

on the Tuesday (or Wednesday) of Passion week? (a) The *textus receptus* has ὁ ἐλθὼν νυκτὸς πρὸς αὐτόν, a reading which is rejected by the best MSS and critics. (b) Even if the whole parenthesis be not a gloss, or a marginal note, which has found its way into the text, and if πρότερον be substituted for νυκτὸς, the word "before" is simply the equivalent of our 'supra' or 'above,'—the reference being made by the Evangelist himself to Nicodemus as the person who 'came before,' i.e. in a *previous* chapter, or in the manner *before-mentioned*. (c) This reference reappears in 19<sup>40</sup>, 'he who at first came to him by night,' τὸ πρῶτον being substituted for πρότερον. The meaning may still be the same. In 10<sup>40</sup>, for instance, our Author designates Βηθανία πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, mentioned in his first chapter (v. 28) as 'the place

where John was baptizing at the first,' τὸ πρῶτον. Similarly, turning back the leaves of his Gospel, he points to the name of Nicodemus, where it occurs 'at the first'—among the earliest chapters. (d) The phrase may be applicable to the tentative, incipient faith of Nicodemus. 'At the first,' in contrast to the bolder step which he is now taking, 'he came by night.' In 12<sup>16</sup>, τὸ πρῶτον has this force, 'These things understood not his disciples *at the first*' (i.e. on the Sunday of his Triumphal Entry).

To sum up, therefore, we may hold that the Nicodemus interview and the Temple-cleansing belong to the Passion week, and that the Evangelist has transferred them to their present place in his narrative because of their antithetic bearing upon the second and third Temptations.

## The Great Text Commentary.

### THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. LUKE.

#### LUKE V. 8.

**But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.**—R.V.

#### EXPOSITION.

'**Simon Peter.**'—This is the only place in his Gospel in which Luke gives Peter both names, and it is the first mention of the surname.—PLUMMER.

'**When he saw it.**'—Apparently it was only when he saw the boats sinking to the gunwale with their load of fish that the tenderness and majesty of the miracle flashed upon his mind.—FARRAR.

'**Depart from me.**'—Did Peter then wish Christ to leave him? Verily no. His all was wrapt up in Him (see Jn 6<sup>68</sup>). 'Twas rather, 'Woe is me, Lord! How shall I abide this blaze of glory? A sinner such as I am is not fit company for thee.' Compare Is 6<sup>6</sup>.—BROWN.

THE wonderful event which he had just witnessed had impressed Peter with the nearness of the Divine power. The sense of God's presence brought to his mind a strong feeling of his own sinfulness and infirmity: he felt that He who now stood before him, and in and through whom God had shown forth His mighty power, was too pure and holy for him to draw near to.—COOK.

We find the expression of analogous feelings in the case of Manoah (Jg 13<sup>20</sup>); the Israelites at Sinai (Ex 20<sup>19</sup>); the men of Beth-Shemesh (1 S 6<sup>20</sup>); David after the death of Uzzah

(2 S 6<sup>9</sup>); the lady of Zarephath (1 K 17<sup>18</sup>); Job (Job 42<sup>5-9</sup>); and Isaiah (Is 6<sup>5</sup>).—FARRAR.

'**For I am a sinful man.**'—The voice of conscience is awakened by the perception of something superhuman in Jesus. This gives no excuse for the outrageous statement of the so-called *Epistle of Barnabas*, that the apostles had been excessively wicked men.—ADENEY.

'**O Lord.**'—The change from ἐπιστάρα, Master (see v. 5), to κύριε, Lord, is remarkable, and quite in harmony with the change of circumstances. It is the 'Master' whose orders must be obeyed, the 'Lord' whose holiness causes moral agony to the sinner (Dn 10<sup>16</sup>).—PLUMMER.

#### THE SERMON.

##### The Making of a Disciple.

*By the Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

We may call this incident the making of a disciple. Is there not some significance in the name given to the apostle who is most prominent in it? 'Simon Peter' he is called. Simon was the name of the fisherman of Galilee. Peter was his name after he became a disciple. There are three things in the making of a disciple.

