

philology. If the question be now asked, what conclusions may be drawn from all this for the investigation of the Pentateuch, I must refer to my *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*. For I have no right, any more than another, to publish elsewhere the contents of that book.¹ Only one thing I would still add. Let no one confuse literary criticism with the negations derived from *Religionsgeschichte*. For it is a misfortune that the two things are not always properly kept apart. Let it not be forgotten also that I have sought one side of my life-work in defending a truly transcendental Revelation, and that I have written a book "against the evolutionary theorists."

ED. KÖNIG.

*JESUS MIRRORED IN MATTHEW, MARK, AND
LUKE.*

VIII. YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN.

WE return to the first Escape and to the *Teaching on the Hill*. Up there on the mountain top Jesus is alone with His chosen disciples enjoying a welcome season of recreation away from the sweltering heat and the crowds of the lake margin, and finding rest in a change of occupation. The Preacher and Healer now becomes the Teacher initiating His scholars into the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. Heaven's peace reigns in the hearts of Master and scholars alike the while. It is for all a sacred, blessed holiday. The holiday mood is traceable throughout the recorded sayings of the Master during this season of repose; the tranquility of the uplands, the neighbourhood of the skies. In some parts of the discourse, especially, *e.g.*, the Beatitudes and

¹ Therefore it must suffice to remark that, if the facts which I have here referred to be properly weighed, they will be found, I believe, to support many of the *literary* conclusions which critics have reached respecting the different sources of which the Pentateuch is composed, and the dates to which they are to be referred.

the admonition against care, there is a divine simplicity, a lyric beauty, a light-hearted buoyancy that charm us, and tend for the moment to transform us into citizens of the kingdom, and elevate us into the upper regions of celestial tranquility. Here we have a chance of seeing into the very heart of Jesus. Of course it is but a glimpse that is now attainable. For an elaborate study of the Teaching on the Hill this is not the place. But we may form a slight acquaintance with the Master's thoughts concerning God, man, and the true life of man. The first of these three related topics will engage our attention in this paper.

Christ introduced into the language of religion a way of speaking concerning God which was new—if not absolutely, at least in emphasis and import. He called God *Father*. "Your Father which is in heaven." But He did not, as perhaps we might have wished, offer any formal definition of the sense in which He used the name. He defined simply by *discriminating use*, employing the name in connections of thought which invested it with special significance. He used the title in this way sufficiently often to invest it for the minds of His disciples with a rich network of associated qualities furnishing a firm support to religious faith, and a powerful stimulus to right conduct. It occurs some fifteen times in the "Sermon on the Mount," as reported by Matthew, so that by the end of the sermon hearers must have come to the conclusion that the Speaker did not employ the term "Father" mechanically as a customary expression, but of set purpose and with conscious deliberate preference. It would be instructive to study exhaustively the settings of the name in the various places where it occurs. This cannot be done now. It must suffice to indicate briefly what can be learned concerning the Father in heaven from the most representative texts.

Two very outstanding texts occur in the fifth chapter, verses 16 and 45. In both the name is introduced to

suggest a motive to conduct inculcated upon disciples. "Let your light shine" because thereby your Father will be glorified. "Love your enemies" because by so doing you will be like your Father, who blesses all, evil and good, just and unjust. In this use of the name the nature of the Divine Fatherhood is supposed to be known. But the same texts may be utilised as an aid to the better knowledge of the Fatherhood. While the name suggests the motives, the motives in turn throw light on the name. It is the light so thrown we are concerned with now.

