, they had stood in the marketplace ready and waiting to go to work, yet idle'—unemployed as yet. It might not have been precisely their blame that they had not gone before; they were others than those in the marketplace when the Master had first come, and they had not been there at that time. Only as he now sent them, he made no definite promise. They felt that in their special circumstances they had no claim; he told them, that whatsoever was right he would give them; and they implicitly trusted to his word, to his justice and goodness. And so happened it yet again, both at the sixth and at the ninth hour of the day. We repeat, that in none of these instances was it the guilt of the labourers—in the sense of being due to their unwillingness or refusal—that they

fresh study seemed requisite. Our interpretation turns on this, that the Parable is only an *illustration* of what is said in St. [Matthew 19:30](#).

⁶St. [Matthew 20:1](#).

⁷In Rome, at the time of Cicero, a day-labourer received 12 *as* =about 6*d.*—that is, rather less than in Judaea (comp. *Marquardt*, Röm. Alterth. vol. v. p. 52).

had not before gone into the vineyard. For some reason—perhaps by their fault, perhaps not, they had not been earlier in the marketplace. But as soon as they were there and called, they went, although, of course, the loss of time, however caused, implied loss of work. Neither did the Master in any case make, nor they ask for, other promise than that implied in his word and character.

These four things, then, stand out clearly in the Parable: the abundance of work to be done in the vineyard; the anxiety of the householder to secure all available labourers; the circumstance that, not from unwillingness or refusal, but because they had not been there and available, the labourers had come at later hours; and that, when they had so come, they were ready to go into the vineyard without promise of definite reward, simply trusting to the truth and goodness of him whom they went to serve. We think here of those last the Gentiles from the east, west, north, and south;⁸ of the converted publicans and sinners; of those, a great part of whose lives has, alas! been spent somewhere else, and who have only come at a late hour into the market-place; nay, of them also whose opportunities, capacity, strength, or time have been very limited—and we thank God for the teaching of this Parable. And if doubt should still exist, it must be removed by the concluding sentences of this part of the Parable, in which the householder is represented as going out at the last hour, when, finding others standing⁹ he asks them why they stood there all the day idle, to which they reply, that no man had hired them. These also are, in turn, sent into the vineyard, though apparently without any expressed promise at all.¹⁰ It thus appears, that in proportion to the lateness of their work was the felt absence of any claim on the part of the labourers, and their simple reliance on their employer.

And now it is even. The time for working is past, and the Lord of the vineyard bids His Steward [here the Christ] pay His labourers. But here the first surprise awaits them. The order of payment is the inverse of that of labour: beginning from the last unto the first. This

⁸St. Luke 13:30.

⁹The word idle in the second clause of [ver. 6](#) is spurious, though it may, of course, be supplied from the fourth clause.

¹⁰The last clause in our T. R. and A. V. is spurious, though *perhaps* such a promise was understood.

[67] is almost a necessary part of the Parable. For, if the first labourers had been paid first, they would either have gone away without knowing what was done to the last, or, if they had remained, their objection could not have been urged, except on the ground of manifest malevolence towards their neighbours. After having received their wages, they could not have objected that they had not received enough, but only that the others had received too much. But it was not the scope of the Parable to charge with conscious malevolence those who sought a higher reward or deemed themselves entitled to it. Again, we notice, as indicating the disposition of the later labourers, that those of the third hour did not murmur, because they had not got more than they of the eleventh hour. This is in accordance with their not having made any bargain at the first, but trusted entirely to the householder. But they of the first hour had their cupidity excited. Seeing what the others had received, they expected to have more than their due. When they like wise received every man a *denarius*, they murmured, as if injustice had been done them. And, as mostly in like circumstances, truth and fairness seemed on their side. For, selecting the extreme case of the eleventh hour labourers, had not the Householder made those who had wrought ¹¹ only one hour equal to them who had borne the burden of the day and the heat? Yet, however fair their reasoning might seem, they had no claim in truth or equity, for had they not agreed for one *denarius* with him? And it had not even been in the general terms of a day's wages, but they had made the express bargain of one *denarius*. They had gone to work with a stipulated sum as their hire distinctly in view. They now appealed to justice; but from first to last they had had justice. This as regards the so much for so much principle of claim, law, work, and pay.

But there was yet another aspect than that of mere justice. Those other labourers, who had felt that, owing to the lateness of their appearance, they had no claim—and, alas! which of us must not feel how late we have been in coming, and hence how little we can have wrought—had made no bargain, but trusted to the Master. And

¹¹I prefer not rendering with *Meyer* and the R.V. *epoisan*, viz., *wran?* by spent but taking the verb as the Hebrew *h= wrought*. And the first labourers could not have meant, that the last had spent not wrought an hour. This were a gratuitous imputation to them of malevolence and calumny.

as they had believed, so was it unto them. Not because they made or had any claim—I will, however, to give unto this last, even as unto thee’—the word I will (qelw) being emphatically put first to mark the good pleasure of His grace as the ground of action. Such a Master could not have given less to those who had come when called, trusting to His goodness, and not in their deserts. The reward was now reckoned, not of work nor of debt, but of grace. ¹² In passing we also mark, as against cavillers, the profound accord between what negative critics would call the true Judaic Gospel of St. Matthew, and what constitutes the very essence of the anti-Judaic teaching of St. Paul—and we ask our opponents to reconcile on their theory what can only be explained on the ground that St. Paul, like St. Matthew, was the true disciple of the true Teacher, Jesus Christ. [68]

But if all is to be placed on the new ground of *grace*, with which, indeed, the whole bearing of the later labourers accords, then (as St. Paul also shows) the labourers who murmured were guilty either of ignorance in failing to perceive the sovereignty of grace—that it is within His power to do with His own as He willeth ¹³—or else of malevolence, when, instead of with grateful joy, they looked on with an evil eye—and this in proportion as the Householder was good. But such a state of mind may be equally that of the Jews, ¹⁴ and of the Gentiles. ¹⁵ And so, in this illustrative case of the Parable, the first shall be last, and the last first. ¹⁶ And in other instances also, though not in *all*—many shall be last that are first; and first that are last. ¹⁷ But He is the God, Sovereign in grace, in Whose Vineyard there is work to do for all, however limited their time, power, or opportunity; Whose labourers we are, if His Children; Who, in His desire for the work, and condescension and patience towards the workers, goeth out into the marketplace even to the eleventh hour, and, with only gentlest rebuke for not having earlier come thither and thus lost our day in idleness, still, even to the last, bids us come; Who promises what is right, and gives far more than is due to them

¹²Romans 4:4-6; 11:6.

¹³Romans 11.

¹⁴Romans 2.; 3:28-31; 9:18-24.

¹⁵Romans 11:11-18.

¹⁶The clause which follows in our A.V. is spurious.

¹⁷St. Matthew 19:30.

who simply trust Him: the God not of the Jews nor of the Gentiles only, but our Father; the God Who not only pays, but freely gives of His own, and in Whose Wisdom and by Whose Grace it may be, that, even as the first shall be last, so the last shall be first.

[69] Another point still remains to be noticed. If anywhere, we expect in these Parables, addressed to the people, forms of teaching and speaking with which they were familiar—in other words, Jewish parallels. But we equally expect that the teaching of Christ, while conveyed under illustrations with which the Jews were familiar, would be entirely different in spirit. And such we find it notably in the present instances. To begin with, according to Jewish Law, if a man engaged a labourer without any definite bargain, but on the statement that he would be paid as one or another of the labourers in the place, he was, according to some, only bound to pay the lowest wages in the place; but, according to the majority, the average between the lowest and the highest.^{18 19} Again, as regards the letter of the Parable itself, we have a remarkable parallel in a funeral oration on a Rabbi, who died at the early age of twenty-eight. The text chosen was: The sleep of a labouring man is sweet²⁰ and this was illustrated by a Parable of a king who had a vineyard, and engaged many labourers to work in it. One of them was distinguished above the rest by his ability. So the king took him by the hand, and walked up and down with him. At even, when the labourers were paid, this one received the same wages as the others, just as if he had wrought the whole day. Upon this the others murmured, because he who had wrought only two hours had received the same as they who had laboured the whole day, when the king replied: Why murmur ye? This labourer has by his skill wrought as much in two hours as you during the whole day.²¹ This in reference to the great merits of the deceased young Rabbi.

But it will be observed that, with all its similarity of form, the moral of the Jewish Parable is in exactly the opposite direction from the teaching of Christ. The same spirit of work and pay breathes in

¹⁸Badha Mets. 87 *a*, towards the end.

¹⁹Some interesting illustrations of secondary importance, and therefore not here introduced, may be found at the close of Badha Mets. 83 *a* and the beginning of *b*.

²⁰Ecclesiastes 5:12.

²¹Midr. on Ecclesiastes 5:11; Jer. Ber. ii. 8.

another Parable, which is intended to illustrate the idea that God had not revealed the reward attaching to each commandment, in order that men might not neglect those which brought less return. A king—so the Parable runs—had a garden, for which he hired labourers without telling them what their wages would be. In the evening he called them, and, having ascertained from each under what tree he had been working, he paid them according to the value of the trees on which they had been engaged. And when they said that he ought to have told them, which trees would bring the labourers most pay, the king replied that thereby a great part of his garden would have been neglected. So had God in like manner only revealed the reward of the greatest of the commandments, that to honour father and mother,²² and that of the least, about letting the mother-bird fly away²³—attaching to both precisely the same reward.²⁴

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To these, if need were, might be added other illustrations of that painful reckoning about work, or else sufferings, and reward, which characterises Jewish theology, as it did those labourers in the Parable.²⁵

2. The second Parable in this series—or perhaps rather illustration—was spoken within the Temple. The Savior had been answering the question of the Pharisees as to His authority by an appeal to the testimony of the Baptist. This led Him to refer to the twofold reception of that testimony—on the one hand, by the Publicans and harlots, and, on the other, by the Pharisees.

The Parable,²⁶ which now follows, introduces a man who has two sons. He goes to the first, and in language of affection (*teknon*) bids him go and work in his vineyard. The son curtly and rudely refuses; but afterwards he changes his mind²⁷ and goes.²⁸ Meantime

²²Exodus 20:12.

²³Deuteronomy 22:7.

²⁴Debar. R. 6 on Deuteronomy 22:6.

²⁵See, for example, Ber. 5 *a* and *b*, but especially 7 *a*.

²⁶St. Matthew 21:28-32.

²⁷The word is not the same as that for repent in St. Matthew 3:2. The latter refers to a change of heart, and means something spiritual. The word used in the text means only a change of mind and purpose. It occurs besides in St. Matthew 27:3; 2 Corinthians 7:8; Hebrews 7:21.

²⁸Looking away from the very profane use made of the saying in the Talmud, we may quote as a literary curiosity the following as the origin of the proverb: He that will not

[71] the father, when refused by the one, has gone to his other son on the same errand. The contrast here is marked. The tone is most polite, and the answer of the son contains not only a promise, but we almost see him going: I, sir!—and he did not go. The application was easy. The first son represented the Publicans and harlots, whose curt and rude refusal of the Father's call was implied in their life of reckless sin. But afterwards they changed their mind—and went into the Father's vineyard. The other Son, with his politeness of tone and ready promise, but utter neglect of obligations undertaken, represented the Pharisees with their hypocritical and empty professions. And Christ obliged them to make application of the Parable. When challenged by the Lord, which of the two had done the will of his father, they could not avoid the answer. Then it was that, in language equally stern and true. He pointed the moral. The Baptist had come preaching righteousness, and, while the self-righteous Pharisees had not believed him, those sinners had. And yet, even when the Pharisees saw the effect on these former sinners, they changed not their minds that they might believe. Therefore the Publicans and harlots would and did go into the Kingdom before them.

3. Closely connected with the two preceding Parables, and, indeed, with the whole tenor of Christ's sayings at that time, is that about the Evil Husbandmen in the Vineyard.²⁹ As in the Parable about the Labourers sought by the Householder at different times, the object here is to set forth the patience and goodness of the owner, even towards the evil. And as, in the Parable of the Two Sons, reference is made to the practical rejection of the testimony of the Baptist by the Jews, and their consequent self-exclusion from the Kingdom, so in this there is allusion to John as greater than the prophets,³⁰ to the exclusion of Israel as a people from their position in the Kingdom,³¹ and to their punishment as individuals.³² Only we mark here a terrible progression. The neglect and non-belief which had appeared in the former Parable

when he may, when he will he shall have nay, tycr)l ytycr#k hcwr yny) hcwr ht)# wy#k Ber. 7 a, line 8 from bottom.

²⁹St. [Matthew 21:33](#) &c. and parallels.

³⁰ver. 36.

³¹ver. 43.

³²ver. 44.

have now ripened into rebellion, deliberate, aggravated, and carried to its utmost consequences in the murder of the King's only and loved Son. Similarly, what formerly appeared as their loss, in that sinners went into the Kingdom of God before them, is now presented alike as their guilt and their judgment, both national and individual.

The Parable opens, like that in [Isaiah 5](#), with a description of the complete arrangements made by the Owner of the Vineyard,³³ to show how everything had been done to ensure a good yield of fruit, and what right the Owner had to expect at least a share in it. In the Parable, as in the prophecy, the Vineyard represents the Theocracy, although in the Old Testament, necessary, as identified with the *nation* of Israel,³⁴ while in the Parable the two are distinguished, and the nation is represented by the labourers to whom the Vineyard was let out. Indeed, the whole structure of the Parable shows, that the husbandmen are Israel as a nation, although they are addressed and dealt with in the persons of their representatives and leaders. And so it was spoken to the people³⁵ and yet the chief priests and Pharisees rightly perceived that He spake of them.³⁶

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This vineyard the owner had let out to husbandmen, while he himself travelled away [abroad], as St. Luke adds, for a long time. From the language it is evident, that the husbandmen had the full management of the vineyard. We remember, that there were three modes of dealing with land. According to one of these (*Arisuth*), the labourers employed received a certain portion of the fruits, say, a third or fourth of the produce.³⁷ In such cases it seems, at least sometimes, to have been the practice, besides giving them a proportion of the produce, to provide also the seed (for a field) and to pay wages to the labourers.³⁸ The other two modes of letting land

³³An hedge against animals or marauders, a winepress or, more specifically (St. Mark), a winevat (upolhnion), into which the juice of the grapes flowed, and a tower for the watchmen and labourers generally. We may here remark that the differences in the narration of this Parable in the three Gospels are too minute for discussion here. The principal one, in St. [Matthew 21:40, 41](#), comp. with the parallels, will be briefly referred to in the text.

³⁴[Isaiah 5:7](#)

³⁵St. [Luke 20:9](#).

³⁶St. [Matthew 21:45](#).

³⁷Jer. Bikk. 64 *b*

³⁸Shem. R. 41, ed. Warsh, p. 54 *b* last line.

were, either that the tenant paid a money rent to the proprietor,³⁹ or else that he agreed to give the owner a definite amount of produce, whether the harvest had been good or bad.⁴⁰ Such leases were given by the year or for life: sometimes the lease was even hereditary, passing from father to son.⁴¹ There can scarcely be a doubt that it is the latter kind of lease (*Chakhranutha*, from rbx) which is referred to in the Parable, the lessees being bound to give the owner a certain amount of fruits in their season.

[73] Accordingly, when the time of the fruits drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his fruits'—the part of them belonging to him, or, as St. Mark and St. Luke express it, of the fruits of the vineyard. We gather, that it was a succession of servants, who received increasingly ill treatment from them evil husbandmen. We might have expected that the owner would now have taken severe measures; but instead of this he sent, in his patience and goodness, other servants'—not more⁴² which would scarcely have any meaning, but greater than the first no doubt, with the idea that their greater authority would command respect. And when these also received the same treatment, we must regard it as involving, not only additional, but *increased* guilt on the part of the husbandmen. Once more, and with deepening force, does the question arise, what measures the owner would now take. But once more we have only a fresh and still greater display of his patience and unwillingness to believe that these husbandmen were so evil. As St. Mark pathetically put it, indicating not only the owner's goodness, but the spirit of determined rebellion and the wickedness of the husbandmen: He had yet one, a beloved son—he sent him last unto them on the supposition that they would reverence him. The result was different. The appearance of the legal heir made them apprehensive of their tenure. Practically, the vineyard was already theirs; by killing the heir, the only claimant to it would be put out of the way, and so the vineyard become in every respect their own. For, the husbandmen proceeded on the idea, that as the owner was abroad for a long time he would not personally interfere—an impression strengthened by the circumstance that he

³⁹Tos. Demai vi.

⁴⁰Babha Mets. 104 a.

⁴¹Jer. Bikk. 64 b.

⁴²as in the A. and R. V.

had not avenged the former ill-usage of his servants, but only sent others in the hope of influencing them by gentleness. So the labourers, taking him [the son], cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him'—the first action indicating that by violence they thrust him out of his possession, before they wickedly slew him.

The meaning of the Parable is sufficiently plain. The owner of the vineyard, God, had let out His Vineyard—the Theocracy—to His people of old. The covenant having been instituted, He withdrew, as it were—the former direct communication between Him and Israel ceased. Then in due season He sent His Servants the prophets, to gather *His* fruits—they had had theirs in all the temporal and spiritual advantages of the covenant. But, instead of returning the fruits meet unto repentance, they only ill-treated His messengers, and that increasingly, even unto death. In His longsuffering He next sent on the same errand greater than them—John the Baptist. ⁴³ And when he also received the same treatment, He sent last His own Son, Jesus Christ. His appearance made them feel, that it was now a decisive struggle for the Vineyard—and so, in order to gain its possession for themselves, they cast the rightful heir out of His own possession, and then killed Him!

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And they must have understood the meaning of the Parable, who had served themselves heirs to their fathers in the murder of all the prophets, ⁴⁴ who had just been convicted of the rejection of the Baptist's message, and whose hearts were even then full of murderous thoughts against the rightful Heir of the Vineyard. But, even so, they must speak their own judgment. In answer to His challenge, what in their view the owner of the vineyard would do to these husbandmen, the chief priests and Pharisees could only reply: *As evil men evilly will he destroy them. And the vineyard will He let out to other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their season.* ⁴⁵

The application was obvious, and it was made by Christ, first, as always, by a reference to the prophetic testimony, showing not only the unity of all God's teaching, but also the continuity of the Israel of the present with that of old in their resistance and rejection

⁴³St. [Luke 7:26](#).

⁴⁴St. [Matthew 23:34-36](#).

⁴⁵St. [Matthew 21:41](#).

[75] of God's counsel and messengers. The quotation, than which none more applicable could be imagined, was from [Psalm 118:22, 23](#), and is made in the (Greek) Gospel of St. Matthew—not necessarily by Christ—from the LXX. Version. The only, almost verbal, difference between it and the original is, that, whereas in the latter the adoption of the stone rejected by the builders as head of the corner (this *hoc, t#z*) is ascribed to Jehovah, in the LXX. its original designation (*auth*) as head of the corner (previous to the action of the builders), is traced to the Lord. And then followed, in plain and unmistakable language, the terrible prediction, first, nationally, that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof; and then individually, that whosoever stumbled at that stone and fell over it, in personal offence or hostility, should be broken in pieces,⁴⁶ but whosoever stood in the way of, or resisted its progress, and on whom therefore it fell, it would scatter Him as dust.

Once more was their wrath roused, but also their fears. They knew that He spake of them, and would fain have laid hands on Him; but they feared the people, who in those days regarded Him as a prophet. And so for the present they left Him, and went their way.

4. If Rabbinic writings offer scarcely any parallel to the preceding Parable, that of the Marriage-Feast of the King's Son and the Wedding Garment⁴⁷ seems almost reproduced in Jewish tradition. In its oldest form⁴⁸ it is ascribed to Jochanan ben Zakkai, who flourished about the time of the composition of the Gospel of St. Matthew. It appears with variety of, or with additional details in Jewish commentaries.⁴⁹ But while the Parable of our Lord only consists of *two parts*,⁵⁰ forming one whole and having one lesson, the Talmud divides it into two separate Parables, of which the one is intended to show the necessity of being prepared for the next world—to stand in readiness for the King's feast;⁵¹ while the other

⁴⁶The only Jewish parallel, even in point of form, so far as I know, is in Vayy. R. 11 (ed. Warsh., p. 18 *a*, near beginning), where we read of a king who sent his treasurer to collect tribute, when the people of the land killed and plundered him.

⁴⁷St. [Matthew 22:1-14](#).

⁴⁸Shabb. 153 *a*, and 152 *b*.

⁴⁹Midr. on Eccles 9:8; Midr. on [Proverbs 16:11](#).

⁵⁰St. [Matthew 22:1-9](#) and [10-14](#).

⁵¹Shabb. 153 *a*.

⁵² is meant to teach that we ought to be able to present our soul to God at the last in the same state of purity in which we had (according to Rabbinic notions) originally received it. ⁵³ Even this shows the infinite difference between the Lord's and the Rabbinic use of the Parable. ⁵⁴ In the Jewish Parable a King is represented as inviting to a feast, ⁵⁵ without, however, fixing the exact time for it. The wise adorn themselves in time, and are seated at the door of the palace, so as to be in readiness, since, as they argue, no elaborate preparation for a feast can be needed in a palace; while the foolish go away to their work, arguing there must be time enough, since there can be no feast without preparation. (The Midrash has it, that, when inviting the guests, the King had told them to wash, anoint, and array themselves in their festive garments; and that the foolish, arguing that, from the preparation of the food and the arranging of the seats, they would learn when the feast was to begin, had gone, the mason to his cask of lime, the potter to his clay, the smith to his furnace, the fuller to his bleaching-ground.) But suddenly comes the King's summons to the feast, when the wise appear festively adorned, and the King rejoices over them, and they are made to sit down, eat and drink; while he is wroth with the foolish, who appear squalid, and are ordered to stand by and look on in anguish, hunger and thirst.

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The other Jewish Parable ⁵⁶ is of a king who committed to his servants the royal robes. The wise among them carefully laid them by while the foolish put them on when they did their work. After a time the king asked back the robes, when the wise could restore them clean, while the foolish had them soiled. Then the king rejoiced over the wise, and, while the robes were laid up in the treasury, they were bidden go home in peace. But to the foolish he commanded that the robes should be handed over to the fuller, and that they themselves should be cast into prison. We readily see that the meaning of this Parable was, that a man might preserve His soul perfectly pure, and so enter into peace, while the careless, who had lost their original

⁵²This Parable is only in the Talmud in this connection, not in the Midrashim.

⁵³Shabb. 152 *b*.

⁵⁴The reader will find both these Parables translated in *Sketches of Jewish Social Life* p. 179.

⁵⁵In the Talmud he invites his servants; in the Midrash, others.

⁵⁶Shabb.. 152 *b*.

purity (no original sin here), would, in the next world, by suffering, both expiate their guilt and purify their souls.

[77] When, from these Rabbinic perversions, we turn to the Parable of our Lord, its meaning is not difficult to understand. The King made a marriage ⁵⁷ for his Son, when he sent his Servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding. Evidently, as in the Jewish Parable, and as before in that of the guests invited to the Great Supper, ⁵⁸ a preliminary general invitation had preceded the announcement that all was ready. Indeed, in the Midrash on Lament iv. 2, ⁵⁹ it is expressly mentioned among other distinctions of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that none of them went to a feast till the invitation had been given and repeated. But in the Parable those invited would not come. It reminds us both of the Parable of the labourers for the Vineyard, sought at different times, and of the repeated sending of messengers to those Evil Husbandmen for the fruits that were due, when we are next told that the king sent forth other servants to tell them to come, for he had made ready his early meal (*ariston*, *not* dinner as in the Authorised and Revised Version), and that, no doubt with a view to the later meal, the oxen and fatlings were killed. These repeated endeavours to call, to admonish, and to invite, form a characteristic feature of these Parables, showing that it was one of the central objects of our Lord's teaching to exhibit the longsuffering and goodness of God. Instead of giving heed to these repeated and pressing calls, in the words of the Parable: but they (the one class) made light of it, and went away, the one to his own land, the other unto his own merchandise.

So the one class; the other made not light of it, but acted even worse than the first. But the rest laid hands on his servants, entreated them shamefully, and killed them. By this we are to understand, that, when the servants came with the second and more pressing message, the one class showed their contempt for the king, the wedding of his son, and the feast, and their preference for and preoccupation with their own possessions or acquisitions—their property or their trading, their enjoyments or their aims and desires. And, when these had gone, and probably the servants still remained to plead

⁵⁷This rather than marriage-feast.'

⁵⁸St. Luke 14:16, 17.

⁵⁹ed. Warsh. p. 73 *b*.

the message of their Lord, the rest evil entreated, and then killed them—proceeding beyond mere contempt, want of interest, and preoccupation with their own affairs, to hatred and murder. The sin was the more aggravated that he was their *king*, and the messengers had invited them to a feast, and that one in which every loyal subject should have rejoiced to take part. Theirs was, therefore, not only murder, but also rebellion against their sovereign. On this the King, in his wrath sent forth his armies, which—and here the narrative in point of time anticipates the event—destroyed the murderers, and burnt their city.⁶⁰

But the condign punishment of these rebels forms only part of the Parable. For it still leaves the wedding unprovided with guests, to sympathise with the joy of the king, and partake of his feast. And so the narrative continues:⁶¹ Then’—after the king had given commandment for his armies to go forth, he said to his servants, The wedding indeed is ready, but they that were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the partings of the highways (where a number of roads meet and cross), and, as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. We remember that the Parable here runs parallel to that other, when first the outcasts from the city-lanes, and then the wanderers on the world’s highway, were brought in to fill the place of the invited guests.⁶² At first sight it seems as if there were no connection between the declaration that those who had been bidden had proved themselves unworthy, and the direction to go into the crossroads and gather any whom they might find, since the latter might naturally be regarded as less likely to prove worthy. Yet this is one of the main points in the Parable. The first invitation had been sent to selected guests—to the Jews—who might have been expected to be worthy but had proved themselves unworthy; the next was to be given, not to the chosen city or nation, but to all that travelled in whatever direction on the world’s highway, reaching them where the roads of life meet and part.

⁶⁰Reference is only made to that part who were murderers. Not that the others escaped suffering or loss, but, in accordance with the plan of the Parable, this is not mentioned. When we read of their city may there not here be also a reference to a commonwealth or nation?

⁶¹St. [Matthew 22:8](#).

⁶²St. [Luke 14:21-24](#).

We have already in part anticipated the interpretation of this Parable. The Kingdom is here, as so often in the Old and in the New Testament, likened to a feast, and more specifically to a marriage-feast. But we mark as distinctive, that the King makes it *for His Son*, Thus Christ, as Son and Heir of the Kingdom, forms the central Figure in the Parable. This is the first point set before us. The next is, that the chosen, invited guests were the ancient Covenant-People—Israel. To them God had sent first under the Old Testament. And, although they had not given heed to His call, yet a second class of messengers was sent to them under the New Testament. [79] And the message of the latter was, that the early meal was ready (Christ's first coming), and that all preparations had been made for the great evening-meal (Christ's Reign). Another prominent truth is set forth in the repeated message of the King, which points to the goodness and longsuffering of God. Next, our attention is drawn to the refusal of Israel, which appears in the contemptuous neglect and preoccupation with their things of one party, and the hatred, resistance, and murder by the other. Then follow in quick succession the command of judgement on the nation, and the burning of their city—God's army being, in this instance, the Romans—and, finally, the direction to go into the crossways to invite all men, alike Jews and Gentiles.

With verse 10 begins the second part of the Parable. The Servants'—that is, the New Testament messengers—had fulfilled their commission; they had brought in as many as they found, both bad and good: that is, without respect to their previous history, or their moral and religious state up the time of their call; and the wedding was filled with guests'—that is, the table at the marriage-feast was filled with those who as guests lay around it (anakeimenwn). But, if ever we are to learn that we must not expect on earth—not even at the King's marriage-table—a pure Church, it is, surely, from what now follows. The King entered to see His guests, and among them he described one of who had not on a wedding garment. Manifestly, the quickness of the invitation and the previous unpreparedness. As the guests had been travellers, and as the feast was in the King's palace, we cannot be mistaken in supposing that such garments were supplied in the palace itself to all those who sought them. And with this agrees the circumstance, that the man so addressed was

speechless [literally, gagged or muzzled’]. ⁶³ His conduct argued utter insensibility as regarded that to which he had been called—ignorance of what was due to the King, and what became such a feast. For, although no previous state of preparedness was required of the invited guests, all being bidden, whether good or bad, yet the fact remained that, if they were to take part in the feast, they must put on a garment suited to the occasion. All are invited to the Gospel-feast; but they who will partake of it must put on the King’s wedding-garment of Evangelical holiness. And whereas it is said in the Parable, that only one was described without this garment, this is intended to teach, that the King will only generally view His guests, but that each will be separately examined, and that no one—no, not a single individual—will be able to escape discovery amidst the mass of guests, if he has not the wedding-garment. In short, in that day of trial, it is not a scrutiny of Churches, but of individuals in the Church. And so the King bade the servants—*diakonoι*—not the same who had previously carried the invitation (*douloι*), but others—evidently here the Angels, His ministers to bind him hand and foot, and to cast him out into the darkness, the outer’—that is, unable to offer resistance and as a punished captive, he was to be cast out into that darkness which is outside the brilliantly lighted guest-chamber of the King. And, still further to mark that darkness outside, it is added that this is the well-known place of suffering and anguish: There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

[80]

And here the Parable closes with the general statement, applicable alike to the first part of the Parable—to the first invited guests, Israel—and to the second, the guests from all the world: For (this is the meaning of the whole Parable) many are called, but few chosen. ⁶⁴ For the understanding of these words we have to keep in view that, logically, the two clauses must be supplemented by the same words. Thus, the verse would read: Many are called *out of the world* by God to partake of the Gospel-feast, but few *out of the world—not, out of the called*—are chosen by God to partake of it. The call to the feast and the choice for the feast are not identical. The call comes to all; but it may outwardly accepted, and a man may sit down to the

⁶³as in St. [Matthew 22:34](#); see the note on it.

⁶⁴St. [Matthew 22:14](#).

feast, and yet he may not be chosen to partake of the feast, because he has not the wedding-garment of converting, sanctifying grace. And so one may be thrust from the marriage-board into the darkness without, with its sorrow and anguish.

Thus, side by side, yet wide apart, are these two—God’s call and God’s choice. The connecting-link between them is the taking of the wedding-garment, freely given in the Palace. Yet, we must seek it, ask it, put it on. And so here also, we have, side by side, God’s gift and man’s activity. And still, to all time, and to all men, alike in its warning, teaching, and blessing, it is true: Many are called, but few are chosen!’

Chapter 6—The Evening of the Third Day in Passion-Week

[81]

*On the Mount of Olives: Discourse to the Disciples Concerning the
Last Things*

(St. [Matthew 24.](#); St. [Mark 13.](#); St. [Luke 21:5-38, 1235-48.](#))

The last and most solemn denunciation of Jerusalem had been uttered, the last and most terrible prediction of judgment upon the Temple spoken, and Jesus was suiting the action to the word. It was as if He had cast the dust of His Shoes against the House that was to be left desolate. And so He quitted forever the Temple and them that held office in it.

They had left the Sanctuary and the City, had crossed black Kidron, and were slowly climbing the Mount of Olives. A sudden turn in the road, and the Sacred Building was once more in full view. Just then the western sun was pouring his golden beams on tops of marble cloister and on the terraced courts, and glittering on the golden spikes on the roof of the Holy Place. In the setting, even more than in the rising sun, must the vast proportions, the symmetry, and the sparkling sheen of this mass of snowy marble and gold have stood out gloriously. And across the black valley, and up the slopes of Olivet, lay the dark shadows of these gigantic walls built of massive stones, some of them nearly twenty-four feet long. Even the Rabbis, despite their hatred of Herod, grow enthusiastic, and dream that the very Temple-walls would have been covered with gold, had not the variegated marble, resembling the waves of the sea, seemed more beautiful. ¹ It was probably as they now gazed on all this grandeur and strength, that they broke the silence imposed on them by gloomy thoughts of the near desolateness of that House, which the Lord had predicted. ² One and another pointed out to

¹Baba B 4 a; Sukk 51 b.

²St. [Matthew 23:37-39.](#)

[82] Him those massive stones and splendid buildings, or speak of the rich offerings with which the Temple was adorned. ³ It was but natural that the contrast between this and the predicted desolation should have impressed them; natural, also, that they should refer to it—not as matter of doubt, but rather as of question. ⁴ Then Jesus, probably turning to one—perhaps to the first, or else the principal—of His questioners, ⁵ spoke fully of that terrible contrast between the present and the near future, when, as fulfilled with almost incredible literality, ⁶ not one stone would be left upon another that was not upturned.

In silence they pursued their way. Upon the Mount of Olives they sat down, right over against the Temple. Whether or not the others had gone farther, or Christ had sat apart with these four, Peter and James and John and Andrew are named ⁷ as those who now asked Him further of what must have weighed so heavily on their hearts. It was not idle curiosity, although inquiry on such as subject, even merely for the sake of information, could scarcely have been blamed in a Jew. But it did concern them personally, for had not the Lord conjoined the desolateness of that House with His own absence? He had explained the former as meaning the ruin of the City and the utter destruction of the Temple. But to His prediction of it had been added these words: Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord. In their view, this could only refer to His Second Coming, and to the End of the world as connected with it. This explains the twofold question which the four now addressed to Christ: Tell us, when shall

³St. [Matthew 24:1](#).

⁴St. [Matthew 24:3](#).

⁵St. [Mark 13:1](#).

⁶According to *Josephus* (War vii. 1. 1) the city was so upheaved and dug up, that it was difficult to believe it had ever been inhabited. At a later period Turnus Rufus had the ploughshare drawn over it. And in regard to the Temple walls, notwithstanding the massiveness of the stones, with the exception of some corner or portion of wall—left almost to show how great had been the ruin and desolation—there is, certainly, nothing now *in situ*. (Capt. *Wilson* in the Ordnance Survey).

⁷St. [Mark 13:3](#).

these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy Coming, and of the consummation of the age? ⁸

Irrespective of other sayings, in which a distinction between these two events is made, we can scarcely believe that the disciple could have conjoined the desolation of the Temple with the immediate Advent of Christ and the end of the world. For, in the saying which gave rise to their question, Christ had placed an indefinite period between the two. Between the desolation of the House and their new welcome to Him, would intervene a period of indefinite length, during which they would not see Him again. The disciples could not have overlooked this; and hence neither their question, nor yet the Discourse of our Lord, have been intended to conjoin the two. It is necessary to keep this in view when studying the words of Christ; and any different impression must be due to the exceeding compression in the language of St. Matthew, and to this, that Christ would purposely leave indefinite the interval between the desolation of the house and His own Return.

Another point of considerable importance remains to be noticed. When the Lord, on quitting the Temple, Said: Ye shall not see Me henceforth He must have referred to Israel in their *national* capacity—to the Jewish polity in Church and State. If so, the promise in the text of visible reappearance must also apply to the Jewish Commonwealth, to Israel in their national capacity. Accordingly, it is suggested that in the present passage Christ refers to His Advent, not from the general cosmic viewpoint of universal, but from the Jewish standpoint of Jewish, history, in which the destruction of Jerusalem and the appearance of false Christs are the last events of national history, to be followed by the dreary blank and silence of

⁸thV sunteleiaV tou aiwnoV *Godet* argues that the account in the Gospel of St. Matthew contains, as in other parts of that gospel, the combined reports of addresses, delivered at different times. That may be so, but inference of *Godet* is certainly incorrect—that neither the question of the disciples, nor the discourse of our Lord on that occasion primarily referred to the Second Advent (the parousia). When that writer remarks, that only St. Matthew, but neither St. Mark nor St. Luke refer to such a question by the disciples, he must have overlooked that it is not only implied in the all these things of St. Mark, and the these things of St. Luke—which, surely, refer to more than one thing—but that the question of the disciples about the Advent takes up a distinctive part of what Christ had said on quitting the Temple, as reported in St. [Matthew 23:39](#).

the many centuries of the Gentile dispensation broken and silence of the events that usher in His Coming.⁹

[84] Keeping in mind, then, that the disciples could not have conjoined the desolation of the Temple with the immediate Advent of Christ into His Kingdom and the end of the world, their question to Christ was twofold: *When* would these things be? and, What would be the *signs* of His Royal Advent and the consummation of the Age? On the former the Lord gave no information; to the latter His Discourse on the Mount of Olives was directed. On one point the statement of the Lord had been so novel as almost to account for their question. Jewish writings speak very frequently of the so-called sorrows of the Messiah (*Chebhley shel Mashiach*.¹⁰¹¹) These were partly those of the Messiah, and partly—perhaps chiefly—those coming of the Messiah. There can be no purpose in describing them in detail, since the particulars mentioned vary so much, and the descriptions are so fanciful. But they may generally be characterised as marking a period of internal corruption¹² and of outward distress, especially of famine and war, of which land of Palestine was to be the scene, and in which Israel were to be the chief sufferers.¹³ As the Rabbinic notices which we possess all date from after the destruction of Jerusalem, it is, of course, impossible to make any absolute assertion on the point; but, as a matter of fact, none of them refers to desolation of the City and Temple as one of the signs or sorrows of the Messiah. It is true that isolated voices proclaimed that fate of the Sanctuary, but not in any connection with the triumphant Advent of Messiah;¹⁴ and, if we are to judge from the hope entertained by the fanatics during the last siege of Jerusalem, they rather expected a Divine, not doubt Messianic, interposition to save the City and Temple, even at the last moment.¹⁵ When Christ, therefore, proclaimed the desolation of the house and even placed it

⁹St. Luke 21:24 &c.

¹⁰Shabb. 118 *a*.

¹¹If these are computed to last nine months, it must have been from a kind of fanciful analogy with the sorrows of a woman.

¹²End of the Mishnic Tractate Sotah.

¹³Comp. Sanh. 98 *a* and *b*.

¹⁴When using the expression Advent in this connection, we refer to the Advent of Messiah to reign. His Messianic manifestation—not His birth.

¹⁵Comp. *Jos.* War ii. 13, 4; and especially vi. 5. 2.

in indirect connection with His Advent, He taught that which must have been alike new and unexpected.

This may be the most suitable place for explaining the Jewish expectation connected with the Advent of the Messiah. Here we have first to dismiss, as belonging to a later period, the Rabbinic fiction of two Messiahs: the one, the primary and reigning, the Son of David; the other, the secondary and warfaring Messiah, the Son of Ephraim or of Manasseh. The earliest Talmudic reference to this second Messiah ¹⁶ dates from the third century of our era, and contains the strange and almost blasphemous notices that the prophecy of Zechariah, ¹⁷ concerning the mourning for Him Whom they had pierced, referred to Messiah the Son of Joseph, Who would be killed in the war of Gog and Magog; ¹⁸ and that, when Messiah the Son of David saw it, He asked life of God, who gave it to Him, as it is written in [Psalm 2](#): Ask of Me, and I will give Thee upon which God informed the Messiah that His father David had already asked and obtained this for Him, according to [Psalm 21:4](#). Generally the Messiah, Son of Joseph, is connected with the gathering and restoration of the ten tribes. Later Rabbinic writings connect all the sufferings of the Messiah for sin with this Son of Joseph. ¹⁹ The war in which the Son of Joseph succumbed would finally be brought to a victorious termination by the Son of David when the supremacy of Israel would be restored, and all nations walk in His Light.

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It is scarcely matter for surprise, that the various notices about the Messiah, Son of Joseph, are confused and sometimes inconsistent, considering the circumstances in which this dogma originated. Its primary reason was, no doubt, controversial. When hardly pressed by Christian argument about the Old Testament prophecies of the sufferings of the Messiah, the fiction about the Son of Joseph as distinct from the Son of David would offer a welcome means of escape. ²⁰ Besides, when in the Jewish rebellion ²¹ under the false

¹⁶Sukk. 52 *a* and *b*.

¹⁷[Zechariah 12:12](#).

¹⁸Another Rabbinic authority, however, refers it to the evil impulse which was, in the future, to be annihilated.

¹⁹See especially Yalkut on [Isaiah 9](#). vol. ii. par 359, quoted at length in Appendix IX.

²⁰Comp. J. M. Gl [U+009C] sener, De Gemino Jud. Mess. pp. 145 &c.; *Schöttgen*, Horae [Hebrews 2](#). pp. 360-366.

²¹132-135 A.D.

Messiah Bar Kokhba (the Son of a Star²²) the latter succumbed to the Romans and was killed, the Synagogue deemed it necessary to rekindle Israel's hope, that had been quenched in blood, by the picture to two Messiahs, of whom the first should fall in warfare, while the second, the Son of David, would carry the contest to a triumphant issue.²³

[86] In general, we must here remember that there is a difference between three terms used in Jewish writings to designate that which is to succeed the present dispensation or world (*Olam hazzeh*), although the distinction is not always consistently carried out. This happy period would begin with the days of the Messiah (*xy#mh twmy*). These would stretch into the coming age (*Athid labho*), and end with the world to come (*Olam habba*)—although the latter is sometimes made to include the whole of that period.²⁴ The most divergent opinions are expressed of the duration of the Messianic period. It seems like a round number when we are told that it would last for three generations.²⁵ In the fullness discussion on the subject,²⁶ the opinions of different Rabbis are mentioned, who variously fix

²²Numbers 24:17.

²³So also both *Levy* (Neuhebr. Wörterb. vol. iii. p. 271 a) and *Hamburger* (Real. Encykl. f. Bib. u. Talm., Abtheil. ii. p. 768). I must here express surprise that a writer so learned and independent as *Castelli* (II Messia, pp. 224-236) should have argued that the theory of a Messiah, son of Joseph, belonged to the *oldest* Jewish traditions, and did not arise as explained in the text. The only reason which *Castelli* urges against a view, which he admits to be otherwise probable, is that certain Rabbinic statements speak also of the Son of David as suffering. Even if this were so, such inconsistencies would prove nothing, since there are so many instances of them in Rabbinic writings. But, really, the only passage which from its age here deserves serious attention in Sanh. 98 a and b. In Yalkut the suffering Messiah is expressly designated as the Son of Ephraim.

²⁴In Bemidb. R. 15 (ed. Warsh. p. 63 a, lines 9 and 8 from bottom), the days of the Messiah are specially distinguished from the *Athid labho s [U+009C]culum futurum*. In Tanchuma (Egebh, ed. Warsh. ii. p. 105 a about the middle) it is said, And after the days of the Messiah comes the “*Olam habba*”—so that the Messianic time is there made to include the *s [U+009C]culum futurum*. Again, in Pes. 68 a and Sanh. 91 b, the days of the Messiah are distinguished from the *Olam habba* and, lastly (not to multiply instances), in Shabb. 113 b from the *Athid labho*.

²⁵Siphre, ed. *Friedmann*, p. 134 a, about the middle.

²⁶Tanchuma, as in Note 3.

the period at from forty to one, two, and even seven thousands years, according to fanciful analogies.²⁷

Where statements rest on such fanciful considerations, we can scarcely attach serious value to them, nor expect agreement. This remark holds equally true in regard to most of the other points involved. Suffice it to say, that, according to general opinion, the Birth of the Messiah would be unknown to His contemporaries;²⁸ that He would appear, carry on His work, then disappear—probably for forty-five days; then reappear again, and destroy the hostile powers of the world, notably Edom Armilos the Roman Power—the fourth and last world-empire (sometimes it is said: through Ishmael). Ransomed Israel would now be miraculously gathered from the ends of the earth, and brought back to their own land, the ten tribes sharing in their restoration, but this only on condition of their having repented of their former sins.²⁹ According to the Midrash,³⁰ all circumcised Israel would then be released from Gehenna, and the dead be raised—according to some authorities, by the Messiah, to Whom God would give the Key of the Resurrection of the Dead.³¹ This Resurrection would take place in the land of Israel, and those of Israel who had been buried elsewhere would have to roll under ground—not without suffering pain³²—till they reach the sacred soil. Probably the reason of this strange idea, which was supported by an appeal to the direction of Jacob and Joseph as to their last resting-place, was to induce the Jews, after the final desolation of their land, not to quit—Palestine—. This Resurrection, which is variously supposed to take place at the beginning or during the course of the Messianic manifestation, would be announced by the

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²⁷40 years = “the” wilderness wanderings: 1000 years = one day, [Psalm 90:4](#); 2000 years of salvation = the day of vengeance and the year of salvation ([Isaiah 63:4](#)); 7000 years = the marriage-week ([Isaiah 62:5](#)), a day being = 1000 years.

²⁸This confirms St. [John 7:26](#), and affords another evidence that it cannot have been of Ephesian authorship, but that its writer must have been a Jew, intimately conversant with Jewish belief.

²⁹But here opinions are divided, some holding that they will never be restored. See both opinions in *Sanh.* 110 *b*.

³⁰*Yalkut on Is.* vol. ii. p. 42 *c*; *Siphra*, ed. Weiss. 112 *b*.

³¹*Sanh.* 113 *a*.

³²*Kethub.* 111 *a*.

blowing of the great trumpet. ³³ ³⁴ It would be difficult to say how many of these strange and confused views prevailed at the time of Christ; ³⁵

[88] which of them were universally entertained as real dogmas; or from what source they had been originally derived. Probably many of them were popularly entertained, and afterwards further developed—as we believe, with elements distorted from Christian teaching.

We have now reached the period of the coming age (the *Athid labho*, or saeculum futurum). All the resistance to God would be concentrated in the great war of Gog and Magog, and with it the prevalence of all the wickedness be conjoined. And terrible would be the straits of Israel. Three times would the enemy seek to storm the Holy City. But each time would the assault be repelled—at the last with complete destruction of the enemy. The sacred City would now be wholly rebuilt and inhabited. But oh, how different from of old! Its Sabbath-boundaries would be strewed with pearls and precious gems. The City itself would be lifted to a height of some nine miles—nay, with realistic application of [Isaiah 49:20](#), it would reach up to the throne of God, while it would extend from Joppa as far as the gates of Damascus! For, Jerusalem was to be the dwelling-place of Israel, and the resort of all nations. But more glorious in Jerusalem would be the new Temple which the Messiah was to rear, and to which those five things were to be restored which had been wanting in the former Sanctuary; the Golden Candlestick, the Ark, and Heaven-lit fire on the Altar, the Holy Ghost, and the Cherubim. And the land of Israel would then be as wide as it had been sketched in the promise which God had given to Abraham, and which had never before been fulfilled—since the largest extent of Israel's rule had only been over seven nations, whereas the Divine promise extended it over ten, if not over the whole earth.

Strangely realistic and exaggerated by Eastern imagination as these hopes sound, there is connected with them, a point of deep-

³³iv. Esd. vi. 23 &c.

³⁴On the Resurrection-body, the bone *Luz*, the dress worn, and the reappearance of the former bodily defects, see previous remarks, pp. 398, 399.

³⁵In this extremely condensed abstract, I have thought it better not to cumber the page with Rabbinic references. They would have been too numerous, and the learned reader can easily find sufficient to bear on each clause in books treating on the subject..

est interest on which, as explained in another place,³⁶ remarkable divergence of opinion prevailed. It concerns the Services of the rebuilt Temple, and the observance of The Law in Messianic days. One party here insisted on the restoration of all the ancient Services, and the strict observance of the Mosaic and Rabbinic Law—nay, on its full imposition on the Gentile nation.³⁷ But this view must have been at least modified by the expectation, that the Messiah would give a new Law.³⁸ But was this new Law to apply only to the Gentiles, or also to Israel? Here again there is divergence of opinions. According to some, this Law would be binding on Israel, but not on the Gentiles, or else the latter would have a modified or condensed series of ordinances (at most thirty commandments). But the most liberal view, and, as we may suppose, that most acceptable to the enlightened, was, that in the future only these two festive seasons would be observed: The Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Esther (or else that of Tabernacles), and that of all the sacrifices only thank-offerings would be continued.³⁹ Nay, opinion went even further, and many held that in Messianic days the distinctions of pure and impure, lawful and unlawful, as regarded food, would be abolished.⁴⁰ There can be little doubt that these different views were entertained even in the days of our Lord and in Apostolic times, and they account for the exceeding bitterness with which the extreme Pharisaic party in the Church at Jerusalem contended, that the Gentile converts must be circumcised, and the full weight of the yoke of the Law laid on their necks. And with a view to this new Law, which God would give to his world through the Messiah, the Rabbis divided all time into three periods: the primitive, that under the Law, and that of the Messiah.⁴¹

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It only remains briefly to describe the beatitude of Israel, both physical and moral, in those days, the state of the nations, and, lastly, the end of that age and its merging into the world to come (*Olam*

³⁶See Book III. ch 3. and Appendix XIV.

³⁷Such as even the wearing of the phylacteries (comp. Ber. R. 98; Midr. on [Psalm 21.](#))

³⁸Midr. on Cant. ii. 13 (*ex rec. R. Martini*, Pugio Fidei, pp. 782, 793); Yalkut ii. par. 296.

³⁹Vayyik. R. 9, 27; Midr on [Psalm 56.](#); 100.

⁴⁰Midr. on [Psalm 146.](#); Vavy. R. 13; Tanch., Shemini 7 and 8.

⁴¹Yalkut on [Isaiah 26](#); Sanh. 97 a; Ab. Z. 9 a.

[90] *habba*). Morally, this would be a period of holiness, of forgiveness, and of peace. Without, there would be no longer enemies nor oppressors. And within the City and Land a more than Paradisiacal state would prevail, which is depicted in even more than the usual realistic Eastern language. For that vast new Jerusalem (not in heaven, but in the literal Palestine) Angels were to cut gems 45 feet long and broad (30 cubits), and place them in its gates; ⁴² the windows and gates were to be of precious stones, the walls of silver, gold, and gems, while all kinds of jewels would be strewed about, of which every Israelite was at liberty to take. Jerusalem would be as large as, at present, all Palestine, and Palestine as all the world. ⁴³ Corresponding to this miraculous extension would be a miraculous elevation of Jerusalem into the air. ⁴⁴ And it is one of the strangest mixtures of self-righteousness and realism with deeper and more spiritual thoughts, when the Rabbis prove by references to the prophetic Scriptures, that every event and miracle in the history of Israel would find its counterpart, or rather larger fulfilment, in Messianic days. Thus, what was recorded of Abraham ⁴⁵ would, on account of his merit, find, clause by clause, its counterpart in the future: Let a little water be fetched in what is predicted in [Zechariah 14:8](#); wash your feet in what is predicted in [Isaiah 4:5](#); rest yourselves under the tree in what is said in [Isaiah 4:4](#); and I will fetch a morsel of bread in the promise of [Psalm 72:16](#). ⁴⁶

But by the side of this we find much coarse realism. The land would spontaneously produce the best dresses and the finest cakes; ⁴⁷ the wheat would grow as high as palm-trees, nay, as the mountains, while the wind would miraculously convert the grain into flour, and cast it into the valleys. Every tree would become fruit-bearing; ⁴⁸ nay, they were to break forth, and to bear fruit every day; ⁴⁹ daily was every woman to bear child, so that ultimately every Israelitish family would number as many as all Israel at the time of the Exodus.

⁴²Babha B 75 *a*.

⁴³Yalkut ii. p. 57 *b*, par. 363, line 3.

⁴⁴Babha B. 75 *b*.

⁴⁵[Genesis 18:4, 5](#).

⁴⁶Ber. R. 48.

⁴⁷Shabb. 30 *b*.

⁴⁸Kethub. 111 *b*.

⁴⁹Shabb. 30 *a, b*.

⁵⁰ All sickness and disease, and all that could hurt, would pass away. As regarded death, the promise of its final abolition ⁵¹ was, with characteristic ingenuity, applied to Israel, while the statement that the child should die an hundred years old ⁵² was understood as referring to the Gentiles, and as teaching that, although they would die, yet their age would be greatly prolonged, so that a centenarian would be regarded as only a child. Lastly, such physical and outward loss as Rabbinism regarded as the consequence of the Fall, ⁵³ would be again restored to man. ^{54 55}

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It would be easy to multiply quotations even more realistic than these, if such could serve any good purpose. The same literalism prevails in regard to the reign of King Messiah over the nations of the world. Not only is the figurative language of the prophets applied in the most external manner, but illustrative details of the same character are added. Jerusalem would, as the residence of the Messiah, become the capital of the world, and Israel take the place of the (fourth) world-monarchy, the Roman Empire. After the Roman Empire none other was to rise, for it was to be immediately followed by the reign of Messiah. ⁵⁶ But that day, or rather that of the fall of the (ten) Gentile nations, which would inaugurate the Empire of Messiah, was among the seven things unknown to man. ⁵⁷ Nay, God had conjured Israel not to communicate to the Gentiles the mystery of the calculation of the times. ⁵⁸ But the very origin of the wicked world-Empire had been caused by Israel's sin. It had been (ideally) founded ⁵⁹ when Solomon contracted alliance with the daughter of Pharaoh, while Romulus and Remus rose when Jeroboam set up the worship of the two calves. Thus, what would have become the

⁵⁰Midr. on Psalm 14.

⁵¹Isaiah 25:8.

⁵²Isaiah 65:20.

⁵³Ber. R. 12.

⁵⁴Bemidb. R. 13.

⁵⁵They are the following six: His splendour, the continuance of life, his original more than gigantic stature, the fruits of the ground, and of trees, and the brightness of the heavenly lights.

⁵⁶Vayyik. R. 13, end.

⁵⁷Ber. R. 65.

⁵⁸Kethub. 111 *a*.

⁵⁹On that day Gabriel had descended, cut a reed from the ocean, and planted it in mud from the sea, and on this the city of Rome was founded (Siphre 86 *a*).

universal Davidic Rule had, through Israel's sin, been changed into subjection to the Gentiles. Whether or not these Gentiles would in the Messianic future become proselytes, seems a moot question. Sometimes it is affirmed;⁶⁰ at others it is stated that no proselytes would then be received,⁶¹ and for this good reason, that in the final war and rebellion those proselytes would, from fear, cast off the yoke of Judaism and join the enemies.

[92] That war, which seems a continuation of that Gog and Magog, would close the Messianic era. The nations, who had hitherto given tribute to Messiah, would rebel against Him, when He would destroy them by the breath of His mouth, so that Israel alone would be left on the face of the earth.⁶² The duration of that period of rebellion is stated to be seven years. It seems, at least, a doubtful point, whether a second or general Resurrection was expected, the more probable view being, that there was only one Resurrection, and that of Israel alone,⁶³ or, at any rate, only of the studious and the pious,⁶⁴ and that this was to take place at the beginning of the Messianic reign. If the Gentiles rose at all, it would only be immediately again to die.^{65 66}

Then the final Judgment would commence. We must here once more make distinction between Israel and the Gentiles, with whom, nay, as more punishable than they, certain notorious sinners, heretics, and all apostates, were to be ranked. Whereas to Israel the Gehenna, to which all but the perfectly righteous had been consigned at death, had proved a kind of purgatory, from which they were all ultimately delivered by Abraham,⁶⁷ or, according to some of the later Midrashim, by the Messiah, no such deliverance was in prospect for the heathen nor for sinners of Israel.⁶⁸ The question whether

⁶⁰Ab. A. 24 *a*.

⁶¹Ab. Z. 3 *b*; Yeb. 24 *b*.

⁶²Tanch. ed. Warsh ii. p. 115 *a*, top.

⁶³Taan. 7*a*.

⁶⁴Kethub. 111 *b*.

⁶⁵Pirké d. R. Eliez. 34.

⁶⁶It is, of course, not denied, that individual voices would have assigned part in the world to come to the pious from among the Gentiles. But even so, what is the *precise* import of this admission?

⁶⁷Erub. 19 *a*.

⁶⁸As to the latter, a solitary opinion in Moed K. 27 *a*.

the fiery torments suffered (which are very realistically described) would at last end in annihilation, is one which at different times received different answers, as fully explained in another place.⁶⁹ At the time of Christ the punishment of the wicked was certainly regarded as of eternal duration. Rabbi José, a teacher of the second century, and a representative of the more rationalistic school, says expressly, The fire of Gehinnom is never quenched.⁷⁰ And even the passage, so often (although only partially) quoted, to the effect, that the final torments of Gehenna would last for twelve months, after which body and soul would be annihilated, excepts from this a number of Jewish sinners, specially mentioned, such as heretics, Epicureans, apostates, and persecutors, who are designated as children of Gehenna (*ledorey doroth*, to ages of ages).⁷¹ And with this other statements agree,⁷² so that at most it would follow that, while annihilation would await the less guilty, the most guilty were to be reserved for eternal punishment.

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Such, then, was the final Judgment, to be held in the valley of Jehoshaphat by God, at the head of the Heavenly Sanhedrin, composed of the elders of Israel.⁷³ Realistic as its description is, even this is terribly surpassed by a passage⁷⁴ in which the supposed pleas for mercy by the various nations are adduced and refuted, when, after an unseemly contention between God and the Gentiles—equally shocking to good taste and blasphemous—about the partiality that had been shown to Israel, the Gentiles would be consigned to punishment. All this in a manner revolting to all reverent feeling. And the contrast between the Jewish picture of the last Judgment and that outlined in the Gospel is so striking, as alone to vindicate (were such necessary) the eschatological parts of the New Testament, and to prove what infinite distance there is between the Teaching of Christ and the Theology of the Synagogue.

⁶⁹See Appendix XIX.

⁷⁰Pes. 54 *a*.

⁷¹Rosh haSh. 17 *a*.

⁷²Sanh. x. 3; 106 *b*.

⁷³Tanch. u. s. i. p. 71 *a, b*.

⁷⁴Ab. Z. 2 *a* to 3.

After the final judgment we must look for the renewal of heaven and earth. In the latter neither physical ⁷⁵ nor moral darkness would any longer prevail, since the *Yetser haRa*, or Evil impulse would be destroyed. ^{76 77} And renewed earth would bring forth all without blemish and in Paradisiacal perfection, while alike physical and moral evil had ceased. Then began the *Olam habba* or world to come. The question, whether any functions or enjoyments of the body would continue, is variously answered. The reply of the Lord to the question of the Sadducees about marriage in the other world seems to imply, that materialistic views on the subject were entertained at the time. Many Rabbinic passages, such as about the great feast upon Leviathan and Behemoth prepared for the righteous in the latter days, ⁷⁸ confirm only too painfully the impression of grossly materialistic expectations. ⁷⁹ On the other hand, passages may be quoted in which the utterly unmaterial character of the world to come is insisted upon in most emphatic language. ⁸⁰ In truth, the same fundamental divergences here exist as on other points, such as the abode of the beatified, the visible or else invisible glory which they would enjoy, and even the new Jerusalem. And in regard to

⁷⁵Ber. R. 91.

⁷⁶Yalkut i. p. 45 c.

⁷⁷But it does not seem clear to me, whether this conjunction of the cessation of darkness, together with that of the *Yetser haRa*, is not intended to be taken figuratively and spiritually.

⁷⁸Babha B. 74 a.

⁷⁹At the same time, many quotations by Christian writers intended to show the materialism of Jewish views are grossly unfair. Thus, for example, Ber. 57 b, quoted by *Weber* (Altsynag. Theol. p. 384), certainly does *not* express the grossly carnal expectancy imputed to it. On the other hand, it is certainly grossly materialistic, when we read how the skin of slaughtered Leviathan is to be made into tents, girdles, necklets, or armlets for the blessed, according to their varying merits (Babha B. 75 a). Altogether the account of the nature and hunt of this Leviathan, of the feast held, the various dishes served (Babha B. 74 b to 75 b), and the wine drunk on the occasion (Targ. Pseudo-Jon. on [Genesis 27:25](#); Targ. on Cant. viii. 2; on Eccles 9:7), are too coarsely materialistic for quotation. But what a contrast to the description of the Last Things by our Lord and His Apostles! This alone would furnish sufficient presumptive evidence in favour of the New Testament. I have tried to touch this very painful matter as delicately as I could, rather by allusions than by descriptions, which could only raise prejudices.

⁸⁰Yalkut, vol. i. p. 32 d. and especially Ber. 17 a.

the latter,⁸¹ as indeed to all those references to the beatitudes of the world to come, it seems at least doubtful, whether the Rabbis may not have intended to describe rather the Messianic days than the final winding up of all things.

To complete this sketch of Jewish opinions, it is necessary, however briefly, to refer to the Pseudepigraphic Writings,⁸² which, as will be remembered, expressed the Apocalyptic expectancies of the Jews before the time of Christ. But here we have always to keep in mind this twofold difficulty: that the language used in works of this kind is of a highly figurative character, and must therefore not be literally pressed; and that more than one of them, notably IV. Esdras, dates from post-Christian times, and was, in important respects, admittedly influenced by Christian teaching. But in the main the picture of Messianic times in these writings is the same as the presented by the Rabbis. Briefly, the Pseudepigraphic view may be thus sketched.⁸³ Of the so-called *Wars of the Messiah* there had been already a kind of prefigurement in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, when armed soldiery had been seen to carry on warfare in the air.⁸⁴ This sign is mentioned in the Sibylline Books⁸⁵ as marking the coming end, together with the sight of swords in the starlit sky at night, the falling of dust from heaven, the extinction of the sunlight and appearance of the moon by day, and the dropping of blood from the rocks. A somewhat similar, though even more realistic, picture is presented in connection with the blast of the third trumpet in IV. (II.) Esdras.⁸⁶ Only that there the element of moral judgment is more clearly introduced. This appears still more fully in another passage of the same book,⁸⁷ in which, apparently in connection with the Judgment, the influence of Christian teaching, although in an externalised form, may be clearly traced. A perhaps even more detailed description of the wickedness, distress, and physical

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⁸¹This is the Jerusalem built of sapphire, which is to descend from heaven, and in the central sanctuary of which (unlike the worship of the Book of Revelation) Aaron is to officiate and to receive the priestly gifts (Taan. 5 a; Baba B. 75 b).

⁸²See Appendix I.

⁸³Comp. generally *Schürer*, Neutest. Zeitgesch. pp. 579, &c.

⁸⁴2 Macc. v. 2, 3.

⁸⁵Or, Sibyll. iii. 795-806.

⁸⁶IV. Esdr. v. 1-12.

⁸⁷vi. 18-28.

desolation upon earth at that time, is given in the Book of Jubilees.
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[96] At last, when these distresses have reached their final height, when signs are in the sky, ruin upon earth, and the unburied bodies that cover the ground are devoured by birds and wild beasts, or else swallowed up by the earth,⁸⁹ would God send the King Who would put an end to unrighteousness. Then would follow the last war against Jerusalem, in which God would fight from heaven with the nations, when they would submit to, and own Him.⁹⁰ But while in the Book of Enoch and in another work of the same class⁹¹ the judgment is ascribed to God, and the Messiah represented as appearing only afterwards,^{92 93} in the majority of these works the judgment or its execution is assigned to the Messiah.⁹⁴

In the land thus restored to Israel, and under the rule of King Messiah, the new Jerusalem would be the capital, purified from the heathen,⁹⁵ enlarged, nay, quite transformed. This Jerusalem had been shown to Adam before his Fall,⁹⁶ but after that both it and Paradise had been withdrawn from him. It had again been shown to Abraham,⁹⁷ to Moses, and to Ezra.⁹⁸ The splendour of this new Jerusalem is described in most glowing language.^{99 100} Of the glorious Kingdom thus instituted, the Messiah would be King,¹⁰¹

⁸⁸Book of Jubilees 23.

⁸⁹Orac. Sibyll. iii. 633-652.

⁹⁰u. s. 653-697; comp. the figurative acc't in the Book of Enoch xc. 16, and following.

⁹¹Assumpt. Mos. x. 2-10.

⁹²Book of Enoch xc. 37.

⁹³In the *Assumptio Mosis* there is no reference at all to the Messiah.

⁹⁴Or. Sibyll. iii. 652-656; Book of Enoch, u. s.: comp. ch 45:3-6; 46.; 55:4; 61. 8, 9, 11, 12; 62.; 69:27-29; Apoc. of Bar. xxxix. 7, 8; 40.; 70:9; 72. 2, end; IV. (II.) Esdras xii. 32-34; 13:25-30, 34-38.

⁹⁵Psalter of Sol. xvii. 25, 33.

⁹⁶The words do not convey to me, as apparently to Dr. *Schürer*, that the New Jerusalem actually stood in Eden, and, indeed, existed otherwise than ideally.

⁹⁷Apoc. of Baruch 4:3-6.

⁹⁸IV. Esdr. x. 44 &c.

⁹⁹Tob. 13:16-18; 14:5; Book of Enoch liii. 6, 7; 90:28; Apoc. of Baruch 32:4.

¹⁰⁰But I do not see, with *Schürer*, a reference to its coming down from heaven, not even in the passage in Baruch to which he refers, which is as follows: Et postea oportet renovari in gloria, et coronabitur in perpetuum.'

¹⁰¹Orac. Sibyll. iii. 47-50; and especially Psalter of Solomon xvii., particularly vv. 23 &c., 32, 35, 38, 47.

¹⁰² although under the supremacy of God. His reign would extend over the heathen nations. The character of their submission was differently viewed, according to the more or less Judaic standpoint of the writers. Thus, in the Book of Jubilees ¹⁰³ the seed of Jacob are promised possession of the whole earth; they would rule over all nations according to their pleasure; and after that draw the whole earth unto themselves, and inherit it for ever. In the Assumption of Moses ¹⁰⁴ this ascendancy of Israel seems to be conjoined with the idea of vengeance upon Rome, ¹⁰⁵ although the language employed is highly figurative. ¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, in the Sibylline Books ¹⁰⁷ the nations are represented as, in view of the blessings enjoyed by Israel, themselves turning to acknowledge God, when perfect mental enlightenment and absolute righteousness, as well as physical well-being, would prevail under the rule and judgeship (whether literal or figurative) of the Prophets. ¹⁰⁸ The most Grecian view of the Kingdom, is, of course, that expressed by Philo. He anticipates, that the happy moral condition of man would ultimately affect the wild beasts, which, relinquishing their solitary habits, would first become gregarious; then, imitating the domestic animals, gradually come to respect man as their master, nay, become as affectionate and cheerful as Maltese dogs. Among men, the pious and virtuous would bear rule, their dignity inspiring respect, their terror fear, and their beneficence good will. ¹⁰⁹ Probably intermediate between this extreme Grecian and the Judaic conception of the Millennium, are such utterances as ascribe the universal acknowledgment of the Messiah to the recognition, that God had invested Him with glory and power, and that His Reign was that of blessing. ¹¹⁰

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¹⁰²I cannot understand how *Schürer* can throw doubt upon this, in view of such plain statements as in Ps. of Sol. xvii., such as (in regard to the Messiah): kai autoV basileuV dikaiouV didaktoV upo Qeou ep autouV.

¹⁰³Bk. of Jub. 32.

¹⁰⁴Or. Sibyll. x. 8.

¹⁰⁵Et ascendes supra cervices et alas aquilae.

¹⁰⁶Comp. ver. 9.

¹⁰⁷Ass. Mos. iii. 715-726.

¹⁰⁸u. s. 766-783.

¹⁰⁹De Praem. et P [U+009C] n. ed. *Mang.* ii. 422-424; ed. Fref. 923-925.

¹¹⁰Book of Enoch xlvi. 4, 5; 90:37; Ps. of Sol. xvii. 34, 35, 38-40.

It must have been remarked, that the differences between the Apocalyptic teaching of the Pseudepigrapha and that of the New Testament are as marked as those between the latter and that of the Rabbis. Another point of divergence is, that the Pseudepigrapha uniformly represent the Messianic reign as eternal, not broken up by any further apostasy or rebellion. ¹¹¹

[98] Then would the earth be renewed, ^{112 113} and this would be followed, lastly, by the Resurrection. In the Apocalypse of Baruch, ¹¹⁴ as by the Rabbis, it is set forth that men would rise in exactly the same condition which they had borne in life, so that, by being recognised, the reality of the Resurrection would be attested, while in the re-union of body and soul each would receive its due meed for the sins committed in their state of combination while upon earth. ¹¹⁵ But after that a transformation would take place: of the just into the Angelic splendour of their glory, while, on view of this, the wicked would correspondingly fade away. ¹¹⁶ Josephus states that the Pharisees taught only a Resurrection of the Just. ¹¹⁷ As we know that such was *not* the case, we must regard this as one of the many assertions made by that writer for purposes of his own—probably to present to outsiders the Pharisaic doctrine in the most attractive and rational light of which it was capable. Similarly, the modern contention, that some of the Pseudepigraphic Writings

¹¹¹This is expressed in the clearest language in every one of these books. In view of this, to maintain the opposite on the ground of these isolated words in Baruch (xl. 3): *Et erit principatus ejus stans in saeculum, donec finiatur mundus corruptionis* seems, to say the least, a strange contention, especially when we read in lxxiii. 1.: *Sederit in pace in aeternum super throno regni sui*. We can quite understand that *Gfrörer* should propound this view in order to prove that the teaching of the New Testament is only a reflection of that of later Judaism; but should an argument so untenable be repeated? IV. Esdras must not here be quoted, as admittedly containing New Testament elements.

