

book, which he declares he has studied with the greatest care, and from which he testifies to have received stimulus in many ways. At the same time he protests against Dr. Kennedy's attempt to fit his theory of *pāsēk* to all the cases where the sign occurs. The old explanation of the sign as a 'separator' or 'divider,' appears to Professor Klostermann to cover the facts much better than Dr. Kennedy's suggestion that it serves much the same purpose as our *N.B.* At the same time he feels that the very one-sidedness of the theory propounded by the Edinburgh scholar will promote investigation, while the complete list given of all *pāsēk* passages in the O.T. is pronounced specially valuable.

Professor König's critique appears in the *Studien und Kritiken* of last April, p. 448 ff. This well-known Hebrew scholar, who in his *Lehrge-*

bände (i. 122 f.) translates the section of the *Dikdūkē ha-tēāmim* dealing with *pāsēk*, is of opinion that Dr. Kennedy is upon the right lines in intending that the sign has in many cases the intention of calling attention to the Hebrew text, whether as questioning its present form [being thus = our?] or as emphasizing that form [=our sic!]. At the same time Professor König can see nothing in Dr. Kennedy's contentions that might not quite well be included in the traditional explanation of *pāsēk*. Instead of the term 'Note-line' adopted by Dr. Kennedy, he suggests that 'Critical line' (*Kritikstrich*) might be a more suitable designation. Like Professor Klostermann, he praises the diligence of Dr. Kennedy in compiling the useful list of *pāsēk* passages.

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The Theology of St. John.

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I. The Knowledge of God.

OUR prolegomena must be brief. On two points some preliminary observations are necessary.

(1) We take the Gospel, the Epistles, and the Revelation ascribed to St. John to be all of them the true work of this apostle, though some of us, probably, hesitate about the last of the three. The Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel surely guarantees its historicity. The recent verdict of a very keen and learned critic, which makes this writing to be genuine but not authentic, pronouncing it in its most wonderful parts a theological romance composed by the beloved disciple to the glory of his Master, is not a judgment that can reasonably stand. The Book of the Revelation is isolated by its nature; and the close resemblance, amounting to continuity, between the Gospel and First Epistle throws into stronger relief its peculiarities. Wide, however, as the chasm is between Gospel and Apocalypse, there are numerous threads of connexion across it; the distance is not wider than that which in other instances separates the productions of an original and comprehensive genius composed in different moods and in different forms of literature. Beside the

detailed correspondences of language and idea, the two works severally exhibit, in their contrasted modes, a dramatic grasp and conception of the subject, an artistic unity realized in a manner altogether naïve and untechnical, a love of symmetry and balance in the development of narrative or vision, which go to vindicate them for the offspring of the same unique and powerful mind.

The Gospel is a historical, the Revelation a prophetic drama, with the same Divine personage dominating both. The former might be entitled, *The Coming of the Incarnate Word*; the latter, *The Victory of the Slain Lamb*. The Gospel rehearses the conflict between the historical Christ and the evil world of Judaism; the Apocalypse reflects the conflict between the glorified Christ and the evil world of the Roman Empire. This latter struggle, whose tragic beginnings St. John witnessed, he projects in vast proportions against the storm-clouds veiling his horizon, which he sees charged with mysterious issues of glory and of judgment.

The Book of Revelation must be put, however, for our purpose upon one side. The material for

the construction of the apostle's doctrine is drawn from his positive and matter-of-fact writings; the speculative Apocalypse (in any case proceeding from the Johannine school) comes in to illustrate the teaching of Gospel and Epistles; doubts respecting its authorship would leave our findings substantially unaffected.