In the first of the two texts the motive suggested implies that God values the honour brought to Him by those who let their light shine. No man can act on the motive unless he believes that God is not a being indifferent to conduct, but rather one who takes an earnest interest in the moral behaviour of men. This then is one thing Jesus would teach when He calls God Father. It is His fundamental lesson connected with His first recorded use of the name in His public ministry. He says in effect: "God is your Father, you are His sons, and your Father would have you behave worthily as His sons. He taketh pleasure in such behaviour not merely because of the honour it brings to Him through its influence on the minds of other men, but for its own sake. His eye rests with complacency on all who acquit themselves in the world as true children of God." This doctrine is consonant to the relation between father and son. A father expects honour from a son, and is deeply disappointed when he does not receive it. "If I be a Father, where is mine honour."¹ And the honour every right-minded father most values is right conduct. Filial courtesies are well in their way, but it is *character*, a life true, pure, earnest, manly, noble, that can alone satisfy the paternal heart. Of a son living such a life every father worthy of the name is proud.

¹ Mal. i. 6.

To this statement the Father in heaven is no exception. He delights in all who in the sense of the preacher let their light shine. Who then are they? They are men of heroic temper; men who love truth with passion and will speak it come what may, and hunger after righteousness, and will do it at all hazards. That means that they are men who have anything but an easy time of it in this world, whose temptation therefore is to hide their light and suppress their convictions to escape toil and trouble. It is indeed by way of warning against yielding to this very temptation that Jesus utters the counsel, "Let your light shine." He has just spoken in a parabolic way of what men do with natural lights: "Neither do men light a lamp and put it under the bushel," thereby hinting to disciples, "Put ye not your light under cover, set it rather on the stand, where it can be seen." Men are tempted to hide their light when letting it be seen exposes them to danger, to loss of name, property or life. It is easy to show our light when it will bring honour and profit to ourselves. It is when there is neither profit nor honour going, at least for ourselves, that we are sorely tempted to suppress conviction and comply tamely with evil custom. And the most powerful aid to resistance of the temptation lies in the knowledge that in yielding to it we miss the opportunity of glorifying our Father in heaven. For the fact is even so. It is one of the sure laws of the moral order of the world that glorifying God and self-glorification are mutually exclusive. The circumstances which give you the golden opportunity of glorifying God are just those which afford the least chance of obtaining immediate glory and advantage to yourself. Contrary-wise, when you are pursuing eagerly your own honour and interest and succeeding very well, be sure that the amount of honour you bring to God is very insignificant. It matters not that your work is within the technically religious sphere, and that you pretend to be very zealous for God's glory.

The moral heroes of human history, the pioneers of good causes, the warriors who fight a good fight for truth and justice, risking limb and life in the battle, the prophets, the martyrs, the confessors—these are the men who let their light shine. These are the sons of God. These are the glorifiers of the Father's name, and in these the Father glories. Such are the men the Teacher on the hill has in view throughout His discourse: the men who have been persecuted for righteousness sake (v. 10), the companions of persecuted prophets (v. 12), the men who, through no faults of theirs, have enemies to love, and persecutors to pray for (v. 44). And by using the name Father for God for the first time in this connection He throws an important light on the nature of the Divine Fatherhood, thereby teaching that God delights in moral heroes, and regards them *par excellence* as His children.

This is a very noteworthy doctrine. It is, *e.g.*, far in advance of that taught by Jewish doctors of the law, who set forth God to their disciples as one whose approval rested on those who studied well and carefully kept all the legal traditions. What a difference between the Father God of Jesus and the law-giving God of the Rabbis! The God of the Rabbis demands justice, the God of Jesus delights in magnanimity, going far beyond what can be legally claimed. The model man of legalism is one who in respect of the commandments great and small (especially the small) is blameless. The model man of the Teaching on the Hill is one who not only lives correctly but is ready to sacrifice himself for the good of others, however thankless the task. Blessed of God, said the Rabbi, is the faultless man. Blessed of the Father in heaven, said Jesus, is the self-sacrificing, devoted, heroic man. Note, further, how far this doctrine rises above the vulgar notion that God's favour is revealed by outward prosperity. That view would oblige us to regard the noblest men that ever

lived—the sages, prophets, apostles, and saviours of the race—as men accursed of God. Jesus has taught us a worthier way of thinking. “Those,” He says, “are the *Sons of God* in whom He delights.” A curse indeed rests on their life, but it is the curse not of God but of a world which in its ignorance and wickedness shuns the light and resents all earnest attempts to establish the reign of righteousness. This curse rests on My own life, as will more and more clearly appear; but because I willingly bear it for the world’s good, therefore doth My Father love Me and account Me His well-beloved Son.