¹¹²Book of Enoch xlv. 4, 5.

¹¹³Dr. *Schürer*, following in this also *Gfrörer*, holds that one party placed the renewal of the earth after the close of the Messianic reign. He quotes in support only Bar. lxxiv. 2, 3; but the words do not convey to me that inference. For the reason stated in the preceding Note, IV. Esdras cannot here serve as authority.

¹¹⁴Ap. Bar. 1, 2, 3.

¹¹⁵Sanh, 91 *a* and *b*.

¹¹⁶u. s. li. 1-6.

¹¹⁷Ant. xviii. 1, 3; War ii. 8, 14.

propound the same view of only a Resurrection of the Just, ¹¹⁸ is contrary to evidence. ¹¹⁹ There can be no question that, according to the Pseudepigrapha, in the general Judgment, which was to follow the universal Resurrection, the reward and punishment assigned are represented as of eternal duration, although it may be open to question, as in regard to Rabbinic teaching, which of those who had been sinners would suffer final and endless torment.

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The many and persistent attempts, despite the gross inconsistencies involved, to represent the teaching of Christ concerning the Last Things as only the reflection of contemporary Jewish opinion, have rendered detailed evidence necessary. When, with the information just summarised, we again turn to the questions addressed to Him by the disciples, we recall that (as previously shown) they could not have conjoined, or rather confounded, the when of these things—that is, of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple—with the when of His Second Coming and the end of the Age. We also recall the suggestion, that Christ referred to His Advent, as to His disappearance, from the Jewish standpoint of Jewish, rather than from the general cosmic viewpoint of universal, history.

As regards the answer of the Lord to the two questions of His disciples, it may be said that the first part of His Discourse ¹²⁰ is intended to supply information on the two facts of the future: the destruction of the Temple, and His Second Advent and the end of the Age by setting before them the signs indicating the approach or beginning of these events. But even here the exact period of each is not defined, and the teaching given intended for purely *practical* purposes. In the second part of His Discourse ¹²¹ the Lord distinctly tells them, what they are *not* to know, and why; and how all that was communicated to them was only to prepare them for that constant watchfulness, which has been to the Church at all times the proper

¹¹⁸In support of it *Schürer* quotes Ps. of Sol. iii. 16, xiv. 2, &c. But these passages convey to me, and will, I think, to others, the very opposite. [Psalm 3:16](#) says nothing of the wicked, only of the righteous. But in [ver. 13 b](#) we have it: h apwleia tou amartwlou eiV ton aiwnaand in [ver. 15](#), auth meriV tw n amartwlwn eiV ton aiwna. [Psalm 14:2](#) has again only reference to the righteous, but in [ver. 6](#) we have this plain statement, which renders any doubt impossible, dia touto h klhronomia autwn adhV kai skotoV kai apwleia

¹¹⁹Comp. Book of Enoch and Apoc. of Bar.

¹²⁰St. [Matthew 24:4-35](#), and parallels.

¹²¹St. [Matthew 24:36](#) to end, and parallels.

outcome of Christ's teaching on the subject. This, then we may take as a guide in our study: that the words of Christ contain nothing beyond what was necessary for the warning and teaching of the disciples and of the Church.

The *first* Part of Christ's Discourse ¹²² consists of four Sections, ¹²³ of which the first describes the beginning of the birth-woes ¹²⁴ ¹²⁵

[100] of the new Age about to appear. The expression: The End is not yet ¹²⁶ clearly indicates, that it marks only the earliest period of the beginning—the farthest *terminus a quo* of the birth-woes. ¹²⁷ Another general consideration, which seems of importance, is, that the Synoptic Gospels report this part of the Lord's Discourse in almost identical language. If the inference from this seems that their accounts were derived from a common source—say, the report of St. Peter—yet this close and unvarying repetition also conveys an impression, that the Evangelists themselves may not have fully understood the meaning of what they recorded. This may account for the rapid and unconnected transitions from subject to subject. At the same time it imposes on us the duty of studying the language anew, and without regard to any scheme of interpretation. This only may be said, that the obvious difficulties of negative criticism are here equally great, whether we suppose the narratives to have been written before or after the destruction of Jerusalem.

1. The purely practical character of the Discourse appears from its opening words. ¹²⁸ They contain a warning, addressed to the disciples in their individual, not in their corporate, capacity, against being led astray. This, more particularly in regard to Judaic seductions leading them after false Christs. Though in the multitude of

¹²²v. 4-35.

¹²³v. 4-8; 9-14; 15-28; 29-35.

¹²⁴St. Matthew 24:8; St. Mark 13:8.

¹²⁵arch wdinwn, St. Matthew 24:8, and so according to the better reading also in St. Mark.

¹²⁶St. Matthew 24:6.

¹²⁷Generally, indeed, these are regarded as the birth-woes of the end. But this not only implies a logical impossibility (the birth-woes of the end), but it must be remembered that these travail-pains are the judgments on Jerusalem, or else on the world, which are to usher in the new—to precede its birth.

¹²⁸ver 4.

impostors, who, in the troubled times between the rule of Pilate and the destruction of Jerusalem, promised Messianic deliverance to Israel, few names and claims of this kind have been specially recorded, yet the hints in the New Testament,¹²⁹ and the references, however guarded, by the Jewish historian,¹³⁰ imply the appearance of many such seducers. And their influence, not only upon Jews, but on Jewish Christians, might be the more dangerous, that the latter would naturally regard the woes which were the occasion of their pretensions, as the judgements which would usher in the Advent of their Lord. Against such seduction they must be peculiarly on their guard. So far for the things connected with the destruction of Jerusalem and the overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth. But, taking a wider and cosmic view, they might also be misled by either rumours of war at a distance, or by actual warfare,¹³¹ so as to believe that the dissolution of the Roman Empire, and with it the Advent of Christ, was at hand.^{132 133} This also would be a Misapprehension, grievously misleading, and to be carefully guarded against.

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Although primarily applying to them, yet alike the peculiarly Judaic, or, it might be even Christian, and the general cosmic sources of misapprehension as to the near Advent of Christ, must not be limited to the times of the Apostles. They rather indicate these twofold grounds of misapprehension which in all ages have misled Christians into an erroneous expectancy of the immediate Advent of Christ: the seductions of false Messiahs, or, it may be, teachers, and violent disturbances in the political world. So far as Israel was concerned, these attained their climax in the great rebellion against Rome under the false Messiah, Bar Kokhba, in the time of Hadrian,¹³⁴ although echoes of similar false claims, or hope of them, have again and again roused Israel during the night of these any centuries into brief, startled waking. And, as regards the more general cosmic

¹²⁹Acts 5:36; 8:9; 21:38.

¹³⁰War ii. 13, 4, 5; Ant. xx. 5, 1; 8,10.

¹³¹Of such wars and rumours of wars not only *Josephus*, but the Roman historians, have much to say about that time. See the Commentaries.

¹³²St. Matthew 24:6-8.

¹³³We know how persistently Nero has been identified with Anti-Christ, and how the Church then expected the immediate return of Christ; nay, in all ages, the End has been associated with troubles in the Roman Empire.'

¹³⁴A. D. 132-135.

signs, have not Christians, in the early ages watched, not only the wars on the boundaries of the Empire, but the condition of the state in the age of Nero the risings, turmoils, and threatenings; and so onwards, those of later generations, even down to the commotions of our own period, as if they betokened the immediate Advent of Christ, instead of marking in them only the beginning of the birth-woes of the new Age?

[102] 2. From the warning to Christians as *individuals*, the Lord next turns to give admonition to the *Church* in her corporate capacity. Here we mark, that the events now described ¹³⁵ must not be regarded as following, with strict chronological precision, those referred to in the previous verses. Rather is it intended to indicate a general nexus and partly after, those formerly predicted. They form, in fact, the continuation of the birth-woes. This appears even from the language used. Thus, while St. Matthew writes: Then (toeat that time) shall they deliver you up St. Luke places the persecutions before all these things; ¹³⁶ while St. Mark, who reports this part of the Discourse most fully, omits every note of time, and only emphasises the admonition which the fact conveys. ¹³⁷ As regards the admonition itself, expressed in this part of the Lord's Discourse, ¹³⁸ we notice that, as formerly to individuals, so now to the Church, two sources of danger are pointed out: *internal* from heresies (false prophets) and the decay of faith, ¹³⁹ and *external*, from persecutions, whether Judaic and from their own kindred, or from the secular powers throughout the world. But, along with these two dangers, two consoling facts are also pointed out. As regards the persecutions in prospect, full Divine aid is promised to Christians—alike to individuals and to the Church. Thus all care and fear may be dismissed: their testimony shall neither be silenced, nor shall the Church be suppressed or extinguished; but inward joyousness, outward perseverance, and final triumph, are secured by the Presence of the Risen Saviour with, and the felt indwelling of the Holy Ghost in His Church. And, as for the other and equally consoling fact: despite the persecution of Jews

¹³⁵St. [Matthew 24:9-14](#), and parallels.

¹³⁶St. [Luke 21:12](#).

¹³⁷St. [Mark 12:9](#).

¹³⁸St. [Matthew 24:9-14](#), and parallels.

¹³⁹St. [Matthew 24:10-13](#).

and Gentiles, before the End cometh this the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations. ¹⁴⁰ This, then, is really the only sign of the End of the present Age.

3. From these general predictions, the Lord proceeds, in the third part of this Discourse, ¹⁴¹ to advertise the Disciples of the great historic fact immediately before them, and of the dangers which might spring from it. In truth, we have here His answer to their question, When shall these things be? ¹⁴² not, indeed, as regards the *when*, but the *what* of them. And with this He conjoins the present application of His general warning regarding false Christs, given in the first part of this Discourse. ¹⁴³ The fact of which He now, in this third part of His Discourse, advertises them, is the destruction of Jerusalem. Its twofold dangers would be—outwardly, the difficulties and perils which at that time would necessarily beset men, and especially the members of the infant-Church; and, religiously, the pretensions and claims of false Christs or prophets at a period when all Jewish thinking and expectancy would lead men to anticipate the near Advent of the Messiah. There can be no question, that from both these dangers the warning of the Lord delivered the Church. As directed by him, the members of the Christian Church fled at an early period of the siege ¹⁴⁴ of Jerusalem to Pella, while the words in which He had told that His Coming would not be in secret, but with the brightness of that lightning which shot across the sky, prevented not only their being deceived, but perhaps even the record, if not the rise of many who otherwise would have deceived them. As for Jerusalem, the prophetic vision initially fulfilled in the days of Antiochus ¹⁴⁵ would once more, and now fully, become reality, and the abomination of desolation ¹⁴⁶ stand in the Holy Place. This,

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¹⁴⁰St. [Matthew 24:14](#).

¹⁴¹St. [Matthew 24:15-28](#), and parallels; note especially the language of St. Luke.

¹⁴²St. [Matthew 24:3](#).

¹⁴³[vv. 4, 5](#).

¹⁴⁴So *Eusebius* (Hist. [Ecclesiastes 3:5](#)) relates that the Christians of Judaea fled to Pella, on the northern boundary of Peraea in 68 A.D. Comp. also *Jos. War* iv. 9. 1, v. 10. 1.

¹⁴⁵[2 Macc. vi. 1-9](#).

¹⁴⁶The quotation from [Daniel 9:27](#) is neither a literal translation of the original, nor a reproduction of the LXX. The former would be: And upon the wing [or corner] of the

[104] together with tribulation to Israel, unparalleled in the terrible past of its history, and unequalled even in its bloody future. Nay, so dreadful would be the persecution, that, if Divine mercy had not interposed for the sake of the followers of Christ, the whole Jewish race that inhabited the land would have been swept away. ¹⁴⁷ But on the morrow of that day no new Maccabee would arise, no Christ come, as Israel fondly hoped; but over that carcass would the vultures gather; ¹⁴⁸ and so through all the Age of the Gentiles, till converted Israel should raise the welcoming shout: Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord!

4. The Age of the Gentiles, ¹⁴⁹ the end of the Age and with it the new allegiance of His now penitent people Israel; the sign of the Son of Man in heaven perceived by them; the conversion of all the world, the Coming of Christ, the last Trumpet, the Resurrection of the dead—such, in most rapid sketch, is the outline which the Lord draws of His Coming and the End of the world.

It will be remembered that this had been the second question of the disciples. ¹⁵⁰ We again recall, that the disciples did not, indeed, could not have connected, as immediately subsequent events, the destruction of Jerusalem and His Second Coming, since he had expressly placed between them the period—apparently protracted—of His Absence, ¹⁵¹ with the many events that were to happen in it—notably, the preaching of the Gospel over the whole inhabited earth. ¹⁵² Hitherto the Lord had, in His Discourse, dwelt in detail only on those events which would be fulfilled before this generation should pass. ¹⁵³ It had been for admonition and warning that He had spoken, not for the gratification of curiosity. It had been prediction of the immediate future for practical purposes, with such dim and general indication of the more distant future of the Church as was

abominations the destroyer. Our Lord takes the well known Biblical expression in the general sense in which the Jews took it, that the heathen power (Rome, the abominable) would bring desolation—lay the city and Temple waste.

¹⁴⁷St. Matthew 24:22.

¹⁴⁸Ver. 28.

¹⁴⁹vv. 29-31.

¹⁵⁰St. Matthew 24:3.

¹⁵¹xxiii. 38, 39.

¹⁵²xxiv. 14.

¹⁵³ver. 34.

absolutely necessary to mark her position in the world as one of persecution, with promise, however, of His Presence and Help; with indication also of her work in the world, to its *terminus ad quem*—the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations on earth.

More than this concerning the future of the Church could not have been told without defeating the very object of the admonition and warning which Christ had exclusively in view, when answering the question of the disciples. Accordingly, what follows in [ver. 29](#), describes the history, not of the Church—far less any visible physical signs in the literal heavens—but, in prophetic imagery, the history of the hostile powers of the world, with its lessons. A constant succession of empires and dynasties would characterise politically—and it is only the political aspect with which we are here concerned—the whole period after the extinction of the Jewish State. [105]

¹⁵⁴ Immediately after that would follow the appearance to Israel of the Sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and with it the conversion of all nations (as previously predicted), ¹⁵⁵ the Coming of Christ, ¹⁵⁶ and, finally, the blast of the last Trumpet and the Resurrection. ¹⁵⁷

5. From this rapid outline of the future the Lord once more turned to make present application to the disciples; nay, application, also, to all times. From the fig tree, under which, on that spring afternoon, they may have rested on the Mount of Olives, they were to learn a parable. ¹⁵⁸ We can picture Christ taking one of its twigs, just as its softening tips were bursting into young leaf. Surely, this meant that summer was nigh—not that it had actually come. The distinction is important. For, it seems to prove that all these things which were to indicate to them that it ¹⁵⁹ was near, even at the doors, and which were to be fulfilled ere this generation had passed away, could not have referred, to the last signs connected with the immediate Advent of Christ, ¹⁶⁰ but must apply to the previous prediction of

¹⁵⁴St. [Matthew 24:30](#).

¹⁵⁵ver. 14.

¹⁵⁶ver. 30.

¹⁵⁷ver. 31.

¹⁵⁸vv. 32, 33.

¹⁵⁹Not as in the R. V. He. It can scarcely be supposed that Christ would. speak of Himself in the third person. The subject is evidently the summer (not as *Meyer* would render *qeroV*= harvest). In St. [Luke 21:31](#) it is paraphrased the Kingdom of God.'

¹⁶⁰vv. 29-31.

the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish Commonwealth. At the same time we again admit, that the language of the Synoptists seems to indicate, that they had not clearly understood the words of the Lord which they reported, and that in their own minds they had associated the last signs and the Advent of Christ with the fall of the City. Thus may they have come to expect that Blessed Advent even in their own days.

[106] II. It is at least a question, whether the Lord, while distinctly indicating these facts, and intended to remove the doubt and uncertainty of their succession from the minds of His disciples. To have done so would have necessitated that which, in the opening sentence of the Second Division of this Discourse, ¹⁶¹ He had expressly declared to lie beyond their ken. The *when*'—the day and the hour of His Coming—was to remain hidden from men and Angels. ¹⁶² Nay, even the Son Himself—as they viewed Him and as He spake to them—knew it not. ¹⁶³ It formed no part of His present Messianic Mission, nor subject for His Messianic Teaching. Had it done so, all the teaching that follows concerning the need of constant watchfulness, and the pressing duty of working for Christ in faith, hope, and love—with purity, self-denial, and endurance—would have been lost. The peculiar attitude of the Church: with loins girt for work, since the time was short, and the Lord might come at any moment; with her hands busy; her mind faithful; her face upturned towards the Sun that was so soon to rise; and her ear straining to catch the first notes of heaven's song of triumph—all this would have been lost! What has sustained the Church during the night of sorrow these many centuries; what has nerved her courage for the battle, with steadfastness to bear, with love to work, with patience and joy in disappointments—would all have been lost! The Church would not have been that of the New Testament, had she known the mystery of that day and hour, and not ever waited as for the immediate Coming of her Lord and Bridegroom.

And what the Church of the New Testament has been, and is, that her Lord and Master made her, and by no agency more effectually

¹⁶¹St. [Matthew 24:36](#) to end.

¹⁶²St. [Matthew 24:36](#).

¹⁶³The expression does not, of course, refer to Christ in His Divinity, but to the Christ, such as they saw Him, in His Messianic capacity and office.

than by leaving undetermined the precise time of His return. To the world this would indeed become the occasion for utter carelessness and practical disbelief of the coming Judgment. ¹⁶⁴ As in the days of Noah the long delay of threatened judgment had led to absorption in the ordinary engagements of life, to the entire disbelief of what Noah had preached, so would it be in the future. But that day would come certainly and unexpectedly, to the sudden separation of those who were engaged in the same daily business of life, of whom one might be taken up (*paralambanetai*, received), the other left to the destruction of the coming Judgment. ¹⁶⁵

But this very mixture of the Church with the world in the ordinary avocations of life indicated a greater danger. As in all such, the remedy which the Lord would set before us is not negative in the avoidance of certain things, but positive. ¹⁶⁶ We shall best succeed, not by going out of the world, but by being watchful in it, and keeping fresh on our hearts, as well as our minds, the fact that he is our Lord, and that we are, and always most lovingly, to look and long for His Return. Otherwise twofold damage might come to us. Not expecting the arrival of the Lord in the night-time (which is the most unlikely for His Coming), we might go to sleep, and the Enemy, taking advantage of it, rob us of our peculiar treasure. ¹⁶⁷ Thus the Church, not expecting her lord, might become as poor as the world. This would be loss. But there might be even worse. According to the Master's appointment, each one had, during Christ's absence, his work for Him, and the reward of grace, or else the punishment of neglect, were in assured prospect. The faithful steward, to whom the Master had entrusted the care of His household, to supply His found faithful, be rewarded by advancement to far larger and more responsible work. On the other hand, belief on the delay of the Lord's Return would lead to neglect to the Master's work, to unfaithfulness, tyranny, self-indulgence and sin. ¹⁶⁸ And when the Lord suddenly came, as certainly he would come, there would be not only loss, but damage, hurt, and the punishment awarded to the hypocrites. Hence,

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¹⁶⁴v. 37-40.

¹⁶⁵v. 40,41.

¹⁶⁶v. 42-51.

¹⁶⁷St Matthew 24:43, 44.

¹⁶⁸ver. 45, end.

let the Church be ever on her watch, ¹⁶⁹ let her ever be in readiness!
¹⁷⁰ And how terribly the moral consequences of unreadiness, and the punishment threatened, have ensued, the history of the Church during these eighteen centuries has only too often and too sadly shown. ¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ver. 42.

¹⁷⁰ver. 44.

¹⁷¹The Parable in St. [Luke 12:35-48](#) is so closely parallel to this, that it seems unnecessary to enter in detail upon its consideration.

Chapter 7—Evening of the Third Day in Passion-Week

[108]

On the Mount of Olives—Last Parables: To the Disciples concerning the Last Things—The Parable of the Ten Virgins—The Parable of the Talents Supplementary Parable of the Minas and the King’s Reckoning with His Servants and His Rebellious Citizens

(St. [Matthew 25:1-13](#); St. [Matthew 25:14-30](#); St. [Luke 19:11-28](#).)

1. As might have been expected, the Parables concerning the Last Things are closely connected with the Discourse of the Last Things, which Christ had just spoken to His Disciples. In fact, that of the Ten Virgins, which seems the fullest in many-sided meaning, is, in its main object, only an illustration of the last part of Christ’s Discourse.¹ Its great practical lessons had been: the unexpectedness of the Lord’s Coming; the consequences to be apprehend from its delay; and the need of personal and constant preparedness. Similarly, the Parable of the Ten Virgins may, in its great outlines, be thus summarised: Be ye personally prepared; be ye prepared for any length of time; be ye prepared to go to Him directly.

Before proceeding, we mark that this Parable also is connected with those that had preceded. But we notice not only connection, but progression. Indeed, it would be deeply interesting, alike historically and for the better understanding of Christ’s teaching, but especially as showing its internal unity and development, and the credibility of the Gospel-narratives, generally to trace this connection and progress. And this, not merely in the three series of parables which mark the three stages of His History—the Parables of the Founding of the Kingdom, of its Character, and of its Consummation—but as regards the parables themselves, that so the first might be joined to the last as a string of heavenly pearls. But this lies beyond our task. Not so, to mark the connection between the

¹St. [Matthew 24:36-51](#).

Parable of the Ten Virgins and that of the Man without the Wedding-Garment.

[109] Like the Parable of the Ten Virgins, it had pointed to the future. If the exclusion and punishment of the Unprepared Guest did not primarily refer to the Last Day, or to the Return of Christ, but perhaps rather to what would happen in death, it pointed, at least secondarily, to the final consummation. On the other hand, in the Parable of the Ten Virgins this final consummation is the primary point. So far, then, there is both connection and advance. Again, from the appearance and the fate of the Unprepared Guest we learned, that not every one who, following the Gospel-call, comes to the Gospel-feast, will be allowed to partake of it; but that God will search and try each one individually. There is, indeed, a society of guests—the Church; but we must not expect either that the Church will, while on earth, be wholly pure, or that its purification will be achieved by man. Each guest may, indeed, come to the banqueting-hall, but the final judgment as to his worthiness belongs to God. Lastly, the Parable also taught the no less important opposite lesson, that each individual is personally responsible; that we cannot shelter ourselves in the community of the Church, but that to partake of the feast requireth personal and individual preparation. To express it in modern terminology: It taught Churchism as against one-sided individualism, and spiritual individualism as against dead Churchism. All these important lessons are carried forward in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. If the union of the Ten Virgins for the purpose of meeting the Bridegroom, and their *à priori* claims to enter in with Him—which are, so to speak, the historical data and necessary premisses in the Parable—point to the Church, the main lessons of the Parable are the need of individual, personal, and spiritual preparation. Only such will endure the trial of the long delay of Christ's Coming; only such will stand that of an immediate summons to meet the Christ.

It is late at even—the world's long day seems past, and the Coming of the Bridegroom must be near. The day and the hour we know not, for the bridegroom has been far away. Only this we know, that it is the Evening of the Marriage which the Bridegroom had fixed, and that his word of promise may be relied upon. Therefore all has been made ready within the bridal house, and is in waiting there; and therefore the Virgins prepare to go forth to meet Him

on His Arrival. The Parable proceeds on the assumption that the Bridegroom is not in the town, but somewhere far away; so that it cannot be known at what precise hour He may arrive. But it is known that He will come that night; and the Virgins who are to meet Him have gathered—presumably in the house where the Marriage is to take place—waiting for the summons to go forth and welcome the Bridegroom. The common mistake, that the Virgins are represented in [verse 1](#) as having gone forth *on the road* to meet the Bridegroom, is not only irrational—since it is scarcely credible that they would all have fallen asleep by the wayside, and with lamps in their hands—but incompatible with the circumstance,² that at midnight the cry is suddenly raised to go forth and meet Him. In these circumstances, no precise parallel can be derived from the ordinary Jewish marriage-processions, where the bridegroom, accompanied by his groomsmen and friends, went to the bride's house, and thence conducted the bride, with her attendant maidens and friends, into his own or his parents home. But in the Parable, the Bridegroom comes from a distance and goes to the bridal house. Accordingly, the bridal procession is to meet Him on His Arrival, and escort Him to the bridal place. No mention is made of the Bride, either in this Parable or in that or the Marriage of the King's Son. This, for reasons connected with their application: since in the one case the Wedding Guests, in the other the Virgins, occupy the place of the Bride. And here we must remind ourselves of the general canon, that, in the interpretation of a Parable, details must not be too closely pressed. The Parables illustrate the Sayings of Christ, as the Miracles His Doings; and alike the Parables and the Miracles present only one or another, not all the aspects of the truth.

[110]

Another archaeological inquiry will, perhaps, be more helpful to our understanding of this Parable. The lamps'—not torches'—which the Ten Virgins carried, were of well-known construction. They bear in Talmudic writings commonly the name *Lappid*, but the Aramaic from the Greek word in the New Testament also occurs as *Lampad* and *Lampadas*.³ The lamp consisted of a round receptacle for pitch or oil for the wick. This was placed in a hollow cup or deep

²St [Matthew 25:6](#).

³Jer. Yoma 41 *a*, line 24 from top.

[111] saucer—the *Beth Shiqqua*⁴—which was fastened by a pointed end into a long wooden pole, on which it was borne aloft. According to Jewish authorities,⁵ it was the custom in the East to carry in a bridal procession about ten such lamps. We have the less reason to doubt that such was also the case in Palestine, since, according to rubric, ten was the number required to be present at any office or ceremony, such as at the benedictions accompanying the marriage-ceremonies. And, in the peculiar circumstances supposed in the Parable, Ten Virgins are represented as going forth to meet the Bridegroom, each bearing her lamp.

The first point which we mark is, that the Ten Virgins brought, presumably to the bridal house, their own⁶ lamps. Emphasis must be laid on this. Thus much was there of *personal* preparation on the part of all. But while the five that were wise brought also oil in the vessels⁷ [presumably the hollow receptacles in which the lamp proper stood], the five foolish Virgins neglected to do so, no doubt expecting that their lamps would be filled out of some common stock in the house. In the text the foolish Virgins are mentioned before the wise,⁸ because the Parable turns to this. We cannot be at a loss to interpret the meaning of it. The Bridegroom far away is Christ, Who is come for the Marriage-Feast from the far country’—the Home above—certainly on that night, but we know not at what hour of it. The ten appointed bridal companions who are to go forth to meet Him are His professed disciples, and they gather in the bridal house in readiness to welcome His arrival. It is night, and a marriage-procession: therefore, they must go forth with their lamps. All of them have brought their own lamps, they all have the Christian, or say, the Church-profession: the lamp, in the hollow cup on the top of the pole. But only the wise Virgins have more than this—the oil in the vessels, without which the lamps cannot give their light. The Christian or Church-profession is but an empty vessel on the

⁴Kel. ii. 8.

⁵See the Aruk, ad voc.

⁶The better reading in ver. 1. and again in ver. 7, is not autwn their but eautwn.

⁷The word autwn in ver. 4, *their* vessels is probably spurious. In both cases, as so often, the improving copyists have missed the deeper meaning.

⁸In ver. 2, according to the better reading, the clauses should be inverted, and, as in ver. 3, the foolish first mentioned.

top of a pole, without the oil in the vessels. We here remember the words of Christ: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in heaven.

⁹ The foolishness of the Virgins, which consisted in this that they had omitted to bring their oil, is thus indicated in the text: All they which [aitineV] ¹⁰

were foolish, when they brought their own lamps, brought not with them oil: they brought their own lamps, but not their own oil. This (as already explained), probably, not from forgetfulness—for they could scarcely have forgotten the need of oil, but from the wilful neglect, in the belief that there would be a common stock in the house, out of which they would be supplied, or that there would be sufficient time for the supply of their need after the announcement that the Bridegroom was coming. They had no conception either of any personal obligation in this matter, nor that the call would come so suddenly, nor yet that there would be so little interval between the arrival of the Bridegroom and the closing of the door. And so they deemed it not necessary to undertake what must have involved both trouble and carefulness, the bringing their own oil in the hollow vessels in which the lamps were fixed.

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We have proceeded on the supposition that the oil was not carried in separate vessels, but in those attached to the lamps. It seems scarcely likely that these lamps had been lighted while waiting in the bridal house, where the Virgins assembled, and which, no doubt, was festively illuminated: Many practical objections to this view will readily occur. The foolishness of the five Virgins therefore consisted, *not* (as is commonly supposed) *in their want of perseverance*—as if the oil had been consumed before the Bridegroom came, and they had only not provided themselves with a sufficient extra-supply—but *in the entire absence of personal preparation*, ¹¹ having brought no oil of their own in their lamps. This corresponds to their conducts, who, belonging to the Church—having the profession—being bridal companions provided with lamps, ready to go forth, and expecting to share in the wedding feast—neglect the preparation of grace, personal conversation and holiness, trusting that in the hour of need

⁹St. [Matthew 5:16](#).

¹⁰quaecunque, eae omnes quae.

¹¹So especially *Goebel*, to whom, in general, we would acknowledge our obligations.

the oil may be supplied out of the common stock. But they know not, or else heed not, that every one must be personally prepared for meeting the Bridegroom, that the call will be sudden, that the stock of oil is not common, and that the time between His arrival and the shutting of the door will be awfully brief.

[113] For—and here begins the second scene in the Parable—the interval between the gathering of the Virgins in readiness to meet Him, and the arrival of the Bridegroom is much longer than had been anticipated. And so it came, that both the wise and the foolish Virgins slumbered and slept. Manifestly, this is but a secondary trait in the Parable, chiefly intended to accentuate the surprise of the sudden announcement of the Bridegroom. The foolish Virgins did not ultimately fail because of their sleep, nor yet were the wise reproved of it. True, it was evidence of their weakness—but then it was night; all the world was asleep; and their own drowsiness might be in proportion to their former excitement. What follows is intended to bring into prominence the startling suddenness of the Bridegroom's Coming. It is midnight—when sleep is deepest—when suddenly there was a cry, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! Come ye out to the meeting of Him. Then all those Virgins awoke, and prepared (trimmed) their lamps. This, not in the sense of heightening the low flame in their lamps, but in that of hastily drawing up the wick and lighting it, when, as there was no oil in the vessels, the flame, of course, immediately died out. Then the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying: Not at all ¹²—it will never ¹³ suffice for us and you! Go ye rather to the sellers, and buy for your own selves.

This advice must not be regarded as given in irony. This trait is introduced to point out the proper source of supply—to emphasise that the oil must be *their own*, and also to prepare for what follows. But while they were going to buy, the Bridegroom came; and the ready ones [they that were ready] went in with Him to the Marriage-Feast, and the door was shut. The sudden cry at midnight: The Bridegroom cometh! had come with startling surprise both to the wise and the foolish Virgins; to the one class it had come only

¹²Mhpote. See *Grimm*, ad voc. But it is impossible to give the full force of the word.

¹³The better reading is *ou mh*, which double negation I have rendered, for want of better, by never.'

unexpectedly, but to the other also unpreparedly. Their hope of sharing or borrowing the oil of the wise Virgins being disappointed, the foolish were, of course, unable to meet the Bridegroom. And while they hurried to the sellers of oil, those that had been ready not only met; but entered with the Bridegroom into the bridal house, and the door was shut. It is of no importance here, whether or not the foolish Virgins finally succeeded in obtaining oil—although this seems unlikely at that time of night—since it could no longer be of any possible use, as its object was to serve in the festive procession, which was now past. Nevertheless, and when the door was shut, those foolish Virgins came, calling on the Bridegroom to open to them. But they had failed in that which could alone give them a claim to admission. Professing to be bridesmaids, they had not been in the bridal procession, and so, in truth and righteousness, He could only answer from within: Verily I say unto you, I know you not. This, not only in punishment, but in the right order of things.

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The personal application of this Parable to the disciples, which the Lord makes, follows almost of necessity. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day, nor the hour. ¹⁴ Not enough to be in waiting with the Church; His Coming will be far on in the night; it will be sudden; it will be rapid: be prepared therefore, be ever and personally prepared! Christ will come when least expected—at midnight—and when the Church, having become accustomed to His long delay, has gone to sleep. So sudden will be His Coming, that after the cry of announcement there will not be time for anything but to go forth to meet Him; and so rapid will be the end, that, ere the foolish Virgins can return, the door has been forever closed. To present all this in the most striking manner, the Parable takes the form of a dialogue, first between the foolish and the wise Virgins, in which the latter only state the bare truth when saying, that each has only sufficient oil for what is superfluous. Lastly, we are to learn from the dialogue between the foolish Virgins and the Bridegroom, that it is impossible in the day of Christ's Coming to make up for neglect of previous preparation, and that those who have failed to meet Him,

¹⁴The clause in which the Son of Man cometh is spurious—an early gloss crept into the text.

even though the bridal Virgins, shall be finally excluded as being strangers to the Bridegroom.

[115] 2. *The Parable of the Talents*—their use and misuse ¹⁵—follows closely on the admonition to watch, in view of the sudden and certain Return of Christ, and the reward or punishment which will then be meted out. Only that, whereas in the Parable of the Ten Virgins the reference was to the *personal state*, in that of the Talents it is to the *personal work* of the Disciples. In the former instance, they are portrayed as the bridal maidens who are to welcome His Return; in the latter, as the servants who are to give an account of their stewardship.

From its close connection with what precedes, the Parable opens almost abruptly with the words: For [it is] like a Man going abroad, [who] called His own *servants*, and delivered to them His goods. The emphasis rests on this, that they were His own servants, and to act for His interest. His property was handed over to them, not for safe custody, but that they might do with it as best they could in the interest of their Master. This appears from what immediately follows: and so to one He gave five talents (about 1,170*l.*), but to one two (about 468*l.*), and to one one (=6,000 denarii, about 234*l.*), to each according to his own capability ¹⁶—that is, He gave to each according to his capacity, in proportion as He deemed severally qualified for larger or smaller administration. And He journeyed abroad straightway. ¹⁷ Having entrusted the management of His affairs to His servants, according to their capacity, He at once went away.

Thus far we can have no difficulty in understanding the meaning of the Parable. Our Lord, Who has left us for the Father's Home, is He Who has gone on the journey abroad, and to His own servants has He entrusted, not for custody, but to use for Him in the time between His departure and His return, what He claims as His own goods. We must not limit this to the administration of His Word, nor to the Holy

¹⁵St. [Matthew 25:14-30](#).

¹⁶kata thn idian dunamin.

¹⁷Some critics and the R.V. have drawn the word straightway to the next verse, as referring to the activity of the first servant. The reasons urged by *Goebel* against this seem to me quite convincing, besides the fact that there is no cause for thus distinguishing the first from the second faithful servant.

Ministry, although these may have been pre-eminently in view. It refers generally to all that a man has, wherewith to serve Christ; for, all that the Christian has—his time, money, opportunities, talents, or learning (and not only the Word), is Christ's, and is entrusted to us, not for custody, but to trade withal for the absent Master—to further the progress of His Kingdom. And to each of us He gives according to our capacity for working—mental, moral, and even physical—to one five, to another two, and to another one talent. This capacity for work lies not within our own power; but it *is* in our power to use for Christ whatever we may have.

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And here the characteristic difference appears. He that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents. In like manner he *that had received* the two gained ¹⁸ other two. As each had received according to his ability, so each worked according to his power, as good and faithful servants of their Lord. If the outward result was different, their labour, devotion, and faithfulness were equal. It was otherwise with him who had least to do for his Master, since only one talent had been entrusted to him. He went away, digged up earth, and hid the money of his Lord. The prominent fact here is, that he did not employ it for the Master, as a good servant, but shunned alike the labour and the responsibility, and acted as if it had been some stranger's, and not his Lord's property. In so doing he was not only unfaithful to his trust, but practically disowned that he was a servant who had received much, two others are introduced in the Parable, who had both received comparatively little—one of whom was faithful, while the other in idle selfishness hid the money, not heeding that it as his Lord's. Thus, while the second servant, although less had been entrusted to him was as faithful and conscientious as he to whom much had been given, and while both had, by their gain, increased the possessions of their Master, the third had by his conduct rendered the money of his Lord a dead, useless, buried thing.

And now the second scene opens. But after a long time cometh the Lord of those servants, and maketh reckoning ¹⁹ with them. The notice of the long absence of the Master not only connects this

¹⁸ekerdhsen—in the case of the first it was epoihsen, although even there ekerdhsen is probably the better reading.

¹⁹sunairei logon, confert, vel componit, rem seu causam.

[117] with the Parable of the Ten Virgins, but is intended to show that the delay might have rendered the servants who traded more careless, while it also increased the guilt of him, who all this time had not done anything with his Master's money. And now the first of the servants, without speaking of his labour in trading, or his merit in making money, answers with simple joyousness: Lord, five talents deliveredst Thou unto me. See, other five talents have I gained besides.²⁰ We can almost see his honest face beaming with delight, as he points to his Master's increased possession. His approval was all that the faithful servant had looked for, for which he had toiled during that long absence. And we can understand, how the Master welcomed and owned that servant, and assigned to him meet reward. The latter was twofold. Having proved his faithfulness and capacity in a comparatively limited sphere, one much greater would be assigned to him. For, to do the work, and increase the wealth of his Master, had evidently been his joy and privilege, as well as his duty. Hence also the second part of his reward—that of entering into the joy of his Lord—must not be confined to sharing in the festive meal at His return, still less to advancement from the position of a servant to that of a friend who shares his Master's lordship. It implies far more than this: even satisfied heart-sympathy with the aims and gains of his Master, and participation in them, with all that thus conveys.

A similar result followed on the reckoning with the servant to whom two talents had been entrusted. We mark that, although he could only speak of two talents gained, he met his Master with the same frank joyousness as he who had made five. For he had been as faithful, and laboured as earnestly as he to whom more had been entrusted. And what is more important, the former difference between the two servants, dependent on greater or less capacity for work, now ceased, and the second servant received precisely the same welcome and exactly the same reward, and in the same terms, as the first. And yet a deeper, and in some sense mysterious, truth comes to us in connection with the words: Thou has been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things. Surely, then, if not after death, yet in that other dispensation there must be work

²⁰ep autoiV should, I think, be retained in the text. It must at any rate be supplied.

to do for Christ, for which the preparation is in this life by faithful application for Him of what He has entrusted to us—be it much or little. This gives quite a new and blessed meaning to the life that now is—as most truly and in all its aspects part of that into which it is to unfold. No; not the smallest share of talents if only faithfully used for Christ, can be lost, not merely as regards His acknowledgement, but also their further and wider employment. And may we not suggest, that this may, if not explain, yet cast the halo of His purpose and Presence around what so often seems mysterious in the removal of those who had just attained to opening, or to full usefulness, or even of those who are taken from us in the early morn of youth and loveliness. The Lord may have need of them, where or how we know not—and beyond this working-day and working-world there are many things over which the faithful servant in little may be set that he may still do, and with greatly enlarged opportunities and powers, the work for Christ which he had loved so well, while at the same time he also shares the joy of his Lord.

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It only remains to refer to the third servant, whose sad unfaithfulness and failure of service we already, in some measure, understand. Summoned to his account, he returned the talent entrusted to him with this explanation, that, knowing his Master to be a hard man, reaping where he did not sow, and gathering (the corn) where He did not winnow ²¹ he had been afraid of incurring responsibility, ²² and hence hid in the earth the talent which he now restored. It needs no comment to show that his own words, however honest and self-righteous they might sound, admitted dereliction of his work and duty as a servant, and entire misunderstanding as well as heart-alienation from his Master. He served Him not, and he knew Him not; he loved Him not, and he sympathised not with Him. But, besides, his answer was also an insult and a medacious pretext. He had been idle and unwilling to work for his Master. If he worked it would be for himself. He would not incur the difficulties, the self-denial, perhaps the reproach, connected with his Master's work. We recognise here those who, although His servants, yet, from self-indulgence and

²¹diaskorpizein here in the same sense in which the LXX. render the Hebrew hrz in [Ezekiel 5:2](#), comp. *Trommius Concord.*, and *Grimm* ad verb.

²²*Goebel* exaggerates in supposing that the servant had done so, because any possible returns for the money would not be his own, but the Master's.

[119] worldliness, will not do work for Christ with the one talent entrusted to them—that is, even though the responsibility and claim upon them be the smallest; and who deem it sufficient to hide it in the ground—not to lose it—or to preserve it, as they imagine, from being used for evil, without using it to trade for Christ. The falseness of the excuse, that he was afraid to do anything with it—an excuse too often repeated in our days—lest, peradventure, he might do more harm than good, was now fully exposed by the Master. Confessedly, it proceeded from a want of knowledge of Him, as if He were a hard, exacting Master, not One Who reckons even the least service as done to Himself; from misunderstanding also of what work for Christ is, in which nothing can ever fail or be lost; and, lastly, from want of joyous sympathy with it. And so the Master put aside the flimsy pretext. Addressing him as a wicked and slothful servant He pointed out that, even on his own showing, if he had been afraid to incur responsibility, he might have cast (a word intended to mark the absence of labour) the money to the bankers when, at His return, He would have received His own, with interest. Thus he might, without incurring responsibility, or much labour, have been, at least in a limited sense, faithful to his duty and trust as a servant.

The reference to the practice of lodging money, at interest, with the bankers, raises questions too numerous and lengthily for full discussion in this place. The Jewish Law distinguished between interest and increase (*neshekh* and *tarbith*), and entered into many and intricate details on the subject.²³ Such transactions were forbidden with Israelites, but allowed with Gentiles. As in Rome, the business of money-changers (*argentarii*, *nummularii*) and that of bankers (*collectarii*, *mensularii*) seem to have run into each other. The Jewish bankers bear precisely the same name (*Shulchani*, *mensularius*, trapezithV). In Rome very high interest seems to have been charged in early times; by-and-by it was lowered, till it was fixed, first at 8½, and then at 4 1/6, per cent. But these laws were not of permanent duration. Practically, usury was unlimited. It soon became the custom to charge monthly interest at the rate of 1 per cent a month. Yet there were prosperous times, as at the close of

²³Babha Mez. iv. and v., especially v. 6, and the Gemara, especially Babha M. 70 b &c.

the Republic, when the rate of interest was so low as 4 percent; during the early Empire it stood at 8 per cent. This, of course, in what we may call fair business transactions. Beyond them, in the almost incredible extravagance, luxury, and indebtedness of even some of the chief historical personages, most usurious transactions took place (especially in the provinces), and that by people in high position (Brutus in Cyprus, and Seneca in Britain). Money was lent at 12, 24, and even 48 per cent; the bills bore a larger sum than that actually received; and the interest was added to the capital, so that debt and interest alike grew. In Greece there were regular State banks, while in Rome such provision was only made under exceptional circumstances. Not unfrequently the twofold business of money-changing and banking was combined. Such bankers undertook to make payments, to collect moneys and accounts, to place out money at interest—in short, all the ordinary business of this kind.

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²⁴ There can be no question that the Jewish bankers of Palestine and elsewhere were engaged in the same undertakings, while the dispersion of their race over the world would render it more easy to have trusted correspondents in every city. Thus, we find that Herod Agrippa borrowed from the Jewish Alabarch at Alexandria the sum of 20,000 drachms, which was paid him in Italy, the commission and interest on it amounting to no less than 8 1/2 per cent. (2,500 drachms). ²⁵

We can thus understand the allusion to the bankers with whom the wicked and unfaithful servant might have lodged his lord's money, if there had been truth in his excuse. To unmask its hollowness is the chief object of this part of the Parable. Accordingly, it must not be too closely pressed; but it would be in the spirit of the Parable to apply the expression to the *indirect* employment of money in the service of Christ, as by charitable contributions, &c. But the great lesson intended is, that every good and faithful servant of Christ must, whatever his circumstances, personally and directly use such talent as he may have to make gain for Christ. Tried by this test, how few seem to have understood their relation to Christ, and

²⁴Comp. Marquardt, Handb. d. Röm. Alterth. vol. v. 2, pp. 56-68.

²⁵Jos. Antiq. xviii. 6. 3.

how cold has the love of the Church grown in the long absence of her lord!

[121] But as regards the unprofitable servant in the Parable, the well-known punishment of him that had come to the Marriage-Feast without the wedding-garment shall await him, while the talent, which he had failed to employ for his master, shall be entrusted to him who had shown himself most capable of working. We need not seek an elaborate interpretation for this. It points to the principle, equally true in every administration of God, that unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall be placed in abundance;²⁶ but as to him that hath not,²⁷ also what he hath shall be away from him. Not a cynical rule this, such as the world, in its selfishness or worship of success, caricatures it; nor yet the worship of superior force; but this, that faithful use for God of every capacity will ever open fresh opportunities, in proportion as the old ones have been used, while spiritual unprofitableness must end in utter loss even of that which, however humble, might have been used, at one time or another, for God and for good.

3. To these Parables, that of the King who on his return makes reckoning with His servants and His enemies may be regarded as supplemental. It is recorded only by St. Luke, and placed by him in somewhat loose connection with the conversion of Zacchaeus.²⁸ The most superficial perusal will show such unmistakable similarity with the Parable of The Talents that their identity will naturally suggest itself to the reader. On the other hand, there are remarkable divergences in detail, some of which seem to imply a different standpoint from which the same truth is viewed. We have also now the additional feature of the message of hatred on the part of the citizens, and their fate in consequence of it. It may have been that Christ spoke the two Parables on the two different occasions mentioned respectively by St. Luke and St. Matthew—the one on the journey to Jerusalem, the other on the Mount of Olives. And yet it seems difficult to believe that He would, with a few days of telling the Parable recorded by St. Luke, have repeated it in almost the same words to the disciples, who must have heard it

²⁶perisseuqhsetai

²⁷So the better reading, tou de mh econtoV

²⁸St. Luke 19:11-28.

in Jericho. This objection would not be so serious, if the Parable addressed, in the first instance, to the disciples (that of the Talents) had been afterwards repeated (in the record of St. Luke) in a *wider* circle, and not, as according to the Synoptists, the opposite. If, however, we are to regard the two Parables of the Talents and of the Pieces of Money as substantially the same, we would be disposed to consider the recension by St. Matthew as the original, being the more homogeneous and compact, while that of St. Luke would seem to combine with this another Parable, that of the rebellious citizens. Perhaps it is safest to assume, that, on His way to Jerusalem, when his adherents (not merely the disciples) would naturally expect that He would inaugurate His Messianic Kingdom, Christ may have spoken the latter Parable, to teach them that the relation in which Jerusalem stood towards Him, and its fate, were quite different from what they imagined, and that His Entrance into the City and the Advent of His Kingdom would be separated by a long distance of time. Hence the prospect before them was that of working, not of reigning; after that would the reckoning come, when the faithful worker would become the trusted ruler. These points were, of course, closely connected with the lessons of the Parable of the Talents, and, with the view of presenting the subject as a whole, St. Luke may have borrowed details from that Parable, and supplemented its teaching by presenting another aspect of it. [122]

It must be admitted, that if St. Luke had really these two Parables in view (that of the King and of the Talents), and wished to combine them into new teaching, he has most admirably welded them together. For, as the Nobleman Who is about to entrust money to His servants, is going abroad to receive a Kingdom, it was possible to represent Him alike in relation to rebellious citizens and to His own servants, and to connect their reward with His Kingdom. And so the two Parables are joined by deriving the illustration from political instead of social life. It has been commonly supposed, that the Parable contains an allusion to what had happened after the death of Herod the Great, when his son Archelaus hastened to Rome to obtain confirmation of his father's will, while a Jewish deputation followed to oppose his appointment—an act of rebellion which Archelaus afterwards avenged in the blood of his enemies. The circumstance must have been still fresh in popular remembrance, although more than

thirty years had elapsed. But if otherwise, applications to Rome for installation to the government, and popular opposition thereto, were of such frequent occurrence amidst the quarrels and intrigues of the Herodians, that no difficulty could have been felt in understanding the allusions of the Parable.

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A brief analysis will suffice to point out the special lessons of this Parable. It introduces a certain Nobleman who has claims to the throne, but has not yet received the formal appointment from the suzerain power. As He is going away to receive it, He deals as yet only with His servants. His object, apparently, is to try their aptitude, devotion, and faithfulness: and so He hands—not to each according to his capacity, but *to all equally*, a sum, not large (such as talents), but small—to each a mina equal to 100 drachms, or about 3*l.* 5*s.* of our money. To trade with so small a sum would, of course, be much more difficult, and success would imply greater ability, even as it would require more constant labour. Here we have some traits in which this differs from the Parable of the Talents. The same small sum is supposed to have been entrusted to all, in order to show which of them was most able and most earnest, and hence who should be called to largest employment, and with it to greatest honour in the Kingdom. While the Nobleman was at the court of His suzerain, a deputation of His fellow-citizens arrived to urge this resolution of theirs: We will not that this One reign over us. It was simply an expression of hatred; it stated no reason, and only urged personal opposition, even if such were in the face of the personal wish of the sovereign who appointed him king.

In the last scene, the King, now duly appointed, has returned to His country. He first reckons with His servants, when it is found that all but one have been faithful to their trust, though with varying success (the *mina* of the one having grown into ten; that of another into five, and so on). In strict accordance with that success is now their further appointment to *rule*—work here corresponding to rule there, which, however, as we know from the Parable of the Talents, is also work for Christ: a rule that is work, and work that is rule. At the same time, the acknowledgment is the same to all the faithful servants. Similarly, the motives, the reasoning, and the fate of the unfaithful servant are the same as in the Parable of the Talents. But as regards His enemies that would not have Him reign over them—

manifestly, Jerusalem and the people of Israel—who, even after He had gone to receive the Kingdom, continued the personal hostility of their 'We will not that this One shall reign over us'—the ashes of the Temple, the ruins of the City, the blood of the fathers, and the homeless wanderings of their children, with the Cain curse branded on their brow and visible to all men, attest, that the King has many ministers to execute that judgment which obstinate rebellion must surely bring, if His Authority is to be vindicated, and His Rule to secure submission. [124]

Chapter 8—The Fourth Day in Passion-Week

Jesus in His Last Sabbatic Rest before His Agony, and the Sanhedrists in their Unrest—The Betrayal—Judas: His Character, Apostasy, and End.

(St. Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16; St. Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11; St. Luke 22:1-6.)

From the record of Christ's Sayings and Doings, furnished by St. Matthew, we turn once more to that of public events, as, from one or another aspect they are related by all the Evangelists. With the Discourses in the Temple the public Teaching of Christ had come to an end; with that spoken on the Mount of Olives, and its application in the Parables of the Virgins and the Talents the instruction of the disciples had been concluded. What follows in His intercourse with His own is *paraenetic*,¹ rather than teaching—exhortation, advice, and consolation: rather, perhaps, all these combined.

The three busy days of Passion-Week were past. The day before that on which the Paschal Lamb was to be slain, with all that was to follow, would be one of rest, a Sabbath to His Soul before its Great Agony. He would refresh Himself, gather Himself up for the terrible conflict before Him. And He did so as the Lamb of God—meekly submitting Himself to the Will and Hand of His Father, and so fulfilling all types, from that of Isaac's sacrifice on Mount Moriah to the Paschal Lamb in the Temple; and bringing the reality of all prophecy, from that of the Woman's Seed that would crush the Serpent's head to that of the Kingdom of God in its fullness, when its golden gates would be flung open to all men, and Heaven's own light flow out to them as they sought its way of peace. Only two days more, as the Jews reckoned them²

¹I take leave to introduce a term which has become naturalised in German theological literature. There is no other single word which so expresses the ideas.

²An attempt has been lately made, with great ingenuity, by the Rev. B. S. Clarke of Boxted, to show that only the weekly Sabbath and the Day of Atonement, but not the

—that Wednesday and Thursday—and at its Even the Paschal supper! And Jesus knew it well, and He passed that day of rest and preparation in quiet retirement with His disciples—perhaps in some hollow of the Mount of Olives, near the home of Bethany—speaking to them of His Crucifixion on the near Passover. They sorely needed His words; they, rather than He, needed to be prepared for what was coming. But what Divine calm, what willing obedience, and also what outgoing of love to them, with full consciousness of what was before Him, to think and speak of this only on that day! So would not a Messiah of Jewish conception have acted; nay, He would not have been placed in such circumstances. So would not a Messiah of ambitious aims or of Jewish Nationalist aspirations have acted; He would have done what the Sanhedrin feared, and raised a tumult of the people prepared for it as the multitude was, which had so lately raised the Hosanna-cry in street and Temple. So would a disillusioned enthusiast not have acted; he would have withdrawn from the impending fate. But Jesus knew it all—far more the agony of shame and suffering, even the unfathomable agony of soul. And the while He thought only of them in it all. Such thinking and speaking is not that of Man—it is that of the Incarnate Son of God, the Christ of the Gospels.

He had, indeed, before that, sought gradually to prepare them for what was to happen on the morrow's night. He had pointed to it in dim figure at the very opening of His Ministry, on the first occasion that he had taught in the Temple,³ as well as to Nicodemus.⁴ He had hinted it, when He spoke of the deep sorrow when the Bridegroom would be taken from them,⁵ of the need of taking up His cross,⁶

other festive, nor yet the natural days, began with the evening. The admission in regard to Sabbaths and the Day of Atonement is, in the absence of any qualifying remark in regard to them, a *primâ facie* argument against the theory. But there is more than this. In Chull. 83 *a* it is noted, in connection with offerings, that as in the history of the Creation the day always belonged to the previous night (one day), it was always to be reckoned in the same manner. Again, in Pes. 2 *a* it is stated that the day lasted till three stars became visible. Lastly, and most important in regard to the Passover, it is distinctly stated (Jer. Pes. 27 *c*, below), that it began with the darkness on the 14th Nisan.

³St. [John 2:19](#).

⁴iii. 14.

⁵St. [Matthew 9:15](#).

⁶x. 38.

of the fulfilment in Him of the Jonah-type,⁷ of His Flesh which He would give for the life of the world,⁸ as well as in what might have seemed the Parabolic teaching about the Good Shepherd, Who laid down His life for the Sheep,⁹

[127] and the Heir Whom the evil husbandmen cast out and killed.¹⁰ But He had also spoken of it quite directly—and this, let us specially notice, always when some highpoint in His History had been reached, and the disciples might have been carried away into Messianic expectations of an exaltation without humiliation, a triumph not a sacrifice. We remember, that the first occasion on which He spoke thus clearly was immediately after that confession of Peter, which laid the foundation of the Church, against which the gates of hell should not prevail;¹¹ the next, after descending from the Mount of Transfiguration;¹² the last, on preparing to make His triumphal Messianic Entry into Jerusalem.¹³ The darker hints and Parabolic sayings might have been misunderstood. Even as regarded the clear prediction of His Death, preconceived ideas could find no room for such a fact. Deep veneration, which could not associate it with His Person, and love which could not bear the thought of it, might, after the first shock of the words was past, and their immediate fulfilment did not follow, suggest some other possible explanation of the prediction. But on that Wednesday it was impossible to misunderstand; it could scarcely have been possible to doubt what Jesus said of His near Crucifixion.¹⁴

⁷St. [Matthew 12:40](#).

⁸St. [John 6:51](#).

⁹St. [John 10:11, 15](#).

¹⁰St. [Matthew 21:38](#).

¹¹St. [Matthew 16:21](#).

¹²St. [Matthew 17:22](#).

¹³St. [Matthew 20:17-19](#).

¹⁴On the evidential force of the narrative of the Crucifixion, I must refer to the singularly lucid and powerful reasoning of Dr. *Wace*, in his work on *The Gospel and its Witnesses* (London, 1883, Lecture VI.). He first refers to the circumstance, that in the narratives of the Crucifixion, written by Apostle, or by friends of Apostles, the writers do not shrink from describing their own conduct, or that of their Master with a truthfulness which terribly reflects on their constancy, courage, and even manliness. Dr. *Wace's* second argument is so clearly put, that I must take leave to transfer his language to these pages. Christ crucified was, we are told by St. Paul, “unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.” It was a constant reproach to Christians, that they worshipped

If illusions had still existed, the last two days must have rudely dispelled them. The triumphal Hosannas of His Entry into the City, and the acclamations in the Temple, had given place to the cavils of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes, and with a Woe upon it Jesus had taken His last departure from Israel's sanctuary. And better far than those rulers, whom conscience made cowards, did the disciples know how little reliance could be placed on the adherence of the multitude. And now the Master was telling it to them in plain words; was calmly contemplating it, and that not as in the dim future, but in the immediate present—at that very Passover, from which scarcely two days separated them. Much as we wonder at their brief scattering on His arrest and condemnation, those humble disciples must have loved Him much to sit around Him in mournful silence as He thus spake, and to follow Him unto His Dying. [128]

But to one of them, in whose heart the darkness had long been gathering, this was the decisive moment. The prediction of Christ, which Judas as well as the others must have felt to be true, extinguished the last glimmering of such light of Christ as his soul had been capable of receiving. In its place flared up the lurid flame of hell. By the open door out of which he had thrust the dying Christ Satan entered into Judas. ¹⁵ Yet, even so, not permanently. ¹⁶ It may, indeed, be doubted, whether, since God is in Christ, such can ever be the case in any human soul, at least on this side eternity. Since our world's night has been lit up by the promise from Paradise, the rosy hue of its morning has lain on the edge of the horizon, deepen-

a man who had been crucified as a malefactor. The main fact, of course, could not be disguised. But that the Evangelical writers should have so diligently preserved what might otherwise have been forgotten—all the minute circumstances of their Master's humiliation, the very weakness of His flesh, and His shrinking, in the garden, from the cup He had to drink—all those marks, in fact, of His human weakness which were obliterated by His Resurrection—this is an instance of truthfulness which seems at least incompatible with any legendary origin of the narratives, at a time when our Lord was contemplated in the glory of His Ascension, and of His session at the right hand of God. But whatsoever impression of truthfulness, and of intense reality in detail, is thus created by the history of the Passion, must in justice be allowed to reflect back over the whole preceding history. The argument is then further carried out as to the truthfulness of writers who could so speak of themselves, and concerning the fate of the Christ. But the whole subject should be studied in the connection in which Dr. *Wace* has presented it. [129]

¹⁵St. Luke 22:3.

¹⁶St. John 13:2 and 27.

ing into gold, brightening into day, growing into midday-strength and evening-glory. Since God's Voice wakened earth by its early Christmas-Hymn, it has never been quite night there, nor can it ever be quite night in any human soul. ¹⁷

But it is a terrible night-study, that of Judas. We seem to tread our way over loose stones of hot molten lava, as we climb to the edge of the crater, and shudderingly look down its depths. And yet there, near there, have stood not only St. Peter in the night of his denial, but mostly all of us, save they whose Angels have always looked up into the Face of our Father in heaven. And yet, in our weakness, we have even wept over them! There, near there, have we stood, not in the hours of our weakness, but in those of our sore temptation, when the blast of doubt had almost quenched the flickering light, or the storm of passion or self-will broken the bruised reed. But He prayed for us—and through the night came over desolate moor and stony height the Light of His Presence, and above the wild storm rose the Voice of Him, Who has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Yet near to us, close to us, was the dark abyss; and we can never more forget out last, almost sliding, foothold as we quitted its edge.

A terrible night-study this of Judas, and best to make it here, at once, from its beginning to its end. We shall indeed, catch sudden glimpse of him again, as the light of the torches flashes on the traitor-face in Gethsemane; and once more hear his voice in the assemblage of the haughty, sneering councillors of Israel, when his footfall on the marble pavement of the Temple-halls; and the clink of those thirty accursed pieces of silver shall waken the echoes, wake also the dirge of despair in his soul, and he shall flee from the night of his soul into the night that forevercloses around him. But all this as rapidly as we may pass from it, after this present brief study of his character and history.

[130] We remember, that Judas, the man of Kerioth was, so far as we know, the only disciple of Jesus from the province of Judaea. This circumstance; that he carried the bag, i.e. was treasurer and administrator of the small common stock of Christ and His disciples;

¹⁷This apart from the question of the exceptional sin against the Holy Ghost.

and that he was both a hypocrite and a thief ¹⁸—this is all that we know for certain of his history. From the circumstance that he was appointed to such office of trust in the Apostolic community, we infer that he must have been looked up to by the others as an able and prudent man, a good administrator. And there is probably no reason to doubt, that he possessed the natural gift of administration or of government (kubernhsiV). ¹⁹ The question, why Jesus left him the bag after he knew him to be a thief—which, as we believe, he was not at the beginning, and only became in the course of time and in the progress of disappointment—is best answered by this other: Why He originally allowed it to be entrusted to Judas? It was not only because he was best fitted—probably, absolutely fitted—for such work, but also in mercy to him, in view of his character. To engage in that for which a man is naturally fitted is the most likely means of keeping him from brooding, dissatisfaction, alienation, and eventual apostasy. On the other hand, it must be admitted that, as mostly all our life-temptations come to us from that for which we have most aptitude, when Judas was alienated and unfaithful in heart, this very thing became also his greatest temptation, and, indeed, hurried him to his ruin. But only *after* he had first failed inwardly. And so, as ever in like circumstances, the very things which might have been most of blessing become most of curse, and the judgment of hardening fulfills itself by that which in itself is good. Nor could the bag have been afterwards taken from him without both exposing him to the others, and precipitating his moral destruction. And so he had to be left to the process of inward ripening, till all was ready for the sickle.

This very gift of government in Judas may also help us to understand how he may have been first attracted to Jesus, and through what process, when alienated, he came to end in that terrible sin which had cast its snare about him. The gift of government would, in its active aspect, imply the *desire* for it. From thence to *ambition* in its worst, or selfish, aspect, there is only a step—scarcely that: rather, only different moral premisses. ²⁰ Judas was drawn to Jesus

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¹⁸St. John 12:5, 6.

¹⁹1 Corinthians 12:28.

²⁰On the relation between ambition and covetousness, generally, and in the case of Judas, see p. 77.

as the *Jewish* Messiah, and he believed in Him as such, possibly both earnestly and ardently; but he expected that His would be the success, the result, and the triumphs of the Jewish Messiah, and he also expected personally and fully to share in them. How deep-rooted were such feelings even in the best, purest, and most unselfish of Jesus disciples, we gather from the request of the mother of John and James for her sons, and from Peter's question: What shall we have? it must have been sorrow, the misery of moral loneliness, and humiliation, to Him Who was Unselfishness Incarnate, Who lived to die and was full to empty Himself, to be associated with such as even His most intimate disciples, who in this sense also could not watch with Him even one hour, and in whom, at the end of His Ministry, such heaviness was mentally and morally the outcrop, if not the outcome. And in Judas all this must have been an hundredfold more than in them who were in heart true to Christ.

He had, from such conviction as we have described, joined the movement at its very commencement. Then, multitudes in Galilee followed His Footsteps, and watched for His every appearance; they hung entranced on His lips in the Synagogue or on the Mount; they flocked to Him from every town, village, and hamlet; they bore the sick and dying to His Feet, and witnessed, awestruck, how conquered devils gave their testimony to His Divine Power. It was the spring-time of the movement, and all was full of promise—land, people, and disciples. The Baptist, who had bowed before Him and testified to Him, was still lifting his voice to proclaim the near Kingdom. But the people had turned after Jesus, and He swayed them. And, oh! what power was there in His Face and Word, and His look and deed. And Judas, also, had been one of them who, on their early Mission, had temporarily had power given Him, so that the very devils had been subject to them. But, step by step, had come the disappointment. John was beheaded, and not avenged; on the contrary, Jesus withdrew Himself. This constant withdrawing, whether from enemies or from success—almost amounting to flight—even when they would have made Him a King; this refusal to show Himself openly, either at Jerusalem, as His own brethren had taunted Him, or, indeed, anywhere else; this uniform preaching of discouragement to them, when they came to Him elated and hopeful at some success; this gathering enmity of Israel's leaders, and His

marked avoidance of, or, as some might have put it, His failure in taking up the repeated public challenge of the Pharisees to show a sign from heaven; last, and chief of all, this constant and growing reference to shame, disaster, and death—what did it all mean, if not disappointment of all those hopes and expectations which had made Judas at the first a disciple of Jesus?

He that so knew Jesus, not only in His Words and Deeds, but in His inmost Thoughts, even to His night-long communing with God on the hill-side, could not have seriously believed in the coarse Pharisaic charge of Satanic agency as the explanation of all. Yet, from the then Jewish standpoint, he could scarcely have found it impossible to suggest some other explanation of His miraculous power. But, as increasingly the moral and spiritual aspect of Christ's Kingdom must have become apparent to even the dullest intellect, the bitter disappointment of his Messianic thoughts and hopes must have gone on, increasing in proportion as, side by side with it, the process of moral alienation, unavoidably connected with his resistance to such spiritual manifestation, continued and increased. And so the mental and the moral alienation went on together, affected by and affecting each other. As if we were pressed to name a definite moment when the process of disintegration, at least sensibly, began, we would point to that Sabbath-morning at Capernaum, when Christ had preached about His Flesh as the Food of the World, and so many of His adherents ceased to follow after Him; nay, when the leaven so worked even in His disciples, that He turned to them with the searching question—intended to show them the full import of the crisis—whether they also would leave Him? Peter conquered by grasping the moral element, because it was germane to him and to the other true disciples: To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. But this moral element was the very cliff on which Judas made shipwreck. After this, all was wrong, and increasingly so. We see disappointment in his face when not climbing the Mount of Transfiguration, and disappointment in the failure to heal the lunatic child. In the disputes by the way, in the quarrels who was greatest among them, in all the pettiness of misunderstandings and realistic folly of their questions or answers, we seem to hear the echo of his voice, to see the result of his influence, the leaven of his presence. And in it all we mark the downward hastening of his

course, even to the moment when, in contrast to the deep love of a Mary, he first stands before us unmasked, as heartless, hypocritical, full of hatred—disappointed ambition having broken down into selfishness, and selfishness slid into covetousness, even to the crime of stealing that which was destined for the poor.

For, when an ambition which rests only on selfishness gives way there lies close by it the coarse lust of covetousness, as the kindred passion and lower expression of that other form of selfishness. When the Messianic faith of Judas gave place to utter disappointment, the moral and spiritual character of Christ's Teaching would affect him, not sympathetically but antipathetically. Thus, that which should have opened the door of his heart, only closed and double-barred it. His attachment to the Person of Jesus would give place to actual hatred, though only of a temporary character; and the wild intenseness of his Eastern nature would set it all in flame. Thus, when Judas had lost his slender foothold, or, rather, when it had slipped from under him, he fell down, down the eternal abyss. The only hold to which he could cling was the passion of his soul. As he laid hands on it, it gave way, and fell with him into fathomless depths. We, each of us, have also some master-passion; and if, which God forbid! We should lose our foothold, we also would grasp this master-passion, and it would give way, and carry us with it into the eternal dark and deep.

On that spring day, in the restfulness of Bethany, when the Master was taking His sad and solemn Farewell of sky and earth, of friends and disciples, and told them what was to happen only two days later at the Passover, it was all settled in the soul of Judas. Satan entered it. Christ would be crucified; this was quite certain. In the general cataclysm let Judas have at least something. And so, on that sunny afternoon, he left them out there, to seek speech of them that were gathered, not in their ordinary meeting-place, but in the High-Priest's Palace. Even this indicates that it was an informal meeting, consultative rather than judicial. For, it was one of the principles of Jewish Law that, in criminal cases, sentence must be spoken in the regular meeting-place of the Sanhedrin. ²¹ The same inference is conveyed by the circumstance, that the captain

²¹ Ab. Zar. 8 b, line before last.

of the Temple-guard and his immediate subordinates seem to have been taken into the council,²² no doubt to concert the measures for the actual arrest of Jesus. There had previously been a similar gathering and consultation, when the report of the raising of Lazarus reached the authorities of Jerusalem.²³ The practical resolution adopted at that meeting had apparently been, that a strict watch should henceforth be kept on Christ's movements, and that every one of them, as well as the names of His friends, and the places of His secret retirement, should be communicated to the authorities, with the view to His arrest at the proper moment.²⁴

It was probably in professed obedience to this direction, that the traitor presented himself that afternoon in the Palace of the High-Priest Caiaphas.²⁵ Those assembled there were the chiefs of the Priesthood—no doubt, the Temple-officials, heads of the course of Priests, and connections of the High-Priestly family, who constituted what both *Josephus* and the Talmud designate as the Priestly Council.²⁶ All connected with the Temple, its ritual, administration, order, and laws, would be in their hands. Moreover, it was but natural, that the High-Priest and his council should be the regular official medium between the Roman authorities and the people. In matters which concerned, not ordinary misdemeanours, but political crimes (such as it was wished to represent the movement of Jesus), or which affected the *status* of the established religion, the official chiefs of the Priest-hood would, of course, be the persons to appeal, in conjunction with the Sanhedrists, to the secular authorities. This, irrespective of the question—to which reference will be made in the sequel—what place the Chief Priests held in the Sanhedrin. But in that meeting in the Palace of Caiaphas, besides these Priestly Chiefs, the leading Sanhedrists (Scribes and Elders) were also gathered. They were deliberating how Jesus might be taken by subtilty and killed. Probably they had not yet fixed on any definite plan. Only at this conclusion had they arrived—probably in consequence of the

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²²St. Luke 22:4.