(2) The personality of the author is singularly elusive; when we try to seize it at any point in the narrative, we are reminded of what is said on one occasion about Jesus: 'He conveyed himself away, a multitude being in the place.' St. John's was a retired, secretive nature,—a mind pondering, contemplative, slow to reach its full stature. One of the first two of our Lord's disciples, he came last to his rights in the New Testament. His experience embraced the alpha and omega of the apostolic age. Writing his Gospel, John loses himself in his subject, to find himself there constantly. St. John renders the thoughts of Jesus in a manner so much his own, that the reader will sometimes doubt whether the words he is following are those of Master or disciple. But if Jesus speaks like John, was it not because John had learnt to think and speak like Jesus? Love absorbed him in his Lord. During a long life abiding in Christ, and Christ's words abiding in him through an unbroken recollection and by communion with His Spirit, he became one with Christ as a branch with its vine. The Synoptic records, having the Petrine tradition for their nucleus, convey a different impression of the method and topics of our Lord's ministry; but the difference is no contradiction: the two representations are complementary, as the temperament of the two apostles from whom they principally proceed. We may take it, too, that the Fourth Evangelist aimed at supplying what others had left for him to add. Certain strains of our Lord's doctrine of inestimable value, and scenes in His work of decisive importance, *found* John as they did not find the other reporters; and he echoes faithfully the tone and accent of Jesus in those parts of His ministry which it fell within his plan to relate. His close acquaintance with Jesus, and the sense of continued possession by His Spirit characteristic of St. John, justified the freedom with which he appears to have summarized in some cases and paraphrased, or even enlarged upon, the original sayings, sure of conveying the drift and spirit of what was uttered on the given occasion. The striking reproduction in the First

Epistle of the salient ideas of the Gospel is to be explained by the deep communion of Master and disciple, and not by any supposed adaptation of the teachings of Jesus on St. John's part to his subjective conceptions. He is conscious only of being a mirror of the glory he beheld in the Only-begotten Son of God, a witness to Him who was 'the faithful and true Witness' of God; and he is a writer whom we may safely take at his own estimate.

For the sake of formal exactness, it would be necessary to analyse separately, in the first instance, the doctrine of the Epistles, along with the Prologue of the Gospel and such other passages of it as contain the Evangelist's comments. In this rapid survey the distinction must be dispensed with, and when made it does not amount to very much. The differences in form of expression and mental atmosphere involved in the fact that St. John writes more than half a century after the death of Jesus, and amidst Churches gathered from the Gentiles, explains such matters as the Logos-phraseology and the distant manner of reference to the Jews, but does not affect the substance of the thought conveyed.

St. John has a firm grasp of the actual, notwithstanding his mysticism; outward things are all symbolic to him, and therefore the more exactly noted; to no writer is truth of fact more sacred. The realities of sense he sees clearly and sharply, but he sees through them, and 'feels through all this earthly dress bright shoots of everlastingness.' His narrative moves with a large and free step, not lingering in detail, but fastening on the significant points of the history, that reveal to him its inner connexion and hidden springs.

St. John's teaching is difficult to methodize, and is apt to suffer in the process. His mode of thinking is intuitive rather than logical; his style aphoristic and axiomatic, not dialectical. His ideas have crystallized into sentences that are the fruit of long meditation, and probably of frequent repetition, which must be turned to the light this way and that before they yield their meaning. The connexion of thought with thought is discovered in the intrinsic relation of the successive conceptions presented and in the grouping and shaping of the whole matter, and is but slightly indicated in the texture of the writing. This is due partly to the Hebraistic limitations of St. John's training, but still more to the cast of his

mind, which makes little demand on the resources of Greek periodic structure. Beneath his simple vocabulary there is a most subtle under-play of idea; and his calmness hides a fire of passion too intense for vehemence. His argument in the Epistle moves like a deep stream confined within winding banks, which sways into eddies now on this side and now on that side of its course, as in its flow it circles for awhile round some centre of reflexion, and in the next paragraph is found absorbed in quite another focus; but all these motions contribute to the onward sweep of the tide, and carry us to the predestined goal.

We will attempt to review St. John's teaching under the three following topics: (1) GOD, or *the knowledge of the Father*; (2) THE SON OF GOD, or *the mission and nature of Jesus*; (3) THE WORLD,—*salvation and judgment, life and death*, as these result from the knowledge of God brought to mankind in the coming of Christ. *Light, Love, Life* may serve as mottos for our three divisions. The Gospel, Apocalypse, and Epistles—with some straining of the idea in the second case—may be severally associated with the three subjects in chief. In the Gospel, Jesus makes Himself an instrument to the revelation of the Father and 'seeks His glory that sent him,' saying of the Spirit who follows, 'He shall glorify me'; in the Revelation His majesty shines forth in unveiled splendour, and the Lamb shares the throne of God. In the Epistles we find the Church, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, living out its Master's life amidst an evil and decaying world, and unfolding the seed of God planted in the world by His hand.