I. *What a disciple is made out of.*—He is made out of a sinner. This is always so. For Christ never had, and never will have, anything to do with those who are not sinners. In His day upon

earth there were two classes, the Righteous and the Sinners. The righteous grumbled because He ate and drank with publicans and sinners. He answered, 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners' (Mt 9<sup>13</sup>). He said He was a physician. 'They that are whole,' He said, 'need not the physician, but they that are sick' (Lk 5<sup>31</sup>). We may still hold that there are two classes of men, and reckon ourselves as belonging to the righteous class. But then we can never become disciples of Jesus. He made all His disciples out of sinners.

II. *What means are used to make a disciple?*—Disciples are always made in one way—by seeing Christ through His mighty works. Sinners are not made disciples by reproof. He ate and drank with publicans and sinners, and many of them became disciples, but not a word has come down to us of His reproof of their sin. He simply lived among them and did His work. One day He went to abide at the house of Zacchæus, a chief publican. It was a fine opportunity of reproving Zacchæus for his extortion. We should almost say it was missed, but the result was that Zacchæus promised that if he had taken anything from any man by false accusation he would restore him fourfold. And he did it. Nor does every miracle make a sinner a disciple. 'Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! Woe unto thee, Chorazin! And thou, Capernaum!' The sinner must see Christ through the miracle. He must see the working of the mighty love of God in Christ. Nicodemus knew that Jesus had come from God because of the miracles which He did. By the very first miracle, in Cana of Galilee, Jesus manifested His glory, and His disciples believed on Him. And Peter himself, sometime after this, speaks of Jesus of Nazareth as 'a man approved of God among you by mighty works' (Ac 2<sup>22</sup>). And our Lord declares that the use of miracle is to lead to Himself: 'the very works that I do, bear witness of Me' (Jn 5<sup>36</sup>). So it is not the miracle, but the vision through the miracle, that turns the sinner into the disciple.

III. *What a disciple becomes.*—He becomes a fisher of men. Does he not become a saint? No, he becomes nothing for himself. He becomes a messenger to others. He is called now an apostle, that is, one 'sent out.' Through saving others he will become a saint, but he is made a disciple in order to save others.

### The Conviction of Sin in the Mind of Peter.

*By the late Rev. Frederick W. Robertson, M.A.*

This is one of the earliest, if not the very earliest, of the interviews of Peter with Christ. The same circumstances attended their last recorded interview—the toiling through the night without success, and the relief by a miracle. The miracle was evidently symbolical, and prefigured the future spiritual success of Peter, the unstinted lovingkindness of God, and the powerlessness of unaided human effort. The advantage of this symbolic teaching was twofold. First, it was a living thing. Sacraments have more of grace in them than mere words. The words of the minister, 'Ye are all brethren,' do not carry with them the same conviction as the sight of the master and the servant kneeling together at the Lord's Table. Secondly, this symbolic teaching saves us from dead dogmas. Christ said, 'This is My body,' and if we let our imagination and heart feed upon that we will feel that no other words could have been substituted for them; but when the Roman commentator forces it into literalism, the glorious figure is turned into mere logic, and the life of the thing is gone. Christ's acts are full of a meaning which can never be exhausted.

I. Let us think of the *meaning and object of this miracle*. It taught, more than all other miracles, God's personality. At the bottom of all things there is a law. Habit makes us look upon laws and see nothing below them. Then a miracle breaks the continuity of these laws by a higher law. What is a law? A law is merely the expression of the will of God. If Peter, without a promise, had let down his net and it had been filled, the will of God would have been working just as much; but when he let it down in obedience to a voice, and his net was filled in exact agreement with the prediction, he learnt that the 'laws of chance' were false. He learnt also that there was a *living will*.

II. Let us think now of the *effect produced by the miracle on the mind of Peter*, namely, a sense of personal sin. What was the cause of this impression? It was partly owing to the Apostle's Jewish education. In a heathen this miracle would only have produced surprise. The Jew felt, 'Thou, God, seest me.' He felt he had transgressed the will of a living person. But also it was partly owing to the pure presence of Jesus

Christ. This is so, not only in Christ's personal ministry, but wherever Christianity is preached. What was the nature of this conviction of sin in Peter's bosom? It was not remorse felt for crime, for Peter was a man of inward devotedness; he had lived anticipating the Redeemer's advent. To comprehend his conviction of guilt we must look at three principles which guide the lives of three different classes of men. The first is obedience to the opinion of the world, which makes the man of honour; the second is obedience to the standard of a man's own opinion, which makes the man of virtue; and the third is obedience to the light of the life of God, and it makes the man of saintliness. Peter, up to this time, had been a man of virtue, resting on the law which he had fulfilled; now he became a man of saintliness, walking humbly, meekly, and lowly, convicted by the infinite love, infinite lovingkindness, and perfect humanity of Jesus Christ.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS.