Passing to the second text, we find the Fatherhood of God referred to in it as a motive to *magnanimity*. Here, again, the motive throws light on the name. Our inference is that magnanimity is a characteristic of God. But we are not left to infer this. That God deals magnanimously with men is expressly declared when it is said that “He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” This magnanimity is an essential feature of the Divine Fatherhood. It is *as a Father* that God dispenses benefits to good and evil alike, treating good and evil, just and unjust, as His children. It is fatherlike thus to act. Many earthly fathers, certainly the best of them, so deal with their children. They give good gifts to all their children, not merely to the more exemplary with whom they are well pleased. No father deals with his children on the principle of strict justice. Every good father does more for all his children than they can claim, much more than unworthy children deserve. It is therefore only in accordance with analogy that the Father in heaven should so act. That He does so act is familiar to us all. We can all testify, “He hath not dealt with us after our sins.”¹ The least worthy have the

¹ *Ps.* ciii. 10.

best reason to know this. How much good they have received ; how little they have deserved !

Thus far as to the general import of this second saying containing the name "Father." A little analysis may help us to a clearer view of its full significance. It contains, we observe, a statement of fact and a certain construction put on the fact.

The fact stated is that to a large extent good comes to all irrespective of character. Sun and shower represent that common good. How much they cover ! From sunshine and rain duly mixed come good crops, food for man and beast in abundance. That means general well-being, all that one could wish for a community in the way of material prosperity.

That the fact is as Jesus stated it, is to us self-evident. But it was by no means a matter of course that a Jewish teacher should have seen the fact so clearly, and stated it so broadly. The tendency of the Hebrew mind was to think differently, and to regard God solely as a moral Governor rendering to every man according to his works. For men holding this view there was a strong temptation to force facts to square with the theory. Strictly carried out, that would mean the sun shining only on the good, the rain falling only on the just ; or the evil and the unjust getting more sunshine and rain than is meet, bringing dearths and deluges to punish them for their sins. "Who," asked Eliphaz boldly, "who ever perished being innocent, or when were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."¹ That was the old theory in its baldest form. The hero of the poem is represented as doubting its truth. "Very natural, very desirable perhaps," replied he in effect ; "but unhappily the facts do not bear your theory out." Jesus is on the side of Job. He breaks with the traditional theory,

¹ *Job* iv. 7, 8.

and He does so because He has discarded the traditional legal conception of God as a mere Governor dealing with men according to strict justice. His mind was not dominated by current opinions or theories, however venerable, and among the notions He repudiated was this one that good or ill in lot is a sure index of good or ill in character. He saw and said that this view was contradicted by two classes of facts: by tribulation endured by good men for righteousness sake, and by temporal prosperity enjoyed by many unworthy men not less, often even more, than by the worthy. The statement in the text about the sun and the rain is therefore not to be taken as a mere truism which any one might have spoken. It is rather the original utterance of one endowed with an unbiassed mind, a clear vision and an unfettered tongue, who saw things as they were, and fearlessly said what He saw.

Note next the construction put upon the fact, which is even more characteristic. The fact being that to a large extent all things come alike to all, the question naturally obtrudes itself: What is the meaning of it? Some might say: that there is no real Providence, that all things happen by general law acting without design or consciousness, that the natural order of the universe is perfectly indifferent to moral interests. It certainly seems so, insomuch that no man who holds this view can easily be argued out of it by an appeal to facts, though there are facts of human history patent to a wide observation which go to show that there is indeed a Power other than ourselves in the world making for righteousness. But besides this agnostic construction there is another which may be put on the facts, one harmonising with a firm faith in a living God and in an intelligent Providence. We may see in the universal boons of sun and shower the *magnanimity* of a Father treating all His children to a certain extent alike.