We should not be true to our Lord's aim as it is manifest in the Fourth Gospel, if we did not posit the foundation of Christian thought in *the apprehension of God*. We think of Christ as 'Son of God' under the preconception of the Godhead that He gives. 'Righteous Father,—and the world knew thee not; but I have known thee, and these have known that *thou* didst send me. And I have made known to them thy name, and will make it known.' So Jesus in departing summed up His work, past and to come. It is needless to multiply quotations to this effect: the thought is pervasive and fundamental to the Gospel. With Jesus was lodged the perfect and saving knowledge of God,—a knowledge super-human in its origin and range and utterly transcending all historical antecedents, that filled His

consciousness, that flowed into His soul by a constant and unchecked communion, and that carried with it a complete unity of will and action between Himself and God the Father. This knowledge of the character and purposes of God, possessed by Jesus alone, supplies the centre and spring of life, the secret of the universe for mankind.

In the controversies of Jesus with the Jewish authorities, we find Him in each debate leading up to or falling back upon the authority of God that He felt within Him, and the character of God as He knew Him—the God whom the Jews claimed for their own, and of whom they should have known enough to recognize His Son, but whom they could only know adequately and to their salvation through His witness. Behind His conflict with the world, and His communion with the disciples, there lay a sense of intimacy with the unseen God that is unique in human consciousness, and lies in a plane above that of the holiest of religious men. It was the attraction of God, as Jesus once said, that drew men to Him—'Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me,'—the craving to know God in truth, the sense of the power of God in and about Jesus, the fact that, like no other prophet or teacher, He 'spoke the words of God,' the things that He had 'heard with the Father,' and that God was 'dwelling in Him' and 'doing His works' in the deeds of His Son. Seeing Him, He said to the disciples, was in fact one thing with 'seeing the Father.' For the apostle, the sum of Christianity is contained in the last sentences of his Epistle and his Prologue: 'This is the true (the veritable) God and eternal life'; 'God no one hath seen at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father,—He hath declared Him.' This manifestation and expounding of God formed, above all else, 'the testimony of Jesus,' which the martyr Church held fast in face of Judaism, Paganism, and Gnosticism, which it sealed with its blood, as Christ had sealed it with His own. 'This is eternal life,' the Lord said to the Father, 'to know thee'!

I. GOD IS KNOWABLE.

It is worth while saying, then, before we go further, that, according to St. John's doctrine, *God is knowable in His true being*. The Gnostics (who were Agnostics too) said, 'In the beginning was

God and silence'; but here, 'In the beginning was *the Word*'—a title of Jesus which owes more to the Old Testament than to Hellenism. The true God is One who speaks, who has had His Word by Him from eternity and lives in converse with His creatures. His Word is one with Him; it utters His very self. God is essentially self-imparting. Creation is revelation; for the Word was its agent. Creature-life is the expression of God, since it sprang from the Word and flashed into light in the intelligence of man. Those first verses of the Prologue are not a rationale of the finite universe, nor are they so much a definition of the place of Christ in relation to God and the world; they set forth the attitude and movement toward the world of God Himself; they trace to the fountain of the Deity, through the previous stages of existence, the manifestation of God beheld in Jesus. The glory visible in the Only-begotten was the breaking forth of a light which, veiled in lower forms of life and obscured by the conflict with sin in humanity, and in the Jewish race on whom it shone with favour, was always 'in the world,' and yet was always 'coming into the world' and progressing towards its desired and consummate advent. God by His Word, who stands incarnate in Jesus, was from the beginning a revealing God.

2. GOD IS SPIRIT.

Amongst the axioms concerning God of the Johannine writings, the saying of Jesus to the Samaritan woman, *God is spirit*, claims prior attention. 'There cometh an hour,' He said, 'when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall men worship the Father, . . . when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for indeed the Father is seeking such for His worshippers. God is a spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.' God is known as spirit—pure personal being—through the spirit of man meeting Him in true worship. These epoch-making words involved, strictly speaking, no new doctrine; but only the principle of the monotheistic creed common to Jew and Samaritan, as this was implied, for instance, in the Second Commandment of the Decalogue—a principle powerfully enforced by later Israelite prophets. But Jesus penetrates to the heart of that creed, and draws its consequences as no one had done before Him; He asserts them with a