²³St. John 11:47, 48.

²⁴St. John 11:57.

²⁵About Caiaphas, see Book II. ch 11.

²⁶The evidence is collected, although not well arranged, by *Wieseler*, Beitr. pp. 205-230.

popular acclamations at His Entry into Jerusalem, and of what had since happened—that nothing must be done during the Feast, for fear of some popular tumult. They knew only too well the character of Pilate, and how in any such tumult all parties—the leaders as well as the led—might experience terrible vengeance.

It must have been intense relief when, in their perplexity, the traitor now presented himself before them with his proposals. Yet his reception was not such as he may have looked for. He probably expected to be hailed and treated as a most important ally. They were, indeed, glad, and covenanted to give him money even as he promised to dog His steps, and watch for the opportunity which they sought. In truth, the offer of the betrayer changed the whole aspect of matters. What formerly they dreaded to attempt seemed now both safe and easy. They could not allow such an opportunity to slip; it was one that might never occur again. Nay, might it not even seem, from the defection of Judas, as if dissatisfaction and disbelief had begun to spread in the innermost circle of Christ's disciples?

Yet, withal, they treated Judas not as an honoured associate, but as a common informer, and a contemptible betrayer. This was not only natural but, in the circumstances, the wisest policy, alike in order to save their own dignity, and to keep most secure hold on the betrayer. And, after all, it might be said, so as to minimize his services, that Judas could really not do much for them—only show them how they might seize Him at unawares in the absence of the multitude, to avoid the possible tumult of an open arrest. So little did they understand Christ! And Judas had at last to speak it out barefacedly—so selling himself as well as the Master: What will ye give me? It was in literal fulfilment of prophecy, ²⁷ that they weighed out to him ²⁸ from the very Temple-treasury those thirty pieces of silver (about 3*l.* 15*s.*). ²⁹ And here we mark, that there is

[136] always terrible literality about the prophecies of judgment, while those of blessing far exceed the words of prediction. And yet it was surely as much in contempt of the seller as of Him Whom he sold, that they paid the legal price of a slave. Or did they mean some kind

²⁷[Zechariah 11:12](#).

²⁸Probably such was the practice in public payments.

²⁹The shekel of the Sanctuary = 4 dinars. The Jerusalem shekel is found, on an average, to be worth about 2*s.* 6*d.*

of legal fiction, such as to buy the Person of Jesus at the legal price of a slave, so as to hand it afterwards over to the secular authorities? Such fictions, to save the conscience by a logical quibble, are not so uncommon—and the case of the Inquisitors handing over the condemned heretic to the secular authorities will recur to the mind. But, in truth, Judas could not now have escaped their toils. They might have offered him ten or five pieces of silver, and he must still have stuck to his bargain. Yet none the less do we mark the deep symbolic significance of it all, in that the Lord was, so to speak, paid for out of the Temple-money which was destined for the purchase of sacrifices, and that He, Who took on Him the form of a servant,³⁰ was sold and bought at the legal price of a slave.³¹

And yet Satan must once more enter the heart of Judas at that Supper, before he can finally do the deed.³² But, even so, we believe it was only temporarily, not for always—for, he was still a human being, such as on this side eternity we all are—and he had still a conscience working in him. With this element he had not reckoned in his bargain in the High Priest's Palace. On the morrow of His condemnation would it exact a terrible account. That night in Gethsemane never more passed from his soul. In the thickening and encircling gloom all around, he must have ever seen only the torch-light glare as it fell on the pallid Face of the Divine Sufferer. In the terrible stillness before the storm, he must have ever heard only these words: Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss? He did not hate Jesus then—he hated nothing; he hated everything. He was utterly desolate, as the storm of despair swept over his disenchanted soul, and swept him before it. No one in heaven or on earth to appeal to; no one, Angel or man, to stand by him. Not the priests, who had paid him the price of blood, would have aught of him, not even the thirty pieces of silver, the blood-money of his Master and of his own soul—even as the modern Synagogue, which approves of what has been done, but not of the deed, will have none of him! With their See thou to it! they sent him reeling back into his darkness. Not so could conscience be stilled. And, louder than the ring of the thirty silver pieces as they fell on the marble pavement of the Temple,

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³⁰Philippians 2:7.

³¹Exodus 21:32.

³²St. John 13:27.

rang it ever in his soul, I have betrayed innocent blood! Even if Judas possessed that which on earth cleaves closest and longest to us—a woman's love—it could not have abode by him. It would have turned into madness and fled; or it would have withered, struck by the lightning-flash of that night of terrors.

Deeper—farther out into the night! to its farthest bounds—where rises and falls the dark flood of death. The wild howl of the storm has lashed the dark waters into fury: they toss and break in wild billows at his feet. One narrow rift in the cloud-curtain over-head, and, in the pale, deathlike light lies the Figure of the Christ, so calm and placid, untouched and unharmed, on the storm-tossed waters, as it had been that night lying on the Lake of Galilee, when Judas had seen Him come to them over the surging billows, and then bid them be peace. Peace! What peace to him now—in earth or heaven? It was the same Christ, but thorn-crowned, with nail-prints in His Hands and Feet. And this Judas had done to the Master! Only for one moment did it seem to lie there; then it was sucked up by the dark waters beneath. And again the cloud-curtain is drawn, only more closely; the darkness is thicker, and the storm wilder than before. Out into that darkness, with one wild plunge—there, where the Figure of the Dead Christ had lain on the waters! And the dark waters have closed around him in eternal silence.

In the lurid morn that broke on the other shore where the flood cast him up, did he meet those searching, loving Eyes of Jesus, Whose gaze he knew so well—when he came to answer for the deeds done in the flesh?

And—can there be a store in the Eternal Compassion for the Betrayer of Christ?

Chapter 9—The Fifth Day in Passion-Week

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Make Ready the Passover!

(St. [Matthew 26:17-19](#); St. [Mark 14:12-16](#); St. [Luke 22:7-13](#); St. [John 13:1](#).)

When the traitor returned from Jerusalem on the Wednesday afternoon, the Passover, in the popular and canonical, though not in the Biblical sense, was close at hand. It began on the 14th Nisan, that is, from the appearance of the first three stars on Wednesday evening [the evening of what had been the 13th], and ended with the first three stars on Thursday evening [the evening of what had been the 14th day of Nisan]. As this is an exceedingly important point, it is well here to quote the precise language of the Jerusalem Talmud: ¹ What means: On the *Pesach*? ² On the 14th [Nisan]. And so Josephus describes the Feast as one of eight days, ³ evidently reckoning its beginning on the 14th, and its close at the end of the 21st Nisan. The absence of the traitor so close upon the Feast would therefore, be the less noticed by the others. Necessary preparations might have to be made, even though they were to be guests in some house—they knew not which. These would, of course, devolve on Judas. Besides, from previous conversations, they may also have judged that the man of Kerioth would fain escape what the Lord had all that day been telling them about, and which was now filling their minds and hearts.

Everyone in Israel was thinking about the Feast. For the previous month it had been the subject of discussion in the Academies, and, for the last two Sabbaths at least, that of discourse in the Synagogues. ⁴ Everyone was going to Jerusalem, or had those near and dear

¹Jer. Pes. 27 *d*, line before last.

²The question is put in connection with Pes. i. 8.

³Ant. ii. 15. 1.

⁴See the Jerusalem Gemara (Jer. Pes. 27 *b*, towards the end). But the detailed quotations would here be so numerous that it seems wiser to omit them.

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to them there, or at least watched the festive processions to the Metropolis of Judaism. It was a gathering of universal Israel, that of the memorial of the birth-night of the nation, and of its Exodus, when friends from afar would meet, and new friends be made; when offerings long due would be brought, and purification long needed be obtained—and all worship in that grand and glorious Temple, with its gorgeous ritual. National and religious feelings were alike stirred in what reached far back to the first, and pointed far forward to the final Deliverance. On that day a Jew might well glory in being a Jew. But we must not dwell on such thoughts, nor attempt a general description of the Feast. Rather shall we try to follow closely the footsteps of Christ and His disciples, and see or know only what on that day they saw and did.

For ecclesiastical purposes Bethphage and Bethany seem to have been included in Jerusalem. But Jesus must keep the Feast in the City itself, although, if His purpose had not been interrupted, He would have spent the night outside its walls. ⁵ The first preparations for the Feast would commence shortly after the return of the traitor. For, on the evening [of the 13th] commenced the 14th of Nisan, when a solemn search was made with lighted candle throughout each house for any leaven that might be hidden, or have fallen aside by accident. Such was put by in a safe place, and afterwards destroyed with the rest. In Galilee it was the usage to abstain wholly from work; in Judea the day was divided, and actual work ceased only at noon, though nothing new was taken in hand even in the morning. This division of the day for festive purposes was a Rabbinic addition; and, by way of a hedge around it, an hour before midday was fixed after which nothing leavened might be eaten. The more strict abstained from it even an hour earlier (at ten o'clock), lest the eleventh hour might insensibly run into the forbidden midday. But there could be little real danger of this, since, by way of public notification, two desecrated thank offering cakes were laid on a bench in the Temple, the removal of one of which indicated that the time for eating what was leavened had passed; the removal of the other, that the time for destroying all leaven had come. ⁶

⁵Comp. St. [Matthew 26:30, 36](#); St. [Mark 14:26, 32](#); St. [Luke 22:39](#); St. [John 18:1](#).

⁶The Jerusalem Talmud gives the most minute details of the places in which search is to be made. One Rabbi proposed that the search should be repeated at three different

It was probably after the early meal, and when the eating of leaven had ceased, that Jesus began preparations for the Paschal Supper. St. John, who, in view of the details in the other Gospels, summarizes, and, in some sense, almost passes over, the outward events, so that their narration may not divert attention from those all-important teachings which he alone records, simply tells by way of preface and explanation—alike of the Last Supper and of what followed—that Jesus, knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father ⁷ ... having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. ⁸ But St. Luke's account of what actually happened, being in some points the most explicit, requires to be carefully studied, and that without thought of any possible consequences in regard to the harmony of the Gospels. It is almost impossible to imagine anything more evident, than that he wishes us to understand that Jesus was about to celebrate the ordinary Jewish Paschal Supper. And the Day of Unleavened Bread came, on which the Passover must be sacrificed. ⁹ The designation is exactly that of the commencement of the *Pascha*, which, as we have seen, was the 14th Nisan, and the description that of the slaying of the Paschal Lamb. What follows is in exact accordance with it: And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the Pascha, that we may eat it. Then occur these three notices in the same account: And... they made ready the Pascha; ¹⁰ and when the hour was come, He reclined [as usual at the Paschal Supper], and the Apostles with Him; ¹¹ and, finally, times! If it had been omitted on the evening of the 13th, it would be made on the forenoon of the 14th Nisan.

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⁷These phrases occur frequently in Jewish writings for dying: the hour has come to depart out of this world. Thus, in Targum on Cant. i. 7, when the hour had come that Moses should depart out of the world; Shem. R. 33, what hour the time came for our father Jacob that he should depart out of the world.'

⁸The words may also be rendered to the uttermost. But it seems more natural to understand the having loved as referring to all Christ's previous sayings and doings, as it were, the summing up of the whole past, like St. [Matthew 26:1](#): when Jesus had finished all these sayings and the other clause (He loved them to the end) as referring to the final and greatest manifestation of His love; the one being the *terminus a quo*, the other the *terminus ad quem*.

⁹St. [Luke 22:7](#).

¹⁰ver. 13.

¹¹ver. 14.

[141] these words of His: ¹² With desire I have desired to eat this Pascha with you. And with this fully agrees the language of the other two Synoptists, St. [Matthew 26:17-20](#), and St. [Mark 14:12-17](#). ¹³ No ingenuity can explain away these facts. The suggestion, that in that year the Sanhedrin had postponed the Paschal Supper from Thursday evening (the 14th-15th Nisan) to Friday evening (15-16th Nisan), so as to avoid the Sabbath following on the first day of the feast—and that the Paschal Lamb was therefore in that year eaten on Friday, the evening of the day on which Jesus was crucified, is an assumption void of all support in history or Jewish tradition. ¹⁴ Equally untenable is it, that Christ had held the Paschal Supper a day in advance of that observed by the rest of the Jewish world—a supposition not only inconsistent with the plain language of the Synoptists, but impossible, since the Paschal Lamb could not have been offered in the Temple, and, therefore, no Paschal Supper held, out of the regular time. But, perhaps, the strangest attempt to reconcile the statement of the Synoptists with what is supposed inconsistent with it in the narration of St. John ¹⁵ is, that while the rest of Jerusalem, including Christ and His Apostles, partook of the Paschal Supper, the chief priests had been interrupted in, or rather prevented from it by their proceedings against Jesus—that, in fact, they had not touched it when they feared to enter Pilate's Judgment-Hall; ¹⁶ and that, after that, they went back to eat it, turning the Supper into a breakfast. ¹⁷ Among the various objections to this extraordinary hypothesis, this one will be sufficient, that such would have been absolutely contrary to one of the plainest rubrical directions, which

¹²ver. 15.

¹³It deserves notice that the latest Jewish writer on the subject (*Joël*, Blicke in d. Relig. Gesch. Part II. pp. 62 & c.)—however we may otherwise differ from him—has by an ingenious process of combination shown, that the *original* view expressed in Jewish writings was, that Jesus was crucified on the first Paschal day, and that this was only at a later period modified to the eve of the Pascha Sanh. 43 a, 67 a (the latter in Chasr. haSh., p. 23 b).

¹⁴It has of late, however, found an advocate even in the learned Bishop *Haneberg*.

¹⁵St. [John 17:28](#).

¹⁶St. [John 18:28](#).

¹⁷So Archdeacon *Watkins* (in Excursus F, in Bp. *Ellicot's* Commentary on the N.T. Gospel of St. John).

has it: The Pascha is not eaten but during the night, nor yet later than the middle of the night. ¹⁸

It was, therefore, with the view of preparing the ordinary Paschal Supper that the Lord now sent Peter and John. ¹⁹ For the first time we see them here joined together by the Lord, these two, who henceforth were to be so closely connected: he of deepest feeling with him of quickest action. And their question, *where* He would have the Paschal Meal prepared, gives us a momentary glimpse of the mutual relation between the Master and His Disciples; how He was still the Master, even in their most intimate converse, and would only tell them what to do just when it needed to be done; and how they presumed not to ask beforehand (far less to propose, or to interfere), but had simple confidence and absolute submission as regarded all things. The direction which the Lord gave, while once more evidencing to them, as it does to us, the Divine foreknowledge of Christ, had also its deep human meaning. Evidently, neither the house where the Passover was to be kept, nor its owner, ²⁰ was to be named beforehand within hearing of Judas. That last Meal with its Institution of the Holy Supper, was not to be interrupted, nor their last retreat betrayed, till all had been said and done, even to the last prayer of Agony in Gethsemane. We can scarcely err in seeing in this combination of foreknowledge with prudence the expression of the Divine and the Human: the two Natures in One Person. The sign which Jesus gave the two Apostles reminds us of that by which Samuel of old had conveyed assurance and direction to Saul. ²¹ On their entrance into Jerusalem they would meet a man—manifestly a servant—carrying a pitcher of water. Without accosting, they were to follow him, and, when they reached the house, to deliver to its owner this message: ²² The Master saith, My time is at hand—with thee [i.e. in thy house the emphasis is on this] I hold ²³ the Passover

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¹⁸Sebbach. v. 8.

¹⁹St. Luke 22:8.

²⁰St. Matthew calls him such an one (ton deina). The details are furnished by St. Mark and St. Luke, and must be gathered from those Gospels.

²¹1 Samuel 10:3.

²²We combine the words from the three Synoptists.

²³Literally, I do.

with My disciples. ²⁴ Where is My ²⁵ hostelry [or hall'], where I shall eat the Passover with My disciples? ²⁶

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Two things here deserve marked attention. The disciples were not bidden ask for the chief or Upper Chamber but for what we have rendered, for want of better, by hostelry or hall'—*kataluma*—the place in the house where, as in an open Khan, the beasts of burden were unloaded, shoes and staff, or dusty garment and burdens put down—if an apartment, at least a common one, certain not the best. Except in this place, ²⁷ ²⁸ the word only occurs as the designation of the inn or hostelry in Bethlehem, where the Virgin Mother brought forth her first-born Son, and laid Him in a manger. ²⁹ He Who was born in a hostelry'—*Katalyma*—was content to ask for His last Meal in a *Katalyma*. Only, and this we mark secondly, it must be His own: My *Katalyma*. It was a common practice, that more than one company partook of the Paschal Supper in the same apartment. ³⁰ ³¹ In the multitude of those who would sit down to the Paschal Supper this was unavoidable, for all partook of, including women and children, ³² only excepting those who were Levitically unclean. And, though each company might not consist of less than ten, it was not to be larger than that each should be able to partake of at least a small portion of the Paschal Lamb ³³—and we know how small lambs are in the East. But, while He only asked for His last Meal in the *Katalyma*, some hall opening on the open court, Christ would have it His own—to Himself, to eat the Passover alone with His Apostles. Not even a company of disciples—such as the owner of the house unquestionably was—nor yet, be it marked, even the

²⁴St. Matthew.

²⁵So in St Luke and also according to the better reading in St. Mark.

²⁶St. Mark and St Luke.

²⁷St. Mark 14:14: St. Luke 22:11.

²⁸The word occurs seven times in the LXX. and twice in the Apocrypha (Ecclus. 14:25; 1 Macc. iii. 45). But out of these nine passages only in one, 1 Samuel 9:22, does it stand for apartment.'

²⁹St. Luke 2:7.

³⁰Pes. vii. 13.

³¹The Mishnah explains certain regulations for such cases. According to the Targum Pseudo-Jon., each company was not to consist of less than ten persons; according to *Josephus* (War vi. 9. 3), of not more than twenty.

³²Pes. viii. 1.

³³Pes. viii. 2.

Virgin Mother, might be present; witness what passed, hear what He said, or be at the first Institution of His Holy Supper. To us at least this also recalls the words of St. Paul: I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you. ³⁴

There can be no reasonable doubt that, as already hinted, the owner of the house was a disciple, although at festive seasons unbounded hospitality was extended to strangers generally, and no man in Jerusalem considered his house as strictly his own, far less would let it out for hire. ³⁵ But no mere stranger would, in answer to so mysterious a message, have given up, without further questioning, his best room. Had he known Peter and John; or recognised Him Who sent the message by the announcement that it was The Master; or by the words to which His Teaching had attached such meaning: that His time had come; or even by the peculiar emphasis of His command: With thee ³⁶ I hold the Pascha with My disciples? It matters little which it was, and, in fact, the impression on the mind almost is, that the owner of the house had not, indeed, expected, but held himself ready for such a call. It was the last request of the dying Master—and could he have refused it? But he would do more than immediately and unquestioningly comply. The Master would only ask for the hall: as He was born in a *Katalyma*, so He would have been content to eat there His last Meal—at the same time meal, feast, sacrifice, and institution. But the unnamed disciple would assign to Him, not the Hall, but the best and chiefest, the upper chamber or *Aliyah*, at the same time the most honourable and the most retired place, where from the outside stairs entrance and departure might be had without passing through the house. And the upper room was large furnished and ready. ³⁷ From Jewish authorities we know, that the average dining-apartment was computed at fifteen feet square; ³⁸ the expression furnished no doubt, refers to the arrangement of couches all round the Table, except at its end, since it was a canon, that the very poorest must partake of that Supper in a *reclining at-*

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³⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:23.

³⁵ Yoma 12 a; Megill, 26 a.

³⁶ Comp. similarly, for example, St Mark 5:41; 10:18.

³⁷ St. Mark.

³⁸ Babha B vi. 4.

titude, to indicate rest, safety, and liberty; ³⁹ while the term ready seems to point to the ready provision of all that was required for the Feast. In that case, all that the disciples would have to make ready would be the Paschal Lamb and perhaps that first *Chagigah*, or festive Sacrifice, which, if the Paschal Lamb itself would not suffice for Supper, was added to it. And here it must be remembered, that it was of religion to fast till the Paschal Supper—as the Jerusalem Talmud explains, ⁴⁰ in order the better to relish the Supper.

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Perhaps it is not wise to attempt lifting the veil which rests on the unnamed such an one whose was the privilege of being the last Host of the Lord and the first Host of His Church, gathered within the new bond of the fellowship of His Body and Blood. And yet we can scarcely abstain from speculating. To us at least it seems most likely, that it was the house of Mark's father (then still alive)—a large one, as we gather from [Acts 12:13](#). For, the most obvious explanation of the introduction by St. Mark alone of such an incident as that about the young man who was accompanying Christ as He was led away captive, and who, on fleeing from those that would have laid hold on him, left in their hands the inner garment which he had loosely cast about him, as, roused from sleep, he had rushed into Gethsemane, is, that he was none other than St. Mark himself. If so, we can understand it all: how the traitor may have first brought the Temple-guards, who had come to seize Christ, to the house of Mark's father, where the Supper had been held, and that, finding Him gone, they had followed to Gethsemane, for Judas knew the place, for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples ⁴¹—and how Mark, startled from his sleep by the appearance of the armed men, would hastily cast about him his loose tunic and run after them; then, after the flight of the disciples, accompany Christ, but escape intended arrest by leaving his tunic in the hands of his would-be captors.

If the view formerly expressed is correct, that the owner of the house had provided all that was needed for the Supper, Peter and John would find there the Wine for the four Cups, the cakes of

³⁹The Talmud puts it that slaves were wont to take their meals standing, and that this reclining best indicated how Israel had passed from bondage into liberty.

⁴⁰Pes. x. 1.

⁴¹St. [John 18:1, 2](#).

unleavened Bread, and probably also the bitter herbs. Of the latter five kinds are mentioned,⁴² which were to be dipped once in salt water, or vinegar, and another time in a mixture called *Charoseth* (a compound made of nuts, raisins, apples almonds, &c.⁴³)—although this *Charoseth* was not obligatory. The wine was the ordinary one of the country, only red; it was mixed with water, generally in the proportion of one part to two of water.⁴⁴

The quantity for each of the four Cups is stated by one authority [146] as five-sixteenths of a log, which may be roughly computed at half a tumbler—of course mixed with water.⁴⁵ The Paschal Cup is described (according to the rubrical measure, which of course would not always be observed) as two fingers long by two fingers broad, and its height as a finger, half a finger, and one-third of a finger. All things being, as we presume, ready in the furnished upper room, it would only remain for Peter and John to see to the Paschal Lamb, and anything else required for the Supper, possibly also to what was to be offered as *Chagigah*, or festive sacrifice, and afterwards eaten at the Supper. If the latter were to be brought, the disciples would, of course, have to attend earlier in the Temple. The cost of the Lamb, which had to be provided, was very small. So low a sum as about threepence festively-lit of our money is mentioned for such a sacrifice.⁴⁶ But this must refer to a hypothetical case rather than to the ordinary cost, and we prefer the more reasonable computation, from one *Sela*⁴⁷ to three *Selaim*,⁴⁸ i.e. from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* of our money.

If we mistake not, these purchases had, however, already been made on the previous afternoon by Judas. It is not likely that they would have been left to the last; nor that He Who had so lately condemned the traffic in the Courts of the Temple would have sent

⁴²Pes. ii. 3

⁴³As it was symbolic of the clay on which the children of Israel worked in Egypt, the rubric has it that it must be thick (Pes. 116 *a*).

⁴⁴The contention that it was *unfermented* wine is not worth serious discussion, although in *modern* practice (for reasons needless to mention) its use is allowed.

⁴⁵The whole rubric is found in Jer. Pes. 37 *c*. The log = to the contents of six eggs. *Herzfeld* (*Handelsgesch.* p. 184) makes 1/32 of a log = a dessert spoon. 12 log = 1 hin.

⁴⁶Chag. 1:2.

⁴⁷Menach. xiii. 8.

⁴⁸Sheqal. ii. 4.

His two disciples thither to purchase the Paschal Lamb, which would have been necessary to secure an animal that had passed Levitical inspection, since on the Passover-day there would have been no time to subject it to such scrutiny. On the other hand, if Judas had made this purchase, we perceive not only on what pretext he may have gone to Jerusalem on the previous afternoon, but also how, on his way from the Sheep-market to the Temple, to have his lamb inspected, he may have learned that the Chief-Priests and Sanhedrists were just then in session in the Palace of the High-Priest close by. ⁴⁹

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On the supposition just made, the task of Peter and John would, indeed, have been simple. They left the house of Mark with wondering but saddened hearts. Once more had they had evidence, how the Master's Divine glance searched the further in all its details. They had met the servant with the pitcher of water; they had delivered their message to the master of the house; and they had seen the large Upper Room furnished and ready. But this prescience of Christ afforded only further evidence, that what He had told of His impending Crucifixion would also come true. And now it would be time for the ordinary Evening-Service and Sacrifice. Ordinarily this began about 2.30 p.m.—the daily Evening-Sacrifice being actually offered up about an hour later; but on this occasion, on account of the Feast, the Service was an hour earlier. ⁵⁰ As at about half-past one of our time the two Apostles ascended the Temple-Mount, following a dense, motley crowd of joyous, chatting pilgrims, they must have felt terribly lonely among them. In all that crowd how few to sympathise with them; how many enemies! The Temple-Courts were thronged to the utmost by worshippers from all countries and from all parts of the land. The Priests Court was filled with white-robed Priests and Levites—for on that day all the twenty-four Courses were on duty, and all their services would be called for, although only the Course for that week would that afternoon engage in the ordinary service, which preceded that of the Feast. Almost mechanically would they witness the various parts of the well-remembered ceremonial. There

⁴⁹But it may have been otherwise; perhaps the lamb was even procured by the owner of the Upper Chamber since it might be offered for another. At the same time the account in the text seems to accord best with the Gospel-narrative.

⁵⁰If it had been the evening from Friday to Saturday, instead of from Thursday to Friday, it would have been two hours earlier. See the rubric in [Psalm 5:1](#).

must have been a peculiar meaning to them, a mournful significance, in the language of [Psalm 81.](#), as the Levites chanted it that afternoon in three sections, broken three times by the threefold blast from the silver trumpets of the Priests.

Before the incense was burnt for the Evening Sacrifice, or yet the lamps in the Golden Candlestick were trimmed for the night, the Paschal-Lambs were slain. The worshippers were admitted in three divisions within the Court of the Priests. When the first company had entered, the massive Nicanor Gates—which led from the Court of the Women to that of Israel—and the other side-gates into the Court of the Priests, were closed. A threefold blast from the Priests trumpets intimated that the Lambs were being slain. This each Israelite did for himself. We can scarcely be mistaken in supposing that Peter and John would be in the first of the three companies into which the offerers were divided; for they must have been anxious to be gone, and to meet the Master and their brethren in that Upper Room. Peter and John ⁵¹ had slain the Lamb. In two rows the officiating Priest stood, up to the great Altar of Burnt-offering. As one caught up the blood from the dying Lamb in a golden bowl, he handed it to his colleague, receiving in return an empty bowl; and so the blood was passed on to the Great Altar, where it was jerked in one jet at the base of the Altar. ⁵² While this was going on, the *Hallel* ⁵³ was being chanted by the Levites. We remember that only the first line of every Psalm was repeated by the worshippers; while to every other line they responded by a *Halleluyah*, till [Psalm 118.](#) was reached, when, besides the first, these three lines were also repeated:—

Save now, I beseech Thee, Lord; O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

As Peter and John repeated them on that afternoon, the words must have sounded most deeply significant. But their minds must have also reverted to that triumphal Entry into the City a few days

⁵¹ Although, so far as we know, not of practical importance here, we should perhaps bear in mind that John was a priest.

⁵² If we may suppose that there was a double row of priests to hand up the blood, and several to sprinkle it, or else that the blood from one row of sacrifices was handed to the priests in the opposite row, there could be no difficulty in the offering of lambs sufficient for all the companies which consisted of from ten to twenty persons.

⁵³ [Psalm 113.](#) to cxviii.

before, when Israel had greeted with these words the Advent of their King. And now—was it not, as if it had only been an anticipation of the Hymn, when the blood of the Paschal Lamb was being shed?

[149] Little more remained to be done. The sacrifice was laid on staves which rested on the shoulders of Peter and John, flayed, cleansed, and the parts which were to be burnt on the Altar removed and prepared for burning. The second company of offerers could not have proceeded far in the service, when the Apostles, bearing their Lamb, were wending their way back to the home of Mark, there to make final preparations for the Supper. The Lamb would be roasted on a pomegranate spit that passed right through it from mouth to vent, special care being taken that, in roasting, the Lamb did not touch the oven. Everything else, also, would be made ready: the *Chagigah* for supper (if such was used); the unleavened cakes, the bitter herbs, the dish with vinegar, and that with *Charoseth* would be placed on a table which could be carried in and moved at will; finally, the festive lamps would be prepared.

It was probably as the sun was beginning to decline in the horizon that Jesus and the other ten disciples descended once more over the Mount of Olives into the Holy City. Before them lay Jerusalem in her festive attire. All around, pilgrims were hastening towards it. White tents dotted the sward, gay with the bright flowers of early spring, or peered out from the gardens or the darker foliage of the olive plantations. From the gorgeous Temple buildings, dazzling in their snow-white marble and gold, on which the slanting rays of the sun were reflected, rose the smoke of the Altar of Burnt-offering. These courts were now crowded with eager worshippers, offering for the last time, in the real sense, their Paschal Lambs. The streets must have been thronged with strangers, and the flat roofs covered with eager gazers, who either feasted their eyes with a first sight of the sacred City for which they had so often longed, or else once more rejoiced in view of the well-known localities. It was the last day-view which the Lord could take, free and unhindered, of the Holy City till His Resurrection. Once more, in the approaching night of His Betrayal, would He look upon it in the pale light of the full moon. He was going forward to accomplish His Death in Jerusalem; to fulfil type and prophecy, and to offer Himself up as the true Passover Lamb—“the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the

sin of the world.” They who followed Him were busy with many thoughts. They knew that terrible events awaited them, and they had only shortly before been told that these glorious Temple-buildings, to which, with a national pride not unnatural, they had directed the attention of their Master, were to become desolate, not one stone [150] being left upon the other. Among them, revolving his dark plans, and goaded on by the great Enemy, moved the betrayer. And now they were within the City. Its Temple, its royal bridge, its splendid palaces, its busy marts, its streets filled with festive pilgrims, were well known to them, as they made their way to the house where the guest-chamber had been prepared. Meanwhile, the crowd came down from the Temple-Mount, each bearing on his shoulders the sacrificial Lamb, to make ready for the Paschal Supper.⁵⁴

⁵⁴The Temple and its Services pp. 194-195.

Chapter 10—The Paschal Supper

The Institution of the Lord's Supper.

(St. Matthew 26:17-19; St. Mark 14:12-16; St. Luke 22:7-13; St. John 13:1; St. Matthew 26:20; St. Mark 14:17; St. Luke 22:14-16; St. Luke 22:24-30; St. Luke 22:17, 18; St. John 13:2-20; St. Matthew 26:21-24; St. Mark 14:18-21; St. Luke 22:21-23; St. John 13:21-26; St. Matthew 26:25; St. John 13:26-38; St. Matthew 26:26-29; St. Mark 14:22-25; St. Luke 22:19, 20.)

The period designated as between the two evenings ¹ when the Paschal Lamb was to be slain, was past. There can be no question that, in the time of Christ, it was understood to refer to the interval between the commencement of the sun's decline and what was reckoned as the hour of his final disappearance (about 6 P.M.). The first three stars had become visible, and the threefold blast of the Silver Trumpets from the Temple-Mount rang it out to Jerusalem and far away, that the Pascha had once more commenced. In the festively-lit Upper Chamber of St. Mark's house the Master and the Twelve were now gathered. Was this place of Christ's last, also that of the Church's first, entertainment; that, where the Holy Supper was instituted with the Apostles, also that, where it was afterwards first partaken of by the Church; the Chamber where He last tarried with them before His Death, that in which He first appeared to them after His Resurrection; that, also, in which the Holy Ghost was poured out, even as (if the Last Supper was in the house of Mark) it undoubtedly was that in which the Church was at first wont to gather for common prayer? ² We know not, and can only venture to suggest, deeply soul-stirring as such thoughts and associations are.

So far as appears, or we have reason to infer, this Passover was the only sacrifice ever offered by Jesus Himself. We remember

¹Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5; Numbers 9:3, 5.

²Acts 12:12, 25.

indeed, the first sacrifice of the Virgin Mother at her Purification. But that was *hers*. If Christ was in Jerusalem at any Passover before His Public Ministry began, He would, of course, have been a guest at some table, not the Head of a Company (which must consist of at least ten persons). Hence, He would not have been the offerer of the Paschal lamb. And of the three Passovers since His Public Ministry had begun, at the first His Twelve Apostles had not been gathered,³ so that He could not have appeared as the Head of a Company; [152] while at the second He was not in Jerusalem but in the utmost parts of Galilee, in the borderland of Tyre and Sidon, where, of course, no sacrifice could be brought.⁴ Thus, the first, the last, the only sacrifice which Jesus offered was that in which, symbolically, He offered Himself. Again, the only sacrifice which He brought is that connected with the Institution of His Holy Supper; even as the only purification to which He submitted was when, in His Baptism, He sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin. But what additional meaning does this give to the words which He spake to the Twelve as He sat down with them to the Supper: With desire have I desired to eat this Pascha with you before I suffer.

And, in truth, as we think of it, we can understand not only why the Lord could not have offered any other Sacrifice, but that it was most fitting He should have offered this one Pascha, partaken of its commemorative Supper, and connected His own New Institution with that to which this Supper pointed. This joining of the Old with the New, the one symbolic Sacrifice which He offered with the One Real Sacrifice, the feast on the sacrifice with that other Feast upon the One Sacrifice, seems to cast light on the words with which He followed the expression of His longing to eat that one Pascha with them: I say unto you, I will not eat any more⁵ thereof,⁶ until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. And has it not been so, that this His last Pascha is connected with that other Feast in which He is ever present with His Church, not only as its Food but as its Host, as both the Pascha and He Who dispenses it? With a Sacrament did

³St. [John 2:13](#).

⁴St. [Matthew 15:21](#), &c.

⁵We prefer retaining this in the text.

⁶Such would still be the meaning, even if the accusative it were regarded as the better reading.

Jesus begin His Ministry: it was that of separation and consecration in Baptism. With a second Sacrament did He close His Ministry: it was that of gathering together and fellowship in the Lord's Supper. Both were into His Death: yet not as something that had power over Him, but as a Death that has been followed by the Resurrection. For, if in Baptism we are buried with Him, we also rise with Him; and if in the Holy Supper we remember His Death, it is as that of Him Who is risen again—and if we show forth that Death, it is until He come again. And so this Supper, also, points forward to the Great Supper at the final consummation of His Kingdom.

[153] Only one Sacrifice did the Lord offer. We are not thinking now of the significant Jewish legend, which connected almost every great event and deliverance in Israel with the Night of the Passover. But the Pascha was, indeed, a Sacrifice, yet one distinct from all others. It was not of the Law, for it was instituted before the Law had been given or the Covenant ratified by blood; nay, in a sense it was the cause and the foundation of all the Levitical Sacrifices and of the Covenant itself. And it could not be classed with either one or the other of the various kinds of sacrifices, but rather combined them all, and yet differed from them all. Just as the Priesthood of Christ was real, yet not after the order of Aaron, so was the Sacrifice of Christ real, yet not after the order of Levitical sacrifices but after that of the Passover. And as in the Paschal Supper all Israel were gathered around the Paschal Lamb in commemoration of the past, in celebration of the present, in anticipation of the future, and in fellowship in the Lamb, so has the Church been ever since gathered together around its better fulfilment in the Kingdom of God.

It is difficult to decide how much, not only of the present ceremonial, but even of the Rubric for the Paschal Supper, as contained in the oldest Jewish Documents, may have been obligatory at the time of Christ. Ceremonialism rapidly develops, too often in proportion to the absence of spiritual life. Probably in the earlier days, even as the ceremonies were simpler, so more latitude may have been left in their observance, provided that the main points in the ritual were kept in view. We may take it, that, as prescribed, all would appear at the Paschal Supper in festive array. We also know, that, as the Jewish Law directed, they reclined on pillows around a low table, each resting on his left hand, so as to leave the right free.

But ancient Jewish usage casts a strange light on the painful scene with which the Supper opened. Sadly humiliating as it reads, and almost incredible as it seems, the Supper began with a contention among them, which of them should be accounted to be greatest. We can have no doubt that its occasion was the order in which they should occupy places at the table. We know that this was subject of contention among the Pharisees, and that they claimed to be seated according to their rank. ⁷

A similar feeling now appeared, alas! in the circle of the disciples and at the Last Supper of the Lord. Even if we had not further indications of it, we should instinctively associate such a strife with the presence of Judas. St. John seems to refer to it, at least indirectly, when he opens his narrative with this notice: And during supper, the devil having already cast *it* into his heart, that Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, shall betray Him. ⁸ For, although the words form a general introduction to what follows, and refer to the entrance of Satan into the heart of Judas on the previous afternoon, when he sold his Master to the Sanhedrists, they are not without special significance as place in connection with the Supper. But we are not left to general conjecture in regard to the influence of Judas in this strife. There is, we believe, ample evidence that he not only claimed, but actually obtained, the chief seat at the table next to the Lord. This, as previously explained, was not, as is generally believed, at the right, but at the left of Christ, not below, but above Him, on the couches or pillows on which they reclined.

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From the Gospel-narratives we infer, that St. John must have reclined next to Jesus, on His Right Hand, since otherwise he could not have leaned back on His Bosom. This, as we shall presently show, would be at one end—the head of the table, or, to be more precise, at one end of the couches. For, dismissing all conventional

⁷ *Wiinsche* (on St. [John 13:2](#)) refers to Pes. 108 a, and states in a somewhat general way that no order of rank was preserved at the Paschal Table. But the passage he quotes does *not* imply this—only, that without distinction of rank all sat down at the same table, but not that the well-established order of sitting was infringed. The Jerusalem Talmud says nothing on the subject. The Gospel-narrative, of course, expressly states that there *was* a contention about rank among the disciples. In general, there are a number of inaccuracies in the part of *Wiinsche's* Notes referring to the Last Supper.

⁸ St. [John 13:2](#)

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ideas, we must think of it as a low Eastern table. In the Talmud,⁹ the table of the disciples of the sages is described as two parts covered with a cloth, the other third being left bare for the dishes to stand on. There is evidence that this part of the table was outside the circle of those who were ranged around it. Occasionally a ring was fixed in it, by which the table was suspended above the ground, so as to preserve it from any possible Levitical defilement. During the Paschal Supper, it was the custom to remove the table at one part of the service; or, if this be deemed a later arrangement, the dishes at least would be taken off and put on again. This would render it necessary that the end of the table should protrude beyond the line of guests who reclined around it. For, as already repeatedly stated, it was the custom to recline at table, lying on the left side and leaning on the left hand, the feet stretching back towards the ground, and each guest occupying a separate divan or pillow. It would, therefore, have been impossible to place or remove anything from the table from behind the guests. Hence, as a matter of necessity, the free end of the table, which was not covered with a cloth, would protrude beyond the line of those who reclined around it. We can now form a picture of the arrangement. Around a low Eastern table, oval or rather elongated, two parts covered with a cloth, and standing or else suspended, the single divans or pillows are ranged in the form of an elongated horseshoe, leaving free one end of the table, somewhat as in the accompanying woodcut. Here A represents the table, B respectively the ends of the two rows of single divans on which each guest reclines on his left side, with his head (C) nearest the table, and his feet (D) stretching back towards the ground.

So far for the arrangement of the table. Jewish documents are equally explicit as to that of the guests. It seems to have been quite an established rule¹⁰ that, in a company of more than two, say of three, the chief personage or Head—in this instance, of course, Christ—reclined on the middle divan. We know from the Gospel-narrative that John occupied the place on His right, at that end of the divans—as we may call it—at the head of the table. But the chief place next to the Master would be that to His left, or above

⁹B Bathr 57 *b*.

¹⁰Ber. 46 *b*; Tos. Ber. v.; Jer. Taan, 68 *a*, towards the bottom.

Him. In the strife of the disciples, which should be accounted the greatest, this had been claimed, and we believe it to have been actually occupied, by Judas. This explains how, Christ whispered to John by what sign to recognise the traitor, ¹¹ none of the other disciples heard it. It also explains, how Christ would first hand to Judas the sop, which formed part of the Paschal ritual, beginning with him as the chief guest at the table, without thereby exciting special notice. Lastly, it accounts for the circumstance that, when Judas, desirous of ascertaining whether his treachery was known, dared to ask whether it was he, and received the affirmative answer, ¹² no one at table knew what had passed. But this could not have been the case, unless Judas had occupied the place next to Christ; in this case, necessarily that at His left, or the post of chief honour. As regards Peter, we can quite understand how, when the Lord with such loving words rebuked their self-seeking and taught them of the greatness of Christian humility, he should, in his petuosity of shame, have rushed to take the lowest place at the other end of the table. ¹³ Finally, we can now understand how Peter could beckon to John, who sat at the opposite end of the table, over against him, and ask him across the table, who the traitor was. ¹⁴ The rest of the disciples would occupy such places as were most convenient, or suited their fellowship with one another.

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The words which the Master spoke as He appeased their unseemly strife must, indeed, have touched them to the quick. First, He showed them, not so much in the language of even gentlest reproof as in that of teaching, the difference between worldly honour and distinction in the Church of Christ. In the world kingship lay in supremacy and lordship, and the title of Benefactor accompanied the sway of power. But in the Church the greater would not exercise lordship, but become as the less and the younger [the latter referring to the circumstance, that age next to learning was regarded among

¹¹St. [John 13:26](#).

¹²St. [Matthew 26:25](#).

¹³It seems almost incomprehensible, that Commentators, who have not thought this narrative misplaced by St. Luke, should have attributed the strife to Peter and John, the former being jealous of the place of honour which the beloved Disciple had obtained. (So *Nebe*, *Leidensgesch.*; the former even *Calvin*.)

¹⁴St. [John 13:24](#).

the Jews as a claim to distinction and the chief seats]; while, instead of him that had authority being called Benefactor, the relationship would be reversed, and he that served would be chief. Self-forgetful humility instead of worldly glory, service instead of rule: such was to be the title to greatness and to authority in the Church. ¹⁵

[157] Having thus shown them the character and title to that greatness in the Kingdom, which was in prospect for them, He pointed them in this respect also to Himself as their example. The reference here is, of course, not to the act of symbolic foot-washing, which St. Luke does not relate—although, as immediately following on the words of Christ, it would illustrate them—but to the tenor of His whole Life and the object of His Mission, as of One Who served, not was served. Lastly, He woke them to the higher consciousness of their own calling. Assuredly, they would not lose their reward; but not here, nor yet now. They had shared, and would share His trials ¹⁶—His being set at nought, despised, persecuted; but they would also share His glory. As the Father had covenanted to Him, so He covenanted and bequeathed to them a Kingdom, in order or so that in it they might have festive fellowship of rest and of joy with Him. What to *them* must have been temptations and in that respect also to Christ, they had endured: instead of Messianic glory, such as they may at first have thought of, they had witnessed only contradiction, denial, and shame—and they had continued with Him. But the Kingdom was also coming. When His glory was manifested, their acknowledgement would also come. Here Israel had rejected the King and His Messengers, but then would that same Israel be judged by their word. A Royal dignity this, indeed, but one of service; a full Royal acknowledgement, but one of work. In that sense were Israel's Messianic hopes to be understood by them. Whether or not something beyond this may also be implied, and, in that day when He again gathers the outcasts of Israel, some special Rule and Judgment may be given to His faithful Apostles, we venture not to determine. Sufficient for us the words of Christ in their primary meaning. ¹⁷

¹⁵St. Luke 22:25, 28.

¹⁶Not temptation'—i.e. not assaults from within, but assaults from without.

¹⁷The sitting down with Him at the feast is evidently a promise of joy, reward, and fellowship. The sitting on thrones and judging Israel must be taken as in contrast to

So speaking, the Lord commenced that Supper, which in itself was symbol and pledge of what He had just said and promised. The Paschal Supper began, as always,¹⁸ by the Head of the Company taking the *first cup*, and speaking over it the thanksgiving. The form presently in use consists really of two benedictions—the first over the wine, the second for the return of this Feast day with all that it implies, and for being preserved once more to witness it.¹⁹ Turning to the Gospels, the words which follow the record of the benediction on the part of Christ²⁰ seem to imply, that Jesus had, at any rate, so far made use of the ordinary thanksgiving as to speak both these benedictions. We know, indeed, that they were in use before His time, since it was in dispute between the Schools of Hillel and Shammai, whether that over the wine or that over the day should take precedence. That over the wine was quite simple: Blessed art Thou, Jehovah our God, Who hast created the fruit of the Vine! The formula was so often used in blessing the cup, and is so simple, that we need not doubt that these were the very words spoken by our Lord. It is otherwise as regards the benediction over the day which is not only more composite, but contains words expressive of Israel's national pride and self-righteousness, such as we cannot think would have been uttered by our Lord. With this exception, however, they were no doubt identical in contents with the present formula. This we infer from what the Lord added, as He passed the cup round the circle of the disciples.²¹ No more, so He told them, would He speak the benediction over the fruit of the vine—not again utter the thanks over the day that they had been preserved alive, sustained, and brought to this season. Another Wine, and at another Feast, now awaited Him—that in the future, when the Kingdom would come. It was to be the last of the old Paschas; the first, or rather the symbol

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the temptation of the contradiction of Christ and of their Apostolic message—as their vindication against Israel's present gainsaying.

¹⁸Pes. x. 2.

¹⁹The whole formula is given in *The Temple and its Services* pp. 204, 205.

²⁰St. [Luke 22:17-18](#)

²¹I have often expressed my conviction that in the ancient Services there was considerable elasticity and liberty left to the individual. At present a cup is filled for each individual, but Christ seems to have passed the one cup round among the Disciples. Whether such was sometimes done, or the alteration was designedly, and as we readily see, significantly, made by Christ, cannot now be determined.

and promise, of the new. And so, for the first and last time, did He speak the twofold benediction at the beginning of the Supper.

[159] The cup, in which, according to express Rabbinic testimony,²² the wine had been mixed with water before it was blessed had passed round. The next part of the ceremonial was for the Head of the Company to rise and wash hands. It is this part of the ritual of which St. John²³ records the adaptation and transformation on the part of Christ. The washing of the disciples feet is evidently connected with the ritual of handwashing. Now this was done *twice* during the Paschal Supper:²⁴ the first time by the Head of the Company alone, immediately after the first cup; the second time by all present, at a much later part of the service, immediately before the actual meal (on the Lamb, &c.). If the footwashing had taken place on the latter occasion, it is natural to suppose that, when the Lord rose, all the disciples would have followed His example, and so the washing of their feet would have been impossible. Again, the footwashing, which was intended both as a lesson and as an example of humility and service,²⁵ was evidently connected with the dispute which of them should be accounted to be greatest. If so, the symbolical act of our Lord must have followed close on the strife of the disciples, and on our Lord's teaching what in the Church constituted rule and greatness. Hence the act must have been connected with the first handwashing—that by the Head of the Company—immediately after the first cup, and not with that at a later period, when much else had intervened.

All else fits in with this. For clearness sake, the account given by St. John²⁶ may here be recapitulated. The opening words concerning the love of Christ to His own unto the end form the general introduction.²⁷ Then follows the account of what happened during Supper²⁸—the Supper itself being left undescribed—beginning, by

²²Babha B. 97 *b*, lines 11 and 12 from top.

²³St. John 13.

²⁴Pes. x. 4.

²⁵St. John 13:12-16.

²⁶St. John 13.

²⁷*Godet*, who regards ver. 1 as a general, and ver. 2 as a special, introduction to the foot-washing, calls attention to the circumstance that such introductions not unfrequently occur in the Fourth Gospel.

²⁸ver. 2.

way of explanation of what is to be told about Judas, with this: The Devil having already cast into his (Judas) heart, that Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, shall betray Him. General as this notice is, it contains much that requires special attention. Thankfully we feel, that the heart of man was not capable of originating the Betrayal of Christ; humanity had fallen, but not so low. It was the Devil who had cast it into Judas heart—with force and overwhelming power. ²⁹ Next, we mark the full description of the name and parentage of the traitor. It reads like the wording of a formal indictment. And, although it seems only an introductory explanation, it also points to the contrast with the love of Christ which persevered to the end, ³⁰ even when hell itself opened its mouth to swallow Him up; the contrast, also, between what Jesus and what Judas were about to do, and between the wild storm of evil that raged in the heart of the traitor and the calm majesty of love and peace which reigned in that of the Saviour.

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If what Satan had cast into the heart of Judas explains his conduct so does the knowledge which Jesus possessed account for that He was about to do. ³¹ ³² Many as are the thoughts suggested by the words, 'Knowing that the Father had given all things into His Hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God'—yet, from evident connection, they must in the first instance be applied to the Footwashing, of which they are, so to speak, the logical antecedent. It was His greatest act of humiliation and service, and yet He never lost in it for one moment aught of the majesty or consciousness of His Divine dignity; for He did it with the full knowledge and assertion that all things were in His Hands, and that He came forth from and was going unto God—and He could do it, because He knew this. Here, not side by side, but in combination, are the Humiliation and Exaltation of the God-Man. And so, during Supper which had begun with the first cup, He riseth from Supper. The disciples would scarcely marvel, except that He should conform to that practice of

²⁹The contrast is the more marked as the same verb (*ballein*) is used both of Satan casting it into the heart of Judas, and of Christ throwing into the basin the water for the footwashing.

³⁰St. John 13:1.

³¹St. John 11.

³²*Bengel*: magna vis.

handwashing, which, as He had often explained, was, as a ceremonial observance, unavailing for those who were not inwardly clean, and needless and unmeaning in them whose heart and life had been purified. But they must have wondered as they saw Him put off His upper garment, gird Himself with a towel, and pour water into a basin, like a slave who was about to perform the meanest service.

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From the position which, as we have shown, Peter occupied at the end of the table, it was natural that the Lord should begin with him the act of footwashing.³³ Besides, had He first turned to others, Peter must either have remonstrated before, or else his later expostulation would have been tardy, and an act either of self-righteousness or of needless voluntary humility. As it was, the surprise with which he and the others had witnessed the preparation of the Lord burst into characteristic language when Jesus approached him to wash his feet. Lord—Thou—of me wapest the feet! It was the utterance of deepest reverence for the Master, and yet of utter misunderstanding of the meaning of His action, perhaps even of His Work. Jesus was now doing what before He had spoken. The act of externalism and self-righteousness represented by the washing of hands, and by which the Head of the Company was to be distinguished from all others and consecrated, He changed into a footwashing, in which the Lord and Master was to be distinguished, indeed, from the others—but by the humblest service of love, and in which He showed by His example what characterised greatness in the Kingdom, and that service was evidence of rule. And, as mostly in every symbol, there was the real also in this act of the Lord. For, by sympathetically sharing in this act of love and service on the part of the Lord, they who had been bathed—who had previously become clean in heart and spirit—now received also that cleansing of the feet of active and daily walk, which cometh from true heart-humility, in opposition to pride, and consisteth in the service which love is willing to render even to the uttermost.

But Peter had understood none of these things. He only felt the incongruousness of their relative positions. And so the Lord, partly also wishing thereby to lead his impetuosity to the absolute

³³St. *Chrysostom* and others unduly urge the words (*ver. 6*), He cometh to Peter. He came to him, not after the others, but from the place where the basin and water for the purification had stood.

submission of faith, and partly to indicate the deeper truth he was to learn in the future, only told him, that though he knew it not now, he would understand hereafter what the Lord was doing. Yes, hereafter—when, after that night of terrible fall, he would learn by the Lake of Galilee what it really meant to feed the lambs and to tend the sheep of Christ; yes, hereafter—when no longer, as when he had been young, he would gird himself and walk whither he would. But, even so, Peter could not content himself with the prediction that in the future he would understand and enter into what Christ was doing in washing their feet. Never, he declared, could he allow it. The same feelings, which had prompted him to attempt withdrawing the Lord from the path of humiliation and suffering,³⁴ now asserted themselves again. It was personal affection, indeed, but it was also unwillingness to submit to the humiliation of the Cross. And so the Lord told him, that if He washed him not, he had no part with Him. Not that the bare act of washing gave him part in Christ, but that the refusal to submit to it would have deprived him of it; and that, to share in this washing, was, as it were, the way to have part in Christ's service of love, to enter into it, and to share it.

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Still, Peter did not understand. But as, on that morning by the Lake of Galilee, it appeared that, when he had lost all else, he had retained love, so did love to the Christ now give him the victory—and, once more with characteristic impetuosity, he would have tendered not only his feet to be washed, but his hands and head. Yet here, also, was there misunderstanding. There was deep symbolical meaning, not only in *that* Christ did it, but also in *what* He did. Submission to His doing it meant symbolically share and part with Him—part in His Work. *What* He did, meant His work and service of love; the constant cleansing of one's walk and life in the love of Christ, and in the service of that love. It was not a meaningless ceremony of humiliation on the part of Christ, not yet one where submission to the utmost was required; but the action was symbolic, and meant that the disciple, who was already bathed and made clean in heart and spirit, required only this—to wash his feet in spiritual consecration to the service of love which Christ had here shown forth in symbolic act. And so His Words referred not, as is so often supposed, to

³⁴St. Matthew 15:22.

the forgiveness of our daily sins—the introduction of which would have been wholly abrupt and unconnected with the context—but, in contrast to all self-seeking, to the daily consecration of our life to the service of love after the example of Christ.

[163] And still do all these words come to us in manifold and ever-varied application. In the misunderstanding of our love to Him, we too often imagine that Christ cannot will or do what seems to us incongruous on His part, or rather, incongruous with what we think about Him. We know it not now, but we shall understand it hereafter. And still we persist in our resistance, till it comes to us that so we would even lose our part in and with Him. Yet not much, not very much, does He ask, Who giveth so much. He that has washed us wholly would only have us cleanse our feet for the service of love, as He gave us the example.

They were clean, these disciples, but not all. For He knew that there was among them he that was betraying Him. ³⁵ He knew it, but not with the knowledge of an inevitable fate impending far less of an absolute decree, but with that knowledge which would again and again speak out the warning, if by any means he might be saved. What would have come, if Judas had repented, is as idle a question as this: What would have come if Israel, as a nation, had repented and accepted Christ? For, from our human standpoint, we can only view the human aspect of things—that earthwards; and here every action is not isolated, but ever the outcome of a previous development and history, so that a man always freely acts, yet always in consequence of an inward necessity.

The solemn service of Christ now went on in the silence of reverent awe. ³⁶ None dared ask Him nor resist. It was ended, and He had resumed His upper garment, and again taken His place at the Table. It was His now to follow the symbolic deed by illustrative words, and to explain the practical application of what had just been done. Let it not be misunderstood. They were wont to call Him by the two highest names of Teacher and Lord, and these designations were rightly His. For the first time He fully accepted and owned the highest homage. How much more, then, must His Service of love,

³⁵So the expression in St. [John 13:11](#), more accurately rendered.

³⁶St. [John 13:12-17](#).

Who was their Teacher and Lord, serve as example ³⁷ of what was due ³⁸

by each to his fellow-disciple and fellow-servant! He, Who really [164] was Lord and Master, had rendered this lowest service to them as an example that, as He had done, so should they do. No principle better known, almost proverbial in Israel, than that a servant was not to claim greater honour than his master, nor yet he that was sent than he who had sent him. They knew this, and now also the meaning of the symbolic act of footwashing; and if they acted it out, then theirs would be the promised Beatitude. ³⁹

This reference to what were familiar expressions among the Jews, especially noteworthy in St. John's Gospel, leads us to supplement a few illustrative notes from the same source. The Greek word for the towel with which our Lord girded Himself, occurs also in Rabbinic writings, to denote the towel used in washing and at baths (*Luntith* and *Aluntith*). Such girding was the common mark of a slave, by whom the service of footwashing was ordinarily performed. And, in a very interesting passage, the Midrash ⁴⁰ contrasts what, in this respect, is the way of man with what God had done for Israel. For, He had been described by the prophet as performing for them the service of washing, ⁴¹ and others usually rendered by slaves. ⁴² Again, the combination of these two designations, Rabbi and Lord or Rabbi, Father, and Lord was among those most common on the part of disciples. ⁴³ The idea, that if a man knows (for example, the Law) and does not do it, it were better for him not to have been created, ⁴⁴ is not unfrequently expressed. But the most interesting reference is in regard to the relation between the sender and the sent, and a servant and his master. In regard to the former, it is proverbially said,

³⁷upodeigma. The distinctive meaning of the word is best gathered from the other passages in the N.T. in which it occurs, viz. [Hebrews 4:11](#); [8:5](#); [9:23](#); St. [James 5:10](#); [2 Peter 2:6](#). For the literal outward imitation of this deed of Christ in the ceremony of footwashing, still common in the Roman Catholic Church, see *Bingham*, Antiq. xii. 4, 10.

³⁸ofeilete.

³⁹The word is that employed in the Beatitudes makarioi.

⁴⁰Shem. R. 20.

⁴¹[Ezekiel 16:9](#).

⁴²Comp. [Ezekiel 16:10](#); [Exodus 19:4](#); [13:21](#).

⁴³ynwd)w yb) ybr or yrwmw ybr.

⁴⁴Comp. St. [John 13:17](#).

that while he that is sent stands on the same footing as he who sent him,⁴⁵ yet he must expect less honour.⁴⁶ And as regards Christ's statement that the servant is not greater than his Master there is a passage in which we read this, *in connection with the sufferings of the Messiah*: It is enough for the servant that he be like his Master.⁴⁷

[165] But to return. The footwashing on the part of Christ, in which Judas had shared, together with the explanatory words that followed, almost required, in truthfulness, this limitation: I speak not of you all. For it would be a night of terrible moral sifting to them all. A solemn warning was needed by all the disciples. But, besides, the treachery of one of their own number might have led them to doubt whether Christ had really Divine knowledge. On the other hand, this clear prediction of it would not only confirm their faith in Him, but show that there was some deeper meaning in the presence of a Judas among them.⁴⁸ We come here upon these words of deepest mysteriousness: I know those I chose; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth My Bread lifteth up his heel against Me!⁴⁹ It were almost impossible to believe, even if not forbidden by the context, that this knowledge of which Christ spoke, referred to an eternal foreknowledge; still more, that it meant Judas had been chosen with such foreknowledge in order that this terrible Scripture might be fulfilled in him. Such foreknowledge and foreordination would be to sin, and it would involve thoughts such as only the harshness of our human logic in its fatal system-making could induce anyone to entertain. Rather must we understand it as meaning that Jesus had, from the first, known the inmost thoughts of those He had chosen to be His Apostles; but that by this treachery of one of their number, the terrible prediction of the worst enmity, that of ingratitude, true in all ages of the Church, would receive its complete fulfilment.⁵⁰ The word *that*'—that the Scripture may be fulfilled

⁴⁵Kidd, 42 a.

⁴⁶Ber. R. 78.

⁴⁷Yalkut on [Isaiah 9](#). vol. ii. p. 56 d, lines 12, 13 from top.

⁴⁸St. [John 13:18, 19](#).

⁴⁹[Psalm 41:9](#).

⁵⁰At the same time there is also a terrible literality about this prophetic reference to one who ate his bread, when we remember that Judas, like the rest, lived of what

does not mean in order that or for the purpose of; it never means this in that connection;⁵¹

and it would be altogether irrational to suppose that an event happened *in order* that a special prediction might be fulfilled. Rather does it indicate the higher internal connection in the succession of events, when an event had taken place in the free determination of its agents, *by which*, all unknown to them and unthought of by others, that unexpectedly came to pass which had been Divinely foretold. And herein appears the Divine character of prophecy, which is always at the same time announcement and forewarning, that is, has besides its predictive a moral element: that, while man is left to act freely, each development tends to the goal Divinely foreseen and foreordained. Thus the word that marks not the connection between causation and effect, but between the Divine antecedent and the human subsequent.

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There is, indeed, behind this a much deeper question, to which brief reference has already formerly been made. Did Christ know from the beginning that Judas would betray Him, and yet, so knowing, did He choose him to be one of the Twelve? Here we can only answer by indicating this as a canon in studying the Life on earth of the God-Man, that it was part of His Self-examination—of that emptying Himself, and taking upon Him the form of a Servant⁵²—voluntarily to forego His Divine knowledge in the choice of His Human actions. So only could He, as perfect Man, have perfectly obeyed the Divine Law. For, if the Divine had determined Him in the choice of His Actions, there could have been no merit attaching to His Obedience, nor could He be said to have, as perfect Man, taken our place, and to have obeyed the Law in our stead and as our Representative, nor yet be our Ensample. But if His Divine

was supplied to Christ, and at that very moment sat at His Table. On [Psalm 41](#). see the Commentaries.

⁵¹ina frequenter ekbatikwV, i.e. de *eventu* usurpari dicitur, ut sit *eo eventu, ut; eo successu, ut, ita ut* [*Grimm*, ad verb.]—Angl. so that. And *Grimm* rightly points out that *ina* is *always* used in that sense, marking the internal connection in the succession of events—ekbatikwV *not* telikwV—where the phrase occurs that it might be fulfilled. This canon is most important, and of very wide application wherever the *ina* is connected with the Divine Agency, in which, from our human view-point, we have to distinguish between the decree and the counsel of God.

⁵²[Philippians 2:5-7](#).

knowledge did not guide Him in the choice of His actions, we can see, and have already indicated, reasons why the discipleship and service of Judas should have been accepted, if it had been only as that of a Judaeon, a man in many respects well fitted for such an office, and the representative of one of the various directions which tended towards the reception of the Messiah.

[167] We are not in circumstances to judge whether or not Christ spoke all these things continuously, after He had sat down, having washed the disciples feet. More probably it was at different parts of the meal. This would also account for the seeming abruptness of this concluding sentence: ⁵³ He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me. And yet the internal connection of thought seems clear. The apostasy and loss of one of the Apostles was known to Christ. Would it finally dissolve the bond that bound together the College of Apostles, and so invalidate their Divine Mission (the Apostolate) and its authority? The words of Christ conveyed an assurance which would be most comforting in the future, that any such break would not be lasting, only transitory, and that in this respect also the foundation of God standeth.

In the meantime the Paschal Supper was proceeding. We mark this important note of time in the words of St. Matthew: as they were eating ⁵⁴ or, as St. Mark expresses it, as they reclined and were eating. ⁵⁵ According to the Rubric, after the washing the dishes were immediately to be brought on the table. Then the Head of the Company would dip some of the bitter herbs into the salt-water or vinegar, speak a blessing, and partake of them, then hand them to each in the company. Next, he would break one of the unleavened cakes (according to the present ritual the middle of the three), of which half was put aside for after supper. This is called the *Aphiqomon*, or after-dish, and as we believe that the bread of the Holy Eucharist was the *Aphiqomon*, some particulars may here be of interest. The dish in which the broken cake lies (not the *Aphiqomon*), is elevated, and these words are spoken: This is the bread of misery which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. All that are hungry, come and eat; all that are needy, come, keep the Pascha. In the more

⁵³St. [John 13:20](#).

⁵⁴St. [Matthew 26:21](#).

⁵⁵St. [Mark 14:18](#).

modern ritual the words are added: This year here, next year in the land of Israel; this year bondsmen, next year free! On this the second cup is filled, and the youngest in the company is instructed to make formal inquiry as to the meaning of all the observances of that night,⁵⁶ when the Liturgy proceeds to give full answers as regards the festival, its occasion, and ritual. The Talmud adds that the table is to be previously removed, so as to excite the greater curiosity.⁵⁷ We do not suppose that even the earlier ritual represents the exact observances at the time of Christ, or that, even if it does so, they were exactly followed at that Paschal Table of the Lord. But so much stress is laid in Jewish writings on the duty of fully rehearsing at the Paschal Supper the circumstances of the first Passover and the deliverance connected with it, that we can scarcely doubt that what the Mishnah declares as so essential formed part of the services of that night. And as we think of our Lord's comment on the Passover and Israel's deliverance, the words spoken when the unleavened cake was broken come back to us, and with deeper meaning attaching to them.

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After this the cup is elevated, and then the service proceeds somewhat lengthily, the cup being raised a second time and certain prayers spoken. This part of the service concludes with the two first Psalms in the series called the Hallel⁵⁸ when the cup is raised a third time, a prayer spoken, and the cup drunk. This ends the first part of the service. And now the Paschal meal begins by all washing their hands—a part of the ritual which we scarcely think Christ observed. It was, we believe, during this lengthened exposition and service that the trouble in spirit of which St. John speaks⁵⁹ passed over the soul of the God-Man. Almost presumptuous as it seems to inquire into its immediate cause, we can scarcely doubt that it concerned not so much Himself as them. His Soul could not, indeed, but have been troubled, as, with full consciousness of all that it would be to Him—ininitely more than merely human suffering—He looked down into the abyss which was about to open at His Feet. But He saw more than even this. He saw Judas about to take the last fatal

⁵⁶Pes. x. 4.

⁵⁷Pes. 115 *b*.

⁵⁸Psalm 113. to cxviii.

⁵⁹St. John 13:21.

step, and His Soul yearned in pity over him. The very sop which He would so soon hand to him, although a sign of recognition to John, was a last appeal to all that was human in Judas. And, besides all this, Jesus also saw, how, all unknown to them, the terrible tempest of fierce temptation would that night sweep over them; how it would lay low and almost uproot one of them, and scatter all. It was the beginning of the hour of Christ's utmost loneliness, of which the climax was reached in Gethsemane. And in the trouble of His Spirit did He solemnly testify to them of the near Betrayal. We wonder not, that they all became exceeding sorrowful, and each asked, Lord, [169] is it I? This question on the part of the eleven disciples, who were conscious of innocence of any purpose of betrayal, and conscious also of deep love to the Master, affords one of the clearest glimpses into the inner history of that Night of Terror, in which, so to speak, Israel became Egypt. We can now better understand their heavy sleep in Gethsemane, their forsaking Him and fleeing, even Peter's denial. Everything must have seemed to these men to give way; all to be enveloped in outer darkness, when each man could ask whether he was to be the Betrayer.

The answer of Christ left the special person undetermined, while it again repeated the awful prediction—shall we not add, the most solemn warning—that it was one of those who took part in the Supper. It is at this point that St. John resumes the thread of the narrative.⁶⁰ As he describes it, the disciples were looking one on another, doubting of whom He spake. In this agonising suspense Peter beckoned from across the table to John, whose head, instead of leaning on his hand, rested, in the absolute surrender of love and intimacy born of sorrow, on the bosom of the Master.⁶¹ Peter would have John ask of whom Jesus spake.⁶² And to the whispered question of John, leaning back as he was on Jesus breast the Lord gave the sign, that it was he to whom He would give the sop when He had dipped it. Even this perhaps was not clear to John, since each one in turn received the sop.

⁶⁰St. John 13:22.

⁶¹The reading adopted in the R.V. of St. John 13:24 represents the better accredited text, though it involves some difficulties.

⁶²On the circumstance that John does not name himself in ver. 23, *Bengel* beautifully remarks: *Optabilis est, amari ab Jesu, quam nomine proprio celebrari.*'

At present, the Supper itself begins by eating, first, a piece of the unleavened cake, then of the bitter herbs dipped in *Charoseth*, and lastly two small pieces of the unleavened cake, between which a piece of bitter radish has been placed. But we have direct testimony, that, about the time of Christ, ⁶³ the sop ⁶⁴ which was handed round consisted of these things wrapped together: flesh of the Paschal Lamb, a piece of unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. ⁶⁵ This, we believe, was the sop which Jesus, having dipped it for him in the dish, handed first to Judas, as occupying the first and chief place at Table. But before He did so, probably while He dipped it in the dish, Judas, who could not but fear that his purpose might be known, reclining at Christ's left hand, whispered into the Master's ear, Is it I, Rabbi? It must have been whispered, for no one at the Table could have heard either the question of Judas or the affirmative answer of Christ. ⁶⁶ It was the last outgoing of the pitying love of Christ after the traitor. Coming after the terrible warning and woe on the Betrayer, ⁶⁷ it must be regarded as the final warning and also the final attempt at rescue on the part of the Saviour. It was with full knowledge of all, even of this that his treachery was known, though he may have attributed the information not to Divine insight but to some secret human communication, that Judas went on his way to destruction. We are too apt to attribute crimes to madness; but surely there is normal, as well as mental mania; and it must have been in a paroxysm of that, when all feeling was turned to stone, and mental self-delusion was combined with moral perversion, that Judas took ⁶⁸ from the Hand of Jesus the sop. It was to descend alive into the grave—and with a heavy sound the gravestone fell and closed over the mouth of the pit. That moment Satan entered again into his heart. But the deed was virtually done; and Jesus, longing for the quiet fellowship of His own with all that was to follow, bade him do quickly that he did.