Such was Christ's reading of the facts. As to the facts

themselves He is at one with the unbeliever. The difference is wholly one of interpretation. But how wide the difference there! In the same facts the agnostic finds no God, and no Providence, while Jesus finds a *gracious* God and a benignant, magnanimous Providence. Extremes meet. No God, or the highest kind of God, a Father; no Providence, or a Providence good to all.

These two sayings of Jesus combined give a balanced view of the Divine Fatherhood. Each is complementary of the other. The one teaches that God hath a special paternal delight in the morally faithful, the other that He exercises a benignant Providence over all, doing good even to the morally unfaithful, His wayward and disobedient children. The former implies decided moral preference, the latter a sphere of action within which moral distinctions are overlooked. Either without the other is liable to run into excess. Moral preference tends to exclusiveness, universal benevolence to indifferentism. Combine the two, and both defects are eliminated. Not only so, the two contrasted qualities interpenetrate and aid each other. God's moral preferences lend emphasis to His magnanimity, making it appear a thing of grace, and not a thing of course. On the other hand the Divine magnanimity, viewed as unmerited favour, is seen to signify a desire that the unworthy may become true sons of God, objects of His complacent regard; an invitation to those who are in the outer circle of sonship to press into the inner circle.

Most of the other texts in the sermon containing the title "Father" bear on two topics: simplicity in religion, and freedom from care on the part of those who have made the Kingdom their chief end. They occur in the sixth chapter of Matthew. Spurious religion appears invested with two evil qualities: ostentation, the vice of Pharisaism; and superstition, the vice of heathenism. The religion of the Pharisee, as manifested in almsgiving, praying and

fasting, is in relation to men a display, in relation to God a form. The religion of the pagan has for its root unbelief in the good will of the gods,—fear. Therefore, when he prays, he indulges in vain repetition, thinking that he shall be heard for his much speaking, by his *battology* compelling his god to lend a reluctant ear. The cure for both vices is a filial conception of God as Father. So Jesus hints to His disciples by the frequent introduction of the Paternal title in this part of His discourse. And on reflection we perceive the truth of the doctrine. The relation of father and son, *like all intimate relations*, demands, in the first place, sincere, real affection. Every true son cares more for the esteem of his father than for that of the outside world. In the sphere of religion this means that a true thought of God as Father gives the death-blow to religious ostentation. The filial worshipper does not care about appearing devout to men; he seeks above all the approval of his heavenly Father. Then it will be impossible for him to mock his Father by a formal routine service in which there is no heart. He will offer always a worship in which thought and feeling find utterance: an *eloquent* worship because therein *all that is within him speaks*.

Faith in the Divine Father is the cure for everything savouring of pagan superstition in religion, not less than for Pharisaic ostentation and formalism. Who can indulge in vain repetition in prayer who believes in a Father's willing ear? More generally what place for elaborate ritual of any sort in a religion which has for its object of worship a Father? Simplicity is congenial to the filial spirit; and by using the name Father in connection with the inculcation of simplicity in prayer Jesus would have His disciples understand that God loves such simplicity. Such love pertains to the paternal relation. There is a place for ceremonial in the public functions of a king, but in the bosom of his own family the most august monarch gladly makes

his escape from pomp and state. In this connection we perceive the significance of another Father-logic not contained in the Sermon on the Mount, but kindred in spirit to those now under consideration. "Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."¹ The particular plant referred to was the tradition of the elders respecting ceremonial ablutions. The implied doctrine is that a Father-God could have no hand in planting such an institution. His characteristic function rather is to eradicate everything of the kind which strikes its roots into the soil of man's religious nature. And the effectual uprooter is just the new way of thinking concerning God as Father. That was one of Christ's reasons for giving the new name so prominent a place in His religious vocabulary. He believed that just in proportion as His disciples got accustomed to a filial mode of conceiving God would Rabbinical and even Levitical ritual lose its hold on their minds, and leave them free to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Would that the Church in all ages had been more abundantly baptized into the new Divine name! Then the portent of Sacramentarianism, with all that goes along with it, had never made its appearance in Christendom. For that also is a plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted.