lawgiver's authority. The pure spirituality of God makes all national prerogatives and local distinctions in regard to His presence illusory. Henceforth He shall be known as the Father of spirits, everywhere inviting and everywhere accessible to the sincere approach of the human spirit. The few recorded occasions of the intercourse of Jesus with souls outside the pale of Judaism are all of them memorable: they moved His heart in a peculiar way, and elicited the latent universalism of His gospel. His meeting with the outcast woman at the well of Sychar drew from Him the prophecy of the worship wide as the race, pure as the cleansed spirit of man, and meeting the desires of God, which He knew Himself destined to establish.

At the same time, these words appear to reflect the thoughts of Jesus during His recent sojourn in Jerusalem, when He scourged the traffickers from His Father's house, and found Zion in effect no more sacred than Gerizim. They reflect His observation of the false worshippers thronging the Temple, and His presentiment of its overthrow. He foresaw at this early date the inevitable breach with Judaism. The system of local sanctuaries—with their ceremonial cults and privileged orders and carnal ordinances—was radically defective: it was inconsistent with the nature of God; it was producing now more false worshippers than true. Another temple, 'made without hands' and open to God's faithful children in every land, will take the place of the Jewish shrine, soon to be destroyed by its own unfaithful ministers.

With the maxim 'God is Spirit' one connects the sayings that identify God with *life*. When Jesus declares, 'The living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father,' He asserts for Himself a life resting upon His spiritual oneness with God and His unbroken filial communion with God, while it is presented and conveyed to men through His visible humanity in the form of 'flesh' and 'blood.' Out of this store He can feed the whole world, since His being is drawn from the eternal vitality of God. Thus Jesus supplies in His person 'the true bread of God'; in contrast with the manna dispensed by Moses, which was perishing though miraculous, as it was of earthly origin and fed but the mortal body; whereas 'the words that I have spoken to you,' He adds, 'they are spirit and they *are* life.' For His words breathe into the souls of men the inmost mind

and will, the very life of God; 'it is the Spirit that giveth life.'

3. GOD IS LIGHT.

If the term spirit describes the nature of the true God, the most comprehensive view of the Divine character is given in St. John's saying that *God is light*. His Epistle begins: 'This is the message which we have heard from Him (from the Word of Life) and report to you,—that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.' That sentence reflects the first impression of Christ's revelation on contemporary minds. God was breaking on the world in radiant, wondrous, unsullied light. St. Paul describes his experience in similar language: 'God, who said Light shall shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ.'

This implies *knowledge*, to be sure—an intellectual apprehension of the Divine; light is truth, in its splendour and clearness. The relations of the Christian to God are expressed by St. John in terms of knowledge almost as freely as in terms of faith. But knowledge with St. John is a pregnant term; it goes far beyond the bare notional. *Persons* are not known by mere intellect. The affections and will participate in every acquaintanceship, most of all in this. The light of God in Christ pours forth from His whole nature, and acts upon the whole nature of man.

The *character of God*, disclosed in Christ, is the substance of the new light dawning on mankind. The apostle brings out its moral quality when he adds, 'and in Him is no darkness at all.' Paganism, with its many gods of motley hue, good and evil, pure and wanton, kind and cruel, presented a notion of the Divine wholly shifting and uncertain, and that afforded no ground for reverence or trust. Light means purity, truth, goodness; while darkness means foulness, falsehood, malice, sin. There was plenty of these latter qualities in the heathen gods; there is nothing of them in the God and Father of Christ. Idolatry lays the most horrible incubus upon mankind, in the fact that it instils vile notions about God, notions by which wrong is imbedded in the Divine nature and the very fount of being is contaminated. To exchange the many gods and lords of Paganism for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to see the sky washed clean of

those foul shapes, to have the haunting idols with their weird and shameful spells, those veritable demons, banished from the imagination and replaced by the pure image of the God incarnated in Christ, and to know that the Lord of all the worlds is the Father of men and is absolute rectitude, wisdom, and love, this was indeed to pass out of darkness into marvellous light.