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⁶³The statement is in regard to Hillel, while the Temple stood.

⁶⁴Mark the definite article—*not* a sop.'

⁶⁵Jer. Chall. 57 *b*.

⁶⁶St. John 13:28.

⁶⁷St. Matthew 26:24; St. Mark 14:21.

⁶⁸St. John 13:30 should be rendered, having taken not received.'

But even so there are questions connected with the human motives that actuated Judas, to which, however, we can only give the answer of some suggestions. Did Judas regard Christ's denunciation of woe on the Betrayer not as a prediction, but as intended to be deterrent—perhaps in language Orientally exaggerated—or if he regarded it as a prediction, did he not believe in it? Again, when after the plain intimation of Christ and His Words to do quickly what he was about to do, Judas still went to the betrayal, could he have had an idea—rather, sought to deceive himself, that Jesus felt that He could not escape His enemies, and that He rather wished it to be all over? Or had all his former feelings towards Jesus turned, although temporarily, into actual hatred which every Word and Warning of Christ only intensified? But above all and in all we have, first and foremost, to think of the peculiarly Judaic character of his first adherence to Christ; of the gradual and at last final and fatal disenchantment of his hopes; of his utter moral, consequent upon his spiritual, failure; of the change of all that had in it the possibility of good into the actuality of evil; and, on the other hand, of the direct agency of Satan in the heart of Judas, which his moral and spiritual ship-wreck rendered possible.

From the meal scarcely begun Judas rushed into the dark night. Even this has its symbolic significance. None there knew why this strange haste, unless from obedience to something that the Master had bidden him. ⁶⁹ Even John could scarcely have understood the sign which Christ had given of the traitor. Some of them thought, he had been directed by the words of Christ to purchase what was needful for the feast: others, that he was bidden go and give something to the poor. Gratuitous objection has been raised, as if this indicated that, according to the Fourth Gospel, this meal had not taken place on the Paschal night, since, after the commencement of the Feast (on the 15th Nisan), it would be unlawful to make purchases. But this certainly was not the case. Sufficient here to state, that the provision and preparation of the needful food, and indeed of all that

⁶⁹To a Jew it might seem that with the sop containing as it did a piece of the Paschal Lamb, the chief part in the Paschal Supper was over.

was needful for the Feast, was allowed on the 15th Nisan.⁷⁰ And this must have been specially necessary when, as in this instance, the first festive day, or 15th Nisan, was to be followed by a Sabbath, on which no such work was permitted. On the other hand, the mention of these two suggestions by the disciples seems almost necessarily to involve, that the writer of the Fourth Gospel had placed this meal in the Paschal Night. Had it been on the evening before, no one could have imagined that Judas had gone out during the night to buy provisions, when there was the whole next day for it, nor would it have been likely that a man should on any ordinary day go at such an hour to seek out the poor. But in the Paschal Night, when the great Temple-gates were opened at midnight to begin early preparations for the offering of the *Chagigah*, or festive sacrifice, which was not voluntary but of due, and the remainder of which was afterwards eaten at a festive meal, such preparations would be quite natural. And equally so, that the poor, who gathered around the Temple, might then seek to obtain the help of the charitable.

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The departure of the betrayer seemed to clear the atmosphere. He was gone to do his work; but let it not be thought that it was the necessity of that betrayal which was the cause of Christ's suffering of soul. He offered Himself willingly—and though it was brought about through the treachery of Judas, yet it was Jesus Himself Who freely brought Himself a Sacrifice, in fulfilment of the work which the Father had given Him. And all the more did He realise and express this on the departure of Judas. So long as he was there, pitying love still sought to keep him from the fatal step. But when the traitor was at last gone, the other side of His own work clearly emerged into Christ's view. And this voluntary sacrificial aspect is further clearly indicated by His selection of the terms Son of Man and God instead of Son and Father.⁷¹ Now is glorified the Son of Man, and God is glorified in Him.⁷² And God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him. If the first of these

⁷⁰The Mishnah expressly allows the procuring even on the Sabbath of that which is required for the Passover, and the Law of the Sabbath-rest was much more strict than that of feast-days. See this in Appendix XVII., p. 783.

⁷¹St. John.

⁷²The first in ver. 32 of our T.R. seems spurious, though it indicates the logical *nexus* of facts.

sentences expressed the meaning of what was about to take place, as exhibiting the utmost glory of the Son of Man in the triumph of the obedience of His Voluntary Sacrifice, the second sentence pointed out its acknowledgment by God: the exaltation which followed the humiliation, the reward ⁷³ as the necessary sequel of the work, the Crown after the Cross.

[173] Thus far for one aspect of what was about to be enacted. As for the other—that which concerned the disciples: only a little while would He still be with them. Then would come the time of sad and sore perplexity—when they would seek Him, but could not come whither He had gone—during the terrible hours between His Crucifixion and His manifested Resurrection. With reference to that period especially, but in general to the whole time of His Separation from the Church on earth, the great commandment, the bond which alone would hold them together, was that of love one to another, and such love as that which He had shown towards them. And this—shame on us, as we write it!—was to be the mark to all men of their discipleship. ⁷⁴ As recorded by St. John, the words of the Lord were succeeded by a question of Peter, indicating perplexity as to the primary and direct meaning of Christ's going away. On this followed Christ's reply about the impossibility of Peter's now sharing his Lord's way of Passion, and, in answer to the disciple's impetuous assurance of his readiness to follow the Master not only into peril, but to lay down his Life for Him, the Lord's indication of Peter's present unpreparedness and the prediction of His impending denial. It may have been, that all this occurred in the Supper-Chamber and at the time indicated by St. John. But it is also recorded by the Synoptists as on the way to Gethsemane, and in, what we may term, a more natural connection. Its consideration will therefore be best reserved till we reach that stage of the history.

We now approach the most solemn part of that night: The Institution of the Lord's Supper. It would manifestly be beyond the object, as assuredly it would necessarily stretch beyond the limits, of the present work, to discuss the many questions and controversies

⁷³Probably the word reward is wrongly chosen, for I look on Christ's exaltation after the victory of His Obedience as rather the necessary sequence than the reward of His Work.

⁷⁴St. John 13:31-35.

which, alas! have gathered around the Words of the Institution. On the other hand, it would not be truthful wholly to pass them by. On certain points, indeed, we need have no hesitation. The Institution of the Lord's Supper is recorded by the Synoptists, although without reference to those parts of the Paschal Supper and its Services with which one or another of its acts must be connected. In fact, while the historical *nexus* with the Paschal Supper is evident, it almost seems as if the Evangelists had intended, by their studied silence in regard to the Jewish Feast, to indicate that with this Celebration and the new Institution the Jewish Passover had forever ceased. On the other hand, the Fourth Gospel does not record the new Institution—it may have been, because it was so fully recorded by the others; or for reasons connected with the structure of that Gospel; or it may be accounted for on other grounds. ⁷⁵ But whatever way we may account for it, the silence of the Fourth Gospel must be a sore difficulty to those who regard it as an Ephesian product of symbolico-sacramentarian tendency, dating from the second century.

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The absence of a record by St. John is compensated by the narrative of St Paul in [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#), to which must be added as supplementary the reference in [1 Corinthians 10:16](#) to the Cup of Blessing which we bless as fellowship of the Blood of Christ, and the Bread which we break as fellowship of the Body of Christ. We have thus four accounts, which may be divided into two groups: St Matthew and St. Mark, and St. Luke and St. Paul. None of these give us the very words of Christ, since these were spoken in Aramaean. In the renderings which we have of them one series may be described as the more rugged and literal, the other as the more free and paraphrastic. The differences between them are, of course, exceedingly minute; but they exist. As regards the text which underlies the rendering in our A.V., the difference suggested are not of any practical importance, ⁷⁶ with the exception of two points. First, the copula *is* [This is My Body This is My Blood'] was certainly *not* spoken by the Lord in the Aramaic, just as it does not

⁷⁵Could there possibly be a *hiatus* in our present Gospel? There is not the least external evidence to that effect, and yet the impression deepens on consideration.

⁷⁶The most important of these, perhaps, is the rendering of covenant for testament. In St. Matthew the word new before covenant should be left out; this also in St. Mark, as well as the word eat after take.'

occur in the Jewish formula in the breaking of bread at the beginning of the Paschal Supper. Secondly, the words: Body which is given or, in [1 Corinthians 11:24](#), broken and Blood which is shed should be more correctly rendered: is being given broken shed.

[175] If we now ask ourselves at what part of the Paschal Supper the new Institution was made, we cannot doubt that it was before the Supper was completely ended.⁷⁷ We have seen, that Judas had left the Table at the beginning of the Supper. The meal continued to its end, amidst such conversation as has already been noted. According to the Jewish ritual, *the third Cup* was filled at the close of the Supper. This was called, as by St. Paul,⁷⁸ the Cup of Blessing partly, because a special blessing was pronounced over it. It is described as one of the ten essential rites in the Paschal Supper. Next, grace after meat was spoken. But on this we need not dwell, nor yet on the washing of hands that followed. The latter would not be observed by Jesus as a religious ceremony; while, in regard to the former, the composite character of this part of the Paschal Liturgy affords internal evidence that it could not have been in use at the time of Christ. But we can have little doubt, that the Institution of the Cup was in connection with this third Cup of Blessing.⁷⁹ If we are asked, what part of the Paschal Service corresponds to the Breaking of Bread we answer, that this being really the last Pascha, and the cessation of it, our Lord anticipated the later rite, introduced when, with the destruction of the Temple, the Paschal as all other Sacrifices ceased. While the Paschal Lamb was still offered, it was the Law that, after partaking of its flesh, nothing else should be eaten. But since the Paschal Lamb had ceased, it is the custom after the meal to break and partake as *Aphikomom*, or after-dish, of that half of the unleavened cake, which, as will be remembered, had been broken and put aside at the beginning of the Supper. The Paschal Sacrifice having now really ceased, and consciously so to all the disciples of Christ, He anticipated this, and connected with the breaking of

⁷⁷St. [Matthew 26:26](#); St. [Mark 14:22](#).

⁷⁸[1 Corinthians 10:10](#).

⁷⁹Though, of course, most widely differing from what is an attempt to trace an analogy between the Ritual of the Romish Mass and the Paschal Liturgy of the Jews, the article on it by the learned Professor *Bickell*, of Innsbruck, possesses a curious interest. See *Zeitsch. fur Kathol. Theol.* for 1880, pp. 90-112.

the Unleavened Cake at the close of the Meal the institution of the breaking of Bread in the Holy Eucharist.

What did the Institution really mean, and what does it mean to us? We cannot believe that it was intended as merely a sign for remembrance of His Death. Such remembrance is often equally vivid in ordinary acts of faith or prayer; and it seems difficult, if no more than this had been intended, to account for the Institution of a special Sacrament, and that with such solemnity, and as the second great rite of the Church—that for its nourishment. Again, if it were a mere token of remembrance, why the Cup as well as the Bread? Nor can we believe, that the copula *is*'—which, indeed, did not occur in the words spoken by Christ Himself—can be equivalent to *signifies*. As little can it refer to any change of substance, be it in what is called Transubstantiation or Consubstantiation. If we may venture an explanation, it would be that this received in the Holy Eucharist, conveys to the soul as regards the Body and Blood of the Lord, the same effect as the Bread and the Wine to the body—receiving of the Bread and the Cup in the Holy Communion is, really, though spiritually, to the Soul what the outward elements are to the Body: that they are both the symbol and the vehicle of true, inward, spiritual feeding on the Very Body and Blood of Christ. So is this Cup which we bless fellowship of His Blood, and the Bread we break of His Body—fellowship with Him Who died for us, and in His dying; fellowship also in Him with one another, who are joined together in this, that for us this Body was given, and for the remission of our sins this precious Blood was shed. ⁸⁰

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Most mysterious words these, yet most blessed mystery this of feeding on Christ spiritually and in faith. Most mysterious—yet he who takes from us our mystery takes from us our Sacrament. ⁸¹ And ever since has this blessed Institution lain as the golden morning-light far out even in the Church's darkest night—not only the seal of His Presence and its pledge, but also the promise of the bright Day at His Coming. For as often as we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we do show forth the Death of the Lord'—for the life of the world,

⁸⁰I would here refer to the admirable critical notes on 1 Corinthians 10. and xi. by Professor Evans in The Speaker's Commentary.

⁸¹The words are a hitherto unprinted utterance on this subject by the late Professor J. Duncan, of Edinburgh.

to be assuredly yet manifested—till He come. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!’

*The Prayer of Consecration*¹

(St. [John 14-17.](#))

The new Institution of the Lord's Supper did not finally close what passed at that Paschal Table. According to the Jewish Ritual, the Cup is filled a fourth time, and the remaining part of the *Hallel*² repeated. Then follow, besides [Psalm 136.](#), a number of prayers and hymns, of which the comparatively late origin is not doubtful. The same remark applies even more strongly to what follows after the fourth Cup. But, so far as we can judge, the Institution of the Holy Supper was followed by the Discourse recorded in St. [John 14.](#) Then the concluding Psalms of the *Hallel* were sung,³ after which the Master left the Upper Chamber. The Discourse of Christ recorded in St. [John 16.](#), and His prayer,⁴ were certainly uttered after they had risen from the Supper, and before they crossed the brook Kidron.⁵ In all probability they were, however, spoken before the Savior left the house. We can scarcely imagine such a Discourse, and still less such a Prayer, to have been uttered while traversing the narrow streets of Jerusalem on the way to Kidron.

1. In any case there cannot be doubt, that the first Discourse⁶ was spoken while still at the Supper-Table. It connects itself closely with that statement which had caused them so much sorrow and perplexity, that, whither He was going, they could not come.⁷ If so, the Discourse itself may be arranged under these four particulars:

¹As this chapter is really in the nature of a commentation on St—[John 14, 15, 16, 17,](#) the reader is requested to peruse it with the Bible-text beside him—Without this it could scarcely be intelligently followed.

²[Psalm 115-118.](#)

³St. [Matthew 26:30;](#) St. [Mark 14:26.](#)

⁴St. [John 17.](#)

⁵St. [John 18:1.](#)

⁶Recorded in St. [John 14.](#)

⁷St. [John 13:33.](#)

explanatory and corrective; ⁸ *explanatory and teaching;* ⁹ *hortatory and promissory;* ¹⁰ *promissory and consolatory.* ¹¹ Thus there is constant and connected progress, the two great elements in the Discourse being: teaching and comfort.

[178] At the outset we ought, perhaps, to remember the very common Jewish idea, that those in glory occupied different abodes, corresponding to their ranks. ¹² If the words of Christ, about the place whither they could not follow Him, had awakened any such thoughts, the explanation which He now gave must effectually have dispelled them. Let not their hearts, then, be troubled at the prospect. As they believed in God, so let them also have trust in Him. ¹³ It was His Father's House of which they were thinking, and although there were many mansions or rather stations in it—and the choice of this word may teach us something—yet they were all in that one House. Could they not trust Him in this? Surely, if it had been otherwise, He would have told them, and not left them to be bitterly disappointed in the end. Indeed, the object of His going was the opposite of what they feared: it was to prepare by His Death and Resurrection a place for them. Nor let them think that His going away would imply permanent separation, because He had said they could not follow Him thither. Rather did His going, not away, but to prepare a place for them, imply His Coming again, primarily as regarded individuals at death, and secondarily as regarded the Church—that He might receive them unto Himself, there to be with Him. Not final separation, then, but ultimate gathering to Himself, did His present going away mean. And whither I go, ye know the way. ¹⁴

Jesus had referred to His going to the Father's House, and implied that they knew the way which would bring them thither also. But His Words had only the more perplexed, at least some of them. If, when speaking of their not being able to go whither He went, He had not referred to a separation between them in that land far

⁸v. 1-4.

⁹v. 5-14.

¹⁰v. 15-24.

¹¹v. 24-31.

¹²Babha Mets. 83 *b*, line 13 from top, and other passages.

¹³I prefer retaining the rendering of the A.V., as more congruous to the whole context.

¹⁴St. John 14:1-4.

away, whither was He going? And, in their ignorance of this, how could they find their way thither? If any Jewish ideas of the disappearance and the final manifestation of the Messiah lurked beneath the question of Thomas, the answer of the Lord placed the matter in the clearest light. He had spoken of the Father's House of many stations but only one road led thither. They must all know it: it was that of personal apprehension of Christ in the life, the mind, and the heart. The way to the Father was Christ; the full manifestation of all spiritual truth, and the spring of the true inner life were equally in Him. Except through Him, no man could consciously come to the Father. Thomas had put his twofold question thus: What was the goal? and, what was the way to it? ¹⁵ In His answer Christ significantly reversed this order, and told them first what was the way—Himself; and then what was the goal. If they had spiritually known Him as the way, they would also have known the goal, the Father, and now, by having the way clearly pointed out, they must also know the goal, God; nay, He was, so to speak, visibly before them—and, gazing on Him, they saw the shining track up to heaven, the Jacob's ladder at the top of which was the Father. ¹⁶

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But once more appeared in the words of Philip that carnal literalising, which would take the words of Christ in only an external sense. ¹⁷ Sayings like these help us to perceive the absolute need of another Teacher, the Holy Spirit. Philip understood the words of Christ as if He held out the possibility of an actual sight of the Father; and this, as they imagined, would forever have put an end to all their doubts and fears. We also, too often, would fain have such solution of our doubts, if not by actual vision, yet by direct communication from on high. In His reply Jesus once more and emphatically returned to this truth, that the vision, which was that of faith alone, was spiritual, and in no way external; and that this manifestation had been, and was fully, though spiritually and to faith, in Him. Or did Philip not believe that the Father was really manifested in Christ, because he did not actually behold Him? Those words which had drawn them and made them feel that heaven was so near, they were not His own, but the message which He had brought

¹⁵ver. 5.

¹⁶St. John 14:7.

¹⁷ver. 8.

[180] them from the Father; those works which He had done, they were the manifestation of the Father's dwelling in Him. Let them then believe this vital union between the Father and Him—and, if their faith could not absolutely rise to that height, let it at least rest on the lower level of the evidence of His works. And so would He still lead us upwards, from the experience of what He does to the knowledge of what He is. Yea, and if they were ever tempted to doubt His works, faith might have evidence of them in personal experience. Primarily, no doubt, the words ¹⁸ about the greater works which they who believed in Him would do, because He went to the Father, refer to the Apostolic preaching and working in its greater results after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. To this also must primarily refer the promise of unlimited answer to prayer in His Name. ¹⁹ But in a secondary, yet most true and blessed, sense, both these promises have, ever since the Ascension of Christ, also applied both to the Church and to all individual Christians.

A twofold promise, so wide as this, required, it must be felt, not indeed limitation, but qualification—let us say, definition—so far as concerns the indication of its necessary conditions. Unlimited power of working by faith and of praying in faith is qualified by obedience to His Commandments, such as is the outcome of personal love to Him. ²⁰ And for such faith, which compasseth all things in the obedience of love to Christ, and can obtain all by the prayer of faith in His Name, there will be a need of Divine Presence ever with them. ²¹ While He had been with them, they had had one *Paraclete*, ²² or Advocate Who had pleaded with them the cause of God, explained and advocated the truth, and guarded and guided them. Now that His outward Presence was to be withdrawn from earth, and He was to be their *Paraclete* or Advocate in Heaven with the Father, ²³ He

¹⁸ver 12.

¹⁹vv. 13, 14.

²⁰St. John 14:15.

²¹ver. 16.

²²Without entering on the discussion of what has engaged so much attention, I must content myself here with indicating the result at which I have arrived. This is simply to abide by the real and natural meaning of the word, alike in the Greek and in Rabbinic usage. This is: not Comforter but Advocate, or, it may be, according to circumstances, Defender, Representative, Counsellor, and Pleader.

²³1 John 2:1.

would, as His first act of advocacy, pray the Father, Who would send them another Paraclete, or Advocate, who would continue with them for ever. To the guidance and pleadings of that Advocate they could implicitly trust themselves, for He was the Spirit of Truth. The world, indeed, would not listen to His pleadings, nor accept Him as their Guide, for the only evidence by which they judged was that of outward sight and material results. But theirs would be other Empirics: and experience not outward, but inward and spiritual. They would know the reality of His Existence and the truth of His pleadings by the continual Presence with them as a body of this Paraclete, and by His dwelling in them individually.

Here (as *Bengel* justly remarks) begins the essential difference between believers and the world. The Son was sent into the *world*; [181] not so the Holy Spirit. Again, the world receives not the Holy Spirit, because it knows Him not; the disciples know Him, because they possess Him. Hence to have known and to have are so conjoined, that not to have known is the cause of not having, and to have is the cause of knowing. ²⁴ In view of this promised Advent of the other Advocate, Christ could tell the disciples that He would not leave them orphans in this world. Nay, in this Advocate Christ Himself came to them. True, the world, which only saw and knew what fell within the range of its sensuous and outward vision (*ver.* 17), would not behold Him, but *they* would behold Him, because He lived, and they also would live—and hence there was fellowship of spiritual life between them. ²⁵ On that day of the Advent of His Holy Spirit would they have full knowledge, because experience, of the Christ's Return to the Father, and of their own being in Christ, and of His being in them. And, as regarded this threefold relationship, this must be ever kept in view: to be in Christ meant to love Him, and this was: to have and to keep His commandments; Christ's being in the Father implied, that they who were in Christ or loved Him would be loved also of His Father; and, lastly, Christ's being in them implied, that He would love them and manifest Himself to them. ²⁶

²⁴*ver.* 17.

²⁵*Ver.* 19 should, I think, be rendered: But you behold Me, because [for] I live, and ye shall live.'

²⁶*St. John* 14:20, 21.

One outstanding novel fact here arrested the attention of the disciples. It was contrary to all their Jewish ideas about the future manifestation of the Messiah, and it led to the question of one of their number, Judas—not Iscariot: Lord, what has happened, that to us Thou wilt manifest Thyself, and not to the world? Again they thought of an outward, while He spoke of a spiritual and inward manifestation. It was of this coming of the Son and the Father for the purpose of making station with them ²⁷ that He spoke, of which the condition was love to Christ, manifested in the keeping of His Word, and which secured the love of the Father also. On the other hand, not to keep His Word was not to love Him, with all that it involved, not only as regarded the Son, but also the Father, since the Word which they heard was the Father's. ²⁸

[182] Thus far then for this inward manifestation, springing from life-fellowship with Christ, rich in the unbounded spiritual power of faith, and fragrant with the obedience of love. All this He could say to them now in the Father's Name—as the first Representative, Pleader, and Advocate or Paraclete. But what, when He was no longer present with them? For that He had provided another Paraclete Advocate, or Pleader. This Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My Name, that same will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. It is quite evident, that the interpretation of the term Paraclete as the Comforter will not meet the description here given of His twofold function as teaching all, and recalling all, that Christ Himself had said. Nor will the other interpretation of Advocate meet the requirements, if we regard the Advocate as one who pleads for us. But if we regard the Paraclete or Advocate as the Representative of Christ, and pleading, as it were, for *Him*, the cause of Christ, all seems harmonious. Christ came in the Name of the Father, as the first Paraclete, as His Representative; the Holy Spirit comes in the Name of Christ, as the second Paraclete, the Representative of Christ, Who is in the Father. As such the second Paraclete is sent by the Father in Name of the first Paraclete, and He would both complete in them, and recall to them, His Cause.

²⁷kai monhn par autw poihsomeqa. Of course only a station as the reference is only to the state of believers while on earth.

²⁸vv. 22-24.

And so at the end of this Discourse the Lord returned again, and now with fuller meaning, to its beginning. Then He had said: Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. Now, after the fuller communication of His purpose, and of their relation to Him, He could convey to them the assurance of peace, even His Own peace, as His gift in the present, and His legacy for the future.²⁹ In their hearing, the fact of His going away, which had filled them with such sorrow and fear, had now been conjoined with that of His Coming³⁰ to them. Yes, as He had explained it, His departure to the Father was the necessary antecedent and condition of His Coming to them in the permanent Presence of the other Paraclete, the Holy Ghost. That Paraclete, however, would, in the economy of grace, be sent by the Father alone. In the dispensation of grace, the final source from whence all cometh, Who sendeth both the Son and the Holy Ghost, is God the Father. The Son is sent by the Father, and the Holy Ghost also, though proceeding from the Father and the Son, is sent by the Father in Christ's Name. In the economy of grace, then, the Father is greater than the Son. And the return of the Son to the Father marks alike the completion of Christ's work, and its perfection, in the Mission of the Holy Ghost, with all that His Advent implies. Therefore, if, discarding thoughts of themselves, they had only given room to feelings of true love to Him, instead of mourning they would have rejoiced because He went to the Father, with all that this implied, not only of rest and triumph to Him, but of the perfecting of His Work—since this was the condition of that Mission of the Holy Ghost by the Father, Who sent both the Son and the Holy Spirit. And in this sense also should they have rejoiced, because, through the presence of the Holy Ghost in them, as sent by the Father in His greater work, they would, instead of the present selfish enjoyment of Christ's Personal Presence, have the more power of showing their love to Him in apprehending His Truth, obeying His Commandments, doing His Works, and participating in His Life.³¹ Not that Christ expected them to understand the full

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²⁹St. John 14:27.

³⁰The word again before come unto you is spurious, as also are the words I said before I go to the Father.'

³¹The great difficulty in understanding the last part of ver. 28 lies not in any one of the clauses nor in the combination of two, but in that of three of them. We could understand

meaning of all these words. But afterwards, when it had all come to pass, they would believe. ³²

[184] With the meaning and the issue of the great contest on which He was about to enter thus clearly before Him, did He now go forth to meet the last assault of the Prince of this World. ³³ But why that fierce struggle, since in Christ he hath nothing? To exhibit to the world the perfect love which He had to the Father; how even to the utmost of self-examination, obedience, submission, and suffering He was doing as the Father had given Him commandment, when He sent Him for the redemption of the world. In the execution of this Mission He would endure the last sifting assault and contest on the part of the Enemy, and, enduring, conquer for us. And so might the world be won from its Prince by the full manifestation of Christ, in His infinite obedience and righteousness, doing the Will of the Father and the Work which He had given Him, and in His infinite love doing the work of our salvation. ³⁴

2. The work of our salvation! To this aspect of the subject Christ now addressed Himself, as He rose from the Supper-Table. If in the Discourse recorded in the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel the Godward aspect of Christ's impending departure was explained, in that of the fifteenth chapter the new relation is set forth which was to subsist between Him and His Church. And this—although epigrammatic sayings are so often fallacious—may be summarised in these three words: Union, Communion, Disunion. The *Union* between Christ and His Church is *corporate*, *vital*, and *effective*, alike as regards results and blessings. ³⁵ This Union issues in *Communion*—of Christ with His disciples, of His disciples with Him, and of His disciples among themselves. The principle of all these is love: the love of Christ to the disciples, the love of the disciples

that if they loved Him, they would rejoice that He went to the Father, as marking the completion of His work; and again, that they should rejoice in His going to the Father, Who was greater, and would send the Holy Ghost, as implying benefit to themselves. But the difficulty of combining all these, so that love to Christ should induce a wish that He should go to the Father, because He was greater, seems one, of which I can only see the natural solution in the interpretation which I have ventured to suggest.

³²ver. 29.

³³St. John 14:30.

³⁴ver. 31.

³⁵xv. 1-8.

to Christ, and the love in Christ of the disciples to one another. ³⁶ Lastly, this Union and Communion has for its necessary counterpart *Disunion, separation* from the world. The world repudiates them for their union with Christ and their communion. But, for all that, there is something that must keep them from going out of the world. They have a Mission in it, initiated by, and carried on in the power of, the Holy Ghost—that of uplifting the testimony of Christ. ³⁷

As regards the relation of the Church to the Christ Who is about to depart to the Father, and to come to them in the Holy Ghost as His Representative, it is to be one of *Union, corporate, vital, and effective*. In the nature of it, such a truth could only be set forth by *illustration*. When Christ said: I am the Vine, the true one, and My Father is the Husbandman; or again, Ye are the branches’—bearing in mind that, as He spake it in Aramaic, the copulas am is and are would be omitted—He did not mean that He *signified* the Vine or was its *sign*, nor the Father that of the Husbandman, nor yet the disciples that of the branches. What He meant was, that He, the Father, and the disciples, stood in exactly the same relationship as the Vine, the Husbandman, and the branches. That relationship was of corporate union of the branches with the Vine for the production of fruit to the Husbandman, Who for that purpose pruned the branches. Nor can we forget in this connection, that, in the old Testament, and partially in Jewish thought, ³⁸ the Vine was the symbol of Israel, not in their national but in their Church-capacity. Christ, with His disciples as the branches, *is the Vine, the true One*’—the reality of all types, the fulfilment of all promises. They are many branches, yet a grand unity in that Vine; there is one Church of which He is the Head, the Root, the Sustenance, the Life. And in that Vine will the object of its planting of old be realised: to bring forth fruit unto God.

Yet, though it be one Vine, the Church must bear fruit not only in her corporate capacity, but individually in each of the branches. It seems remarkable that we read of branches in Him that bear not fruit. This must apparently refer to those who have by Baptism

³⁶v. 9-17.

³⁷v. 18-27.

³⁸There the two could with difficulty be separated. Hence the vine the symbol of Israel, the sages being the ripe grapes, Chull. 92 a.

been inserted into the Vine, but remain fruitless, since a merely outward profession of Christ could scarcely be described as a branch in Him. On the other hand, every fruit-bearing branch the Husbandman cleanseth ³⁹—not necessarily nor exclusively by pruning, but in whatever manner may be requisite—so that it may produce the largest possible amount of fruit. As for them, the process of cleansing had already been accomplished through, or because of [the meaning is much the same], the Word which He had spoken unto them. If that condition of fruit-bearing now existed in them in consequence of the impression of His Word, it followed as a cognate condition that they must abide in Him, and He would abide in them.

[186] Nay, this was a vital condition of fruit-bearing, arising from the fundamental fact that He was the Vine and they the branches. The proper, normal condition of every branch in that Vine was to bear much fruit, of course, in proportion to its size and vigour. But, both figuratively and really, the condition of this was to abide in Him, since apart from Him they could do nothing. It was not like a force once set in motion that would afterwards continue of itself. It was a life, and the condition of its permanence was continued union with Christ, from Whom alone it could spring.

And now as regarded the two alternatives: he that abode not in Him was the branch cast outside and withering, which, when ready for it, men would cast into the fire—with all of symbolic meaning as regards the gatherers and the burning that the illustration implies. On the other hand, if the corporate and vital union was effective, if they abode in Him, and in consequence, His Words abode in them, then: Whatsoever ye will ye shall ask, and it shall be done to you. It is very noteworthy that the unlimitedness of prayer is limited, or, rather, conditioned, by our abiding in Christ and His Words in us, ⁴⁰ just as in St. [John 14:12-14](#) it is conditioned by fellowship with Him, and in St. [John 15:16](#) by permanent fruitfulness. ⁴¹ For, it were the most dangerous fanaticism, and entirely opposed to the teaching of Christ, to imagine that the promise of Christ implies such

³⁹airei - kaqairei: Suavis rhythmus (*Bengel*).

⁴⁰Canon *Westcott* beautifully observes: Their prayer is only some fragment of His teaching transformed into a supplication, and so it will necessarily be heard.'

⁴¹Every unprejudiced reader will feel that St. [Matthew 18:19, 20](#), so far as it does not belong to an entirely different sphere, is subject to similar conditions.

absolute power—as if prayer were magic—that a person might ask for anything, no matter what it was, in the assurance of obtaining his request.⁴² In all moral relations, duties and privileges are correlative ideas, and in our relation to Christ conscious immanence in Him and of His Word in us, union and communion with Him, and the obedience of love, are the indispensable conditions of our privileges. The believer may, indeed, ask for anything, because he may always and absolutely go to God; but the certainty of special answers to prayer is proportionate to the degree of union and communion with Christ. And such unlimited liberty of prayer is connected with our bearing much fruit, because thereby the Father is glorified and our discipleship evidenced.^{43 44}

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This union, being inward and moral, necessarily unfolds into *communion*, of which the principle is *love*. Like as the Father loved Me, even so loved I you. Abide in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in the love *that is* Mine (en th agaph th emh). We mark the *continuity* in the scale of love: the Father towards the Son, and the Son towards us; and its *kindredness* of forthgoing. And now all that the disciples had to do was to *abide* in it. This is connected, not with sentiment nor even with faith, but with obedience.⁴⁵ Fresh supplies are drawn by faith, but continuance in the love of Christ is the manifestation and the result of obedience. It was so even with the Master Himself in His relation to the Father. And the Lord immediately explained⁴⁶ what His object was in saying this. In this, also, were they to have *communion* with Him: communion in that joy which was His in consequence of His perfect obedience. These things have I spoken to you, in order that the joy *that is* Mine (h cara h emh) may be⁴⁷ in you, and your joy may be fulfilled [completed].

But what of those commandments to which such importance attached? Clean as they now were through the Words which He had

⁴²Some, to me at least, horrible instances of this supposed absolute licence of prayer have appeared in a certain class of American religious literature which of late has found too wide circulation among us.

⁴³St. John 15:7, 8.

⁴⁴Preces ipsae sunt fructus, et fructum augent (*Bengel*).

⁴⁵We would fain here correct another modern religious extravagance.

⁴⁶St. John 15:11.

⁴⁷So according to the better reading.

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spoken, one great commandment stood forth as specially His Own, consecrated by His Example and to be measured by His observance of it. From whatever point we view it, whether as specially demanded by the pressing necessities of the Church; or as, from its contrast to what Heathenism exhibited, affording such striking evidence of the power of Christianity; ⁴⁸ or, on the other hand, as so congruous to all the fundamental thoughts of the Kingdom: the love of the Father in sending His Son for man, the work of the Son in seeking and saving the lost at the price of His Own Life, and the new bond which in Christ bound them all in the fellowship of a common calling, common mission, and common interests and hopes—love of the brethren was the one outstanding Farewell-Command of Christ. ⁴⁹ And to keep His commandments was to be His friend. And they were His friends. No longer did He call them servants, for the servant knew not what his lord did. He had now given them a new name, and with good reason: You have I called friends, because all things which I heard of My Father I made known to you. And yet deeper did He descend, in pointing them to the example and measure of His love as the standard of theirs towards one another. And with this teaching He combined what He had said before, of bearing fruit and of the privilege of fellowship with Himself. They were His friends; He had proved it by treating them as such in now opening up before them the whole counsel of God. And that friendship: Not you did choose Me, but I did choose you’—the object of His choosing [that to which they were appointed’] being, that, as they went forth into the world, they should bear fruit, that their fruit should be permanent, and that they should possess the full privilege of that unlimited power to pray of which He had previously spoken. ⁵⁰ All these things were bound up with obedience to His commands, of which the outstanding one was to love one another. ⁵¹

But this very choice on His part, and their union of love in Him and to one another, also implied not only *separation* from,

⁴⁸The heathen are wont to exclaim with wonder, See how these Christians love one another! (*Tertullian*, apud *Westcott*.)

⁴⁹v. 12-14

⁵⁰St. John 15:16.

⁵¹ver. 17.

but repudiation by, the world. ⁵² For this they must be prepared. It had come to Him, and it would be evidence of their choice to discipleship. The hatred of the world showed the essential difference and antagonism between the life-principle of the world and theirs. For evil or for good, they must expect the same treatment as their Master. Nay, was it not their privilege to realise, that all this came upon them for His sake? And should they not also remember, that the ultimate ground of the world's hatred was ignorance of Him Who had sent Christ? ⁵³ And yet, though this should banish all thoughts of personal resentment, their guilt who rejected Him was truly terrible. Speaking to, and in, Israel, there was no excuse for their sin—the most awful that could be conceived; since, most truly: He that hateth Me, hateth My Father also. For, Christ was the Sent of God, and God manifest. It was a terrible charge this to bring against God's ancient people Israel. And yet there was, besides the evidence of His Words, that of His Works. ⁵⁴ If they could not apprehend the former, yet, in regard to the latter, they could see by comparison with the works of other men that they were unique. ⁵⁵ They saw it, but only hated Him and His Father, ascribing it all to the power and agency of Beelzebul. And so the ancient prophecy had now been fulfilled: They hated Me gratuitously. ⁵⁶ But all was not yet at an end: neither His Work through the other Advocate, nor yet theirs in the world. When the Advocate is come, Whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of the Truth—Who proceedeth from the Father [goeth forth on His Mission as sent by the Father], ⁵⁷ this Same will bear witness about Me. And ye also bear witness, ⁵⁸ because ye are with Me from the beginning.

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3. The last of the parting Discourses of Christ, in the sixteenth chapter of St. John, was, indeed, interrupted by questions from the disciples. But these, being germane to the subject, carry it only

⁵²ver. 18.

⁵³vv. 19-21.

⁵⁴vv. 22-24.

⁵⁵Canon *Westcott* writes: The works are characterised (*which none other did*); the words are undefined (*come and spoken*). The works of Christ might be compared with other works: His words had an absolute power.'

⁵⁶Psalm 35:19; 69:4.

⁵⁷On this meaning of the words see the Note of Canon *Westcott*.

⁵⁸For the fulfilment of this predicted twofold testimony, see [Acts 5:32](#).

forward. In general, the subjects treated in it are: the new relations arising from the departure of Christ and the coming of the other Advocate. Thus the last point needed would be supplied—[chap 14](#), giving the comfort and teaching in view of His departure; [chap 15](#), describing the personal relations of the disciples towards Christ, one another, and the world; and [chap 16](#), fixing the new relations to be established.

The chapter appropriately opens by reflecting on the predicted enmity of the world. ⁵⁹ Christ had so clearly foretold it, lest this should prove a stumbling block to them. Best, to know distinctly that they would not only be put out of the Synagogue, but that everyone who killed them would deem it to offer a religious service to God. So, no doubt, Saul of Tarsus once felt, and so did many others who, alas! never became Christians. Indeed, according to Jewish Law, a zealot might have slain without formal trial those caught in flagrant rebellion against God—or in what might be regarded as such, and the Synagogue would have deemed the deed as meritorious as that of Phinehas. ⁶⁰

[190] It was a sorrow, and yet also a comfort, to know that this spirit of enmity arose from ignorance of the Father and Christ. Although they had in a general way been prepared for it before, yet He had not told it all so definitely and connectedly from the beginning, because He was still there. ⁶¹ But now that He was going away, it was absolutely necessary to do so. For even the mention of it had thrown them into such confusion of personal sorrow, that the main point, *whither* Christ was going, had not even emerged into their view. ⁶² ⁶³ Personal feelings had quite engrossed them, to the forgetfulness of their own higher interests. He was going to the Father, and this was the condition, as well as the antecedent of His sending the Paraclete.

⁵⁹St. [John 16](#).

⁶⁰Sanh. 81 *b*; Bemid. R. 21.

⁶¹St. [John 16:1-4](#).

⁶²ver. 5.

⁶³The question of Thomas (St. [John 14:5](#)) bore as to the way, rather than the goal; that of Peter ([13:36](#)) seemed founded either on the Jewish idea that the Messiah was to disappear, or else referred to Christ's going among enemies and into danger, whither Peter thought he would follow Him. But none of the questions contemplated the Messianic Return of the Son to the Father with a view to the Mission of the Holy Ghost.

But the Advent of the Advocate would mark a new era, as regarded the Church ⁶⁴ and the world. It was their Mission to go forth into the world and to preach Christ. That other Advocate, as the Representative of Christ, would go into the world and convict on the three cardinal points on which their preaching turned. These three points on which all Missioning proceeds, are—Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment. And on these would the New Advocate convict the world. Bearing in mind that the term convict is uniformly used in the Gospels ⁶⁵ for clearly establishing or carrying home guilt, ⁶⁶ we have here three separate facts presented to us. As the Representative of Christ, the Holy Ghost will carry home to the world, establish the fact of its guilt in regard to *sin*—on the ground that the world believes not in Christ. Again, as the Representative of Christ, He will carry home to the world the fact of its guilt in regard to *righteousness*—on the ground that Christ has ascended to the Father, and hence is removed from the sight of man. Lastly, as the Representative of Christ, He will establish the fact of the world's guilt, because of this: that its Prince, Satan, has already been judged by Christ—a judgment established in His sitting at the Right Hand of God, and which will be vindicated at His Second Coming. Taking, then, the three great facts in the History of the Christ: His First Coming to salvation, His Resurrection and Ascension, and His Sitting at the Right Hand of God, of which His Second Coming to Judgment is the final issue, this Advocate of Christ will in each case convict the world of guilt; in regard to the first—concerning sin, because it believes not on Him Whom God has sent; in regard to the second—concerning righteousness, because Christ is at the Father's Right Hand; and, in regard to the third—concerning judgment, because that Prince whom the world still owns has already been judged by Christ's Session at the Right Hand of God, and by His Reign, which is to be completed in His Second Coming to Earth.

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⁶⁴St. [John 16:7](#).

⁶⁵It occurs besides this place in St. [Matthew 18:15](#); St. [Luke 3:19](#); St. [John 3:20](#); 8. (9) 46.

⁶⁶Closely similar to the above is the use of the verb *elegcw* in St. [James 2:9](#), and in [Revelation 3:19](#). This may be called the Hebraic *usus* of the word. In the Epistles of St. Paul it is more general; in that to the Hebrews ([12:5](#)) it seems to stand for punishing.

Such was the cause of Christ which the Holy Spirit as the Advocate would plead to the world, working conviction as in a hostile guilty party. Quite other was that cause of Christ which, as His Advocate, He would plead with the disciples, and quite other in their case the effect of His advocacy. We have, even on the present occasion, marked how often the Lord was hindered, as well as grieved, by the misunderstanding and unbelief of man. Now it was the self-imposed law of His Mission, the outcome of His Victory in the Temptation in the Wilderness, that He would not achieve His Mission in the exercise of Divine Power, but by treading the ordinary path of humanity. This was the limitation which He set to Himself—one aspect of His Self-examination. But from this His constant sorrow must also have flowed, in view of the unbelief of even those nearest to Him. [192] It was, therefore, not only expedient, but even necessary for them, since at present they could not bear more, that Christ's Presence should be withdrawn, and His Representative take His place, and open up His Cause to them. And this was to be His special work to the Church. As Advocate, not speaking from ⁶⁷ Himself, but speaking whatsoever He shall hear—as it were, according to His heavenly brief'—He would guide them into all truth. And here His first declaration would be of the things that are coming. A whole new order of things was before the Apostles—the abolition of the Jewish, the establishment of the Christian Dispensation, and the relation of the New to the Old, together with many kindred questions. As Christ's Representative, and speaking not from Himself, the Holy Spirit would be with them, not suffer them to go astray into error or wrong, but be their wayleader into all truth. Further, as the Son glorified the Father, so would the Spirit glorify the Son, and in analogous manner—because He shall take of His and declare it unto them. This would be the second line, as it were, in the declarations of the Advocate, Representative of Christ. And this work of the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, in His declaration about Christ, was explained by the circumstance of the union and communication between the Father and Christ. ⁶⁸ And so—to sum up, in one brief Farewell, all that He had said to them—there would be a little while

⁶⁷This meaning of the word is not only most important but well marked. Canon *Westcott* calls attention to its use also in the following passages: v. 19; 7:18; 11:51; 15:4.

⁶⁸St. [John 16:8-15](#).

in which they would not behold Him (ouketi qewreite me), and again a little while and they would see Him (oyesqe me), though in quite different manner, as even the wording shows. ⁶⁹ ⁷⁰

If we had entertained any doubt of the truth of the Lord's previous words, that in their absorbedness in the present the disciples had not thought of the *whither* to which Christ was going, and that it was needful for them that He should depart and the other Advocate come, ⁷¹ this conviction would be forced upon us by their perplexed questioning among themselves as to the meaning of the twofold little while and of all that He had said about, and connected with, His going to the Father. They would fain have asked, yet dared not. But He knew their thoughts, and answered them. That first little while comprised those terrible days of His Death and Entombment, when they would weep and lament, but the world rejoice. Yet their brief sorrow would be turned into joy. It was like the short sorrow of childbearing—afterwards no more remembered in the joy that a human being had been born into the world. Thus would it be when their present sorrow would be changed into the Resurrection-joy—a joy which no man could ever afterwards take from them. On that day of joy would He have them dwell in thought during their present night of sorrow. That would be, indeed, a day of brightness, in which there would be no need of their making further inquiry of Him (eme ouk erwthsete). ⁷² All would then be clear in the new light of the Resurrection. A day this, when the promise would become true, and whatsoever they asked the Father (aithshte), He would give it them in Christ's Name. ⁷³ Hitherto they had not yet asked in His Name; let them ask: they would receive, and so their joy be completed. Ah! that day of brightness. Hitherto He had only been able to speak to them, as it were, in parables and allegory, but then would He declare to them in all plainness about the Father. And, as He would be able to speak to them directly and plainly about the Father, so would they then be able to speak directly to the Father—as the Epistle to the

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⁶⁹ver. 16.

⁷⁰The words, because I go to the Father are spurious in ver. 16.

⁷¹vv. 5-7.

⁷²St. John 16:23 comp. ver 19.

⁷³According to the better reading of ver. 23: He will give it you in My Name.'

Hebrews expresses it, come with plainness⁷⁴ or directness to the throne of grace. They would ask directly in the Name of Christ; and no longer would it be needful, as at present, first to come to Him that He may inquire of the Father about them (*erwthsw peri umwn*). For, God loved them as lovers of Christ, and as recognising that He had come forth from God. And so it was—He had come forth from out the Father⁷⁵

[194] when He came into the world, and, now that He was leaving it, He was going to the Father.

The disciples imagined that they understood this at least. Christ had read their thoughts, and there was no need for anyone to put express questions.⁷⁶ He knew all things, and by this they believed—it afforded them evidence—that He came forth from⁷⁷ God. But how little did they know their own hearts! The hour had even come when they would be scattered, every man to his own home, and leave Him alone—yet, truly, He would not be alone, because the Father would be with Him.⁷⁸ Yet, even so, His latest as His first thought⁷⁹ was of them; and through the night of scattering and of sorrow did He bid them look to the morning of joy. For, the battle was not theirs, nor yet the victory doubtful: I [emphatically] have overcome [it is accomplished] the world.⁸⁰

We now enter most reverently what may be called the innermost Sanctuary.⁸¹ For the first time we are allowed to listen to what was really the Lord's Prayer⁸² and, as we hear, we humbly worship. That Prayer was the great preparation for His Agony, Cross, and Passion; and, also, the outlook on the Crown beyond. In its three parts⁸³

⁷⁴The same word (*parrhsia*) is used of Christ's plainly declaring the Father (*ver. 25*), and of our liberty in prayer in [Hebrews 4:16](#); comp. also *x. 19*. For the Johannine use of the word, comp. *St. John 7:4, 13, 26; 10:24; 11:14, 54; 16:25, 29; 18:20; 1 John 2:28; 3:21; 4:17; 5:14*.

⁷⁵According to the better reading: *ek tou patroV*. Surely, if words have any meaning, these teach the unity of Essence of the Son and the Father.

⁷⁶*St. John 16:30*.

⁷⁷Very significantly, however, they use neither *para*, nor *ek*, but *ap_o*.

⁷⁸*St. John 16:32*.

⁷⁹*xiv. 1*.

⁸⁰*xvi. 33*.

⁸¹*St. John 17*.

⁸²That in *St. Matthew 11:25-27* is a brief thanksgiving.

⁸³*vv. 1-5; 6-19; 20-26*.

it seems almost to look back on the teaching of the three previous chapters,⁸⁴ and convert them into prayer.⁸⁵ We see the great High-Priest first solemnly offering up Himself, and then consecrating and interceding for His Church and for her work.

The first part of that Prayer⁸⁶ is the consecration of Himself by the Great High-Priest. The final hour had come. In praying that the Father would glorify the Son, He was really not asking anything for Himself, but that the Son might⁸⁷ glorify the Father. For, the glorifying of the Son—His support, and then His Resurrection, was really the completion of the work which the Father had given Him to do, as well as its evidence. It was really in accordance (even as) with the power or authority which the Father gave Him over all flesh⁸⁸ when He put all things under His Feet as the Messiah—the object of this Messianic Rule being, that the totality (the all, pan) that Thou hast given Him, He should give to them eternal life. The climax in His Messianic appointment, the object of His Rule over all flesh, was the Father's gift to Christ of the Church as a totality and a unity; and in that Church Christ gives to each individually eternal life. What follows⁸⁹ seems an intercalated sentence, as shown even by the use of the particle and with which the all-important definition of what is eternal life is introduced, and by the last words in the verse. But although embodying, so to speak, as regards the form, the record which St. John had made of Christ's Words, we must remember that, as regards the substance, we have here Christ's own Prayer for that eternal life to each of His own people. And what constitutes the eternal life? Not what we so often think, who confound with the thing its effects or else its results. It refers not to the future, but to the present. It is the realisation of what Christ had told them in these

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⁸⁴Comp. each chapter with the corresponding section of verses in ch 17.

⁸⁵I cannot agree with Canon *Westcott* that these last Discourses and this Prayer were spoken in the Temple. It is, indeed, true, that on that night the Temple was thrown open at midnight, and speedily thronged. But if our Lord had come before that time, He would have found its gates closed; if after that time, He could not have found a place of retirement and quiet, where it is conceivable that could have been said and prayed which is recorded in St. [John 14, 15, 16, 17](#).

⁸⁶v. 1-5.

⁸⁷The word also should be struck out.

⁸⁸We mark this Hebraism in the Fourth Gospel.

⁸⁹in St. [John 17:3](#).

words: Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. It is the pure sunlight on the soul, resulting in, or reflecting the knowledge of Jehovah; the Personal, Living, True God, and of Him Whom He did send, Jesus Christ. These two branches of knowledge must not so much be considered as co-ordinate, but rather as inseparable. Returning from this explanation of the eternal life which they who are bathed in the Light possess even now and here, the Great High-Priest first offered up to the Father that part of His work which was on earth and which He had completed. And then, both as the consummation and the sequel of it, He claimed what was at the end of His Mission: His return to that fellowship of essential glory, which He possessed together with the Father before the world was. ⁹⁰

[196] The gift of His consecration could not have been laid on more glorious Altar. Such Cross must have been followed by such Crown. ⁹¹ And now again His first thought was of them for whose sake He had consecrated Himself. *These He now solemnly presented to the Father.* ⁹² He introduced them as those (the individuals) whom the Father had specially given to him out of the world. As such they were really the Father's, and given over the Christ—and He now presented them as having kept the Word of the Father. Now they knew that all things whatsoever the Father had given the Son were of the Father. This was the outcome, then, of all His teaching, and the sum of all their learning—perfect confidence in the Person of Christ, as in His Life, Teaching, and Work sent not only of God, but of the Father. Neither less nor yet more did their knowledge represent. All else that sprang out of it they had yet to learn. But it was enough, for it implied everything; chiefly these three things—that they *received* the words which He gave them as from the Father; that they *knew truly* that Christ had come out from the Father; and that they *believed* that the Father had sent Him. And, indeed, reception of Christ's Word, knowledge of His Essential Nature, and faith in His Mission: such seem the three essential characteristics of those who are Christ's.

And now He brought them in *prayer* before the Father. ⁹³ He was interceding, not for the world that was His by right of His

⁹⁰v. 4, 5.

⁹¹Philippians 2:8, 11.

⁹²St. John 17:6-10.

⁹³St. John 17:9-12.

Messiahship, but for them whom the Father had specially given Him. They were the Father's in the special sense of covenant-mercy, and all that in that sense was the Father's was the Son's, and all that was the Son's was the Father's. Therefore, although all the world was the Son's, He prayed not now for it; and although all in earth and heaven were in the Father's Hand, He sought not now His blessing on them, but on those whom, while He was in the world, He had shielded and guided. They were to be left behind in a world of sin, evil, temptation, and sorrow, and He was going to the Father. And this was His prayer: Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name which Thou hast given Me, that so (in order that) they may be one (a unity, en), as *We are*. The peculiar address, Holy Father shows that the Saviour once more referred to the keeping in holiness, and what is of equal importance, that the unity of the Church sought for was to be primarily one of spiritual character, and not a merely outward combination. Unity in holiness and of nature, as was that of the Father and Son, such was the great object sought, although such union would, if properly carried out, also issue in outward unity. But while moral union rather than outward unity was in His view, our present unhappy divisions arising so often from wilfulness and unreadiness to bear slight differences among ourselves—each other's burdens—are so entirely contrary not only to the Christian, but even to the Jewish, spirit, that we can only trace them to the heathen element in the Church.

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While He was with them He kept them in the Father's Name. Them whom the Father had given Him, by the effective drawing of His grace within them, He guarded (efulaxa) and none from among them was lost, except the son of perdition—and this, according to prophecy. But ere He went to the Father, He prayed thus for them, that in this realised unity of holiness the joy that was His ⁹⁴ (thn caran thn emhn), might be completed in them. ⁹⁵ And there was the more need of this, since they were left behind with nought but His Word in a world that hated them, because, as Christ, so they also were not of it [from it, ek]. Nor yet did Christ ask with a view to their being taken out of the world, but with this that [in order that]

⁹⁴Comp. here St. [John 15:11](#).

⁹⁵ver. 13.

the Father should keep them [preserve, thrhshV] from the Evil One.⁹⁶ And this the more emphatically, because, even as He was not, so were they not out of the world which lay in the Evil One. And the preservative which He sought for them was not outward but inward, the same in kind as while He had been with them,⁹⁷ only coming now directly from the Father. It was sanctification in the truth⁹⁸ with this significant addition: The word *that is* Thine (o logoV o soV) is truth.⁹⁹

[198] In its last part this intercessory Prayer of the Great High-Priest bore on the work of the disciples and its fruits. As the Father had sent the Son, so did the Son send the disciples into the world, in the same manner, and on the same Mission. And for their sakes He now solemnly offered Himself, consecrated or sanctified Himself, that they might in truth¹⁰⁰ —truly—be consecrated. And in view of this their work, to which they were consecrated, did Christ pray not for them alone, but also for those who, through their word, would believe in Him, in order or that so all may be one’—form a unity. Christ, as sent by the Father, gathered out the original unity; they, as sent by Him, and consecrated by His consecration, were to gather others, but all were to form one great unity, through the common spiritual communication. As Thou in Me, and I also in Thee, so that [in order that] they also may be in Us, so that [in order that] the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory that Thou hast given Me’—referring to His Mission in the world, and His setting apart and authorisation for it—I have given to them, so that [in order that] [in this respect also] they may be one, even as *We are One* [a unity].¹⁰¹ I in them, and Thou in Me, so that they may be perfected into One’—the ideal unity and real character of the Church, this—so that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them as Thou lovedst Me.

⁹⁶This meaning is ruled by a reference to 1 John 5:18, 19, and, if so, it seems in turn to rule the meaning of the petition: Deliver us from the Evil One.’

⁹⁷St. John 17:12.

⁹⁸Not, by Thy truth.’

⁹⁹vv. 12-17.

¹⁰⁰Not, as in the A.V. (ver. 19), through the truth (en alhqeia).

¹⁰¹It need scarcely be said that by the term unity we refer not to unity of Person, but of Nature, Character, and Work.

After this unspeakably sublime consecration of His Church, and communication to her of His glory as well as of His Work, we cannot marvel at what follows and concludes the Lord's Prayer.¹⁰² We remember the unity of the Church—a unity in Him, and as that between the Father and the Son—as we listen to this: That which Thou hast given Me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with Me—so that they may gaze [behold] on the glory that is Mine, which Thou hast given Me [be sharers in the Messianic glory]: because Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.

And we all would fain place ourselves in the shadow of this final consecration of Himself and of His Church by the Great High-Priest, which is alike final appeal, claim, and prayer: O Righteous Father, the world knew Thee not, but I know Thee, and these know that Thou sentest Me. And I made known unto them Thy Name, and will make it known, so that [in order that] the love wherewith Thou lovedst Me may be in them, and I in them. This is the charter of the Church: her possession and her joy; her faith, her hope also, and love; and in this she standeth, prayeth, and worketh.

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¹⁰²v. 24-26.

Chapter 12—Gethsemane

(St. [Matthew 26:30-56](#); St. [Mark 14:26-52](#); St. [Luke 22:31-53](#); St. [John 18:1-11](#).)

We turn once more to follow the steps of Christ, now among the last He trod upon earth. The hymn with which the Paschal Supper ended, had been sung. Probably we are to understand this of the second portion of the *Hallel*,¹ sung some time after the third Cup, or else of [Psalm 136](#)., which, in the present Ritual, stands near the end of the service. The last Discourses had been spoken, the last Prayer, that of Consecration, had been offered, and Jesus prepared to go forth out of the City, to the Mount of Olives. The streets could scarcely be said to be deserted, for, from many a house shone the festive lamp, and many a company may still have been gathered; and everywhere was the bustle of preparation for going up to the Temple, the gates of which were thrown open at midnight.

Passing out by the gate north of the Temple, we descend into a lonely part of the valley of black Kidron, at that season swelled into a winter torrent. Crossing it, we turn somewhat to the left, where the road leads towards Olivet. Not many steps farther (beyond, and on the other side of the present Church of the Sepulchre of the Virgin) we turn aside from the road to the right, and reach what tradition has since earliest times—and probably correctly—pointed out as Gethsemane the Oil-press. It was a small property enclosed (*cwrion*), a garden in the Eastern sense, where probably, amidst a variety of fruit trees and flowering shrubs, was a lowly, quiet summer-retreat, connected with, or near by, the Olive-press. The present Gethsemane is only some seventy steps square, and though its old gnarled olives cannot be those (if such there were) of the time of Jesus, since all trees in that valley—those also which stretched their shadows over Jesus—were hewn down in the Roman siege, they may have sprung from the old roots, or from the odd kernels. But we love to think

¹[Psalm 115](#). to cxviii.

of this Garden as the place where Jesus often'—not merely on this occasion, but perhaps on previous visits to Jerusalem—gathered with His disciples. It was a quiet resting-place, for retirement, prayer, perhaps sleep, and a trysting-place also where not only the Twelve, but others also, may have been wont to meet the Master. And as such it was known to Judas, and thither he led the armed band, when they found the Upper Chamber no longer occupied by Jesus and His disciples. Whether it had been intended that He should spend part of the night there, before returning to the Temple, and whose that enclosed garden was—the other Eden, in which the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, bore the penalty of the first, and in obeying gained life—we know not, and perhaps ought not to inquire. It may have belonged to Mark's father. But if otherwise, Jesus had loving disciples even in Jerusalem, and, we rejoice to think, not only a home at Bethany, and an Upper Chamber furnished in the City, but a quiet retreat and trysting-place for His own under the bosom of Olivet, in the shadow of the garden of the Oil-press. [201]

The sickly light of the moon was falling full on them as they were crossing Kidron. It was here, we imagine, after they had left the City behind them, that the Lord addressed Himself first to the disciples generally. We can scarcely call it either prediction or warning. Rather, as we think of that last Supper, of Christ passing through the streets of the City for the last time into that Garden, and especially of what was now immediately before Him, does what He spake seem natural, even necessary. To them—yes, to them all—He would that night be even a stumbling-block. And so had it been foretold of old, ² that the Shepherd would be smitten, and the sheep scattered. Did this prophecy of His suffering, in its grand outlines, fill the mind of the Saviour as He went forth on His Passion? Such Old Testament thoughts were at any rate present with Him, when, not unconsciously nor of necessity, but as the Lamb of God, He went to the slaughter. A peculiar significance also attaches to His prediction that, after He was risen, He would go before them into Galilee. ³ For, with their scattering upon His Death, it seems to us, the Apostolic circle or College, as such, was for a time broken up. They continued,

²Zechariah 13:7.

³St. Matthew 26:32; St. Mark 14:28.

[202] indeed, to meet together as individual disciples, but the Apostolic bond was temporarily dissolved. This explains many things: the absence of Thomas on the first, and his peculiar position on the second Sunday; the uncertainty of the disciples, as evidenced by the words of those on the way to Emmaus; as well as the seemingly strange movements of the Apostles—all which are quite changed when the Apostolic bond is restored. Similarly, we mark, that only seven of them seem to have been together by the Lake of Galilee,⁴ and that only afterwards the Eleven met Him on the mountain to which He had directed them.⁵ It was here that the Apostolic circle or College was once more re-formed, and the Apostolic commission renewed,⁶ and thence they returned to Jerusalem, once more sent forth from Galilee, to wait the final events of His Ascension, and the Coming of the Holy Ghost.

But in that night they understood none of these things. While all were staggering under the blow of their predicted scattering, the Lord seems to have turned to Peter individually. What he said, and how He put it, equally demand our attention: Simon, Simon⁷—using His old name when referring to the old man in him—Satan has obtained [out-asked, exhthsato] you, *for the purpose* of sifting like as wheat. But I have made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not. The words admit us into two mysteries of heaven. This night seems to have been the power of darkness when, left of God, Christ had to meet by himself the whole assault of hell, and to conquer in His own strength as Man's Substitute and Representative. It is a great mystery: but quite consistent with itself. We do not, as others, here see any analogy to the permission given to Satan in the opening chapter of the Book of Job, always supposing that this embodies a real, not an allegorical story. But in that night the fierce wind of hell was allowed to sweep unbroken over the Saviour, and even to expend its fury upon those that stood behind in His Shelter. Satan had out-asked obtained it—yet not to destroy, nor to cast down, but to sift like as wheat⁸ is shaken in a sieve to cast out of it what is not

⁴St. [John 21:2](#).

⁵St. [Matthew 28:16](#).

⁶u. s. vv. 18-20.

⁷St. [Luke 22:31](#).

⁸It is very probable that the basis of the figure is [Amos 9:9](#).

grain. Hitherto, and no farther, had Satan obtained it. In that night of Christ's Agony and loneliness, of the utmost conflict between Christ and Satan, this seems almost a necessary element.

This, then, was the first mystery that had passed. And this sifting would affect Peter more than the others. Judas, who loved not Jesus at all, has already fallen; Peter, who loved Him—perhaps not most intensely, but, if the expression be allowed, most extensively—stood next to Judas in danger. In truth, though most widely apart in their direction, the springs of their inner life rose in close proximity. There was the same readiness to kindle into enthusiasm, the same desire to have public opinion with him, the same shrinking from the Cross, the same moral inability or unwillingness to stand alone, in the one as in the other. Peter had abundant courage to sally out, but not to stand out. Viewed in its primal elements (not in its development), Peter's character was, among the disciples, the likeliest to that of Judas. If this shows what Judas might have become, it also explains how Peter was most in danger that night; and, indeed, the husks of him were cast out of the sieve in his denial of the Christ. But what distinguished Peter from Judas was his faith of spirit, soul, and heart—of spirit, when he apprehended the spiritual element in Christ;⁹ of soul, when he confessed Him as the Christ;¹⁰ and of heart, when he could ask Him to sound the depths of his inner being, to find there real, personal love to Jesus.¹¹

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The second mystery of that night was Christ's supplication for Peter. We dare not say, as the High-Priest—and we know not when and where it was offered. But the expression is very strong, as of one who has need of a thing.¹² And that for which He made such supplication was, that Peter's faith should not fail. This, and not that something new might be given him, or the trial removed from Peter. We mark, how Divine grace presupposes, not supersedes, human liberty. And this also explains why Jesus had so prayed for Peter, not for Judas. In the former case there was *faith*, which only required to be strengthened against failure—an eventuality which, without the

⁹St. John 6:68.

¹⁰St. Matthew 16:16.

¹¹St. John 21:15-17.

¹²This even philologically, and in all the passages in which the word is used. Except in St. Matthew 9:38, it occurs only in the writings of St. Luke and St. Paul.

[204] intercession of Christ, was possible. To these words of His, Christ added this significant commission: And thou, when thou hast turned again, confirm thy brethren. ¹³ And how fully he did this, both in the Apostolic circle and in the Church, history has chronicled. Thus, although such may come in the regular moral order of things, Satan has not even power to sift without leave of God; and thus does the Father watch in such terrible sifting over them for whom Christ has prayed. This is the first fulfilment of Christ's Prayer, that the Father would keep them from the Evil One. ¹⁴ Not by any process from without, but by the preservation of their faith. And thus also may we learn, to our great and unspeakable comfort, that not every sin—not even conscious and wilful sin—implies the failure of our faith, very closely though it lead to it; still less, our final rejection. On the contrary, as the fall of Simon was the outcome of the natural elements in him, so would it lead to their being brought to light and removed, thus fitting him the better for confirming his brethren. And so would light come out of darkness. From our human standpoint we might call such teaching needful: in the Divine arrangement it is only the Divine sequent upon the human antecedent.

We can understand the vehement earnestness and sincerity with which Peter protested against of any failure on his part. We mostly deem those sins farthest which are nearest to us; else, much of the power of their temptation would be gone, and temptation changed into conflict. The things which we least anticipate are our falls. In all honesty—and not necessarily with self elevation over the others—he said, that even if all should be offended in Christ, he never could be, but was ready to go with Him into prison and death. And when, to enforce the warning, Christ predicted that before the repeated crowing of the cock ¹⁵

¹³Curiously enough, Roman Catholic writers see in the prediction of his fall by implication an assertion of Peter's supremacy. This, because they regard Peter as the representative and head of the others.

¹⁴St. John 17:15.

¹⁵This crowing of the cock has given rise to a curious controversy, since, according to Rabbinic law, it was forbidden to keep fowls in Jerusalem, on account of possible Levitical defilements through them (*Baba K.* vii. 7). *Reland* has written a special dissertation on the subject, of which *Schöttgen* has given a brief abstract. We need not reproduce the arguments, but *Reland* urges that, even if that ordinance was really in force at the time of Christ (of which there is grave doubt), Peter might have heard the cock crow from

ushered in the morning, ¹⁶ Peter would thrice deny that he knew Him, Peter not only persisted in his asseverations, but was joined in them by the rest. Yet—and this seems the meaning and object of the words of Christ which follow—they were not aware terribly changed the former relations had become, and what they would have to suffer in consequence. ¹⁷ When formerly He had sent forth, both without provision and defence, had they lacked anything? No! But now no helping hand would be extended to them; nay, what seemingly they would need even more than anything else would be a sword’—defence against attacks, for at the close of His history He was reckoned with transgressors. ¹⁸ The Master a crucified Malefactor—what could His followers expect? But once more they understood Him in a grossly realistic manner. These Galileans, after the custom of their countrymen, ¹⁹ had provided themselves with short swords, which they concealed under their upper garment. It was natural for men of their disposition, so imperfectly understanding their Master’s teaching, to have taken what might seem to them only a needful precaution in coming to Jerusalem. At least two of them—among them Peter—now produced swords. ²⁰ But this was not the time of reason with them, and our Lord simply put it aside. Events would only too soon teach them.

They had now reached the entrance of Gethsemane. It may have been that it led through the building with the oil-press and that the eight Apostles, who were not to come nearer to the Bush burning,

Fort Antonia, occupied by the Romans, or else that it might have reached thus far in the still night air from outside the walls of Jerusalem. But there is more than doubt as to the existence of this ordinance at the time. There is repeated mention of cock-crow in connection with the Temple-watches, and if the expression be regarded as not literal, but simple a designation of time, we have in *Jer. Erub. x. 1* (p. 26 *a*, about middle) a story in which a cock caused the death of a child at Jerusalem, proving that fowls must have been kept there.

¹⁶St. Matthew speaks of this night St. Mark and St. Luke of this day proving, if such were needed, that the day was reckoned from evening to evening.

¹⁷St. [Luke 22:35-38](#).

¹⁸Omit the article.

¹⁹*Jos. War iii. 3, 2.*

²⁰The objection has been raised, that, according to the Mishnah (*Shabb. vi. 4*), it was not lawful to carry swords on the Sabbath. But even this Mishnah seems to indicate that there was divergence of opinion on the subject, even as regarded the Sabbath, much more a feast-day.

[206] but not consumed were left there. Or they may have been taken within the entrance of the Garden, and left there, while, pointing forward with a gesture of the Hand, He went yonder and prayed ²¹ According to St. Luke, He added the parting warning to pray that they might not enter into temptation.