"Care not; your Father cares for you," said Jesus in effect to His disciples in that part of His discourse which is directed against earthly anxieties.² It is assumed that those who are thus admonished are making the Kingdom of God their chief end, and the aim is to set them free from distraction arising out of concern about food and raiment. The appositeness of the title "Father" applied to God in this connection is obvious. It is a father's part to provide for his children. By calling God Father, in an exhortation

¹ *Matthew* xv. 13.

² *Matthew* vi. 25-34.

against care, Jesus in effect teaches that God's Fatherliness includes Providence among its attributes and functions. And if disciples but thoroughly believed this, it would certainly transport them into that care-free region of feeling in which their Master desired them to dwell. He lived habitually up there Himself, without effort, because He had an undoubting faith in a Paternal Providence which with unsleeping solicitude looked after the interests of those who, with singleness of heart, gave themselves to the service of the Kingdom. How perfect was the peace that through this faith reigned in His bosom this very admonition against care suffices to show. What divine serenity it breathes! And what simple delight in the world of nature finds expression in it! The careworn are so moody and gloomy that they have no eye for the wildflowers, and no ear for the song of birds, or for the music of rippling brooks or autumn winds. But Jesus had an eye and an ear for all sights and sounds of nature. "I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Enquire not curiously of what flower He spoke, as if it must needs have been some exceptionally lovely flower of gorgeous hue that called forth such an encomium. Jesus, I believe, would have said the same thing about the simplest wildflower that grows in the meadow or by the wayside: the snowdrop, the primrose, or the daisy.

The peace Jesus Himself enjoyed He desired His disciples to attain, and for that end He plied them with arguments fitted to aid weak faith. Noteworthy are two drawn from human experience, and put in the form of questions: "Is not the life more than meat?" and "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" Both questions suggest an argument from what God has done to what He may be expected to do. What He has done is in both instances the greater thing, what He has yet to do the less. God has given to all *life* a greater thing than the

means of life, food and raiment. The argument is: if God has already bestowed on us the greater boon, why doubt as to His continuing to give us the less—the means of sustaining that life He has conferred on all as an unsought blessing? The point of the second question is not so obvious. It seems to hint at a form of anxiety which no human being ever was absurd enough to cherish. Who ever thought of adding to his stature one cubit? Pressed by the surface difficulty, many recent commentators have adopted the view that the question refers not to increase of bodily stature, but to lengthening of life. The use of measures of length in space as symbols of length in time is not unexampled in Scripture. We have an instance of it in *Psalms* xxxix. 5, where, speaking of the brevity of life, the Psalmist says: "Behold Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth." It is therefore quite conceivable that our Lord asked anxious-minded persons: "Which of you by any amount of care can add to his days a period of time corresponding in length to a cubit?" It would have been a very pertinent question, for the tendency of care is not to lengthen our days, but rather to shorten them. Yet I am persuaded that this was not the thought Jesus meant to convey. His question refers to stature, and its aim is to remind the anxious that God has done for every man arrived at maturity what no man by any amount of thinking or wishing can do for himself. Every grown man is more than a cubit taller than he was as a child. The addition to his stature is the effect of a gradual growth going on insensibly for years. How unobtrusively the marvellous result was achieved, the process incessantly going on, but from day to day unobservable, perceptible only after the lapse of large intervals of time. The boy measures himself against the wall to-day, and this time next year he will repeat the process and find to his delight that he has grown one or two inches. But he had no hand in producing that

growth save by taking the food provided for him by his parents and indulging with boyish glee in the sports which promote growth, but have not growth for their conscious aim. The cubit is added in the care-free time of life. The boy sports and grows and reaches manhood with one cubit or two, or even three added to his stature, not by him, but by the laws of nature, or, as Christ would have said, by the kindness of His heavenly Father. And Christ's argument is: "If God has done that greater thing for you, rearing you from infancy to the stature of manhood, providing all the time the food necessary for growth, why doubt His readiness and power to find for you the needful sustenance now? You did well, by God's help, when you were boys and girls undistracted by care. Why not carry a little of the spirit of boyhood into your mature life, and, if possible, remain young-hearted all your days?"