The apostle's conception in the Epistle of God as pure 'light' includes the qualities specifically ascribed to Him in the language of Jesus, after the devout style of the Old Testament. God is the '*righteous* Father' whom 'the world hath not known,' since His dealings with mankind, well known to Jesus, have been marked by a perfect rectitude, being consistent with His declared will and law, and with His fatherly relationship to men. He is the '*holy* Father,' in that intrinsic worth of being by which He stands utterly remote from the sinfulness of men. In virtue of this character, by the power and in the shelter of His own 'name,' the Father is besought to 'keep from the evil' of the world those who belong to Jesus and to Him. He is asked, being the 'holy Father,' to 'sanctify them in the truth'—in that knowledge of Himself, that responsive apprehension of His name and word, which links the soul to the realities of being.

In line with these designations is the epithet 'true,' when employed of God in its ethical signification. Our ambiguous 'true' represents the *ἀληθινός* (*verus*) of St. John's Greek in Gospel and Epistle, under which he writes of 'the true God' (as of 'the true light,' 'the true worshippers') by contrast with false idols; for God is the great Reality, in whom name and being absolutely match. But the term *ἀληθής* (*verax*) of the Gospels, to which *ἀληθινός* corresponds in the Apocalypse (for it seems that there St. John wrote with less knowledge of Greek, or less literary help, than in his other works), has another meaning. Jesus is reported saying, 'He that sent me is *true*,' where He declares that His message comes from God who cannot err or lie, who abides by every word He has said through His Messenger. Behind the words of Jesus lies the veracity of God. Accordingly the man 'who receives' Christ's 'witness, has set to his seal that God is true'; he has put his affidavit to the affirmations of God Himself. On the contrary, to contradict that witness is to commit the blasphemy of 'making

God a liar'; it is to give the lie to the Author and Fountain of truth.

The above three adjectives, it is to be observed, are those which the writer of the 'Apocalypse' applies by predilection to the character, the 'ways' and 'judgments' of God. In the revelations of His holiness, righteousness, truth, the glorious light of God had long been coming to its own in Israel: these elements furnish a chief and fundamental part, but not the whole, of the knowledge of God the Father conveyed through Jesus Christ; they are subsumed in His teaching.

4. GOD IS LOVE.

God is righteous; God is holy, and true: this the Old Testament had said. The words *God is love* it remained for St. John to utter, in gathering to a point the doctrine of Christ and the New Testament. Light, to be sure, includes more than love, as darkness and sin include more than hate. God is love; but love is not everything in God. To say that this is so, to reduce righteousness and truth and holiness to mere phases of love, would be to stultify the attribute that one seeks to exalt. Love has a value proportioned to the integrity of the lover's character. His moral grandeur gives to the love of Jesus overwhelming power; it is the Holy One of God who 'loved me and gave himself up for me.' The love of a God nothing but love, would be an affection without substance and without aim, an amorphous sentiment,—a sheer non-sense. God was seen already in the light of His righteousness and truth, when Jesus came with the message of His grace; His love is the love of the All-holy, All-wise, Almighty God.

This was, however, the new and astonishing part of Christ's doctrine about God—that He 'so loved the world.' In the mingled colours that make up the white awful light of the Divine character, as it is finally disclosed by Christ, love supplies the conspicuous hue. Love was the motive of salvation, the impulse which prompted the sending of the Son of God; it is the attribute that, above others, marks God as *Father* of Christ and of man. Love is not the exclusive, but it is the dominant note in the whole strain of the New Testament; and in St. John's pages it swells to its fullest compass and loftiest utterance. St. Paul's favourite expression, 'the grace of God,' is not used by St. John, who goes back from the stream to the fountain, and finds the spring of all grace

in God's essential love. *Χάρις* takes the place of *ἀγάπη* with him only in the saying, 'Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ,' where 'grace' signifies God's loving favour and forgivingness to the unworthy in contrast to the unsparing régime of the Mosaic law.

Jesus Christ presented Himself as the embodiment, still more than the witness, of God's love to mankind. 'God gave His Son, the Only-begotten, that every one who believes in Him should have eternal life [the Evangelist's words, rather than those of Jesus: in Jn 3¹⁶ ff.]. For God did not send the Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.' This is love shown not in word, but in deed and gift; and not in the gift of something created and external to the Godhead,—it was the gift of the Only-begotten, beside whom God had no other, who was the object of His love in the beginning before the world was, who was '*the Son*' to '*the Father*.'