Eight did He leave there. The other three—Peter, James and John—companions before of His glory, both when He raised the daughter of Jairus ²² and on the Mount of Transfiguration ²³ —He took with Him farther. If in that last contest His Human Soul craved for the presence of those who stood nearest Him and loved Him best, or if He would have them baptized with His Baptism, and drink of His Cup, these were the three of all others to be chosen. And now of a sudden the cold flood broke over Him. Within these few moments He had passed from the calm of assured victory into the anguish of the contest. Increasingly, with every step forward, He became sorrowful full of sorrow, sore amazed and desolate. ²⁴ He told them of the deep sorrow of His Soul (yuch) even unto death, and bade them tarry there to watch with Him. Himself went forward to enter the contest with prayer. Only the first attitude of the wrestling Saviour saw they, only the first words in that Hour of Agony did they hear. For, as in our present state not uncommonly in the deepest emotions of the soul, and as had been the case on the Mount of Transfiguration, irresistible sleep crept over their frame. But what, we may reverently ask, was the cause of this sorrow unto death of the Lord Jesus Christ? Not fear, either of bodily or mental suffering: but Death. Man's nature, created of God immortal, shrinks (by the law of its nature) from the dissolution of the bond that binds body to soul. Yet to fallen man Death is not by any means fully Death, for he is born with the taste of it in his soul. Not so Christ. It was the Unfallen Man dying; it was He, Who had no experience of it, tasting Death, and that not for Himself but for every man, emptying the cup to its bitter dregs. It was the Christ undergoing Death by man and for man; the Incarnate God, the God-Man, submitting Himself vicariously to

²¹St. [Matthew 26:36](#).

²²St. [Mark 5:37](#).

²³St. [Matthew 17:1](#).

²⁴We mark a climax. The last word (adhnonein) used both by St. Matthew and St. Mark seems to indicate utter loneliness, desertion, and desolateness.

the deepest humiliation, and paying the utmost penalty: Death—all Death. No one as He could know what Death was (not dying, which men dread, but Christ dreaded not); no one could taste its bitterness as He. His going into Death was His final conflict with Satan for man, and on his behalf. By submitting to it He took away the power of Death; He disarmed Death by burying his shaft in His own Heart. And beyond this lies the deep, unutterable mystery of Christ bearing the penalty due to our sin, bearing our death, bearing the penalty of the broken Law, the accumulated guilt of humanity, and the holy wrath of the Righteous Judge upon them. And in view of this mystery the heaviness of sleep seems to steal over our apprehension.

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Alone, as in His first conflict with the Evil One in the Temptation in the wilderness, must the Saviour enter on the last contest. With what agony of soul He took upon Him now and there the sins of the world, and in taking expiated them, we may learn from this account of what passed, when, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death He offered up prayers and supplications. ²⁵ And—we anticipate it already—with these results: that He was heard; that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; that He was made perfect; and that He became: to us the Author of Eternal Salvation, and before God, a High-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Alone—and yet even this being parted from them (apespasqh), ²⁶ implied sorrow. ^{27 28} And now, on His knees prostrate on the ground, prostrate on His Face, began His Agony. His very address bears witness to it. It is the only time, so far as recorded in the Gospels, when He addressed God with the personal pronoun: My Father. ^{29 30} The object of the prayer was, that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from Him. ³¹ The subject of the prayer (as recorded by the three Gospels) was, that the Cup itself might pass away, yet always with the limitation, that not His Will but the Father's might be done. The petition of Christ, therefore, was

²⁵Hebrews 5:7.

²⁶St. Luke 22:41.

²⁷Comp. Acts 21.

²⁸The Vulgate renders: *avulsus est*. *Bengel* notes: *serio affectu*.'

²⁹St. Matthew 26:39, 42.

³⁰St. Jerome notes: *dicitque blandiens: Mi Pater*.'

³¹St. Mark 14:36.

[208] subject not only to the Will of the Father, but to His own Will that the Father's Will might be done.³² We are here in full view of the deepest mystery of our faith: the two Natures in One Person. Both Natures spake here, and the if it be possible of St. Matthew and St. Mark is in St. Luke if Thou be willing. In any case, the possibility is not physical—for with God all things are possible—but moral: that of inward fitness. Was there, then, any thought or view of a possibility that Christ's work could be accomplished without that hour and Cup? Or did it only mark the utmost limit of His endurance and submission? We dare not answer; we only reverently follow what is recorded.

It was in this extreme Agony of Soul almost unto death, that the Angel appeared (as in the Temptation in the wilderness) to strengthen and support His Body and Soul. And so the conflict went on, with increasing earnestness of prayer, all that terrible hour.³³ For, the appearance of the Angel must have intimated to Him, that the Cup could not pass away.³⁴ And at the close of that hour—as we infer from the fact that the disciples must still have seen on His Brow the marks of the Bloody Sweat³⁵—His Sweat, mingled with Blood,³⁶ fell in great drops on the ground. And when the Saviour with this mark of His Agony on His Brow³⁷ returned to the three, He found that deep sleep held them. While He lay in prayer, they lay in sleep; and yet where soul-agony leads not to the one, it often induces the other. His words, primarily addressed to Simon roused them, yet not sufficiently to fully carry to their hearts either the loving reproach, the admonition to Watch and pray in view of the coming temptation, or the most seasonable warning about the weakness of the flesh, even where the spirit was willing, ready and ardent (proquomon).

³²This explains the apo thV eulabeiaV of [Hebrews 5:7](#).

³³St. [Matthew 26:40](#).

³⁴*Bengel*: Signum bibendi calicis.'

³⁵The pathological phenomenon of blood being forced out of the vessels in bloody sweat, as the consequence of agony, has been medically sufficiently attested. See the Commentaries.

³⁶No one who has seen it, can forget the impression of *Carlo Dolce's* picture, in which the drops as they fall kindle into heavenly light.

³⁷They probably knew of the Bloody Sweat by seeing its marks on His Brow, though those who did not follow Him on His capture may have afterwards gone, and in the moonlight seen the drops on the place where He had knelt.

The conflict had been virtually, though not finally, decided, when the Saviour went back to the three sleeping disciples. He now returned to complete it, though both the attitude in which He prayed (no longer prostrate) and the wording of His Prayer—only slightly altered as it was—indicate how near it was to perfect victory. And once more, on His return to them, He found that sleep had weighted their eyes, and they scarce knew what answer to make to Him. Yet a third time He left them to pray as before. And now He returned victorious. After three assaults had the Tempter left Him in the wilderness; after the threefold conflict in the Garden he was vanquished. Christ came forth triumphant. No longer did He bid His disciples watch. They might, nay they should, sleep and take rest, ere the near terrible events of His Betrayal—for, the hour had come when the Son of Man was to be betrayed into the hands of sinners.

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A very brief period of rest this,³⁸ soon broken by the call of Jesus to rise and go to where the other eight had been left, at the entrance of the Garden—to go forward and meet the band which was coming under the guidance of the Betrayer. And while He was speaking, the heavy tramp of many men and the light of lanterns and torches indicated the approach of Judas and his band. During the hours that had passed all had been prepared. When, according to arrangement, he appeared at the High-Priestly Palace, or more probably at that of Annas, who seems to have had the direction of affairs, the Jewish leaders first communicated with the Roman garrison. By their own admission they possessed no longer (for forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem) the power of pronouncing capital sentence.³⁹ It is difficult to understand how, in view of this fact (so fully confirmed in the New Testament), it could have been imagined (as so generally) that the Sanhedrin had, in regular session, sought formally to pronounce on Jesus what, admittedly, they had not the power to execute. Nor, indeed, did they, when appealing to Pilate, plead that they had pronounced sentence of death, but only that they had a law by which Jesus should die.⁴⁰ It was otherwise

³⁸It will be noticed that we place an interval of time, however brief, between St. [Matthew 26:45](#) (and similarly St. [Mark 14:41](#)) and the following verse. So already St. *Augustine*.

³⁹Sanh. 41.

⁴⁰St. [John 18:31](#); St. [John 19:7](#).

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as regarded civil causes, or even minor offences. The Sanhedrin, not possessing the power of the sword, had, of course, neither soldiery, nor regularly armed band at command. The Temple-guard under their officers served merely for purposes of police, and, indeed, were neither regularly armed nor trained.⁴¹ Nor would the Romans have tolerated a regular armed Jewish force in Jerusalem.

We can now understand the progress of events. In the fortress of Antonia, close to the Temple and connected with it by two stairs,⁴² lay the Roman garrison. But during the Feast the Temple itself was guarded by an armed Cohort, consisting of from 400 to 600 men,⁴³ so as to prevent or quell any tumult among the numerous pilgrims.⁴⁴ It would be to the captain of this Cohort that the Chief Priests and leaders of the Pharisees would, in the first place, apply for an armed guard to effect the arrest of Jesus, on the ground that it might lead to some popular tumult. This, without necessarily having to state the charge that was to be brought against Him, which might have led to other complications. Although St. John speaks of the band by a word (*speira*) which always designates a Cohort⁴⁵—in this case the Cohort the definite article marking it as that of the Temple—yet there is no reason for believing that the whole Cohort was sent. Still, its commander would scarcely have sent a strong detachment out of the—Temple—, and on what might lead to a riot, without having first referred to the Procurator, Pontius Pilate. And if further evidence were required, it would be in the fact that the band was led not by a Centurion, but by a Chiliarch,⁴⁵ which, as there were no intermediate grades in the Roman army, must represent one of the six tribunes attached to each legion. This also explains not only the apparent preparedness of Pilate to sit in judgment early next morning, but also how Pilate's wife may have been disposed for those dreams about Jesus which so affrighted her.

⁴¹*Jos. War* iv. 4. 6.

⁴²*Jos. War* v. 5, 8.

⁴³The number varied. See *Marquardt, Röm. Alterthumsk.* vol. v. 2, pp. 359, 386, 441. Canon *Westcott* suggests that it might have been, not a cohort, but a *manipulus* (of about 200 men); but, as himself points out, the expression as used in the N.T. seems always to indicate a cohort.

⁴⁴*Jos. Ant.* xxv. 5. 3.

⁴⁵St. [John 18:12](#).

This Roman detachment, armed with swords and staves'—with the latter of which Pilate on other occasions also directed his soldiers to attack them who raised a tumult ⁴⁶—was accompanied by servants from the High-Priest's Palace, and other Jewish officers, to direct the arrest of Jesus. They bore torches and lamps placed on the top of poles, so as to prevent any possible concealment. ⁴⁷

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Whether or not this was the great multitude mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark, or the band was swelled by volunteers or curious onlookers, is a matter of no importance. Having received this band, Judas proceeded on his errand. As we believe, their first move was to the house where the Supper had been celebrated. Learning that Jesus had left it with His disciples, perhaps two or three hours before, Judas next directed the band to the spot he knew so well: to Gethsemane. A signal by which to recognise Jesus seemed almost necessary with so large a band, and where escape or resistance might be apprehended. It was—terrible to say—none other than a kiss. As soon as he had so marked Him, the guard were to seize, and lead Him safely away.

Combining the notices in the four Gospels, we thus picture to ourselves the succession of events. As the band reached the Garden, Judas went somewhat in advance of them, ⁴⁸ and reached Jesus just as He had roused the three and was preparing to go and meet His captors. He saluted Him, Hail, Rabbi so as to be heard by the rest, and not only kissed but covered Him with kisses, kissed Him repeatedly, loudly, effusively (*katēfilhsen*). The Saviour submitted to the indignity, not stopping, but only saying as He passed on: Friend, that for which thou art here; ⁴⁹ ⁵⁰ and then, perhaps in answer to his questioning gesture: Judas, with a kiss deliverest thou up the Son of Man? ⁵¹ If Judas had wished, by thus going in advance of the band and saluting the Master with a kiss, even now to act the hypocrite and deceive Jesus and the disciples, as if he had not come with the

⁴⁶*Jos.* War ii. 9. 4.

⁴⁷St. [John 18:3](#).

⁴⁸St. [Luke](#).

⁴⁹St. [Matthew 26:49](#); comp. St. [Mark 14:45](#).

⁵⁰We cannot, as many interpreters, take the words in an interrogative sense. I presume that Christ spoke both what St. Matthew and what St. Luke record. Both bear internal marks of genuineness.

⁵¹St. [Luke 22:48](#).

[212] armed men, perhaps only to warn Him of their approach, what the Lord said must have reached his inmost being. Indeed, it was the first mortal shaft in the soul of Judas. The only time we again see him, till he goes on what ends in his self-destruction, is as he stands, as it were sheltering himself, with the armed men. ⁵²

It is at this point, as we suppose, that the notices from St. John's Gospel ⁵³ come in. Leaving the traitor, and ignoring the signal which he had given them, Jesus advanced to the band, and asked them: Whom seek ye? To the brief spoken, perhaps somewhat contemptuous, Jesus the Nazarene He replied with infinite calmness and majesty: I am He. The immediate effect of these words was, we shall not say magical, but Divine. They had no doubt been prepared for quite other: either compromise, fear, or resistance. But the appearance and majesty of that calm Christ—heaven in His look and peace on His lips—was too overpowering in its effects on that untutored heathen soldiery, who perhaps cherished in their hearts secret misgivings of the work they had in hand. The foremost of them went backward, and they fell to the ground. But Christ's hour had come. And once more He now asked them the same question as before, and, on repeating their former answer, He said: I told you that I am *He*; if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way—the Evangelist seeing in this watchful care over His own the initial fulfilment of the words which the Lord had previously spoken concerning their safe preservation, ⁵⁴ not only in the sense of their outward preservation, but in that of their being guarded from such temptations as, in their then state, they could not have endured.

The words of Christ about those that were with Him seem to have recalled the leaders of the guard to full consciousness—perhaps awakened in them fears of a possible rising at the incitement of His adherents. Accordingly, it is here that we insert the notice of St. Matthew, ⁵⁵ and of St. Mark, ⁵⁶ that they laid hands on Jesus and took Him. Then it was that Peter, ⁵⁷ seeing what was coming, drew

⁵²St. John 18:5.

⁵³xviii. 4-9.

⁵⁴St. John 17:12.

⁵⁵St. Matthew 26:50 b.

⁵⁶St. Mark 14:46.

⁵⁷St. John 18:11, 26.

the sword which he carried, and putting the question to Jesus, but without awaiting His answer, struck at Malchus,⁵⁸ the servant⁵⁹ of the High-Priest—perhaps the Jewish leader of the band—cutting off his ear. But Jesus immediately restrained all such violence, and rebuked all self-vindication by outward violence (the taking of the sword that had not been received)—nay, with it all merely outward zeal, pointing to the fact how easily He might, as against this cohort have commanded Angelic legions.^{60 61} He had in wrestling Agony received from His Father that Cup to drink,^{62 63} and the Scriptures must in that wise be fulfilled. And so saying, He touched the ear of Malchus, and healed him.⁶⁴

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But this faint appearance of resistance was enough for the guard. Their leaders now bound Jesus.⁶⁵ It was to this last, most undeserved and uncalled-for indignity that Jesus replied by asking them, why they had come against Him as against a robber—one of those wild, murderous Sicarii. Had He not been all that week daily in the Temple, teaching? Why not then seize Him? But this hour of theirs that had come, and the power of darkness’—this also had been foretold in Scripture!

And as the ranks of the armed men now closed around the bound Christ, none dared to stay with Him, lest they also should be bound as resisting authority. So they all forsook Him and fled. But there

⁵⁸The name *Malchus*, which occurs also in *Josephus* (*Ant.* i. 15. 1.; 14:5. 2; 11. 4; *War* i. 8. 3), must not be derived, as is generally done, from *Klm* a king. Its Hebrew equivalent, apparently, is *Malluch*, Counsellor a name which occurs both in the Old Testament and in the LXX. (*1 Chronicles* 6:44; *Nehemiah* 10:4, &c.), and as a later Jewish name in the Talmud. But both *Frankel* (*Einl.* in *d. Jer. Talm.* p. 114) and *Freudenthal* (*Hell. Stud.* p. 131) maintain that it was not a Jewish name, while it was common among Syrians, Ph[^{U+009C}]nicians, Arabians, and Samaritans. The suggestion therefore lies near, that Malchus was either a Syrian or a Ph[^{U+009C}]nician by birth.

⁵⁹The definite article here marks that he was, in a special sense, *the* servant of the High-Priest—his body-servant.

⁶⁰St. Matthew.

⁶¹A legion had ten cohorts.

⁶²St. John.

⁶³This reference to the cup which the Father had given Him to drink by St. John, implies the whole history of the Agony in Gethsemane, which is not recorded in the Fourth Gospel. And this is, on many grounds, very instructive.

⁶⁴St. Luke.

⁶⁵St. John.

was one there who joined not in the flight, but remained, a deeply interested onlooker. When the soldiers had come to seek Jesus in the Upper Chamber of his home, Mark, roused from sleep, had hastily cast about him the loose linen garment or wrapper ⁶⁶

[214] that lay by his bedside, and followed the armed band to see what would come of it. He now lingered in the rear, and followed as they led away Jesus, never imagining that they would attempt to lay hold on him, since he had not been with the disciples nor yet in the Garden. But they, ⁶⁷ perhaps the Jewish servants of the High-Priest, had noticed him. They attempted to lay hold on him, when, disengaging himself from their grasp, he left his upper garment in their hands, and fled.

So ended the first scene in the terrible drama of that night.

⁶⁶sindwn. This, no doubt, corresponds to the *Sadin* or *Sedina* which, in Rabbinic writings, means a linen cloth, or a loose linen wrapper, though, possibly, it may also mean a night-dress (see *Levy*, ad voc.).

⁶⁷The designation young men (St. [Mark 14:51](#)) is spurious.

Chapter 13—Thursday Night

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Before Annas and Caiaphas—Peter and Jesus

(St. John 18:12-14; St. Matthew 26:57, 58; St. Mark 14:53, 54; St. Luke 22:54, 55; St. John 18:24, 15-18; St. John 18:19-23; St. Matthew 26:69, 70; St. Mark 14:66-68; St. Luke 22:56, 57; St. John 18:17, 18; St. Matthew 26:71, 72; St. Mark 14:69, 70; St. Luke 22:58; St. John 18:25; St. Matthew 26:59-68; St. Mark 14:55-65; St. Luke 22:67-71, 63-65; St. Matthew 26:73-75; St. Mark 14:70-72; St. Luke 22:59-62; St. John 18:26, 27.)

It was not a long way that they led the bound Christ. Probably through the same gate by which He had gone forth with His disciples after the Paschal Supper, up to where, on the slope between the Upper City and the Tyropoeon, stood the well-known Palace of Annas. There were no idle saunterers in the streets of Jerusalem at that late hour, and the tramp of the Roman guard must have been too often heard to startle sleepers, or to lead to the inquiry why that glare of lamps and torches, and Who was the Prisoner, guarded on that holy night by both Roman soldiers and servants of the High-Priest.

If every incident in that night were not of such supreme interest, we might dismiss the question as almost idle, why they brought Jesus to the house of Annas, since he was not at that time the actual High-Priest. That office now devolved on Caiaphas, his son-in-law, who, as the Evangelist significantly reminds us,¹ had been the first to enunciate in plain words what seemed to him the political necessity for the judicial murder of Christ.² There had been no pretence on his part of religious motives or zeal for God; he had cynically put it in a way to override the scruples of those old Sanhedrists by raising their fears. What was the use of discussing about forms of Law or about that Man? It must in any case be done; even the friends of

¹St. John 18:14.

²xi. 50.

Jesus in the Council, as well as the punctilious observers of Law, must regard His Death as the less of two evils. He spoke as the bold, unscrupulous, determined man that he was; Sadducee in heart rather than by conviction; a worthy son-in-law of Annas.

[216] No figure is better known in contemporary Jewish history than that of Annas; no person deemed more fortunate or successful, but none also more generally execrated than the late High-Priest. He had held the Pontificate for only six or seven years; but it was filled by not fewer than five of his sons, by his son-in-law Caiaphas, and by a grandson. And in those days it was, at least for one of Annas disposition, much better to have been than to be High-Priest. He enjoyed all the dignity of the office, and all its influence also, since he was able to promote to it those most closely connected with him. And, while they acted publicly, he really directed affairs, without either the responsibility or the restraints which the office imposed. His influence with the Romans he owed to the religious views which he professed, to his open partisanship of the foreigner, and to his enormous wealth. The Sadducean Annas was an eminently safe Churchman, not troubled with any special convictions nor with Jewish fanaticism, a pleasant and a useful man also who was able to furnish his friends in the Praetorium with large sums of money. We have seen what immense revenues the family of Annas must have derived from the Temple-booths, and how nefarious and unpopular was the traffic. The names of those bold, licentious, unscrupulous, degenerate sons of Aaron were spoken with whispered curses.³ Without referring to Christ's interference with that Temple-traffic, which, if His authority had prevailed, would, of course, have been fatal to it, we can understand how antithetic in every respect a Messiah, and such a Messiah as Jesus, must have been to Annas. He was as resolutely bent on His Death as his son-in-law, though with his characteristic cunning and coolness, not in the hasty, bluff manner of Caiaphas. It was probably from a desire that Annas might have the conduct of the business, or from the active, leading part which Annas took in the matter; perhaps for even more prosaic and practical reasons, such as that the Palace of Annas was nearer to the place of Jesus capture, and that it was desirable to dismiss the

³Pes. 57 a.

Roman soldiery as quickly as possible—that Christ was first brought to Annas, and not to the actual High-Priest.

In any case, the arrangement was most congruous, whether as regards the character of Annas, or the official position of Caiaphas. The Roman soldiers had evidently orders to bring Jesus to the late High-Priest. This appears from their proceeding directly to him, and from this, that apparently they returned to quarters immediately on delivering up their prisoner. ⁴

And we cannot ascribe this to any official position of Annas in the Sanhedrin, first, because the text implies that it had not been due to this cause, ⁵ and, secondly, because, as will presently appear, the proceedings against Christ were *not* those of the ordinary and regular meetings of the Sanhedrin. [217]

No account is given of what passed before Annas. Even the fact of Christ's being first brought to him is only mentioned in the Fourth Gospel. As the disciples had all forsaken Him and fled, we can understand that they were in ignorance of what actually passed, till they had again rallied, at least so far, that Peter and another disciple evidently John, followed Him into the Palace of the High-priest'—that is, into the Palace of Caiaphas, not of Annas. For as, according to the three Synoptic Gospels, the Palace of the High-Priest Caiaphas was the scene of Peter's denial, the account of it in the Fourth Gospel ^{6 7} must refer to the same locality, and not to the Palace of Annas, while the suggestion that Annas and Caiaphas occupied the same dwelling is not only very unlikely in itself, but seems incompatible with the obvious meaning of the notice, ⁸ Now Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the High-Priest. But if Peter's denial, as recorded by St. John, is the same as that described by the Synoptists, and took place in the house of Caiaphas, then the account of the examination by the High-Priest, ⁹ which follows the notice about Peter, must also refer to that by Caiaphas, not Annas.

⁴No further reference whatever is made to the Roman guard.

⁵We read (St. John 18:13): 'For he was father-in-law to Caiaphas.'

⁶St. John 18:15-18.

⁷And hence also that of the two disciples following Christ.

⁸ver. 24.

⁹St. John 18:19-23.

¹⁰ We thus know absolutely nothing of what passed in the house of Annas—if, indeed, anything passed—except that Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas. ¹¹

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Of what occurred in the Palace of Caiaphas we have two accounts. That of St. John ¹² seems to refer to a more private interview between the High-Priest and Christ, at which, apparently, only some personal attendants of Caiaphas were present, from one of whom the Apostle may have derived his information. ¹³ The second account is that of the Synoptists, and refers to the examination of Jesus at dawn of day ¹⁴ by the leading Sanhedrists, who had been hastily summoned for the purpose.

It sounds almost like presumption to say, that in His first interview with Caiaphas Jesus bore Himself with the majesty of the Son of God, Who knew all that was before Him, and passed through it as on the way to the accomplishment of His Mission. The questions of Caiaphas bore on two points: the disciples of Jesus, and His

¹⁰In this argument we lay little stress on the designation, High-Priest which St. John (ver. 19) gives to the examiner of Christ, although it is noteworthy that he carefully distinguishes between Annas and Caiaphas, marking the latter as the High-Priest (vv. 13, 24).

¹¹According to our argument, St. John 18:24 is an intercalated notice, referring to what had previously been recorded in vv. 15-23. To this two critical objections have been raised. It is argued, that as *apesteilen* is in the aorist, not plu-perfect, the rendering must be, Annas sent not had sent Him. But then it is admitted, that the aorist is occasionally used for the pluperfect. Secondly, it is insisted that, according to the better reading, *oun* should be inserted after *apesteilen* which Canon *Westcott* renders: Annas therefore sent Him. But notwithstanding Canon *Westcott's* high authority, we must repeat the critical remark of *Meyer*, that there are important witnesses against as well as for the insertion of *oun*, while the insertion of other particles in other Codd. seems to imply that the insertion here of any particle was a later addition.

On the other hand, what seem to me two irrefragable arguments are in favour of the retrospective application of ver. 24. First, the preceding reference to Peter's denial must be located in the house of Caiaphas. Secondly, if vv. 19-23 refer to an examination by Annas, then St. John has left us absolutely no account of anything that had passed before Caiaphas—which, in view of the narrative of the Synoptists, would seem incredible

¹²St. John 18:19-23.

¹³Canon *Westcott* supposes that the Apostle himself was present in the audience chamber. But, although we readily admit that John went into the house, and was as near as possible to Christ, many reasons suggest themselves why we can scarcely imagine John to have been present, when Caiaphas inquired about the disciples and teaching of Jesus.

¹⁴St. Luke 22:66.

teaching—the former to incriminate Christ’s followers, the latter to incriminate the Master. To the first inquiry it was only natural that He should not have condescended to return an answer. The reply to the second was characterised by that openness which He claimed for all that He had said. ¹⁵ ¹⁶ If there was to be not unprejudiced, but even fair inquiry, let Caiaphas not try to extort confessions to which he had no legal right, nor to ensnare Him when the purpose was evidently murderous. If he really wanted information, there could be no difficulty in procuring witnesses to speak to His doctrine: all Jewry knew it. His was no secret doctrine (in secret I spake nothing). He always spoke in Synagogue and in the Temple, whither all the Jews gather together. ¹⁷ If the inquiry were a fair one, let the judge act judicially, and ask not Him, but those who had heard Him.

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It must be admitted, that the answer sounds not like that of one accused, who seeks either to make apology, or even greatly cares to defend himself. And there was in it that tone of superiority which even injured human innocence would have a right to assume before a nefarious judge, who sought to ensnare a victim, not to elicit the truth. It was this which emboldened one of those servile attendants, with the brutality of an Eastern in such circumstances, to inflict on the Lord that terrible blow. Let us hope that it was a heathen, not a Jew, who so lifted his hand. We are almost thankful that the text leaves it in doubt, whether it was with the palm of the hand, or the lesser indignity—with a rod. Humanity itself seems to reel and stagger under this blow. In pursuance of His Human submission, the Divine Sufferer, without murmuring or complaining, or without asserting His Divine Power, only answered in such tone of patient expostulation as must have convicted the man of his wrong, or at least have left him speechless. May it have been that these words and

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¹⁵St. John 18:20.

¹⁶I cannot think that the expression *tw kosmw* to the world in [ver. 20](#) can have any implied reference to the great world in opposition to the Jews (as so many interpreters hold). The expression the world in the sense of everybody is common in every language. And its Rabbinic use has been shown on p. 368, Note 3. Christ proves that He had had no secret doctrine, about which He might be questioned, by three facts: 1. He had spoken *parrhsia* without reserve; 2. He had spoken *tw kosmw* to everybody, without confining Himself to a select audience; 3. He had taught in the most public places—in Synagogue and in the Temple, whither all Jews resorted.

¹⁷So according to the better reading and literally.

the look of Christ had gone to his heart, and that the now strangely silenced malefactor became the confessing narrator of this scene to the Apostle John?

2. That Apostle was, at any rate, no stranger in the Palace of Caiaphas. We have already seen that, after the first panic of Christ's sudden capture and their own flight, two of them at least, Peter and John, seem speedily to have rallied. Combining the notices of the Synoptists ¹⁸ with the fuller details, in this respect, of the Fourth Gospel, ¹⁹ we derive the impression that Peter, so far true to his word, had been the first to stop in his flight and to follow afar off. If he reached the Palace of Annas in time, he certainly did not enter it, but probably waited outside during the brief space which preceded the transference of Jesus to Caiaphas. He had now been joined by John, and the two followed the melancholy procession which escorted Jesus to the High-Priest. John seems to have entered the court along with the guard, ²⁰ while Peter remained outside till his fellow-Apostle, who apparently was well known in the High-Priest's house, had spoken to the maid who kept the door—the male servants being probably all gathered in the court ²¹ —and so procured his admission.

Remembering that the High-Priest's Palace was built on the slope of the hill, and that there was an outer court, from which a door led into the inner court, we can, in some measure, realise the scene. As previously stated, Peter had followed as far as that inner door, while John had entered with the guard. When he missed his fellow-disciple, who was left outside this inner door, John went out and, having probably told the waiting-maid that this was a friend of his, procured his admission. While John now hurried up to be in the Palace, and as near Christ as he might, Peter advanced into the middle of the court, where, in the chill spring night, a coal fire had been lighted. The glow of the charcoal, around which occasionally

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¹⁸St. [Matthew 26:58](#); St. [Mark 14:54](#); St. [Luke 22:54, 55](#).

¹⁹St. [John 18:15-18](#).

²⁰St. [John 18:15](#).

²¹The circumstance that *Josephus* (*Ant.* vii. 2. 1) on the ground of [2 Samuel 4:6](#) (LXX.) speaks of a female porter and that Rhoda opened the door in the house of the widowed mother of John Mark ([Acts 12:13](#)), does not convince me, that in the Palace of the High-Priest a female servant regularly discharged that office.

a blue flame played, threw a peculiar sheen on the bearded faces of the men as they crowded around it, and talked of the events of that night, describing, with Eastern volubility, to those who had not been there what had passed in the Garden, and exchanging, as is the manner of such serving-men and officials, opinions and exaggerated denunciations concerning Him Who had been captured with such unexpected ease, and was now their master's safe Prisoner. As the red light glowed and flickered, it threw the long shadows of these men across the inner court, up the walls towards the gallery that ran round, up there, where the lamps and lights within, or as they moved along apartments and corridors, revealed other faces: there, where, in an inner audience-chamber, the Prisoner was confronted by His enemy, accuser, and judge.

What a contrast it all seemed between the Purification of the Temple only a few days before, when the same Jesus had overturned the trafficking tables of the High-Priest, and as He now stood, a bound Prisoner before him, at the mercy of every menial who might carry favour by wantonly insulting Him? It was a chill night when Peter, down beneath ²² looked up to the lighted windows. There, among the serving-men in the court, he was in every sense without. ²³ He approached the group around the fire. He would hear what they had to say; besides, it was not safe to stand apart; he might be recognised as one of those who had only escaped capture in the Garden by hasty flight. And then it was chill—and not only to the body, the chill had struck to his soul. Was he right in having come there at all? Commentators have discussed it as involving neglect of Christ's warning. As if the love of any one who was, and felt, as Peter, could have credited the possibility of what he had been warned of; and, if he had credited it, would, in the first moments of returning flood after the panic of his flight, have remembered that warning, or with cool calculation acted up to the full measure of it! To have fled to his home and shut the door behind him, by way of rendering it impossible to deny that he knew Christ, would not have been Peter nor any true disciple. Nay, it would itself have been a worse and more cowardly denial than that of which he was

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²²St. [Mark 14:66](#).

²³St. [Matthew 26:69](#).

actually guilty. Peter followed afar off, thinking of nothing else but his imprisoned Master, and that he would see the end, whatever it might be. But now it was chill, very chill, to body and soul, and Peter remembered it all; not, indeed, the warning, but that of which he had been warned. What good could his confession do? Perhaps much possible harm; and why was he there?

Peter was very restless, and yet he must seem very quiet. He sat down among the servants, ²⁴ then he stood up among them. ²⁵ It was this restlessness of attempted indifference which attracted the attention of the maid who had at the first admitted him. As in the uncertain light she scanned the features of the mysterious stranger, she boldly charged him, ²⁶ though still in a questioning tone, with being one of the disciples of the Man Who stood incriminated up there before the High-Priest. And in the chattering of his soul's fever, into which the chill had struck, Peter vehemently denied all knowledge of Him to Whom the woman referred, nay, of the very meaning of what she said. He had said too much not to bring soon another charge upon himself. We need not inquire which of the slightly varying reports in the Gospels represents the actual words of the woman or the actual answer of Peter. Perhaps neither; perhaps all—certainly, she said all this, and, certainly, he answered all that, though neither of them would confine their words to the short sentences reported by each of the Evangelists.

What had he to do there? And why should he incriminate himself, or perhaps Christ, by a needless confession to those who had neither the moral nor the legal right to exact it? That was all he now remembered and thought; nothing about any denial of Christ. And so, as they were still chatting together, perhaps bandying words, Peter withdrew. We cannot judge how long time had passed, but this we gather, that the words of the woman had either not made any impression on those around the fire, or that the bold denial of Peter had satisfied them. Presently, we find Peter walking away down the porch ²⁷ which ran round and opened into the outer court. ²⁸ He

²⁴The Synoptists.

²⁵St. John.

²⁶St. John.

²⁷St. Matthew.

²⁸St. Mark.

was not thinking of anything else now than how chilly it felt, and how right he had been in not being entrapped by that woman. And so he heeded it not, while his footfall sounded along the marble-paved porch, that just at this moment a cock crew. But there was no sleep that night in the High-Priest's Palace. As he walked down the porch towards the outer court, first one maid met him; and then, as he returned from the outer court, he once more encountered his old accuser, the door-portress; and as he crossed the inner court to mingle again with the group around the fire, where he had formerly found safety, he was first accosted by one man, and then they all around the fire turned upon him, and each and all had the same thing to say, the same charge, that he was also one of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. But Peter's resolve was taken; he was quite sure it was right; and to each separately, and to all together, he gave the same denial, more brief now, for he was collected and determined, but more emphatic—even with an oath.²⁹ And once more he silenced suspicion for a time. Or, perhaps, attention was now otherwise directed.

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3. For, already, hasty footsteps were heard along the porches and corridors, and the maid who that night opened the gate at the High-Priest's Palace was busy at her post. They were the leading Priests, Elders, and Sanhedrists,³⁰ who had been hastily summoned to the High-Priest's Palace, and who were hurrying up just as the first faint streaks of gray light were lying on the sky. The private examination by Caiaphas we place (as in the Gospel of St. John) between the first and second denial of Peter; the first arrival of Sanhedrists immediately after his second denial. The private inquiry of Caiaphas had elicited nothing; and, indeed, it was only preliminary. The leading Sanhedrists must have been warned that the capture of Jesus would be attempted that night, and to hold themselves in readiness when summoned to the High-Priest. This is not only quite in accordance with all the previous and after circumstances in the narrative, but nothing short of a procedure of such supreme importance would

²⁹St. Matthew.

³⁰The expression all the council must evidently be taken in a general, not literal sense. No one would believe, for example, that either Nicodemus or Gamaliel was present. I would not, however, attach any great importance to this. The reference to the Elders (in St. Matt.) is spurious.

have warranted the presence for such a purpose of these religious leaders on that holy Passover-night.

- [224] But whatever view be taken, thus much at least is certain, that it was no formal, regular meeting of the Sanhedrin. We put aside, as *à priori* reasoning, such considerations as that protesting voices would have been raised, not only from among the friends of Jesus, but from others whom (with all their Jewish hatred of Christ) we cannot but regard as incapable of such gross violation of justice and law. But all Jewish order and law would have been grossly infringed in almost every particular, if this had been a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin.³¹ We know what their forms were, although many of them (as so much in Rabbinic accounts) may represent rather the ideal than the real—what the Rabbis imagined should be, rather than what was; or else what may date from later times. According to Rabbinic testimony, there were three tribunals. In towns numbering less than 120 (or, according to one authority, 230³²) male inhabitants, there was only the lowest tribunal, that consisting of three Judges.³³
- [225] Their jurisdiction was limited, and notably did not extend to capital causes.³⁴ The authority of the tribunal of next instance—that

³¹This is also the conclusion of the calmest and most impartial Jewish historian, my lamented friend, the late *Dr. Jost* (*Gesch. d. Judenth.* 1. pp. 402-409). He designates it a private murder (*Privat-Mord*), committed by burning enemies, not the sentence of a regularly constituted Sanhedrin. The most prominent men who represented the Law, such as Gamaliel, Jochanan b. Zakkai, and others, were not present. The defence of the proceedings as a right and legal procedure by the Sanhedrin, as made by *Salvador* (*Gesch. d. Mos. Instit.* [German Transl.] vol. ii. pp. 67-79) is, from the critical point of view, so unsatisfactory, that I can only wonder the learned *Saalschütz* should, even under the influence of Jewish prejudice, have extended to it his protection (*Mos. Recht*, pp. 623-626). At the same time, the refutation of *Salvador* by *M. Dupin* (reproduced as App. to vol. iii. of the German translation of *Salvador*) is as superficial as the original attack. *Cohen's Les Déicides* is a mere party-book which deserves not serious consideration. *Grätz* (*Gesch. d. Juden*, 3. p. 244) evades the question.

³²In *Sanh.* i. 6, the reasons for the various numbers are given; but we can scarcely regard them as historical.

³³Various modern writers have of late denied the existence of tribunals of three. But the whole weight of evidence is against them. A number of passages might here be quoted, but the reader may be generally referred to the treatment of the subject in *Selden*, de *Synedriis*, ii. c. 5, and especially to *Maimonides*, *Hilkh. Sanh.*

³⁴In the case of a *Mumcheh* or admitted authority, even one Judge could in certain civil cases pronounce sentence (*Sanh.* 2 *b*; 3 *a*).

of twenty-three³⁵—was also limited, although capital causes lay within its competence. The highest tribunal was that of seventy-one, or the Great Sanhedrin, which met first in one of the Temple-Chambers, the so-called *Lishkath haGazith*—or Chamber of Hewn Stones—and at the time of which we write in the booths of the sons of Annas.³⁶ The Judges of all these Courts were equally set apart by ordination (*Semikhah*), originally that of the laying on of hands. Ordination was conferred by *three*, of whom one at least must have been himself ordained, and able to trace up his ordination through Joshua to Moses.³⁷ This, of course, on the theory that there had been a regular succession of ordained Teachers, not only up to Ezra, but beyond him to Joshua and Moses. The members of the tribunals of twenty-three were appointed by the Great Sanhedrin.³⁸ The members of the tribunals of three were likewise appointed by the Great Sanhedrin, which entrusted to men, specially accredited and worthy, the duty of travelling through the towns of Palestine and appointing and ordaining in them the men best fitted for the office.³⁹ The qualifications mentioned for the office remind us of those which St. Paul indicates as requisite for the Christian eldership.⁴⁰

Some inferences seem here of importance, as throwing light on early Apostolic arrangements—believing, as we do, that the outward *form* of the Church was in great measure derived from the Synagogue. First, we notice that there was regular ordination, and, at first at least, by the laying on of hands. Further, this ordination was *not* requisite either for delivering addresses or conducting the liturgy in the Synagogue, but for *authoritative* teaching, and especially for judicial functions, to which would correspond in the Christian Church the power of the Keys—the administration of discipline and of the Sacraments as admitting into, and continuing in the fellowship of the Church. Next, ordination could only be conferred by those who had themselves been rightly ordained, and who could, therefore,

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³⁵In Jerusalem there were said to have been two such tribunals; one whose *locale* was at the entrance to the Temple-Court, the other at that to the inner or Priest-Court.

³⁶It is a mistake to identify these with the four shops on the Mount of Olives. They were the Temple-shops previously described.

³⁷Sanh. 2 *a*; *Maim.* Sanh. iv. 1-3.

³⁸Sanh. 2 *a*; 15 *b*.

³⁹Sanh. 88 *b*; *Maim.* u. s. ch 2:7, 8.

⁴⁰1 Timothy 3.; Titus 1.

through those previously ordained, trace their ordination upwards. Again, each of these Colleges of Presbyters had its Chief or President. Lastly, men entrusted with supreme (Apostolic) authority were sent to the various towns to appoint elders in every city. ⁴¹

The appointment to the highest tribunal, or Great Sanhedrin, was made by that tribunal itself, either by promoting a member of the inferior tribunals or one from the foremost of the three rows, in which the disciples or students sat facing the Judges. The latter sat in a semicircle, under the presidency of the *Nasi* (prince) and the vice-presidency of the *Ab-beth-din* (father of the Court of Law).

⁴² At least twenty-three members were required to form a *quorum*.

⁴³ We have such minute details of the whole arrangements and proceedings of this Court as greatly confirms our impression of the chiefly ideal character of some of the Rabbinic notices. Facing the semicircle of Judges, we are told, there were two shorthand writers, to note down, respectively, the speeches in favour and against the accused. Each of the students knew, and sat in his own place. In capital causes the arguments in defence of and afterwards those incriminating the accused, were stated. If one had spoken in favour, he might not again speak against the panel. Students might speak for, not against him. He might be pronounced not guilty on the same day on which the case was tried; but a sentence of guilty might only be pronounced on the day following that of the trial. It seems, however, at least doubtful, whether in case of profanation of the Divine Name (*Chillul haShem*), judgment was not immediately executed. ⁴⁴ Lastly, the voting began with the youngest, so that juniors might not be influenced by the seniors; and a bare majority was not sufficient for condemnation.

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These are only some of the regulations laid down in Rabbinic writings. It is of greater importance to enquire, how far they were

⁴¹Titus 1:5.

⁴²*Kuene*, and after him *Schürer* (*Neutest. Zeitgesch.*) have denied the existence of this arrangement, but, as I think, on quite insufficient grounds. They have been answered by *D. Hoffmann* (see the very able ed. of the *Pirqé Abhoth*, by that learned and accurate scholar, Prof. *Strack* of Berlin, p. 9, notes). Comp. also *Levy*, *Neuhebr. Wörterb.*, s. v. *Schürer* has to account for other passages besides those which he quotes (p. 413)—notably for the very clear statement in *Chag. 2:2*.

⁴³*Bemidb. R.* 1.

⁴⁴*Kidd, 40 a.*

carried out under the iron rule of Herod and that of the Roman Procurators. Here we are in great measure left to conjecture. We can well believe that neither Herod nor the Procurators would wish to *abolish* the Sanhedrin, but would leave to them the administration of justice, especially in all that might in any way be connected with purely religious questions. Equally we can understand, that both would deprive them of the power of the sword and of decision on all matters of political or supreme importance. Herod would reserve to himself the final disposal in all cases, if he saw fit to interfere, and so would the Procurators, who especially would not have tolerated any attempt at jurisdiction over a Roman citizen. In short, the Sanhedrin would be accorded full jurisdiction in inferior and in religious matters, with the greatest show, but with the least amount, of real rule or of supreme authority. Lastly, as both Herod and the Procurators treated the High-Priest, who was their own creature, as the real head and representative of the Jews; and as it would be their policy to curtail the power of the independent and fanatical Rabbis, we can understand how, in great criminal causes or in important investigations, the High-Priest would always preside—the presidency of the *Nasi* being reserved for legal and ritual questions and discussions. And with this the notices alike in the New Testament and in Josephus accord.

Even this brief summary about the Sanhedrin would be needless, if it were a question of applying its rules of procedure to the arraignment of Jesus. For, alike Jewish and Christian evidence establish the fact, that Jesus was not formally tried and condemned by the Sanhedrin. It is admitted on all hands, that forty years before the destruction of the Temple the Sanhedrin ceased to pronounce capital sentences. This alone would be sufficient. But, besides, the trial and sentence of Jesus in the Palace of Caiaphas would (as already stated) have outraged every principle of Jewish criminal law and procedure. Such causes could only be tried, and capital sentence pronounced, in the regular meeting-place of the Sanhedrin,^{45 46} not, as here, in the High-Priest's Palace; no process, least of all such

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⁴⁵ Ab Zar. 8 *b*.

⁴⁶ There is truly not a tittle of evidence for the assumption of commentators, that Christ was led from the Palace of Caiaphas into the Council-Chamber. The whole proceedings took place in the former, and from it Christ was brought to Pilate (St. [John 18:28](#)).

an one, might be begun in the night, not even in the afternoon,⁴⁷
⁴⁸ although if the discussion had gone on all day, sentence might
 be pronounced at night.⁴⁹ Again, no process could take place on
 Sabbaths or Feast days,⁵⁰ or even on the eves of them,⁵¹ ⁵² although
 this would not have nullified proceedings, and it might be argued on
 the other side, that a process against one who had seduced the people
 should preferably be carried on, and sentence executed, at the great
 public Feasts,⁵³ for the warning of all. Lastly, in capital causes there
 was a very elaborate system of warning and cautioning witnesses,⁵⁴
 while it may safely be affirmed, that at a regular trial Jewish Judges,
 however prejudiced, would not have acted as the Sanhedrists and
 Caiaphas did on this occasion.

[229] But as we examine it more closely, we perceive that the Gospel-
 narratives do not speak of a formal trial and sentence by the San-
 hedrin. Such references as to the Sanhedrin (council), or to all the
 Sanhedrin must be taken in the wider sense, which will presently be
 explained. On the other hand, the four Gospels equally indicate that
 the whole proceedings of that night were carried on in the Palace
 of Caiaphas, and that during that night no formal sentence of death
 was pronounced. St. John, indeed, does not report the proceedings
 at all; St. Matthew⁵⁵ only records the question of Caiaphas and
 the answer of the Sanhedrists; and even the language of St. Mark
 does not convey the idea of a formal sentence.⁵⁶ And when in the

⁴⁷Shabb. 9 b

⁴⁸The ordinary Court-hours were from after morning-service till the time of the meal
 (Sabb. 10 a).

⁴⁹Sanh. 32 a.

⁵⁰Bets. 36.

⁵¹Baba K. 113 a.

⁵²In civil cases at least no process was carried on in the months of Nisan and Tishri
 (comp. Bloch, Civil Process-Ordnung).

⁵³Sanh. xi. 4; Tos. Sanh. xi. 6.

⁵⁴The details on these points are given in most commentaries. (Comp. the Tractate
 Sanhedrin and the Gemara on it.) In a capital cause not only would the formal and very
 solemn warning charge against false testimony have been addressed to the witnesses, but
 the latter would be tested by the threefold process known as *Chaqiroth*, *Derishoth*, and
Bediqoth; the former two referring to questions on the main points, the third or secondary
 points in the evidence.

⁵⁵St. Matthew 26:66.

⁵⁶St. Mark 14:64: condemned Him to be worthy of death.'

morning, in consequence of a fresh consultation, also in the Palace of Caiaphas, they led Jesus to the Praetorium, it was not as a prisoner condemned to death of whom they asked the execution,⁵⁷ but as one against whom they laid certain accusations worthy of death,⁵⁸ while, when Pilate bade them judge Jesus according to Jewish Law, they replied, not: that they had done so already, but, that they had no competence to try capital causes.⁵⁹

4. But although Christ was not tried and sentenced in a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin, there can, alas! be no question that His Condemnation and Death were the work, if not of the Sanhedrin—yet of the Sanhedrists, of the whole body of them (all the council), in the sense of expressing what was the judgment and purpose of all the Supreme Council and Leaders of Israel, with only very few exceptions. We bear in mind, that the resolution to sacrifice Christ had for some time been taken. Terrible as the proceedings of that night were, they even seem a sort of concession—as if the Sanhedrists would fain have found some legal and moral justification for what they had determined to do. They first sought witness or as St. Matthew rightly designates it, false witness against Christ.⁶⁰

Since this was throughout a private investigation, this witness could only have been sought from their own creatures. Hatred, fanaticism, and unscrupulous Eastern exaggeration would readily misrepresent and distort certain sayings of Christ, or falsely impute others to Him. But it was altogether too hasty and excited an assemblage, and the witnesses contradicted themselves so grossly, or their testimony so notoriously broke down, that for very shame such trumped-up charges had to be abandoned. And to this result the majestic calm of Christ's silence must have greatly contributed. On directly false and contradictory testimony it must be best not to cross-examine at all, not to interpose, but to leave the false witness to destroy itself.

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⁵⁷St. John 18:29, 30.

⁵⁸St. Luke 23:2; St. Matthew 27:12.

⁵⁹St. John 18:31.

⁶⁰The Pharisaic Law of witness was very peculiar. Witnesses who contradicted each other were not considered in Rabbinic Law as false witnesses, in the sense of being punishable. Nor would they be so, even if an *alibi* of the accused were proved—only if the *alibi* of the witnesses themselves were proved (comp. *Bähr*, Gesetz u. Falsche Zeug., pp. 29, &c.). Thus the Story of Susanna is bad in Jewish Law, unless, as *Geiger* supposes, it embodies an earlier mode of procedure in Jewish criminal jurisprudence.

Abandoning this line of testimony, the Priests next brought forward probably some of their own order, who on the first Purgation of the Temple had been present when Jesus, in answer to the challenge for a sign in evidence of His authority, had given them that mysterious sign of the destruction and upraising of the Temple of His Body. ⁶¹ ⁶² They had quite misunderstood it at the time, and its reproduction now as the ground of a criminal charge against Jesus must have been directly due to Caiaphas and Annas. We remember, that this had been the first time that Jesus had come into collision, not only with the Temple authorities, but with the avarice of the family of Annas. We can imagine how the incensed High-Priest would have challenged the conduct of the Temple-officials, and how, in reply, he would have been told what they had attempted, and how Jesus had met them. Perhaps it was the only real inquiry which a man like Caiaphas would care to institute about what Jesus said. And here, in its grossly distorted form, and with more than Eastern exaggeration of partisanship it was actually brought forward as a criminal charge!

[231] Dexterously manipulated, the testimony of these witnesses might lead up to two charges. It would show that Christ was a dangerous seducer of the people, Whose claims might have led those who believed them to lay violent hands on the Temple, while the supposed assertion, that He would ⁶³ or was able ⁶⁴ to build the Temple again within three days, might be made to imply Divine or magical pretensions. ⁶⁵ A certain class of writers have ridiculed this part of

⁶¹St. John 2:18, 19.

⁶²Critically also this is of interest. The first Purgation of the Temple is not related by the Synoptists, but they here confirm St. John's account of it. On the other hand, St. John's account of the Temple purgation confirms that of the Temple-purgation which St. John does not relate. And the evidence is the stronger, that the two sets of accounts are manifestly independent of each other, and that of the Fourth Gospel younger than that of the Synoptists.

⁶³St. Mark.

⁶⁴St. Matt.

⁶⁵At the same time neither this, nor even the later charge of blasphemy would have made Jesus what was technically called either a *Massith*, or a *Maddiach*. The former is described as an *individual* who *privately* seduces private individuals into idolatry (Sanh. vii. 10; Jer. Yeb. 15 *d*), it being added that he speaks with a loud voice (in praise of some false god) and uses the Holy (Hebr.) language (Jer. Sanh. 25 *d*). On the other hand, the *Maddiach* is one who publicly seduces the people to idolatry, using, as it is added,

the Sanhedrist plot against Jesus. It is, indeed, true, that, viewed as a Jewish charge, it might have been difficult, if not impossible, to construe a capital crime out of such charges, although, to say the least, a strong popular prejudice might thus have been raised against Jesus—and this, no doubt, was one of the objects which Caiaphas had in view. But it has been strangely forgotten that the purpose of the High-Priest was not to formulate a capital charge in *Jewish* Law, since the assembled Sanhedrists had no intention so to try Jesus, but to formulate a charge which would tell before the Roman Procurator. And here none other could be so effective as that of being a fanatical seducer of the ignorant populace, who might lead them on to wild tumultuous acts. Two similar instances, in which the Romans quenched Jewish fanaticism in the blood of the pretenders and their deluded followers, will readily recur to the mind. ⁶⁶

In any case, Caiaphas would naturally seek to ground his accusation of Jesus before Pilate on anything rather than His claims to Messiahship and the inheritance of David. It would be a cruel irony if a Jewish High-Priest had to expose the loftiest and holiest hope of Israel to the mockery of a Pilate; and it might prove a dangerous proceeding, whether as regarded the Roman Governor or the feelings of the Jewish people. [232]

But this charge of being a seducer of the people also broke down, through the disagreement of the two witnesses whom the Mosaic Law required, ⁶⁷ and who, according to Rabbinic ordinance, had to be separately questioned. ⁶⁸ But the divergence of their testimony does not exactly appear in the differences in the accounts of St.

the language spoken commonly by the people. The two Talmudic stories, that witnesses had lain in wait to hear and report the utterances of Christ (*Sanh. 67 a*), and that forty days before His execution heralds had summoned any exculpatory evidence in His favour (*Sanh. 43 a*), may be dismissed without comment.

⁶⁶Besides other movements, we refer here specially to that under Theudas, who led out some 400 persons under promise of dividing Jordan, when both he and his adherents were cut down by the Romans (*Jos. Ant. xx. 5. 1*). At a later time an Egyptian Jew gathered 3,000 or 4,000 on the Mount of Olives, promising to cast down the walls of Jerusalem by the breath of his mouth (*u. s. xx. 8, 6*). Another impostor of that kind was Simon of Cyprus (*u. s. xx. 7. 2*), and, of course, Bar Kokhabh.

⁶⁷[Deuteronomy 17:6](#).

⁶⁸Rosh haSh. ii. 6.

Matthew and of St. Mark. If it be deemed necessary to harmonise these two narratives, it would be better to regard both as relating the testimony of these two witnesses. What St. Mark reported may have been followed by what St. Matthew records, or *vice versâ*, the one being, so to speak, the basis of the other. But all this time Jesus preserved the same majestic silence as before, nor could the impatience of Caiaphas, who sprang from his seat to confront, and, if possible, browbeat his Prisoner, extract from Him any reply.

[233] Only one thing now remained. Jesus knew it well, and so did Caiaphas. It was to put the question, which Jesus could not refuse to answer, and which, once answered, must lead either to His acknowledgement or to His condemnation. In the brief historical summary which St. Luke furnishes, there is an inversion of the sequence of events, by which it might seem as if what he records had taken place at the meeting of the Sanhedrists ⁶⁹ on the next morning. But a careful consideration of what passed there obliges us to regard the report of St. Luke as referring to the night-meeting described by St. Matthew and St. Mark. The motive for St. Luke's inversion of the sequence of events may have been, ⁷⁰ that he wished to group in a continuous narrative Peter's threefold denial, the third of which occurred *after* the night-sitting of the Sanhedrin, at which the final adjuration of Caiaphas elicited the reply which St. Luke records, as well as the other two Evangelists. Be this as it may, we owe to St. Luke another trait in the drama of that night. As we suppose, the simple question was first addressed to Jesus, whether He was the Messiah? To which He replied by referring to the needlessness of such an enquiry, since they had predetermined not to credit His claims, nay, had only a few days before in the Temple refused ⁷¹ to discuss them. ⁷² It was upon this that the High-Priest, in the most solemn manner, adjured the True One by the Living God, Whose Son He was, to say it, whether He were the Messiah and Divine—the

⁶⁹It seems, to say the least, strange to explain the expression led Him into their sunedron as referring to the regular Council-chamber (St. Luke 22:66).

⁷⁰At the same time I confess myself in no way anxious about an accord of *details* and *circumstances*. When, admittedly the *facts* entirely agree—nay, in such case, the accord of facts would be only the more striking.

⁷¹St. Matthew 22:41-46.

⁷²St. Luke 22:67, 68; the clause nor let Me go is spurious.

two being so joined together, not in Jewish belief, but to express the claims of Jesus. No doubt or hesitation could here exist. Solemn, emphatic, calm, majestic, as before had been His silence, was now His speech. And His assertion of what He was, was conjoined with that of what God would show Him to be, in His Resurrection and Sitting at the Right Hand of the Father, and of what they also would see, when He would come in those clouds of heaven that would break over their city and polity in the final storm of judgment.

They all heard it—and, as the Law directed when blasphemy was spoken, the High Priest rent both his outer and inner garment, with a rent that might never be repaired.⁷³ But the object was attained. Christ would neither explain, modify, nor retract His claims. They had all heard it; what use was there of witnesses, He had spoken *Giddupha*,⁷⁴ blaspheming. Then, turning to those assembled, he put to them the usual question which preceded⁷⁵

the formal sentence of death. As given in the Rabbinical original, it is:⁷⁶ What think ye gentlemen? And they answered, if for life, “For life!” and if for death, “For death.”⁷⁷ But the formal sentence of death, which, if it had been a regular meeting of the Sanhedrin, must now have been spoken by the President,⁷⁸ was not pronounced.⁷⁹

There is a curious Jewish conceit, that on the Day of Atonement the golden band on the High Priest’s mitre, with the graven words, Holiness unto Jehovah atoned for those who had blasphemed.⁸⁰ It stands out in terrible contrast to the figure of Caiaphas on that awful night. Or did the unseen mitre on the True and Eternal High-Priest’s Brow, marking the consecration of His Humiliation to Jehovah, plead for them who in that night were gathered there, the blind leaders of the blind? Yet amidst so many most solemn thoughts, some press prominently forward. On that night of terror, when all the enmity of man and the power of hell were unchained, even the falsehood

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⁷³Sanh. vii. 5 Moed K. 26 a.

⁷⁴Other designations for it are *Chillul haShem*, and, euphemistically, *Birkhath haShem*.

⁷⁵But this does not seem to me to have been the actual sentence. In regard to the latter, see the formalities detailed in Sanh. iii. 7.

⁷⁶Myyxl Myyxl M) Myrmw) Mhw wnm yrbs html htymL M)w

⁷⁷Tanchuma Piqudey, ed. Warsh. i. p. 132 b.

⁷⁸Sanh. iii. 7.

⁷⁹The President of the Judges said: “Such an one, thou... art guilty” (Sanh. iii. 7).

⁸⁰Jer. Yoma 44 c.

of malevolence could not lay any crime to His charge, nor yet any accusation be brought against him other than the misrepresentation of His symbolic Words. What testimony to Him this solitary false and ill-according witness! Again: They all condemned Him to be worthy of death. Judaism itself would not now re-echo this sentence of the Sanhedrists. And yet is it not after all true—that He was either the Christ, the Son of God, or a blasphemer? This Man, alone so calm and majestic among those impassioned false judges and false witnesses; majestic in His silence, majestic in His speech; unmoved by threats to speak, undaunted by threats when He spoke; Who saw it all—the end from the beginning; the Judge among His judges, the Witness before His witnesses: which was He—the Christ or a blaspheming impostor? Let history decide; let the heart and conscience of mankind give answer. If He had been what Israel said, He deserved the death of the Cross; if He is what the Christmas-bells of the Church, and the chimes of the Resurrection-morning ring out, then do we rightly worship Him as the Son of the Living God, the Christ, the Saviour of men.

[235] 5. It was after this meeting of the Sanhedrists had broken up, that, as we learn from the Gospel of St. Luke, the revolting insults and injuries were perpetrated on Him by the guards and servants of Caiaphas. All now rose in combined rebellion against the Perfect Man: the abject servility of the East, which delighted in insults on One Whom it could never have vanquished, and had not even dared to attack; that innate vulgarity, which loves to trample on fallen greatness, and to deck out in its own manner a triumph where no victory has been won; the brutality of the worse than animal in man (since in him it is not under the guidance of Divine instinct), and which, when unchained, seems to intensify in coarseness and ferocity;⁸¹ and the profanity and devilry which are wont to apply the wretched witticisms of what is misnomered common sense and the blows of tyrannical usurpation of power to all that is higher and better, to what these men cannot grasp and dare not look up to, and before the shadows of which, when cast by superstition, they cower and tremble in abject fear! And yet these insults, taunts,

⁸¹Have we advanced much beyond this, when the Parisian democracy can inscribe on its banners such words as *Ecrasez l'Infâme*—and, horrible to relate it, teach its little children to bring to this its floral offerings?

and blows which fell upon that lonely Sufferer, not defenceless, but undefending, not vanquished, but uncontending, not helpless, but majestic in voluntary self-submission for the highest purpose of love—have not only exhibited the curse of humanity, but also removed it by letting it descend on Him, the Perfect Man, the Christ, the Son of God. And ever since has every noble-hearted sufferer been able on the strangely clouded day to look up, and follow what, as it touches earth, is the black misty shadow, to where, illumined by light from behind, it passes into the golden light—a mantle of darkness as it enwraps us, merging in light up there where its folds seem held together by the Hand from heaven.

This is *our* Sufferer—the Christ or a blasphemer; and in that alternative which of us would not choose the part of the Accused rather than of His judges? So far as recorded, not a word escaped His Lips; not a complaint, nor murmur; nor utterance of indignant rebuke, nor sharp cry of deeply sensitive, pained nature. He was drinking, slowly, with the consciousness of willing self-surrender, the Cup which His Father had given Him. And still His Father—and this also specially in His Messianic relationship to man. [236]

We have seen that, when Caiaphas and the Sanhedrists quitted the audience-chamber, Jesus was left to the unrestrained licence of the attendants. Even the Jewish Law had it, that no prolonged death (*Mithah Arikhta*) might be inflicted, and that he who was condemned to death was not to be previously scourged.⁸² At last they were weary of insult and smiting, and the Sufferer was left alone, perhaps in the covered gallery, or at one of the windows that overlooked the court below. About one hour had passed⁸³ since Peter's second denial had, so to speak, been interrupted by the arrival of the Sanhedrists. Since then the excitement of the mock-trial, with witnesses coming and going, and, no doubt, in Eastern fashion repeating what had passed to those gathered in the court around the fire; then the departure of the Sanhedrists, and again the insults and blows inflicted on the Sufferer, had diverted attention from Peter. Now it turned once more upon him; and, in the circumstances, naturally more intensely than before. The chattering of Peter, whom

⁸²Keth 37 *b*, top.

⁸³St. Luke.

conscience and consciousness made nervously garrulous, betrayed him. This one also was with Jesus the Nazarene; truly, he was of them—for he was also a Galilean! So spake the bystanders; while, according to St. John, a fellow-servant and kinsman of that Malchus, whose ear Peter, in his zeal, had cut off in Gethsemane, asserted that he actually recognised him. To one and all these declarations Peter returned only a more vehement denial, accompanying it this time with oaths to God and imprecations on himself.

The echo of his words had scarcely died out—their diastole had scarcely returned them with gurgling noise upon his conscience—when loud and shrill the second cock-crowing was heard. There was that in its harsh persistence of sound that also wakened his memory. He now remembered the words of warning prediction which the Lord had spoken. He looked up; and as he looked, he saw, how up there, just at that moment; the Lord turned round ⁸⁴

[237] and looked upon him—yes, in all that assembly, upon Peter! His eyes spake His Words; nay, much more; they searched down to the innermost depths of Peter's heart, and broke them open. They had pierced through all self-delusion, false shame, and fear: they had reached the man, the disciple, the lover of Jesus. Forth they burst, the waters of conviction, of true shame, of heart-sorrow, of the agonies of self-condemnation; and, bitterly weeping, he rushed from under those suns that had melted the ice of death and burnt into his heart—out from that cursed place of betrayal by Israel, by its High Priest—and even by the representative Disciple.

Out he rushed into the night. Yet a night lit up by the stars of promise—chiefest among them this, that the Christ up there—the conquering Sufferer—had prayed for him. God grant us in the night of our conscious self-condemnation the same star-light of His Promises, the same assurance of the intercession of the Christ, that so, as *Luther* puts it, the particularness of the account of Peter's denial, as compared with the briefness of that of Christ's Passion, may carry to our hearts this lesson: The fruit and use of the sufferings of Christ is this, that in them we have the forgiveness of our sins.

⁸⁴There is not any indication in the text that, as Commentators suppose, Christ was at that moment led bound across the Court; nor, indeed, that till the morning He was at all removed from near the place where He had been examined.

Chapter 14—The Morning of Good Friday

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(St. Matthew 27:1, 2, 11-14; St. Mark 15:1-5; St. Luke 23:1-5; St. John 18:28-38; St. Luke 23:6-12; St. Matthew 27:3-10; St. Matthew 27:15-18; St. Mark 15:6-10; St. Luke 23:13-17; St. John 18:39, 40; St. Matthew 27:19; St. Matthew 27:20-31; St. Mark 15:11-20; St. Luke 23:18-25; St. John 19:1-16.)

The pale grey light had passed into that of early morning, when the Sanhedrists once more assembled in the Palace of Caiaphas. ¹ A comparison with the terms in which they who had formed the gathering of the previous night are described will convey the impression, that the number of those present was now increased, and that they who now came belonged to the wisest and most influential of the Council. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that some who would not take part in deliberations which were virtually a judicial murder might, once the resolution was taken, feel in Jewish casuistry absolved from guilt in advising how the informal sentence might best be carried into effect. It was this, and not the question of Christ's guilt, which formed the subject of deliberation on that early morning. The result of it was to bind Jesus and hand Him over as a malefactor to Pilate, with the resolve, if possible, not to frame any definite charge; ² but, if this became necessary, to lay all the emphasis on the purely political, not the religious aspect of the claims of Jesus. ^{3 4}

To us it may seem strange, that they who, in the lowest view of it, had committed so grossly unrighteous, and were now coming on so cruel and bloody a deed, should have been prevented by religious scruples from entering the Praetorium. And yet the student of Jewish casuistry will understand it; nay, alas, history and even common

¹This is so expressly stated in St. John 18:28, that it is difficult to understand whence the notion has been derived that the Council assembled in their ordinary council-chamber.

²St. John 18:29, 30.

³St. Luke 23:2.

⁴Comp. St. Matthew 27:1 with. xxvi. 59, where the words and elders must be struck out; and St. Mark 15:1 with xiv. 55.

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observation furnish only too many parallel instances of unscrupulous scrupulosity and unrighteous conscientiousness. Alike conscience and religiousness are only moral tendencies natural to man; whither they tend, must be decided by considerations outside of them: by enlightenment and truth. ⁵ The Praetorium to which the Jewish leaders, or at least those of them who represented the leaders—for neither Annas nor Caiaphas seems to have been personally present—brought the bound Christ, was (as always in the provinces) the quarters occupied by the Roman Governor. In Caesarea this was the Palace of Herod, and there St. Paul was afterwards a prisoner. But in Jerusalem there were two such quarters: the fortress Antonia, and the magnificent Palace of Herod at the northwestern angle of the Upper City. Although it is impossible to speak with certainty, the balance of probability is entirely in favour of the view that, when Pilate was in Jerusalem with his wife, he occupied the truly royal abode of Herod, and not the fortified barracks of Antonia. ⁶ From the slope at the eastern angle, opposite the Temple-Mount, where the Palace of Caiaphas stood, up the narrow streets of the Upper City, the melancholy procession wound to the portals of the grand Palace of Herod. It is recorded, that they who brought Him would not themselves enter the portals of the Palace, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

Few expressions have given rise to more earnest controversy than this. On two things at least we can speak with certainty. Entrance into a heathen house *did* Levitically render impure for that day—that is, till the evening. ⁷

⁵These are the *Urim* and *Thummim* of the *anima naturaliter Christiana*.’

⁶This is, of course, not the traditional site, nor yet that which was formerly in favour. But as the Palace of Herod undoubtedly became (as all royal residences) the property of the State, and as we have distinct evidence that Roman Procurators resided there, and took their seat in front of that Palace on a raised pavement to pronounce judgment (*Jos.* War ii. 14. 8; comp. *Philo*, ad Caj. § 38), the inference is obvious, that Pilate, especially as he was accompanied by his wife, resided there also.

⁷The various reasons for this need not here be discussed. As these pages are passing through the press (for a second edition) my attention has been called to Dr. *Schürer's* brochure (*Ueber fagein to pasca* Giessen, 1883), intended to controvert the interpretation of St. [John 18:28](#), given in the text. This is not the place to enter on the subject at length. But I venture to think that, with all his learning, Dr. *Schürer* has not quite met the case, nor fully answered the argument as put by *Kirchner* and *Wieseler*. Putting aside any

The fact of such defilement is clearly attested both in the New Testament⁸ and in the Mishnah, though its reasons might be various.⁹ A person who had so become Levitically unclean was technically called *Tebhul Yom* (bathed of the day). The other point is, that, to have so become impure for the day, would *not* have disqualified for eating the Paschal Lamb, since the meal was partaken of *after* the

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argument from the supposed later date of the Priest-Codex as compared with Deuter., and indeed the purely Biblical argument, since the question is as to the views entertained in the time of Christ, *Schürer* argues: 1. That the *Chagigah* was not designated by the term *Pesach*. 2. That the defilement from entering a heathen house would not have ceased in the evening (so as to allow them to eat the Passover), but have lasted for seven days, as being connected with the suspicion that an *abortus*—i.e. a dead body—might be buried in the house. On the first point we refer to Note 1 on the next page, only adding that, with all his ingenuity, *Schürer* has not met all the passages adduced on the other side, and that the view advocated in the text is that adopted by many Jewish scholars.