We have now learned these four things regarding the Divine Fatherhood as defined by discriminating use in the hill teaching of our Lord: It implies delight in the noble conduct of heroic men; magnanimous treatment of the unworthy; intimate relations between God and men, demanding from the latter sincere, simple-hearted religious affections; and effective provision for the temporal wants of all who devote themselves to the higher concerns of life. This is much, but it is not all. We miss a cheering word about the pardon of sin and aid in the fight with evil. The magnanimity ascribed to the Divine Father might indeed be held to cover these needs, and it does inferentially; yet the express reference of that attribute as spoken of in the Sermon is to the sunshine and the showers. Inference in connection with such vital matters is not enough; we need positive assurance. And we have it in two petitions of the *Pater Noster*: "Forgive us our debts"; "Deliver us from evil." By putting these petitions into the mouths of disciples in a prayer addressed to the Father in Heaven, Jesus

gave them to understand that pardon of their moral shortcomings and power to live well were boons to be confidently expected from one standing to them in the relation of Father. The doctrine at this point also is congruous to the nature of fatherhood. Every true father forgives his children not once, but many times. He deals not with them after their sins. He also gives them all the aid he can to do what is right; by prayer, wise counsel and good example striving to keep their feet from evil ways. If God be indeed a Father, He may be expected to do likewise: not coming behind good earthly fathers, rather doing more for His erring children than an earthly parent has either the will or the power to do. A father on earth must sometimes stop short at mere desire. He cannot give his child a good spirit, or a holy bias, or write the law of duty on his heart. But the Divine Father is both able and willing. Often earthly fathers are lacking even in respect of good will. How many of them readily conclude that the waywardness of a disobedient son has exceeded the limits of the forgivable, and harden their hearts against him? He is a rare father, of phenomenally tender heart, who can fitly represent in his parental conduct the mercy of God. Jesus has drawn his picture in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Why does that picture affect us so powerfully? Because it tells us fathers what we ought to be, but are not. It is a poetic ideal far transcending the reality of ordinary family life. Jesus drew that pathetic picture that we might know that what for many of us is merely ideal is real for God. "God," He would teach, "behaves so towards His returning prodigal children. Judge Him not by yourselves. His ways are not your ways." In that beautiful parable the doctrine of Jesus concerning the Fatherhood of God in the moral sphere reached its climax. It is the best concrete commentary on the abstract general petition: "Forgive us our debts." Who without such a pictorial representation

of Divine forgiveness would have the courage to think that even God could pardon in that magnificent way?

And yet there is greater magnificence behind all that. Nothing more generous and handsome can be conceived than the reception given by the father to the prodigal on his arrival. But what if he had gone in quest of the wanderer as the shepherd went in quest of the straying sheep, enduring the hardships of the long way and the miseries of the famine-stricken land, and, finding the lost one there, had claimed him as his son, and by moving entreaties induced him to return home? That would have been a deeper depth of pity, and a pardon costing the pardoner more. It is no fault of the parable that it leaves this phase of fatherly love out of the picture. Room had to be made for the free play of *penitence*, the lost one in this case being not a sheep, but a *man*. For in the human sphere finding means self-finding, coming to oneself in contrite reflection. But the seeking and the suffering connected therewith have their place here also. The Son of man came to seek the lost. In Him, if He be Divine, the Father came to seek the lost. Patripassianism is not wholly a heresy.

A. B. BRUCE.

THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN ST. PAUL'S THEOLOGY.

THE theology of St. Paul was the product of three factors—(1) his early Pharisaic training, perhaps the only course of systematic study for which he ever found time; (2) his contact with other minds in mission work, in which he made it his principle to take the intellectual and religious standpoint of those whom he wished to convince (Rom. i. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 20), and which therefore often determined the form in which his teaching was presented; and (3)