Jesus dwelt in His teaching, as we know from the Synoptists, on the natural proofs of God's bounty, in rain and sunshine, and the like. Both there and with St. John the gift of the Spirit is held out as the chief of the 'good things' proceeding from God's fatherly interest in men. But St. John's mind was fastened upon this one bestowment, as though there were no other,—a gift immense in itself and coming from 'the bosom of the Father,' a gift imparted without reserve and identified with man, with his earthly existence and with the need created by his sin; for 'the Word became flesh and tabernacled amongst us': He '*gave His Son*: to be a propitiation for our sins.' No familiarity lessens the wonder of this gift; no other event in history, no possession that mankind may acquire, can eclipse in any wise the glory of the manifestation made in it of God's goodwill and His resolution to save the world. Love is all our wealth; and 'herein know we love. 'Herein is love: not that we loved God'—His love went out to a race unworthy and cold toward the Infinite Goodness—'but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins,'—'sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him,' 'sent the Son as Saviour of the world.' Thus the apostle interprets his saying, that 'God is love.' Before the Son of God came and offered His sacrifice for sin, who would have thought of describing the Godhead by this one

predicate? Now God's love flames out with such burning glory, and appeals to the world with such speaking evidence, that all other attributes of the Divine seem to be lost in this.

But the Father's love to the world in Christ is no blind passion; it is a moral affection, that has respect to the character of God and the conscience of its objects. It taxes itself, therefore, to find *propitiation* for its sinful beneficiaries; it requires trust and submission on their part. The love of God operates under ethical conditions; it founds its remedial agencies upon a basis of righteousness and truth; and thus restores the bonds of a holy fellowship between God and the world He saves from perishing.

The Divine love, therefore, is *selective*. While God loved the world—not Israel alone—and has sent His Son for its Saviour, His regard finds its abiding objects in 'so many as receive' the Son, in those who come to 'know the love that God hath toward us,' and meet it with a welcome. 'The Father Himself loveth you,' said Jesus to His chosen, 'because you have loved me, and believed that I came out from God'; again, 'If a man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him.' The Father's Messenger could not manifest Himself to the world, while it rejected the Father's word in Him and met His overtures with an obstinate repulse. 'They have both seen and hated both me and my Father,' said Jesus, summing up His sad experience of the Jewish people. God does not meet hate with hate. But His love toward such a world is mixed with anger; and the very chapter of John's Gospel which declares that 'God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son,' ends with the terrible words: 'He that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.' How fearfully that wrath of Almighty God thunders and flames in the Apocalypse, against the haters of His Son and the murderers of His people, there is no need to recall.

But behind all the love of God to men, an earlier Divine love is revealed in the words of Jesus to the Father: 'Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' What a door this saying opens into heaven! It will not do to explain this as a love of contemplation, embracing its object before its birth; for in the same connexion Jesus speaks of 'the glory which I *had with thee* before the world was.' Such sayings as these—which are

surely beyond the reach of imagination or invention, on any author's part—speak for a consciousness of the Divine affection enjoyed by Jesus Christ which lay at the back of creation; they reveal God as being love eternally, and possessing an object for His love in the Word that 'was with' Him 'in the beginning.' On this love of God to Christ, which antedates creation, He appears to ground in His high-priestly prayer the love that God bears to His disciples; for He asks 'that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them.' As Jesus drew life for us from the absolute life that belonged to Him in God, He finds love for us in the eternal love with which God looked on Him.

5. THE FATHER.

All the disclosures of God and views of the Divine character and action that we gain from the teachings of Master and disciple, in Gospel and Epistle, are gathered up in the word *Father*, *the Father*, in the use of which the Apostle John reproduces the very style of Jesus. St. John quotes this name not only much more frequently than the other Evangelists—as often, indeed, as all of them together—but also more exclusively in reference to the relationship of Christ to God. Only in the message sent at His resurrection does Jesus speak of God to His disciples as '*your* Father,' when He says, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God,' throwing by that repeated 'and' a bridge over a chasm unsounded and hitherto impassable. He associates Himself with His followers in filial relationship to God, yet with a solemn distinction and reserve. Never in any of the Gospels is Jesus recorded saying of God 'our Father' with inclusion of Himself.