The argument on the second point is even more unsatisfactory. The defilement from entering the *Praetorium*, which the Sanhedrists dreaded, might be—or rather, in this case must have been—due to other causes than that the house might contain an *abortus* or a dead body. And of such many may be conceived, connected either with the suspected presence of an idol in the house or with contact with an idolator. It is, indeed, true that *Ohol. xviii. 7* refers to the suspicion of a buried *abortus* as the cause of regarding the houses of Gentiles as defiled; but even so, it would be too much to suppose that a bare suspicion of this kind would make a man unclean for seven days. For this it would have been necessary that the dead body was actually within the house entered, or that what contained it had been touched. But there is another and weightier consideration. *Ohol. xviii. 7* is not so indefinite as Dr. *Schürer* implies. It contains a most important limitation. In order to make a house thus defiled (from suspicion of an *abortus* buried in it), it states that *the house must have been inhabited by the heathen for forty days*, and even so the custody of a Jewish servant or maid would have rendered needless a *bediqah*, or investigation (to clear the house of suspicion). Evidently, the *Praetorium* would not have fallen under the category contemplated in *Ohol. xviii. 7*, even if (which we are not prepared to admit) such a case would have involved a defilement of seven days. Thus *Schürer's* argument falls to the ground. Lastly, although the *Chagigah* could only be brought by the offerer in person, the Paschal Lamb might be brought for another person, and then the *tebhul yom* partake of it. Thus, if the Sanhedrists had been defiled in the morning they might have eaten the Pascha at night. Dr. *Schürer* in his *brochure* repeatedly appeals to *Delitzsch* (*Zeitschr. f. Luther. Theol.* 1874, pp. 1-4); but there is nothing in the article of that eminent scholar to bear out the special contention of *Schürer*, except that he traces the defilement of heathen houses to the cause in *Ohal. xviii. 7*. *Delitzsch* concludes his paper by pointing to this very case in evidence that the N.T. documents date from the *first*, and not the second century of our era.

⁸Acts 10:28.

⁹Ohol. xviii. 7; Tohar. vii. 3.

evening, and when a new day had begun. In fact, it is distinctly laid down ¹⁰ that the bathed of the day that is, he who had been impure for the day and had bathed in the evening, *did* partake of the Paschal Supper, and an instance is related, ¹¹ when some soldiers who had guarded the gates of Jerusalem immersed and ate the Paschal Lamb. It follows that those Sanhedrists could not have abstained from entering the Palace of Pilate because by so doing they would have been disqualified for the Paschal Supper.

The point is of importance, because many writers have interpreted the expression the Passover as referring to the Paschal Supper, and have argued that, according to the Fourth Gospel, our Lord did not on the previous evening partake of the Paschal Lamb, or else that in this respect the account of the Fourth Gospel does not accord with that of the Synoptists. But as, for the reason just stated, it is impossible to refer the expression Passover to the Paschal Supper, we have only to inquire whether the term is not also applied to other offerings. And here both the Old Testament ¹²

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and Jewish writings ¹³ show, that the term *Pesach*, or Passover was applied not only to the Paschal Lamb, but to all the Passover sacrifices, especially to what was called the *Chagigah*, or festive offering (from *Chag*, or *Chagag*, to bring the festive sacrifice usual at each of the three Great Feasts). According to the express rule (Chag. 1:3) the *Chagigah* was brought on the first festive Paschal Day. ¹⁴ It was offered immediately after the morning-service, and eaten on that day—probably some time before the evening, when, as we shall by-and-by see, another ceremony claimed public attention. We

¹⁰Pes. 92 a.

¹¹Jer. Pes. 36 b, lines 14 and 15 from bottom.

¹²Deuteronomy 16:1-3; 2 Chronicles 35:1, 2, 6, 18.

¹³The subject has been so fully discussed in *Wieseler*, Beitr., and in *Kirchner*, Jüd. Passahfeier, not to speak of many others, that it seems needless to enter further on the question. No competent Jewish archaeologist would care to deny that *Pesach* may refer to the *Chagigah* while the motive assigned to the Sanhedrists by St. John implies, that in this instance it *must* refer to this, and not to the Paschal Lamb.

¹⁴xsp l# Nw#rh bw+ Mwy. But concession was made to those who had neglected it on the first day to bring it during the festive week, which in the Feast of Tabernacles was extended to the *Octave*, and in that of Weeks (which lasted only one day) over a whole week (see Chag. 9 a; Jer. Chag. 76 c). The *Chagigah* could not, but the *Paschal Lamb* might be offered by a person on behalf of another.

can therefore quite understand that, *not* on the eve of the Passover but on the first Paschal day, the Sanhedrists would avoid incurring a defilement which, lasting till the evening, would not only have involved them in the inconvenience of Levitical defilement on the first festive day, but have actually prevented their offering on that day the Passover, festive sacrifice, or *Chagigah*. For, we have these two express rules: that a person could not in Levitical defilement offer the *Chagigah*; and that the *Chagigah* could not be offered for a person by some one else who took his place (Jer. Chag. 76 a, lines 16 to 14 from bottom). These considerations and canons seem decisive as regards the views above expressed. There would have been no reason to fear defilement on the morning of the Paschal Sacrifice; but entrance into the *Praetorium* on the morning of the first Passover-day would have rendered it impossible for them to offer the *Chagigah*, which is also designated by the term *Pesach*.

It may have been about seven in the morning, probably even earlier,¹⁵ when Pilate went out to those who summoned him to dispense justice. The question which he addressed to them seems to have startled and disconcerted them. Their procedure had been private; it was of the very essence of proceedings at Roman Law that they were in public. Again, the procedure before the Sanhedrists had been in the form of a criminal investigation, while it was of the essence of Roman procedure to enter only on definite accusations.¹⁶ Accordingly, the first question of Pilate was, what accusation they brought against Jesus. The question would come upon them the more unexpectedly, that Pilate must, on the previous evening, have given his consent to the employment of the Roman guard which effected the arrest of Jesus. Their answer displays humiliation, ill-humour, and an attempt at evasion. If He had not been a malefactor they would not have delivered¹⁷ Him up! On this vague charge Pilate, in whom we mark throughout a strange reluctance to proceed—perhaps from unwillingness to please the Jews, perhaps from a

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¹⁵Most commentators suppose it to have been much earlier. I have followed the view of *Keim*.

¹⁶*Nocens, nisi accusatus fuerit, condemnari non potest*. In regard to the publicity of Roman procedure, comp. [Acts 16:19](#); [17:6](#); [18:12](#); [25:6](#); *Jos. War ii. 9. 3*; *14. 8*; *maxima frequentia amplissimorum ac sapientissimorum civium adstante* (*Cicero*).

¹⁷Significantly the word is the same as that in reference to the *betrayal* of Judas.

desire to wound their feelings on the tenderest point, perhaps because restrained by a Higher Hand—refused to proceed. He proposed that the Sanhedrists should try Jesus according to the Jewish Law. This is another important trait, as apparently implying that Pilate had been previously aware both of the peculiar claims of Jesus, and that the action of the Jewish authorities had been determined by envy.¹⁸ But, under ordinary circumstances, Pilate would *not* have wished to hand over a person accused of so grave a charge as that of setting up Messianic claims to the Jewish authorities, to try the case as a merely religious question.¹⁹ Taking this in connection with the other fact, apparently inconsistent with it, that on the previous evening the Governor had given a Roman guard for the arrest of the prisoner, and with this other fact of the dream and warning of Pilate's wife, a peculiar impression is conveyed to us. We can understand it all, if, on the previous evening, after the Roman guard had been granted, Pilate had spoken of it to his wife, whether because he knew her to be, or because she might be interested in the matter. Tradition has given her the name *Procula*;²⁰ while an Apocryphal Gospel describes her as a convert to Judaism;²¹ while the Greek Church has actually placed her in the Catalogue of Saints. What if the truth lay between these statements, and Procula had not only been a proselyte, like the wife of a previous Roman Governor,²² but known about Jesus and spoken of Him to Pilate on that evening? This would best explain his reluctance to condemn Jesus, as well as her dream of Him.

As the Jewish authorities had to decline the Governor's offer to proceed against Jesus before their own tribunal, on the avowed ground that they had not power to pronounce capital sentence,²³ it

¹⁸St. [Matthew 27:18](#).

¹⁹[Acts 22:30; 22:28, 29; 24:9, 18-20](#).

²⁰*Nicephorus*, H. E. i. 30.

²¹Gospel according to Nicod. ch 2.

²²Sturmius (*Jos. Ant.* xviii. 3, 5).

²³The apparently strange statement, St. [John 18:32](#), affords another undesigned confirmation of the Jewish authorship of the Fourth Gospel. It seems to imply, that the Sanhedrin might have found a mode of putting Jesus to death in the same informal manner in which Stephen was killed and they sought to destroy Paul. The Jewish law recognised a form of procedure, or rather a want of procedure, when a person caught in *flagrante delicto* of blasphemy might be done to death without further inquiry.

now behoved them to formulate a capital charge. This is recorded by St. Luke alone.²⁴ It was, that Jesus had said, He Himself was Christ a King. It will be noted, that in so saying they falsely imputed to Jesus their own political expectations concerning the Messiah. But even this is not all. They prefaced it by this, that He perverted the nation and forbade to give tribute to Caesar. The latter charge was so grossly unfounded, that we can only regard it as in their mind a necessary inference from the premiss that He claimed to be King. And, as telling most against Him, they put this first and foremost, treating the inference as if it were a fact—a practice this only too common in controversies, political, religious, or private.

This charge of the Sanhedrists explains what, according to all the Evangelists, passed within the Praetorium. We presume that Christ was within, probably in charge of some guards. The words of the Sanhedrists brought peculiar thoughts of Pilate. He now called Jesus and asked Him: Thou art the King of the Jews? There is that mixture of contempt for all that was Jewish, and of that general cynicism which could not believe in the existence of anything higher, we mark a feeling of awe in regard to Christ, even though the feeling may partly have been of superstition. Out of all that the Sanhedrists had said, Pilate took only this, that Jesus claimed to be a King. Christ, Who had not heard the charge of His accusers, now ignored it, in His desire to stretch out salvation even to a Pilate. Not heeding the implied irony, He first put it to Pilate, whether the question—be it criminal charge or inquiry—was his own, or merely the repetition of what His Jewish accusers had told Pilate of Him. The Governor quickly disowned any personal inquiry. How could he raise any such question? He was not a Jew, and the subject had no general interest. Jesus own nation and its leader had handed Him over as a criminal: what had He done?

The answer of Pilate left nothing else for Him Who, even in that supreme hour, thought only of others, not of Himself, but to bring before the Roman directly that truth for which his words had given the opening. It was not, as Pilate had implied, a *Jewish* question: it was one of absolute truth; it concerned all men. The Kingdom of Christ was not of this world at all, either Jewish or Gentile. Had it

²⁴St. Luke 22:2, 3.

been otherwise, He would have led His followers to a contest for His claims and aims, and not have become a prisoner of the Jews. One word only in all this struck Pilate. So then a King art Thou! He was incapable of apprehending the higher thought and truth. We mark in his words the same mixture of scoffing and misgiving. Pilate was now in no doubt as to the nature of the *Kingdom*; his exclamation and question applied to the *Kingship*. That fact Christ would now emphasise in the glory of His Humiliation. He accepted what Pilate said; He adopted his words. But He added to them an appeal, or rather an explanation of His claims, such as a heathen, and a Pilate, could understand. His Kingdom was not of this world, but [246] of that other world which He had come to reveal, and to open to all believers. Here was *the* truth! His Birth or Incarnation, as the Sent of the Father, and His own voluntary Coming into this world—for both are referred to in His words ²⁵—had it for their object to testify of the truth concerning that other world, of which was His Kingdom. This was no Jewish-Messianic Kingdom, but one that appealed to all men. And all who had moral affinity to the truth would listen to His testimony, and so come to own Him as King.

But these words struck only a hollow void, as they fell on Pilate. It was not merely cynicism, but utter despair of all that is higher—a moral suicide—which appears in his question: What is truth? He had understood Christ, but it was not in him to respond to His appeal. He, whose heart and life had so little kinship to the truth could not sympathise with, though he dimly perceived, the grand aim of Jesus Life and Work. But even the question of Pilate seems an admission, an implied homage to Christ. Assuredly, he would not have so opened his inner being to one of the priestly accusers of Jesus.

That man was no rebel, no criminal! They who brought Him were moved by the lowest passions. And so he told them, as he went out, that he found no fault in Him. Then came from the assembled Sanhedrists a perfect hailstorm of accusations. As we picture it to ourselves, all this while the Christ stood near, perhaps behind Pilate, just within the portals of the Praetorium. And to all this clamour of charges He made no reply. It was as if the surging of the wild waves broke far beneath against the base of the rock, which, untouched,

²⁵St. John 18:37.

reared its head far aloft to the heavens. But as He stood in the calm silence of Majesty, Pilate greatly wondered. Did this Man not even fear death; was He so conscious of innocence, so infinitely superior to those around and against Him, or had He so far conquered Death, that He would not condescend to their words? And why then had He spoken to him of His Kingdom and of that truth?

Fain would he have withdrawn from it all; not that he was moved for absolute truth or by the personal innocence of the Sufferer, but that there was that in the Christ which, perhaps for the first time in his life, had made him reluctant to be unrighteous and unjust. And so, when, amidst these confused cries, he caught the name Galilee as the scene of Jesus labours, he gladly seized on what offered the prospect of devolving the responsibility on another. Jesus was a Galilean, and therefore belonged to the jurisdiction of King Herod. To Herod, therefore, who had come for the Feast to Jerusalem, and there occupied the old Maccabean Palace, close to that of the High-Priest, Jesus was now sent. ^{26 27}

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To St. Luke alone we owe the account of what passed there, as, indeed, of so many traits in this last scene of the terrible drama. ²⁸ The opportunity now offered was welcome to Herod. It was a mark of reconciliation (or might be viewed as such) between himself and the Roman, and in a manner flattering to himself, since the first step had been taken by the Governor, and that, by an almost ostentatious acknowledgement of the rights of the Tetrarch, on which possibly their former feud may have turned. Besides, Herod had long wished to see Jesus, of Whom he had heard so many things. ²⁹ In that hour coarse curiosity, a hope of seeing some magic performances, was the only feeling that moved the Tetrarch. But in vain did he ply Christ with questions. He was as silent to him as formerly against the virulent charges of the Sanhedrists. But a Christ Who would or could do no signs, nor even kindle into the same denunciations as

²⁶St. Luke 23:6-12.

²⁷anepemyen. *Meyer* marks this as the technical term in handing over a criminal to the proper judicial authority.

²⁸It is worse than idle—it is trifling to ask, whence the Evangelists derived their accounts. As if those things had been done in a corner, or none of those who now were guilty had afterwards become disciples!

²⁹St. Luke 9:7-9.

the Baptist, was, to the coarse realism of Antipas, only a helpless figure that might be insulted and scoffed at, as did the Tetrarch and his men of war. ³⁰ And so Jesus was once more sent back to the Praetorium.

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It is in the interval during which Jesus was before Herod, or probably soon afterwards, that we place the last weird scene in the life of Judas, recorded by St. Matthew. ³¹ We infer this from the circumstance, that, on the return of Jesus from Herod, the Sanhedrists do not seem to have been present, since Pilate had to call them together, ³² presumably from the Temple. And here we recall that the Temple was close to the Maccabean Palace. Lastly, the impression left on our minds is, that henceforth the principal part before Pilate was sustained by the people the Priests and Scribes rather instigating them than conducting the case against Jesus. It may therefore well have been, that, when the Sanhedrists went from the Maccabean Palace into the Temple, as might be expected on that day, only a part of them returned to the Praetorium on the summons of Pilate.

But, however that may have been, sufficient had already passed to convince Judas what the end would be. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that he could have deceived himself on this point from the first, however he had failed to realise the fact in its terrible import till after his deed. The words which Jesus had spoken to him in the Garden must have burnt into his soul. He was among the soldiery that fell back at His look. Since then Jesus had been led bound to Annas, to Caiaphas, to the Praetorium, to Herod. Even if Judas had not been present at any of these occasions, and we do not suppose that his conscience had allowed this, all Jerusalem must by that time have been full of the report, probably in even exaggerated form. One thing he saw: that Jesus was condemned. Judas did not repent in the Scriptural sense; but a change of mind and feeling came over him. ³³ Even had Jesus been an ordinary man, and the relation to Him

³⁰It is impossible to say, whether the gorgeous apparel in which Herod arrayed Christ was purple, or white. Certainly it was not, as Bishop *Haneberg* suggests (*Relig. Alterth.* p. 554), an old high-priestly garment of the Maccabees.

³¹St. [Matthew 27:3-10](#).

³²St [Luke 23:13](#); comp. St. [Matthew 27:17](#).

³³The verb designating Scriptural repentance is *metanoew*; that here used is *metamelomai*, as in St. [Matthew 21:29](#), as in St. [Matthew 21:29, 32](#); [2 Corinthians 7:8](#); [Hebrews 7:21](#).

of Judas been the ordinary one, we could understand his feelings, especially considering his ardent temperament. The instant before and after sin represents the difference of feeling as portrayed in the history of the Fall of our first parents. With the commission of sin, all the bewitching, intoxicating influence, which incited to it, has passed away, and only the naked fact remains. All the glamour has been dispelled; all the reality abideth. If we knew it, probably scarcely one out of many criminals but would give all he has, nay, life itself, if he could recall the deed done, or awake from it to find it only an evil dream. But it cannot be; and the increasingly terrible is, that it *is* done, and done for ever. Yet this is not repentance or, at least, God alone knows whether it is such; it may be, and in the case of Judas it only was, change of mind and feeling towards Jesus. Whether this might have passed into repentance, whether, if he had cast himself at the Feet of Jesus, as undoubtedly he might have done, this would have been so, we need not here ask. The mind and feelings of Judas, as regarded the deed he had done, and as regarded Jesus, were now quite other; they became increasingly so with ever-growing intensity. The road, the streets, the people's faces—all seemed now to bear witness against him and for Jesus. He read it everywhere; he felt it always; he imagined it, till his whole being was on flame. What had been; what was; what would be! Heaven and earth receded from him; there were voices in the air, and pangs in the soul—and no escape, help, counsel, or hope anywhere.

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It was despair, and his a desperate resolve. He must get rid of these thirty pieces of silver, which, like thirty serpents, coiled round his soul with terrible hissing of death. Then at least his deed would have nothing of the selfish in it: only a terrible error, a mistake, to which he had been incited by these Sanhedrists. Back to them with the money, and let them have it again! And so forward he pressed amidst the wondering crowd, which would give way before that haggard face with the wild eyes, that crime had made old in those few hours, till he came upon that knot of priests and Sanhedrists, perhaps at that very moment speaking of it all. A most unwelcome sight and intrusion on them, this necessary but odious figure in the drama—belonging to its past, and who should rest in its obscurity. But he would be heard; nay, his words would cast the burden on them to share it with him, as with hoarse cry he broke into this: I

[250] have sinned—in that I have betrayed—innocent blood! They turned from him with impatience, in contempt, as so often the seducer turns from the seduced—and, God help such, with the same fiendish guilt of hell: What is that to us? See thou to it! And presently they were again deep in conversation or consultation. For a moment he stared wildly before him, the very thirty pieces of silver that had been weighed to him, and which he had now brought back, and would fain have given them, still clutched in his hand. For a moment only, and then he wildly rushed forward, towards the Sanctuary itself,³⁴ probably to where the Court of Israel bounded on that of the Priests, where generally the penitents stood in waiting, while in the Priests Court the sacrifice was offered for them. He bent forward, and with all his might hurled from him³⁵ those thirty pieces of silver, so that each resounded as it fell on the marble pavement.

Out he rushed from the Temple, out of Jerusalem, into solitude.³⁶ Whither shall it be? Down into the horrible solitude of the Valley of Hinnom, the Tophet of old, with its ghastly memories, the Gehenna of the future, with its ghostly associations. But it was not solitude, for it seemed now peopled with figures, faces, sounds. Across the Valley, and up the steep sides of the mountain! We are now on the potter's field of Jeremiah—somewhat to the west above where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys merge. It is cold, soft clayey soil, where the footsteps slip, or are held in clammy bonds. Here jagged rocks rise perpendicularly: perhaps there was some gnarled, bent, stunted tree.³⁷ Up there climbed to the top of that rock. Now slowly and deliberately he unwound the long girdle that held his garment. It was the girdle in which he had carried those thirty pieces of silver. He was now quite calm and collected. With that girdle he will hang himself³⁸ on that tree close by, and when he has fastened it, he will throw himself off from that jagged rock.

³⁴The expression naoV is always used in the N.T. of the Sanctuary itself, and not of the outer courts; but it would include the Court of the Priests, where the sacrifices were offered.

³⁵I so understand the riyav of St. [Matthew 27:5](#).

³⁶anecwrhse.

³⁷The topographical notice is based on *Bädeker-Socin's Palästina*, pp. 114-116.

³⁸This, not with any idea that his death would expiate for his sin. No such idea attached to suicide among the Jews.

It is done; but as, unconscious, not yet dead perhaps, he swung heavily on that branch, under the unwonted burden the girdle gave way, or perhaps the knot, which his trembling hands had made, unloosed, and he fell heavily forward among the jagged rocks beneath, and perished in the manner of which St. Peter reminded his fellow-disciples in the days before Pentecost. ³⁹ ⁴⁰

But in the Temple the priests knew not what to do with these thirty pieces of money. Their unscrupulous scrupulosity came again upon them. It was not lawful to take into the Temple-treasury, for the purchase of sacred things, money that had been unlawfully gained. In such cases the Jewish Law provided that the money was to be restored to the donor, and, if he insisted on giving it, that he should be induced to spend it for something for the public weal. This explains the apparent discrepancy between the accounts in the Book of Acts and by St. Matthew. By a fiction of law the money was still considered to be Judas', and to have been applied by him ⁴¹ in the purchase of the well-known potter's field for the charitable purpose of burying in it strangers. ⁴² But from henceforth the old name of potter's field became popularly changed into that of field of blood (*Haqal Dema*). And yet it was the act of Israel through its leaders: they took the thirty pieces of silver—the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field! It was all theirs, though they would have fain made it all Judas': the valuing, the selling, and the purchasing. And the potter's field'—the very spot on which Jeremiah had been Divinely directed to prophesy against Jerusalem and against Israel: ⁴³ how was it now all fulfilled in the light of the completed sin and apostasy of the people, as prophetically described by Zechariah! This Tophet of Jeremiah, now that they had valued and sold at thirty shekel Israel's Messiah-Shepherd—truly a Tophet, and become a field of blood! Surely, not an accidental coincidence this, that it

³⁹Acts 1:18, 19.

⁴⁰As presented in the text, there is no real divergence between the accounts of St. Matthew and the Book of Acts. *Keim* has formulated the supposed differences under five particulars, which are discussed *seriatim* by *Nebe*, *Leidensgesch.* vol. ii. pp. 12 &c.

⁴¹Acts 1:18.

⁴²St. Matthew 27:7.

⁴³Jeremiah 19.

should be the place of Jeremy's announcement of judgment: not accidental, but veritably a fulfilment of his prophecy! And so St. Matthew, targuming this prophecy in form ⁴⁴ as in its spirit, and in true Jewish manner stringing to it the prophetic description furnished by Zechariah, sets the event before us as the fulfilment of Jeremy's prophecy. ⁴⁵

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We are once more outside the Praetorium, to which Pilate had summoned from the Temple Sanhedrists and people. The crowd was momentarily increasing from the town. ⁴⁶ It was not only to see what was about to happen, but to witness another spectacle, that of the release of a prisoner. For it seems to have been the custom, that at the Passover ⁴⁷ the Roman Governor released to the Jewish populace some notorious prisoner who lay condemned to death. A very significant custom of release this, for which they now began to clamour. It may have been, that to this also they were incited by the Sanhedrist who mingled among them. For if the stream of popular sympathy might be diverted to Bar-Abbas, the doom of Jesus would be the more securely fixed. On the present occasion it might be the more easy to influence the people, since Bar-Abbas belonged to that class, not uncommon at the time, which, under the colorable pretence of political aspirations, committed robbery and other crimes. But these movements had deeply struck root in popular sympathy. A strange name and figure, Bar-Abbas. That could scarcely have been his real name. It means Son of the Father. ⁴⁸ Was he a political Anti-Christ? And why, if there had not been some conjunction between them, should Pilate have proposed the

⁴⁴The alterations in the words quoted are, as previously explained, a targuming of them.

⁴⁵Most Commentators, however, regard the word Jeremy as a lapse of memory, or an oversight by the Evangelist, or else as a very early error of transcription. Other explanations (more or less unsatisfactory) may be seen in the commentaries. *Böhl* (Altest. Cit. p. 78), following *Valckenar*, thinks the mistake arose from confounding Zriou (written abbreviated) with Iriou. But the whole question is of no real importance.

⁴⁶According to the better reading of St. [Mark 15:8](#) the multitude was going up.'

⁴⁷How can they who regard the Johannine account as implying that Christ was crucified on the morning *before* the Passover, explain the words of St. John, Ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one *at the Passover*?

⁴⁸The ancient reading Jesus Bar-Abbas is not sufficiently attested to be adopted.

alternative of Jesus or Bar-Abbas, and not rather that of one of the two malefactors who were actually crucified with Jesus?

But when the Governor, hoping to enlist some popular sympathy, put this alternative to them—nay, urged it, on the ground that neither he nor yet Herod had found any crime in Him, and would even have appeased their thirst for vengeance by offering to submit Jesus to the cruel punishment of scourging, it was in vain. It was now that Pilate sat down on the judgment seat. But ere he could proceed, came that message from his wife about her dream, and the warning entreaty to have nothing to do with that righteous man. An omen such as a dream, and an appeal connected with it, especially in the circumstances of that trial, would powerfully impress a Roman. And for a few moments it seemed as if the appeal to popular feeling on behalf of Jesus might have been successful.⁴⁹ But once more the Sanhedrists prevailed. Apparently, all who had been followers of Jesus had been scattered. None of them seem to have been there; and if one or another feeble voice might have been raised for Him, it was hushed in fear of the Sanhedrists. It was Bar-Abbas for whom, incited by the priesthood, the populace now clamoured with increasing vehemence. To the question—half bitter, half mocking—what they wished him to do with Him Whom their own leaders had in their accusation called King of the Jews surged back, louder and louder, the terrible cry: Crucify him! That such a cry should have been raised, and raised by Jews, and before the Roman, and against Jesus, are in themselves almost inconceivable facts, to which the history of these eighteen centuries has made terrible echo. In vain Pilate expostulated, reasoned, appealed. Popular frenzy only grew as it was opposed.

All reasoning having failed, Pilate had recourse to one more expedient, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been effective.⁵⁰ When a Judge, after having declared the innocence of the accused, actually rises from the judgment-seat, and by a symbolic act pronounces the execution of the accused a judicial murder, from all participation in which he wishes solemnly to clear himself, surely no jury would persist in demanding sentence of death. But in the

⁴⁹St. [Mark 11:11](#).

⁵⁰St. [Matthew 27:24, 25](#).

[254] present instance there was even more. Although we find allusions to some such custom among the heathen,⁵¹ that which here took place was an essentially Jewish rite, which must have appealed the more forcibly to the Jews that it was done by Pilate. And, not only the rite, but the very words were Jewish.⁵² They recall not merely the rite prescribed in [Deuteronomy 21:6](#), &c., to mark the freedom from guilt of the elders of a city where untracked murder had been committed, but the very words of such Old Testament expressions as in [2 Samuel 3:28](#), and [Psalm 26:6](#), [73:13](#),⁵³ and, in later times, in *Sus.* ver. 46. The Mishnah bears witness that this rite was continued.⁵⁴ As administering justice in Israel, Pilate must have been aware of this rite.⁵⁵ It does not affect the question, whether or not a judge could, especially in the circumstances recorded, free himself from guilt. Certainly, he could not; but such conduct on the part of a Pilate appears so utterly unusual, as, indeed, his whole bearing towards Christ, that we can only account for it by the deep impression which Jesus had made upon him. All the more terrible would be the guilt of Jewish resistance. There is something overawing in Pilate's, 'See ye to it'—a reply to the Sanhedrists 'See thou to it to Judas, and in the same words. It almost seems, as if the scene of mutual imputation of guilt in the Garden of Eden were being reenacted. The Mishnah tells us, that, after the solemn washing of hands of the elders and their disclaimer of guilt, priest responded with this prayer: 'Forgive it to Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, O Lord, and lay not innocent blood upon Thy people Israel! But here, in answer to Pilate's words, came back that deep, hoarse cry: 'His Blood be upon us and—God help us!—on our children! Some thirty years later, and on that very spot, was judgment pronounced against some of the best in Jerusalem; and among the 3,600 victims of the Governor's fury, of whom not a few were scourged and crucified right over against the Praetorium, were many of the noblest of the citizens of Jerusalem.⁵⁶ A few years more, and hundreds of crosses bore

⁵¹ See the quotations in *Wetstein*, ad loc., and *Nebe*, u. s. p. 104.

⁵² *aqwoV apo tou aimatoV* is a Hebraism = *Mr@ami yqinaf*.

⁵³ In the LXX. version.

⁵⁴ *Sot.* ix. 6.

⁵⁵ The Evangelist put what he said into the well-remembered Old Testament words.

⁵⁶ *Jos.* War 14. 8. 9.

Jewish mangled bodies within sight of Jerusalem. And still have these wanderers seemed to bear, from century to century, and from land to land, that burden of blood; and still does it seem to weigh on us and our children.

The Evangelists have passed as rapidly as possible over the last scenes of indignity and horror, and we are too thankful to follow their example. Bar-Abbas was at once released. Jesus was handed over to the soldiery to be scourged and crucified, although final and formal judgment had not yet been pronounced.⁵⁷ Indeed, Pilate seems to have hoped that the horrors of the scourging might still move the people to desist from the ferocious cry for the Cross.⁵⁸ For the same reason we may also hope, that the scourging was not inflicted with the same ferocity as in the case of Christian martyrs, when, with the object of eliciting the incrimination of others, or else recantation, the scourge of leather thongs was loaded with lead, or armed with spikes and bones, which lacerated back, and chest, and face, till the victim sometimes fell down before the judge a bleeding mass of torn flesh. But, however modified, and without repeating the harrowing realism of a Cicero, scourging was the terrible introduction to crucifixion—the intermediate death. Stripped of His clothes, His hands tied and back bent, the Victim would be bound to a column or stake, in front of the Praetorium. The scourging ended, the soldiery would hastily cast upon Him His upper garments, and lead Him back into the Praetorium. Here they called the whole cohort together, and the silent, faint Sufferer became the object of their ribald jesting. From His bleeding Body they tore the clothes, and in mockery arrayed Him in scarlet or purple.⁵⁹ For crown they wound together thorns, and for sceptre they placed in His Hand a reed. Then alternately, in mock proclamation they hailed Him King, or worshipped Him as God, and smote Him or heaped on Him other indignities.⁶⁰

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⁵⁷St. John 19:1, following.

⁵⁸St. John 19:4, following.

⁵⁹The *Sagum*, or short woollen military cloak, scarlet or purple (the two colours are often confounded, comp. *Wetstein* ad loc.), fastened by a clasp on the right shoulder. It was also worn by Roman generals, and sometimes (in more costly form and material) presented to foreign kings.

⁶⁰*Origen* already marks in this a notable breach of military discipline. *Keim* (Jesu von Naz. iii. 2, pp. 393, &c.) gives a terribly graphic and realistic account of the whole scene. The soldiers were, as mostly in the provinces, chiefly provincials—in this case,

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Such a spectacle might well have disarmed enmity, and forever-allayed worldly fears. And so Pilate had hoped, when, at his bidding, Jesus came forth from the Praetorium, arrayed as a mock-king, and the Governor presented Him to the populace in words which the Church has ever since treasured: Behold the Man! But, so far from appeasing, the sight only incited to fury the chief priests and their subordinates. This Man before them was the occasion, that on this Paschal Day a heathen dared in Jerusalem itself insult their deepest feeling, mock their most cherished Messianic hopes! Crucify! Crucify! resounded from all sides. Once more Pilate appealed to them, when, unwittingly and unwillingly, it elicited this from the people, that Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God.

If nothing else, what light it casts on the mode in which Jesus had borne Himself amidst those tortures and insults, that this statement of the Jews filled Pilate with fear, and led him to seek again converse with Jesus within the Praetorium. The impression which had been made at the first, and been deepened all along, had now passed into the terror of superstition. His first question to Jesus was, whence He was? And when, as was most fitting—since he could not have understood it—Jesus returned no answer, the feelings of the Romans became only the more intense. Would he not speak; did He not know that he had absolute power to release or to crucify Him? ⁶¹ Nay, not absolute power—all power came from above; but the guilt in the abuse of power was far greater on the part of apostate Israel and its leaders, who knew whence power came, and to Whom they were responsible for its exercise.

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So spake not an impostor; so spake not an ordinary man—after such sufferings and in such circumstances—to one who, whencesoever derived, *had* the power of life or death over Him. And Pilate felt it—the more keenly, for his cynicism and disbelief of all that was higher. And the more earnestly did he now seek to release Him. But, proportionately, the louder and fiercer was the cry of the Jews for

probably Syrians. They were all the more bitterly hostile to the Jews (*Jos. Ant.* xix. 9. 1; *War* ii. 12, 1. 2; 5:11, 1—there also derision at execution). A strange illustration of the scene is afforded by what happened only a few years afterwards at Alexandria, when the people in derision of King Agrippa I., arrayed a well-known maniac (Karabas) in a common door-mat, put a papyrus crown on his head, and a reed in his hand, and saluted him Maris lord (*Philo*, In *Flacc.* ed. *Mang.* ii. 522; *Wetstein*, N.T., i. p. 535). On all the

His Blood, till they threatened to implicate in the charge of rebellion against Caesar the Governor himself, if he persisted in unwonted mercy.

Such danger a Pilate would never encounter. He sat down once more in the judgment-seat, outside the Praetorium, in the place called Pavement and, from its outlook over the City, Gabbatha ⁶² the rounded height. So solemn is the transaction that the Evangelist pauses to note once more the day—nay, the very hour, when the process had commenced. It had been the Friday in Passover-week, ⁶³ and between six and seven of the morning. ⁶⁴ And at the close Pilate once more in mockery presented to them Jesus: Behold your King! ⁶⁵ Once more they called for His Crucifixion—and, when again challenged, the chief priests burst into the cry, which preceded Pilate's final sentence, to be presently executed: We have no king but Caesar!

With this cry Judaism was, in the person of its representatives, guilty of denial of God, of blasphemy, of apostasy. It committed suicide; and, ever since, has its dead body been carried in show from land to land, and from century to century: to be dead, and to remain dead, till He come a second time, Who is the Resurrection and the Life!

classical illustrations and corroborations of the whole proceedings in every detail, the reader should consult *Wetstein*, ad loc.

⁶¹This is the proper order of the words. To release is put first to induce Christ to speak.

⁶²The derivation of *Wünsche* (tybh bg) back of the Temple is on every ground to be rejected. *Gabbath* (tb@ag@a) or *Gabbetha* means a rounded height. It occurs also as the name of a town (Jer. Taan. 69 b).

⁶³I have simply rendered the *paraskeuh tou pasca* by Friday in Passover-week. The evidence for regarding *paraskeuh*, in the Gospels, as the *terminus technicus* for Friday, has been often set forth. See *Kirchner*, D. jud. Passahf. pp. 47, &c.

⁶⁴The hour (about the sixth) could only refer to when the process was taken in hand.

⁶⁵I ought to mention that the verb *ekaqisen* in St. [John 19:13](#), has been taken by some critics in the transitive sense: Pilate... brought Jesus forth and seated Him in the judgment-seat implying an act of mock-homage on the part of Pilate when, in presenting to the Jews their King, he placed Him on the judgment-seat. Ingenious as the suggestion is, and in some measure supported, it does not accord with the whole tenour of the narrative.

Chapter 15—Crucified, Dead, and Buried.’

(St. Matthew 27:31-43; St. Mark 15:20-32(a); St. Luke 23:26-38; St. John 19:16-24; St. Matthew 28:44; St. Mark 15:32(b); St. Luke 23:39-43; St. John 19:25-27; St. Matthew 27:45-56; St. Mark 15:33-41; St. Luke 23:44-49; St. John 19:28-30; St. John 19:31-37; St. Matthew 27:57-61; St. Mark 15:42-47; St. Luke 23:50-56; St. John 19:38-42; St. Matthew 27:62-66.)

It matters little as regards their guilt, whether, pressing the language of St. John,¹ we are to understand that Pilate delivered Jesus to the Jews to be crucified, or, as we rather infer, to his own soldiers. This was the common practice, and it accords both with the Governor’s former taunt to the Jews,² and with the after-notice of the Synoptists. They, to whom He was delivered led Him away to be crucified: and they who so led Him forth compelled the Cyrenian Simon to bear the Cross. We can scarcely imagine, that the Jews, still less the Sanhedrists, would have done this. But whether formally or not, the terrible crime of slaying, with wicked hands, their Messiah-King rests, alas, on Israel.

Once more was He unrobed and robed. The purple robe was torn from His Wounded Body, the crown of thorns from His Bleeding Brow. Arrayed again in His own, now bloodstained, garments, He was led forth to execution. Only about two hours and a half had passed³ since the time that He had first stood before Pilate (about half-past six),⁴ when the melancholy procession reached Golgotha (at nine o’clock a.m.). In Rome an interval, ordinarily of two days, intervened between a sentence and its execution; but the rule does not seem to have applied to the provinces,⁵ if, indeed, in this case the formal rules of Roman procedure were at all observed.

¹St. John 19:16.

²ver. 6.

³St. Mark 15:95.

⁴St. John 19:25.

⁵The evidence is collected by *Nebe*, u. s. vol. ii. p. 166, 167.

The terrible preparations were soon made: the hammer, the nails, the Cross, the very food for the soldiers who were to watch under each Cross. ⁶ Four soldiers would be detailed for each Cross, the whole being under the command of a centurion. As always, the Cross was borne to the execution by Him Who was to suffer on it—perhaps His Arms bound to it with cords. But there is happily no evidence—rather, every indication to the contrary—that, according to ancient custom, the neck of the Sufferer was fastened within the *patibulum*, two horizontal pieces of wood, fastened at the end, to which the hands were bound. Ordinarily, the procession was headed by the centurion, ⁷ or rather, preceded by one who proclaimed the nature of the crime, ⁸ and carried a white, wooden board, on which it was written. Commonly, also, it took the longest road to the place of execution, and through the most crowded streets, so as to attract most public attention. But we would suggest, that alike this long circuit and the proclamation of the herald were, in the present instance, dispensed with. They are not hinted at in the text, and seem incongruous to the festive season, and the other circumstances of the history.

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Discarding all later legendary embellishments, ⁹ as only disturbing, we shall try to realise the scene as described in the Gospels. Under the leadership of the centurion, whether or not attended by one who bore the board with the inscription, or only surrounded by the four soldiers, of whom one might carry this tablet, Jesus came forth bearing His Cross. He was followed by two malefactors—robbers’—probably of the class then so numerous, that covered its crimes by pretensions of political motives. These two, also, would bear each

⁶*Keim* seems to imagine that, not indeed the whole cohort but a *manipulus* of about 120, or a *centuria* of about 60 men, accompanied the procession. But of this there is not evidence, and all indications lead to a contrary inference.

⁷Tradition calls him Longinus.

⁸This was the Jewish practice also (*Sanh.* vi. 2). At the same time it must be remembered, that this was chiefly to elicit testimony in favour of the criminal, when the execution would be immediately arrested; and also that, as the Sanhedrin had, for centuries before the redaction of the Mishnah, been deprived of the power of life and death, such descriptions read very like ideal arrangements. But the practice seems also to have been Roman (*per praeconem pronuntiati*).

⁹Such as concerning Veronica and the bearing of the Virgin Mother (*Acta Pilati*, 8:10.; *Mors Pilati* [Tischendorf] 433).

[260] his cross, and probably be attended each by four soldiers. Crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of punishment, although the Maccabee King Jannaeus had so far forgotten the claims of both humanity and religion as on one occasion to crucify not less than 800 persons in Jerusalem itself. ¹⁰ But even Herod, with all cruelty, did not resort to this mode of execution. Nor was it employed by the Romans till after the time of Caesar, when, with the fast increasing cruelty of punishments, it became fearfully common in the provinces. Especially does it seem to characterise the domination of Rome in Judaea under every Governor. During the last siege of Jerusalem hundreds of crosses daily arose, till there seemed not sufficient room nor wood for them, and the soldiery diversified their horrible amusement by new modes of crucifixion. So did the Jewish appeal to Rome for the Crucifixion of Israel's King come back in hundredfold echoes. But, better than such retribution, the Cross of the God-Man hath put an end to the punishment of the cross, and instead, made the Cross the symbol of humanity, civilisation, progress, peace, and love.

As mostly all abominations of the ancient world, whether in religion or life, crucifixion was of Phoenician origin, although Rome adopted, and improved on it. The modes of execution among the Jews were: strangulation, beheading, burning, and stoning. In all ordinary circumstances the Rabbis were most reluctant to pronounce sentence of death. This appears even from the injunction that the Judges were to fast on the day of such a sentence. ¹¹ Indeed, two of the leading Rabbis record it, that no such sentence would ever have been pronounced in a Sanhedrin of which they had been members. The indignity of hanging—and this only after the criminal had been otherwise executed—was reserved for the crimes of idolatry and blasphemy. ¹² The place where criminals were stoned (*Beth haSeqilah*) was on an elevation about eleven feet high, from whence the criminal was thrown down by the first witness. If he had not died by the fall, the second witness would throw a large stone on his heart as he lay. If not yet lifeless, the whole people would stone him. ¹³ At

¹⁰ *Jos. Ant.* xiii. 14, 2; *War* i, 4, 6.

¹¹ With application of [Leviticus 19:26](#), *Sanh.* 63 a.

¹² *Sanh.* vi. 4.

¹³ This explains how the witnesses at the stoning of St. Stephen laid down their garments at the feet of Paul.

a distance of six feet from the place of execution the criminal was undressed, only the covering absolutely necessary for decency being left. ^{14 15}

In the case of Jesus we have reason to think that, while the mode of punishment to which He was subjected was un-Jewish, every concession would be made to Jewish custom, and hence we thankfully believe that on the Cross He was spared the indignity of exposure. Such would have been truly un-Jewish. ¹⁶ [261]

Three kinds of Cross were in use: the so-called St. Andrew's Cross (x, the *Crux decussata*), the Cross in the form of a T (*Crux Commissa*), and the ordinary Latin Cross (+, *Crux immissa*). We believe that Jesus bore the last of these. This would also most readily admit of affixing the board with the threefold inscription, which we know His Cross bore. Besides, the universal testimony of those who lived nearest the time (*Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, and others), and who, alas! had only too much occasion to learn what crucifixion meant, is in favour of this view. This Cross, as St. John expressly states, Jesus Himself bore at the outset. And so the procession moved on towards Golgotha. Not only the location, but even the name of that which appeals so strongly to every Christian heart, is matter of controversy. The name cannot have been derived from the skulls which lay about, since such exposure would have been unlawful, and hence must have been due to the skull-like shape and appearance of the place. Accordingly, the name is commonly explained as the Greek form of the Aramaean *Gulgalta*, or the Hebrew *Gulgoleth*, which means a skull.

Such a description would fully correspond, not only to the requirements of the narrative, but to the appearance of the place which, so far as we can judge, represents Golgotha. We cannot here explain the various reasons for which the traditional site must be abandoned. Certain it is, that Golgotha was outside the gate ¹⁷ and near the City.

¹⁴Sanh. vi. 3, 4.

¹⁵This opinion, however, was not shared by the majority of Rabbis. But, as already stated, all those notices are rather ideal than real.

¹⁶According to the Rabbis, when we read in Scripture generally of the punishment of death, this refers to the lightest, or strangulation (Sanh. 52 *b*). Another mode of execution reads like something between immuring alive and starvation (Sanh. 81 *b*)—something like the manner in which in the Middle Ages people were starved to death.

¹⁷Hebrews 13:12.

[262] ¹⁸ In all likelihood it was the usual place of execution. Lastly, we know that it was situated near gardens, where there were tombs, and close to the highway. The three last conditions point to the north of Jerusalem. It must be remembered that the third wall, which afterwards surrounded Jerusalem, was not built till several years after the Crucifixion. The new suburb of Bezetha extended at that time outside the second wall. Here the great highway passed northwards; close by, were villas and gardens; and here also rock-hewn sepulchres have been discovered, which date from that period. But this is not all. The present Damascus Gate in the north of the city seems, in most ancient tradition, to have borne the name of St. Stephen's Gate, because the Proto-Martyr was believed to have passed through it to his stoning. Close by, then, must have been the place of execution. And at least one Jewish tradition fixes upon this very spot, close by what is known as the Grotto of Jeremiah, as the ancient place of stoning (*Beth haSeqilah*). And the description of the locality answers all requirements. It is a weird, dreary place, two or three minutes aside from the high road, with a high, rounded, skull-like rocky plateau, and a sudden depression or hollow beneath, as if the jaws of the skull had opened. Whether or not the tomb of the Herodian period in the rocky knoll to the west of Jeremiah's Grotto was the most sacred spot upon earth—the Sepulchre in the Garden we dare not positively assert, though every probability attaches to it.

¹⁹

Thither, then, did that melancholy procession wind, between eight and nine o'clock on that Friday in Passover week. From the ancient Palace of Herod it descended, and probably passed through the gate in the first wall, and so into the busy quarter of Acra. As it proceeded, the numbers who followed from the Temple, from the dense business-quarter through which it moved, increased. Shops, bazaars, and markets were, indeed, closed on the holy feast-day. But

¹⁸St. John 19:20.

¹⁹This view was first propounded by *Thenius*, and afterwards advocated by *Furrer* (Wander. d. Paläst, pp. 70, &c.), but afterwards given up by him. As to the locality, comp. Quart. Statement of Pal. Explor. Fund Oct. 1881, pp. 317-319; *Conder's Handbook to the Bible* pp. 355, 356, and for the description of Jeremiah's Grotto, *Bäedeker-Socin*, u. s. p. 126. Of course, proof is in the nature of things impossible; yet to me this seems the most sacred and precious locality in Jerusalem.

quite a crowd of people would come out to line the streets and to follow; and, especially, women, leaving their festive preparations, raised loud laments, not in spiritual recognition of Christ's claims, but in pity and sympathy. ²⁰ ²¹ And who could have looked unmoved on such a spectacle, unless fanatical hatred had burnt out of his bosom all that was human? Since the Paschal Supper Jesus had not tasted either food or drink. After the deep emotion of that Feast, with all of holiest institution which it included; after the anticipated betrayal of Judas, and after the farewell to His disciples, He had passed into Gethsemane. There for hours, alone—since His nearest disciples could not watch with Him even one hour—the deep waters had rolled up to His soul. He had drunk of them, immersed, almost perished in them. There had he agonised in mortal conflict, till the great drops of blood forced themselves on His Brow. There had He been delivered up, while they all had fled. To Annas, to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod, and again to Pilate; from indignity to indignity, from torture to torture, had He been hurried all that livelong night, all that morning. All throughout He had borne Himself with a Divine Majesty, which had awakened alike the deeper feelings of Pilate and the infuriated hatred of the Jews. But if His Divinity gave its true meaning to His Humanity, that Humanity gave its true meaning to His voluntary Sacrifice. So, far, then, from seeking to hide its manifestations, the Evangelists, not indeed needlessly but unhesitatingly, put them forward. ²² Unrefreshed by food or sleep, after the terrible events of that night and morning, while His pallid Face bore the blood-marks from the crown of thorns, His mangled Body was unable to bear the weight of the Cross. No wonder the pity of the women of Jerusalem was stirred. But ours is not pity, it is worship at the sight. For, underlying His Human Weakness was the Divine Strength which led Him to this voluntary self-surrender

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²⁰St. Luke.

²¹I cannot conceive any sufficient ground, why *Keim* should deny the historical character of this trait. Surely, on *Keim's* own principles, the circumstance, that only St. Luke records it, would not warrant this inference. On the other hand, it may be characterised as perhaps one of the most natural incidents in the narrative.

²²I can only account for it by the prejudices of party feeling, that one of such fine and sympathetic tact as *Keim* should so strangely have missed this, and imputed, especially to St. John, a desire of obscuring the element of weakness and forsakenness (u. s. p. 401).

and self-examination. It was the Divine strength of His pity and love which issued in His Human weakness.

Up to that last Gate which led from the Suburb towards the place of execution did Jesus bear His Cross. Then, as we infer, His strength gave way under it. A man was coming from the opposite direction, one from that large colony of Jews which, as we know, had settled in Cyrene.²³ He would be specially noticed; for, few would at that hour, on the festive day, come out of the country²⁴ although such was not contrary to the Law. So much has been made of this, that it ought to be distinctly known that travelling, which was forbidden on Sabbaths, was *not* prohibited on feast-days.²⁵ Besides, the place whence he came—perhaps his home—might have been within the ecclesiastical boundary of Jerusalem. At any rate, he seems to have been well known, at least afterwards, in the Church—and his sons Alexander and Rufus even better than he.²⁶ Thus much only can we say with certainty; to identify them with persons of the same name mentioned in other parts of the New Testament can only be matter of speculation.²⁷ But we can scarcely repress the thought that Simon the Cyrenian had not before that day been a disciple; had only learned to follow Christ, when, on that day, as he came in by the Gate, the soldiery laid hold on him, and against his will forced him to bear the Cross after Christ. Yet another indication of the need of such help comes to us from St. Mark,²⁸ who uses an expression²⁹ which conveys, though not necessarily that the Saviour had to be borne, yet that He had to be supported to Golgotha from the place where they met Simon.

[265] Here, where, if the Saviour did not actually sink under His burden, it yet required to be transferred to the Cyrenian, while Himself henceforth needed bodily support, we place the next incident in this

²³See vol. i. pp. 62, 63, 119.

²⁴Certainly *not* from the field. The original, it is now generally admitted, does not mean this, and, as *Wieseler* aptly remarks (Beitr. p. 267) a person would scarcely return from labour in the field at nine o'clock in the morning (St. [Mark 15:25](#)).

²⁵This is shown in Tosaph. to Chag. 17 *b*, and admitted by all Rabbinic writers. (See *Hoffmann*, Abh. u.d. Pentat. Ges. p. 66.)

²⁶St. [Mark 15:21](#).

²⁷[Acts 13:1](#); [Romans 16:13](#).

²⁸xv. 22.

²⁹ferousin.

history. ³⁰ While the Cross was laid on the unwilling Simon, the women who had followed with the populace closed around the Sufferer, raising their lamentations. ³¹ At His Entrance into Jerusalem, ³² Jesus had wept over the daughters of Jerusalem; as He left it for the last time, they wept over Him. But far different were the reasons for His tears from theirs of mere pity. And, if proof were required of His Divine strength, even in the utmost depth of His Human weakness—how, conquered, He was Conqueror—it would surely be found in the words in which He bade them turn their thoughts of pity where pity would be called for, even to themselves and their children in the near judgment upon Jerusalem. The time would come, when the Old Testament curse of barrenness ³³ would be coveted as a blessing. To show the fulfilment of this prophetic lament of Jesus, it is not necessary to recall the harrowing details recorded by *Josephus*, ³⁴ when a frenzied mother roasted her own child, and in the mockery of desperateness reserved the half of the horrible meal for those murderers who daily broke in upon her to rob her of what scanty food had been left her; nor yet other of those incidents, too revolting for needless repetition, which the historian of the last siege of Jerusalem chronicles. But how often, these many centuries, must Israel’s women have felt that terrible longing for childlessness, and how often must the prayer of despair for the quick death of falling mountains and burying hills rather than prolonged torture ³⁵ have risen to the lips of Israel’s sufferers! And yet, even so, these words were also prophetic of a still more terrible future! ³⁶ For, if Israel had put such flame to its green tree how terribly would the Divine judgment burn among the dry wood of an apostate and rebellious people, that had so delivered up its Divine King, and pronounced sentence upon itself by pronouncing it upon Him!

³⁰St. [Luke 23:27-31](#).

³¹εκοπτοντο και εqrhnoun auton. *Gerhard* remarks: ut koptesqai sive plangere est manuum (*Bengel*: pertinet ad gestus), ita qrhneinoris et oculorum (*Bengel*: ad, fletum et vocem flebilem).’

³²as St. Luke also records.

³³[Hosea 9:14](#).

³⁴War vi. 3. 4.

³⁵[Hosea 10:8](#).

³⁶[Revelation 6:10](#).

[266] And yet natural, and, in some respects, genuine, as were the tears of the daughters of Jerusalem mere sympathy with Christ almost involves guilt, since it implies a view of Him which is essentially the opposite of that which His claims demand. These tears were the emblem of that modern sentiment about the Christ which, in its effusiveness, offers insult rather than homage, and implies rejection rather than acknowledgment of Him. We shrink with horror from the assumption of a higher standpoint, implied in so much of the modern so-called criticism about the Christ. But even beyond this, all mere sentimentalism is here the outcome of unconsciousness of our real condition. When a sense of sin has been awakened in us, we shall mourn, not for what Christ has suffered, but for what He suffered for us. The effusiveness of mere sentiment is impertinence or folly: impertinence, if He was the Son of God; folly, if He was merely Man. And, even from quite another point of view, there is here a lesson to learn. It is the peculiarity of Romanism ever to present the Christ in His Human weakness. It is that of an extreme section on the opposite side, to view Him only in His Divinity. Be it ours ever to keep before us, and to worship as we remember it, that the Christ is the Saviour God-Man.

It was nine of the clock when the melancholy procession reached Golgotha, and the yet more melancholy preparations for the Crucifixion commenced. Avowedly, the punishment was invented to make death as painful and as lingering as the power of human endurance. First, the upright wood was planted in the ground. It was not high, and probably the Feet of the Sufferer were not above one or two feet from the ground. Thus could the communication described in the Gospels take place between Him and others; thus, also, might His Sacred Lips be moistened with the sponge attached to a short stalk of hyssop. Next, the transverse wood (*antenna*) was placed on the ground, and the Sufferer laid on it, when His Arms were extended, drawn up, and bound to it. Then (this not in Egypt, but in Carthage and in Rome) a strong, sharp nail was driven, first into the Right, then into the Left Hand (the *clavi trabales*). Next, the Sufferer was drawn up by means of ropes, perhaps ladders;³⁷

[267] the transverse either bound or nailed to the upright, and a rest or

³⁷But *Nebe* denies the use of ladders, and, in general, tries to prove by numerous quotations that the whole Cross was first erected, and then the Sufferer lifted up to it, and,

support for the Body (the *cornu* or *sedile*) fastened on it. Lastly, the Feet were extended, and either one nail hammered into each, or a larger piece of iron through the two. We have already expressed our belief that the indignity of exposure was not offered at such a Jewish execution. And so might the crucified hang for hours, even days, in the unutterable anguish of suffering, till consciousness at last failed.

It was a merciful Jewish practice to give to those led to execution a draught of strong wine mixed with myrrh so as to deaden consciousness.³⁸ This charitable office was performed at the cost of, if not by, an association of women in Jerusalem.³⁹ That draught was offered to Jesus when He reached Golgatha.⁴⁰ But having tasted it, and ascertained its character and object, He would not drink it. It was like His former refusal of the pity of the daughters of Jerusalem. No man could take His Life from Him; He had power to lay it down, and to take it up again. Nor would He here yield to the ordinary weakness of our human nature; nor suffer and die as if it had been a necessity, not a voluntary self-surrender. He would meet Death, even in his sternest and fiercest mood, and conquer by submitting to the full. A lesson this also, though one difficult, to the Christian sufferer.

And so was He nailed to His Cross, which was placed between, probably somewhat higher than, those of the two malefactors crucified with Him.⁴¹ One thing only still remained: to affix to His Cross the so-called title (*titulus*), on which was inscribed the charge on which He had been condemned. As already stated, it

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only after that, the nails fastened into His Arms and Feet. Strange though it may seem, the question cannot be absolutely decided.

³⁸Mass Sem. ii. 9; Bemid. R. 10.

³⁹Sanh. 43 *a*.

⁴⁰The two alleged discrepancies, between St. Matthew and St. Mark, though, even if they did exist, scarcely worth mention, may be thus explained: 1. If St. Matthew wrote vinegar (although the best MSS. read wine), he, no doubt, so translated literally the word *Chomets* (Cmew&x) which, though literally, vinegar refers to an inferior kind of wine which was often mixed (comp. Pes. 42 *b*). 2. If our Greek text of St. Matthew speaks of wormwood (as in the LXX.)—not gall’—and St. Mark of myrrh, we must remember, that both may have been regarded as stupefying, perhaps both used, and that possibly the mistake may have arisen from the similarity of words and their writing—*Lebhonah*, myrrh *Laanah*, wormwood’—when hnwbl may have passed into hn(l—the wb into

⁴¹*Sepp*, vol. vi. p. 336, recalls the execution of Savonarola between Fra Silvestro and Fra Domenico, and the taunt of his enemies: Now, brother!’

was customary to carry this board before the prisoner, and there is no reason for supposing any exception in this respect. Indeed, it seems implied in the circumstance, that the title had evidently been drawn up under the direction of Pilate. It was—as might have been expected, and yet most significantly ⁴²—trilingual: in Latin, Greek, and Aramaean. We imagine, that it was written in that order, ⁴³ and that the words were those recorded by the Evangelists (excepting St. Luke, ⁴⁴ who seems to give a modification of the original, or Aramaean, text). The inscription given by St. Matthew exactly corresponds with that which *Eusebius* ⁴⁵ records as the Latin *titulus* on the cross of one of the early martyrs. We therefore conclude, that it represents the Latin words. Again, it seems only natural, that the fullest, and to the Jews most offensive, description should have been in Aramaean, which all could read. Very significantly this is given by St. John. It follows, that the inscription given by St. Mark must represent that in Greek. Although much less comprehensive, it had the same number of words, and precisely the same number of letters, as that in Aramaean, given by St. John. ⁴⁶

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It seems probable, that the Sanhedrists had heard from some one, who had watched the procession on its way to Golgotha, of the inscription which Pilate had written on the *titulus*'—partly to avenge himself on, and partly to deride, the Jews. It is not likely that they would have asked Pilate to take it down after it had been affixed to the Cross; and it seems scarcely credible, that they would have waited outside the *Praetorium* till the melancholy procession commenced its march. We suppose that, after the condemnation

⁴²Professor *Westcott* beautifully remarks: These three languages gathered up the result of the religious, the social, the intellectual preparation for Christ, and in each witness was given to His office.

⁴³See next page, note 1.

⁴⁴The better reading there is, *o basileuV tw n IoudiaiwV outoV*.

⁴⁵H.E. v. 1.

⁴⁶Probably it would read *Jeshu han-Notsri malka dihudaey* (yric:w&ha w@#\$\$@y—or else w#y yrcnh—y)"dewhydi)k@afl:ma). Both have four words and, in all, twenty letters. The Latin inscription (St. Matthew) would be, *Hic est Jesus Rex Judaeorum*—five words and twenty-two letters. It will be seen how each would fill a line of about the same length. The notice of the three languages in St. Luke is spurious. We retain the *textus receptus* of St. [John 19:19](#), as in any case it seems most unlikely that Pilate would have placed the Latin in the middle and not at the top. The Aramaean would stand last.

of Jesus, the Sanhedrists had gone from the Praetorium into the Temple, to take part in its services. When informed of the offensive tablet, they hastened once more to the Praetorium, to induce Pilate not to allow it to be put up. This explains the inversion in the order of the account in the Gospel of St. John,⁴⁷ or rather, its location in that narrative in immediate connection with the notice, that the Sanhedrists were afraid the Jews who passed by might be influenced by the inscription. We imagine, that the Sanhedrists had originally no intention of doing anything so un-Jewish as not only to gaze at the sufferings of the Crucified, but to even deride Him in His Agony—that, in fact, they had not intended going to Golgotha at all. But when they found that Pilate would not yield to their remonstrances, some of them hastened to the place of Crucifixion, and, mingling with the crowd, sought to incite their jeers, so as to prevent any deeper impression⁴⁸ which the significant words of the inscription might have produced.⁴⁹

Before nailing Him to the Cross, the soldiers parted among them the poor worldly inheritance of His raiment.⁵⁰ On this point there are slight seeming differences⁵¹

between the notices of the Synoptists and the more detailed account of the Fourth Gospel. Such differences, if real, would afford only fresh evidence of the general trustworthiness of the narrative. For, we bear in mind that, of all the disciples, only St. John witnessed the last scenes, and that therefore the other accounts of it circulating in the early Church must have been derived, so to speak, from second sources. This explains, why perhaps the largest number of seeming discrepancies in the Gospels occurs in the narrative of the closing hours in the Life of Christ, and how, contrary to what otherwise we might have expected, the most detailed as well as precise account

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⁴⁷St. John 19:21, 22.

⁴⁸Comp. here the account of St. Matt. (27:39-43) and of the other Synoptists.

⁴⁹Thus, the notice in St. John 19:21, 22, would be parenthetical, chronologically belonging to an earlier part, and inserted here for the sake of historical connection.

⁵⁰It is generally stated, that this was the common Roman custom. But of this there is no evidence, and in later times it was expressly forbidden (*Ulpianus*, Digest. xiviii. 20, 6). I cannot see how *Keim*, and, after him, *Nebe*, should infer from this as certain, that the law had formerly been the opposite.

⁵¹Strangely, I confess, to my thinking, they seem to have been a source of anxiety and distress to St. *Augustine*, that he might find their true conciliation.

of them comes to us from St. John. In the present instance these slight seeming differences may be explained in the following manner. There was, as St. John states, first a division into four parts—one to each of the soldiers—of such garments of the Lord as were of nearly the same value. The headgear, the outer cloak-like garment, the girdle, and the sandals, would differ little in cost. But the question, which of them was to belong to each of the soldiers, would naturally be decided, as the Synoptists inform us, by lot.

[271] But, besides these four articles of dress, there was the seamless woven inner garment,⁵² by far the most valuable of all, and for which, as it could not be partitioned without being destroyed, they would specially cast lots⁵³ (as St. John reports). Nothing in this world can be accidental, since God is not far from any of us. But in the History of the Christ the Divine purpose, which forms the subject of all prophecy, must have been constantly realised; nay, this must have forced itself on the mind of the observer, and the more irresistibly when, as in the present instance, the outward circumstances were in such sharp contrast to the higher reality. To St. John, the loving and loved disciple, greater contrast could scarcely exist than between this rough partition by lot among the soldiery, and the character and claims of Him Whose garments they were thus apportioning, as if He had been a helpless Victim in their hands. Only one explanation could here suggest itself: that there was a special Divine meaning in the permission of such an event—that it was in fulfilment of ancient prophecy. As he gazed on the terrible scene, the words of the Psalm^{54 55} which portrayed the desertion, the sufferings, and the contempt even unto death of the Servant of the Lord, stood out in the red light of the Sun setting in Blood. They

⁵²It is deeply significant that the dress of the priests was not sewed but woven (Zehbach. 88 *a*), and especially so that of the High-Priest (Yoma 72 *b*). According to tradition, during the seven days of consecration, Moses ministered in a seamless white dress, woven throughout. (Taan. 11 *b*.)

⁵³It is impossible to determine in what manner this was done. The various modes of casting the lot are described by *Adam*, Roman Antiq. pp. 397-399. Possibly, however, it was much more simple and rough than any of these.

⁵⁴Psalm 22:18.

⁵⁵*Strauss* calls Psalm 22. the programme of the Passion of Christ. We may accept the description, though not in his sense.

flashed upon his mind—for the first time he understood them; ⁵⁶ and the flames which played around the Sufferer were seen to be the sacrificial fire that consumed the Sacrifice which He offered. That this quotation is made in the Fourth Gospel alone, proves that its writer was an eyewitness; that it was made in the Fourth Gospel at all, that he was a Jew, deeply imbued with Jewish modes of religious thinking. And the evidence of both is the stronger, as we recall the comparative rareness, and the peculiarly Judaic character of the Old Testament quotations in the Fourth Gospel. ⁵⁷

It was when they thus nailed Him to the Cross, and parted His raiment, that He spake the first of the so-called Seven Words: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. ⁵⁸ Even the reference in this prayer to what they do (not in the past, nor future) points to the soldiers as the primary, though certainly not the sole object of the Saviour's prayer. ^{59 60}

But higher thoughts also come to us. In the moment of the deepest abasement of Christ's Human Nature, the Divine bursts forth most brightly. It is, as if the Saviour would discard all that is merely human in His Sufferings, just as before He had discarded the Cup of stupefying wine. These soldiers were but the unconscious instruments: the form was nothing; the contest was between the Kingdom of God and that of darkness, between the Christ and Satan, and these sufferings were but the necessary path of obedience, and to victory and glory. When He is most human (in the moment of His being nailed to the Cross), then is He most Divine, in the utter discarding of the human elements of human instrumentality and of human suffering. Then also in the utter self-forgetfulness of the God-Man—which is one of the aspects of the Incarnation—does He

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⁵⁶The Scripture quotation in the t. r. of St. Matthew, and, in all probability, that also in St. Mark, is spurious.

⁵⁷Altogether there are fifteen such quotations in the Fourth Gospel. Of these at most only two (St. [John 6:31](#) and [7:38](#)) could be described as Alexandrian in character, the rest are truly Judaic.

⁵⁸The genuineness of these words has been called in question. But alike external and internal evidence demands their retention.

⁵⁹Comp. [Acts 3:17](#) [1 Corinthians 2:8](#).

⁶⁰It would be presumptuous to seek to determine *how far* that prayer extended. Generally—I agree with *Nebe*—to all (Gentiles and Jews) who, in their participation in the sufferings inflicted on Jesus, acted in ignorance.

only remember Divine mercy, and pray for them who crucify Him; and thus also does the Conquered truly conquer His conquerors by asking for them what their deed had forfeited. And lastly, in this, that alike the first and the last of His Utterances begin with Father does He show by the unbrokenness of His faith and fellowship the real spiritual victory which He has won. And He has won it, not only for the martyrs, who have learned from Him to pray as He did, but for everyone who, in the midst of all that seems most opposed to it, can rise, beyond mere forgetfulness of what is around, to realising faith and fellowship with God as the Father—who through the dark curtain of cloud can discern the bright sky, and can feel the unshaken confidence, if not the unbroken joy, of absolute trust.

This was His first Utterance on the Cross—as regarded them; as regarded Himself; and as regarded God. So, surely, suffered not Man. Has this prayer of Christ been answered? We dare not doubt it; nay, we perceive it in some measure in those drops of blessing which have fallen upon heathen men, and have left to Israel also, even in its ignorance, a remnant according to the election of grace.
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[273] And now began the real agonies of the Cross—physical, mental, and spiritual. It was the weary, unrelieved waiting, as thickening darkness gradually gathered around. Before sitting down to their melancholy watch over the Crucified,⁶² the soldiers would refresh themselves, after their exertion in nailing Jesus to the Cross, lifting it up, and fixing it, by draughts of the cheap wine of the country. As they quaffed it, they drank to Him in their coarse brutality, and mockingly came to Him, asking Him to pledge them in response. Their jests were, indeed, chiefly directed not against Jesus personally, but in His Representative capacity, and so against the hated, despised Jews, whose King they now derisively challenged to save Himself.
63 Yet even so, it seems to us of deepest significance, that He was so treated and derided in His Representative Capacity and as the

⁶¹In reference to this St. *Augustine* writes: *Sanguinem Christi, quem saevientes fuderunt, credentes biberunt.* The question why Christ did not Himself forgive, but appeal for it to the Father, is best answered by the consideration, that it was really a *crimen laesae majestatis* against the *Father*, and that the vindication of the Son lay with God the Father.

⁶²St. Matthew.

⁶³St. Luke.

King of the Jews. It is the undesigned testimony of history, alike as regarded the character of Jesus and the future of Israel. But what from almost any point of view we find so difficult to understand is, the unutterable abasement of the Leaders of Israel—their moral suicide as regarded Israel's hope and spiritual existence. There, on that Cross, hung He, Who at least embodied that grand hope of the nation; Who, even on their own showing, suffered to the extreme for that idea, and yet renounced it not, but clung fast to it in unshaken confidence; One, to Whose Life or even Teaching no objection could be offered, save that of this grand idea. And yet, when it came to them in the ribald mockery of this heathen soldiery, it evoked no other or higher thoughts in them; and they had the indescribable baseness of joining in the jeer at Israel's great hope, and of leading the popular chorus in it!

For, we cannot doubt, that—perhaps also by way of turning aside the point of the jeer from Israel—they took it up, and tried to direct it against Jesus; and that they led the ignorant mob in the piteous attempts at derision. And did none of those who so reviled Him in all the chief aspects of His Work feel, that, as Judas had sold the Master for nought and committed suicide, so they were doing in regard to their Messianic hope? For, their jeers cast contempt on the four great facts in the Life and Work of Jesus, which were also the underlying ideas of the Messianic Kingdom: the new relationship to Israel's religion and the Temple (Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days); the new relationship to the Father through the Messiah, the Son of God (if Thou be the Son of God); the new all-sufficient help brought to body and soul in salvation (He saved others); and, finally, the new relationship to Israel in the fulfilment and perfecting of its Mission through its King (if He be the King of Israel). On all these, the taunting challenge of the Sanhedrists, to come down from the Cross, and save Himself, if he would claim the allegiance of their faith, cast what St. Matthew and St. Mark characterise as the blaspheming⁶⁴ of doubt. We compare with theirs the account of St. Luke and St. John. That of St. Luke reads like the report of what had passed, given by one

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⁶⁴The two Evangelists designate by this very word the bearing of the passersby, rendered in the A.V. reviled and railed.

who throughout had been quite close by, perhaps taken part in the Crucifixion ⁶⁵—one might almost venture to suggest, that it had been furnished by the Centurion. ⁶⁶ The narrative of St. John reads markedly like that of an eyewitness, and he a Judaeen. ⁶⁷ And as we compare both the general Judaeen cast and Old Testament quotations in this with the other parts of the Fourth Gospel, we feel as if (as so often), under the influence of the strongest emotions, the later development and peculiar thinking of so many years afterwards had for the time been effaced from the mind of St. John, or rather given place to the Jewish modes of conception and speech, familiar to him in earlier days. Lastly, the account of St. Matthew seems as if written from the priestly point of view, as if it had been furnished by one of the Priests or Sanhedrist party, present at the time.