'I am a sinful man.'—In a far-off Chinese city the daily Scripture lesson was being given amongst a class of thoughtful boys. The subject was the miraculous draught of fishes and the involuntary cry of Peter, 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man.' The teacher was trying to explain that it was no real desire to leave Christ, but that it was the natural shrinking cry of a human soul seeing its own sinfulness in the sudden flash of the Divine. Turning to one handsome, intelligent lad, son of a high mandarin, he asked, 'If we could picture to ourselves the wonder of the entrance at this moment into the schoolroom of the Incarnate God, should you be afraid?' 'No,' came the prompt reply. 'Why, then, should you not fear, while Peter shrank?' 'Because he was a sinner; he said so. *I am not.*' That is the ordinary utterance of a religion which puts the Supreme God at an infinite distance.—F. SENIOR.

In Rendel Harris' *Life of F. W. Crossley* the following story is told by Rev. Thos. Cook: 'I was returning from London to Harrogate late one night, and found I had an hour to wait at Leeds station, so I went into the waiting-room intending to spend the time there. When I entered I saw a man standing near to the fire with his arms leaning on the mantel. His eyes looked as if he had been weeping, so I asked him if he were in trouble. . . . His only reply was, "*I have met a man to-day who has treated me just as Jesus Christ would have done.*" When I asked for particulars, he told me something as follows: "Two or three years ago my brother and I decided to start business on our own account. We purchased a factory, and bought one of Crossley's gas-engines to supply the power. After we had got the engine fixed we found it was not large enough, and instead of making money by our venture, we lost it. Things got worse and

worse, until a few weeks ago my brother said, 'It is no use carrying on any longer, we are bankrupt.' He urged that we should sign our petition at once, and get matters settled, but I said, 'Think what a disgrace it will be. We are both of us Church members and Sunday-school teachers, and I cannot bear the thought of bringing discredit on the cause of God.' I suggested that instead of coming to any immediate decision, I should consult the Crossley firm about it. . . . When I got to the works Mr. Crossley was not there. I saw one of the managers, and he said he could do nothing. I was turning away in despair when Mr. Crossley came up and asked what was the matter, and I told him the whole story. When I had finished, he said, 'I am sorry for you, my lad, and will do what I can to help you. Go back and tell your brother that I will put in a larger engine and take back the old one, and it shall not cost you a penny to effect the exchange.' And he added, 'Ask your brother to find out how much you have lost since you started business, and if he will let me know I will send you a cheque for the amount.'" *His eyes looked as if he had been weeping, so I asked him if he was in trouble. His only reply was, "I have met a man to-day who has treated me just as Jesus Christ would have done."*

**The Miracle of Humility.**—Among the nuns in a convent not far from Rome, one had appeared who laid claim to certain rare gifts of inspiration and prophecy, and the abbess advised the Holy Father at Rome of the wonderful powers shown by her novice. The Pope did not well know what to make of these new claims, and St. Philip Neri coming in from a journey one day, he consulted him. Philip undertook to visit the nun, and ascertain her character. He threw himself on his mule, all travel-soiled as he was, and hastened through the mud and mire to the distant convent. He told the abbess the wishes of his Holiness, and begged her to summon the nun without delay. The nun was sent for, and as soon as she came into the apartment, Philip stretched out his leg, all bespattered with mud, and desired her to draw off his boots. The young nun, who had become the object of much attention and respect, drew back with anger, and refused the office. Philip ran out of doors, mounted his mule, and returned instantly to the Pope. 'Give yourself no uneasiness, Holy Father, any longer; here is no miracle, for here is no humility.'—EMERSON, *Essay on Worship*.

THE sight of Him will kindle in thy heart,  
All tender, gracious, reverential thoughts.  
Thou wilt be sick with love, and yearn for Him.

There is a pleading in His pensive eyes  
Will pierce thee to the quick, and trouble thee,  
And thou wilt hate and loathe thyself; for, though  
Now sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinned,  
As never thou didst feel; and wilt desire  
To slink away, and hide thee from His sight,  
And yet wilt have a longing aye to dwell  
Within the beauty of His countenance.