Those cherished sayings of the Synoptic history are wanting here, in which our Lord pointed His disciples to the care and watchful guardianship of 'your heavenly Father,' and taught them to pray to 'our Father which art in heaven.' St. John is absorbed in the thought of Christ's Sonship as the ground of all childlike relations on man's part to God, and all fatherly approaches of God to man. In His prophecy addressed to the woman of Samaria, 'the Father' who seeks His 'true worshippers' everywhere, is revealed as the Father of all men of the Spirit, from the hour of Christ's coming; when the Jews, on the other hand, claimed in antagonism to Jesus to have 'one Father, even God,' He sternly denied the sonship

and fathers them upon 'the Devil,' since they 'do his lusts,' and their falsehood and the murder they were designing spring from Satan. To His disciples He says, 'None cometh to the Father but through me'; 'I am the door,' 'I am the way.' God is intimately near in His paternal love to men and graciously accessible—the way is plain, the door is open; but access is through the offices of Christ; other ways are barred. So it stands in the First Epistle: 'Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father either; he that confesseth the Son, hath the Father also.' This dependence on Jesus Christ for filial standing before God, as well as for true knowledge of God, is intimated in the later words of the Epistle: 'He that hath the Son of God, hath life; he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.' 'The antichrist,' therefore, is an antitheist too; 'he denies the Father and the Son,' in one breath contradicting the filial Deity of Christ and the eternal Fatherhood of God.

In writing his Gospel, St. John seems to be jealous of any expression that might appear to trench upon the sole Sonship of Jesus Christ; the title 'Son of God' is His unshared designation, and 'the Father' signifies, almost invariably, *His* Father. This mode of speech, presumably, reflects the prevailing attitude of Jesus to 'the Father': 'the Father and the Son,'—these are the two actors that fill the scene. 'The world' of men is the sphere into which 'the Father sends the Son.' The disciples are those whom 'the Father gives' to the Son; they are exchanged or shared between the Two as 'thine and mine'; they are 'branches' in the vine of which the Son is the vine-stock and the 'Father the vine-dresser'; 'sheep' for the Father's flock, of which the Son is the faithful shepherd. Amongst the heathen also, outside of

'this (Israelite) fold,' there are 'scattered abroad, children of God,' for whose sake He permits His Son to die. All His earthly children the Father regards with an infinite love, making the Son the channel of His love to all alike. Gathered around Him and ranged under His leadership, 'bought for God,' as the Apocalypse describes it, in His blood, 'out of every nation and tongue,' they people the heavenly city and fill the Father's house of many dwellings. Then 'the tabernacle of God shall be with men; and God Himself shall be with them as their God, and shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.' 'The Lord God the Almighty is the temple' of the city, and His glory is all its light; 'the Lamb is *the lamp* thereof.' So the eternal blessedness of the saints is the eternal impartation of God Himself to them in Christ.

From the concentration of the light of Divine knowledge in Jesus Christ—the idea in which the Johannine theology is rooted—it ensues that God is viewed and thought of through His character. He is what Jesus Christ exhibits, in word, deed, and disposition,—that and no other. 'We beheld his glory,' writes John in the Prologue, 'glory as of an Only-begotten from a Father, full of grace and truth,'—the one person in whom God is exactly and adequately mirrored. The Unseen is seen! God, who is Spirit, is manifest, and palpable, in the flesh. The Word of the Eternal, which spoke in the forms of nature and through the course of history in broken and contradicted utterance, now voices itself through human lips in clear tones of grace and truth to the universal heart. We know through His image in His Son what the Most High is really like, and what are His thoughts and purpose for our race.

Literary Illustrations of the Sermon on the Mount.

BY THE REV. JAMES MOFFATT, D.D., DUNDONALD.

THE BEATITUDES:

'No list of circumstances will ever make a paradise.'—GEORGE ELIOT.

'There are no real pleasures without real needs.'—VOLTAIRE.

Mt 5⁸ 'The spirit is the seat of this poverty,

just as the heart is of this purity' of the Gospel.—LOISY.

Mt 5⁶. See Fiske's *Man's Destiny*, chap. xv.

Mt 5⁸ "Hold off from sensuality," says Cicero, "for if you have given yourself up to it, you will find yourself unable to think of anything else."