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Yet other inferences come to us. First, there is a remarkable relationship between what St. Luke quotes as spoken by the soldiers: If Thou art the King of the Jews, save Thyself and the report of the words in St. Matthew: ⁶⁸ He saved others—Himself He cannot save. He ⁶⁹ is the King of Israel! Let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe on Him! These are the words of the Sanhedrists, and they seem to respond to those of the soldiers, as reported by St. Luke, and to carry them further. The if of the soldiers: If Thou art the King of the Jews now becomes a direct blasphemous challenge. As we think of it, they seem to re-echo, and now with the laughter of hellish triumph, the former Jewish challenge for an outward, infallible sign to demonstrate His Messiahship. But they also take up, and re-echo, what Satan had set before Jesus in the Temptation of the wilderness. At the beginning of His Work, the Tempter had suggested that the Christ should achieve absolute victory by an act of presumptuous self-assertion, utterly opposed to the spirit of the Christ, but which Satan represented as an act of trust in God, such

⁶⁵The peculiarities in it are (besides the *titulus*): what passed on the procession to Golgotha (St. [Luke 23:27-31](#)); the prayer, when affixed to the Cross ([ver. 34 a](#)); the bearing of the soldiers ([vv. 36, 37](#)); the conversion of the penitent thief; and the last words on the Cross ([ver. 46](#)).

⁶⁶There is no *evidence*, that the Centurion was still present when the soldier came to pierce the Saviour's side (St. [John 19:31-37](#)).

⁶⁷So from the peculiar details and O.T. quotations.

⁶⁸St. [Matthew 27:42](#).

⁶⁹The word if (if He) in our A.V. is spurious.

as He would assuredly own. And now, at the close of His Messianic Work, the Tempter suggested, in the challenge of the Sanhedrists, that Jesus had suffered absolute defeat, and that God had publicly disowned the trust which the Christ had put in Him. He trusteth in God: let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him. ⁷⁰ Here, as in the Temptation of the Wilderness, the words misapplied were those of Holy Scripture—in the present instance those of [Psalm 22:8](#). And the quotation, as made by the Sanhedrists, is the more remarkable, that, contrary to what is generally asserted by writers, this Psalm ⁷¹ was Messianically applied by the ancient Synagogue. ⁷² More especially was this verse, ⁷³ which precedes the mocking quotation of the Sanhedrists, expressly applied to the sufferings and the derision which Messiah was to undergo from His enemies: All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head. ^{74 75}

The derision of the Sanhedrists under the Cross was, as previously stated, not entirely spontaneous, but had a special motive. The place of Crucifixion was close to the great road which led from the North to Jerusalem. On that Feast-day, when, as there was no law to limit, as on the weekly day of rest, locomotion to a Sabbath day's journey many would pass in and out of the City, and the crowd would naturally be arrested by the spectacle of the three Crosses. Equally naturally would they have been impressed by the *titulus* over the Cross of Christ. The words, describing the Sufferer as the King of the Jews might, when taken in connection with what was known of Jesus, have raised most dangerous questions. And this the presence of the Sanhedrists was intended to prevent, by turning the popular mind in a totally different direction. It was just such a taunt

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⁷⁰This is the literal rendering. The will have Him = has pleasure in Him, like the German: Wenn Er Ihn will.'

⁷¹[Psalm 22](#).

⁷²See Appendix IX.

⁷³[Psalm 22:7](#).

⁷⁴Yalkut on [Isaiah 60](#). vol. ii. p. 56 *d*, lines 12 &c, from bottom.

⁷⁵*Meyer* actually commits himself to the statement, that [Psalm 22](#). was not Messianically applied by the Jews. Other writers follow his lead. The objection, that the Sanhedrists could not have quoted this verse, as it would have branded them as the wicked persons described in the Psalm, has no force when we remember the loose way in which the Jews were in the habit of quoting the Old Testament.

and argumentation as would appeal to that coarse realism of the common people, which is too often misnamed common sense. St. Luke significantly ascribes the derision of Jesus only to the Rulers,⁷⁶ and we repeat, that that of the passers by, recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark, was excited by them. Thus here also the main guilt rested on the leaders of the people.⁷⁷

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One other trait comes to us from St. Luke, confirming our impression that his account was derived from one who had stood quite close to the Cross, probably taken official part in the Crucifixion. St. Matthew and St. Mark merely remark in general, that the derision of the Sanhedrists and people was joined in by the thieves on the Cross.⁷⁸ A trait this, which we feel to be not only psychologically true, but the more likely of occurrence, that any sympathy or possible alleviation of their sufferings might best be secured by joining in the scorn of the leaders, and concentrating popular indignation upon Jesus. But St. Luke also records a vital difference between the two robbers on the Cross.⁷⁹ The impenitent thief takes up the jeer of the Sanhedrists: Art Thou not the Christ? ⁸⁰ Save Thyself and us! The words are the more significant, alike in their bearing on the majestic calm and pitying love of the Saviour on the Cross, and on the utterance of the penitent thief that—strange as it may sound—it seems

⁷⁶The words, with them in St. [Luke 23:35](#), are spurious.

⁷⁷St. Mark introduces the mocking speeches (xv. 29) by the particle *oua* (Ah) which occurs only here in the N.T. It is evidently the Latin *Vah* an exclamation of ironical admiration. (See *Bengel* and *Nebe*, ad loc.) The words literally were: Ha! the downbreaker of the sanctuary and upbuilding it in three days, save Thyself. Except the introductory particle and the order of the words, the words are the same in St. Matthew. The *o kataluwn* is used in the sense of a substantive (comp. *Winer*, Gram. p. 122, and especially p. 316).

⁷⁸The language of St. Matthew and St. Mark is quite general, and refers to the thieves; that of St. Luke is precise and detailed. But I cannot agree with those who, for the sake of harmony represent the penitent thief as joining in his comrade's blasphemy before turning to Christ. I do not deny, that such a sudden change might have taken place; but there is no evidence for it in the text, and the supposition of the penitent thief first blaspheming gives rise to many incongruities, and does not seem to fit into the text.

⁷⁹Tradition names the impenitent thief *Gestas*, which *Keim* identifies with *steganoV*, silenced, hardened—although the derivation seems to me forced. The penitent thief is called *Dysmas*, which I would propose to derive from *dusmh* in the sense of the setting viz, of the sun: he who turns to the setting sun. *Sepp* very fancifully regards the penitent thief as a Greek (*Japhetisch*), the impenitent as a negro.

⁸⁰So according to the right reading.

to have been a terrible phenomenon, noted by historians,⁸¹ that those on the cross were wont to utter insults and imprecations on the onlookers, goaded nature perhaps seeking relief in such outbursts. Not so when the heart was touched in true repentance.

If a more close study of the words of the penitent thief may seem to diminish the fulness of meaning which the traditional view attaches to them, they gain all the more as we perceive their historic reality. His first words were of reproof to his comrade. In that terrible hour, amidst the tortures of a slow death, did not the fear of God creep over him—at least so far as to prevent his joining in the vile jeers of those who insulted the dying agonies of the Sufferer?⁸² And this all the more, in the peculiar circumstances. They were all three sufferers; but they two justly, while He Whom he insulted had done nothing amiss. From this basis of fact, the penitent rapidly rose to the height of faith. This is not uncommon, when a mind is learning the lessons of truth in the school of grace. Only, it stands out here the more sharply, because of the dark background against which it is traced in such broad and brightly shining outlines. The hour of the deepest abasement of the Christ was, as all the moments of His greatest Humiliation, to be marked by a manifestation of His Glory and Divine Character—as it were, by God’s testimony to Him in history, if not by the Voice of God from heaven. And, as regarded the penitent himself, we notice the progression in his soul. No one could have been ignorant—least of all those who were led forth with Him to crucifixion, that Jesus did not suffer for any crime, nor for any political movement, but because He professed to embody the great hope of Israel, and was rejected by its leaders. And, if any had been ignorant, the title over the Cross and the bitter enmity of the Sanhedrists, which followed Him with jeers and jibes, where even ordinary humanity, and still more Jewish feeling, would have enjoined silence, if not pity, must have shown what

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⁸¹See the quotations in *Nebe*, ii. 258.

⁸²Dost not thou even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? Condemnation here means that to which one is condemned: the sufferings of the cross; and the expostulation is: Suffering as thou art like Him and me, canst thou join in the jeers of the crowd? Dost thou not even fear God—should not fear of Him now creep over thy soul, or at least prevent thee from insulting the dying Sufferer? And this all the more, since the circumstances are as immediately afterwards described.

had been the motives of the condemnation of Jesus. But, once the mind was opened to perceive all these facts, the progress would be rapid. In hours of extremity a man may deceive himself and fatally mistake fear for the fear of God, and the remembrance of certain external knowledge for spiritual experience. But, *if* a man really learns in such seasons, the teaching of years may be compressed into moments, and the dying thief on the Cross might outdistance the knowledge gained by Apostles in their years of following Christ.

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One thing stood out before the mind of the penitent thief who in that hour *did* fear God. Jesus had done nothing amiss. And this surrounded with a halo of moral glory the inscription on the Cross, long before its words acquired a new meaning. But how did this Innocent One bear Himself in suffering? Right royally—not in an earthly sense, but in that in which alone He claimed the Kingdom. He had so spoken to the women who had lamented Him, as His faint form could no longer bear the burden of the Cross; and He had so refused the draught that would have deadened consciousness and sensibility. Then, as they three were stretched on the transverse beam, and, in the first and sharpest agony of pain, the nails were driven with cruel stroke of hammer through the quivering flesh, and, in the nameless agony that followed the first moments of the Crucifixion, only a prayer for those who in ignorance, were the instruments of His torture, had passed His lips. And yet He was innocent, Who so cruelly suffered. All that followed must have only deepened the impression. With what calm of endurance and majesty of silence He had borne the insult and jeers of those who, even to the spiritually unenlightened eye, must have seemed so infinitely far beneath Him! This man did feel the fear of God, who now learned the new lesson in which the fear of God was truly the beginning of wisdom. And, once he gave place to the moral element, when under the fear of God he reproved his comrade, this new moral decision became to him, as so often, the beginning of spiritual life. Rapidly he now passed into the light, and onwards and upwards: Lord, remember me, when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom!

The familiar words of our Authorised Version—'When Thou comest into Thy Kingdom'—convey the idea of what we might call a more spiritual meaning of the petition. But we can scarcely believe, that at that moment it implied either that Christ was then

going into His Kingdom, or that the penitent thief looked to Christ for admission into the Heavenly Kingdom. The words are true to the Jewish point of vision of the man. He recognised and owned Jesus as the Messiah, and he did so, by a wonderful forthgoing of faith, even in the utmost Humiliation of Christ. And this immediately passed beyond the Jewish standpoint, for he expected Jesus soon to come back in His Kingly might and power, when he asked to be remembered by Him in mercy. And here we have again to bear in mind that, during the Life of Christ upon earth, and, indeed, before the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, men always first learned to believe in the Person of the Christ, and then to know His teaching and His Mission in the forgiveness of sins. It was so in this case also. If the penitent thief had learned to know the Christ, and to ask for gracious recognition in His coming Kingdom, the answering assurance of the Lord conveyed not only the comfort that his prayer was answered, but the teaching of spiritual things which he knew not yet, and so much needed to know. The penitent had spoken of the future, Christ spoke of to-day'; the penitent had prayed about that Messianic Kingdom which was to come, Christ assured him in regard to the state of the disembodied spirits, and conveyed to him the promise that he would be there in the abode of the blessed—Paradise'—and that through means of Himself as the Messiah: Amen, I say unto thee—To-day with Me shalt thou be in the Paradise. Thus did Christ give him that *spiritual* knowledge which he did not yet possess—the teaching concerning the to-day the need of gracious admission into Paradise, and that with and through Himself—in other words, concerning the forgiveness of sins and the opening of the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. This, as the first and foundation-creed of the soul, was the first and foundation-fact concerning the Messiah.

This was the Second Utterance from the Cross. The first had been of utter self-forgetfulness; the second of deepest, wisest, most gracious spiritual teaching. And, had He spoken none other than these, He would have been proved to be the Son of God. ⁸³

⁸³Fully to understand it, we ought to realise what would be the Jewish ideas of the penitent thief and what his understanding of the words of Christ. Broadly, one would say, that as a Jew he would expect that his death would be expiation of his sins. Thoughts of need of forgiveness through the Messiah would not therefore come to him. But the words of Christ must have supplied all this. Again when Christ spoke of Paradise His

[281] Nothing more would require to be said to the penitent on the Cross. The events which followed, and the words which Jesus would still speak, would teach him more fully than could otherwise have been done. Some hours—probably two—had passed since Jesus had been nailed to the Cross. We wonder how it came that St. John, who tells us some of the incidents with such exceeding particularity, and relates all with the vivid realisation of a most deeply interested eyewitness, should have been silent as to others—especially as to those hours of derision, as well as to the conversion of the penitent thief. His silence seems to us to have been due to absence from the scene. We part company with him after his detailed account of the last scene before Pilate.⁸⁴ The final sentence pronounced, we suppose him to have hurried into the City, and to have acquainted such of the disciples as he might find—but especially those faithful women and the Virgin Mother—with the terrible scenes that had passed since the previous evening. Thence he returned to Golgotha, just in time to witness the Crucifixion, which he again describes with peculiar fulness of details.⁸⁵ When the Saviour was nailed to the Cross, St. John seems once more to have returned to the City—this time, to bring back with him those-women, in company of whom we now find him standing close to the Cross. A more delicate, tender, loving service could not have been rendered than this. Alone, of

[282] all the disciples, he is there—not afraid to be near Christ, in the Palace of the High-Priest, before Pilate, and now under the Cross. And alone he renders to Christ this tender service of bringing the

hearer would naturally understand that part of Hades in which the spirits of the righteous dwelt till the Resurrection. On both these points there are so many passages in Rabbinic writings that it is needless to quote (see for ex. *Westein*, ad loc., and our remarks on the Parable of Lazarus and Dives). Indeed, the prayer: let my death be the expiation of my sins, is still in the Jewish office for the dying, and the underlying dogma is firmly rooted in Rabbinic belief. The words of our Lord, so far from encouraging this belief, would teach him that admission to Paradise was to be granted by Christ. It is scarcely necessary to add, that Christ's words in no way encouraged the realistic conceptions which Judaism attached to Paradise (skrp). In Biblical Hebrew the word is used for a choice garden: in [Ecclesiastes 2:5](#); Cant. iv. 13; Nehem. 2:8. But in the LXX. and the Apocr. the word is already used in our sense of Paradise. Lastly, nothing which our Lord had said to the penitent thief about being to-day with Him in Paradise, is in any way inconsistent with, rather confirms, the doctrine of the Descent into Hades.

⁸⁴St. [John 19:2-16](#).

⁸⁵v. 17-24.

women and Mary to the Cross, and to them the protection of his guidance and company. He loved Jesus best; and it was fitting that to his manliness and affection should be entrusted the unspeakable privilege of Christ's dangerous inheritance. ⁸⁶

The narrative ⁸⁷ leaves the impression that with the beloved disciple these four women were standing close to the Cross: the Mother of Jesus, the Sister of His Mother, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. ⁸⁸ A comparison with what is related by St. Matthew ⁸⁹ and St. Mark ⁹⁰ supplies further important particulars. We read there of only three women, the name of the Mother of our Lord being omitted. But then it must be remembered that this refers to a later period in the history of the Crucifixion. It seems as if John had fulfilled to the letter the Lord's command: Behold thy mother and literally from that very hour taken her to his own home. If we are right in this supposition, then, in the absence of St. John—who led away the Virgin Mother from that scene of horror—the other three women would withdraw to a distance, where we find them at the end, not by the Cross as in St. [John 19:25](#), but beholding from afar and now joined by others also, who had loved and followed Christ.

We further notice that, the name of the Virgin Mother being omitted, the other three are the same as mentioned by St. John; only, Mary of Clopas is now described as the mother of James and Jose ⁹¹ and Christ's Mother's Sister as Solome ⁹² and the mother of

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⁸⁶The first impression left is, of course, that the brothers of Jesus were not yet, at least in the full sense, believers. But this does not by any means necessarily follow, since both the presence of John under the Cross, and even his outward circumstances, might point him out as the most fit custodian of the Virgin Mother. At the same time it seems the more likely supposition, that the brothers of Jesus were converted by the appearance to James of the Risen One ([1 Corinthians 15:7](#)).

⁸⁷St. [John 19:25-27](#).

⁸⁸This view is now generally adopted.

⁸⁹St. [Matthew 27:55](#).

⁹⁰St. [Mark 15:40, 41](#).

⁹¹There is, of course, the difficulty that Judas (Lebbaeus) and Simon Zelotes are not here mentioned as her sons. But they may have been her stepsons, or there may have other reasons for the omission. Judas of James could scarcely have been the son of James, and Simon is expressly mentioned by *Hegesippus* as the son of Clopas.

Zebedee's children. ⁹³ Thus Salome, the wife of Zebedee and St. John's mother, was the sister of the Virgin, and the beloved disciple the cousin (on the mother's side) of Jesus, and the nephew of the Virgin. This also helps to explain why the care of the Mother had been entrusted to him. Nor was Mary the wife of Clopas unconnected with Jesus. What we have every reason to regard as a trustworthy account ⁹⁴ describes Clopas as the brother of Joseph, the husband of the Virgin. Thus, not only Salome as the sister of the Virgin, but Mary also as the wife of Clopas, would, in a certain sense, have been His aunt, and her sons His cousins. And so we notice among the twelve Apostles five cousins of the Lord: the two sons of Salome and Zebedee, and the three sons of Alphaeus or Clopas ⁹⁵ and Mary: James, Judas surnamed Lebbaeus and Thaddaeus, and Simon surnamed Zelotes or Cananaean. ⁹⁶

[284] We can now in some measure realise events. When St. John had seen the Saviour nailed to the Cross, he had gone to the City and brought with him for a last mournful farewell the Virgin, accompanied by those who, as most nearly connected with her, would naturally be with her: her own sister Salome, the sister-in-law of Joseph and wife (or more probably widow) of Clopas, and her who of all others had experienced most of His blessed power to save—Mary of Magdala. Once more we reverently mark His Divine calm of utter self-forgetfulness and His human thoughtfulness for others. As they stood under the Cross, He committed His Mother to the disciple whom He loved, and established a new human relationship

⁹²St. Mark.

⁹³St. Matthew.

⁹⁴*Hegesippus* in *Euseb.* H.E. iii. 11 and iv. 22.

⁹⁵Alphaeus and Clopas are the same name. The first occurs in the Babylon Talmud as *Ilphai*, or *Ilpha* (plyas in R. haSh. 17 *b*, and often; the other in the Jerusalem Talmud as *Chilphai* (yyplyx), as for ex. in Jer. B. Kama 7 *a*.

⁹⁶I regard the Simon Zelotes of the list of Apostles as the Simon son of Clopas, or Alphaeus, of *Hegesippus*—*first*, because of his position in the lists of the Apostles along with the two other sons of Alphaeus; *secondly*, because, as there were only two prominent Simons in the N.T. (the brother of the Lord, and Zelotes), and *Hegesippus* mentions him as the son of Clopas, it follows that the Simon son of Clopas was Simon Zelotes. Levi Matthew was, indeed, also a son of Alphaeus, but we regard this as another Clopas than the husband of Mary.

between him and her who was nearest to Himself. ⁹⁷ And calmly, earnestly, and immediately did that disciple undertake the sacred charge, and bring her—whose soul the sword had pierced—away from the scene of unutterable woe to the shelter of his home. ⁹⁸ And this temporary absence of John from the Cross may account for the want of all detail in his narrative till quite the closing scene. ⁹⁹

Now at last all that concerned the earthward aspect of His Mission—so far as it had to be done on the Cross—was ended. He had prayed for those who had nailed Him to it, in ignorance of what they did; He had given the comfort of assurance to the penitent, who had owned His Glory in His Humiliation; and He had made the last provision of love in regard to those nearest to Him. So to speak, the relations of His Humanity—that which touched His Human Nature in any direction—had been fully met. He had done with the Human aspect of His Work and with earth. And, appropriately, Nature seemed now to take sad farewell of Him, and mourned its departing Lord, Who, by His Personal connection with it, had once more lifted it from the abasement of the Fall into the region of the Divine, making it the dwelling-place, the vehicle for the manifestation, and the obedient messenger of the Divine.

For three hours had the Saviour hung on the Cross. It was midday. And now the Sun was craped in darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour. No purpose can be served by attempting to trace the source of this darkness. It could not have been an eclipse, since it was the time of full moon; nor can we place reliance on the later reports on this subject of ecclesiastical writers. ¹⁰⁰

It seems only in accordance with the Evangelic narrative to regard [285]

⁹⁷Incongruous though the interruption be, we cannot help noticing that the introduction of such a scene seems inconsistent with the whole theory of an Ephesian authorship of the Fourth Gospel. On the other hand, it displays evidence of the true human interest of an actor in the scene.

⁹⁸Nothing is really known of the later history of the Blessed Virgin.

⁹⁹St. John 19:28.

¹⁰⁰I do not think the testimony of *Phlegon*, as quoted by *Eusebius*, is available (see the discussion in *Wieseler's Synopse*, p. 387, note 1). Still, if the astronomical calculations of *Ideler* and *Wurm* are correct, the eclipse recorded by *Phlegon* [whether eclipse in the *scientific* sense, or darkness] would have taken place in the very year of our Lord's death, A.D. 29, but, as they reckon, on November 24. I do not possess the special knowledge requisite to verify these calculations; but that it is described by *Phlegon* as an eclipse'—

the occurrence of the event as supernatural, while the event itself might have been brought about by natural causes; and among these we must call special attention to the earthquake in which this darkness terminated. ¹⁰¹ For, it is a well-known phenomenon that such darkness not unfrequently precedes earthquakes. On the other hand, it must be freely admitted, that the language of the Evangelists seems to imply that this darkness extended, not only over the land of Israel, but over the inhabited earth. The expression must, of course, not be pressed to its full literality, but explained as meaning that it extended far beyond Judaea and to other lands. No reasonable objection can be raised from the circumstance, that neither the earthquake nor the preceding darkness are mentioned by any profane writer whose works have been preserved, since it would surely not be maintained that an historical record must have been preserved of every earthquake that occurred, and of every darkness that may have preceded it. ¹⁰²

[286] But the most unfair argument is that, which tries to establish the unhistorical character of this narrative by an appeal to what are described as Jewish sayings expressive of similar expectancy. ¹⁰³ It is quite true that in old Testament prophecy—whether figuratively or really—the darkening, though not only of the sun, *but also of the moon and stars*, is sometimes connected, not with the Coming of Messiah, still less with His Death, but with the final Judgement.

which this could not have been—does not necessarily invalidate the argument, since he might have used the term inaccurately. It is in this sense that St. [Luke 23:45](#) uses the verb—that is, if we adopt the amended reading. What *Nebe* writes on this subject (vol. ii. p. 301), and the illustrations of the popular use of the word from *Pliny* and *Plutarch*, deserve the most serious consideration. But, I repeat, I cannot attach weight in this argument to such testimonies, nor yet to the sayings of *Origen*, *Tertullian*, &c., nor to the *Acta Pilati* (the ecclesiastical testimonies are discussed by *Nebe*, u. s. p. 299).

¹⁰¹St. [Matthew 27:51](#).

¹⁰²There are frequent notices in classical writers of eclipses preceding disastrous events or the death of great men, such as of Caesar (*Nebe*, u. s. p. 300). But these were, if correctly related, eclipses in the true sense, and, as such, natural events, having in no way a supernatural bearing, and hence in no sense analogous to this darkness at the Crucifixion.

¹⁰³So *Strauss* (after *Wetstein*) and even *Keim*. Painful as controversy is in connection with the last hours of Jesus, I would not have shrunk from contesting the positions of *Keim*, if I had not felt that every unprejudiced person must see, that most of them are mere assertions, without an attempt at anything like historical evidence.

¹⁰⁴ But Jewish tradition never speaks of such an event in connection with Messiah, or even with the Messianic judgments, and the quotations from Rabbinic writings made by negative critics must be characterised as not only inapplicable but even unfair. ¹⁰⁵

But to return from this painful digression. The three hours darkness was such not only to Nature; Jesus, also, entered into darkness: Body, Soul, and Spirit. It was now, not as before, a contest—but suffering. Into this, to us, fathomless depth of the mystery of His Sufferings, we dare not, as indeed we cannot, enter. It was of the Body; yet not of the Body only, but of physical life. And it was of the Soul and Spirit; yet not of them alone, but in their conscious relation to man and to God. And it was not of the Human only in Christ, but in its indissoluble connection with the Divine:

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¹⁰⁴*Strauss* (ii. p. 556), and more fully *Keim* (iii. p. 438, Note 3), quote [Joel 2:10, 31](#); [Amos 8:9](#); [Isaiah 13:10](#); [1:3](#); [Job 9:7](#); [Jeremiah 15:9](#). Of these passages some have no bearing, however remote, on the subject, while the others refer not to the Messiah but to the final judgement.

¹⁰⁵To be quite fair, I will refer to *all* the passages quoted in connection with the darkening of the sun as a token of mourning. The first (quoted by *Wetstein*) is from the Midrash on [Lamentations 3:28](#) (ed. Warsh. p. 72 *a*). But the passage, evidently a highly figurative one, refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of Israel, and, besides the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars (not the sun only), refers to a realistic fulfilment of [Nahum 1:3](#) and [Lamentations 3:28](#) in God's walking in dust and keeping silence. The second quotation of *Wetstein*, that when a great Rabbi dies it is as portentous as if the sun went down at midday—has manifestly no bearing whatever on the matter in hand (though *Strauss* adduces it). The last and only quotation really worth mention is from *Sukk. 29 a*. In a somewhat lengthened statement there, the meaning of an obscuration of the sun or moon is discussed. I have here to remark (1) that these phenomena are regarded as signs in the sense of betokening coming judgments, such as war, famine, &c., and that these are supposed to affect various nations according as the eclipse is towards the rising or setting of the sun. The passage therefore *can* have no possible connection with such a phenomenon as the death of Messiah. (2) This is further confirmed by the enumeration of certain sins for which heavenly luminaries are eclipsed. Some are not fit for mention, while others are such as false witness-bearing, the needless cutting down of fruit-trees, &c. (3) But the unfairness, as well as the inaptitude, of the quotation appears from this, that only the beginning of the passage is quoted (*Strauss* and *Keim*): At a time when the sun is obscured, it is an evil sign to all the world while what follows is omitted: When the sun is obscured, it is an evil sign to the nations of the world; when the moon is obscured, it is an evil sign to Israel, because Israel reckons according to the moon, the nations of the world according to the sun. And yet *Wünsche* (*Erlauter.* pp. 355, 356) quotes both that which precedes and that which follows this passage, but leaves out this passage itself. (*Comp. Mechilta*, p. 3 *b*.)

[288] of the Human, where it reached the utmost verge of humiliation to body, soul, and spirit—and in it of the Divine, to utmost self-examination. The increasing, nameless agonies of the Crucifixion¹⁰⁶ were deepening into the bitterness of death. All nature shrinks from death, and there is a physical horror of the separation between body and soul which, as a purely natural phenomenon, is in every instance only *overcome*, and that only by a higher principle. And we conceive that the purer the being the greater the violence of the tearing asunder of the bond with which God Almighty originally bound together body and soul. In the Perfect Man this must have reached the highest degree. So, also, had in those dark hours the sense of man-forsakenness and His own isolation from man; so, also, had the intense silence of God, the withdrawal of God, the sense of His God-forsakenness and absolute loneliness. We dare not here speak of punitive suffering, but of forsakenness and loneliness. And yet as we ask ourselves how this forsakenness can be thought of as so complete in view of His Divine consciousness, which at least could not have been wholly extinguished by His Self-examination, we feel that yet another element must be taken into account. Christ on the Cross suffered *for* man; He offered Himself a sacrifice; He died for our sins, that, as death was the wages of sin, so He died as the Representative of man—for man and in room of man; He obtained for man eternal redemption¹⁰⁷ having given His Life a ransom,¹⁰⁸ for many. For, men were redeemed with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot;¹⁰⁹ and Christ gave Himself for us, that He might “redeem” us from all iniquity;¹¹⁰ He gave Himself “a ransom” for all;¹¹¹ Christ died for all;¹¹² Him, Who knew no sin, God made sin for us; Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us’—and this, with express reference to the Crucifixion.¹¹³ This sacrifice, vicarious, expiatory, and redemptive character of His Death, if it

¹⁰⁶These are described with terrible realism by *Keim*.

¹⁰⁷aiwnian lutrwsinHebr. ix. 12.

¹⁰⁸lutronSt. [Matthew 20:28](#).

¹⁰⁹[1 Peter 1:19](#).

¹¹⁰[Titus 2:14](#).

¹¹¹antilutron uper pantwn [1 Timothy 2:6](#).

¹¹²uper pantwn, [2 Corinthians 5:15](#).

¹¹³[Galatians 3:13](#).

does not explain to us, yet helps us to understand, Christ's sense of God-forsakenness in the supreme moment of the Cross; if one might so word it—the passive character of His activeness through the active character of His passiveness.

It was this combination of the Old Testament idea of sacrifice, and of the Old Testament ideal of willing suffering as the Servant of Jehovah, now fulfilled in Christ, which found its fullest expression in the language of the twenty-second Psalm. It was fitting—rather, it was true—that the willing suffering of the true Sacrifice should now find vent in its opening words: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?—*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthanei?* otemark7351108114 [289] These words, cried with a loud voice ¹¹⁵ at the close of the period of extreme agony, ¹¹⁶ marked the climax and the end of this suffering of Christ, of which the utmost compass was the withdrawal of God and the felt loneliness of the Sufferer. But they that stood by the Cross, misinterpreting the meaning, and mistaking the opening words for the name *Elias*, imagined that the Sufferer had called for Elias. We can scarcely doubt, that these were the soldiers who stood by the Cross. They were not necessarily Romans; on the contrary, as we have seen, these Legions were generally recruited from Provincials. On the other hand, no Jew would have mistaken *Eli* for the name of Elijah, not yet misinterpreted a quotation of [Psalm 22:1](#) as a call for that prophet. And it must be remembered, that the words were not whispered, but cried with a loud voice. But all entirely accords with the misunderstanding of non-Jewish soldiers, who, as the whole history shows, had learned from His accusers and the infuriated mob snatches of a distorted story of the Christ.

And presently the Sufferer emerged on the other side. It can scarcely have been a minute or two from the time that the cry from

¹¹⁴So in St. Matthew, according to the best reading. In St. Mark, *Eloi, Eloi* [apparently the Syriac form], *lema sabachthanei?* Might it be that St. Matthew represents the current Judæan or Galilean dialect, and St. Mark the Syrian, and that this casts light alike on the dialects in Palestine at the time of Christ, and even, to some extent, on the composition of the Gospels, and the land in which they were written? The Targum renders [Psalm 22:2](#): *Eli, Eli, metul mah shebhaqtani?* (On account of what hast Thou forsaken me?).

¹¹⁵This in the extreme agony of soul, not to mark His Divinity.

¹¹⁶About the ninth hour. I cannot bring myself here to discuss the supposed analogous quotations of [Psalm 22:1](#) in Rabbinic writings. The comparison is equally inapt and irreverent.

the twenty-second Psalm marked the high-point of His Agony, when the words I thirst ¹¹⁷ seem to indicate, by the prevalence of the merely human aspect of the suffering, that the other and more terrible aspect of sin-bearing and God-forsakenness was past. To us, therefore, this seems the beginning, if not of Victory, yet of Rest, of the End. St. John alone records this Utterance, prefacing it with this distinctive statement, that Jesus so surrendered Himself to the human feeling, seeking the bodily relief by expressing His thirst: knowing that all things were now finished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹¹⁸ In other words, the climax of The anthropic Suffering in His feeling of God-forsakenness, which had led to the utterance of [Psalm 22:1](#), was now, to His consciousness, the end of all which in accordance with Scripture-prediction He had to bear. He now could and did yield Himself to the mere physical wants of His Body.

It seems as if St. John, having perhaps just returned to the scene, and standing with the women afar off beholding these things, ¹¹⁹ had hastened forward on the cry from [Psalm 22.](#), ¹²⁰ and heard Him express the feeling of thirst, which immediately followed. And so St. John alone supplies the link between that cry and the movement on the part of the soldiers, which St. Matthew and St. Mark, as well as St. John, report. For, it would be impossible to understand why, on what the soldiers regarded as a call for Elijah, one of them should have hastened to relieve His thirst, but for the Utterance recorded in the Fourth Gospel. But we can quite understand it, if the Utterance, I thirst followed immediately on the previous cry.

¹¹⁷St. [John 19:28](#).

¹¹⁸The words last quoted can, of course, and have by most writers been connected with the thirst of Christ, as the fulfilment of [Psalm 69:21](#). But the structure of the sentence leads rather to the punctuation adopted in the text, while I have the greatest difficulty in applying [Psalm 69:21](#) in the manner proposed, and still more grave objection to the idea that Christ uttered the words in order to fulfil the Psalm, although the word that must, as previously shown (p. 503), not be taken in the sense of in order that. There is, of course, a *tertium quid*, and the Evangelist may be supposed to have expressed only his own sense that the Scripture was fulfilled, when he saw the thirst of the Saviour quenched in the vinegar of the soldiers. But in that case we should expect the words that the Scripture might be fulfilled placed *after* the I thirst.'

¹¹⁹St. [Luke 23:49](#).

¹²⁰Whether or not he heard the words of the cry.

One of the soldiers—may we not be allowed to believe, one who either had already learned from that Cross, or was about to learn, to own Him Lord—moved by sympathy, now ran to offer some slight refreshment to the Sufferer by filling a sponge with the rough wine of the soldiers and putting it to His lips, having first fastened it to the stem (reed) of the caper (hyssop), which is said to grow to the height of even two or three feet.¹²¹ But, even so, this act of humanity was not allowed to pass unchallenged by the coarse jibes of the others who would bid him leave the relief of the Sufferer to the agency of Elijah, which in their opinion He had invoked. Nor should we perhaps wonder at the weakness of that soldier himself, who, though he would not be hindered in his good deed, yet averted the opposition of the others by apparently joining in their mockery.¹²²

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By accepting the physical refreshment offered Him, the Lord once more indicated the completion of the work of His Passion. For, as He would not enter on it with His senses and physical consciousness lulled by narcotised wine, so He would not pass out of it with senses and physical consciousness dulled by the absolute failure of life-power. Hence He took what for the moment restored the physical balance, needful for thought and word. And so He immediately passed on to taste death for every man. For, the two last sayings of the Saviour now followed in rapid succession: first, that with a loud voice, which expressed it, that the work given Him to do, as far as concerned His Passion, was finished;¹²³ and then, that in the words of [Psalm 31:5](#), in which He commended His Spirit into the Hands of the Father.¹²⁴ Attempts at comment could only weaken the solemn thoughts which the words awaken. Yet some points should be noted for our teaching. His last cry with a loud voice was not like that of one dying. St. Mark notes, that this made such deep impression on the Centurion.¹²⁵ In the language of the early Christian hymn, it was not Death which approached Christ, but Christ Death: He

¹²¹Comp. *Tristram* Nat. Hist. of the Bible, p. 457.

¹²²St. [Matthew 27:48, 49](#); St. [Mark 15:36](#).

¹²³St. John.

¹²⁴St. Luke.

¹²⁵St. [Mark 15:39](#).

died without death. ¹²⁶ Christ encountered Death, not as conquered, but as the Conqueror. And this also was part of His work, and for us: now the beginning of His Triumph. And with this agrees the peculiar language of St. John, that He bowed the Head, and gave up the Spirit (to pneuma).

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Nor should we fail to mark the peculiarities of His last Utterance. The My God of the fourth Utterance had again passed into the Father of conscious fellowship. And yet neither in the Hebrew original of this Psalm, nor in its Greek rendering by the LXX., does the word Father occur. Again, in the LXX. translation of the Hebrew text this word expressive of entrustment—the commending—is in the future tense; on the lips of our Lord it is in the present tense. ¹²⁷ And the word, in its New Testament sense, means not merely commending: it is to deposit, to commit for safe keeping. ¹²⁸ That in dying—or rather meeting and overcoming Death—He chose and adapted these words, is matter for deepest thankfulness to the Church. He spoke them *for* His people in a twofold sense: on their behalf, that they might be able to speak them; and for them that henceforth they might speak them after Him. How many thousands have pillowed their heads on them when going to rest! They were the last words of a Polycarp, a Bernard, Huss, Luther, and Melanchthon. And to us also they may be the fittest and the softest lullaby. And in the Spirit which He had committed to God did He now descend into Hades, and preached unto the spirits in prison. ¹²⁹ But behind this great mystery have closed the two-leaved gates of brass, which only the Hand of the Conqueror could burst open.

And now a shudder ran through Nature, as its Sun had set. We dare not do more than follow the rapid outlines of the Evangelic narrative. As the first token, it records the rending of the Temple-Veil in two from the top downward to the bottom; as the second, the quaking of the earth, the rending of the rocks and the opening of the graves. Although most writers have regarded this as indicating

¹²⁶En pessima, non tu/Pervenis ad Christum, sed Christus pervenit ad te./Cui licuit sine morte mori. *Sedulius*.

¹²⁷So according to the better reading.

¹²⁸Comp. the use of the verb paratiq̄hmi in such passages as St. [Luke 12:48](#); [Acts 14:23](#); [20:32](#); [1 Timothy 1:18](#); [2 Timothy 2:2](#).

¹²⁹[1 Peter 3:18, 19](#).

the strictly chronological succession, there is nothing in the text to bind us to such a conclusion. Thus, while the rending of the Veil is recorded first, as being the most significant token to Israel, it may have been connected with the earthquake, although this alone might scarcely account for the tearing of so heavy a Veil from the top to the bottom. Even the latter circumstance has its significance. That some great catastrophe, betokening the impending destruction of the Temple, had occurred in the Sanctuary about this very time, is confirmed by not less than four mutually independent testimonies: those of Tacitus,¹³⁰ of Josephus,¹³¹ of the Talmud,¹³² and of earliest Christian tradition¹³³. The most important of these are, of course, the Talmud and Josephus. The latter speaks of the mysterious extinction of the middle and chief light in the Golden Candlestick, forty years before the destruction of the Temple; and both he and the Talmud refer to a supernatural opening by themselves of the great Temple-gates that had been previously closed, which was regarded as a portent of the coming destruction of the Temple. We can scarcely doubt, that some historical fact must underlie so peculiar and widespread a tradition, and we cannot help feeling that it may be a distorted version of the occurrence of the rending of the Temple-Veil (or of its report) at the Crucifixion of Christ.¹³⁴

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But even if the rending of the Temple-Veil had commenced with

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¹³⁰Hist. v. 13.

¹³¹Jew. War vi. 5. 3.

¹³²Jer. Yoma 43 c; Yoma 39 b.

¹³³So in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, from which St. Jerome quotes (in [Matthew 27:51](#), and in a letter to Hedibia) to the effect, that the huge lintel of the Temple was broken and splintered, and fell. St. Jerome connects the rending of the Veil with this, and it would seem an obvious inference to connect again this breaking of the lintel with an earthquake.

¹³⁴A story is told in Jewish tradition (Gitt, 56 b, about the middle; Ber. R. 10; Vayyik. R. 22, and in other places) to the effect that, among other vilenesses, Titus the wicked had penetrated into the Sanctuary, and cut through the Veil of the Most Holy Place with his sword, when blood dropped down. I mention the legend to express my emphatic protest against the manner in which Dr. *Joel* (Blicke in d. Religionsgesch. i. pp. 7, 8, treating of the passage in the Midr. on [Lamentations 2:17](#)) has made use of it. He represents it, as if the Veil had been rent (Zerreissen des Vorhanges bei d. Tempelzerstörung)—not cut through by Titus, and on the basis of this misrepresentation has the boldness to set a legend about Titus side by side with the Evangelic account of the rending of the Temple-Veil! I write thus strongly because I am sorry to say that this is by no means the only instance in

the earthquake, and, according to the Gospel to the Hebrews, with the breaking of the great lintel over the entrance, it could not be wholly accounted for in this manner. According to Jewish tradition, there were, indeed, two Veils before the entrance to the Most Holy Place.¹³⁵ The Talmud explains this on the ground that it was not known, whether in the former Temple the Veil had hung inside or outside the entrance and whether the partition-wall had stood in the Holy or Most Holy Place.¹³⁶ Hence (according to *Maimonides*)¹³⁷ there was not any wall between the Holy and Most Holy Place, but the space of one cubit, assigned to it in the former Temple, was left unoccupied, and one Veil hung on the side of the Holy, the other on that of the Most Holy Place. According to an account dating from Temple-times, there were altogether thirteen Veils used in various parts of the Temple—two new ones being made every year.¹³⁸ The Veils before the Most Holy Place were 40 cubits (60 feet) long, and 20 (30 feet) wide, of the thickness of the palm of the hand, and wrought in 72 squares, which were joined together; and these Veils were so heavy, that, in the exaggerated language of the time, it needed 3000 priests to manipulate each. If the Veil was at all such as is described in the Talmud, it could not have been rent in twain by a mere earthquake or the fall of the lintel, although its composition in squares fastened together might explain, how the rent might be as described in the Gospel.

Indeed, everything seems to indicate that, although the earthquake might furnish the physical basis, the rent of the Temple-Veil was—with reverence be it said—really made by the Hand of God. As we compute, it may just have been the time when, at the Evening-Sacrifice, the officiating Priesthood entered the Holy Place, either to burn the incense or to do other sacred service there. To see before them, not as the aged Zacharias at the beginning of this history the Angel Gabriel, but the Veil of the Holy Place rent from top to bottom—that beyond it they could scarcely have seen—and hanging

which Jewish writers adapt their quotations to controversial purposes. *Joel* refers to Dr. *Sachs*, Beitr. i. p. 29, but that learned writer draws no such inference from the passage in question.

¹³⁵Yoma v. 1.

¹³⁶Yoma 51 *b*.

¹³⁷Hilkh. Beth ha-Bech, iv. 2, ed. Amst. vol. iii. p. 149 *b*.

¹³⁸Yoma 54 *a* Kethub. 106 *a*; Sheqal. viii. 5.

in two parts from its fastenings above and at the side, was, indeed, a terrible portent, which would soon become generally known, and must, in some form or other, have been preserved in tradition. And they all must have understood, that it meant that God's Own Hand had rent the Veil, and foreverdeserted and thrown open that Most Holy Place where He had so long dwelt in the mysterious gloom, only lit up once a year by the glow of the censer of him, who made atonement for the sins of the people. ¹³⁹

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Other tokens were not wanting. In the earthquake the rocks were rent, and their tombs opened. This, as Christ descended into Hades. And when He ascended on the third day, it was with victorious saints who had left those open graves. To many in the Holy City on that ever-memorable first day, and in the week that followed, appeared the bodies of many of those saints who had fallen on sleep in the sweet hope of that which had now become reality. ¹⁴⁰

But on those who stood under the Cross, and near it, did all that was witnessed make the deepest and most lasting impression. Among them we specially mark the Centurion under whose command the soldiers had been. Many a scene of horror must he have witnessed in those sad times of the Crucifixion, but none like this. Only one conclusion could force itself on his mind. It was that which, we cannot doubt, had made its impression on his heart and conscience. Jesus was not what the Jews, His infuriated enemies, had described Him. He was what He professed to be, what His bearing on the Cross and His Death attested Him to be: righteous and hence, the Son of God. From this there was only a step to personal allegiance to Him, and, as previously suggested, we may possibly owe to him some of those details which St. Luke alone has preserved.

The brief spring-day was verging towards the evening of the Sabbath. In general, the Law ordered that the body of a criminal

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¹³⁹May this phenomenon account for the early conversion of so many priests recorded in [Acts 6:7](#)?

¹⁴⁰I dare express myself dogmatically on the precise import of St. [Matthew 27:52, 53](#). Does it mean that they were actually clothed with the Resurrection-body, or with the body which they had formerly borne, or that many saints from out Hades appeared to those who loved them, and with them had waited for the Kingdom, in the forms which they had known? We know too little of the connection between the other world and this, and the

should not be left hanging unburied over night. ¹⁴¹ Perhaps in ordinary circumstances the Jews might not have appealed so confidently to Pilate as actually to ask ¹⁴² him to shorten the sufferings of those on the Cross, since the punishment of crucifixion often lasted not only for hours but days, ere death ensued. But here was a special occasion. The Sabbath about to open was a high-day'—it was both a Sabbath and the second Paschal Day, which was regarded as in every respect equally sacred with the first—nay, more so, since the so-called Wavesheaf was then offered to the Lord. And what the Jews now proposed to Pilate was, indeed, a shortening, but not in any sense a mitigation, of the punishment. Sometimes there was added to the punishment of crucifixion that of breaking the bones (*crurifragium*, *skelokopia*) by means of a club or hammer. This would not itself bring death, but the breaking of the bones was always followed by a *coup de grâce*, by sword, lance, or stroke (the *perforatio* or *percussio sub alas*), which immediately put an end to what remained of life. ¹⁴³ Thus the breaking of the bones was a sort of increase of punishment, by way of compensation for its shortening by the final stroke that followed.

It were unjust to suppose, that in their anxiety to fulfil the letter of the Law as to burial on the eve of that high Sabbath, the Jews had sought to intensify the sufferings of Jesus. The text gives no indication of this; and they could not have asked for the final stroke to be inflicted without the breaking of the bones which always preceded it. The irony of this punctilious care for the letter of the Law about burial and high Sabbath by those who had betrayed and crucified their Messiah on the first Passover-day is sufficiently great, and, let us add, terrible, without importing fictitious elements. St. John, who, perhaps, immediately on the death of Christ, left the Cross, alone reports circumstance. Perhaps it was when he concerted with Joseph of Arimathaea, with Nicodemus, or the two Marys, measures

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for the burying of Christ, that he learned of the Jewish deputation mode in which the departed may communicate with those here, to venture on any decided statement, especially as we take into account the unique circumstances of the occasion.

¹⁴¹Deuteronomy 21:23; comp. Jos. War iv. 5. 2.

¹⁴²hrwthsan, they asked St. John 19:31.

¹⁴³Comp. Friedlieb, Archaeol. d. Leidensgesch. pp. 163-168; but especially Nebe, u. s. ii. pp. 394, 395.

to Pilate, followed it to Praetorium, and then watched how it was all carried out on Golgotha. He records, how Pilate acceded to the Jewish demand, and gave directions for the *crurifragium*, and permission for the after-removal of the dead bodies, which otherwise might have been left to hang, till putrescence or birds of prey had destroyed them. But St. John also tells us what he evidently regards as so great a prodigy that he specially vouches for it, pledging his own veracity, as an eyewitness, and grounding on it an appeal to the faith of those to whom his Gospel is addressed. It is, that certain things came to pass [*not as in our A. V., were done*'] that the Scripture should be fulfilled or, to put it otherwise, by which the Scripture was fulfilled. These things were two, to which a third phenomenon, not less remarkable, must be added. For, first, when, in the *crurifragium*, the soldiers had broken the bones of two malefactors, and then came to the Cross of Jesus, they found that He was dead already, and so a bone of Him was not broken. Had it been otherwise, the Scripture concerning the Paschal Lamb,¹⁴⁴ as well that concerning the Righteous Suffering Servant of Jehovah,¹⁴⁵ would have been broken. In Christ alone these two ideas of the Paschal Lamb and the Righteous Suffering Servant of Jehovah are combined into a unity and fulfilled in their highest meaning. And when, by a strange concurrence of circumstances, it came to pass that, contrary to what might have been expected, a bone of Him was not broken this outward fact served as the finger to point to the predictions which were fulfilled of Him.

Not less remarkable is the second fact. If, on the Cross of Christ, these two fundamental ideas in the prophetic description of the work of the Messiah had been set forth: the fulfilment of the Paschal Sacrifice, which, as that of the Covenant, underlay all sacrifices, and the fulfilment of the ideal of the Righteous Servant of God, suffering in a world that hated God, and yet proclaimed and realising His Kingdom, a third truth remained to be exhibited. It was not in regard to the character, but the effects, of the Work of Christ—its reception, alike in the present and in the future. This had been indicated in the prophecies of Zechariah,¹⁴⁶ which foretold how, in the day of

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¹⁴⁴Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12.

¹⁴⁵Psalms 34:20.

¹⁴⁶Zechariah 12:10

Israel's final deliverance and national conversion, God would pour out the spirit of grace and of supplication, and as they shall look on Him Whom they pierced the spirit of true repentance would be granted them, alike nationally and individually. The application of this to Christ is the more striking, that even the Talmud refers the prophecy to the Messiah. ¹⁴⁷ And as these two things really applied to Christ, alike in His rejection and in His future return, ¹⁴⁸ so did the strange historical occurrence at His Crucifixion once more point to it as the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy. For, although the soldiers, on finding Jesus dead, broke not one of His Bones, yet, as it was necessary to make sure of His Death, one of them, with a lance, pierced His Side with a wound so deep, that Thomas might afterwards have thrust his hand into His Side. ¹⁴⁹

And with these two, as fulfilling Holy Scripture, yet a third phenomenon was associated, symbolic of both. As the soldier pierced the side of the Dead Christ, forthwith came there out Blood and Water. It has been thought by some, ¹⁵⁰ that there was physical cause for this—that Christ had literally died of a broken heart, and that, when the lance pierced first the lung filled with blood and then the pericardium filled with serous fluid, ¹⁵¹ there flowed from the wound this double stream. ¹⁵² In such cases, the lesson would be that reproach had literally broken His Heart. ¹⁵³ But we can scarcely believe that St. John could have wished to convey this without clearly setting it forth—thus assuming on the part of his readers knowledge of an obscure, and, it must be added, a scientifically doubtful phenomenon. Accordingly, we rather believe that to St.

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¹⁴⁷Sukk. 52 a.

¹⁴⁸Revelation 1:7.

¹⁴⁹St. John 20:27.

¹⁵⁰So, with various modifications, which need not here be detailed, first, Dr. *Gruner* (Comment. Antiq. Med. de Jesu Christ Morte, Hal. 1805), who, however, regarded Jesus as not quite dead when the lance pierced the heart, and, of late, Dr. *Stroud* (The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ, 1871), and many interpreters (see *Nebe*, u.s. pp. 400, 401).

¹⁵¹But certainly *not* through a separation of the *serum* and the *cruor*, which is the mark of beginning putrefaction.

¹⁵²The fullest and most satisfactory physical explanation is that given by the Rev. S. *Haughton*, M.D., and reprinted in the Speaker's Commentary on 1 John 349, 350. It demonstrates, that this phenomenon would take place, but only if a person who *was also being crucified* died of rupture of the heart.

¹⁵³Psalms 69:20.

John, as to most of us, the significance of the fact lay in this, that out of the Body of One dead had flowed Blood and Water—that corruption had *not* fastened on Him. Then, there would be the symbolic meaning conveyed by the Water (from the pericardium) and the Blood (from the heart)—a symbolism most true, if corruption had no power nor hold on Him—if in Death He was not dead, if He vanquished Death and Corruption, and in this respect also fulfilled the prophetic ideal of not seeing corruption.¹⁵⁴ To this symbolic bearing of the flowing of Water and Blood from His pierced side, on which the Evangelist dwells in his Epistle,¹⁵⁵ and to its external expression in the symbolism of the two Sacraments, we can only point the thoughtful Christian. For, the two Sacraments mean that Christ had come; that over Him, Who was crucified for us and loved us unto death with His broken heart, Death and Corruption had no power; and that He liveth for us with the pardoning and cleansing power of His offered Sacrifice.

Yet one other scene remains to be recorded. Whether before, or, more probably, after the Jewish deputation to the Roman Governor, another and a strange application came to Pilate. It was from one apparently well known, a man not only of wealth and standing,¹⁵⁶ whose noble bearing¹⁵⁷ corresponded to his social condition, and who was known as a just and a good man.¹⁵⁸ Joseph of Arimathaea was a Sanhedrist,¹⁵⁹ but he had not consented either to the counsel or the deed of his colleagues. It must have been generally known that he was one of those which waited for the Kingdom of God. But he had advanced beyond what that expression implies. Although secretly, for fear of the Jews,¹⁶⁰ he was a disciple of Jesus. It is

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¹⁵⁴Psalm 16:10.

¹⁵⁵1 John 5:6.

¹⁵⁶St. Matthew.

¹⁵⁷This seems implied in the expression *euschmwn* (A.V. honourable), St. Mark 15:43.

¹⁵⁸St. Luke.

¹⁵⁹Taken in connection with St. Luke 23:51, this is probably the meaning of *bouleuthV*. Otherwise we would have regarded him rather as a member of the Council of Priests (*Beth Din shel Kohanim*, Kethub. i. 5) which met in what anciently was called the *Lishkath Bulvatin* (Chamber of Councillors) in the Temple (Jer. Yoma 38 c; Yoma 8 b). The Greek work itself has passed into Rabbinic language as *Bulyutos*, and in other modifications of the word.

¹⁶⁰St. John.

in strange contrast to this fear that St. Mark tells us, that, having dared ¹⁶¹ he went in unto Pilate and asked for the Body of Jesus. Thus, under circumstances the most unlikely and unfavorable, were his fears converted into boldness, and he, whom fear of the Jews had restrained from making open avowal of discipleship during the life-time of Jesus, not only professed such of the Crucified Christ, ¹⁶² but took the most bold and decided step before Jews and Gentiles in connection with it. So does trial elicit faith, and the wind, which quenches the feeble flame that plays around the outside, fan into brightness the fire that burns deep within, though for a time unseen. Joseph of Arimathaea, now no longer a secret disciple, but bold in the avowal of his reverent love, would show to the Dead Body of his Master all veneration. And the Divinely ordered concurrence of circumstances not only helped his pious purpose, but invested all with deepest symbolic significance. It was Friday afternoon, and the Sabbath was drawing near. ¹⁶³ No time therefore was to be lost, if due honour were to be paid to the Sacred Body. Pilate give it to Joseph of Arimathaea. Such was within his power, and a favour not unfrequently accorded in like circumstances. ¹⁶⁴ But two things must have powerfully impressed the Roman Governor, and deepened his former thoughts about Jesus: first, that the death on the Cross had taken place so rapidly, a circumstance on which he personally questioned the Centurion, ¹⁶⁵ and then the bold appearance and request of such a man as Joseph of Arimathaea. ¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹tolmhsaV

¹⁶²At the same time I feel, that this *might have been represented by the Jews* as not quite importing what it really was—as rather an act of *pietas* towards the Rabbi of Nazareth than of homage to the Messiahship of Jesus.

¹⁶³The *hmera paraskeuh*V in connection with the Sabbath (St. [Luke 23:54](#)) shows, that the former expression refers to the preparation for the *Sabbath*, or the Friday.

¹⁶⁴See the proof in *Wetstein*, ad loc.

¹⁶⁵St. Mark.

¹⁶⁶The Arimathaea of Joseph is probably the modern Er-Ram, two hours north of Jerusalem, on a conical hill, somewhat east of the road that leads from Jerusalem to Nablus (*Jos. Ant.* viii. 12. 3)—the Armathaim of the LXX. The objection of *Keim* (which it would take too long to discuss in a note) are of no force (comp. his *Jesu von Naz.* iii. p. 516). It is one of the undesigned evidences of the accuracy of St. Luke, that he described it as belonging to Judaea. For, whereas Ramah in Mount Ephraim originally belonged to Samaria, it was afterwards separated from the latter and joined to the province of Judaea (comp. *1 Macc.* x. 38; 11:28, 34).

Or did the Centurion express to the Governor also some such feeling [301] as that which had found utterance under the Cross in the words: Truly this Man was the Son of God?

The proximity of the holy Sabbath, and the consequent need of haste, may have suggested or determined the proposal of Joseph to lay the Body of Jesus in his own rock-hewn new tomb,¹⁶⁷ wherein no one had yet been laid.¹⁶⁸ The symbolic significance of this is the more marked, that the symbolism was undersigned. These rock-hewn sepulchres, and the mode of laying the dead in them, have been very fully described in connection with the burying of Lazarus¹⁶⁹ We may therefore wholly surrender ourselves to the sacred thoughts that gather around us. The Cross was lowered and laid on the ground; the cruel nails drawn out, and the ropes unloosed. Joseph, with those who attended him, wrapped the Sacred Body in a clean linen cloth and rapidly carried it to the rock-hewn tomb in the garden close by. Such a rock-hewn tomb or cave (*Meartha*) had niches (*Kukhin*), where the dead were laid. It will be remembered, that at the entrance to the tomb'—and within the rock'—there was a court nine feet square, where ordinarily the bier was deposited, and its bearers gathered to do the last offices for the Dead. Thither we suppose Joseph to have carried the Sacred Body, and then the last scene to have taken place. For now another, kindred to Joseph in spirit, history, and position, had come. The same spiritual Law, [302] which had brought Joseph to open confession, also constrained the profession of that other Sanhedrist, Nicodemus. We remember, how at the first he had, from fear of detection, come to Jesus by night, and with what bated breath he had pleaded with his colleagues not so much the cause of Christ, as on His behalf that of law and justice.¹⁷⁰ He now came, bringing a roll of myrrh and aloes, in the fragrant mixture well known to the Jews for purposes of anointing or burying.

¹⁶⁷*Meyer* regards the s statement of St. Matthew to the effect (xxvii. 60) as inconsistent with the notice in St. [John 19:42](#). I really cannot see any inconsistency, nor does his omission of the fact that the tomb was Joseph's seem to me fatal. The narrative of St. John is concentrated on the burying rather than its accessories. Professor *Westcott* thinks that St. [John 19:41](#), implies that the sepulcher in which the Lord was laid was not chosen as His final resting-place. But of this also I do not perceive evidence.

¹⁶⁸St. Luke.

¹⁶⁹See Book IV. ch 21.

¹⁷⁰St. [John 7:50](#).

It was in the court of the tomb that the hasty embalmment—if such it may be called—took place. None of Christ's former disciples seem to have taken part in the burying. John may have withdrawn to bring tidings to, and to comfort the Virgin Mother; the others also, that had stood after off, beholding appear to have left. Only a few faithful ones,¹⁷¹ notably among them Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the mother of Jesus, stood over against the tomb, watching at some distance where and how the Body of Jesus was laid. It would scarcely have been in accordance with Jewish manners, if these women had mingled more closely with the two Sanhedrists and their attendants. From where they stood they could only have had a dim view of what passed within the court, and this may explain how, on their return, they prepared spices and ointments¹⁷² 2 for the more full honours which they hoped to pay the Dead after the Sabbath was past.¹⁷³

[303] For, it is of the greatest importance to remember, that haste characterised all that was done. It seems as if the clean linen cloth in which the Body had been wrapped, was now torn into cloths or swathes, into which the Body, limb by limb, was now bound¹⁷⁴ no doubt, between layers of myrrh and aloes, the Head being wrapped in a napkin. And so they laid Him to rest in the niche of the rock-hewn

¹⁷¹St. Luke.

¹⁷²St. Luke.

¹⁷³St. John computes it at about 100 *litras*. As in all likelihood this would refer to Roman pounds, of about twelve ounces each, the amount is large, but not such as to warrant any reasonable objection. a servant could easily carry it, and it is not said that it was all used in the burying. If it were possible to find any similar use of the expression (*litra*V), one might be tempted to regard the *litras* as indicating not the weight, but a *coin*. In that sense the word *litra* is used, sometimes as = 100 denars, in which case 100 *litras* would be = about 250 *l.*, but more frequently as = 4 drachms, in which case 100 *litras* would be=about 12*l.* (comp. *Herzfeld. Handelsgesch.* p. 181). But the linguistic difficulty seems very great, while any possible objection to the weight of the spices is really inconsiderable. For the kind of spices used in the burying, see Book IV. ch 21. (as the burying of Lazarus). In later times there was a regular rubric and prayers with Kabbalistic symbolism (see *Perles, Leichenfeierlichk.* p. 11, Note 12). No doubt, the wounds in the Sacred Body of our Lord had been washed from their gore.

¹⁷⁴The Synopists record, that the Body of Jesus was wrapped in a linen cloth; St. John tells us that it was bound with the aloes and myrrh of Nicodemus into swathes or cloths even as they were found afterwards in the empty tomb, and by their side the napkin or *soudarion*, for the head. I have tried to combine the account of the Synoptists and that of St. John into a continuous narrative.

new tomb. And as they went out, they rolled, as was the custom, a great stone’—the *Golel*—to close the entrance to the tomb, ¹⁷⁵ probably leaning against it for support, as was the practice, a smaller stone—the so-called *Dopheq*. ¹⁷⁶ It would be where the one stone was laid against the other, that on the next day, Sabbath though it was, the Jewish authorities would have affixed the seal, so that the slightest disturbance might become apparent. ¹⁷⁷

It was probably about the same time, that a noisy throng prepared to follow delegates from the Sanhedrin to the ceremony of cutting the Passover-sheaf. The Law had it, “he shall bring a sheaf [literally, the Omer] with the first-fruits of your harvest, unto the priest; and he shall wave the Omer before Jehovah, to be accepted for you.” This Passover-sheaf was reaped in public the evening before it was offered, and it was to witness this ceremony that the crowd had gathered around the elders. Already on the 14th Nisan the spot whence the first sheaf was to be reaped had been marked out, by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley that was to be cut down, according to custom, in the sheltered Ashes-Valley across Kidron. When the time for cutting the sheaf had arrived—[304] that is, on the evening of the 15th Nisan, even though it were a Sabbath, just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, set to work. Clearly to bring out what was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked of the bystanders three times each of these questions: “Has the sun gone down?” “With this sickle?” “Into this basket?” “On this Sabbath? (or first Passover-day)”—and, lastly, “shall I reap?” Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down barley to the amount of one ephah, or about three pecks and three pints of our English measure. This is not the place to follow the ceremony farther—how the corn was threshed out, parched, ground, and one omer of the flour, mixed with oil and frankincense, waved before the Lord in the Temple on the second Paschal day (or 16th of Nisan). But, as this festive procession started, amidst loud demonstrations, a small band of mourners turned from having laid their dead Master in His resting-place. The contrast is as

¹⁷⁵Sanh. 47 b.

¹⁷⁶Ohai. ii. 4.

¹⁷⁷But it must be admitted, that there are difficulties on this particular. See the remarks on this point at pp. 623 and 631, but especially pp. 636, 637.

sad as it is suggestive. And yet, not in the Temple, nor by the priest, but in the silence of that garden-tomb, was the first Omer of the new Paschal flour to be waved before the Lord. ¹⁷⁸

Now on the morrow, which is after the preparation [the Friday], the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, which He was yet alive, After three days I rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest haply His disciples come and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Take a guard, go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them.

[305] But was there really need for it? Did they, who had spent what remained of daylight to prepare spices wherewith to anoint the Dead Christ, expect His Body to be removed, or did they expect—perhaps in their sorrow even think of His word: I rise again? But on that holy Sabbath, when the Sanhedrists were thinking of how to make sure of the Dead Christ, what were the thoughts of Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus, of Peter and John, of the other disciples, and especially of the loving women who only waited for the first streak of Easter-light to do their last service of love? What were their thoughts of God—what of Christ—what of the Words He had spoken, the Deeds He had wrought, the salvation He had come to bring, and the Kingdom of Heaven which He was to open to all believers?

Behind Him had closed the gates of Hades; but upon them rather than upon Him had fallen the shadows of death. Yet they still loved Him—and stronger than death was love.

¹⁷⁸See *The Temple and its Services* pp. 221-224.

Chapter 16—On the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead

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The history of the Life of Christ upon earth closes with a Miracle as great as that of its inception. It may be said that the one casts light upon the other. If He was what the Gospels represent Him, He must have been born of a pure Virgin, without sin, and He must have risen from the Dead. If the story of His Birth be true, we can believe that of His Resurrection; if that of His Resurrection be true, we can believe that of His Birth. In the nature of things, the latter was incapable of strict historical proof; and, in the nature of things, His Resurrection demanded and was capable of the fullest historical evidence. If such exists, the keystone is given to the arch; the miraculous Birth becomes almost a necessary postulate, and Jesus is the Christ in the full sense of the Gospels. And yet we mark, as another parallel point between the account of the miraculous Birth and that of the Resurrection, the utter absence of details as regards these events themselves. If this circumstance may be taken as indirect evidence that they were not legendary, it also imposes on us the duty of observing the reverent silence so well-befitting the case, and not intruding beyond the path which the Evangelic narrative has opened to us.

That path is sufficiently narrow, and in some respects difficult; not, indeed, as to the great event itself, nor as to its leading features, but as to the more minute details. And here, again, our difficulties arise, not so much from any actual disagreement, as from the absence of actual identity. Much of this is owing to the great compression in the various narratives, due partly to the character of the event narrated, partly to the incomplete information possessed by the narrators—of whom only one was strictly an eyewitness, but chiefly to this, that to the different narrators the central point of interest lay in one or the other aspect of the circumstances connected with the Res-

urrection. Not only St. Matthew,¹ but also St. Luke, so compresses the narrative that the distinction of points of time is almost effaced. St. Luke seems to crowd into the Easter Evening what himself tells us occupied forty days.² His is, so to speak, the pre-eminently Jerusalem account of the evidence of the Resurrection; that of St. [307] Matthew the pre-eminently Galilean account of it. Yet each implies and corroborates the facts of the other.³ In general we ought to remember, that the Evangelists, and afterwards St. Paul, are not so much concerned to narrate the whole *history* of the Resurrection as to furnish the evidence for it. And here what is distinctive in each is also characteristic of his special viewpoint. St. Matthew describes the impression of the full evidence of that Easter morning on friend and foe, and then hurries us from the Jerusalem stained with Christ's Blood back to the sweet Lake and the blessed Mount where first He spake. It is, as if he longed to realise the Risen Christ in the scenes where he had learned to know Him. St. Mark, who is much more brief, gives not only a mere summary,⁴ but, if one might use the expression, tells it as from the bosom of the Jerusalem family, from the house of his mother Mary.⁵ St. Luke seems to have made most full inquiry as to all the facts of the Resurrection, and his narrative might almost be inscribed: Easter Day in Jerusalem. St. John paints [308] such scenes—during the whole forty days, whether in Jerusalem

¹So Canon *Westcott*.

²[Acts 1:3](#).

³The reader who is desirous of further studying this point is referred to the admirable analysis by Canon *Westcott* in his notes prefatory to St. [John 20](#). At the same time I must respectfully express dissent from his arrangement of some of the events connected with the Resurrection (u.s., p. 288 *a*).

⁴I may here state that I accept the genuineness of the concluding portion of St. Mark ([16:9-20](#)). If, on internal grounds, it must be admitted that it reads like a postscript; on the other hand, without it the section would read like a mutilated document. This is not the place to discuss the grounds on which I have finally accepted the genuineness of these verses. The reader may here be referred to Canon *Cook's* Revised Version of the first three Gospels pp. 120-125, but especially to the masterly and exhaustive work by Dean *Burton* on The last twelve verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark. At the same time I would venture to say, that Dean *Burton* has not attached sufficient importance to the adverse impression made by the verses in question on the ground of internal evidence (see his chapter on the subject, pp. 136-190). And it must be confessed, that, whichever view we may ultimately adopt, the subject is beset with considerable difficulties.

⁵[Acts 12:12](#).

or Galilee—as were most significant and teachful of this threefold lesson of his Gospels: that Jesus was the Christ, that He was the Son of God, and that, believing, we have life in His Name. Lastly, St. Paul—as one born out of due time—produces the testimony of the principal witnesses to the fact, in a kind of ascending climax.⁶ And this the more effectively, that he is evidently aware of the difficulties and the import of the question, and has taken pains to make himself acquainted with all the facts of the case.

The question is of such importance, alike in itself and as regards this whole history, that a discussion, however brief and even imperfect,⁷ preliminary to the consideration of the Evangelic narrations, seems necessary.