And these two pains, so counter and so keen,  
The longing for Him, when thou seest Him not;  
The shame of self at thought of seeing Him,—  
Will be thy veriest, sharpest purgatory.

NEWMAN, *The Dream of Gerontius*.

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## Books for Christmas and the New Year.

### BLACKIE.

To say that a book is published by Messrs. Blackie is to guarantee its worth. It is a guarantee that its matter will be good; it is also a guarantee that it will be handsomely bound.

Henty's admirers, and they are deservedly many, will be glad to know that they can purchase *With Clive in India*, one of the most thrilling of all his historical romances, for 3s. 6d.

Every Christmas we expect a book from Captain Brereton. This year he has given us *Roger the Bold* (6s.). It is a thrilling tale, and Captain Brereton could not have chosen more picturesque scenery for it than that of Mexico.

As a writer of sea-stories none can beat Harry Collingwood, for he writes about what he knows. He was trained to the sea as an officer in the navy, and afterwards became civil engineer to the Admiralty. 'From personal experience he can say what it feels like to swim for life from a hungry pursuing shark; to be carried off by a full-grown leopard; to be beset by bloodthirsty savages, and have to cut a way through them for escape.'

Messrs. Blackie have a gift for discovering great writers of books for boys. *The Lost Explorers* (6s.) is written by Mr. Alex. Macdonald, who last season made a name for himself with 'In Search of El Dorado.' He too writes from experience. He has travelled in Australia and Africa, and is at present again exploring in Australia. *The Lost Explorers* is a most realistic story of the Australian Desert—the great Never-Never Land. Encouraged by James Mackay, a Scotchman who had been in Australia before, Bob Wentworth and Jack Armstrong set out for Australia. They dig for gold and find it, and they also make an expedition over a mysterious mountain that had not before been discovered, and find a party of Englishmen who had disappeared some years before. The interest of the story does not flag from beginning to end. It is strikingly illustrated by Arthur H. Buckland.

There are two books for girls, and both are by writers already popular—Ethel Heddle and Rosa Mulholland (Lady Gilbert). In *Girl Comrades* (6s.), by Miss Heddle, there is much powerful character-drawing. There is pathos, but there is also delightful humour.

*Our Sister Maisie* (6s.), by Lady Gilbert, is the account of

a girl who gave up most brilliant prospects to make a home for a large family of stepbrothers and sisters. It ends very happily with the marriage of Maisie and of her younger sister Tan.

### LONGMANS.

We thought Mr. Andrew Lang had exhausted all the colours for his Fairy Books. We ourselves know the Blue, Yellow, Grey, Red, Violet, Green, Crimson, and Brown. But this year he edits *The Orange Fairy Book* (6s.). Most of the stories in it have been written by Mrs. Lang, not 'out of her own head,' however. She has collected all the fairy stories she could find that have delighted the children of other countries—French children, Italian, Catalan, Gaelic, Cherokee, Indian, Australian, and even Eskimo, and now she has rewritten these stories for the children of England. The book has eight coloured plates and many illustrations beautifully executed by Mr. H. J. Ford.

### DAVID NUTT.

Mr. David Nutt has catered handsomely this season for the boys and girls who love fairy tales. We have often looked at the flowers and wondered how they got their names, what they thought, and what they said to each other. In *The Flower Fairy Book* (5s.), by Isabella C. Blackwood, we are told all about the Bluebell, the Shamrock, the Rose, the Lily, the Thistle, and many others.

*My Friend Poppity* (2s. 6d.), by Augusta Thorburn, is a very dainty book. It is bound in white and crimson; its illustrations are in white and crimson, and so are its edges and the headings of its chapters.

Still another book about fairies is *Mr. Ubbledjeb*, by A. Thorburn (2s.).

Baby Bosh, Brother Tosh, and Sister Sosh are so popular that Mr. Harry Bruce has had to write another of his charming diminutive books about them. It is called *Beasts in Bayswater* (1s.). Baby Bosh went to the Zoological Gardens with his Dad one day and enjoyed himself very much indeed. Much more, in fact, than if he had been with anyone else. At last he went

'Home—till full of bun and beast

Reluctantly he reached his bed.

But see! so soon as he was sleeping,

Wonderful dreams came round him creeping.'