What thoughts concerning the Dead Christ filled the minds of Joseph of Arimathaea, of Nicodemus, and of the other disciples of Jesus, as well as of the Apostles and of the pious women? They believed Him to be dead, and they did not expect Him to rise again from the dead—at least, in our accepted sense of it. Of this there is abundant evidence from the moment of His Death, in the burial spices brought by Nicodemus, in those prepared by the women (both of which were intended as against corruption), in the sorrow of the women at the empty tomb, in their supposition that the Body had been removed, in the perplexity and bearing of the Apostle, in the doubts of so many, and indeed in the express statement: For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.⁸ And the notice in St. Matthew's Gospel,⁹ that the Sanhedrists had taken precautions against His Body being stolen, so as to give the appearance of fulfilment to His prediction that He would rise again after three days¹⁰—that, therefore, they knew of such a prediction, and took it in the literal sense—would give only more emphasis to the opposite bearing of the disciples and their manifest non-ex-

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⁶1 Corinthians 15:4-8.

⁷I have purposely omitted detailed references to, and refutation of the arguments of opponents.

⁸St. John 20:9.

⁹St. Matthew 27:62-66.

¹⁰But it must be truthfully admitted that there is force in some, though not in all, the objections urged against this incident by *Meyer* and others. It need scarcely be said that this would in no way invalidate the truth of the narrative. Further than this, which we unhesitatingly state, we cannot at present enter on the question. See pp. 636, 637.

pectancy of a literal Resurrection. What the disciples expected, perhaps wished, was not Christ's return in glorified corporeity, but His Second Coming in glory into His Kingdom.

But if they regarded Him as really dead and not to rise again in the literal sense, this had evidently no practical effect, not only on their former feelings towards Him, but even on their faith in Him as the promised Messiah. ¹¹ This appears from the conduct of Joseph and Nicodemus, from the language of the women, and from the whole bearing of the Apostles and disciples. All this must have been very different, if they had regarded the Death of Christ, even on the Cross, as having given the lie to His Messianic Claims. ¹² On the contrary, the impression left on our minds is, that, although they deeply grieved over the loss of their Master, and the seeming triumph of His foes, ¹³ yet His Death came to them not unexpectedly, but rather as of internal necessity and as the fulfilment of His often repeated prediction. Nor can we wonder at this, since He had, ever since the Transfiguration, laboured, against all their resistance and reluctance, to impress on them the act of His Betrayal and Death. He had, indeed—although by no means so frequently or clearly—also referred to His Resurrection. But of this they might, according to their Jewish ideas, form a very different conception from that of a literal Resurrection of that Crucified Body in a glorified state, and yet capable of such terrestrial intercourse as the Risen Christ held with them. And if it be objected that, in such case, Christ must have clearly taught them all this, it is sufficient to answer, that there was no need for such clear teaching on the point at that time; that the event itself would soon and best teach them; that it would have been impossible really to teach it, except by the event; and that any attempt at it would have involved a far fuller communication on this mysterious subject than, to judge from what is told us in Scripture, it was the purpose of Christ to impart

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¹¹The statement of the two on the way to Emmaus (St. [Luke 24:21](#)): But we trusted that it was He Which should redeem Israel refers only to the disappointment of their Jewish hopes of a present Messianic Kingdom.

¹²It can scarcely be supposed, that their whole ideas of his Messiahship had in those few hours undergone a complete change, and that in a philosophico-rationalistic direction, such as would have been absolutely and wholly foreign to minds and training like theirs.

¹³St. [Mark 16:10](#).

in our present state of faith and expectancy. Accordingly, from their point of view, the prediction of Christ might have referred to the continuance of His Work, to his Vindication, or to some apparition of Him, whether from heaven or on earth—such as that of the saints in Jerusalem after the Resurrection, or that of Elijah in Jewish belief—but especially to His return in glory; certainly, not to the Resurrection as it actually took place. The fact itself would be quite foreign to Jewish ideas, which embraced the continuance of the soul after death and the final resurrection of the body, but not a state of spiritual corporeity, far less, under conditions such as those described in the Gospels. ¹⁴ Elijah, who is so constantly introduced in Jewish tradition, is never represented as sharing in meals or offering his body for touch; nay, the Angels who visited Abraham are represented as only making show of, not really, eating. ¹⁵ Clearly, the Apostles had not learned the Resurrection of Christ either from the Scriptures—and this proves that the narrative of it was not intended as a fulfilment of previous expectancy—nor yet from the predictions of Christ to that effect; although without the one, and especially without the other, the empty grave would scarcely have wrought in them the assured conviction of the Resurrection of Christ. ¹⁶

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This brings us to the real question in hand. Since the Apostles and others evidently believed Him to be dead, and expected not His Resurrection, and since the fact of His Death was not to them a formidable, if any, objection to His Messianic Character—such as might have induced them to invent or imagine a Resurrection—

¹⁴But even if a belief in His Resurrection had been a requirement in their faith, as *Keim* rightly remarks, such realistic demonstration of it would not have been looked for. Herod Antipas did not search the tomb of the Baptist when he believed him risen from the dead—how much more should the disciples of Christ have been satisfied with evidence far less realistic and frequent than that described in the Gospels. This consideration shows that there was no motive for inventing the details connected with the history of the Resurrection.

¹⁵So *Josephus* (*Ant.* xi. 1. 2), and, to show that this was not a rationalistic view, *Baba Mets.* 65 *b*, *Ber. R.* 48. Later tradition (*Tos. to b. Mets.*; *Bemidb. R.* 10), indeed, seems to admit the literal eating, but as representing travellers, and in acknowledgment of Abraham's hospitality. *Onkelos* simply renders literally, but the *Targum Pseudo-Jon.* seems purposely to leave the point undetermined.

¹⁶This is well argued by *Weiss*, *Leben Jesu*, vol. ii. p. 608.

how are we to account for the history of the Resurrection with all its details in all the four Gospels and by St. Paul? The details, or signs are clearly intended as *evidences* to all of the reality of the Resurrection, without which it would not have been believed; and their multiplication and variety must, therefore, be considered as indicating what otherwise would have been not only numerous but insuperable difficulties. Similarly, the language of St. Paul ¹⁷ implies a careful and searching inquiry on his part; ¹⁸ the more rational, that, besides intrinsic difficulties and Jewish preconceptions against it, the objections to the fact must have been so often and coarsely obtruded on him, whether in disputation or by the jibes of the Greek scholars and students who derided his preaching. ¹⁹

Hence, the question to be faced is this: Considering their previous state of mind and the absence of any motive, how are we to account for the change of mind on the part of the disciples in regard to the Resurrection? There can at least be no question, that they came to believe, and with the most absolute certitude, in the Resurrection as an historical fact; nor yet, that it formed the basis and substances of all their preaching of the Kingdom; nor yet, that St. Paul, up to his conversion a bitter enemy of Christ, was fully persuaded of it; not—to go a step back—that Jesus Himself expected it. Indeed, the world would not have been converted to a dead Jewish Christ, however His intimate disciples might have continued to love His memory. But they preached everywhere, first and foremost, the Resurrection from the dead! In the language of St. Paul: If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God... ye are yet in your sins. ²⁰

[312] We must here dismiss what probably underlies the chief objection to the Resurrection: its miraculous character. The objection to Miracles, as such, proceeds on that false Supernaturalism, which traces a Miracle to the immediate *fiat* of the Almighty without any inter-

¹⁷Galatians 1:18.

¹⁸This is conveyed by the verb *istorew*.

¹⁹Acts 17:32.

²⁰1 Corinthians 15:14, 15, 17.

vening links; ²¹ and, as already shown, it involves a vicious *petitio principii*. But, after all, the Miraculous is only the to us unprecedented and uncognisable—a very narrow basis on which to refuse historical investigation. And the historian *has* to account for the undoubted fact, that the Resurrection was the fundamental personal conviction of the Apostles and disciples, the basis of their preaching, and the final support of their martyrdom. What explanation then can be offered of it?

1. We may here put aside two hypotheses, now universally discarded even in Germany, and which probably have never been seriously entertained in this country. They are that of gross fraud on the part of the disciples, who had stolen the Body of Jesus—as to which even *Strauss* remarks, that such a falsehood is wholly incompatible with their after-life, heroism, and martyrdom;—and again this, that Christ had not been really dead when taken from the Cross, and that He gradually revived again. Not to speak of the many absurdities which this theory involves, ²² it really shifts—if we acquit the disciples of complicity—the fraud upon Christ Himself.

2. The only other explanation, worthy of attention, is the so-called Vision-hypothesis: that the Apostles really believed in the Resurrection, but the mere visions of Christ had wrought in them this belief. The hypothesis has been variously modified. According to some, these visions were the outcome of an excited imagination, of a morbid state of the nervous system. To this there is, of course, the preliminary objection, that such visions presuppose a previous expectancy of the event, which, as we know, is the opposite of the fact. Again, such a Vision-hypothesis in no way agrees with the many details and circumstances narrated in connection with Risen One, Who is described as having appeared not only to one or another in the retirement of the chamber, but to many, and in a manner and circumstances which render the idea of a mere vision impossible. Besides, the visions of an excited imagination would not have endured and led to such results; most probably they would soon have given place to corresponding depression. [313]

²¹The whole subject of miracles requires fuller and clearer treatment than it has yet received.

²²Such as this, how with pierced Feet He could have gone to Emmaus.

The Vision-hypothesis is not much improved, if we regard the supposed vision as the result of reflection—that the disciples, convinced that the Messiah could not remain dead (and this again is contrary to fact) had wrought themselves first into a persuasion that He must rise, and then into visions of the Risen ²³

[314] One. Nor yet would it commend itself more to our mind, if were to assume that these visions had been directly sent from God Himself, ²⁴ to attest the fact that Christ lived. For, we have here to deal with a

²³This argument might, of course, be variously elaborated, and the account in the Gospels represents as the form which it afterwards took in the belief of the Church. But (a) the whole Vision-hypothesis is shadowy and unreal, and the sacred writers themselves show that they knew the distinction between visions and real appearances; (b) it is impossible to reconcile it with such occurrences as that in St. [Luke 24:38-43](#) and St. [John 21:13](#), and, if possible, even more so, to set aside all these details as the outcome of later tradition, for which there was no other basis than the desire of vindicating a vision; (c) it is incompatible with the careful inquiry of St. Paul, who, as on so many other occasion, is here a most important witness. (d) The theory involves the most arbitrary handling of the Gospel-narratives, such as that the Apostles had *at once* returned to Galilee, where the sight of the familiar scenes had kindled in them this enthusiasm; that all the notices about the third day are to be rejected, &c. (e). What was so fundamental a belief as that of the Resurrection could not have had its origin in a delusive vision. This, as *Keim* has shown, would be incompatible with the calm clearness of conviction and strong purpose of action which were its outcome. Besides, are we to believe that the enthusiasm had first seized the women, then the Apostle, and so on? But how, in that case, about the 500 of whom St. Paul speaks? They could scarcely all have been seized with the same mania. (f) A mere vision is unthinkable under such circumstances as the walk to Emmaus, the conversation with Thomas, with Peter, &c. Besides, it is incompatible with the giving of such definite promises by the Risen Christ as that of the Holy Spirit, and of such detailed directions as that of Evangelising the world. (g) Lastly, as *Keim* points out, it is incompatible with the fact that these manifestations ceased with the Ascension. We have eight or at most nine such manifestations in the course of six weeks, and then they suddenly and permanently cease! This would not accord with the theory of visions on the part of excited enthusiasts. But were the Apostles such? Does not the perusal of the Gospel-narratives leave on the impartial reader exactly the opposite impression?

²⁴These two modes of accounting for the narrative of the Resurrection: by fraud, and that Christ's was not real death, were already attempted by *Celsus*, 1700 years ago, and the first, by the Jews long before that. *Keim* has subjected them, as modified by different advocates, to a searching criticism, and, with keen irony, exhibited their utter absurdity. In regard to the supposition of fraud he says: it shows that not even the faintest idea of the holy conviction of the Apostles and first Christians has penetrated hardened spirits. The objection that the Risen One had only manifested Himself to *friends*, not before enemies, is also as old as *Celsus*. It ignores that, throughout, the revelation of Christ does not supersede, but imply faith; that there is no such thing in Christianity as forcing conviction,

series of facts that cannot be so explained, such as the showing them His Sacred Wounds; the offer touch them; the command to handle Him, so as to convince themselves of His real corporeity; the eating with the disciples; the appearance by the Lake of Galilee, and others. Besides, the Vision-hypothesis has to account for the events of the Easter-morning, and especially for the empty tomb from which the great stone had been rolled, and in which the very cerements²⁵ of death were seen by those who entered it. In fact, such a narrative as that recorded by St. Luke²⁶ seems almost designed to render the Vision-hypothesis impossible. We are expressly told, that the appearance of the Risen Christ, so far from meeting their anticipations, had affrighted them, and that they had thought it spectral, on which Christ had reassured them, and bidden them handle Him, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold Me having. Lastly, who removed the Body of Christ from the tomb? Six weeks afterwards, Peter preached the Resurrection of Christ in Jerusalem. If Christ's enemies had removed the Body, they could easily have silenced Peter; if His friends, they would have been guilty of such fraud, as not even *Strauss* deems possible in the circumstances. The theories of deception, delusion,²⁷ and vision being thus impossible, and the

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instead of eliciting faith; and that the purpose of the manifestations of the Risen Christ was to confirm, to comfort, and to teach His disciples. As for His enemies, the Lord had expressly declared that they would not see Him again till the judgment.

²⁵Exaggeration would, of course, be here out of the question.

²⁶St. Luke 24:38-43.

²⁷The most deeply painful, but also interesting study is that of the conclusion at which *Keim* ultimately arrives (*Gesch. Jesu v. Naz.* iii. pp. 600-605). It has already been stated with what merciless irony he exposes the fraud and the non-death theory, as well as the arguments of *Strauss*. The Vision-hypothesis he seems at first to advocate with considerable ingenuity and rhetorical power. And he succeeds in this the more easily, that, alas, he surrenders—although most arbitrarily—almost every historical detail in the narrative of the Resurrection! And yet what is the result at which he ultimately arrives? He shows, perhaps more conclusively than any one else, that the vision-hypothesis is also impossible! having done so, he virtually admits that he cannot offer any explanation as to the mysterious exit of the life of Jesus. Probably the visions of the Risen Christ were granted directly by God Himself and by the glorified Christ (p. 602). Nay, even the bodily appearance itself may be conceded to those who without it fear to lose all (p. 603). But from this there is but a very small step to the teaching of the Church. At any rate, the greatest of negative critics has, by the admission of his inability to explain the Resurrection in a natural manner, given the fullest confirmation to the fundamental article of our Christian faith.

[316] *à priori* objection to the fact, as involving a Miracle, being a *petitio principii*, the historical student is shut up to the simple acceptance of the narrative. To this conclusion the unpreparedness of the disciples, their previous opinions, their new testimony unto martyrdom, the foundation of the Christian Church, the testimony of so many, singly and in company, and the series of recorded manifestations during forty days, and in such different circumstances, where mistake was impossible, had already pointed with unerring certainty.²⁸ And even if slight discrepancies, nay, some not strictly historical details, which might have been the outcome of earliest tradition in the Apostolic Church, could be shown in those accounts which were not of eyewitnesses, it would assuredly not invalidate the great fact itself, which *may unhesitatingly be pronounced that best established in history*. At the same time we would carefully guard ourselves against the admission that those hypothetical flaws really exist in the narratives. On the contrary, we believe them capable of the most satisfactory arrangement, unless under the strain of hypercriticism.

The importance of all this cannot be adequately expressed in words. A dead Christ might have been a Teacher and Wonder-worker, and remembered and loved as such. But only a Risen and Living Christ could be the Saviour, the Life, and the Life-Giver, and as such preached to all men. And of this most blessed truth we have the fullest and most unquestionable evidence. We can, therefore, implicitly yield ourselves to the impression of these narratives, and, still more, to the realisation of that most sacred and blessed fact. This is the foundation of the Church, the inscription on the banner of her armies, the strength and comfort of every Christian heart, and the grand hope of humanity:

The Lord is risen indeed. *Godet* aptly concludes his able discussion of the subject by observing that, if *Strauss* admits that the Church would have never arisen if the Apostles had not had unshaken faith in the reality of Christ's Resurrection, we may add, that this faith of the Apostles would have never arisen unless the Resurrection had been a true historical fact²⁹⁶²⁴¹

²⁸*Reuss* (Hist. Evang. p. 698) well remarks, that if this fundamental dogma of the Church had been the outcome of invention, care would have been taken that the accounts of it should be in the strictest and most literal agreement.

Chapter 17—On the Third Day He Rose Again from the Dead:

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He Ascended into Heaven

(St. Matthew 28:1-10; St. Mark 16:1-11; St. Luke 24:1-12; St. John 20:1-18; St. Matthew 28:11-15; St. Mark 16:12, 13; St. Luke 24:13-35; 1 Corinthians 15:5; St. Mark 16:14; St. Luke 24:36-43; St. John 20:19-25; St. John 20:26-29; St. Matthew 28:16; St. John 21:1-24; St. Matthew 28:17-20; St. Mark 16:15-28; 1 Corinthians 15:6; St. Luke 24:44-53; St. Mark 16:19, 20; Acts 1:3-12.)

Grey dawn was streaking the sky, when they who had so lovingly watched Him to His Burying were making their lonely way to the rock-hewn Tomb in the Garden. ¹ Considerable as are the difficulties of exactly harmonising the details in the various narratives—if, indeed, importance attaches to such attempts—we are thankful to know that any hesitation only attaches to the arrangement of minute particulars, ² and not to the great facts of the case. And even these minute details would, as we shall have occasion to show, be harmonious, if only we knew all the circumstances.

The difference, if such it may be called, in the names of the women, who at early morn went to the Tomb, scarce requires elaborate discussion. It may have been, that there were two parties, starting from different places to meet at the Tomb, and that this also accounts for the slight difference in the details of what they saw and heard at the Grave. At any rate, the mention of the two Marys and

¹I must remain uncertain, however important, whether the oye sabbatwn refers to Saturday evening or early Sunday Morning.

²The reader who is desirous of comparing the different views about these seeming or real small discrepancies is referred to the various Commentaries. On the strictly orthodox side the most elaborate and learned attempt at conciliation is that by Mr. *McClellan* (New Test., Harmony of the Four Gospels, pp. 508-538), although his ultimate scheme of arrangement seems to me too composite.

[318] Joanna is supplemented in St. Luke ³ by that of the other women with them while, if St. John speaks only of Mary Magdalene, ⁴ her report to Peter and John: We know not where they have laid Him implies, that she had not gone alone to the Tomb. It was the first day of the week ⁵ —according to Jewish reckoning the third day from His Death. ⁶ The narrative leaves the impression that the Sabbath's rest had delayed their visit to the Tomb; but it is at least a curious coincidence that the relatives and friends of the deceased were in the habit of going to the grave up to the third day (when presumably corruption was supposed to begin), so as to make sure that those laid there were really dead. ⁷ Commenting on this, that Abraham described Mount Moriah on the third day, ⁸ the Rabbis insist on the importance of the third day in various events connected with Israel, and specially speak of it in connection with the resurrection of the dead, referring in proof to [Hosea 6:2](#). ⁹ In another place, appealing to the same prophetic saying, they infer from [Genesis 42:7](#), that God never leaves the just more than three days in anguish. ¹⁰ In mourning also the third day formed a sort of period, because it was thought that the soul hovered round the body till the third day, when it finally parted from its tabernacle. ¹¹

Although these things are here mentioned, we need scarcely say that no such thoughts were present with the holy mourners who, in the grey of that Sunday-morning, ¹² went to the Tomb. Whether or not there were two groups of women who started from different places to meet at the Tomb, the most prominent figure among them was Mary Magdalene ¹³ —as prominent among the pious women as

³St. [Luke 24:10](#).

⁴St. [John 20:1](#).

⁵*miasabbatwn*, an expression which exactly answers to the Rabbinic *tb#b rx*

⁶Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

⁷Mass. Semach. viii. p. 29 *d*.

⁸[Genesis 22:4](#).

⁹Ber. R. 56, ed, Warsh. p. 102 *b*, top of page.

¹⁰Ber. R. 91.

¹¹Moed K. 28 *b*; Ber. R. 100.

¹²I cannot believe that St. [Matthew 27:1](#) refers to a visit of the two Marys on the Saturday evening, nor St. [Mark 16:1](#) to a purchasing at that time of spices.

¹³The accounts imply, that the women knew nothing of the sealing of the stone and of the guard set over the Tomb. This may be held as evidence, that St. Matthew could have not meant that the two Marys had visited the grave on the previous evening (xxviii.

Peter was among the Apostles. She seems to have reached the Grave,¹⁴ and, seeing the great stone that had covered its entrance rolled away, hastily judged that the Body of the Lord had been removed. Without waiting for further inquiry, she ran back to inform Peter and John of the fact. The Evangelist here explains, that there had been a great earthquake, and that the Angel of the Lord, to human sight as lightning and in brilliant white garment, had rolled back the stone, and sat upon it, when the guard, affrighted by what they heard and saw, and especially by the look and attitude of heavenly power in the Angel, had been seized with mortal faintness. Remembering the events connected with the Crucifixion, which had no doubt been talked about among the soldiery, and bearing in mind the impression of such a sight on such minds, we could readily understand the effect on the two sentries who that long night had kept guard over the solitary Tomb. The event itself (we mean: as regards the rolling away of the stone), we suppose to have taken place after the Resurrection of Christ, in the early dawn, while the holy women were on their way to the Tomb. The earthquake cannot have been one in the ordinary sense, but a shaking of the place, when the Lord of Life burst the gates of Hades to re-tenant His Glorified Body, and the lightning-like Angel descended from heaven to roll away the stone. To have left it there, when the Tomb was empty, would have implied what was no longer true. But there is a sublime irony in the contrast between man's elaborate precautions and the ease with which the Divine Hand can sweep them aside, and which, as throughout the history of Christ and of His Church, recalls the prophetic declaration: He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at them.

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While the Magdalene hastened, probably by another road, to the abode of Peter and John, the other women also had reached the Tomb, either in one party, or, it may be, in two companies. They had wondered and feared how they could accomplish their pious purpose—for, who would roll away the stone for them? But, as often, the difficulty apprehended no longer existed. Perhaps they thought that the now absent Mary Magdalene had obtained help for

1). In such case they must have seen the guard. Nor could the women in that case have wondered who roll away the stone for them.

¹⁴I cannot believe that St. [Matthew 27:1](#) refers to a visit of the two Marys on the Saturday evening, nor St. [Mark 16:1](#) to a purchasing at that time of spices.

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this. At any rate, they now entered the vestibule of the Sepulchre. Here the appearance of the Angel filled them with fear. But the heavenly Messenger bade them dismiss apprehension; he told them that Christ was not there, nor yet any longer dead, but risen, as indeed, He had foretold in Galilee to His disciples; finally, he bade them hasten with the announcements to the disciples, and with this message, that, as Christ had directed them before, they were to meet Him in Galilee. It was not only that this connected, so to speak, the wondrous present with the familiar past, and helped them to realise that it was their very Master; nor yet that in the retirement, quiet, and security of Galilee, there would be best opportunity for fullest manifestation, as to the five hundred, and for final conversation and instruction. But the main reason, and that which explains the otherwise strange, almost exclusive, prominence given at such a moment to the direction to meet Him in Galilee, has already been indicated in a previous chapter. ¹⁵ With the scattering of the Eleven in Gethsemane on the night of Christ's betrayal, the Apostolic College was temporarily broken up. They continued, indeed, still to meet together as individual disciples, but the bond of the Apostolate was for the moment, dissolved. And the Apostolic circle was to be reformed, and the Apostolic Commission renewed and enlarged, in Galilee; not, indeed, by its Lake, where only seven of the Eleven seem to have been present, ¹⁶ but on the mountain where He had directed them to meet Him. ¹⁷ Thus was the end to be like the beginning. Where He had first called, and directed them for their work, there would He again call them, give fullest directions, and bestow new and amplest powers. His appearances in Jerusalem were intended to prepare them for all this, to assure them completely and joyously of the fact of His Resurrection—the full teaching of which would be given in Galilee. And when the women, perplexed and scarcely conscious, obeyed the command to go in and examine for themselves the now empty niche in the Tomb, they saw two Angels ¹⁸—probably as the Magdalene afterwards saw them—one at the

¹⁵See this Book, ch 12.

¹⁶St. [John 21:2](#).

¹⁷St. [Matthew 28:16](#).

¹⁸It may, however, have been that the appearance of the one Angel was to one company of women, that of two Angels to another.

head, the other at the feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain. They waited no longer, but hastened, without speaking to anyone, to carry to the disciples the tidings of which they could not even yet grasp the full import. ¹⁹

2. But whatever unclearness of detail may rest on the narratives of the Synoptists, owing to their great compression, all is distinct when we follow the steps of the Magdalene, as these traced in the Fourth Gospel. Hastening from the Tomb, she ran to the lodging of Peter and to that of John—the repetition of the preposition to probably marking, that the two occupied different, although perhaps closely adjoining, quarters. ²⁰ Her startling tidings induced them to go at once—and they went towards the sepulchre. But they began to run, the two together—probably so soon as they were outside the town and near the Garden. John, as the younger, outran Peter. ²¹ Reaching the Sepulchre first, and stooping down, he seeth blepei the linen clothes, but, from his position, not the napkin which lay apart by itself. If reverence and awe prevented John from entering the Sepulchre, his impulsive companion, who arrived immediately after him, thought of nothing else than the immediate and full clearing up of the mystery. As he entered the sepulchre, he steadfastly (intently)

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¹⁹While I would speak very diffidently on the subject, it seems to me as if the Evangelist had compresses the whole of that morning's event into one narrative: The Women at the Sepulchre. It is this compression which gives the appearance of more events than really took place, owing to the appearance of being divided into scenes, and the circumstance that the different writers give prominence to different persons or else to different details in what is really one scene. Nay, I am disposed—though again with great diffidence—to regard the appearance of Jesus to the women (St. [Matthew 28:9](#)) as the same with that to Mary Magdalene, recorded in St. [John 20:11-17](#), and referred to in St. [Mark 16:9](#)—the more so as the words in St. [Matthew 28:9](#) as they went to tell His disciples are spurious, being probably intended for harmonious purposes. But, while suggesting this view, I would by no means maintain it as one certain to my own mind, although it would simplify details otherwise very intricate.

²⁰So already *Bengel*.

²¹It may be regarded as a specimen of what one might designate as the imputation of sinister motives to the Evangelists, when the most advanced negative criticism describes this legend as implying the contest between Jewish and Gentile Christianity (Peter and John) in which the younger gains the race! Similarly, we are informed that the penitent on the Cross is intended to indicate the Gentiles, the impenitent the Jews! But no language can be so strong to repudiate the imputation, that so many parts of the Gospels were intended as covert attacks by certain tendencies in the early Church against others—the Petrine and Jacobine against the Johannine and Pauline directions.

beholds (qewrei) in one place the linen swathes that had bound about His Head. There was no sign of haste, but all was orderly, leaving the impression of One Who had leisurely divested Himself of what no longer befitted Him. Soon the other disciples followed Peter. The effect of what he saw was, that he now believed in his heart that the Master was risen—for till then they had not yet derived from Holy Scripture the knowledge that He must rise again. And this also is most instructive. It was not the belief previously derived from Scripture, that the Christ was to rise from the Dead, which led to expectancy of it, but the evidence that He had risen which led them to the knowledge of what Scripture taught on the subject.

3. Yet whatever light had risen in the inmost sanctuary of John's heart, he spake not his thoughts to the Magdalene, whether she had reached the Sepulchre ere the two left it, or met them by the way. The two Apostles returned to their home, either feeling that nothing more could be learned at the Tomb, or to wait for further teaching and guidance. Or it might even have been partly due to a desire not to draw needless attention to the empty Tomb. But the love of the Magdalene could not rest satisfied, while doubt hung over the fate of His Sacred Body. It must be remembered that she knew only of the empty Tomb. For a time she gave away the agony of her sorrow; then, as she wiped away her tears, she stopped to take one more look into the Tomb, which she thought empty, when, as she intently gazed (qewrei), the Tomb seemed no longer empty. At the head and feet, where the Sacred Body had lain, were seated two Angels in white. Their question, so deeply true from their knowledge that Christ had risen: Woman, why weepest thou? seems to have come upon the Magdalene with such overpowering suddenness, that, without being able to realise—perhaps in the semi-gloom—who it was that had asked it, she spake, bent only on obtaining the information she sought: Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not²² where they have laid Him. So is it often with us, that, weeping, we ask the question of doubt or fear, which, if we only knew, would

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²²When *Meyer* contends that the plural in St. [John 20:2](#), We know not where they have laid Him does not refer to the presence of other women with the Magdalene, but is a general expression for: We, all His followers, have no knowledge of it—he must have overlooked that, when alone, she repeats the same words in [ver. 13](#), but markedly uses the *singular* number: I know not.'

never have risen to our lips; nay, that heaven's own Why? fails to impress us, even when the Voice of its Messengers would gently recall us from the error of our impatience.

But already another was to be given to the Magdalene. As she spake, she became conscious of another Presence close to her. Quickly turning round, she gazed (qewrei) on One Whom she recognised not, but regarded as the gardener, from His presence there and from His question: Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? The hope, that she might now learn what she sought, gave wings to her words—intensity and pathos. If the supposed gardener had borne to another place the Sacred Body, she would take It away, if she only knew where It was laid. This depth and agony of love, which made the Magdalene forget even the restraints of a Jewish woman's intercourse with a stranger, was the key that opened the Lips of Jesus. A moment's pause, and He spake her name in those well-remembered accents, that had first unbound her from sevenfold demoniac power and called her into a new life. It was as another unbinding, another call into a new life. She had not known His appearance, just as the others did not know at first, so unlike, and yet so like, was the glorified Body to that which they had known. But she could not mistake the Voice, especially when It spake to her, and spake her name. So do we also often fail to recognise the Lord when He comes to us in another form ²³ than we had known. But we cannot fail to recognise Him when He speaks to us and speaks our name.

Perhaps we may here be allowed to pause, and, from the non-recognition of the Risen Lord till He spoke, ask this question: With what body shall *we* rise? Like or unlike the past? Assuredly, most like. Our bodies will then be *true*; for the soul will body itself forth according to its past history—not only *im*press itself, as now on the features, but *ex*press itself—so that a man may be known by what he is, and as what he is. Thus, in this respect also, has the Resurrection a moral aspect, and is the completion of the history of mankind and of each man. And the Christ also must have borne in His glorified Body all that He was, all that even His most intimate disciples had

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²³St. Mark 16:12.

not known nor understood while He was with them, which they now failed to recognise, but knew at once when He spake to them.

It was precisely this which now prompted the action of the Magdalene—prompted also, and explains, the answer of the Lord. As in her name she recognised His Name, the rush of old feeling came over her, and with the familiar *Rabboni!*²⁴—my Master—she would fain have grasped Him. Was it the unconscious impulse to take hold on the precious treasure which she had thought foreverlost; the unconscious attempt to make sure that it was not merely an apparition of Jesus from heaven, but the real Christ in His corporeity on earth; or a gesture of generation, the beginning of such acts of worship as her heart prompted? Probably all these; and yet probably she was not at the moment distinctly conscious of either or of any of these feelings. But to them all there was one answer, and in it a higher direction, given by the words of the Lord: Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to the Father. Not the Jesus appearing from heaven—for He had not yet ascended to the Father; not the former intercourse, not the former homage and worship. There was yet a future of completion before Him in the Ascension, of which Mary knew not. Between that future of completion and the past of work, the present was a gap—belonging partly to the past and partly to the future. The past could not be recalled, the future could not be anticipated. The present was of reassurance, of consolation, of preparation, of teaching. Let the Magdalene go and tell His brethren of the Ascension. So would she best and most truly tell them that she had seen Him; so also would they best learn how the Resurrection linked the past of His Work of love for them to the future: I ascend unto My Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. Thus, the fullest teaching of the past, the clearest manifestation of the present, and the brightest teaching of the future—all as gathered up in the Resurrection—came to the Apostles through the mouth of love of her out of whom He had cast seven devils.

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4. Yet another scene on that Easter morning does St. Matthew relate, in explanation of how the well-known Jewish Calumny had arisen that the disciples had stolen away the Body of Jesus. He tells,

²⁴This may represent the *Galilean* form of the expression, and, if so, would be all the more evidential.

how the guard had reported to the chief priests what had happened, and how they had turned and bribed the guard to spread this rumor, at the same time promising that if the fictitious account of their having slept while the disciples robbed the Sepulchre should reach Pilate, they would intercede on their behalf. Whatever else may be said, we know that from the time of *Justin Martyr*^{25 26} this has been the Jewish explanation.²⁷ Of late, however, it has, among thoughtful Jewish writers, given place to the so-called Vision-hypothesis to which full reference has already been made.

5. It was the early afternoon of that spring-day perhaps soon after the early meal, when two men from that circle of disciples left the City. Their narrative affords deeply interesting glimpses into the circle of the Church in those first days. The impression conveyed to us is of utter bewilderment, in which only some things stood out unshaken and firm: love to the Person of Jesus; love among the brethren; mutual confidence and fellowship; together with a dim hope of something yet to come—if not Christ in His Kingdom, yet some manifestation of, or approach to it. The Apostolic College seems broken up into units; even the two chief Apostles, Peter and John, are only certain of them that were with us. And no wonder; for they are no longer Apostles'—sent out. Who is to send them forth? Not a dead Christ! And what would be their commission, and to whom and whither? And above all rested a cloud of utter uncertainty and perplexity. Jesus *was* a Prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people. But their rulers had crucified Him. What was to be their new relation to Jesus; what to their rulers? And what of the great hope of the Kingdom, which they had connected with Him?

Thus they were unclear on that very Easter Day even as to His Mission and Work: unclear as to the past, the present, and the future. What need for the Resurrection, and for the teaching which the Risen One alone could bring! These two men had on that very day been in communication with Peter and John. And it leaves on us the impression, that, amidst the general confusion, all had brought such

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²⁵Dial. c. Tryph. xvii.; 108.

²⁶In its coarsest form it is told in the so-called *Toldoth Jeshu*, which may be seen at the end of *Wagenseil's Tela Ignea Satanae*.

²⁷So *Grätz*, and most of the modern writers.

tidings as they, or had come to hear them, and had tried but failed, to put it all into order or to see light around it. The women had come to tell of the empty Tomb and of their vision of Angels, who said that He was alive. But as yet the Apostles had no explanation to offer. Peter and John had gone to see for themselves. They had brought back confirmation of the report that the Tomb was empty, but they had seen neither Angels nor Him Whom they were said to have declared alive. And, although the two had evidently left the circle of the disciples, if not Jerusalem, before the Magdalene came, yet we know that even her account did not carry conviction to the minds of those that heard it. ²⁸

Of the two, who on that early spring afternoon left the City in company, we know that one bore the name of Cleopas. ²⁹ The other, unnamed, has for that very reason, and because the narrative of that work bears in its vividness the character of personal recollection, been identified with St. Luke himself. If so, then, as has been finely remarked, ³⁰ each of the Gospels would, like a picture, bear in some dim corner the indication of its author: the first, that of the publican; that by St. Mark, that of the young man, who, in the night of the Betrayal, had fled from his captors; that of St. Luke in the Companion of Cleopas; and that of St. John, in the disciple whom Jesus loved. Uncertainty, almost equal to that about the second traveller to Emmaus, rests on the identification of that place. ³¹

²⁸St. Mark 16:11.

²⁹This may be either a form of Alphaeus, or of Cleopatros.

³⁰By *Godet*.

³¹Not less than four localities have been identified with Emmaus. But some preliminary difficulties must be cleared. The name Emmaus is spelt in different ways in the Talmud (comp. *Neubauer*, Geogr. d. Talm. p. 100, Note 3). *Josephus* (War iv. 1. 3; Ant. xviii. 2. 3) explains the meaning of the name as warm baths or thermal springs. We will not complicate the question by discussing the derivation of Emmaus. In another place (War vii. 6. 6) *Josephus* speaks of Vespasian having settled in an Emmaus, sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, a colony of soldiers. There can be little doubt that the Emmaus of St. Luke and that of *Josephus* are identical. Lastly, we read in Mishnah (Sukk. iv. 5) of a *Motsa* whence they fetched the willow branches with which the altar was decorated at the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Talmud explains this Moza as Kolonieh, which again is identified by Christian writers with Vespasian's colony of Roman soldiers (*Caspari*, Chronol Geogr. Einl. p. 207; Quart. Rep. of the Pal Explor. Fund, July 1881, p. 237 [not without some slight inaccuracies]). But an examination of the passage in the Mishnah must lead us to dismiss this part of the theory. No one could imagine that the worshippers

But such great probability attaches, if not to the exact spot, yet to the locality, or rather the valley, that we may in imagination follow the two companies on their road. [327]
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We have leave the City by the Western Gate. A rapid progress for about twenty-five minutes, and we have reached the edge of the plateau. The blood-strained City, and the cloud-and-gloom-capped trying-place of the followers of Jesus, are behind us; and with every step forward and upward the air seems fresher and freer, as if we felt in it the scent of mountains, or even the far-off breezes of the sea. Other twenty-five or thirty minutes—perhaps a little more, passing here and there country-houses—and we pause to look back, now on the wide prospect far as Bethlehem. Again we pursue our way. We are now getting beyond the dreary, rocky region, and are entering

would walk sixty stadia (seven or eight miles) for willow branches to decorate the altar, while the Mishah, besides, describes this Moza as *below*, or south of Jerusalem, whereas the modern *Kolonieh* (which is identified with the Colonia of *Josephus*) is northwest of Jerusalem. No doubt, the Talmud, knowing that there was an Emmaus which was Colonia blunderingly identified with it the Moza of the willow branches. This, however, it seems lawful to infer from it, that the Emmaus of *Josephus* bore popularly the name of *Kolonieh*. We can now examine the four proposed identifications of Emmaus. The oldest and the youngest of these may be briefly dismissed. The most common, perhaps the earliest identification, was with the ancient *Nicopolis*, the modern *Amwâs*, which in Rabbinic writings also bears the name of Emmaus (*Neubauer*, u.s.). But this is impossible, as *Nicopolis* is twenty miles from Jerusalem. The latest proposed identification is that with *Urtas*, to the south of Bethlehem (Mrs. *Finn*, Quart. Rep. of Pal. Explor. Fund, Jan. 1883, p. 53). It is impossible here to enter into the various reasons urged by the talented and accomplished proposer of this identification. Suffice it, in refutation, to note, that, *admittedly*, there were no natural hot-baths or thermal springs, here, only artificial Roman baths such as, no doubt, in many other places, and that this Emmaus was Emmaus *only* at the particular period when they (St. Luke and *Josephus*) were writing (u.s. p. 62). There now only remain two localities, the modern *Kolonieh* and *Kubeibeh*—for the strange proposed identification by Lieut. *Conder* in the Quarterly Rep. of the Pal. Explor. Fund, Oct. 1876 (pp. 172-175) seems now abandoned even by its author. *Kolonieh* would, of course, represent the *Colonia* of *Josephus*, according to the Talmud = Emmaus. But this is only 45 furlongs from Jerusalem. But at the head of the same valley, in the Wady Buwai, and at a distance of about three miles north, is *Kubeibeh*, the Emmaus of the Crusaders, just sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. Between these places is *Beit Mizza*, or *Hammoza*, which I regard as the real Emmaus. It would be nearly 55 or about 60 furlongs (St. Luke)—sufficiently near to *Kolonieh* (Colonia) to account for the name, since the colony would extend up the valley, and sufficiently near to *Kubeibeh* to account for the tradition. The Palestine Exploration Fund has now apparently fixed on *Kubeibeh* as the site (see Q. Report, July, 1881, p. 237, and their N. T. map.

on a valley. To our right is the pleasant spot that marks the ancient *Nephtoah*,³² on the border of Judah, now occupied by the village of *Lifta*. A short quarter of an hour more, and we have left the well-paved Roman road and are heading up a lovely valley. The path gently climbs in a northwesterly direction, with the height on which Emmaus stands prominently before us. About equidistant are, on the right Lifta, on the left Kolonieh. The roads from these two, describing almost a semicircle (the one to the north-west, the other to the north-east), meet about a quarter of a mile to the south of Emmaus (Hammoza, Beit Mizza). What an oasis this in a region of hills! Among the course of the stream, which babbles down, and low in the valley is crossed by a bridge, are scented orange-and lemon-gardens, olive-groves, luscious fruit trees, pleasant enclosures, shady nooks, bright dwellings, and on the height lovely Emmaus. A sweet spot to which to wander on that spring afternoon;³³ a most suitable place where to meet such companionship, and to find such teaching, as on that Easter Day.

It may have been where the two roads from Lifta and Kolonieh meet, that the mysterious Stranger, Whom they knew not, their eyes being holden joined the two friends. Yet all these six or seven miles³⁴ their converse had been of Him, and even now their flushed faces bore the marks of sadness³⁵ on account of those events of which they had been speaking—disappointed hopes, all the more bitter for the perplexing tidings about the empty Tomb and the absent Body of the Christ. So is Christ often near to us when our eyes are holden, and we know Him not; and so do ignorance and unbelief often fill our hearts with sadness, even when truest joy would most become us. To the question of the Stranger about the topics of a conversation

³²Joshua 15.

³³Even to this day seems a favourite resort of the inhabitants of Jerusalem for an afternoon (comp. *Conder's Tent-Work in Palestine*, i. pp. 25-27).

³⁴60 furlongs about = "7" ½ miles.

³⁵I cannot persuade myself that the right reading of the close of *ver. 17* (St. *Luke 24*.) can be *And they stood still, looking sad*. Every reader will mark this as an incongruous, jejune break-up in the vivid narrative, quite unlike the rest. We can understand the question as in our A.V., but scarcely the standing-still and looking sad on the question as in the R. V.

which had so visibly affected them,³⁶ they replied in language which shows that they were so absorbed by it themselves, as scarcely to understand how even a festive pilgrim and stranger in Jerusalem could have failed to know it, or perceive its supreme importance. Yet, strangely unsympathetic as from His question He might seem, there was that in His Appearance which unlocked their inmost hearts. They told Him their thoughts about this Jesus; how He had showed Himself a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people;³⁷ then, how their rulers had crucified Him; and, lastly, how fresh perplexity had come to them from the tidings which the women had brought, and which Peter and John had so far confirmed, but were unable to explain. Their words were almost childlike in their simplicity, deeply truthful, and with a pathos and earnest craving for guidance and comfort that goes straight to the heart. To such souls it was, that the Risen Saviour would give His first teaching. The very rebuke with which He opened it must have brought its comfort. We also, in our weakness, are sometimes sore distress when we hear what, at the moment, seem to us insuperable difficulties raised to any of the great of our holy faith; and, in perhaps equal weakness, feel comforted and strengthened, when some great one turns them aside, or avows himself in face of them a believing disciple of Christ. As if man's puny height could reach up to heaven's mysteries, or any big infant's strength were needed to steady the building which God has reared on that great Cornerstone! But Christ's rebuke was not of such kind. Their sorrow arose from their folly in looking only at the things seen, and this, from their slowness to believe what the prophets had spoken. Had they attended to this, instead of allowing it all. Did not the Scriptures with one voice teach this twofold truth about the Messiah, that He was to suffer and to enter into His glory? Then why wonder—why not rather expect, that He had suffered, and that Angels had proclaimed Him alive again?

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He spake it, and fresh hope sprang up in their hearts, new thoughts rose in their minds. Their eager gaze was fastened on Him as He now opened up, one by one, the Scriptures, from Moses

³⁶Without this last clause we could hardly understand how a stranger would accost them, ask the subject of their conversation.

³⁷*Meyer's* rendering of οV egeneto in [ver. 19](#) as implying: *se praestitit, se praebuit*, is more correct than the which was of both the A.V. and R.V.

and all the prophets, and in each well-remembered passage interpreted to them the things concerning Himself. Oh, that we had been there to hear—though in silence of our hearts also, if only we crave for it, and if we walk with Him, He sometimes so opens from the Scriptures—nay, from all the Scriptures, that which comes not to us by critical study: the things concerning Himself. All too quickly fled the moments. The brief space was traversed, and the Stranger seemed about to pass on from Emmaus—not the feigning it, but really: for, the Christ will only abide with us if our longing and loving constrain Him. But they could not part with Him. They constrained

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Him. Love made them ingenious. It was toward evening; the day was far spent; He must even abide with them. What rush of thought and feeling comes to us, as we think of it all, and try to realise time, scenes, circumstances in our experience, that are blessedly akin to it. The Master allowed Himself to be constrained. He went in to be their guest, as they thought, for the night. The simple evening-meal was spread. He sat down with them to the frugal board. And now He was no longer the Stranger; He was the Master. No one asked, or questioned, as He took the bread and spake the words of blessing, then, breaking, gave it to them. But that moment it was, as if an unfelt Hand had been taken from their eyelids, as if suddenly the film had been cleared from their sight. And as they knew Him, He vanished from their view—for, that which He had come to do had been done. They were unspeakably rich and happy now. But, amidst it all, one thing forced itself ever anew upon them, that, even while their eyes had yet been holden, their hearts had burned within them, while He spake to them and opened to them the Scriptures. So, then, they had learned to full the Resurrection-lesson—not only that He was risen indeed, but that it needed not His seen Bodily Presence, if only He opened up to the heart and mind all the Scriptures concerning Himself. And this, concerning those other words about holding and touching Him—about having converse and fellowship with Him as the Risen One, had been also the lesson taught the Magdalene, when He would not suffer her loving, worshipful touch, pointing her to the Ascension before Him. This is the great lesson concerning the Risen One, which the Church fully learned in the Day of Pentecost.

6. That same afternoon, in circumstances and manner to us unknown, the Lord had appeared to Peter. ³⁸ We may perhaps suggest, that it was *after* His manifestation at Emmaus. This would complete the cycle of mercy: first, to the loving sorrow of the woman; next, to the loving perplexity of the disciples; then, to the anxious heart of the stricken Peter—last, in the circle of the Apostles, which was again drawing together around the assured fact of His Resurrection.

7. These two in Emmaus could not have kept the good tidings to themselves. Even if they had not remembered the sorrow and perplexity in which they had left their fellow-disciples in Jerusalem that forenoon, they could not have kept it to themselves, could not have remained in Emmaus, but must have gone to their brethren in the City. So they left the uneaten meal, and hastened back the road they had travelled with the now well-known Stranger—but, ah, with what lighter hearts and steps!

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They knew well the trysting-place where to find the Twelve'—nay, not the Twelve now, but the Eleven'—and even thus their circle was not complete, for, as already stated, it was broken up, and at least Thomas was not with the others on that Easter-Evening of the first Lord's Day. But, as St. Luke is careful to inform us, ³⁹ with the others who then associated with them. This is of extreme importance, as marking that the words which the Risen Christ spake on that occasion were addressed not to the Apostles as such—a thought forbidden also by the absence of Thomas—but to the Church, although it may be as personified and represented by such of the Twelve or rather Eleven as were present on the occasion.

When the two from Emmaus arrived, they found the little band as sheep sheltering within the fold from the storm. Whether they apprehended persecution simply as disciples, or because the tidings of the empty Tomb, which had reached the authorities, would stir the fears of the Sanhedrists, special precautions had been taken. The outer and inner doors were shut, alike to conceal their gathering and to prevent surprise. But those assembled were now sure of at least one thing. Christ *was* risen. And when they from Emmaus told

³⁸1 Corinthians 15:5.

³⁹St. Luke 24:33.

their wondrous story, the others could antiphonally reply by relating how He had appeared, not only to the Magdalene, but also to Peter. And still they seem not yet to have understood His Resurrection; to have regarded it as rather an Ascension to Heaven, from which He had made manifestation, that as the reappearance of His real, though glorified Corporeity.

[333] They were sitting at meat ⁴⁰—if we may infer from the notice of St. Mark, and from what happened immediately afterwards, discussing, not without considerable doubt and misgiving, the real import of these appearances of Christ. That to the Magdalene seems to have been put aside—at least, it is not mentioned, and, even in regard to the others, they seem to have been considered, at any rate by some, rather as what we might call spectral appearances. But all at once He stood in the midst of them. The common salutation—on His Lips not common, but a reality—fell on their hearts at first with terror rather than joy. They had spoken of spectral appearances, and now they believed they were gazing (qewreinon a spirit. This the Saviour first, and once for all, corrected, by the exhibition of the glorified marks of His Sacred Wounds, and by bidding them handle Him to convince themselves, that His was a real Body, and what they saw not a disembodied spirit. ⁴¹ The unbelief of doubt now gave place to the not daring to believe all that it meant, for very gladness, and for wondering whether there could now be any longer fellowship or bond between this Risen Christ and them in their bodies. It was to remove this also, which, though from another aspect, was equally unbelief, that the Saviour now partook before them of their supper of broiled fish, ⁴² thus holding with them true human fellowship as of old. ⁴³

⁴⁰St. [Mark 16:14](#).

⁴¹I cannot understand why Canon *Cook* (Speaker's Commentary ad loc.) regards St. [Luke 24:39](#) as belonging to the appearance on the octave of the Resurrection. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be strictly parallel to St. [John 20:20](#).

⁴²The words and honeycomb seem spurious.

⁴³Such seems to me the meaning of His eating; any attempt at explaining, we willingly forego in our ignorance of the conditions of a glorified body, just as we refuse to discuss the manner in which He suddenly appeared in the room while the doors were shut. But I at least cannot believe, that His body was then in a transition state not perfected not quite glorified till His Ascension.

It was this lesson of His continuity—in the strictest sense—with the past, which was required in order that the Church might be, so to speak, reconstituted now in the Name, Power, and Spirit of the Risen One Who had lived and died. Once more He spake the Peace be unto you! and now it was to them not occasion of doubt or fear, but the well-known salutation of their old Lord and Master. It was followed by the re-gathering and constituting of the Church as that of Jesus Christ, the Risen One. The Church of the Risen One was to be the Ambassador of Christ, as He had been the Delegate of the Father. The Apostles were [say rather, the Church was'] commissioned to carry on Christ's work, and not to begin a new one.⁴⁴ As the Father has sent Me [in the past, for His Mission was completed], even so send⁴⁵ I you [in the constant, present, till His coming again]. This marks the threefold relation of the Church to the Son, to the Father, and to the world, and her position in it. In the same manner, for the same purpose, nay, so far as possible, with the same qualification and the same authority as the Father had sent Christ, does He commission His Church. And so it was that He made it a very real commission when He breathed on them, not individually but as an assembly, and said: Take ye the⁴⁶ Holy Ghost; and this, manifestly not in the absolute sense, since the Holy Ghost was not yet given,⁴⁷ but as the connecting link with, and the qualification for, the authority bestowed on the Church. Or, to set forth another aspect of it by somewhat inverting the order of the words: Alike the Mission of the Church and her authority to forgive or retain sins are connected with a personal qualification: Take ye the Holy Ghost;'—in which the

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⁴⁴*Wescott.*

⁴⁵The words in the two clauses are different in regard to the sending of Christ (apostalken me) and in regard to the Church (pempw umaV). No doubt, there must be deeper meaning in this distinction, yet both are used alike of Christ and of the disciples. It may be as *Cremer* seems to hint (*Bibl. Theol. Lex. of the N.T.* p. 529) that apostellw, from which apostle and apostolate are derived, refers to a mission with a definite commission, or rather for a definite purpose, while pempw is sending in a general sense. See the learned and ingenious Note of Canon *Westcott* (*Comm. on St. John 298*).]

⁴⁶In the original the definite article is omitted. But this, though significant, can surely not be supposed to prove that the expression is equivalent to a gift of the Holy Ghost. For, as *Meyer* has pointed out, the word is used in other passages without the article, where the Holy Ghost is referred to (comp. *St. John 1:33; 7:39; Acts 1:2, 5*).

⁴⁷This alone would suffice to show what misinterpretation is sometimes made, by friend and foe, of the use of these words in the English Ordinal.

word take should also be marked. This is the authority which the Church possesses, not *ex opere operato*, but as not connected with the taking and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Church.

[335] It still remains to explain, so far as we can, these two points: in what this power of forgiving and retaining sins consists, and in what manner it resides in the Church. In regard to the former we must first inquire what idea it would convey to those to whom Christ spake the words. It has already been explained,⁴⁸ that the power of loosing and binding referred to the legislative authority claimed by, and conceded to, the Rabbinic College. Similarly, as previously stated, that here referred to applied to their juridical or judicial power, according to which they pronounced a person either, *Zakkai* innocent or free; absolved *Patur*; or else liable guilty *Chayyabh* (whether liable to punishment or sacrifice.) In the true sense, therefore, this is rather administrative, disciplinary power, the power of the keys'—such as St. Paul would have had the Corinthian Church put in force—the power of admission and exclusion, of the authoritative declaration of the forgiveness of sins, in the exercise of which power (as it seems to the present writer) the authority for the administration of the Holy Sacraments is also involved. And yet it is not, as is sometimes represented, absolution from sin which belongs only to God and to Christ as Head of the Church, but absolution of the sinner, which He has delegated to His Church: Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven. These words also teach us, that the Rabbis claimed in virtue of their office, that the Lord bestowed on His Church in virtue of her receiving, and of the indwelling of, the Holy Ghost.

In answering the second question proposed, we must bear in mind one important point. The power of binding and loosing had been primarily committed to the Apostles,⁴⁹ and exercised by them in connection with the Church.⁵⁰ On the other hand, that of forgiving and retaining sins, in the sense explained, was primarily bestowed on the Church, and exercised by her through her representatives, the Apostles, and those to whom they committed rule.⁵¹ Although, therefore, the Lord on that night committed this power to His Church,

⁴⁸Book iii. ch 37.

⁴⁹St. Matthew 16:19; 18:18.

⁵⁰Acts 15:22, 23.

⁵¹1 Corinthians 5:4, 5, 12, 13; 2 Corinthians 2:6, 10.

it was in the person of her representatives and rulers. The Apostles alone could exercise legislative function,⁵² but the Church, has to the end of time the power of the keys.

8. There had been absent from the circle of disciples on that Easter-Evening one of the Apostles, Thomas. Even when told of the marvellous events at that gathering, he refused to believe, unless he had personal and sensuous evidence of the truth of the report. It can scarcely have been, that Thomas did not believe in the fact that Christ's Body had quitted the Tomb, or that He had really appeared. But he held fast by what we may term the Vision-hypothesis, or, in this case, rather the spectral theory. But until this Apostle also had come to conviction of the Resurrection in the only real sense—of the identical though glorified Corporeity of the Lord, and hence of the continuity of the past with the present and future, it was impossible to re-form the Apostolic Circle, or to renew the Apostolic commission, since its primal message was testimony concerning the Risen One. This, if we may so suggest, seems the reason why the Apostles still remain in Jerusalem, instead of hastening, as directed, to meet the Master in Galilee. [336]

A quiet week had passed, during which—and this also may be for our twofold learning—the Apostles excluded not Thomas,⁵³ nor yet Thomas withdrew from the Apostles. Once more the day of days had come—the Octave of the Feast. From that Easter-Day onwards the Church must, even without special institution, have celebrated the weekly-recurring memorial of His Resurrection, as that when He breathed on the Church the breath of a new life, and consecrated it to be His Representative. Thus, it was not only the memorial of His Resurrection, but the birthday of the Church, even as Pentecost was her baptism day. On that Octave, then, the disciples were again gathered, under circumstances precisely similar to those of Easter, but now Thomas was also with them. Once more—and

⁵²The decrees of the first Councils should be regarded not as legislative, but either as disciplinary, or else as explanatory of Apostolic teaching and legislation.

⁵³It must, however, be remembered that Thomas did not deny that Christ was risen—except as in the peculiar sense of the Resurrection. Had he denied the other, he would scarcely have continued in the company of the Apostles.

[337] it is again specially marked: the doors being shut ⁵⁴ —the Risen Saviour appeared in the midst of the disciples with the well-known salutation. He now offered to Thomas the demanded evidence; but it was no longer either needed or sought. With a full rush of feeling he yielded himself to the blessed conviction, which once formed, must immediately have passed into act of adoration: My Lord and my God! The fullest confession this hitherto made, and which truly embraced the whole outcome of the new conviction concerning the reality of Christ's Resurrection. We remember how, under similar circumstances, Nathnael had been the first to utter fullest confession. ⁵⁵ We also remember the analogous reply of the Saviour. As then, so now, He pointed to the higher: to a faith which was not the outcome of sight, and therefore limited and bounded by sight, whether of the sense or of perception by the intellect. As one has finely remarked: This last and greatest of the Beatitudes is the peculiar heritage of the later Church ⁵⁶ —and thus most aptly comes as the consecration gift of that Church.

9. The next scene presented to us is once again by the Lake of Galilee. The manifestation to Thomas, and, with it, the restoration of unity in the Apostolic Circle, had originally concluded the Gospel of St. John. ⁵⁷ But the report which had spread in the early Church, that Disciple whom Jesus loved was not to die, led him to add to his Gospel, by way of Appendix, and account of the events with which this expectancy had connected itself. It is most instructive to the critic, when challenged at every step to explain why one or another fact is not mentioned or mentioned only in one Gospel, to find that, but for the correction of a possible misapprehension in regard to the aged Apostle, the Fourth Gospel would have contained no reference to the manifestation of Christ in Galilee, nay, to the presence of the disciples there before the Ascension. Yet, for all that St. John had it in his mind. And should we not learn from this, that what appear to us strange omissions, which, when held by the side of the other Gospel-narratives, seem to involve discrepancies, may

⁵⁴Significantly, the expression for fear of the Jews no longer occurs. That apprehension had for the present passed away.

⁵⁵St. John 1:45-51.

⁵⁶Canon *Westcott*.

⁵⁷St. John 20:30, 31.

be capable of the most satisfactory explanation, if we only knew all the circumstance?

The history itself sparkles like a gem in its own peculiar setting. It is of green Galilee, and of the blue Lake, and recalls the early days and scenes of this history. As St. Matthew has it, ⁵⁸ the eleven disciples went away into Galilee'—probably immediately after that Octave of the Easter. ⁵⁹

It can scarcely be doubted, that they made known not only the fact of the Resurrection, but the trysting which the Risen One had given them—perhaps at that Mountain where He had spoken His first Sermon. And so it was, that some doubted ⁶⁰ and that He afterwards appeared to the five hundred at once. ⁶¹ But on that morning there were by the Lake of Tiberias only seven of the disciples. Five of them only are named. They are those who most closely kept in company with Him—perhaps also they who lived nearest the Lake.

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The scene is introduced by Peter's proposal to go a-fishing. It seems as if the old habits had come back to them with the old associations. Peter's companions naturally proposed to join him. ⁶² All that still, clear night they were on the Lake, but caught nothing. Did not this recall to them for former event, when James and John, and Peter and Andrew were called to be Apostles, and did it not specially recall to Peter the searching and sounding of his heart on the morning that followed? ⁶³ But so utterly self-unconscious were they, and, let us add, so far is this history from any trace of legendary design, ⁶⁴ that not the slightest indication of this appears. Early morning was breaking, and under the rosy glow above the cool shadows were still lying on the pebbly beach. There stood the Figure of One Whom they recognised not—nay, not even when He spake. Yet His Words were intended to bring them this knowledge. The direction to cast the net to the right side of the ship brought

⁵⁸St. [Matthew 28:16](#).

⁵⁹The account of St. [Luke 24:44-48](#) is a condensed narrative—without distinction of time or place—of what occurred during all the forty days.

⁶⁰St. [Matthew 28:17](#).

⁶¹[1 Corinthians 15:6](#).

⁶²The word immediately in St. [John 21:3](#) is spurious.

⁶³St. [Luke 5:1, 11](#).

⁶⁴Yet St John must have been acquainted with this narrative, recorded as it is by all three Synoptists.

[339] them, as He had said, the haul for which they had toiled all night in vain. And more than this: such a multitude of fishes, enough for the disciple whom Jesus loved and whose heart may previously have misgiven him. He whispered it to Peter: It is the Lord, and Simon, only reverently gathering about him his fisher's upper garment,⁶⁵ cast himself into the sea. Yet even so, except to be sooner by the side of Christ, Peter seems to have gained nothing by his haste. The others, leaving the ship, and transferring themselves to a small boat, which must have been attached to it followed, rowing the short distance of about one hundred yards,⁶⁶ and dragging after them the net, weighted with the fishes.

They stepped on the beach, hallowed by His Presence, in silence, as if they had entered Church or Temple. They dared not even dispose of the netful of fishes which they had dragged on shore, until He directed them what to do. This only they notice, that some unseen hand had prepared the morning meal, which, when asked by the Master, they had admitted they had not of their own. And now Jesus directed them to bring the fish they had caught. When Peter dragged up the weight net, it was found full of great fishes, not less than a hundred and fifty-three in number. There is no need to attach any symbolic import to that number, as the Fathers and later writers have done. We can quite understand—nay, it seems almost natural, that, in the peculiar circumstances, they should have counted the large fishes in that miraculous draught that still left the net unbroken.⁶⁷ It may have been, that they were told to count the fishes—partly, also, to show the reality of what had taken place. But on the fire the coals there seems to have been only one fish, and beside it only one bread.⁶⁸ To this meal He now bade them, for they seem still to have hung back in reverent awe, nor durst they ask him, Who He was,

⁶⁵This notice also seems specially indicative that the narrator is himself from the Lake of Galilee.

⁶⁶About 200 cubits.

⁶⁷Canon *Westcott* gives, from St. Augustine, the points of difference between this and the miraculous draught of fishes on the former occasion (St. [Luke 5.](#)). These are very interesting. Not so the fanciful speculations of the Fathers about the symbolic meaning of the number 153.

⁶⁸This seems implied in the absence of the article in St. [John 21:9.](#)

well knowing it was the Lord. This, as St. John notes, was the third appearance of Christ to the disciples as a body. ⁶⁹

10. And still this morning of blessing was not ended. The frugal meal was past, with all its significant teaching of just sufficient provision for His servants, and abundant supply in the unbroken net beside them. But some special teaching was needed, more even than that to Thomas, for him whose work was to be so prominent among the Apostles, whose love was so ardent, and yet in its very ardour so full of danger to himself. For, our dangers spring not only from deficiency, but it may be from excess of feeling, when that feeling is not commensurate with inward strength. Had Peter not confessed, quite honestly, yet, as the event proved, mistakingly, that his love to Christ would endure even an ordeal that would disperse all the others? ⁷⁰ And had he not, almost immediately afterwards, and though prophetically warned of it, thrice denied his Lord? Jesus had, indeed, since then appeared specially to Peter as the Risen One. But this threefold denial still, stood, as it were, uncanceled before the other disciples, nay, before Peter himself. It was to this that the threefold question to the Risen Lord now referred. Turning to Peter, with pointed though most gentle allusion to the danger of self-confidence—a confidence springing from only a sense of personal affection, even though genuine—He asked: Simon, son of Jona’—as it were with fullest reference to what he was naturally—lovest thou Me more than these? Peter understood it all. No longer with confidence in self, avoiding the former reference to the others, and even with marked choice of a different word to express his affection ⁷¹ from that which the Saviour had used, he replied, appealing rather to his Lord’s, than to his own consciousness: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. And even here the answer of Christ is characteristic. It was to set him first the humblest work, that which needed most tender care and patience: Feed [provide with food] My Lambs.

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Yet a second time came the same question, although now without the reference to the others, and, with the same answer by Peter, the

⁶⁹St. John could not have meant His third appearance in general, since himself had recorded three previous manifestations.

⁷⁰St. [Matthew 26:33](#); St. [John 13:37](#).

⁷¹Christ asks: *agapa* V me, and Peter answers: *su oida* V *oti flw* se.

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now varied and enlarged commission: Feed [shepherd, poimaine] My Sheep. Yet a third time did Jesus repeat the same question, now adopting in it the very word which Peter had used to express his affection. Peter was grieved at this threefold repetition. It recalled only too bitterly his threefold denial. And yet the Lord was not doubtful of Peter's love, for each time He followed up His question with a fresh Apostle commission; but now that He put it for the third time, Peter would have the Lord send down the sounding-line quite into the lowest deep of this heart: Lord, Thou knowest all things—Thou perceivest⁷² that I love Thee! And now the Saviour spake it: Feed [provide food for] My sheep. His Lamb, His Sheep, to be provided for, to be tended as such! And only love can do such service.

Yes, and Peter did love the Lord Jesus. He had loved Him when he said it, only too confident in the strength of his feelings, that he would follow the Master even unto death. And Jesus saw it all—yea, and how this love of the ardent temperament which had once made him rove at wild liberty, would give place to patient work of love, and be crowned with that martyrdom which, when the beloved disciple wrote, was already matter of the past. And the very manner of death by which he was to glorify God was indicated in the words of Jesus.

As He spake them, He joined the symbolic action to His Follow Me. This command, and the encouragement of being in death literally made like Him—following Him—were Peter's best strength. He obeyed; but as he turned to do so, he saw another following. As St. John himself puts it, it seems almost to convey that he had longed to share Peter's call, with all that it implied. For, St. John speaks of himself as the disciple whom Jesus loves, and he reminds us that in that night of betrayal he had been specially a sharer with Peter, nay, had spoken what the other had silently asked of him. Was it impatience, was it a touch of the old Peter, or was it a simple inquiry of brotherly interest which prompted the question, as he pointed to John: Lord—and this man, what? Whatever had been the motive, to him, as to us all, when perplexed about those who seem to follow Christ, we ask it—sometimes in bigoted narrowness, sometimes in

⁷²ginwskeiV.

ignorance, folly, or jealousy—is this answer: What is that to thee? follow thou Me. For John also had his lifework for Christ. It was to tarry while He was coming⁷³—to tarry those many years in patient labour, while Christ was coming.

But what did it mean? The saying went aboard among the brethren that John was not to die, but to tarry till Jesus came again to reign, when death would be swallowed up in victory. But Jesus had not so said, only: If I will that he tarry while I am coming. What that Coming was, Jesus had not said, and John knew not. So, then, there are things, and connected with His Coming, on which Jesus has left the veil, only to be lifted by His own Hand—which He means us not to know at present, and which we should be content to leave as He has left them.

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11. Beyond this narrative we have only briefest notices: by St. Paul, of Christ manifesting Himself to James, which probably finally decided him for Christ, and the Eleven meeting Him at the mountain, where He had appointed them; by St. Luke, of the teaching in the Scriptures during the forty days of communication between the Risen Christ and the disciples.

But this twofold testimony comes to us from St. Matthew and St. Mark, that then the worshipping disciples were once more formed into the Apostolic Circle—Apostles, now, of the Risen Christ. And this was the warrant of their new commission: All power (authority) has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. And this was their new commission: Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And this was their work: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you. And this is His final and sure promise: And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

12. We are once more in Jerusalem, whither He had bidden them go to tarry for the fulfilment of the great promise. The Pentecost was drawing nigh. And on that last day—the day of His Ascension—He led them forth to the well-remembered Bethany. From where He had

⁷³So Canon *Westcott* renders the meaning. The coming might refer to the second Coming, to the destruction of Jerusalem, or even to the firm establishment of the Church. The tradition that St. John only slept in the grave at Ephesus is mentioned even by St. *Augustine*.

made His last triumphal Entry into Jerusalem before His Crucifixion, would He make His triumphant Entry visibly into Heaven. Once more would they have asked Him about that which seemed to them the final consummation—the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. But such questions became them not. Theirs was to be work, not rest; suffering, not triumph. The great promise before them was of spiritual, not outward, power: of the Holy Ghost—and their call not yet to reign with Him, but to bear witness for Him. And, as He so spake, He lifted His Hands in blessing upon them, and, as He was visibly taken up, a cloud received Him. And still they gazed, with upturned faces, on that luminous cloud which had received Him, and two Angels spake to them this last message from him, that He should so come in like manner—as they had beheld Him going into heaven.

And so their last question to Him, ere He had parted from them, was also answered, and with blessed assurance. Reverently they worshipped Him; then, with great joy, returned to Jerusalem. So it was all true, all real—and Christ sat down at the Right Hand of God! Henceforth, neither doubting, ashamed, nor yet afraid, they were continually in the Temple, blessing God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.

Amen! It is so. Ring out the bells of heaven; sing forth the Angelic welcome of worship; carry it to the utmost bound of earth! Shine forth from Bethany, Thou Sun of Righteousness, and chase away earth's mist and darkness, for Heaven's golden day has broken!

Easter Morning, 1883.—Our task is ended—and we also worship and look up. And we go back from this sight into a hostile world, to love, and to live, and to work for Risen Christ. But as earth's day is growing dim, and, with earth's gathering darkness, breaks over it heaven's storm, we ring out—as of old they were wont, from church-tower, to the mariners that hugged a rock-bound coast—our Easter-bells to guide them who are belated, over the storm-tossed sea, beyond the breakers, into the desired haven. Ring out, earth, all thy Easter-chimes; bring you offerings, all ye people; worship in faith, for—

This Jesus, When was received up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!